

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

**APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT) BILL (NO. 1) 2008**  
**APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT) BILL (NO. 2) 2008**

*Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR J.N. HYDE (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary)** [2.43 pm]: Allowing written supplementary questions is nothing short of workplace harassment. A supplementary question exists so that a keen member can pick out an illogical comment or error in a minister's answer; that is, a member has to listen to the answer to find a flaw. There cannot be pre-written supplementary questions; they defy logic.

Grievances are probably the most productive legislative pastime in this place. Members are allowed seven minutes to grieve and ministers are given seven minutes to respond. Given the short time, we are made to condense and communicate a real message. If we were allowed five minutes, grievances would be even more relevant. Five minutes go in consideration in detail for each time a member gets to his or her feet is lazy and wasteful. Members who get up at the end of five minutes and say, "I'd like to hear the member speak further on this" should be dragged before a war crimes tribunal or taken out into the courtyard and shot. They are really saying, "My parliamentary colleague is such an oratorically challenged primate that he cannot ask a sensible question or make a coherent complaint in five minutes."

Finally, we could cut down the amount of time the bells ring from three minutes to two minutes, 60 seconds or 45 seconds. It would not only save time, but also improve the general fitness of members.

*Point of Order*

**Dr K.D. HAMES:** Mr Speaker, I do not recall whether you made a ruling on the point of order raised by the member for Central Kimberley-Pilbara prior to question time.

**The SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr J.N. HYDE:** Cutting down the amount of time the bells ring would also cause us to review stupid quorum calls, irrational points of order and irrelevant divisions. These are unproductive, slothful work practices totally out of kilter with how we efficiently work in our own electorate offices and in the community. No other workplace in Western Australia is as time wasteful as the Parliament of WA.

**MS K. HODSON-THOMAS (Carine)** [2.45 pm]: That is a really hard act to follow. I agree with part of the member for Perth's sentiment but there is a lot with which I do not agree. Some members opposite need to spend some time over here in opposition, because it is a very different place. Many of the member for Perth's good ministers spent quite a few years over here in opposition. That is why they are so good.

This will be my last budget speech.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Thanks, member for Carine; we appreciate that.

**Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS:** Given that it is my last budget speech, I will probably say lots of nice things about members in this place.

I thought I would take the time to speak about matters that are important to me and close to my heart. In the main, I will focus on tourism and its value and importance to the state. I was very fortunate to hold that shadow portfolio last year. It was truly one of the most interesting and dynamic portfolios that I have had the good fortune to hold during my time in this place. It afforded me the opportunity to travel the length and breadth of our fantastic state, to see our tourism product first hand and to meet with tourism operators right across Western Australia. We have the most unique state. Western Australians enjoy 12 500 kilometres of coastline. Much of the state is isolated. If members have ever had the opportunity to visit some of the remote parts of our state, they would understand my reference to it. It is truly exquisite and magical. No wonder Western Australians are more actively engaging in water activities and purchasing more boats. I suggest that they would probably be doing a lot of that in your electorate, Mr Speaker.

As the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure recently told a marine industry forum in Fremantle, in the past 10 years there has been an increase in the vicinity of 40 per cent in the number of registered boats in this state. When I was in the industry 11 or 12 years ago, there were about 57 000 registered boats, 10 years ago there were 58 000 registered boats and now there is in the vicinity of 88 000 registered boats. That is one boat per 24 people. I understand that, during the same period, the number of registered boats greater than 7.5 metres increased from 2 900 to 5 000. While this growth augurs well for the marine sector, it has limitations for future

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

sales, as it has placed enormous pressure on our boating facilities. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure acknowledges this challenge in the trend and the demand on our scarce boating facilities, such as moorings, pens and launching ramps. In these buoyant times, when Western Australians want to invest in boat ownership, there is a real need to address these shortcomings and invest in the infrastructure that supports both the industry and boat owners. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure encouraged the industry at the forum to play a more active role and have a stronger industry voice to show support for future upgrades, while still acknowledging and recognising the unique biodiversity along our coastline. Moreover, with the success of the state's bid by the Minister for Tourism for the International Sailing Federation world sailing championships to be held in WA in 2011, I take the opportunity once again to congratulate the Minister for Tourism. She has done a wonderful job securing this event for the state. It is really fantastic. Members on both sides of Parliament should be very proud to see that event coming to Western Australia. However, there is an urgency to plan and to put in place the necessary marine infrastructure by the time that event is upon us. It is absolutely crucial for its success.

I note on page 820 of the budget papers there is a reference, under "Major Initiatives For 2008-09" relating to the "Destination Marketing" heading on page 819, to the Baz Luhrmann movie *Australia*, which stars Hugh Jackman and Nicole Kidman, and the opportunity for Tourism Western Australia to take advantage of this once in a lifetime marketing opportunity to position our state, and in particular the Kimberley, on the world stage. We must take advantage of every opportunity to showcase our state. I commend the government for being proactive about this opportunity and I hope that the minister details during budget estimates how the commission intends to take advantage of this opportunity.

The Australian Surf Life Saving Championships has also been a great coup for the state, but the event in my mind highlighted the growing shortage of hotel accommodation we are experiencing in Perth. The budget papers also make reference to this shortage on page 816, where it states that a shortfall of about 1 000 hotel rooms is anticipated by about 2011. The source for this information was a Perth hotel investment study dated March 2007. This matter was raised with me personally, when I attended the recent surf life-saving championships event in Scarborough, by a number of competitors and their families who showed great concern that Rendezvous Observation City Hotel had advised them that they would need to look for alternative accommodation for the 2009 event, given that the hotel's owner plans to upgrade the premises. Although I acknowledge the owner's right to upgrade the facility, I think the timing, once approvals are completed, is very short-sighted and will once again show Perth in a very bad light. I hasten to add that decisions such as that leave visitors dissatisfied. It is no wonder that on page 816 of the budget papers there is an acknowledgement that visitor satisfaction results are down in our state. I find that incredibly disappointing, as we truly have a wonderful state—a unique state. To my mind it is matchless. We must ensure that we raise the bar. I know the industry works tirelessly to ensure that, but a decision like this one by Rendezvous Observation City Hotel is flawed and should be discouraged at all costs, at least until after that event in 2009.

I have raised this matter before and I have concerns also about the way in which we badge our state. Our state regions are named "Australia's North West", "Australia's Coral Coast", "Australia's Golden Outback"—I acknowledge that the Minister for Tourism was not in the chamber when I congratulated her, but she is present now—and "Australia's South West" and "Experience Perth". I always thought it was a national initiative to name our regions in that way; namely, a reference to Australia rather than Western Australia. I took the liberty of looking at the way other states badge their regions and it concerned me that we do not refer to our state and regions as Western Australia; for example, "Western Australia's Coral Coast", "Western Australia's Golden Outback" and "Western Australia's South West".

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Or "Western Australia's Amazing Albany".

**Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS:** Yes. I congratulate the member for Albany for taking the liberty of distributing the important tourism booklet that has been produced in Albany. Was it produced by the visitors' centre?

**Mr P.B. Watson:** By the City of Albany.

**Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS:** By the City of Albany. It was a good initiative of the member for Albany to pass it around to members so that we can see the product there. As I said, I find the way we badge our state quite ludicrous and illogical, particularly when we are trying to raise awareness of Western Australia on the world stage in the minds of prospective tourists. We should actually promote ourselves as Western Australia, not just as Australia.

The budget papers show that tourism contributed \$5.7 billion to Western Australia's gross state product during 2005-06. Although the number of tourists has increased on the back of the resource boom, the increase in business tourists hides the decrease in the number of international holidaymakers visiting Western Australia. Although the government can crow about the strength of the industry, there is still much to be done to attract

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

holidaymakers, not just business tourists. We need a well balanced sector, not one that is just weighed towards business tourists, who often do not participate in holiday excursions and tours. They fill our hotel rooms and restaurants but do not take up the many wonderful opportunities available on the many diversified tours that tour operators right across the state provide. If the government continues to ignore the needs of international and domestic holidaymakers, the government will find that when the resource boom is over many operators will have either left the industry or, worse still, gone broke.

Another matter I wish to raise is the government's Landbank policy, which was unveiled at the Australian Tourism Exchange in Perth in June 2005. The government stated that Landbank was created to ensure there was an adequate supply of tourism development sites to meet the future needs of the tourism industry in Western Australia. No-one would disagree that it is a sound policy; nevertheless at this stage the Landbank page on the Tourism WA website shows only the Albany waterfront development, for which plans will be released mid-2008 for a hotel development site; the Denham development, for which the tender process for a tourist accommodation development site has now closed; and the Tom Price hotel development, for which the expression of interest period has now closed and submissions are being assessed. Tenders for Rottneest Island, we know, have been released and these other three sites listed are a far cry from the government's goal of 20 sites by 2010. Although there are references to a number of studies being commissioned by Tourism WA to identify both demand and investment needs, I would say that the goal might never be realised if this is the pace at which Landbank progresses. As I indicated, a number of studies have been commissioned by Tourism WA; for example, the Broome accommodation study to identify accommodation development sites in Bunbury and, of course, the Perth hotel investment outlook. Although these are essential for ensuring that the proposed developments are well suited, the Labor government is still not near the target of 20 sites. If this is the pace at which the government is moving, we really need to encourage it to get a move on.

I quote the first dot point on page 822 of the budget papers under "Major Initiatives For 2008-09" —

- Continue the Landbank initiative to develop and release sites of tourism value that include those suitable for low-key, environmentally sensitive tourism development.

I will certainly watch this development with great interest, as I believe that in our state, particularly in our regions, that we have an opportunity to create development opportunities where visitors can explore and enjoy some amazing ecotourism and wilderness experiences. Western Australia should certainly be leading the country in ecotourism. The very large distances between our tourist destinations right across the state act as a barrier to domestic and international tourists visiting by motor vehicle some of our more remote and spectacular parts of our state such as Ningaloo Reef, Karijini National Park and the Kimberley. We should examine how best we can break these large distances to make travelling throughout the state more comfortable. This is an area that I believe falls within the auspices of Landbank. It could be examined under Landbank to see the best way forward to break those distances and provide an environment with further infrastructure development along the way.

The significant issues and trends on page 815 of the budget papers refer to critical skills and labour shortages. This is an enormous problem for the industry. I have heard first-hand the difficulty people have getting visas, with some waiting up to seven months, and there is a nine-month wait list. Some are even applying in Tasmania because the process there does not take as long. This is a matter that seriously needs urgent action. We must reduce these waiting times as a matter of urgency. I therefore encourage both the state and federal governments to do more to work together to address this as a matter of priority.

Another issue facing the tourism and hospitality sector is staff accommodation, particularly in the north. Staff working in the hospitality and tourism sector are not paid the high wages of employees in the resources sector. Given the shortage of housing in the north, rental properties are at a premium. Many landlords are commanding in the vicinity of \$1 000 to \$1 500 a week, and that makes it very difficult for the industry to keep staff. Cable Beach Resort, for example, bought another hotel in Broome, Palms Resort, to house its staff. Cable Beach Resort recognised that, in order to keep good staff, it had to find a solution to the problem. While that has worked for its organisation, not all tourism operators are in the financial position to do that.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS:** I also take this opportunity to congratulate the Minister for Tourism on her efforts, and acknowledge the government's strategic objective of accelerating the development of Indigenous tourism, to which reference appears on paper 823 of the budget papers. This is most certainly an area that we as a state should be leading in. There are some amazing Indigenous products in this state. I had the good fortune to hear many Indigenous tourism operators address last year's Indigenous tourism conference in Broome, and I can attest to the tourism product there and its potential. I would like to share an example of this with the house: I met Kathleen Cox from Goombaragin Eco Ventures, which she runs with her partner. It is an amazing enterprise, and

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

I had the good fortune to be invited up there. I will quote from a case study on the Tourism Australia web page, which states in part —

It was a family decision to go back to country and establish a home and business where they could work towards independence from government welfare, take control of their own destiny and aspire to be leaders for their people.

Kathleen takes her responsibilities for the safeguarding of country, culture, law and heritage seriously and has developed a product with these values at the core. It represents, as Kathleen describes it, “*A symbiotic relationship — where one is connected to the other*”

Tourism in the Kimberley is a booming industry and the Dampier Peninsula is no exception particularly with regards to Cultural Tourism. Many international and domestic visitors are in search of an authentic Aboriginal experience. Goombaragin offers the opportunity for full immersion in traditional culture, where Kathleen and her family are proud to share their stories, unique lifestyle and love for country.

Goombaragin offers semi inclusive cultural tours and accommodation packages of 3 days 2 nights staying in ‘Up Market’ tents on platforms. Tours focus on lifestyle and culture sharing activities with up market camping accommodation provided by way of tents on platforms inclusive of bedding and linen.

Kathleen has an extraordinary amount of passion, determination, entrepreneurial skill and personality, and I congratulate her and wish her every success in growing her business.

The liquor reform debate last year centred, in part, around creating a vibrant city and the desire to attract more tourist investment along with attracting people to domicile in Western Australia. It was aimed at deflecting the use of the tag that some detractors give Perth—“Dullsville”, a tag I loathe and argue against. During the past week there has been some media coverage of the government’s proposal for hotel lock-outs. I understand that the proposal is intended to reduce the number of assaults and accidents at or near hotels and entertainment precincts. While no-one can argue against providing a safe and lawful environment, I suggest that such a policy flies in the face of the earlier debate we had on the liquor reform legislation about creating a vibrant city. I believe the lock-out policy is fundamentally flawed. While I have been in this place, I have been staggered to see governments continuing more and more down this path of over-regulation. I worry that we will, ultimately, move a problem from one place to somewhere else. Law abiding citizens continue to be the losers and continue to be ignored and penalised when governments make policy like this on the run. Any reasonable-thinking individual would recognise that this kind of backward thinking might see more young Western Australians leaving in droves to other states where they can enjoy some social engagement regardless of the time of day, so I vigorously argue against hotel lock-outs.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Hear, hear!

**Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS:** As it is, we impose much regulation on business owners who have invested in their employees’ training, such as in the responsible serving of alcohol. I encourage the government to have a good, hard think before it goes down this path.

I wanted to take the opportunity of raising another matter that our former colleague Trevor Sprigg actively pursued before his untimely passing earlier this year. Before I do that, I also acknowledge a special tribute that the Australian Hotels Association made to Trevor Sprigg’s wife, Lyn, and her family at Monday evening’s Hospitality Supplier Awards held at the Burswood Resort Hotel. Bradley Woods of the AHA acknowledged Trevor’s long and committed service to the industry and recognised him with the Liquor and Hospitality Industry Achievement Award. It was a great tribute to Trevor. Trevor Sprigg was a strong advocate of the proposed street circuit racing event for V8 super cars. Late last year, Trevor called on the government to commit to a feasibility study of this event. Given the popularity of the sport, I must agree with the sentiment. We know that V8 super car racing will be held here for only two more seasons—all the more reason to commit to a feasibility study to the street-car circuit, like South Australia’s Clipsal 500, which contributes significantly to that state’s economy and tourism numbers. I raise this matter in my budget speech today on behalf and in memory of our former colleague.

Other members have referred to the government’s proposed stamp duty cuts to take effect from July 2008. These will effectively result in an already-weakened market being hit with buyers who will wait until 1 July to sign an offer and acceptance contract purchase a new home. Whether it starts today or 1 July, I suggest it will have no major bearing on government revenue and it will mean that, for the next few months, sellers’ desperation will grow. It just does not make sense and will be far too little, way too late. I ask the Treasurer why there is a need to wait at all.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

I raise some other concerns that relate to my electorate. Having listened to many members make their speeches on the budget in the past couple of days, it appears I am not alone when I raise the neglect of local schools, particularly their maintenance and upgrades. Just as I am doing, other members have been calling on the government for more to be done in this area, yet the words appear to fall on deaf ears. It saddens me that students and teachers alike are expected to be housed in substandard facilities. I have been calling on the Minister for Education and Training to do something about the Davallia Primary School administration upgrade and the Carine Senior High School toilet blocks, which are in urgent need of some attention. It is interesting to note that these matters have been raised by not only opposition members, but also government members. These matters must be addressed urgently.

Another issue that relates to my electorate is the redevelopment of the Carine TAFE site, which has been a long time coming. My community deserves to know what is planned for that site. Since the closure of the educational facility was announced in 2002, my constituents have anxiously awaited news about what will be done with that site. They want an opportunity to have input into the decision-making process. The delays in implementing this process are unacceptable. In 2004 I was given a firm promise by LandCorp that a community consultation process would occur in 2006. In May 2006 I was informed that this had been delayed because the metropolitan region scheme amendment had not been initiated. In May 2007 I was informed that the amendment to the MRS was progressing and I was told informally that it was hoped that the community consultation would begin during the consultation process from May to August 2007. It is now May 2008 and to my knowledge none of that has occurred. In March 2008 the MRS amendment was gazetted. I am told that the community consultation process for the development of the site is still being formulated. It is seriously a long time coming. One would have thought that this process would have been well and truly underway some years ago. The Carine TAFE site is a large part of the suburb of Carine and its development is of vital interest to the community. One aspect of this issue is public open space, for which the City of Stirling normally requires 10 per cent of land in a new housing development be set aside. Some watchful residents have told me that LandCorp is thinking of abandoning that requirement because there are so many local parks nearby. My constituents and I will keep a watchful eye over the project. To date the management of this issue has been less than satisfactory because it has failed to keep the stakeholders informed. Key stakeholders always seem to be the last people to know what is going on.

Another matter I wish to raise during this debate is a request that has been made by people in my electorate to reduce the speed limit on sections of Marmion Avenue from 80 kilometres an hour to 70 kilometres an hour. I have tabled a petition relating to that matter in this place. I have written to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure on several occasions and I have received replies from the minister's chief of staff on her behalf. I have serious concerns about the position he has adopted. He asserts that an 80-kilometre-an-hour speed limit is appropriate for Marmion Road's design and function, but did not give any evidence to back up his assertion. In the letter I wrote to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure on 15 April, I advised that as an individual who travels on Marmion Avenue and whose constituents frequently travel on it, the information provided was not accurate. Motorists can access Marmion Avenue from numerous roads; indeed, many roads cross over Marmion Avenue. Many such roads have only a stop sign to moderate traffic. A number of schools in the area are close to Marmion Avenue and students are required to cross it to get to their schools. I would like to know how often speed limits are monitored and when the last review was conducted. My electorate is calling for reduced speed limits along a certain section of the road. Introducing a more realistic target for drivers in the interests of road safety is a good thing. Sadly, there have been a number of fatalities along that stretch. I hope we can do something positive to ensure our road users remain safe.

In closing, as this might be the last time I make a speech in this place, I thank my dedicated staff who have worked alongside me for some time. I refer to Janet Graham, Genevieve Lyon and Zara Saliba, a young university student who works for me one day a week. Pamela Mann has been acting in a relief capacity over the past couple of weeks while Jan is away on a well-deserved break with her husband, Bruce, in Europe. They have recently celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary, which is a great tribute to them both. I hope that they are having a sensational time. I have missed Jan very much, but Genevieve, Zara and Pamela have been working alongside me. They are, as all members' electorate office staff are, the first point of call when people ring to make a complaint. I truly appreciate their hard work and endeavours during the time they have worked with me.

**MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe)** [3.16 pm]: I hope this is not my last speech. I think the member for Carine and I will have one more chance to make a speech before we leave this place. Some time ago I said that before I leave Parliament I would make a speech about water and about that canal. I know that some members will find that an opportunity for much merriment. I admit that the concept of water canals and pipelines from the north may seem a bit whacky. However, there is a serious edge to that issue, which is why I want to talk about it today.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

I was somewhat heartened last night after the address of the members for Victoria Park and Avon, because for a rare moment—the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure was involved in this, which was surprising—there was a sensible interchange across this chamber about one of the big issues facing this state; namely, the increasing role played by China and its very aggressive stock market behaviour in accessing control of resources, which is a massive issue for Western Australia. Until that moment, it had barely been mentioned in this house. Some people have questioned the future of our state Parliament and its relevance. Parliament will almost certainly drift into irrelevance if it does not deal with the big issues.

The big issue that I will address today is water. Water is a massive issue for this country and, indeed, much of the world. When I was a small boy, which was not that long ago, my father said, “Colin, never complain if it rains in Australia”. It was one of his favourite sayings. He grew up on a farm, and he was right. There is no doubt that a lack of water has, more than any other factor, held back the population and economic development of this country. Today, all the nation’s capital cities face problems with water supply and, in some cases, water quality. Restrictions on the use of water are now standard across all Australian capital cities. Our greatest river system, the Murray-Darling, struggles to reach the ocean. Irrigation farmers along its length in areas such as the Riverina are in absolute despair. There is little prospect of the Murray-Darling being the river system that it used to be. The prognosis, as members will be aware, is not good. Australia faces an even drier climate if the forecasted climate change is correct. Western Australia is the largest and driest state in the driest continent. Our massive land area, which is larger than Europe, is largely unproductive and unpopulated—if only we could add water. In the southern part of the state, where almost all of us live—three-quarters of the population live in Perth alone—the forecast is for a further 20 per cent drop in rainfall by 2030 and a horrific forecast of a 60 per cent drop by 2070. If those forecasts prove to be anywhere near correct, the impact on Western Australia will be absolutely devastating. The signs are already quite ominous. Rainfall levels are already well down since the mid-1960s. Many areas and water resources are now saline. Our major dams have not passed the half-full level for the past five years. In the middle of last year, storage levels in dams around Perth were just 20 per cent of their capacity. I can remember my late mother being absolutely horrified in the 1960s when it was announced that bore water would be included as part of Perth’s water system. I do not know what she was fearful of but I know she was horrified. Today 60 per cent of Perth’s water comes from groundwater sources. I believe the use of the term “water crisis”, which Premier Gallop used frequently, is an exaggeration and I said so at the time. I do not think we have a crisis, but we certainly have a very serious problem. There is a multiplicity of solutions, and desalination, recycling, water conservation, higher prices and water trading can all play a part in making better use of what water is available. However, sooner rather than later we will face the fundamental question of where the next big water resource or supply will come from. We had a smaller version of that debate recently about the use of the south west Yarragadee aquifer. For this government the solution now appears to be desalination. There are lots of things that we can or should do and they could all extend the time before we may face a crisis, but eventually we will run out of options. Eventually we will get to the stage of deciding where the next big water supply will come from.

We are not alone. The American author Mark Twain is attributed with the famous saying, “Whiskey is for drinkin’, water is for fightin’.” I do not know whether there has ever been a war over water. Some people suggest that one of the earlier Israeli-Arab conflicts was over a water dispute. It is significant that in recent years both the United Nations and the World Bank have warned that the most likely wars between countries and regions in this century will be over access to potable water. The statistics are potentially alarming. By 2025—not that very far away—it is estimated that three billion people will live in areas with a severe water shortage. Given that the world population is likely to double this century and that as people become wealthier their water consumption goes up, the planet will run into a water problem. Therefore, the problem is not only to do with reduced rainfall. In many parts of the world, major water supplies are contaminated and their use is therefore limited.

We face a dilemma. In fact, the more we concentrate population in Perth, and the more that Perth draws water from surrounding areas, the more inevitable it is that people will live only in Perth. It actually becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. That adds to our problem; we have a water shortage and the most concentrated population is in the southern corner of the state and, essentially, in Perth. When we look at our dams, the situation becomes even bleaker. Thirty years ago, our dams supplied 90 per cent of Perth’s fresh water; today they supply about 25 per cent. The dams are very quickly becoming a secondary or even a tertiary source of water. The Gngangara water mound, which now supplies 60 per cent of our drinking water, has in a number of studies recently been described as drying out; the water level of the mound is falling.

The Labor government under Dr Gallop declared with great fanfare that seawater desalination was our salvation. I remember that he pointed to the Indian Ocean and said, “There you go—no crisis. We’ve got all the water out there; we’re fine.” That was the salvation. The first desalination plant cost \$387 million to produce 45 gigalitres

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

of water a year. Despite some teething problems, the plant works. Desalination works. How reliable the plants prove to be, given that they use saline and hypersaline water, remains to be seen. My point is that the second desalination plant now proposed for Binningup will cost \$640 million for only another 45 gegalitres. That is a very substantial increase in costs for desalinated water in a very short period. As I said, desalination works and it has a place. To me, desalination is a back-up, a reserve, something to avoid the water crisis ever happening. However, desalination is highly energy intensive. I know this government tried to pretend that was not an issue by talking about building renewable energy and the like, but that is like a dog chasing its tail. Desalination needs baseload power generation, and baseload power generation for Western Australia means principally the burning of coal and, secondarily, the burning of natural gas. The government cannot run a desalination plant with renewable energy. The government can have various offsets and the like, but that will mean that the additional renewable energy going into our grid will be essentially used up or any net gain in renewable energy will be swamped by desalination plants run on fossil fuel—we will not make any net gain. It is spin and it is misleading the public to detract from the reality that desalination is highly energy intensive. The cost of building and operating this new desalination plant and the water produced from it has gone up by 64 per cent in only three years. Therefore, the second plant is 64 per cent more expensive than the first plant, and that has occurred in three years.

Given that desalination is energy intensive, we are now tying our water supply to the availability and cost of energy; in other words, either directly or indirectly to the price of world oil. That is a precarious financial position, if not a water security position, for this state to get itself into. We could very easily find ourselves dependent on desalinated water for perhaps 30 or 40 per cent and maybe even closer to 50 per cent of our water supply within a decade. That would put Western Australia in a precarious financial and water security position. I know some people say that water issues really are not to do with households as households use only 18 per cent of water, while farming and mining use most of the water across the state. However, in Perth, where most people live, 70 per cent of Water Corporation water is used by households. Therefore, we have an issue right here in Perth.

Given the geography and size of Western Australia, it is, of course, hardly surprising that people would look across an arid state with the population concentrated in the south and recognise that there is a massive water resource in the Kimberley. The idea is not new; various people have talked about it for decades. However, if one person deserves credit for promoting the Kimberley water supply, it is Hon Ernie Bridge. I have acknowledged that at every single moment throughout the water debate of recent years. There have been, of course, various attempts to use the water of the Kimberley. Irrigation farming at Camballin on the Fitzroy River was tried during the 1950s and 1960s and eventually the river washed the whole project away. There was better success on the Ord River Dam at Lake Argyle. I think probably every member has seen Lake Argyle—it is spectacular and massive. I have not done it, but apparently one can see a horizon on either side from a rowboat in the middle of the lake. Lake Argyle is 18 times bigger than Sydney Harbour; it is an extraordinary resource of fresh, clean, renewable water. I remember speaking, perhaps a decade ago, to an irrigation farmer, a guy called Spike Desert—some members probably know him. I think he is either American or Canadian. He commented to me one night over a glass or two of red wine that he had been involved in irrigation farming around the world. He said that there is nowhere else where irrigation farmers have water of this volume and quality. Nowhere; it is unique. Therefore, we have this great, massive water resource in the Kimberley. I worked, as others did, to try to expand the Ord River scheme and, I guess, finally its day may have come. It has been a long, tortuous process. One success I had as a minister was the establishment of the Ord River hydro power scheme, a by-product of which was the raising of the dam wall. Raising the wall of the dam actually doubled the volume of water just like that. This is a massive, massive resource. As I said, Ernie Bridge is the person who promoted the concept of bringing water from the Kimberley to the south of the state and to areas in between. One of the ironies of politics is that when Ernie was water resources minister, he commissioned a study into doing exactly that. Labor lost power in 1993 and I, as a new minister, was the person who received the report. I dismissed the idea, not out of hand, but the report itself dismissed the idea of bringing water from the Kimberley. I am sure that Ernie Bridge was not too pleased about that; in fact, he told me so at the time. However, that was in 1993 and a fair bit has changed since then: climate change—the drying effect has become more pronounced; the demise of the Murray-Darling; and problems in the Asia-Pacific region, with China, India and other places all now facing water supply issues. I had a rethink on the water from the Kimberley issue and it was sparked by hearing Ernie interviewed on the radio. It was probably around mid-2004. He was asked a question about water from the Kimberley and he made the comment that since he had left politics, no-one in the government had spoken to him or asked him at all about it. In fact he said no political leader in the state had ever spoken to him or raised the issue again.

That started me thinking. I thought that was strange. As it would happen, I got a knock on the door from Paul Salteri, the head of the company Tenix, who came to see me to talk about the concept of bringing water south

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

from the Kimberley. I had dealt with Tenix as a minister. It is a major engineering company in Australia. It builds battleships, power stations, transmission lines etc. It built and owns the tunnel under Sydney Harbour. This is not a silly, trivial company. It is probably Australia's leading engineering group; a highly technical and sophisticated company.

Tenix had been involved in looking at a proposal for cotton farming in the area. One issue it needed to investigate was how to collect water in the Kimberley and move it to an area perhaps 80 to 90 kilometres to the south of Broome. It did all sorts of studies that an engineering company would do. It came to the conclusion that the way to move the water was not by pipelines, but by building a canal, like a channel or a ditch. That was the cheapest way of moving the water in large volumes. Paul Salteri became personally interested in the issue. Even though the cotton project did not proceed, he continued, through Tenix, to do a lot of work on whether or not this was just a pipedream—pun not intended—or a fanciful notion. Was there something that could be done?

He had approached Dr Gallop, who refused to see him; he would not talk about it. In desperation, he came to see me as the Leader of the Opposition and said, "We have worked on this for 12 months. We have done all the desktop studies, we have surveyed the site, done all the analyses and there are pages of reports. I believe it works." I take someone like Paul Salteri and a company like Tenix seriously when a company of that sophistication brings a proposal to me.

Admittedly, we were going into an election campaign. I did back the canal, and maybe it is a bit over the top in the context of an election campaign. Interestingly enough—and I accept the sort of ridicule one gets from opponents in a campaign—the media ridiculed it. The observation I would make is that young journalists could not get their minds around the concept at all. They could not even get their minds around the concept of economic development. It was the longer-standing journalists, people like Paul Murray and those of his vintage, who had some understanding of the burst and bust nature of the Western Australia economy and of the imperative that we actually should do something to develop the north of the state and the areas in between, who could see beyond simply water coming out of a tap. They could see the bigger picture. I seek leave for an extension.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr C.J. BARNETT:** That was an observation. The media continued to ridicule the idea until an opinion poll was conducted and over half the voters supported the idea, if not of a canal, of doing something with the Kimberley water and bringing it south.

The east coast journalists ridiculed the whole idea. Why would they not? Because they basically ridicule anything that Western Australia does. John Howard, as Prime Minister, sat on the fence. He observed the public interest and dashed back a year or so later and talked about a \$10 billion scheme for the Murray-Darling, but got it wrong. There was no recognition. Why? Perhaps this is a bit paranoid or conspiratorial, but let me say that if we in Western Australia are to deal with a project like that—it will not be me—it would be the greatest engineering project since the Snowy Mountains scheme. It would be nation-building. We would not get support from Canberra or the east coast. Why? Because it would be a Western Australian project. It would be our project and it would establish this state for this century. I know it sounds whacky, but the most criticism I got—interestingly, I still get criticism—was for the use of the word "canal". Maybe that is a marketing mistake. Maybe some people thought of Suez or Panama or the Moscow-Volga Canal; I do not know. Maybe some people thought of the ancient Egyptian canals and the Roman canals; I do not know. What is relevant is the modern era of great water projects.

We have got one—of course, C.Y. O'Connor's pipeline in the early part of the previous century—to Kalgoorlie. Today that is still the longest freshwater pipeline in the world. It is still operating and it is still the number one achievement of this state.

There have been other great projects. We do not hear much about them or talk about them, maybe because of the parts of the world they are in. I will give members a taste of them. There are projects in North Africa and the Middle East. In Iraq the Sweet Water Canal supplies water to the city of Basra. In Egypt the Sheikh Zayed Canal is being built at present. It will essentially create a second Nile Valley; a massive project for the huge population of Egypt. Libya—a small country, rich in oil—has the Great Man-Made River Project, some 4 000 kilometres of massive pipelines literally beneath the Sahara Desert. In South Africa the Lesotho Highlands project is bringing water through canals, pipelines and tunnels through mountains from Lesotho into South Africa to the Transvaal valley. It is vital for the economy of that country. Closer to home is China. We hear a lot about China today. China is in the process of building three massive canals, each of them 1 200 kilometres long, to take water from the relatively wet southern part of China to the dry north. The first of those canals will deliver water to Beijing in 2010 and the rest will follow, costing about \$US50 billion. The Indians are facing a hugely uncertain future



Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

given glacial retreat and changes in the ice cap of the Himalayas. They face a potentially devastating impact. They are currently looking at and probably will proceed with a project that will involve some 300 reservoirs across India and 12 000 kilometres of canals to control the river and the water of the Himalayas across the arid subcontinent of India.

I make the point that if some relatively small countries that are still developing can foresee into this century the importance of potable water and can use engineering solutions to develop major new water supplies, why are we so pathetic? Australia has not done a decent water project since the Snowy Mountains scheme. We have not done anything of world scale, yet around us China, India, North Africa, the Middle East, South Africa, the Americas and other countries are building massive water projects.

Los Angeles has been getting water for more than 80 years from canals in the Hoover Dam system. The whole Napa Valley is irrigation farming. Los Angeles, where the Hollywood sign is—for members who may never have been there—is desert; coyotes can be found there. We at least have a hinterland, a relatively moist area; California does not, yet California has built itself on water; moving water.

At the time of the last election I did not, and even today I do not, support all aspects of the Tenix proposal. Tenix had a particular project to bring water from the Kimberley to Perth. Why? Because Perth has the market; it has got an ability to pay for it. I will stick to the use of the word “canal” and, although people do have visions of huge structures, it would not be that big. The Tenix canal proposed was nine metres wide and about two to three metres deep; about the size of a road. It was not a complex project; not a concrete canal. It was a lined canal with a membrane such as the Egyptians have built already. It involved simple civil engineering, nothing complicated and nothing that difficult.

We have a great advantage: not only do we have the water supply in the Kimberley, we have a flat state. Water will flow. People say, “How is it going to get there? It will not flow. It will evaporate.” Hang on; has anyone heard of the Nile River? Rivers flow. They are natural phenomena. Water is heavy and will spread and will flow. It is not a contaminant, it is not dangerous. If a bit leaks out or seeps into the ground, it does not matter. We will lose some water through evaporation.

In Western Australia, under the Tenix proposal, there are large areas where water would flow under its own gravity or weight for up to 800 kilometres without any pumping. We have a capacity to move water in large volumes over long distances. People will say, “Who pays for it?” It would be expensive, and I will come back to the costing issue.

There are two markets for water—one is Perth—and I would much rather we took a medium to long-term decision to start to use some of the Kimberley water rather than be in the scenario of every two to three years building another \$1 billion or \$2 billion-a-throw desalination plant that provides water for Perth but does nothing at all for the development of the state, let alone the hinterland of Perth. We will be all right in Perth, but the rest of the state will just dry out. The other big market is the expansion of the mining industry in the Pilbara and some of the projects being proposed now. For example, the magnetite iron ore mineralogy project is looking at spending \$1 billion on desalination. It needs clean water to wash down the iron ore. Salt cannot be mixed in with iron ore for export. We will potentially see massive desalination projects, using massive amounts of greenhouse energy and using up the gas resource that could be used in other, better ways within the state, because we do not have the ability to think big and bring water south. Had I succeeded in the election, it is what we would have set about doing. We would have set up an initial stage of damming, not the Fitzroy River but probably a tributary—probably the Margaret River—and developing water in the west Kimberley and bringing the water, I presume by canal but that would have to be tested by engineers, into the Pilbara. Ultimately, and it might be 20 years away, a pipeline connection might come down further south, but to develop the water resource of the west Kimberley into the Pilbara would do more for developing this state than any other thing. People will not live in the harsh environment of the Pilbara if we do not create for them a green and attractive environment. Look at the cities of western America such as Las Vegas. They have green, lush environments. People will not live in a harsh environment. We must soften the harshness of the Pilbara and make it attractive. There is a market. The mining industry would have no choice but to pay substantially for water, which it will have to pay for one way or another to get.

The costing factor always becomes an issue. I do not think that the Chinese or the Indians are worrying about it; they are doing it, because it is not just about water but about their very survival as nations in this century. The stakes are higher than simply water and its price. Tenix costed its canal proposal at about \$2 billion. After the election—I am not putting words in its mouth—it probably recognised that it would be in the range of \$4 billion to \$5 billion. That is about where it sits now. It is not a difficult engineering project. It is essentially using earthmoving equipment to create a trench, correctly contoured and lined to minimise loss, and maybe even

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

covering it to minimise evaporation in parts. It is not difficult; there is nothing sophisticated about it. Canals have been around the world for hundreds of years. Let us say it costs \$5 billion, which is a big number. People will ask how we could warrant spending \$5 billion. It will be marketable into Perth and into the Kimberley and Pilbara, particularly into the mining industry. Let us put this into context. If we asked the people of Western Australia whether we were capable of building an all-weather road from Perth to Darwin, everyone would say that of course we could do it because we have one now. Do members know how much it costs to build a road? It is at least \$1 million a kilometre and probably more for a road of that standard. To build an all-weather road, with all its engineering, river crossings and other bits and pieces, from Perth to Darwin would cost today at least \$5 billion, and the engineering complexity is about the same. That is what I am talking about. To build a canal project of that scale is about the same in engineering complexity and cost as building a road from one place to another. I am not saying that we should do it overnight. Tenix talked about three years, but we do not have a crisis and we do not need that time frame. However, I hope that this state has the vision and the capacity to think long term and do something with it.

In my concluding comment I want to add this, without being over the top: we heard some bigger picture thinking last night, so I want to pose this question as I leave this place. In a world that is bursting at the seams with people, natural disasters, a shortage of potable water, emerging economies and all sorts of political, racial and ethnic tensions, and because Asia Pacific is our trading partner and Asia Pacific's problems are also our problems, do members really think that we can sit here through this century on 2.5 million square kilometres of land, leave it empty and keep it? Do members really think that will happen? I put to them that it will not. I am not talking about invasion, although it is possible because in living memory we have faced invasion, so it is not ridiculous. I am not suggesting that, but members may well see international bodies deem that dislocated people will be relocated in Western Australia in their hundreds of thousands, if not millions. Do not forget that in the 1930s, and again in the 1940s, it was a serious option that the Kimberley be made the State of Israel. It was looked at twice; in fact, the state government of the day agreed to proceed with it but the Prime Minister overruled it. It nearly happened. Do not believe that members can sit in this Parliament in the future and talk about the minutiae of the trivial political issues when they have a responsibility into the future, if I may say so, to ensure that this state is controlled by the people who currently live here. We will welcome people, but if we sit back and ignore the north, I predict—probably in my lifetime—we will lose effective control of the northern part of Western Australia; that is, the Pilbara, the Kimberley and probably even the Gascoyne. We will not sit here with two million people and hold an area of land the size of Europe in the Asia Pacific region with the problems it faces. The one project that could make this state secure into the future is water and, I happen to think, a canal. If it is a pipeline, I do not really mind. However, I urge this Parliament to think seriously about the big picture of water resources for this state. It is the greatest constraint on the economic development and the population of Western Australia. Whacky as it may sound, it matters.

**MR J.B. D'ORAZIO (Ballajura)** [3.47 pm]: Had I made this speech a month ago, I might have been a little more vicious towards the government than I will be today, but I will still be fairly caustic. When we look at the budget, although it may be good in general terms for the state, I still query why the government would have a \$1.8 billion surplus going into an election year and basically give the opposition a free kick. I think that is for others to decide. I am concerned about how this budget affects my electorate. I decided to look at the nice little handout we get to see what is happening in our electorates. I went through page after page after page, and for the fourth year in a row I could not find anything for the seat of Ballajura. Then I thought to go back and have a close look because there might be something of significance for Ballajura. Guess what? I found \$86 000 to install an overflow storage facility at the Green Park sewerage plant in Ballajura. I knew I was in trouble with the Premier —

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** It is to keep you out of it.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** I did not know he was going to pump the stuff away.

**Mr B.J. Grylls:** They are building it next to your house.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** That is not it; Green Park is in Ballajura. However, there was \$86 000 for a sewage pumping station, which is an absolute joke considering that there are some major ongoing issues in my electorate. I am really disappointed that they have not been addressed. For example, there is the extension of Hepburn Avenue, which has been a bugbear for a number of years now. The road was originally funded by a local government regional group, but because there was an environmental problem, which we wanted to resolve before we constructed the whole road, while that happened the project has blown out to something like \$12 million and it is not funded again. That is a major problem for the people of Ballajura. I hope that it may be funded in some other way during the upcoming process, because the estimates contain no allocation for the

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

construction of the Hepburn Avenue extension. It was the subject of a request for a special grant because the amount of money that needs to come out of the local government pool fund is such that it would take years and years before it even got close, yet it is one of the highest priorities in the metropolitan area. There was also no allocation for the Alexander Drive intersections with Reid Highway and Mirrabooka Avenue with Reid Highway. Mirrabooka Avenue is not in my electorate but the Alexander Drive intersection is, and it is a number one black spot. During the federal election there was talk of \$20 million, but again it is not in the budget.

What has caused me the greatest concern is the fact that we cannot get \$40 000 for the Ballajura youth centre to provide an ongoing service to the youth of Ballajura. I remind the house that not very long ago there was a problem at Ballajura when kids destroyed a wedding reception. The father of the bride had a heart attack and the whole wedding was disrupted by the action of a group of youths. After that event, the community organised the Ballajura youth support unit. The community is now working very hard to find enough money to provide a youth support worker so that it could provide an ongoing service for the youth of Ballajura. This may seem insignificant, but the problem is that if we cannot get recurrent funding, we will not be able to get the funding for a purpose-built facility. That is because one of the conditions that the federal government has placed on its grant for a youth centre in Ballajura is that recurrent funding be provided for the provision of a youth worker. Therefore, it is a chicken and egg situation. A pile of money is available to be spent, but it cannot be spent unless the state commits to provide recurrent funding. That is a problem for the people of Ballajura because the youth of Ballajura do need this support service. It is important that the government provides youth facilities. I notice that in neighbouring areas—in Mirrabooka and Balga, to a lesser extent in Lockridge in the electorate of the member for Bassendean, and in Midland—support is given on an ongoing basis to the various youth support units, yet Ballajura seems to have missed out, as it has in this budget.

Overall, this is a very good budget, and with the budget surplus of \$1.8 billion and the funding allocations that have been made, it will obviously be of some benefit. However, in the seat of Ballajura, and also in the two new seats of Morley and West Swan, only a very small amount of money has been allocated in this budget for the people in those areas. It might help if Ballajura went back to being a marginal seat, because I remember that when it was a marginal seat, about \$12 million was allocated to be spent in my electorate, and we could not find enough projects to be funded, because as soon as anyone said anything about a project, it was funded. The member for Nollamara made the comment this morning that perhaps all seats should be marginal because they would then get more funding. We may be able to work with some of the ministers in the next few months and resolve some of these issues that I have highlighted. The community is certainly working very hard. The Ballajura youth workers and the support group were planning to come to Parliament House at lunchtime to protest about the fact that they have not been allocated any funding. The community is concerned. Therefore, this is a matter that the government needs to look at.

I want to recognise Steffan Silcox, the principal of Ballajura Community College, for the effort he has put in at that school. Since he has taken over as principal he has managed to turn the school from a good school to a fantastic school. The school has achieved a 100 per cent graduation rate for the past three years. The credit for that must go to not only the principal, but also the staff and the students of the school and the community that supports the school. It is a pleasure to go to that school, and to a graduation at that school, and see how happy the students are to graduate, and the high esteem in which they hold the teachers and the principal. Governments need to support these sorts of institutions, because they are making a huge difference. However, they are not given enough recognition, not just in a financial sense but also in a public sense. To Steffan and all his staff, congratulations. I have said this a number of times publicly, but it is a fantastic school, and its reputation within the local community and the state is outstanding. I hope they keep up the good work.

I want to talk now about two issues that I have a strong interest in. The first is the cross-regional railway link in the Perth metropolitan area. I have talked about this link in this place a number of times. I have been proposing this link since 1996, and it is supported by most of the councils along the route at one time or another. The route that I am proposing would run from the northern line, and across the Bayswater line to the Armadale line. It would basically follow Reid Highway from the northern line to where it meets Tonkin Highway. It would then run back through Bayswater, across the river, and past the airport, and it would then join up to the Armadale line. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure made the courageous decision not long ago to announce that she has now decided that the link to Perth Airport will be via the Bayswater line. For those who do not know the history of that link, that is a huge change from the original plan. Originally, the link to Perth Airport was to be down the middle of Great Eastern Highway. The alternative was the Kewdale freight line.

**Mr M.W. Trenorden:** Great Eastern Highway is hugely wide!

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** Yes! It could easily accommodate a rail line!

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

In the years that I was on the Western Australian Planning Commission I always made the point that the only logical option was the Bayswater link to the airport. I am glad the minister has announced that link, because that will basically make a cross-regional link a reality. The current rail system in Perth is all based on the wheel-and-spoke concept. Everything is Perth-centric. People coming from Mandurah need to go through Perth, people coming from Joondalup need to go through Perth, people coming from Midland need to go through Perth, and people coming from Armadale need to go through Perth. What is missing is a cross-regional link that will pick up the various transport lines across the metropolitan area. Long term, there is also a possibility of linking the Armadale line to the Mandurah line. However, that is not part of the proposal that I have been sponsoring. I have written to all the councils, and they have responded. Some are supporting this proposal, some are objecting, and some have not responded because they do not want to upset the government. Whatever the councils' opinions are, and whatever the government in power, this link will become a reality at some point. What worries me is that if we do not do the planning now, we will make some bad decisions. The minister is talking about building a crossover at the intersections of Alexander Drive and Reid Highway, and Mirrabooka Avenue and Reid Highway. These are \$20 million projects —

**Mr R.C. Kucera:** They are actually \$28 million projects.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** If the government does not allow for rail when those projects are built, it will find that when it does want to build the rail, it will need to undo some of the engineering work that is being done now, so we need the planning done now. That cross-regional link will make it possible to build a ring structure with rail. It will make it possible for areas such as Ballajura, Noranda, Dianella and Morley to link to a rail transport system very easily. It will make it possible to link Joondalup to the airport. It will also make it possible to link the industrial areas where people work to the areas where they live, so that people will not need to travel through Perth. It is a simple concept. If we do the planning now, that link will not be expensive. I am not saying it will be built in the next few years. However, if we do the planning now, we will not have a problem later. The link from the Bayswater line, going up Tonkin Highway to where it meets Reid Highway, and up Reid Highway to Ellenbrook, is already in the metropolitan region scheme. The minister has now proposed the link go across the river to the airport. All that is missing is the bit from where Reid Highway and Tonkin Highway meet the northern line, and the bit from the airport to the Armadale line. Those are the only two bits of my total proposal that have not been agreed to.

**Mr R.C. Kucera:** Is the land available to allow that to happen?

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** Yes. Where the Bayswater line crosses Tonkin Highway, there is a large area of land that will allow for an interchange to the airport, which is what the minister has said is going to happen. I am also talking about the interchange to the left, which is where the Ellenbrook line will go from, which is already in the MRS. All we need to do is continue the MRS that goes to Ellenbrook to join up to the northern line, using the Tonkin-Reid alignment.

**Mr R.C. Kucera** interjected.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** I am talking about the Tonkin Highway median strip and the Reid Highway median strip. The land is there. No land resumption would be required. It would be simple to do. It is simply a matter of putting the planning in place and getting the funds to make it happen. It may not happen in my lifetime. However, it will happen. The problem is, as I have said, that if we do not do the planning now, we will create a problem in the future.

While I am on the subject of major projects, I am reminded of the comments of the member for Cottesloe. People get very excited when they think about a major iconic-type project that may cost up to \$800 million. This is one of those projects. People in my electorate are very excited about this project. They keep asking me: when is this rail line going to happen, and how can we influence the process? It is important that we politicians keep talking about this so that it comes to fruition at some point in the cycle.

The satisfaction surveys that have been carried out by Path Transit Pty Ltd, the group that provides bus services, have shown that the level of satisfaction with public transport in the eastern corridor that I have been representing for a number of years has progressively worsened. The dissatisfaction rate was 60 per cent; it is now up to 85 per cent. People are saying that the service is not as good as it was because it is very difficult to get public transport from Ballajura, for example, into the city and those industrial areas in Malaga and elsewhere. It is very difficult for the young people in that area. They have different expectations. They do not all have cars. Therefore, when we make these transport decisions, we should understand that public transport is something we should all aspire to. Rail always excites most people.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

I want to move to the other issue that is very dear to my heart. I was disappointed with the budget in relation to this issue. Four years ago I stood in this place and said that this government should introduce a shared equity housing scheme. When I first became a minister I was asked what portfolio I wanted. I said to Dr Gallop that I wanted the housing portfolio so I could implement a shared equity housing scheme. The scheme I envisaged was a 50-50 shared equity housing scheme. I congratulate the Minister for Housing and Works for introducing the 60-40 shared equity housing scheme. It is a great innovation and something that this government should be very proud of. It has made a helluva difference to a lot of families. I have spoken to some of them and they are ecstatic because they would never have been able to buy a house without the shared equity housing scheme.

The biggest issue in my electorate is rental accommodation. People are screaming out that it is a real problem. The rent for a basic four-bedroom house is about \$400 a week. It is really difficult for someone on a low income to afford that. How can they survive? That is the biggest issue that we as politicians should be addressing. The government has some initiatives in this budget but I do not think they will go far enough.

**Mr M.W. Trenorden:** We can help them. We can put up the price of water, we can put up the price of power and we can put up —

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** This is a really serious issue. We should get above politics and see what we can do. When I talked about the shared equity scheme, a lot of people said that it would never happen. It has been implemented and it is a great idea.

Today I want to float another idea. Why do we not have a shared equity scheme for rentals? People ask me what that means.

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** Exactly.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** I will explain it to members. In the same way that we have a shared equity housing scheme whereby the state owns a portion of the land and the other part is privately owned, we should get the superannuation funds involved because they want to invest huge dollars in our community. If we do it on a shared-equity basis with the state, whereby the state provides the serviced lots and the super funds provide the funds for the construction of houses, we could actually set up a deal as tenants in common whereby the super funds would own their portion of the allocation and the state would own its portion.

**Mr M.W. Trenorden:** You'll have to go guarantor.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** A guarantor would not be needed because the super funds would own the title.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** I will use as an example a block of land that is worth \$200 000. The construction costs for a basic four-bedroom, two-bathroom house are about \$150 000.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** It's a bit more than that now.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** We can still get a four-by-two house for less than that. I am only using rough figures; they can fluctuate. Under that scenario, Homeswest or the state would own 57 per cent and the super funds would own 43 per cent. Again, they would be tenants in common so either party could sell its share independently of the other. On day one a rental return for the super fund would be worked out based on a five per cent rental return. The rental return would be CPI indexed. Assuming a three per cent CPI increase, at year five the rental return to tax super funds would be six per cent, at year 10 the rental return would be 7.5 per cent, at year 15 the rental return would be nine per cent, and at year 20 the rental return would be 11 per cent. In addition, the super fund would be getting capital growth on the asset. It would get a substantial return. If we assume a five per cent capital increase in the asset, at the end of 20 years the super fund would be receiving something like 13.2 per cent capital growth together with the 11 per cent rental return. That is a total return of approximately 25 per cent. The model stacks up financially. The state would not lose anything because it would still be in a shared equity arrangement in the normal market. The funds could sell their properties and get back their capital if someone wanted to buy them out. Let us look at the rents people would be paying. On a \$150 000 property, the rent would be \$8 500, giving a five per cent return. This includes \$1 000 for property management. With no rent assistance, \$164 a week rent would be charged. On a \$100 000 property, the rent payable would be \$120 a week. If the construction cost was \$200 000, the rent payable would be \$210. That is a helluva lot less than the \$400 a week that renters are currently paying.

We need to work out the legal problems and sort out the protections for the state as well as the super funds. The super funds are looking for long-term returns. This is a fantastic scheme. What better way is there of using the savings of people in super funds to provide some relief to the community? However, we would have to be

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

careful. If too many lots were put on the market, it would overheat the building market and create a problem. I suggest that the government consider 2 000 properties a year. About 12 000 to 15 000 properties are currently being put on the market each year. That would require \$300 million a year investment from super funds, which is a small sum. In 10 years we could wipe out the Homeswest waiting list at no cost to the state but with plenty of benefits. There are some other provisos. We could not use the Homeswest models that are currently being used. We would have to use a hybrid model because the rents would be different. We would also have to look at how it would be managed on an ongoing basis. Homeswest constructions cost more than private enterprise constructions. They are minor problems. This model is a clear way of solving this rental problem now. It would put pressure on rents to come down across the board, helping the whole community.

It is impossible for low-income earners to survive. That is why the Homeswest waiting lists have blown out so much. I have talked to people about this model, including a couple of people involved in superannuation funds, and they are quite happy. That is exactly the sort of investment they want—long term, guaranteed, with minimal risk. We have the opportunity to make a helluva difference. When we talk to people in government, they throw up all the problems under the sun that could occur, but if we get ourselves absolutely committed and think about how we can make this happen, it will make a huge difference to our community.

Regardless of whether I am in this place in the future, I hope someone thinks outside the square. We need to think outside the square about this issue.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** We hope you are here, John.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** I am sure the member for Hillarys does.

Housing is the number one issue. Because the people who have housing problems are not visible and they are not on television all the time, we seem to forget about them. They come into our offices bawling their eyes out. One lady came into my office last week. She has four kids and was living in Noranda. She has been thrown out because she cannot afford the rent. She lives in a car. We got her on the expedited list for Homeswest housing but it will be a year or two before she gets anything. What hope is there for her?

**Ms S.E. Walker:** Where does she live?

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** She is living in a car.

**Ms S.E. Walker:** That is ridiculous.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** It is absolutely ridiculous, but what does one do?

**Ms S.E. Walker:** Ask the Premier.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** We were successful with one family. The family that appeared on TV a couple of weeks ago was one that we were also dealing with; that is, the family that got a house at Kelmscott. The only trouble is that the family got a house at Kelmscott and left my electorate. However, that was all right, as they were looked after and got accommodation, which was the important thing.

There are another two issues I want to highlight. One issue is the stadium. I note that the Minister for Sport and Recreation is in the chamber. I have said to the minister before that \$1.1 billion for a stadium is a lot of money. I think we need to look outside the square when deciding how it will be funded and seek some private money for that stadium. As they do with stadiums in the United States, we should sell some of the seats for a figure. For example, if we charged \$20 000 each and sold 20 000 seats, that would bring in \$400 million. People would have a lifetime tenancy on their seats. They would still have to pay to get into the football or a show but they would own their seats. In the United States people who have access to seats pass their seats down from generation to generation. Selling seats is a way of generating a lot of money. I do not know whether the Perth market would stomach a cost of \$20 000, but even if it were only \$5 000, it would generate \$100 million, which would make a difference to the budget. That is a helluva lot of money that the government could use for some other project. I am sure, for that sort of money, I could find a project in my electorate of Ballajura, especially for the youth service that needs only \$45 000 on an ongoing basis. It is a great decision to build a stadium and, as an Eagles supporter, I know how strong they will be and that they will win the next six premierships—after this year!

Several members interjected.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** As the 70 000 seats planned for the stadium are much needed, it is important that we build the stadium. There is a tendency for government to put up the money for projects such as this, but the government needs to look outside the square for funding.

Another issue that concerned me was the allocation of \$500 million for a new museum. I am not sure that that is the best way to spend \$500 million. I am sure some mining companies would donate moneys for the construction

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

of a museum. We need to look at the planning options for that sort of facility. I am not against museums. Although members would never find me in a museum —

**Ms S.E. Walker:** Only as an archive!

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** If the Premier had his way, that is probably true.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** That is probably only after a visit to the taxidermist!

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** Thanks!

**Ms J.A. Radisich:** Would the Leader of the House want that head on his wall?

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** That is not what the member for Swan Hills told me yesterday!

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** I think the Premier would say yes.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** Thanks!

The museum, as I said, is a large expenditure item and, again, the government needs to look outside the square on funding.

I was going to make a comment in support of my colleague the new Minister for Corrective Services. As a previous justice minister, I want the government to put more money into solving her portfolio problems; however, that is life.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Just confirm that I didn't ask you to say that, member for Ballajura.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** She certainly did not. It is just that I understand her portfolio and when I saw the budget for it I thought it was terrible. However, I am sure she will manage it perfectly and get it to work extremely well.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** I am managing more with less.

**Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO:** Absolutely!

I conclude by saying that it is disappointing that my electorate did not get very much at all in the budget. However, I think we can work on some of those issues I have raised. I implore all members of this place to think outside the square. If we as members of Parliament continue to go on the road that we have been going on, nothing will change. We need to be thinking outside the square, especially to solve issues such as public transport and, more importantly, the rental housing problem that I believe is the number one issue facing this state and will be for a number of years to come.

**MR B.J. GRYLLS (Merredin — Leader of the National Party)** [4.13 pm]: I rise to make my 2008 reply to the budget speech. These are indeed dark times for the Parliament of Western Australia. The standing of this place in the eyes of the community again, I believe, hit rock bottom when yet another member of Parliament decided to air more dirty linen on ABC talkback radio and more unsubstantiated rumours about the Western Australian Parliament made worldwide news. The Corruption and Crime Commission revelations, with many more to come, were just the start of a long process that has taken the reputation of Western Australian politicians towards an abyss. I have risen to speak today, not to claim any moral high ground for my National Party colleagues or for myself, but, rather, to spell out the seriousness of this institution's current predicament.

The chair-sniffing fiasco has made us a joke, not only in Western Australia but also around the world. The allegations of shirt lifting against our Premier have added to the scornful way in which we are being viewed. These are not unknown backbenchers I am talking about, but the leader of the government and the Leader of the Opposition—the most senior MPs in the Western Australian Parliament. Talkback radio is now awash with calls that demean us all, not just those involved—all of us. In the corridors of this place the current mood is venomous. We cannot walk around the Parliament without feeling the heat of the exchanges of the past couple of weeks. The internal power play within the Labor Party is distracting not only the Premier but also his ministers from carrying out their duty to the people of Western Australia. The internal power play within the Liberal Party has rendered it an ineffective and scorned opposition. Members of the Western Australian Parliament are going out of their way, maliciously, to bring down the Premier, government ministers, the Leader of the Opposition and their own party members. We must not allow the Parliament of Western Australia to fall into disrepute. It is time to clear the air. When I talk to Western Australians, they say that they have had enough of this rubbish. It is as embarrassing for them as it is for us as members of Parliament. The ability to perform our role as members of Parliament has been rendered hopeless by these circumstances.

I have consulted with my parliamentary colleagues and the Nationals organisation, and we believe this situation must be brought to an end, and quickly. I intend over the next few days to write directly to the Premier urging him to call a snap election at the earliest date possible—July, if it can be done. A snap election would not be a

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

cynical exercise but, rather, would allow the people of Western Australia to carry out a job review on their members of Parliament. It would allow the people of Western Australia to clear the air of the current malaise in which we find ourselves in this Parliament. We need to put an end to this dysfunction and start with a clean slate. I believe that an election is the only way to achieve this. If members of Parliament are supportive of the institution of the Western Australian Parliament, they will support my call for this early election.

I do not put forward these views lightly. However, as a member of Parliament moving around Western Australia, I am absolutely shocked at the conversations I engage in on a daily basis. They are not about state building, not about solving the rental crisis and not about solving the challenges that have been put on the table of this Parliament by members of this chamber. The conversations I have and I am sure all other members have when they are in the community of Western Australia are about these scandals, the viciousness, the vitriol, the attacks and the internal bickering between political parties. We are members of the Parliament of Western Australia. We have a very important role to perform for the state, and it is not being performed. It is time to clear the air, and I believe that an election is the only way to do that. My National colleagues and I will urge the Premier to make the decision to clear the air now. I cannot see that going early to an election would advantage anybody in this situation. No member is outside this problem; no politician is spared. It is time to clear the air. I urge the Premier to call an election. I urge members of Parliament to support this call so that we can get on with the job after the election. Whoever is elected can get on with the job of governing Western Australia in the best interests of Western Australia, rather than seeing the state's reputation dragged through the dirt day in, day out by members of this Parliament who cannot keep their dirty linen to themselves but must roll it out again and again.

**Dr G.G. Jacobs** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, member for Roe!

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** The budget is about outlining a vision for the future of this state. The chaos that has occurred in this Parliament from the events that have emerged in the past few weeks indicates that there is no alternative vision for Western Australia. The Labor Party and the Liberal Party have very similar policies, just as we saw in the last federal election, and it is almost impossible to see a difference between the two political parties. Both major political parties support Fiona Stanley Hospital, the new sports stadium, Perth Arena, the Perth foreshore redevelopment and the new Museum. This locks in the state's expenditure for the foreseeable future, with the budget surplus predicted to plummet to just \$200 million in 2011.

To put forward an alternative infrastructure plan for Western Australia, it would be necessary to oppose one or more of the announced projects. The Nationals have an alternative plan for state infrastructure, and it would be funded by deferring the Perth Museum project and supporting the redevelopment of Subiaco Oval rather than the currently proposed greenfield development. This would free up more than \$1 billion over the budget out years and allow us to implement our policy called royalties for regions. This is a plan to quarantine 25 per cent of mining and petroleum royalties in Western Australia in a regional infrastructure fund. This regional infrastructure fund of 25 per cent of the royalties, in 2008-09 budgeted royalties, would amount to \$675 million in the budget period for investment in specific regional projects. This \$675 million would be over and above the existing budgeted projects. Everything that the government has announced in the last budget would be accommodated, apart from the Perth Museum and the greenfield development of Subiaco Oval. We would still build a hospital in Port Hedland, upgrade the school at Mt Barker, build a new transmission line from Pinjar to Geraldton and build a new school at Karratha. This is everything the current government has committed to, plus, in 2009-10, a \$675 million regional investment fund for Western Australia. Those members of Parliament who have not had the opportunity to travel the length and breadth of regional Western Australia are encouraged to do so before they support an infrastructure plan that, on Treasury predictions, locks in the state's finances until the end of the boom. Once that infrastructure plan is locked in, there is no tomorrow; there is no "we'll come back to that later"; there is no development of the Kimberley, the Pilbara, the Gascoyne, the goldfields or the south west. That is because the money is locked in until the predicted end of this current strong economic cycle. The only time to really invest in regional Western Australia is over the out years of this budget, while the economy remains strong, so that all Western Australians can take advantage of the strong economic times.

The project that I think should be number one on the list for Western Australia is the expansion of the Ord River irrigation district in the Kimberley. The Ord River needs a \$200 million injection over four years to extend the M2 supply channel, expand the port of Wyndham, and upgrade Weaber Plain Road, the Ord scheme boundary roads and bridges, Victoria Highway, the Kununurra-Wyndham road and the Kununurra airport. Before this last budget, in this Parliament I challenged members in the Labor Party caucus to put the issue of the expansion of the Ord on the agenda for the budget deliberations, because I know that the members representing the regions alone do not have the numbers to win that debate in the caucus. Metropolitan members need to highlight that the



Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

expansion of the Ord is a project of state significance that they wish to support. However, once again, that project has missed out on any level of state-building state government funding.

I turn now to an issue that is very hot at the moment—the funding of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The notion that the Royal Flying Doctor Service, in making its business case to the government, expected to be ignored in the budget only for negotiations to be reinstated after the budget process is an absolute joke. The government had no intention of continuing negotiations with the RFDS. Instead, in the media debate straight after the budget the Minister for Health noted that \$2 million had been allocated to be shared between the RFDS, the patient assisted transport scheme and St John Ambulance Association. That was the extent of the budget allocation, and that is why the minister went to the extent of saying that not all interest groups can be accommodated, the government cannot make everybody happy with the budget process and unfortunately some people have to miss out. The someone who had to miss out this time was the RFDS. Only pressure from the Royal Flying Doctor Service and members of Parliament on both sides of politics, I hope, has been able to put the issue back on the political agenda to allow negotiations to continue today. Once again, the RFDS is asking for a budget allocation outside the budget papers because the money has not been allocated in that process. It is a very disappointing outcome for the Minister for Health to take on the RFDS. The only way possible to cause more offence would be to disparage Mother Teresa. The RFDS is an absolutely critical icon of regional Western Australia and Australia, and the government would be well served if it recognised the call for adequate funding so that the RFDS can perform its task. The minister has said publicly many times that the claim for \$68 million over five years is an ambit claim by the RFDS. I hope the minister understands that what he calls an ambit claim was prepared by his department. The WA Country Health Service, as well as the RFDS, commissioned outside expertise to put forward the business case to the Minister for Health for a five-year budget allocation for the RFDS. It was signed off by both the RFDS and the Country Health Service, which reports directly to the Minister for Health. For the minister to say that it is an ambit claim, when his own department commissioned the report to find out the extent of the need for the RFDS, causes concern on this side of the chamber and to regional members that the RFDS will not be adequately funded in the future.

The other thing that our royalties for regions fund should be used to support is a comprehensive housing plan for regional Western Australia. Metropolitan members think there is a rental crisis in the metropolitan area; I do not know too many people in the metropolitan area, other than in some of the more salubrious suburbs, who are paying \$2 000 a week for rent. That is what is occurring in the Pilbara, and increasingly in the Kimberley, as the mining expansion really takes hold. That is where there is a real rental crisis. The regions are experiencing high demand caused by the expansion of the mining sector. We need to act quickly, for not only the mining sector but also the many disadvantaged families who find themselves without access to public housing. At the moment a debate is underway about expanding the housing program but, with more than 1 000 families in the Kimberley alone seeking state government supported housing, it can be seen that we are a long way from rectifying that problem. Many Western Australians are living in car bodies and on the streets; living from day to day without any access to a home. In times of a \$2 billion budget surplus and a \$25 billion capital works program, it is very disappointing that Western Australians are sleeping in cars and on the streets. It is occurring now. I believe, and I have stated in Parliament, that the style of housing that has been supported for so long is too expensive and takes too long to build. Innovative kit home proposals under which houses can be built twice as quickly for half the price is the only way we can even make a dent in the housing crisis in regional Western Australia. By freeing up money in the state budget through deferring the Museum and redeveloping Subiaco Oval rather than building a new stadium, we can free up funding for 2 000 new homes in regional Western Australia, following the kit-style policy. Those homes will very quickly alleviate the shortage. However, this is not something to be done as a 10-year plan when people are living on the streets and in their cars. It needs to be a two-year plan, or a one-year plan—an emergency plan. Western Australians are suffering to that degree. While we build sport stadiums, museums, Perth Arena and the foreshore development, people are living in cars.

To attract and retain a workforce in regional Western Australia, we need a seismic shift in attitude and incentives for teachers, nurses and police—essential workers in regional Western Australia. What hope have we got of building sustainable communities in the regions when those essential workers who provide the day-to-day services for our communities simply do not exist? The Minister for Education and Training has offered teachers what he believes to be an attractive package; however, they have not accepted it because it will not work. It does not provide people with an incentive to get back into teaching. As a result, many classes in regional Western Australia will go without teachers. In some of the major communities in my electorate, students study English, mathematics and social studies via Schools of Distance and Isolated Education because there are no teachers. Some communities in my region have become School of the Air communities despite having a population of 1 000 people simply because teachers are not available. The Nationals believe that the government must introduce a new incentive program to attract essential workers to regional Western Australia. It should phase out

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

housing costs for essential workers commensurate with the time they are employed in regional areas. This would include a discount on Government Regional Officers' Housing rental costs, which would reduce costs by 50 per cent after the first year of service and a further 25 per cent after the second year of service. After teachers, nurses, police and other essential workers have completed three or more years of continual service in regional areas, there would be no costs associated with their GROH rental accommodation. That is a real incentive for teachers to move to and perform important tasks in regional Western Australia.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** I will announce another policy that the government should take a lot of notice of as we move into the budget out years. Yesterday during question time I asked the Treasurer about BHP Billiton's bid to take over Rio Tinto. I have received high-level taxation advice that state government stamp duty is payable on the takeover of Rio Tinto by BHP Billiton on the Western Australian asset base of the Rio Tinto company. I cannot substantiate that advice, which is why I asked the Treasurer about it yesterday. I did not receive an answer. I have been told that the stamp duty payable on that deal, should it proceed, would amount to hundreds of millions of dollars. It has been put to me that it could even be higher than \$1 billion.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** A corporate merger does not attract stamp duty.

**Mr B.J. GRYLLS:** I have taken taxation advice. I am happy to have this argument further down the track. If stamp duty is payable on the Rio Tinto-BHP Billiton transaction, it would provide us with a unique opportunity to right some of the social and infrastructure wrongs in Western Australia. I put to this Parliament that should stamp duty be payable on that transaction, that money should be placed in a future fund for the north west of Western Australia. That money should be quarantined so that it is used for the north west, not Geraldton, Albany, the goldfields, the wheatbelt or the great southern. The north west should be the beneficiary of that future fund so that the government can address the chronic shortage of services and facilities in that part of the state. If that merger goes ahead, an asset will be transferred to the north west. If stamp duty is payable, that money could go into a north west future fund that in perpetuity would grow an ongoing revenue stream to right the social and infrastructure wrongs that are occurring in the Kimberley, the Pilbara and the north west region of Western Australia. Anyone who has had the opportunity to travel to Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Derby or Wyndham knows that people in those areas have fewer services than do people in my electorate of Merredin. Compared with the north west of Western Australia, the wheatbelt is relatively well serviced. Tom Price has a population of 5 000 and yet Tom Price District Hospital offers fewer services than does Corrigin District Hospital. People in Tom Price who want to access outside medical care must take a four-hour road trip to Port Hedland. That is a much different situation from that which exists for people in my electorate who live closer to the metropolitan area. If stamp duty is payable on that deal, the government will be given a unique opportunity to set up a fund to help the north west of Western Australia. Other members, including the member for Cottesloe, have referred to the great opportunities of expanding that part of the world. I agree with them wholeheartedly. The north west of Western Australia remains a frontier. Members should turn their minds to developing the north west of Western Australia and coming up with a funding model that allows that to happen. Short of a future fund-type arrangement like this from a one-off windfall for the state, I do not see how this Parliament, with its concentration of metropolitan members, will ever come up with a policy that offers half-decent facilities and infrastructure in regional Western Australia.

That is my contribution to the budget debate this year. I started off by expressing concern for the institution that is the Western Australian Parliament. I do not resile from that. I struggle to see how the Western Australian Parliament can govern the state of Western Australia while controversy and scandal engulfs both sides of Parliament.

**MR M.P. WHITELY (Bassendean — Parliamentary Secretary)** [4.37 pm]: I will make a brief contribution, but not because of anything that was said by the member for Perth, although I think he is uniquely qualified to talk about long-winded pomposity!

The budget is a very good budget for my electorate, particularly in the area of education. It has put paid to the myth that safe seats get nothing. I am rapt with the contribution of \$9 million out of a total \$13 million that has been allocated to undertake a complete rebuild of Lockridge Primary School. When we were at a caucus retreat in Mandurah, the Minister for Education and Training and the Treasurer heeded my call when I highlighted my concern that Lockridge Primary School is in an appalling state and that it needs to be rebuilt. After visiting the school, the minister and the Treasurer determined that a rebuild was a priority and that the current building was not good enough. They acted with extreme haste and allocated \$13 million for a complete rebuild of the school. The school is fortunate in the sense that it is on a large site. A new school building can be constructed with minimal interruption to students as they can continue to be taught in the existing building, which will be

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

demolished after the new building has been constructed. The planning is proceeding with great haste. It is my understanding that students will use the new school building on the first day of the 2010 school year.

I told the Minister for Education and Training that Lockridge Primary School was the worst school I had seen during my time as the member for Bassendean and Roleystone. However, I changed that assessment when late last year I visited Governor Stirling Senior High School. I am absolutely rapt that the minister has taken appropriate action by providing \$400 000 to improve Governor Stirling Senior High School's facilities, which happened over the Christmas break. That facelift made the school a more pleasant environment for the kids and teachers. In this year's budget, the government has allocated \$63 million in the out years—\$2 million this year—for a complete rebuild of Governor Stirling Senior High School on its current site. Well done, Minister for Education and Training! I thank him for heeding the call. Governor Stirling is not in my electorate, but it services students in my electorate. Students who live near the train line in Bassendean, Ashfield and Eden Hill have the option of taking a train a couple of extra stops to Governor Stirling. I congratulate the Minister for Education and Training for his work in that regard. I have communicated that to the numbers of parents who live in my electorate who have approached me and voiced their desire to rebuild Governor Stirling Senior High School. These parents are overjoyed at the prospect of their children going to a first-class government school with state-of-the-art facilities. I understand it is the most expensive government school ever to be built in the metropolitan area.

I will also talk about a couple of issues outlined in the budget. On page 706 of the *Budget Statements* under the "Network City" subheading, reference is made to both the Bassendean town centre strategy feasibility study and the Ashfield precinct plan. They are very high priorities of the Maylands to Guildford transit oriented design study that is jointly chaired by the member for Maylands and me. This highlights the fact that planning has started for these very important projects. The Ashfield precinct plan has had \$150 000 specifically put aside for it. In the next month, work will be undertaken on an overview of Ashfield to formulate a plan to build on Ashfield's potential. Ashfield is about nine kilometres from the central business district, is on a rail line and has the river as one boundary. It is a beautiful part of the world that is far from reaching its potential. It is run-down and there have been some antisocial and criminal behaviour problems in the area that residents have brought to my attention and are keen to have addressed. I congratulate the work of the Kiara police, Homeswest and some other agencies for dealing with some of those problems. The \$150 000 that has been allocated for the future planning for the Ashfield precinct will go towards vastly changing Ashfield and helping it reach its potential in the long run.

I will briefly talk about a community mental health service item that appears in the *Budget Statements* under "Major Initiatives For 2008-09" on page 591, which states —

- Development of new services for clients with Attention and Hyperactivity Related Disorders will commence.

It is my understanding, although I will seek clarification from the Minister for Health in the estimates hearings, that approximately \$9 million has been put aside over the next four years for the establishment of two clinics. It is also my understanding that it is likely that the first of those two clinics will be located in the member for Joondalup's electorate. The clinics have been described as providing new services for clients with attention and hyperactivity related disorders, but I believe that is something of a misnomer. The clinics are designed to help diagnose the true causes for kids who have behavioural and attention difficulties, so I think these clinics will actually lead to a decline in the number of children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Therefore, in a sense, they are anti-ADHD clinics. I know it is semantics but it is an important point because these services are necessary to ensure that kids' needs will be fully addressed, rather than sticking them with a simplistic label. The member for Peel made a grievance to the Premier, I believe, that the second of these clinics should be located in Rockingham. Both the Rockingham and Joondalup health service districts have very high rates of ADHD medication prescriptions. From memory, I think they are number one and two in the metropolitan area, although I stand to be corrected. Strategically locating this service at either end of Perth is a great start in addressing this issue. I will seek clarification from the Minister for Health during the estimates committee hearing, but I believe these clinics will employ 28 full-time equivalent psychologists, psychiatrists, community health nurses, paediatricians, social workers, occupational therapists and the like. I believe also that each clinic will have 14 full-time equivalent staff, although I may be wrong. However, this will ensure that these badly needed services are provided, although there will still be an issue of unmet need. I have been working to encourage the new federal government and the new federal Minister for Health and Ageing, Nicola Roxon, even when she was the opposition health spokesperson, to jointly fund these services not only in Western Australia, but also across Australia. These two clinics will go only halfway to addressing the level of unmet need in this area. Nevertheless, the provision of these two clinics is a fantastic first step and we are the first state in Australia

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

to do this. The federal government needs to get on board and support us in that endeavour. By providing these services, which involve a significant investment in the short term, the government will realise a significant cost saving through subsidising fewer amphetamine prescriptions on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. This is a fantastic initiative that I support wholeheartedly.

I will not take any more time except to congratulate the Treasurer for the job he has done. The member for Ballajura made a comment about why the Treasurer would run such a large budget surplus in the lead-up to an election and said that it gives the opposition an opportunity to have a free kick. The Treasurer has been economically responsible rather than politically opportunistic with this budget. Budgets should be structured with a view to the economic circumstances of the state, not the political circumstances of the government. The state Treasurer, the world's greatest Treasurer, is, like me, a fiscal conservative. Perhaps it is my accounting training, but I think the Treasurer looks like an accountant. I am a trained accountant and I congratulate the Treasurer on this great budget and its seven predecessors.

**MS S.E. WALKER (Nedlands)** [4.47 pm]: I would like to comment on three issues in my electorate. First of all, I will make a general comment that I agree with some of the comments made by members, particularly the member for Merredin, about some of the items promoted by the government that I support, such as Subiaco Oval, the Western Australian Museum, and the Swan River redevelopment provided it gets all the proper environmental approvals. However, we see a lot of glamour, glitz and excitement, and I am concerned that basic services are still suffering. Having said that, I think it must be very hard for the government to cope with the increase in population in a mining boom. To try to provide some of the basic services, such as airport taxis, has been a nightmare. I congratulate the government on the increase in mental health services. I think that is extremely important and it is something that I have campaigned on for quite a while.

The first issue I would like to raise is that I hope the government can provide about \$250 000 to the Regal Theatre in Subiaco for wheelchair accessible toilets. I received a letter in January from a lady who lives in Cottesloe. I think this letter was sent to quite a few members of Parliament; however, the Regal Theatre is in the Nedlands electorate. This lady's letter states —

On attending a performance recently at the Regal Theatre in Subiaco, I was dismayed and dumbfounded to find out that there are no wheelchair accessible toilets in this significant, publicly-owned venue. Instead of being able to use toilets in the Regal Theatre, I and my carer had to attempt, at relatively short notice, to locate a wheelchair accessible toilet in a public venue in as close proximity to the theatre as possible.

She goes on to say that the manager of the theatre —

. . . has been attempting for some considerable time . . . to gain support and funding to make provision for wheelchair accessible toilets in the theatre, but has been unsuccessful.

Can someone with responsibility for resolving this issue and making the necessary modifications to ensure that the venue complies with the relevant legal requirements please respond to my email/letter as soon as possible? Otherwise, I will have no alternative but to lodge a complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

I hope this matter can be resolved expeditiously without protracted bureaucratic red tape.

I wrote to the Minister for Disability Services and I asked whether she could help this lady. She wrote back and said —

The Regal Theatre is privately operated and it is the responsibility of the operator - the Baker Trust to meet obligations under the Disability Discrimination Act. The Disability Services Commission (DSC) has advised the Baker Theatre Trust of its obligations . . .

The Minister for Disability Services says that the Regal Theatre is a privately operated venue. However, it is actually a publicly owned venue, as I understand it. I took time out to have a meeting with Mr John Thornton, who operates the Regal Theatre through his company Interstar, and I asked Mr Thornton what was going on with the provision of these toilets. The Baker Theatre Trust is a non-profit public trust that owns the Regal Theatre on behalf of all Western Australians and it feels that it must correct the record. Mr Thornton says that the minister has a tired and old response that the trust has been hearing for years and that it is quite ludicrous. It is ludicrous. The Perth Theatre Trust owns His Majesty's Theatre and the Perth Concert Hall—I think Ogden is the operator and has the lease to provide the management of those facilities. If the government is providing upgrades for

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

those publicly owned buildings, why does it not provide the upgrade for wheelchair-accessible toilets at the Regal Theatre, which is a publicly owned venue and a state icon?

This government is putting in place a new Subiaco Oval. It has upgraded the railways and built the Dalglish turn-back siding to accommodate the expected increase in people coming into Subiaco. If the government expects that increase, it obviously also expects, as does the council, people to use the facilities in the area. It must expect that people who are disabled and who go to the theatre should be able to use proper facilities. I can see a few members on the other side of the house nodding their heads because the Regal Theatre is owned by the public; it is a heritage-listed Art Deco building. It is estimated that it will cost approximately \$200 000 to \$250 000 to install wheelchair-accessible toilets. I am advised that although the public owns the Regal Theatre in perpetuity, Interstar's lease expires in 14 years with an option for only another 10 years.

The fourth paragraph of the minister's letter says that the Department of Culture and the Arts' grant program does not fund facilities owned by private and public companies or individuals—the Regal Theatre is none of those things. The minister says that the Perth Theatre Trust cannot fund building improvements to facilities not under its control and management. The Baker Theatre Trust does not expect the Perth Theatre Trust to fund the improvements, but it does expect the government to contribute to this not-for-profit organisation. The theatre is an Art Deco building which costs a lot of money and which cannot be altered without specific approval from the Heritage Council. I am hoping that the stand-off between the government and the theatre will stop. I am hoping that the minister can get over whatever it is that is preventing her from assisting the disabled people in Western Australia who want to access this facility, and provide that facility for not just my constituents, but also all people who use the Regal Theatre. I think it is the most successful theatre in Western Australia.

The other two issues I want to speak about that are looming large in the electorate relate to the government's Network City policy, which is a policy of the Labor Party that was formally adopted in 2005. It purports to address the need for more transit-oriented development, housing and sustainability. I think it was quite relevant, after having listened to the member for Merredin and the member for Ballajura—other members may have also spoken about it—speak about the state of homelessness in Western Australia. If members of Parliament know these people who are homeless, they should bring them and their children into the Speaker's gallery. Let us see these people; let us meet them and hear the reality of the situation in Western Australia. I am not saying that it is not true; I am saying that it is true, and members should bring those people to Parliament so that Parliament can hear what the government is not doing and what this side of the house is not doing to make the government change its tack on some policies and do something about homelessness. It really concerns me that there is not a balance. Late last year I raised the fact that, in the stinking heat, a man in a wheelchair had to wait four hours for a taxi outside my electorate office. He waited in the sun so that he would not miss the taxi. Other issues, such as the Attorney General not providing the funding to crack down on the backlog in the courts, are not directly attributable to the boom. However, when the government has the money at hand, it can do something and I think something ought to be done.

I will discuss Network City and how it has impacted on my electorate. I refer to the "Dalkeith Redevelopment (Precinct No.18) Concept Guidelines", which was released in December 2007 by the City of Nedlands council. It was not a draft; it was just a concept. Two or three interest groups actively promoted it in local newspapers through advertisements and letters. Frankly, it scared the living daylights out of locals in Dalkeith. The 56-page document was developed by a project team that consisted of two administration officers from the City of Nedlands, a Department for Planning and Infrastructure representative and Koltasz Smith, architects, urban designers and planners. A copy of that concept was given to the Western Australian Planning Commission, and the commission also sits on the Network City committee. This was all done against the background of the Nedlands council having received a letter from the Department for Planning and Infrastructure to say that it had to amend its town planning scheme.

The point is this: the matter has not been handled well. The plan was pushed through at the expense of my community. It is quite clear from part of the document of the Nedlands council that the Dalkeith redevelopment project had to go through several steps. One of those steps was the concept for the project. The concept was incredibly offensive to people in the immediate area because it was so out of character with the area. I am not saying that Waratah Avenue, Dalkeith does not need something done to it, because I have thought for 35 years at least that it has been a bit of a white elephant. It was quite cruel of the council to drop this on the community when it did not need to. Having scared the living daylights out of residents, the Nedlands council intends to get the residents to work hard to put in submissions and then redraft the concept into guidelines. The guidelines are to be drafted and moved forward as an amendment to town planning scheme 2, and the Dalkeith plan will then be moved across to town planning scheme 3, which one of the documents I have says is 80 to 90 per cent finalised. How this will change any plan under town planning scheme 2 is not known. I have not seen this raised

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

as yet. I will refer to the council minutes of 28 November 2006, which deal with town planning scheme 3, into which the eventual concept draft guidelines will be transferred. It was endorsed by Nedlands council on 22 March 2004 for the purposes of advertising, and it already contains a number of increases in residential density, mixed use and mixed business uses for Stirling Highway, Dalkeith Village, Hampden Road and Broadway. The council already has the ability to approve developments, ad hoc if it likes, for that area. The recommendations that arise from a housing diversity study will be for additional increases in development areas and to not replace those already proposed in scheme 3. The minutes go on to state that it is understood that in those areas where design guidelines have been developed and implemented and scheme amendments already initiated or finalised, development will continue to take place. That was on 22 March 2004.

On 4 May 2006 the city received a letter from the chairman of the Western Australian Planning Commission that discussed the recommended approach by which to finalise town planning scheme 3. I want to read into the record these four paragraphs because it refers to why the City of Nedlands—in Nedlands as opposed to other areas of the City of Nedlands—is moving forward with these different development areas. According to the minutes, it says four things —

- *“Intensification of activity along Stirling Highway and other corridors, such as Hampden Road will offer opportunities for new civic and commercial activities and for housing choice and affordability, while potentially reducing travel demand and supporting improved public transport.*

I support that because older people, particularly baby boomers who are getting older, want to live near the village and are looking for smaller housing. The community must provide for that in the next decade. Of course, the community cannot do that at the expense of not taking into account the residential amenity, as the government has done with the QEII Medical Centre planning process. The second point reads —

- *We would expect the Council to seek ways of managing these activity corridors which allow transitions in land use and land configuration.*

The concept is an enormous plan of ridiculous proportions, which has scared the community. The letter continues —

*This will require block by block solutions, with significant incentives for amalgamation and comprehensive redevelopment, in the form of opportunities for new users and high densities.*

- *Innovative responses are required to manage the expanding activity centres (including UWA and QEII), both to manage their impacts and to respond to the needs of those involved, whether staff, students, patient’s families etc.*

It has to be remembered the concept for this very quiet little hollow included a tavern. All of a sudden these businesses were being proposed, and that has worried people, as has the height and the number of buildings. The letter continues —

- *In places considered most appropriate by the Council, residential and mixed redevelopment will be required, in response to the above issues and to offer the local community options or different housing types to suit households which are smaller, less well off and/or at different life stages.”*

When this was released late last year I had calls to my office. I also met with the chairman of one of the two or three interest groups, which was People Against Dalkeith Density. I went to the council and had a briefing. I went to the public meeting and asked for a show of hands on whether people wanted the concept stopped completely, and they did. To do that they would have had to get the council to rescind a motion to include the Dalkeith redevelopment under the town planning scheme. They would have had to get the council to stop in its tracks in one of these steps along the way. It would have to have been the meeting at which it was going to initiate draft guidelines and refer it to the Environmental Protection Authority, because that would trigger a statutory process, and the community would never be able to get the council or anyone else to retrieve that document.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Ms S.E. WALKER:** This document, this ridiculous concept, is sitting in the office of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. The council unanimously supported it, sent it out to the community and refused to rescind it. It will trigger the mechanism by which the amended guidelines will go off and the community will have no say. It will probably follow the process that was followed when the Hollywood Senior High School site was redeveloped. Then the community tried to come to a compromise for four years. Then, when the Labor government came in, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure knocked that on the head and increased the density. I am concerned for the community in Dalkeith that that is what may happen to the draft guidelines.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

I congratulate the PADD group, which has raised money from the community and probably scared people a little more because of its advertisements in the newspaper. I have its mission statement in front of me. PADD did not support knocking the plan on its head. It wanted to amend the plan, and that is what it is doing now with the council. I would have preferred, and I think members at the meeting would have preferred, to have knocked it on its head, but it will go down the track as it is going. All I am concerned about is that the community is not being manipulated in any way. I am just sorry that it has been handled in the way it has. I really cannot understand it.

In another section of the electorate a similar thing is happening at the China Green site in Subiaco with the Network City policy. To put it briefly, in 2004 Subiaco council handed over or maybe sold the site. I do not know because I have not seen the contract, and neither has anybody else because it is secret. If people read the Subiaco council minutes, they can glean from some of the things that were said that the council does have, although we cannot read the document and the residents cannot read it, the ability to take legal action against the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority in certain circumstances. In that case, the council perhaps could have taken legal action about three years ago when the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority first stepped out of line on what it was supposed to honour under the contract. When the site was handed over, the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority was supposed to come up with a plan that reflected the principles of the Network City policy. I also commend the China Green group, some of whom I know. I have decided to be gracious in my speech today. I have looked at some questions asked by Hon Simon O'Brien of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure about concerns that I have and questions that I think should be asked. For instance, if we look at the minutes, when the council knew that the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority was not honouring the contract, why did it not take any legal action or pursue anything then? If we look at the history through the council minutes, we can see that time and again the council has hit the development authority with a wet lettuce. It has simply written to the authority instead of asking itself what legal action it can take. The residents who have started the action group are now looking at a class action, but it is all a bit late. In 2007 the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority asked the council to initiate an amendment to the scheme and to adopt a proposal to increase the density of R60, which was in the February 2004 plan, to an average density of R120, with R120 for mixed-use development and R175 for group multiple dwellings.

I cannot find my copy of the minutes at the moment, but my point is that the council did not agree with the plan, and it discussed why it did not agree with the plan, and how terrible it was, yet it agreed to initiate the scheme amendment, which in my view is the trigger for the plan to go into the statutory process. I am sure the China Green Action Group would tell me if I am wrong. I am sure also that the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority would tell me if I am wrong. I have not spoken to the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority about this matter. However, I have looked at some of the responses from the minister as to why the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority has changed the plan. In answer to question without notice 359, asked in the Legislative Council on 10 April 2008 by Hon Simon O'Brien of the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, the minister provided an answer that states in part —

- (3) The focus of the SRA is still clearly on the mixed use transit-oriented development close to public transport. The current plan for China Green sets higher standards of environmentally sustainable development . . .

There is no doubt that the SRA is trying to do that, and I accept that—unless there is something that I have not read. The answer goes on to say —

The current plan is better aligned with Network City . . .

The old plan is now five years old and did not take into account WA's present and ongoing strong economic and population growth. The new plan reflects the high population growth predictions for Perth over the next decade and the resulting housing affordability and housing diversity issues facing Perth.

There is no doubt that that is an issue. Many people are finding that their children are having to move interstate to buy a property in which to live because they cannot afford to buy a property in Western Australia. The answer continues —

Between 2006 and 2031 the number of lone person households in Perth's inner city is expected to increase by 44 per cent. This is the largest increase of all household types in Perth's inner city. This is equivalent to 50 per cent of total growth in private occupied dwellings over that period. There is also recognition of the increased demand for office space in Perth and the areas around the city close to public transport.

- (4) The February 2004 concept plan indicated 105 dwellings and about 20 000 square metres of commercial floor space within generally three to four-storey buildings. The China Green plan

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

indicates up to 330 dwellings and up to 55 000 square metres of commercial office mixed use  
floor space . . .

The problem is that it is all very well to propose these plans, but some thought needs to be given to the consequences of these plans for the residential amenity of the people who live in the area. I am not sure whether it is deliberate, but there are a lot of redevelopment issues in my electorate. I totally support the petition that has been promoted by Kevin Wulff, of 4 Jasmine Avenue, Subiaco, and the China Green Action Group. If some Liberal members are also running with this issue, that is fine. I just wish they would clobber the minister a bit more on this issue. The minister needs to consider the residential amenity of those people who have bought property in Subiaco, in the expectation that the China Green development would be on a par with the other developments in that area. These people are concerned that the development on that site will cause increased traffic in that area. No thought has been given to how that increased traffic will be handled. A classic example of that is the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre site, and the public meeting that was called by Nedlands City Council at Hollywood Bowling Club. The Minister for Health has said that someone had put to him five good points for why that site should be redeveloped, and he thought two of those points were very good! Is that running the health portfolio properly? The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has said that this plan sounds like a good idea, because it will provide affordable housing and lone person housing. Is that running the planning and infrastructure portfolio properly? One of the problems with the proposed development on this site is that it will increase the amount of traffic in the area. In the past couple of years, because of the boom, the traffic on the roads in Perth has noticeably increased. In a small confined suburb like Subiaco, Hollywood or Dalkeith, more thought needs to be given to this issue. Why does this government think that it needs to come out with these plans that are so over the top and that scare people? Everyone seems to be busy these days. However, many of these busy people, and many elderly people who live in Dalkeith, are finding that they are having to spend a lot of their time dealing with and trying to do something about these redevelopment issues.

A 558-signature petition, mostly from people who live in Subiaco, has been presented to the Legislative Council. The petition states in part —

Your petitioners therefore respectfully request the Legislative Council —

I am requesting the Legislative Assembly —

to note our opposition to the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority's December 2007 plan for the site in its current form and to support our expectation that the State Government and related agencies and the Subiaco City Council act upon the views of Subiaco residents in particular. We respectfully request the Legislative Council to call upon the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure to reject the Subiaco Redevelopment Authority December 2007 plan for the site.

I am pleased the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has come into the chamber. I am sure the minister will not dump this plan on Western Australian citizens. I think she will accommodate their concerns. I think the minister will look after them. I say that because even though the minister has a chip on her shoulder about the western suburbs, she is a reasonable woman, and she has been a very successful minister, some would say. As I have said, I am glad the minister is in the chamber, because someone should be addressing this matter to the minister. I think the minister will come to the party. The minister knows that these plans are ridiculous and over the top. They are, in fact, stupid. I am sure that when the minister sits down and has a look at these plans, she will accommodate the concerns of my residents in the electorate of Nedlands.

**MS J.A. RADISICH (Swan Hills — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.17 pm]: I rise today to respond to the 2008-09 budget, as have members before me, and, in doing so, to present my last response to a budget in this place. The budget has been criticised by the opposition as being boring. I think that is very unfair. I am sure that if the budget was more exciting in the opposition's interpretation or language, the opposition would characterise it as reckless. Therefore, the government really cannot win no matter what it does. I may be a bit unusual, but I think that a boring budget is a good thing, because it represents a financial instrument that is fiscally responsible—and that is something that a government should always aim to present, so that it can preserve the funds of the taxpayers of Western Australia and invest those funds to provide services and infrastructure for all the people of Western Australia. I think this budget has done that. In the course of my commentary, I will be outlining how that has been achieved for the people of the electorate of Swan Hills.

Before I go into the benefits of this budget for the electorate of Swan Hills, I want to make a couple of opening remarks. As I have said, this is my last budget reply speech. I am not sure whether it will be my last speech ever. There has been a lot of talk about an early election. Although I am not prepared just now to make my valedictory speech, there are a number of things that I want to put on the record for the future. In recent times I have been reflecting a lot on what the electorate expects from all of us as members and what my electorate expects of me.



Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

The most important thing that members of Parliament can do is what they say they will do. Although “Colin’s canal” certainly helped me get re-elected in 2005, I would like to think I got re-elected because I am a fairly straightforward person—certainly that is what my electors say to me, sometimes for the good and sometimes for the bad, as I do not always agree with the propositions my electors put to me—and because I follow up on the things that matter to them, pursue them with vigour and try to get a decent result. During the last two terms of office we have a proud record of delivering to the people in Swan Hills. Labor has changed that electorate. The former Labor member for Swan Hills, Gavan Troy, did a lot of good things and promoted progress in Swan Hills, which had not been achieved for some time. I am not saying that the Liberals did nothing in their eight years, but our record between 2001 and 2008 is rather remarkable. I am proud of what we have been able to deliver.

When people ask me what makes me most proud about being the member for Swan Hills, I say that I am most proud of Ellenbrook Secondary College. I have said that in this place before. We went through a lot of pain to ultimately deliver that project on time and more or less within budget. To go one step further, the government has also made a commitment to build stage 2 of that school, the years 11 and 12 section. I have had a concern for many years about the quality of education infrastructure in the eastern suburbs and the culture and attitude of people in the eastern suburbs about their worth. A lot of that comes through education. I hope what we have done for Ellenbrook, what we have done and are doing for Bullsbrook District High School, what we have done for Eastern Hills Senior High School, Darlington Primary School, Sawyers Valley Primary School and so on has seen and will continue to see an increase in the academic performance and satisfaction of students with their education and an increase in general community participation and activity by students and parents alike who are connected with those schools. Schools in outer metropolitan and country areas are more likely to have the school as the focus of the local community. It is not that that does not happen in inner metropolitan areas, but there are certainly fewer opportunities for extra activities and less social infrastructure in places that I represent compared with some inner city localities. As always, there is more to be done.

I have reflected on the things that we have achieved in this term and what we have left to do. It is quite a scary exercise. Unfortunately, before elections we are forced as MPs to analyse the work that we have done and the achievements we have had over a given three or four-year period and reflect on that level of productivity. When I was preparing for the 2005 election, I was really worried about having to sit down and get out the magnifying glass and the fine toothcomb to assess how I spent my four years between 2001 and 2005. I was not sure what I would come up with. Sometimes we do not appreciate just how much we do. It was really heartening for me to have a list that I could present to the electorate of the things that I cared about and the things that I worked on to make things better in the area that I represented. I will be doing that in the next few months not for the purposes of re-election but to demonstrate to the electorate what I have done, with the government, to deliver outcomes. I hope that my successor continues that work because, as I said, there is definitely more work to be done.

There are things that have not been funded in the budget. As these things tend to unfold, I am hoping they will receive some attention and commitment from the government during the lead-up to the next election, whenever that may be, whether it is in six weeks or six months. These projects need to be pursued for the benefit of people in Swan Hills. They include a commitment to the second stage of Bullsbrook District High School. That school ranges from kindergarten to 12. The upgrade that was opened the other day by the Minister for Education and Training was the K-6 upgrade, which will completely change the nature of teaching and learning in that district. It is essentially the only school between Ellenbrook and probably Gin Gin or Muchea. The member for the area is not present, but he could probably help me out with that. As I mentioned, Sawyers Valley Primary School still needs a new administration block, and Chidlow Primary School needs a new administration block, a sick bay and probably a whole new teaching classroom.

Earlier, the member for Ballajura spoke about the need for the Ellenbrook rail link. He described in more detail than I have time for how that fits in with the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure’s plan to better service people living in the eastern suburbs who travel to and from the city and the airport. We really need to put some effort into developing the Ellenbrook rail link. That whole northern corridor urbanisation project encompassing suburbs such as Ellenbrook, Aveley and Henley Brook will see 60 000 people in that area in the next few years, which will cause a regional centre about the same size as Bunbury to be formed. We are all aware of the significant investments in Bunbury since time began given the marginal nature of that area. Public transport is a big problem in the outer metropolitan area. I wish I could offer a solution but I cannot. All I can offer is a couple of rehashed ideas from 20 years ago that we need to invest in, plan for and get on with. One of those is the rail link to Ellenbrook. There will be so many people living there. Rising petrol costs are already putting families in those areas under pressure, many of whom have arguably over-mortgaged themselves with new house and land packages and so forth. They need to travel to work. Frequently, they are single-car families. It can be quite

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

isolating for people not to have particularly good bus routes or any other means of escape. Having a train line will enable them to access services and activities in other parts of Perth. I really hope that, as a first step, the Ellenbrook rail line feasibility study can be funded and, as a second and fairly urgent step, we can fulfil the plan that is outlined in the metropolitan region scheme and build a decent public transport network to that growing outer urban area.

There is also a problem with buses in my electorate. At the last election I did not offer a solution on public transport for Swan Hills. The Liberals at the last election offered to conduct a survey. I do not need to conduct a survey because I already know the answer. The problem is that bus services throughout my electorate are scant and infrequent, but they are also very poorly used. Arguably they are poorly used because they are scant and infrequent. It is a chicken and egg scenario. Another factor about the bus problem is that if the current allocation for bus services were to apply in Swan Hills today, most bus services would be removed. I understand that a density of 300 houses a square kilometre is required to make a bus route financially viable. Given the large properties in my electorate, the housing density just does not add up. Outlying areas such as Stoneville, Chidlow, Wooroloo and so forth would not have a bus service at all. I therefore give credit to the government for continuing to fund those services which, in the normal application of the rules, we would not have. However, we need to get creative about transporting people for social reasons, for work and so forth; and I do not have an answer to that. Officers from the Shire of Mundaring and I have been trying to work with the Public Transport Authority to be creative. I really must pay tribute to some of the guys at the PTA who just love public transport. It is really nice to work with them because they can tell the make, model and registration number of every single bus in the whole fleet, who the contractor is, how often it breaks down and probably even the tyre pressure—anything anyone could want to know. To have public servants like that who have that sort of passion is an inspiration. I therefore thank them and give them credit for their work. They say to me, “Hey, you get us some more money, we’ll get you some more bus services.” It is not that easy; we all know that. However, if there is anything we can do to more creatively deliver public transport services throughout Swan Hills, I will support that in the time I have remaining.

Of course there are more things that are being delivered in the 2008 budget that are a tremendous boon for my electorate. One of those is funds to finish off Ellen Stirling primary school, which is the newest addition to the primary school collection in my electorate. Unfortunately, the landscaping still has not been finished, which is very frustrating. However, there is a whole trail of bureaucracy in coordinating the Department of Education and Training, the Department of Housing and Works, the contractors, the architects and the project managers, which sometimes gets in the way of delivering good quality and value for money outcomes when we are delivering capital works projects for the public sector. I have seen it happen time and again, particularly with school capital works projects. This coordination really does need to be refined. Having a string of five separate reporting agencies to fix a problem that is often worth less than \$5 000 is administratively incredibly inefficient and not a good use of government funds. Of course, we must have accountability between our agencies on the expenditure of public moneys, but I think this is overkill to the extreme.

Probably the most exciting item in the current budget is the funding for Governor Stirling Senior High School. For me that is a really important project. Although it is outside my electorate, it is not something on which I have focused all my attention in the past few years, given that I have been involved in other things, such as schools in Ellenbrook, Bullsbrook and Eastern Hills. I am really pleased for all those people in the Swan Valley, whose natural high school is Governor Stirling Senior High School, and for everyone around Midland who can soon look forward to a state-of-the art, first-class school in that area. As members might know, I attended Mt Lawley Senior High School, which was built around the same time as Governor Stirling. My parents went to Governor Stirling, and I do not think a whole lot has changed since they were there. It is therefore really time, now that schools such as Mt Lawley Senior High School have been heavily invested in and upgraded, that Governor Stirling Senior High School got its fair share from the budget. I am really glad that the government is in a position to do that.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Ms J.A. RADISICH:** Also of interest to me in the budget is funding for the Roe Highway-Great Eastern Highway interchange. That was one of the very first issues that came to my attention when I was elected in 2001. Although that is now seven and a half years ago, sometimes these things take time. It is really exciting when funding is allocated, construction starts and a project comes to fruition. Although the construction on that particular project has not started yet, I know that a lot of people, particularly those living in the hills, will feel a lot safer going home at night with the building of this interchange.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

Funding in the budget for a safe house for teenage mothers and their children who are escaping domestic violence is another great boon for not only my electorate, but also people around the state. There was an interesting anomaly for teenage mothers who could not access the normal refuge services because they were underage. The fact that this specialised service is being established to fill this interesting area of need is also a credit to the government and the relevant minister.

There are so many things to say and only 12 minutes in which to say them. I do not think I will be able to cover everything, but I have a few further issues to reflect on. In the budget the Treasurer talked about an increase from 125 medical student graduates in 2006 to an expected 278 graduates in 2010. This is a really exciting statistic for me to observe. Obviously, that statistic is due to the establishment of the medical school at the University of Notre Dame Australia, although 278 graduates in 2010 are still not enough. It is incredibly difficult to get general practitioner services in communities in this state outside the central business district, the inner north, the inner south and the inner west. I recall one of the joys of the past eight years was when I met Dr Sam Bada, who is from Nigeria. We had no doctor in Ellenbrook. We had a population at that time of 10 000 and the organisation that had provided medical services decided to pull out for reasons of profit, as it was entitled to do. However, here was a place with between 40 and 60 births of new babies a month, no general practitioner services and poor bus services; therefore, we really needed to address that problem. The best that I could do at the time was to put a 10-word advertisement in a national medical journal, and it was a free ad. To pay for one would have cost \$1 100. That would have been my next step, but it was not my first step. I got a call from Dr Bada, who was then in Queensland. He said to me, "This is a joke, right?" I said, "No. What's funny about it? This is a really serious problem. There are 10 000 people. We really need a doctor." He said, "How could that be? You're only 40 minutes from the CBD. There are 10 000. Why don't you have a doctor?" I said, "Well, this is one of the problems that we face in Perth." A couple of weeks later Sam got on a plane and I took him to dinner in the Swan Valley. The next thing I knew, he had moved his wife and young daughter to Perth, built premises in Ellenbrook and now employs six or eight other GPs.

**Mr A.D. McRae:** It must have been a good restaurant.

**Ms J.A. RADISICH:** It was a good restaurant!

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** And the company!

**Ms J.A. RADISICH:** The company is a bit questionable!

However, Dr Bada now offers a broad range of services; everything from botox to mole scans, to day-to-day GP services and even some alternative therapies as well. He has really put a fine effort in and a significant amount of investment, and the community is reaping rewards from his efforts. I am therefore very glad to have met him and very glad that he responded to my extremely modest advertisement in that particular medical journal.

I have gone slightly off track because I was talking about the number of medical student graduates in Western Australia. There will be a bit of a problem. We have a workforce shortage across the entire state, whether it be doctors, bricklayers, teachers or anybody in between. What are we going to do about health services? Many years ago I had the idea that there should be a kind of degree that was neither a science degree nor a medical degree but something in between. I thought that there were many students studying various biological sciences who had a lot of knowledge about the human body and human health that could be put to much better use. I proposed some sort of a degree that would create a health professional stream to fill the gap between a doctor and nurse. When I mentioned this idea to a few people, they pretty much laughed at me and said, "Good luck taking on the AMA." That is a fair point. I did not really think too much more of it. I have had a fair bit to do in the past eight years, so I figured that others would need to pursue that line if it were to go anywhere. It was some years ago, and we have not necessarily yet moved to solve that problem.

**Mr R.C. Kucera:** What about nurse practitioners?

**Ms J.A. RADISICH:** I guess that is where I am going with my comments. The government's introduction of nurse practitioners a number of years ago and the consequent change in legislation was extremely controversial at the time, but now, since nurse practitioners have been in operation, we can see the benefits being delivered to sick people from having that extra stream of health professionals. However, I think there is still a gap remaining for a multidisciplinary health professional who is something more than a nurse practitioner but less than a doctor. We need to harness the education that allied health students receive. We need to combine research and practice so that we can get more efficient models of health delivery than we have now. We have tried so many things that have delivered some results, such as the general practitioner clinics to alleviate pressure on emergency departments, but we still have not found the answer. I hope that in due course, perhaps based on the nurse practitioner model, we may be able to develop, in cooperation with the Australian Medical Association and other

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

interested parties, some sort of health service provider to fill the gap. Health is the most important thing we have. I guess education follows in second place. We need to put our minds, and probably our money, into seeing what we can do to pursue further alternatives.

There are many more things I am concerned about in my electorate, but I do not have time to go into all of them, so all I can really do is provide a very quick list. There is a lack of reticulated gas services throughout the hills area. There is no legal space for trail bike riders to ride off the road. That is something that they love to do, but we are not providing proper accommodation for them. We need to recognise mountain bike riders, who are not technically part of the cycling community. They engage in a recreational activity, but they fall in this funny place where they cannot actually get support because they do not strictly come under the sport of cycling.

I promised one of my school principals that, if the opportunity arose, I would raise the issue of kindergarten places. There is an interesting situation in which, under the education legislation, students do not have to be catered for in local intake schools for kindergarten and preprimary. This presents a whole range of problems, especially when, as I understand it, waiting lists will not be kept. I have found that some parents have not been sending their kindergarten and preprimary children to school because there was no place at their local intake schools and no funding is available to expand the facilities to take them. The parents do not want to take them many suburbs away at that early stage of their education. It is a statewide issue that can be solved, but it will cost money. It is not the most important issue in the world, but it is important. It is difficult to raise this with a sense of urgency when there are more important issues, such as teacher retention, for example.

When I thought about all the capital works, service delivery, public transport and everything that is important to the people in my electorate, I tried to figure out what was the most important thing to everyone. I came up with something that is not really related to government at all; that is, happiness. If there is anything that we can do as a government to promote happiness in our people, we should do it. We need to do that starting at the primary school level through health education, and whatever the equivalent is in the secondary schools. Preserving our mental health can create a great saving for future taxpayers, but it will also provide for a much happier, engaged, active and positive community. I would like to see money going into not only mental health support but also mental health preventive programs; maybe not preventive in the clinical sense, but more in the way of positive thinking and positive encouragement for our young people. We tell them we want them to go to good schools, get good jobs, earn lots of money, and have good cars, but we forget to tell them that nothing is more important than them being happy. That is a little bit of food for thought that I thought I would leave the chamber with. Sometimes it takes many years for anyone to figure out that that is the most important thing. If we could give some kids a bit of a kick start along the way to that path, that would be better for everyone.

As a final comment, I thank my staff, my family, my friends, members of my electorate and a few strangers for the kindness they have shown me in recent times.

**MR A.P. O'GORMAN (Joondalup)** [5.47 pm]: I realise that it is Thursday evening and that a number of our country members need to get on the road back to their electorates, so I will be as brief as possible. I rise in support of the eighth budget brought down by the Treasurer under the Gallop and Carpenter governments. I congratulate him on his sound financial management throughout those eight years. When we first came into government, the Treasurer told us in his first budget speech that things were pretty grim and that all the things that we had hoped for would probably have to be put on the backburner until we got the state into a better financial shape. I am glad to say that he has managed to do that; he has put the state into great financial shape. We are running huge financial surpluses that go towards delivering infrastructure across the state, making it a much better place to live in.

For my electorate of Joondalup, this year's budget contains the final amounts of money for the extension of Mitchell Freeway from Hodges Drive to Burns Beach Road. On top of that, the City of Joondalup is dualling Burns Beach Road to cater for the extra traffic. Another part of this year's budget is something that has been pushed by the City of Joondalup, the member for Mindarie, Hon Ken Travers and me; that is, the dualling of Connolly Drive from Burns Beach Road to meet the current dual carriageway in the City of Wanneroo. I congratulate and thank the Treasurer for delivering that to us. It is a really important project for us to get up, and it will make life a whole lot easier for people in the northern suburbs; not particularly in my electorate, but certainly in the electorate of the member for Mindarie.

**Mr R.C. Kucera:** It is just as well the member for Mindarie did not resign.

**Mr A.P. O'GORMAN:** That is right.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

We have had some movement on schools in my electorate, particularly in Craigie, which is probably one of my oldest suburbs. It had two fine primary schools. One was Craigie Primary School, on Spinaway Street, the other was Camberwarra Primary School. Over the past year those schools have merged to create Craigie Heights Primary School. Thanks to the Minister for Education and Training, in conjunction with a stack of other ministers, particularly the Treasurer, we managed to fund the bowling over of Craigie Primary School and a \$13 million replacement primary school that will have dental therapy facilities. That is a huge move forward for the suburb of Craigie. The school was closed relatively quietly, unlike the closure of many other primary schools. There was no backlash from the community; in fact, the community welcomed its closure and has worked hard with me to ensure that a new school is built. It is our hope that the school will open late 2009 or, at the very latest, February 2010, which will be in time for the start of the 2010 school year. The community is working towards achieving that goal. The Department of Education and Training and the Department of Housing and Works are working towards that deadline. I thank them for the work that they are doing.

Craigie is an old suburb that has a patient population. In 2004 Craigie High School was closed and the building was bowled over. Since that time the land has sat vacant. We have reached the stage at which we can issue tenders for consultation on a subdivision. LandCorp is handling that matter. There should be subdivisions on that site in the next short while. The government will build a Craigie community purpose facility, as it promised it would at the last election. The government intended to purchase the land from the City of Joondalup. However, the City of Joondalup wanted to sell it at the current market price, which was in excess of \$600 000. Consequently, it looked like the Craigie community purpose facility would not go ahead because there was only \$900 000 in the budget. Thanks to the Minister for Education and Training, we have managed to secure a deal that involves excising some of that land so that the Craigie community purpose facility can be built. Indeed, work on that facility has already started.

Some schools in my electorate have been part of the 100 schools project. The information technology component of that program has seen computers and fibre optic cables installed in schools. Spines have also been installed at schools to deliver information communication technology. The majority of schools in my electorate received computers and infrastructure as part of that program. There was one little glitch in the program, because the extra power points that were required had not been funded. The schools managed to fund those extra power points. Any future projects of that nature should include power point upgrades. Hopefully, the government can reimburse the money that it cost the schools, because funding the power points took a large chunk out of their budgets, particularly the smaller schools, and that has put them behind the eight ball. Nevertheless, it was a great project that will allow information communication technology to be accessed by students at schools.

I have written to the Minister for Education and Training about the maintenance and minor new works contracts for schools. An issue has arisen because the contractor who was awarded the contract is not delivering in the best possible way. Some schools are unhappy with the way it is working and they are asking that there be additional checks and balances.

Somebody said that this is not a sexy budget. That is true, although the government is building 26 new schools and 33 new hospitals. A lot of infrastructure work is taking place underground and it is therefore not seen by the community. I refer to power, water and sewerage infrastructure. The Beenyup Wastewater Treatment Plant is in my electorate. Tens of millions of dollars have been spent on that over the past year to overcome what is known as the Craigie pong. A smell has emanated from the plant for many years. I am sure that the members for Hillarys and Kingsley are aware of it. That issue is ongoing, and the more waste that is pumped through that facility, the greater the risk of it smelling. Thankfully, we are on top of the problem at the moment because measures have been put in place to ameliorate the situation.

I turn to power. A new \$12 million substation will be built in Joondalup. The building of the substation is a bit controversial, because people do not want substations built in their suburb. The City of Joondalup has made its views known. It will be built on a site on Shenton Avenue that is between the freeway and the rail line and is not surrounded by housing. It will be built below the level of the road. The substation is badly needed so that Joondalup can continue to grow as a city. The Lakeside Joondalup Shopping Centre redevelopment is on-stream, and that will require additional power.

The upgrade of the Joondalup Health Campus has taken some time to get off the ground. Although it is a public hospital, it is operated by a private contractor. During the time that the Labor Party has been in government, the private contractor has changed from Mayne Health, to Affinity Health to Ramsay Health. Each time it changed hands, negotiations for the building program suffered a setback. We are only just now reaching the stage at which we can sign off on the contract and move ahead. That hurdle has not stopped the government; it has continued to move ahead. Indeed, \$12 million worth of mental health beds will go into that facility.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

As the member for Bassendean said earlier, an attention deficit hyperactivity disorder clinic will be built in the northern suburbs. It is hoped that the clinic will look after our young people by ensuring that we reduce their dependence on drugs and find alternative ways to diagnose them.

I will briefly talk about the selling of property. Western Australia is currently experiencing a housing shortage. During the recent housing sales boom, sellers were offered an alternative way of selling their property through an organisation called Commfree, which has an office in my electorate and in Kalgoorlie. The gentleman who runs Commfree came to see me and told me that he is finding it increasingly difficult to advertise the properties that he has listed. He provides sellers advice, background information, support and advertising for a set price; however, the vendor, rather than a real estate agent, sells the property. In that way, people do not have to pay real estate agents up to \$15 000 in commission. For those who have to sell their homes, paying that \$15 000 could cause extreme difficulty. The gentleman who runs the organisation informed me that real estate agents have visited some of his clients and bullied them into believing that they could not sell their homes privately. Those people have then engaged a real estate agent to sell their homes. This is an issue for which I do not have an answer. I have raised it with the Minister for Consumer Protection. The Real Estate Institute of WA controls and funds the internet advertising of properties across the state. Other issues exist, but because of the time I will not go into them.

I turn briefly to the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act. As everyone knows there is always a push to deregulate retail trading hours across the state because of the mismatched laws that govern trading hours. Bunnings can sell hardware and certain other products and groceries stores can open as long as they are of a certain size and as long as they employ only a certain number of staff. Some furniture and whitegoods stores can open and some cannot. We must come to terms with that. However, as part of coming to terms with that, we really must look very, very closely at the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act and make it fairer for those small businesses. Many of our shopping centre managers throughout the state still insist on receiving the turnover figures for businesses in their shopping centres. Small business owners have approached me and they cannot understand why they need to hand over their turnover figures to the shopping centres, other than it is a way for the shopping centres to continue to eat into their profits and take more money for rent. It is an issue and we need to resolve commercial tenancies. One way that has been suggested is to have a lease register. My understanding is that people on a number of sides to this argument have agreed to that. From talking to Landbank I understand that, given the infrastructure and the information we have, it would not be too much of an issue to implement a lease register at the moment. I urge that we, as a government, look very closely at commercial tenancies and the concept of a lease register.

I would like to finish on an issue that has been reborn in the past 12 months; that is, prostitution legislation. The last time this government attempted to introduce prostitution legislation, and brought down a green bill, it caused great angst in the City of Joondalup. Indeed, some of the councillors, and I think the mayor at the time, were quite upset that we suggested bringing in prostitution legislation and giving local government the power to decide where brothels may be located. With the recent passage of our prostitution legislation through the upper house—I do not believe it has been proclaimed yet—there will be ways planning rules can be used to deal with brothels in our community. At that time, a number of years ago, I happened to mention to a local councillor—it got a couple of runs in the paper and I had a couple of very angry councillors talk to me about it—that there is a brothel in Joondalup. Everybody said there is no brothel in Joondalup. Even the landlord of the premises wrote to me and said, “If that premises is being used as a brothel I am unaware of it, and I’ll look into it straightaway.” A number of years down the track, our prostitution legislation is about to be proclaimed and the opposition says we are putting more work onto councils because they will have a say in where brothels can be located. The same brothel still operates in Joondalup just off Winton Road. The Joondalup business advertised in *The West Australian* personal column states —

**MISS ELLA BELLA**  
**GORGEOUS LADIES**  
**FULL SERVICE 10AM-LATE**

That advertisement reads as nothing more than a brothel to me. Therefore, if it sounds like a brothel and looks like a brothel, I think it must be a brothel. The government is giving the City of Joondalup an opportunity to take this matter in hand by using planning rules. The City of Joondalup previously told me that it could not close down the brothel because it did not breach planning guidelines. In the prostitution legislation, we have given the city the opportunity to draw up a town planning scheme or guidelines that will reflect whether this business can operate in that area. I am not casting any judgement on whether it should; I am simply saying that we have now given local councils the power to deal with that issue.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

Realising the time, I will end my remarks there to allow time for the Treasurer to give his address in reply. I commend the bill to the house. I think it is great that we have undertaken to do the behind-the-scenes work to continue to build our state.

**MR M.J. COWPER (Murray)** [6.03 pm]: I will make some preliminary comments before I get into my contribution to the budget debate and how it affects the Murray electorate. Before I do so, I might point out that I am using notes in my trusty notepad as opposed to the notes that I had prepared on my laptop computer simply because my laptop computer is, I understand, terminally ill and is not available to me in this place. Last week my computer mysteriously picked up something like 140 viruses. It had an open heart transplant last week and, again this week, I am having difficulty communicating with my staff in my office. I must say while the Speaker is in the chair that I am finding that since the so-called upgrade of our computer systems, the system has not been as friendly as perhaps it could be.

**Mr R.C. Kucera:** It has been disastrous!

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I am being a bit generous, member.

I will talk about my electorate and the issues that affect the people whom I am here to represent; and that is my job. People in this house need to be drawn back to the reasons why we are here and not get caught up in all the rubbish that occurs from time to time.

I will start on a more solemn note and talk about real issues that affect real people. I wish to inform the house about a real person, who has a real family. He is one of my constituents and he was simply doing his job and now his whole life has changed. I refer to a gentleman by the name of Pete Tippett. He is a Department of Environment and Conservation employee. He operated as a member of a fire crew out of Dwellingup, and tragically, a number of weeks ago, he and his crew were cleaning up after a fire and a red gum tree branch fell down and he has sustained severe injuries. His back has been broken in three places. It was one of those freak things where a branch has fallen down behind the cabin. He is now a paraplegic and is currently in Royal Perth Rehabilitation Hospital at Shenton Park. My sympathies go to him and his family. I can reassure him—and I have already spoken to the minister about this—that he is not going to be any worse off than is possible given the set of circumstances and that his family will be taken care of. What is very pleasing to hear is that he wishes to return to work in some capacity, working for the Department of Environment and Conservation. I think that is a very positive attitude. I caught up with Terry Mayo last week and discussed with him issues in relation to this matter. I am very pleased that the family that is the DEC have come to his aid and have got behind him. I also know that the accident has had a significant impact on his fellow workers. Members can appreciate that during the Dwellingup fires these crews worked tirelessly and in circumstances that were beyond the call of duty. I have seen these guys operate during those conditions, in and under the fire, having flames over the top of them, and going at it as they do. Peter has a wife, Monique, and two children. I will hopefully be catching up with them shortly to reassure them that I will be doing my utmost to ensure that they have a quality life to look forward to and will have their husband and father home very soon in a capacity in which he can get on with his life. I am very pleased that the minister and I have had the discussion about the situation. I am very much encouraged by the comments that the minister has made in relation to it.

I now move on to the budget itself. Of course, the budget papers are dumped on us late on a Thursday afternoon and we have to find time to go through them to work out what is in the budget for people in my electorate and also those issues that affect the portfolios I hold dominion over in my capacity as opposition spokesperson. There seems to be a lot of money around this year. However, my calls for infrastructure and resources to be allocated to my electorate appear to be falling on deaf ears once again. I will go through specifically what they are shortly. One has to ask the question: why is it that we have this situation in which the minister comes to this house frequently and tells us that we have unprecedented spending on infrastructure and how wonderful it is, and then, at the end of the day, what are we getting for our dollar?

The Perth-Bunbury Highway, which predominantly is in my electorate—and in the new Murray-Wellington electorate going to the next election—is long overdue. It is something that many people, including me, have been advocating for, for some time. The budget for the Perth-Bunbury Highway started off at about \$300 million. It went to \$340 million and then went to \$460 million. As stated in the budget papers, the cost has now blown out to something in the vicinity of \$720 million. Over the course of a few years the cost of constructing the Perth-Bunbury Highway—a vital piece of infrastructure for the state—has become much more than estimated. I will return to my electorate and tell people that we are getting this much-needed new section of highway, but it will be at some expense. If more money is spent on these sorts of projects, there is less money in the kick to provide schools, hospitals, police, law and order etc. I am concerned by the explosion of the cost of this project. It has not been an increase of just 10 per cent; it has been an increase in excess of 100 per cent. I understand that the

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

cost of fuel has gone up and there are number of factors that affect these costs, but an increase of over 100 per cent in the cost of a project warrants closer inspection. I will be doing that during the estimates hearing; I will be seeking answers as to why the cost of this specific project has blown out of all proportion.

I have been advocating for two new schools in the rapidly growing Murray electorate, as it stands now. Notwithstanding that, not a single new school has been constructed in my electorate for at least seven years, since Riverside Primary School was built. Given that the northern part of Mandurah is the fastest growing area of the City of Mandurah, it is desperately in need of a new school in and around Meadow Springs and Lakelands. The population of that area is growing unbelievably. New streets have been established and the number of people moving into that part of the world is staggering. The schools in the district are all overflowing and have in excess of 600 students—up to about 750 in one of the schools. Riverside Primary School has something in the vicinity of 14 dongas accommodating staff and students. There must be more forward planning, but nothing is mentioned in the forward estimates about these matters.

The other school that I was hoping would be built would alleviate some of the problems experienced in recent years in the transportation of young students between the Barragup-Furnissdale area and Pinjarra. The encroachment of the Perth public transport area has meant that students have to pay a small fee to travel to and from school, despite the fact that traditionally, for the past 50 years, students from this area travelled by bus free of charge to Pinjarra schools. The construction of a new school somewhere in the Ravenswood area would alleviate that problem, and it would also take pressure off a number of other schools in the district. Alas, no school for Ravenswood this year. That is the comment I will be making to residents in that part of the world. Following the redistribution of the electoral boundaries, that part of my electorate will revert to the Mandurah electorate, and perhaps the current member, Hon David Templeman, can assist those people in that part of the world with what I was unable to achieve—not for want of advocacy or effort. Maybe he has the ear of the cabinet and can persuade it to fork out some money for an area that has been neglected for some time.

The hospital and health situation in my electorate is still very dismal, as it is in the new Murray-Wellington electorate. It seems to be a common thread that stretches right through that part of the world and includes Murray District Hospital. It is acknowledged that there will be a new Murray health clinic, which is welcome. It will be a \$5.3 million investment, notwithstanding that, as I have mentioned a number of times in this place, the area in and around Pinjarra is growing fast. The outline development plans will demonstrate that that will be where the greatest growth in the Peel region will occur. There are a number of refineries in the area, and in fact the world's largest alumina refinery is at Pinjarra. There is also the Wagerup expansion just down the road. The jobs that they create will mean that we will need the infrastructure that goes with it. Unfortunately, the planning that goes with these major infrastructure investments does not seem to be met by the government's forward planning on these matters. Yarloop District Hospital has recently closed. It was an old hospital and the government decided that, because of the small number of people living in Yarloop, the cost of replacing the hospital was not warranted. There was a token effort to spend a few dollars on Harvey District Hospital, which is about 20-odd kilometres down the road, but Harvey District Hospital itself will need to have some investment in the near future before it falls into similar disrepair to that of Murray District Hospital.

I turn to sport and recreation. Members will be aware that this has become an increasingly major problem. The issue of Logue Brook Dam has brought to a head many of the ailments that exist not only in the Murray-Wellington electorate, but also right across Western Australia. I heard the member for Swan Hills comment on the fact that there is nowhere in her electorate for motorcycle enthusiasts. The sport of motocross and endurance is not properly catered for. I spoke to the relevant minister recently and I am seeking support from major industry, including Alcoa. I had some very meaningful discussions with Alcoa only today on prospects for a facility in the Murray district that will cater particularly for enthusiasts who ride off-road dirt bikes. There are some 50 000-plus of them in Western Australia as we speak. In excess of 1 000 bikes alone have been sold in the Mandurah area in the past 12 months. It is anticipated that there are in excess of 2 500 trail bike riders in my electorate. It is a major sport, which is growing. We have established a club in the area with 100-plus members and another 100-plus members waiting in the wings to join should we have the ability to acquire somewhere to set up a facility. We are looking to cater for not only motocross, but also recreational riders. There is an executive summary in a draft plan of which the minister is fully aware. It is a very insightful report by the Department of Sport and Recreation, with contributions from Motorcycling Western Australia and a number of others. It gives a clear and precise state of play of the industry.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** I think you are talking about the report by the Department of Sport and Recreation.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I did mention that, yes. It gives some interesting figures. The sport is worth \$150 million per annum to the state's economy. In the eastern states and overseas it is a huge industry. I believe it is a niche



Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

we need to address. We provide swimming pools for swimming clubs and football ovals for football clubs. We could have a facility that would accommodate not only motocross, but also ordinary recreational riders and endurance riders. We need to get them off the roads where they create havoc, particularly in new, expanding urban areas. We need not only the young people involved, but also parents to get responsible parenting back into teaching them the correct way of operating their machines. Many people in the community with disposable incomes are buying cheap motorcycles imported from China that make a lot of noise and do not have proper operating instructions and they are not wearing the proper protective equipment while riding them. I hope that in the next 12 months we will be able to report back that we have achieved something. I understand that there were about eight recreational areas in the metropolitan area eight years ago. Now there are only three, and those areas have diminished in size. There is certainly none south of the river where people can lawfully operate their machines.

Logue Brook Dam was a popular place for people to ride motorbikes. The closure of that dam has polarised a lot of people who used the area for recreational purposes, including waterskiers and people who like to hike, mountain bike, fly fish, wakeboard and kayak. A number of key people and associations have formed a group called WARSTA, or the West Australian Recreation, Sport, Tourism Alliance.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** That group is advocating for a number of very salient points that it believes the government has failed on. I support that group 100 per cent. I am sure that its concerns will be played out in the near future. The government has made a clear decision that it wants the water from the dam. It has weighed up the options, and the minister must have had many sleepless nights worrying about his two competing portfolios of water resources and sport and recreation. I believe he has come down on the wrong side of a balanced view on this matter. In retrospect, it might be good that he has done that, because it has polarised a number of people who will be very vocal in the lead-up to the soon-to-be-announced election.

Another issue that needs addressing is the sports facility plan released by the Mandurah and Murray shires. There were 27 recommendations on facilities, yet none of them has been addressed. The number one recommendation was for a new aquatic centre for the Peel region. That was going to be built in the Murray shire, but nothing has happened on that yet. Hopefully, there will be an announcement leading up to the election that might please the people in my area. An amount of \$1.8 million is being sought for the Pinjarra pool, but that has been knocked on the head. That leads me to conclude that perhaps the Minister for Sport and Recreation has better things planned for the people of my electorate. I would hate to think that they will be totally ignored in the lead-up to the election.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** It is not that there was a lack of interest; it is just that there is a major recreational facility that would have clashed with that. It has been planned, and that is public knowledge.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** However, it has been planned since 2002 but still nothing has materialised. In fact, that report indicates that it might take something like 20 years to materialise. I think the cost of building that facility has been estimated to be \$18 million, and that was five years ago. Given the current economic climate, one can assume that it would cost somewhere in the vicinity of \$40 million or \$50 million now.

I refer to the bypass for Pinjarra. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure put out a challenge to my federal colleague Don Randall that if he could get the federal government to stump up \$10 million, the state government would consider stumping up the other \$10 million to build the Pinjarra bypass. It is a very important ring-road that will include Greenlands Road. It will bypass the main street. I recall that when I was on a committee and I had cause to take my parliamentary colleagues to Pinjarra, we called into the Steam Train Cafe. One of my Labor colleagues remarked to me that it was hard to have a conversation with the large number of trucks travelling through the middle of town. I smiled at him and said that I had not previously noticed. He quickly realised that he had been taken there for a particular purpose. Clearly, the number of trucks travelling through Pinjarra is creating a very hazardous situation. The mother of a friend of mine was knocked down a while back. Thankfully, she sustained only minor injuries. However, there is enormous potential for accidents to happen there, given that it is adjacent to Pinjarra Senior High School.

Another issue is South Yunderup channel. The minister gave about \$100 000 to the Shire of Murray for the dredging of that channel. The costs of that dredging have blown out. We now have the problem of trying to find a contractor who will do that work. The problem is also that if we do not get that work done properly in the first place, and if we do not stump up some money for it, in five years we will be facing the same problem with the re-silting, given the oscillation of the water within the Peel-Harvey estuary. Therefore, we need to find a more permanent solution. I have had a discussion with the minister about this matter. Some progress has been made in recent times with property developers in the area who are interested in some conceptual ideas that have been put

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

forward by members of the community, and perhaps we will also have some success from the corporate sector, because even though that \$100 000 from the minister is received very gratefully, it is nowhere near enough to remedy the problem at South Yunderup.

I turn now to the desalination plant. It is reported in today's paper that the production output of the desal plant in Kwinana has had to be reduced because of the level of hypersaline water in Cockburn Sound.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** That is not true.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** Is the minister saying that report is incorrect?

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** The report said it was due to oxygen levels. That is not related to salinity.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** Sorry; the oxygen levels have dropped. Therefore, the desal plant has had to ease back on production. Is that correct?

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** Yes.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** That being the case, that gives rise to concern, particularly for the people of Binningup, who have been saying ever since the second desal plant was announced nearly 12 months ago —

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** What is the concern? There is no connection between the salt levels and the oxygen.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I am talking about the oxygen levels.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** The oxygen drops to that level naturally, even without a desal plant. It is unrelated.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** However, it gives rise to a concern. Whether that concern is real or perceived, the fact is that the people in that community perceive that there is going to be a problem.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** Well, you can assure them that there is no connection; there is no likelihood of that at Binningup at all.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** The fact remains that we have sought funding from the government so that the local community group can employ an expert in the field to establish the validity of what has been put forward by the Water Corporation in particular.

**Mr R.C. Kucera:** The desal plant has now been in operation for six years, and it is the same system as is proposed for Binningup.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** The situation will obviously become apparent to the people very shortly. It is a matter that needs to be managed. I am not satisfied with the manner in which the Water Corporation, in particular, has been interacting with the community down there. A lot of the questions that they have been asking have not been addressed satisfactorily. The minister can rest assured that the people of Binningup are acutely concerned about the fact that the first and the second stage of desal 2 are going to be imposed on them.

Another issue of concern in my part of the world is the water catchment in Australind. This is another water issue. While the Minister for Water Resources is in the house, I might just as well direct these questions at him! The water for Australind comes from bores in and around Australind. The recharge of those bores comes from a series of wetlands adjacent to Wellesley River, which is part of the Kemerton industrial estate. There is a real concern about the —

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** I am happy to get you a briefing. That is totally untrue. That is not correct.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I will take the minister up on that offer, but I am putting the issue that is concerning the people in this area, who hopefully will become my constituents very shortly. The fact is that there is a major industrial area in Australind. There are some nasties there. I am acutely aware that there are some nasties there, because I was involved, as the officer in charge of Australind Police Station, in conducting some emergency management training on particularly those chemicals that are coming out of the Millennium International Chemicals plant, and also out of Simcoa. Simcoa has now changed its name. I cannot keep pace with what the current name is. I think it is Crystal. There are some nasties in the water there. The people are not against developing Kemerton; they are against industry that will affect their amenity and the quality of their air and water. They have no objection to some sort of industry being put there as long as it is not an industry that will impact on their environment.

Another issue for Australind came about as the result of a change of minister. The former minister—the member for Maylands—did not give approval for the Twin Rivers Estate development on Barnes Avenue in Australind. The Marist Brothers wanted to develop some land there. That decision was overturned by subsequent ministers and the land has now been cleared. A vast hill of remnant and very attractive vegetation has now been

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

decimated; it has been terraced with limestone blocks and a housing development has been built there. The member for Leschenault worked hard on this issue, gathered petitions, and was given an assurance that this would never happen; lo and behold, it has happened. It is a situation that is acutely affecting the people in that area and they are well aware of it.

Another issue I have been aware of for some time is the safety of roads in that part of the world, specifically the intersection of the Australind Bypass with Raymond Road, Brunswick Road and Paris Road. I can recall when the Collie River Bridge was closed and traffic was diverted along Paris Road. I was doing point duty, as I have done on many occasions, trying to get the traffic flow through the intersection because of the lack of planning. If the Collie River Bridge is taken out, access to the Old Coast Road is diminished. We need to advance the access road that will link Treendale with Eaton. It is a piece of infrastructure that needs to be completed, not only to accommodate the people who live in the area but also from an emergency perspective. To get from Australind Police Station to Eaton takes about 15 minutes in the opposite direction.

Mr Speaker, perhaps I am interrupting members as they engage in their own conversations across the floor. I am sorry if I am in any way annoying them or interrupting their comments.

The desalination plant will also have an impact on access to the beach. It has been a tradition for people to drive their vehicles onto the beach to do some tailor fishing and what-have-you, as they have done for many years. That is a growing issue in that part of the world. The access road from Binningup to Myalup has been enjoyed by people for many years, but I understand it is to be terminated as a result of the desalination plant.

A government member interjected.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** Access to the beach will be restricted. I am pushing to raise these issues; this is my opportunity to do so, and I will do so.

The Murray State Emergency Service unit is a subject close to my heart and I will raise issues about it during budget estimates. An assurance was made to the Murray SES unit that it would be given an opportunity to be relocated. It has made a number of submissions. Members of the SES have put in a lot of work, but once again they have been snubbed. The unit has been told to go and get a loan. The unit was prepared to do a lot of the work. I have seen examples throughout Western Australia—even in your electorate, Mr Speaker—of local volunteers putting their own firefighting capacity together. They get a lot of the work done on their own and at the end of the day the state gets a great asset. It could not be replaced if it were done by contract. That was going to happen in Pinjarra townsite; the SES unit was to be owned by the people, but once again it was offered a piecemeal \$70 000 shed down in an industrial area. As far as I am concerned, the government has treated our 30 000 SES volunteers in Western Australia very badly.

**MR A.D. McRAE (Riverton)** [6.34 pm]: This is a great budget. It continues the work of the Labor Party since it came to office in 2001. It continues to deliver budget surpluses. In fact, this is the seventh year in a row that Labor has delivered a budget surplus to the Western Australian people. It is the seventh year in a row that we have maintained our commitment to investing in productive infrastructure and capacity. That is not just built infrastructure, but also the infrastructure of our society—the soft infrastructure of people. It is the seventh year, unlike the preceding six years when we had to debate the political point with the Howard government, when we have demonstrated that state governments investing in productive enterprises have a direct impact on the productive economic efficiency and capacity of the nation. That cannot be any truer than the work that has gone on in Western Australia over the past seven-plus years.

One of the great failings of the Howard years, certainly the Howard government's last two terms, is that through its blatant pork-barrelling and loading up of tax cuts into people's pockets that increased individual and household consumption capacity, it absolutely abandoned the responsibility of a national government to invest in the broader economic capacity of the country. That does two things. First, increasing consumption amongst an increasingly wealthy populace creates an increased level of demand right across the economy. Second, a failure to keep pace with that growth in demand by increasing the total productive capacity of the economy means that we have a relative decline in the capacity of supply. That is basic economics. The Howard government failed us all dismally. The inflationary conditions that we are now seeing in Australia would be much worse had it not been for state Labor governments such as the Gallop and Carpenter Labor governments making a huge investment in the productive infrastructure of this state. That particularly happened here in Western Australia and also in Queensland. We saw the same patterns of investment in every state Labor government throughout Australia. In some ways we acted to temper the inflationary behaviours and policies of the Howard government. That has a direct impact on my electorate of Riverton. When we listen to members talk about the areas that they are most keen to see investment in, it comes as no surprise to learn that schools figure largely in members' views

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

and perspectives. Over the past four years in Riverton we have invested more than \$26 million into Lynwood, Willetton and Rossmoyne Senior High Schools and the nine primary schools in my electorate. Part of that \$26 million went towards a major rebuild of the school infrastructure, but, in truth, it was also partially a catch-up of deferred investments and maintenance programs from the previous conservative government and, dare I say it, the latter years of the Labor government in the 1980s and 1990s. I accept that this is not just a straight Labor-Liberal equation. I accept that what we have seen occur—that is, a bill running up higher and higher for the renewal of our school network throughout the state—is the result of a cumulative failure to properly invest in schools. I am pleased to say that that criticism cannot be levelled at our government. The \$26 million that has gone into schools in my electorate over the past four years is evidence of that.

I am very excited that some of the money we were allocated and are now finishing spending in this financial year was for the construction of the Canning River eco education centre, a \$2.5 million centre that will serve the immediate community that uses the Canning River Regional Park and act as a focal point for the more than 300 volunteers who are involved in maintenance, weeding, tour guiding and recreational activities in and around the park. This centre is now forecast to provide an educational facility for more than 10 000 students a year who will study rivers and environments. There is nothing like it in Western Australia; it is unique. It is, in part, modelled on the very successful educational facility at Herdsman Lake, which has been in operation now for a number of years. It has been a fantastic facility for those undertaking environmental studies—and not just for primary school and secondary school students, I might add. It has become a centre that is used by students who are doing graduate and post-graduate studies, and also international studies, of wetland environments at our universities. The Canning River Eco Education Centre is destined to be a quality facility of the same ilk.

It would be remiss of me if I did not, when talking about our plans in this budget and the plans that are set out by the government for the future, address one of the most contentious issues in my electorate, and that is the very large trucks that use Leach Highway and South Street as they access the Fremantle harbour and beyond—they go down to Kwinana and the Kwinana industrial strip, into Henderson, Spearwood and so on. The growth in the economy of Western Australia has meant that there has been a very large increase in the amount of freight that is moved in and out of the Fremantle port, and that has had a knock-on effect on the number of heavy-freight vehicles that we see on major roads, not only in my electorate, but also right across the south metropolitan region. When we came to government, not one metre of Roe Highway had been built for more than eight years. In fact, the last construction work on Roe Highway had been done by a previous Labor government. That had caused an extraordinary load to be borne by the people in William Street, in Beckenham, where a suburban street had been turned into the exit and entry point for Roe Highway. Literally thousands of trucks a year poured down that suburban street until we started construction of Roe Highway immediately upon being elected in 2001.

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** It is a good thing, Roe Highway.

**Mr A.D. McRAE:** I thank the member. Since 2001 we have completed stage 4 to the Kenwick link, stage 5 to Nicholson Road, stage 6 to South Street, and Roe stage 7 connecting Kwinana Freeway to Roe Highway and, via that major industrial heavy freight route, connecting it to Tonkin Highway, Great Eastern Highway and Great Northern Highway. That connection to Kwinana Freeway is a major piece of infrastructure. Although I understand that there is a great deal of difference of opinion in the community about how we should proceed west of the freeway, I have put it on record for a very long time that any suggestion that we continue with the 1950s plan to bulldoze through the Beeliar wetlands regional park will simply not get up. It does not matter what people wish and hope for, it simply will not be approved. If people cannot understand why, let me briefly touch on some of the reasons.

On the Swan coastal plain, we now have less than 20 per cent of the wetlands that existed at the time of the establishment of the Swan colonial settlement. There is no doubt that there is a direct connection between the loss of wetlands, the loss of biodiversity, the loss of species ranges and the threats to sustainable ecosystems. All those things come from developmental pressures; that is, infrastructure construction over the top of previously sensitive ecosystems where there is gradual deterioration and degradation of natural ecosystems that ultimately provide the living earth systems that make our lives sustainable. We cannot continue to bulldoze and wipe out those kinds of systems and expect air quality, water quality and biodiversity to be sustained. It is an equation that does not add up. I therefore ask members who think that we should continue with the old 1950s plan of bulldozing through Beeliar wetlands to please look at the facts and understand that in a world now framed by a debate on climate change—and in Western Australia already framed by a debate on the reduction in rainfall that is caused, in part at least, by massive clearing of native forests—the continued destruction of sensitive and valuable ecosystems will not be acceptable under state or national environmental law. We therefore need to find alternatives. Indeed, I have proposed alternatives and we will need to continue to debate those.

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

However, I want to focus on the achievements of constructing Roe Highway to connect with Kwinana Freeway, and the implementation of the large-truck ban that the government promised in the lead-up to the 2005 election. We said that large articulated vehicles would be banned from those roads where very large vehicles have an alternative; that is, to use the newly constructed and opened, purpose-built freight route in Roe Highway. It would be nice to say that we could continue it on to the west beyond that, but we can deal only with the infrastructure that is in place. The reality is that Kwinana Freeway currently is the end connection point for Roe Highway. That means that from Kwinana Freeway to Albany Highway on both Leach Highway and South Street there is a ban on very large articulated vehicles. We did say that very large articulated vehicles would be banned, and we have now followed through on that ban. I understand that members were keen to see that ban put in place as soon as possible, and we did it as soon as it was possible. The opening of Roe Highway stage 7 and its connection to Kwinana Freeway has resulted in a cut in the number of large trucks on Leach Highway of more than 500 vehicles a day and on South Street of more than 1 100 a day. Since we implemented the ban on very large trucks—that is, the ban applying to vehicles of more than 19.5 metres in length—an extra 250 large vehicles a day on Leach Highway and an additional 100 trucks a day on South Street have been removed from those roads.

People the length and breadth of Shelley and Riverton, and indeed people from the member for Murdoch's electorate which abuts mine in Rossmoyne and Bull Creek, say to me that they are astonished at the effect that the large-truck ban has had on large vehicle densities and volumes, particularly on Leach Highway. It is now possible for people to drive along Leach Highway and not feel as though they are going to be concertinaed by road trains or B-double model trucks travelling along that road head to toe. There is much more to be done but those are some great achievements.

I will finish by moving to a couple of items which are of concern to my electorate and which have been raised with me in the past number of weeks. They go broadly to government policy, and they are affected by this fantastic 2008-09 Western Australian budget that the government is now putting in place. The first thing that comes to mind from the number of comments that I have had from people in my electorate is that, although they are concerned with their own personal stories and the lives of their own families and communities, they have not lost sight of the fact that they live in the community of South East Asia, nor have they lost sight of the suffering now being endured by people in Burma and more recently by people in China, who have suffered terrible natural disasters. I pay my regards to the people who are working in my electorate to conduct fundraising events to assist the people suffering so terribly. In particular, the Red Cross branch in my electorate has worked tirelessly to raise funds and send materials to children and displaced people in Burma. It appears from media reports that up to 1.5 million people are now homeless and living in the open, in desperate need of our support.

Another thing I wanted to briefly touch on, and it runs through all the aspects of community I have mentioned in my contribution to this debate, is that this week is National Volunteer Week. One of the features of modern, busy, economically powerhoused Western Australian society is that volunteerism is under threat. It does not matter whether we are talking about church support groups, union membership, membership of political parties, membership of community service organisations such as Lions and Rotary, or whether it is membership of or support for the local junior football or netball club. Overall, there has been a decline in the rate of volunteerism for taking on the jobs that ensure that those community groups—volunteer and service groups—sustain themselves through good organisation.

I am heartened to some extent by the research that has been conducted by the department responsible for volunteers that says that the number of hours of volunteering being contributed by Western Australians is on the increase. However, to unpack that statistic a little, we need to understand that it is a measure of the total number of people turning up for functions that are organised for them by other volunteers. It is the other volunteers who take up the role of president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, membership officer or event organiser in which we are seeing a serious decline in the number of people who are willing and able, because of time availability, to take on those roles. As a Parliament we need to give some thought to that. It is one of the great challenges for our society. I refer members to the saying, "They know the price of everything and the value of nothing." We must understand the value of volunteerism in our community and what that brings—the connectedness, community organisations and the very personal relationships that make living as a human being so rewarding. It provides people with the capacity to make contributions to their community and beyond. We must understand the pressures on volunteerism and together, collectively, look to see what it is that we might do as a Parliament, legislators and budget framers to support volunteerism. That presents a challenge, because it is really a contradiction in terms to say that we should be providing money to forums when, previously, sheer goodwill and a commitment to local community has been the backbone of community organisations. We should not exclude anything from this examination of what it is that we need to do to support volunteerism.

**Extract from *Hansard***  
[ASSEMBLY - Thursday, 15 May 2008]  
p3192a-3227a

Mr John Hyde; Dr Kim Hames; Speaker; Ms Katie Hodson-Thomas; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr John D'Orazio; Mr  
Brendon Grylls; Mr Martin Whitely; Ms Sue Walker; Ms Jaye Radisich; Mr Tony O'Gorman; Mr Murray  
Cowper; Mr Tony McRae

---

I understand that the people in my electorate of Riverton and across Western Australia are facing increased pressure on their household budgets. I will be working with my community to ensure that I offer whatever assistance I can to show how we can reduce, for example, household energy bills by increased efficiency, new technologies and the diversion from one type of heating or cooling system to more efficient heating and cooling systems. We need also to advance the rate of use of public transport because it is clear that fuel bills are also putting pressure on household budgets. We do not control interest rates—they are part of the market process. However, as members of Parliament we are able to assist households to deal with increasing pressure on their budgets, and I intend to commit myself over the next year or so to doing this.

Question put and passed.

Bill (Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Bill (No. 1) 2008) read a second time.

Pursuant to standing order 222, bill and estimates referred to Estimates Committees A and B.

*Appropriations*

Message from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the bill.