

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 12 May 2004

THE SPEAKER (Mr F. Riebeling) took the Chair at 12 noon, and read prayers.

WARREN-BLACKWOOD DISTRICT, HOSPITAL SERVICES FUNDING CUTS

Petition

MR P.D. OMODEI (Warren-Blackwood) [12.01 pm]: I have a petition on health service funding cuts in the Warren-Blackwood region, which is in the following terms -

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say:-

That we, the people of the Warren-Blackwood District are deeply concerned about moves by the Premier . . . and Health Minister . . . to cut funding and services in our local hospitals. Further, many of us have great difficulty in accessing health care and services in Bunbury and Perth.

Now we ask that the Legislative Assembly advise the State Labor Government that we believe that **Health Care** and **Health Services** should be restored to our towns so that the majority of people can be cared for in our hospitals close to home and family.

This petition contains 408 signatures. I certify that it conforms to the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly.

[See petition No 349.]

PERTH-MANDURAH BUS SERVICE

Petition

MR A.D. MARSHALL (Dawesville) [12.02 pm]: I have a petition signed by 69 people about the fact that there is no bus service between Perth and Mandurah after seven o'clock at night. The petition requests as follows -

To: The Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned, Mandurah bus commuters, continue to be isolated from Perth night life. The last bus from Perth on week days is 7.05pm but more importantly on weekends when people have more time to visit Perth the final bus departure is 4.47pm.

People who want to visit relatives, friends, people in hospital, the Burswood, His Majesty's Theatre, cinemas, night clubs or sporting events are restricted by the out of date Transport Service.

Now we ask that the Legislative Assembly request the Government to lift the curfew and provide a bus service to leave Perth around 11pm, 7 days per week.

This petition has been signed by 69 people. There will be more to come, because there is deep feeling in Mandurah about this isolation.

[See petition No 350.]

Ms A.J. MacTiernan: That is right. You had better tell Willy Packer about that.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Have members finished? We will move on to the next item of business.

NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK 2004

Statement by Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth

MS S.M. McHALE (Thornlie - Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth) [12.04 pm]: This week is National Volunteer Week 2004. It is an important time to recognise and applaud the contributions that volunteers make to nearly every aspect of our community life. Western Australia's volunteers contribute more than 70 million hours a year to the community. Volunteering demonstrates a cohesive community in which people are willing to give up their personal time for others. I am very proud that Western Australia has such a wonderful volunteering ethos. In particular, I pay tribute to the more than 180 volunteers from the Peel district who

attended a function at Fairbridge this morning. On behalf of the State Government and the people of Western Australia, I thank all our volunteers and the organisations and staff who support volunteers.

On Tuesday I was pleased to launch the booklet "Western Australia's Volunteers - Topic Sheet No.1", which is an easy to read profile that explores the reasons that people volunteer, and who our volunteers are. The profile is reassuring. It shows that the number of people who volunteer has risen by about one-third since 1995, and that a culture of volunteering has developed in younger people. This fact sheet is the first in a series on volunteering in WA. It is based on information from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and includes a broad representation of volunteering across Australia, including the economic value of volunteering, interest areas of volunteering, and how volunteering varies among the population. It highlights some interesting facts, including that volunteer rates are highest among people who are working; that helping others and personal or family involvement were the most common reasons for volunteering; and that sport and recreation attracted the highest number of volunteers, particularly in the 18 to 54-year-old age group, while community welfare was more popular for those aged 55-plus.

I also launched the final stage of a three-part project on developing recruitment strategies particularly targeted at baby boomers. This publication and the fact sheet on Western Australia's volunteers reflect the State Government's commitment, which was outlined in the valuing volunteers policy document, to provide and promote recognition of and practical support for volunteering across the State. Once again, the work of our Government in supporting volunteers and organisations is positioning Western Australia at the leading edge of work in this field. I give a big thanks to all volunteers. I encourage all Western Australians to support National Volunteer Week and celebrate volunteering.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Standing Orders Suspension

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Nollamara - Leader of the House) [12.07 pm]: I move -

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable private members' business to take precedence on Wednesday, 12 May 2004 from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm.

I thank the Opposition for its cooperation with and support for this motion, which will have the effect of reducing private members' time from three hours to two hours. This is in the context of dealing with the second reading debate of the appropriation Bills. As that is a general debate, members can speak on any matter that they wish for 45 minutes. If we are to conclude the second reading of the Bills this week, we will need to sit for extended hours to give members an opportunity to speak. I appreciate the cooperation of the Opposition. There will be ample opportunities for members to speak this week, given that we are dealing with the second reading debate on the appropriation Bills. I hope that the reduction by one hour of private members' business will help us to complete the second reading debate on the appropriation Bills without having to sit too late tomorrow night.

Question put and passed.

The SPEAKER: As a result of the motion that was just agreed to, dinner will be taken between 6.00 and 7.00 pm.

REVENUE LAWS AMENDMENT BILL 2004

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr E.S. Ripper (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

Second Reading

MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont - Treasurer) [12.10 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to implement the stamp duty and land tax revenue relief measures announced as part of the 2004-05 state budget. Specifically, the Bill proposes amendments to the Stamp Act 1921 to increase stamp duty relief to eligible first home buyers, reduce stamp duty rates on conveyance of property and adjust the thresholds of the concessional rates of stamp duty for purchases of a principal place of residence or business property. Additionally, the Bill proposes a number of amendments that seek to ensure stamp duty is paid on the acquisition of a 90 per cent interest in a listed company that otherwise would be land rich. The Bill also proposes amendments to the Land Tax Act 2002 to increase the lowest three thresholds of the land tax scale. Complementary provisions are also contained in the Revenue Laws Amendment and Repeal Bill 2004.

I will now examine each of these proposed changes in greater detail. Part 1 of the Bill contains the short title of the Act and the proposed commencement provisions. Part 2 of the Bill contains amendments to the Land Tax Act 2002 to implement a new land tax rate scale with effect from the 2004-05 assessment year. The growth in property prices experienced recently has flowed through to unimproved values upon which land tax is assessed. Estimates based on preliminary land valuations for 2004-05 indicated that land tax revenue would have grown by around 13.4 per cent in

2004-05. This is significantly higher than the average growth rate of 8.5 per cent per annum over the past decade. To ameliorate the impact of this strong growth in property values, it is proposed that the land tax scale be amended by increasing the land tax exemption threshold for land from \$50 000 in unimproved value, to \$100 000 from 1 July 2004. In addition, it is proposed that the second threshold be increased from \$190 000 to \$220 000, and the third threshold be increased from \$550 000 to \$570 000. These amendments will free around 55 000 land tax payers from land tax and lower the land tax assessments of a further 58 000 taxpayers below what those assessments would have been in the absence of these changes. As a result of these adjustments to the land tax scale, it is estimated that land tax revenue will grow by 8.7 per cent in 2004-05 - broadly in line with growth over the past 10 years. The cost in terms of forgone revenue in 2004-05 will be around \$17 million, and \$76.2 million over the next four years.

The proposed amendments to the Stamp Act 1921 in part 3 of the Bill are intended to operate from 1 July 2004 and seek to reduce stamp duty rates on conveyance of property; provide the phase-out rate of stamp duty for purchases of a principal place of residence or business property when the amount or value of the consideration is between \$100 000 and \$200 000; provide stamp duty relief for eligible first home buyers; and ensure stamp duty is paid on the acquisition of a 90 per cent interest in a listed company that otherwise would be land rich.

The first measure seeks to decrease the rates of stamp duty applicable to the conveyance or transfer of property by five per cent across the rate scale from 1 July 2004. Under the new scale, the rate of stamp duty on conveyances of property valued at \$80 000 or less will fall from 2.3 per cent to 2.2 per cent, with each rate in the scale decreasing by five per cent to a maximum marginal rate of six per cent, down from 6.3 per cent. As an example of the benefits from the proposed changes, stamp duty on the purchase of a \$300 000 house will fall by \$635. This measure, which will benefit owner-occupier purchasers, investors in property and Western Australian business, is estimated to cost \$47.2 million in 2004-05 and \$203.4 million over the period to 2007-08. The second of these stamp duty measures seeks to extend the phasing-out of the existing concessional rate of conveyance duty applied to purchases of a principal place of residence or low-value business property from \$135 000 to \$200 000. This will address an anomaly in the current scheme, which results in a substantial jump in stamp duty on property values just over \$135 000, when the concession cuts out. This measure is estimated to cost \$3 million in 2004-05, and \$13 million over the next four years. The third stamp duty measure in the Bill seeks to create an effective exemption from stamp duty on conveyance for eligible first home buyers who purchase a home valued up to \$220 000. This exemption will be phased out between \$220 000 and \$300 000. When first home buyers elect to purchase vacant land and then build a home, they will effectively receive a stamp duty exemption on the conveyance up to a purchase price of \$100 000, and will receive a partial concession up to a purchase price of \$150 000. This will help to ensure that first home buyers who purchase vacant land and first home buyers who purchase an established home are treated equitably. The measure will assist first home buyers facing a higher deposit gap as a result of recent rapid increases in house prices. It also recognises the benefits of home ownership.

The passage of this Bill will mean that an eligible first home buyer purchasing a home worth \$220 000 will receive a stamp duty saving of \$8 230 and the \$7 000 first home owner grant. Effectively, this represents assistance received from the State of over \$15 000. For administration and compliance purposes, and to ensure that the conveyance duty concession scheme is straightforward and easy to understand, it is proposed that the eligibility requirements for conveyance duty relief be linked to the requirements of the \$7 000 first home owner grant. The proposed administrative arrangements are set out in the Revenue Laws Amendment and Repeal Bill 2004. It is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation later this sitting to amend the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 to restrict access, except in very limited circumstances, to the first home owner grant to persons who are 18 years of age or more. This legislation is intended to have an operative date of 1 July 2004, regardless of its ultimate date of passage. In addition, a requirement will be added to the Act such that a person will not only be required to occupy the home within 12 months as the principal place of residence, but will also now be required to occupy that residence for a continuous period of six months. These changes will flow through into the new first home buyer stamp duty concession. The proposed arrangements to assist first home buyers are estimated to cost \$45.5 million in 2004-05, and \$196.2 million over the four years to 2007-08.

The fourth stamp duty measure in the Bill provides a number of amendments that will ensure that stamp duty is paid on the acquisition of a 90 per cent interest in a listed company that otherwise would be land rich. This measure is part of the package of measures arising from the review of state business taxes conducted by this Government and is designed to maintain equity with the duty treatment of public unit trusts that become private after being acquired. Listed companies that have high value land or mining tenements are those most likely to be affected by these proposed amendments, which are estimated to generate \$6.1 million in revenue in the next financial year.

Overall, the measures in this Bill and the Revenue Laws Amendment and Repeal Bill 2004 will represent a cost to revenue of \$112.7 million in 2004-05, and \$488.9 million over the budget period. Furthermore, these initiatives are consistent with the broader reform agenda that has been considered and passed by this House, which has resulted in a significant streamlining of the tax system in the past two years. A detailed explanation of these measures is contained in the associated explanatory memorandum. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J.L. Bradshaw.

REVENUE LAWS AMENDMENT AND REPEAL BILL 2004*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr E.S. Ripper (Treasurer), and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

Second Reading

MR E.S. RIPPER (Belmont - Treasurer) [12.19 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill seeks to provide administrative support for the stamp duty and land tax revenue relief measures announced as part of the 2004-05 state budget, and to put in place other measures designed to enhance the equity and efficiency of the State's taxation regime. In broad terms, the Bill proposes -

- an exemption from land tax for land that is the subject of an approved conservation covenant;
- amendments to the Stamp Act 1921 to support the budget measures;
- the repeal of a number of redundant taxation Acts; and
- a range of measures designed to increase the efficiency of administrative arrangements and improve outcomes for taxpayers.

I will now examine each of these proposed measures in greater detail. The Bill proposes amendments to the Land Tax Assessment Act 2002 to provide a land tax exemption for land held under an approved conservation covenant issued by the Department of Conservation and Land Management or the Western Australian branch of the National Trust of Australia. Providing such an incentive is an important step towards ensuring that land with high conservation values, including rare or endangered flora and fauna, is preserved for the benefit of future generations. This measure is expected to have a modest cost of around \$10 000 in 2004-05, increasing to around \$50 000 in 2007-08.

The Bill also proposes seven measures to the Stamp Act 1921 to -

- provide the administrative arrangements for stamp duty relief to first home buyers;
- increase the upper threshold for the concessional rate of duty for purchases of principal places of residence and low value business property from \$135 000 to \$200 000;
- insert new arrangements for the lodgment and payment of stamp duty on certain classes of conditional contracts;
- remove nominal duty from leases and mortgages executed as a deed;
- amend the mortgage duty provisions to recognise the abolition of mortgage duty in Victoria;
- extend the family farm conveyance duty exemption in limited circumstances; and
- allow a unit trustee applying for registration as an equity trust to hold options to acquire shares.

The first of these measures provides the administrative arrangements for stamp duty relief on conveyances for first home buyers. The complementary provisions of the Revenue Laws Amendment Bill 2004 provide the rates of duty. This measure links the eligibility requirements for the conveyance duty relief to the eligibility criteria of the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000.

The second of these measures extends the upper threshold for the concessional rate of conveyance duty applied to purchases of a principal place of residence or low value business property from \$135 000 to \$200 000. The complementary provisions of the Revenue Laws Amendment Bill 2004 provide the amendment to the phase-out rate for this duty.

The third of these measures provides new stamp duty lodgment and payment arrangements for conditional contracts. These arrangements, which have been developed in consultation with a number of industry bodies, will provide a significant reduction in compliance costs for purchasers of land, homes and businesses.

The fourth of these measures provides an exemption for deeds that evidence a lease or an agreement for a lease, or an instrument of security, which prior to recent changes would have been chargeable with mortgage duty.

The fifth of these measures relates to Victoria's legislated abolition of mortgage duty with effect from 1 July 2004. From the point of view of certainty and equity for taxpayers, it is important that the remaining taxing States adopt a consistent treatment in the duty calculations to recognise Victorian property. The States affected by the Victorian abolition are currently in the process of developing options to provide for consistent treatment in the duty calculations to recognise Victorian property; however, a common position has not yet been reached.

The amendments contained in this Bill maintain the principles of the current model and ensure that moneys secured by Victorian property are treated in a manner consistent with security over property situated in the Northern Territory, the

Australian Capital Territory and overseas, where mortgage duty does not currently apply. The amendments are required to ensure that the revenue is adequately protected and take effect from the date of the Victorian abolition.

Salinity is a significant problem affecting the viability of many farms. The sixth of these stamp duty measures recognises that farmers are attempting to address this problem in a variety of ways, including leasing salt-affected land for tree farming to ensure the longer-term success of the family farm. The measures in this Bill extend the existing family farm conveyance duty exemption to include land that is leased to a third party for the purposes of tree farming or reforestation, when the leased land is transferred with other farming land.

The seventh of these stamp duty measures relates to equity trusts. A trust that meets the definition of an equity trust in the Stamp Act may apply to be excluded from the private unit trust provisions. The definition is based primarily on the nature of the trust's allowable investments, confined largely to marketable securities and other liquid assets. These trusts are excluded from the operation of the private unit trust provisions because if the marketable securities held by the trust were traded directly, they would not be subject to duty.

This Bill amends the allowable assets of an equity trust to include options to acquire shares. With the exception of the budget amendments, these stamp duty measures will have negligible impact on revenue.

The Bill also proposes the repeal of the Taxation (Reciprocal Powers) Act 1989, the Financial Institutions Duty Act 1983, the Land Tax Relief Act 1991, and the Land Tax Relief Act 1992, which are now redundant.

To enhance the efficiency, fairness, and simplicity of the tax system, the Bill further proposes minor amendments to the Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act 2002, the Stamp Act 1921 and the Taxation Administration Act 2003. These amendments include -

- the correction of an anomaly in the calculation of a family farm conveyance duty exemption for land-rich companies;
- the clarification of the time for lodgment of a mortgage following an advance;
- the provision of an alternative to endorsement of an instrument stamped as part of a special tax return arrangement;
- the confirmation of the evidentiary value of an assessment notice;
- the prevention of the use of a stamped or collateral mortgage that is no longer part of the same mortgage package;
- the clarification of the due date for payment of tax resulting from a reassessment;
- the provision of access to the objections and appeals process for certain decisions of the commissioner; and
- the provision for the commissioner to lodge a memorial on land when tax is not paid as a result of a reassessment when a first home buyer initially receives the stamp duty concession and is later found to be ineligible.

These measures will have negligible impact on revenue, but will improve the administration of the tax system and, in so doing, will improve outcomes for both taxpayers and the community.

A detailed explanation of the measures in this Bill is contained in the associated explanatory memorandum. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J.L. Bradshaw.

CRIMINAL INJURIES COMPENSATION AMENDMENT BILL 2004

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr J.A. McGinty (Attorney General), and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Attorney General.

Second Reading

MR J.A. MCGINTY (Fremantle - Attorney General) [12.26 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 2003, the 2003 Act, received assent on 15 December 2003 and commenced on 1 January 2004. I am pleased to be able to inform members that the introduction of the new legislation has been smooth.

As members may recall, the 2003 Act made a number of important changes to assist victims of crime while preserving the successful framework of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 1985, the 1985 Act. The 2003 Act repealed the 1985 Act and brought all applications under the new Act. Major changes included -

- providing for interim payments to avoid victims experiencing financial hardship;
- increasing the maximum award from \$50 000 to \$75 000;
- giving the chief assessor jurisdiction over all applications, and standardising procedures;
- providing that the chief assessor may reduce an award by 100 per cent because of contributory behaviour on the part of the victim;
- prohibiting compensation where a person was injured in the course of criminal conduct;
- providing that when a person suffers injury or loss as a result of more than one homicide of close family members, the award can exceed the maximum for a single offence by twice the maximum;
- providing that when a person is injured as a result of offences committed by the same offender over a period of time, the maximum award for the series of offences shall be no more than twice the maximum for a single offence; and
- providing that claims for secondary victims for mental and nervous shock be limited to persons who witnessed the event or its aftermath and close relatives of the person directly injured by the offence who were at the time of the offence living with the person directly injured.

Two drafting errors have been identified in the 2003 Act: one in relation to secondary victims and the other to compensation reimbursement orders. Paragraphs (c) and (e) of section 35(2) of the 2003 Act limit the eligibility for compensation of secondary victims by reference to the victim's relationship to the incident or to the primary victim. It was intended that secondary claims for mental and nervous shock be limited to cases in which the primary victim suffered injury as defined in the 2003 Act. Injury is defined to mean bodily harm, mental and nervous shock, or pregnancy. However, paragraphs (c) and (e) of section 35(2) of the 2003 Act have been drafted to limit compensation to cases in which the primary victim suffered bodily harm as opposed to injury. This means that some classes of secondary victims, which it was not intended to exclude, will not be eligible for compensation. For example, it was intended that a child who witnessed sexual abuse of another would be entitled to claim pursuant to section 35(2)(c). However, as a result of the use of the term "bodily harm" as opposed to "injury", the child will not be able to claim in those circumstances unless the primary victim also suffered bodily harm. Similarly, a close relative such as a parent of a child who was the victim of sexual abuse who was living with the child at the time of the offence, as required by section 35(2)(e), will be excluded from compensation unless the child also suffers bodily harm as a consequence of the offences. To remedy these problems, the Bill deletes the words "bodily harm" and substitutes the word "injury" in paragraphs (c) and (e) of section 35(2).

The intention of the 2003 Act was also to create a single Act governing all aspects of criminal injuries compensation law, and in particular to do away with the complexity of the previous regime, which involved three criminal injuries compensation statutes. Part 6 of the 2003 Act creates a procedure that assists the State to recover the amount of an award from a convicted offender, and largely re-enacts part V of the 1985 Act. No transitional provision was included in the 2003 Act to deal with recovery under that Act of orders made under the 1985 Act. The Interpretation Act enables the continued application of the 1985 Act to awards made under it, but this in part defeats the intention of providing a single Act to govern the area. To remedy this, the Bill extends part 6 of the 2003 Act to orders made under the 1985 Act to assist the recovery of the value of an award from a convicted offender. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J.L. Bradshaw.

PUBLIC NOTARIES AMENDMENT BILL 2004

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr J.A. McGinty (Attorney General), and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Attorney General.

Second Reading

MR J.A. MCGINTY (Fremantle - Attorney General) [12.32 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

This Bill repeals section 10(1) and (4) of the Public Notaries Act 1979 of Western Australia and transfers the functions currently conferred on the Attorney General under those subsections to the Legal Practice Board, which will be able to report directly to the Chief Justice. The procedure provided for in section 10(1) and (4) has proved to be cumbersome and is thought to be inappropriate insofar as it involves the Attorney General's reporting to the Chief Justice on the suitability and fitness of an applicant for appointment. The Legal Practice Board is far better placed to comment on the suitability and fitness of an applicant and the need for a further appointment, and has signified its willingness to be responsible for performing these functions. The Chief Justice supports the amendment.

The Bill also contains minor amendments to section 6(4) and section 11 of the Act. Section 6(4) of the Act is to be amended to refer to the "metropolitan region" as defined under the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act 1959 instead of the "Fremantle or Perth district" so as to provide greater clarity. Section 11 of the Act is to be amended to make it clear that any objection to an application for appointment is to be heard by the Full Court of the Supreme Court. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J.L. Bradshaw.

DENTAL PROSTHETISTS AMENDMENT BILL 2004

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by Mr M.W. Trenorden (Leader of the National Party), and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Leader of the National Party.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 1) 2004 **APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 2) 2004**

Second Reading - Cognate Debate

Resumed from 11 May.

MR P.G. PENDAL (South Perth) [12.35 pm]: I use the occasion of the budget debate to raise not contemporary finances and sources of revenue, but concerns about some negotiations taking place that could affect future revenues of the State in such a way that would adversely affect the position of local government. I begin by stating that I for one congratulate the Treasurer for having brought down a budget with expenditure that runs in the order of \$12.4 billion, and that has a projected surplus this year, as I understand it, of \$243 million. I state briefly a view that I have put before about public sector finance. I again raise my concerns about why in this day and age it is necessary to budget for surpluses anyway. I know and understand the rainy day argument, but invariably all the figures of state and commonwealth budgets have built-in rainy day propositions in any event. That in itself is prudent. My point is that in a budget of this considerable size, \$12.4 billion, a budgeted surplus of \$243 million means that \$243 million could have been, and still could be, spent in areas of urgent public need. I see no particular virtue or prudence in surplus budgets nowadays, as I see no good sense in deficit budgets. I again draw to the Government's attention, for what it is worth, the belief that we should aim at all times for balanced budgets. Balanced budgets are of themselves prudent housekeeping of the State's finances. To think that we should be building in a layer of fat to the tune of \$243 million is to my mind, when held up against urgent needs in public spending, somewhat irresponsible in itself. I will return to that figure in a moment.

The principal purpose of my remarks today is to raise current negotiations regarding the possible future sources of state government income by way of a review of the Land Administration Act. It has been drawn to my attention by the recently elected Mayor of South Perth that this review of the Land Administration Act 1997 may well tempt the State Government to make some form of raid on the finances of local government throughout Western Australia. I will explain my fears in some detail. The Mayor of South Perth has put to me his concerns about any change in the future enabling the State to share revenues from crown lands that are vested in local authorities and from which the local authorities draw revenue. Let me give an example in my electorate. The Collier Park Golf Course is a most successful venture created by the South Perth City Council in the past 15 years based on vesting crown land at Karawara, or, as some people still call it, Como. It reflects the position throughout Western Australia, in which most local authorities have in their possession crown lands that they manage and from which they receive a commercial return. In the case of the City of South Perth, I understand its net receipts from the Collier Park Golf Course to be in the order of \$300 000 a year. It is a considerable amount of money to a local authority of that size. The profit, if I can put it that way, has always been enjoyed by the local authorities. However, we fear there are moves afoot within the Department of Land Information to claw back some of that money, to make a raid on the purse of the local authorities and to share that money with the State Government. One of the obvious consequences of that will be a rise in local government rates, or a rise in the cost of some of the services that are extended by local governments. Notwithstanding that the City of South Perth is now a well-run local authority, I doubt that it could easily absorb the loss of, say, 50 per cent, or \$150 000, of the Collier Park revenues to the State. That is my concern.

On what do we base those claims? The mayor has drawn to my attention the discussion paper that was released by the Department of Land Information on 16 January this year. That document contains a number of sleepers that all members of this House ought to familiarise themselves with, and they should make clear to the Government of the day and the Opposition that we will be having none of this. If these things come about, members will be standing in this Chamber - I will not be, but others will - in future budget debates talking about this raid on local government finances by a State Government via the Department of Land Information.

The Western Australian Local Government Association reacted to this discussion paper in somewhat of a concerned fashion on a number of fronts, not the least of which was that the paper was released on 16 January with a deadline of 27 February by which local authorities and other people were supposed to respond. That was an inadequate time and,

subsequent to that, the Government was happy enough to extend the period for responses, albeit in a modest way. The association was granted an extension until 5 March, and it raised two other matters of concern. The Mayor of South Perth has concerns at least at the revenue level, and I have concerns about two of the issues. The first is that very revenue issue and the second, which I will go through in due course, is about a possible change in the role of the Governor in the handling of crown lands and commensurate increase in the powers of the minister of the day. Whenever a document is produced by a government department advocating that a new course of action be followed because it will make things more efficient for the public service of the day, my suspicions are raised that it is probably something that at a democratic level people should be opposing. Generally, those measures sought by the civil service as being efficient and processes that we need to adopt tend to be issues that the Parliament should take a much closer interest in.

I now turn to the concerns that I want to express. The Western Australian Local Government Association sent a letter to the Department for Planning and Infrastructure, in which it summed up its case on the revenue issue in the following way -

Assertions made within the Discussion Paper regarding streamlining of processes and enhanced, more efficient practices in management of Crown land arising from operation of the Land Administration Act 1997 are noted and acknowledged.

This is the concern -

However, the Association is concerned that devolution of management responsibility for the Crown Estate to the Minister has in more recent times, encouraged a shift in the State Government's view of the basis by which Local Governments should discharge their traditional roles as custodians of vested Crown Land.

In particular, wide-ranging Departmental proposals floated since 2001 have advocated implementation of 'revenue-sharing' arrangements with Local Governments for private commercial leasing activities negotiated on vested Crown Land.

Thus, my concern about land such as the Collier Park Golf Course and land on which, for example, the Boatshed Restaurant is located along the South Perth foreshore. The association then expresses the following concern -

The Association understands that a key rationale underpinning this proposal is that State Governments now consider Crown Land as being a statewide strategic asset and accordingly, the State has an entitlement to access a share of revenues in similar manner to any other public resource.

I am not sure that that should be accepted at all. If the State is going to ask a local authority to take over the management and control of crown vesting, does it not make sense that the State would want that crown land to be managed well? It should not mean that the State wants to make a profit from it. It should mean that the State, in devolving it to local government, is giving local government the opportunity to manage it, hopefully to manage it well, and if it manages it at a profit then that is well and good. My view is that if a person chooses to part with his or her money by paying for a day on the Collier Park Golf Course, then he or she can have no objection to that. They are voluntarily parting with their money. It should not be a question of the State seeking to identify new forms of revenue, as stated in the WALGA document. The document goes on to say -

The Association and its membership have been and remain fundamentally opposed to such an assertion on the basis that Local Governments are increasingly being required, through their own funds, to subsidise the ongoing costs providing a range of active and passive recreational facilities on vested Crown Land commensurate with heightened expectations of communities.

If implemented, any regime whereby Government is accorded a share of revenues from private commercial leasing ventures would only serve to target the more economically viable aspects of Local Government's Crown Land management whilst ignoring the fact that significant community funds investment is required in terms of cross-subsidisation.

The association makes it very clear: it will not accept a revenue-sharing proposal between local government and the State Government without -

. . . State Government consideration of a complimentary arrangement for contribution towards operational and capital infrastructure costs incurred by Local Government.

There is no certainty about this. Local authorities can smell a rat when they see one. Certainly, the Mayor of South Perth is sufficiently concerned about it to want the matter raised publicly and to have assurances, if necessary, that we are all misreading this. I do not think people are misreading it. My calculations are that this could be worth in the order of \$20 million a year to the State Government. The extraction of \$20 million a year from local authorities would, in most cases, lead to rate rises of some description; yet \$20 million going into a Government that now enjoys revenues of \$12 billion a year would be a drop in the ocean. Every member of this House may well be confronted with that prospect if the Government goes down the track of encouraging or endorsing the proposals that are being circulated in that discussion paper.

There is a second field of matters which do not touch on the revenues but which I believe, as a result of their being raised in the discussion paper, are also matters that we should look at with great scrutiny. I am told that pages 4 to 7 of the discussion paper refer separately to issues involving what is called the redefinition of crown land and the devolution of responsibility for administrative functions for the crown estate from the Governor in Executive Council to the minister as a basis for - this is the worrying bit - the adoption of more efficient practices, enabling much more timely decisions to be made by the minister or her delegates. That bothers me enormously. I have heard many arguments over the years about why it is desirable to take away from the Governor in Executive Council powers that are then devolved to one single minister. A person does not have to be a political science genius to understand that anything that is dealt with by a single minister will be dealt with more expeditiously than anything that goes to the Governor in Executive Council, when at least several ministers and the Governor are present.

I believe that the Parliament, as a matter of principle, should be most careful in the years ahead of going down the path of throwing away well-worn and time-honoured practices, which are meant to build in better levels of scrutiny, in favour of ministers unilaterally being able to make decisions of that kind. I for one am pleased that the Western Australian Local Government Association has raised those concerns. Whether they should be treated as fears at this stage is really a question of how much reassurance the minister responsible for land administration can give. If it affects me in the electorate of South Perth, I can guarantee that it will affect almost every one of the members of this House. People do not stay in government forever; we know that. People who are in government today may, in a short time, be in opposition. However, all members will come under pressure from their local authorities for letting something like this slip through, if it is in fact allowed to slip through.

In the main, I believe that the Government should make a serious, definitive statement on where it stands on the question of an enforced sharing of local government revenues. I repeat what I said earlier: \$20 million is my calculation of what could be sucked out of local government revenues. The amount of \$150 000 - that is, a half share of Collier Park - is a sizeable amount of money to the City of South Perth. However, the transfer of \$20 million to the state coffers would be a small percentage point that would otherwise disappear into coffers now worth over \$12 billion. My complaint, therefore, is not about something in the budget that is before us, although I have a number of serious concerns about it. My great concern is what might be before us next year or the year after unless we nip this thing in the bud and get from the Government the assurances that we want to get; that is, that local government will not have forced on it this form of raid on its local treasuries, to the detriment of those councils and, finally, to the detriment of all those ratepayers who will have to make up the difference. I support the budget.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham - Parliamentary Secretary) [12.55 pm]: The member for South Perth has caught me unawares with his brevity. It was one of the shortest speeches I have ever heard him make in this place. He must be winding down in prelude to his departure. Therefore, I will have to make do, without having the time that I expected I would have before being called to speak.

I start by congratulating the Treasurer on his efforts to produce a fourth budget. It is not an easy task, as we have learnt from the behaviour of the federal Treasurer recently, to come back and go through the process of putting it together, year in and year out. I do not think our Treasurer, at the time of his ninth budget, will behave in a similar fashion to the federal Treasurer. I believe our Treasurer loves the job so much that he will be doing it for a considerable time to come due to, first, his capacity to do it, and, secondly, his complete joy in putting it together and making sure that the people of Western Australia enjoy the benefits of sound financial management, a great capital works program and a continuing emphasis on putting the resources of the State into those areas that most Western Australians care about in their daily lives. As I said, I do not think the Treasurer would be contemplating retirement at this time, considering the great job he has done in producing four budgets, all of which have been in surplus, and all of which have had great capital works programs and a capacity to meet expenditure commitments into the future.

However, at the outset, it raises a significant issue. The Treasurer has shown no sign of wanting to depart this place. Yesterday the member for Murdoch announced his retirement from the Parliament. I regard the member for Murdoch, my Anzac colleague, as one of the most capable people in the Opposition in both Houses of this Parliament. I wish him well in his life after Parliament. He is one of those people who have realised that there is more to life than politics. I am sure, with his business capacities, he will make a fair go of it in the outside world, as he did before he entered this place. I wish him all the best. However, it raises a significant issue that I do not believe has been commented upon properly.

Mr N.R. Marlborough: Do you know that the member about whom you were just talking and I shared a bed in New York?

Mr M. McGOWAN: He has boasted about that regularly.

The issue is that the member for Murdoch's departure follows the announcement of the departure of the member for Kingsley - I suspect the member for Vasse is up against it - and of the members for Murray Wellington, Moore, Dawesville, Ningaloo, Stirling, Roe and South Perth. There may be one or two others from the conservative side of the House whom I have missed and who will be departing this place. The significant issue is that it raises a major question about -

Mr M.J. Birney: The difference is that most of ours are voluntary departures; yours will be involuntary.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member's departure will be involuntary. We will see what happens to him. The issue is - if the Leader of the Opposition were honest, he would acknowledge it - that I do not see the capacity of the Opposition to form a Cabinet. After the election, about nine members of this Opposition will remain in this House. What is more, the Opposition will lose its most capable members. It is widely acknowledged that the members for Kingsley and Murdoch are the two most capable members of the Opposition, bar none. They will be leaving this place. I do not see much capacity at all on that side to form a Cabinet. I cannot recall such a situation arising in a State Parliament in Australia for a considerable period. Perhaps it could apply to the Oppositions in Queensland and Victoria. Apart from those two very recent examples, the only other example I can remember is in 1974 when the Queensland Opposition was reduced to 11 members. I do not see many potential cabinet members among members of this Opposition. Nor have I seen any great potential among the people who have been preselected.

I started my remarks by complimenting the member for Murdoch, who is capable, and I wish him well in his life after politics. However, before the next election, Western Australians must consider a major issue very carefully. This budget is a great Labor budget; it amounts to \$12.4 billion worth of expenditure and it secures the State's finances into the future. Our spending and our capital works program are sustainable. The credit rating agencies, which examine a State's budget to determine whether, firstly, its spending is sustainable and, secondly, its revenue capacities meet projected expenditure, on both counts have given the State a AAA credit rating. This budget secures a \$243 million surplus, which I believe is necessary. The member for South Perth indicated that he thought a surplus was not necessary. However, I believe it is necessary because it funds the State's capital works program. The Government has adopted the philosophy, widely accepted throughout the world, that it is fair and reasonable to borrow to fund capital works programs, which are usually in progress for a considerable period. That is the concept of intergenerational equity, which means that if we want to provide resources and assets for future generations to utilise, as is invariably the case with capital works, it is entirely fair and appropriate to borrow to fund those assets. That has been the policy of the Blair Government, and in fact it was the Thatcher Government's policy. Margaret Thatcher had a habit of relating economical issues to a household budget.

Mr M.J. Birney: Was she your hero?

Mr M. McGOWAN: No; she was not my hero. One thing she said that was quite sensible was that if in the management of their household budget, people must pay for the cost of owning their house, it is entirely fair and reasonable to borrow that money to provide for the future. It is not sensible for people to save the entire cost of their house before they buy it, because it is an asset that will last them into the future. Margaret Thatcher applied that central principle to the provision of assets. That principle has been adopted by the Blair Government, and it is widely accepted throughout the world. I think that, if the truth be told, Margaret Thatcher borrowed it from the Carter Government's Administration in the United States. The Government has borrowed to fund its capital works program because it involves assets that will benefit future generations. That is widely accepted.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Was that your philosophy into the 1980s and early 1990s?

Mr M. McGOWAN: The Leader of the Opposition's team will be reduced to nine members before the next election, so he should be focusing on the future rather than events of 20 or so years ago. All his best people will be leaving his party. If the Leader of the Opposition listens to his heart of hearts, does he not acknowledge that his colleagues on either side of him will be leaving this place perhaps in search of a more fulfilling career than that which is being offered in this Parliament?

Mr M.J. Birney: Why don't you do that? You will never get onto the front bench.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I thank the member for Kalgoorlie for that. We will examine the figures on polling night and see how his one per cent margin holds up in light of his behaviour.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You have been like an angry ant for the past three years. You have been grizzling to members on this side that you should be in cabinet. It is pretty obvious why you aren't in cabinet, mate.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is not true and it is a remark that should be beneath the Leader of the Opposition.

Several members interjected

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr J.P.D. Edwards): Order, members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The budget contains a range of measures that transfer the State's spending into areas of great priority. The health budget will increase by \$178 million, a 4.4 per cent increase, and includes a major program to plan for future capital works requirements. Over the past four years, the law and order budget has increased by 33.2 per cent. Significant areas of criminal behaviour have declined. The Department of Education and Training budget has also increased significantly. Approximately 82 per cent of new government spending is in those three key priority areas.

In country areas, of course, more than \$400 million will be spent on improving the electricity network. The \$80 million regional investment fund will be spent over the next four years, and new hospitals and schools will be built. Most significantly, the Government will implement some sustainable tax cuts. The tax relief that this Government will implement is very much targeted at the people who are most in need of it. The first tax assistance is to eliminate stamp duty for first home buyers to assist people seeking to purchase their first home. The second area of assistance is to freeze everyday living expenses, such as the cost of electricity, motor vehicle registration, public transport and the like. That will assist the people who have the least financial resources. Over the four years of this Government, electricity charges have been frozen.

Mr J.L. Bradshaw: We did not increase them for eight years.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member for Murray-Wellington may well note that the electricity charges were increased in, I think, the 1999 or 2000 Court budget. They have not been increased during the Gallop Government's term.

Mr R.F. Johnson: You have been in office for only three years.

Mr M. McGOWAN: This is the fourth budget in which they have not been increased. There is a stark difference. Members opposite cannot say they did not increase them, except on one occasion. What a bizarre argument. The Opposition's argument that it did the same as this Government except for one occasion speaks for itself. What sort of argument is that? That is in contrast to the budget of the federal Government. It shows the difference between Labor and Liberal. I welcome tax cuts under the federal budget. In fact, I will get a significant tax cut, as will everyone in this House. The people who earn the most money, as we do - we are in the top two or three per cent of income earners in the country - will get the biggest tax cuts. That is a difference between Labor and Liberal. Our budget directs the biggest tax cuts to those who most need them. We are putting in place targeted relief for those who buy their first home. I have a number of young families in my electorate. I was part of a young family perhaps a decade ago now.

Mr D.A. Templeman: The years roll by quickly.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It feels recent. I would certainly have enjoyed that sort of relief when I bought my first house. Unfortunately, I was doing that in the time of the Court Government. It did not offer that sort of relief to first home buyers when I was buying my first home. I was not able to enjoy the benefits of a good Labor Government that directs that sort of relief to those most in need. The Court Government did not offer it to us.

Mr P.D. Omodei interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We are hearing from a ghost of the Court Government. An old apparition from the Court Government is coming out of the trees and falling out of the forest with a chainsaw in one hand and grapes in the other. He has given some excuse about why the Court Government taxed first home buyers so hard. I remember it. I was one of those people who was taxed hard by the Court Government when I first bought a house.

Mr J.H.D. Day: You are disingenuous. Just tell the truth.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have heard from another apparition. He is a big, bold apparition from the Court Government. He is part of the new breed and the new broom for the future. He is one of the tired, uninterested, broken-down former ministers -

Mr J.H.D. Day: So those who are going are good, and those who are staying are not. You are disingenuous.

Mr M. McGOWAN: He uses words such as disingenuous to make his point. He was part of the Court Government. He is coming forward with tired, old ideas.

I know, as does my wife, that we had to pay stamp duty under the Court Government. If we were buying our first house now under the Gallop Government, we would not have to do so. That is a simple point of difference.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Would you be buying a house for \$220 000? I think not.

Mr M. McGOWAN: If I were 26 now, I would be purchasing a house worth less than \$220 000. That is a difference. The state budget also provides relief to people who live in caravan parks by helping them with their electricity costs, which is terrific. There are three caravan parks in my constituency. Most of the people who live in those caravan parks are on fixed incomes. Those on fixed incomes and who have no kids get few benefits from the Costello budget.

Mr M.J. Birney: Would you live in one?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Those who live in caravan parks basically get nothing from the Costello budget. From the Gallop Government they will essentially receive half of their electricity costs. I have three caravan parks in my constituency. I resided in a caravan park when I was younger. It is hard for many people in those circumstances to meet their costs.

On top of that are the environmental initiatives of this Government, including those involving the Swan River and the preservation of forests. This is the only State Government in Australia to preserve old-growth forest. That is a terrific achievement of this Government. It is something that all members of this Parliament will be able to look back on one

day, when they are out of this place and reflect on being part of the Parliament that achieved that. We should be very proud of that achievement. This Government and this Premier should be filled with pride about that achievement. It is something that we, and generation after generation of Western Australians, will be able to look back on. Eastern States Governments wish they could achieve what we have achieved in that regard. On top of that, this Government has made the greatest spending commitment to address the salinity problem that this State has seen.

That is the essence of a modern Labor Government. It is financially responsible. It fixes budget deficits, ensures that we live within our means, places a burden to the least extent possible on those who can least afford it, prioritises government expenditure into the key areas of health care, education and law and order, takes dramatic steps to protect our State's environment, and plans for the future. They are the essence of and key to a modern Labor Government. This Government has been doing that well for four budgets.

I would like to take five minutes to address a few issues concerning my electorate of Rockingham. Until the past couple of years the southern suburbs of Perth had largely missed out on the government spending that other parts of our great city had received. It has been an article of faith. The people of Rockingham had seen in the northern and western suburbs and the central city area the result of massive capital works expenditure by Governments over the past few decades, and wondered why there was no expenditure in their area. I absolutely agreed with them. It was unjustified and unexplainable. I did not know why my area missed out on the level of spending that had occurred in other parts of the city, particularly considering my electorate's contribution to the state economy, through the only heavy industrial part of the State, and to the nation's defence, through the most important defence base in the country. I was always confused about why that happened. However, that has been addressed in recent years. It is in black and white in the transport section of the budget.

An amount of \$400 million will be spent this year on the southern suburbs rail link. That rail link is something for which I and my community have been arguing for a long time. What is more, it goes the right way; that is, straight along the freeway and into Perth. It does not deviate through a dogleg that would have taken people, as soon as they got a vision of where they wanted to go, in an easterly direction for some unexplainable and unbelievable reason, and missed where it was supposed to go. It does not do that. It goes along the direct route that the people of the southern suburbs of Perth wanted it to go. The people of Rockingham will judge the Liberal Party's support for the rail line to go through the eastern suburbs of Perth, rather than along the direct route to Perth. I am confident that they support the Gallop Government's move, against the opposition of the Liberal Party, to take the railway directly into Perth along the freeway. An amount of \$400 million has been provided in this budget. The southern suburbs railway is a \$1.2 billion project. Another \$300 million will be spent on other parts of the New MetroRail project. The Government has made a total commitment of \$1.2 billion to the south western suburbs of Perth.

Secondly, I refer to the Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital upgrades. During this term of government a new emergency department has been built at the Rockingham hospital at a cost of \$10 million, including a new state-of-the-art four-slice CT scanner, which was opened last month by the Premier. Rockingham hospital will be first cab off the rank under the Reid review to receive an additional \$95 million of expenditure over the next 10 years, of which \$54 million will be spent in the next three budgets, more than tripling the size of the Rockingham hospital. It will include things like renal dialysis, orthopaedics, more general surgery, advanced efforts in paediatrics and obstetrics, new birthing suites, and an expansion from 67 to 217 beds.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Why didn't you do that three years ago?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am extremely proud of what we have done. I am proud it is in the forward estimates. I will watch very carefully whether the Liberal Party also commits to that expenditure as the election approaches, or whether that money will be siphoned off to some other project, such as putting milk into primary schools, the Fremantle eastern bypass or taking people's land to build the Fremantle eastern bypass. According to the Liberal Party, freehold private property is no longer safe.

Mr J.H.D. Day: That is disgraceful.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Those opposite have been writing to real estate agents saying that they will take their land. They are saying to people that their land is not safe if their Government gets elected.

Mr J.H.D. Day: That is not so.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Do you deny having written to real estate agents?

Mr J.H.D. Day: Yes, advising people not to buy land because of that.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Apparently Hon Barbara Scott and every media outlet are all wrong. Perhaps the Liberals will siphon that money away for some of the hair-brained schemes that they have come up with in recent times.

The Rockingham hospital will receive \$54 million over the next few years, \$1.2 billion has been allocated for the Rockingham railway and \$10 million has been allocated for the upgrade of the emergency department at the Rockingham hospital, which has already been completed.

The budget also contains a state allocation of \$3 million for the LandCorp development of the Rockingham beach area, which will include doing up the whole beachfront area with new entertainment, leisure and residential opportunities. It is a very exciting development for LandCorp that will bring more people into Rockingham.

As part of the education budget a brand new \$20 million high school will be built in Kwinana and a \$17 million high school at Secret Harbour. In recent years this Government has opened a range of new primary schools in Rockingham - the Waikiki Primary School, the Rockingham Lakes Primary School and the Secret Harbour Primary School, just to name three. There is also a commitment in the budget for the new Settlers Hill Primary School. That is, four new primary schools, one high school in Rockingham, one high school in Kwinana, a tripling of the size of the Rockingham-Kwinana District Hospital and a new rail link to the area. An amount of \$1 million has been allocated for the new mental health unit in Rockingham. In addition, \$250 000 has been allocated for a study into a proposed marina in Rockingham to assess whether it is economically viable and, if such a development is proposed, whether it meets the environmental conditions that are necessary for a proposal of that type. An amount of \$250 000 has been allocated for the West Coast Dive Park, which is a park of ships off the coast of Perth, designed to provide recreational dive opportunities in close proximity to over 80 per cent of the population. Allocating an amount of \$250 000 for a ship to be sunk off the coast of Perth is a significant commitment, and one that I am very proud of. It will make a huge difference to tourism and recreational opportunities in Rockingham.

I am very pleased with this budget and what this Government has provided for the south western suburbs. My city of some 82 000 citizens has finally caught up and in some respects has gone past other areas in Perth in terms of government attention that was so lacking in the past. I am proud of that. People in my area will also be pleased that the Government has gone to those lengths to assist them. I congratulate the Treasurer on his sound financial management. I thank him and the Premier for all the effort they have put into the southern suburbs of Perth.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Darling Range) [1.25 pm]: I am pleased to have the opportunity to comment on the 2004-05 state budget and also some related issues. The education budget was detailed by the Treasurer last week and we can come to only one conclusion: the allocation of funding for education and training is very disappointing. Clearly, education is the major sector that has missed out in this year's budget. Either the Minister for Education and Training lost his argument at the cabinet table and during the pre-budget discussions or he has not been doing his job. I concede that there was a great deal of pressure on the state budget because of the demands for funding, particularly for the southern metropolitan railway. An amount of \$411 million will be spent on that railway just in the next financial year, and a lot more in total, up to approximately \$1.5 billion or \$1.6 billion. That clearly puts major pressure on the rest of the budget, and unfortunately the school sector is suffering as a result.

The increase in the education and training budget is only 3.1 per cent. When one takes into account the effects of inflation of approximately two to 2.5 per cent and also the natural increase in numbers of school students in government schools of approximately 1.5 per cent a year, there has been no real increase in the education budget at all. In fact, it could be argued that there has been a decrease in real terms once one takes into account the need to provide for an additional number of students in the system. The 3.1 per cent increase contrasts dramatically with increases that occurred when the previous coalition Government was in office. The increase in last year's state budget was of a similar order. However, when the previous Liberal-National Party Government was in office, the increases over a number of years were substantially higher than during the term of this current Government. In 1995-96 there was a 9.1 per cent increase, in 1996-97 there was a 9.7 per cent increase, in 1997-98 there was a 6.7 per cent increase, in 1998-99 there was a 10.8 per cent increase, in 1999-2000 there was a 7.2 per cent increase and in 2000-01 there was a 4.9 per cent increase. I have not worked out the average of those increases, but it would have to be in the order of at least six or seven per cent. That contrasts dramatically with the increases that have been provided by the current Government. For all the rhetoric that the Minister for Education and Training and other members of the Government go on with, they are not putting their money where their mouths are, and, as often happens, it is Liberal Governments that actually make real achievements and changes and allocate funds to a significant extent.

There is a major need, for example, for maintenance and refurbishment of schools, particularly of the older schools in the government school system. A survey in 2001, the last survey that was completed and of which we have information, indicated that there was a \$88 million need for maintenance in government schools. I will be very interested to see the figure in the survey that was undertaken recently. I expect that the survey would have been completed by now, but I have not been advised of the equivalent figure. I suspect that it will be higher than \$88 million, because things have gone backwards in the past three years. Except for this year, there has been a reduction in the capital works budget for the education system. I can presume only that the figure for maintenance needs in government schools will be higher than \$88 million. I hope it is not, but I will be very interested to see what that figure is.

We also know that there is a need for new schools in many fast-growing areas of the State, but only one new secondary school has been funded in this budget; that is, the new middle school planned for Secret Harbour. I acknowledge that funding also has been allocated for the replacement of Kwinana Senior High School. No doubt that will be a very worthy project, but it will provide not a new school but a replacement for the existing high school at Kwinana.

When the Treasurer finished making his speech in presenting the budget last week, I read the budget overview, which is entitled "Families First". I went to the page headed "Budget Highlights", thinking I would see something about education, given that it is one of the core areas of state government responsibility. However, there is no mention on that page of funding for or meeting the needs of the education system in Western Australia. There is reference to a balanced budget, taxes and charges relief, health, disability services, community development, law and order, the environment and capital works, but there is nothing that relates to education and training. That tells a huge story. Clearly, there is nothing in this budget that this Government can be proud of in its achievements in and allocations to the education system. Indeed, I had to go to the end of the document to find any reference to or explanation for some of the activities it is undertaking in the education sector. Clearly, the education system has missed out in this budget, and that is bad news for students in the government school system in particular, which depends almost entirely on government funding. About 90 per cent of funding for government schools comes from the State Government.

As I have mentioned, in the next financial year the Government will spend \$412 million on the southern rail project. Hundreds of millions of dollars in excess of that will be spent over the following two or three years. That project is not popular in many parts of the State. It is certainly not appreciated by many of my constituents who live in the eastern part of the metropolitan area. Everyone accepts that good public transport services must be provided by the Government, including good public transport services to Mandurah. However, the way in which this Government is going about that project means that hundreds of millions of dollars more will be spent than would have been spent on the alternative route proposed and planned for by the previous Government; namely, the route through Kenwick and Canning Vale. It is not just a matter of the shortest possible route to Mandurah; it is a matter of balancing how many residents can be benefited overall. Clearly, more people would benefit if the railway were to go through the Kenwick-Canning Vale area, which is a very fast growing part of the metropolitan area and in which there is a big need for good public transport services. It must be remembered that there is already a very good public transport system along the middle of the freeway, with the busway that was installed as a result of the decisions of the previous Government near the end of its term. People in Melville, Como, South Perth and surrounding areas are very well served by public transport services at the moment. It would be better value for money and a more responsible use of taxpayers' funds if the railway were to go through the Kenwick and Canning Vale areas.

Mr M. McGowan: Is that a commitment?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The previous Government made a very clear commitment to constructing the railway -

Mr M. McGowan: Is that a commitment by you?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Many people are very sceptical about the value of the railway, and would prefer that a high-standard, high-speed dedicated bus lane be built all the way to Mandurah via Rockingham and so on. No doubt there will be further debate about that issue. The previous Government made a very clear commitment and, indeed, allocated funding for the construction of a railway through Kenwick and Canning Vale. I expect that that will be the commitment that will be re-endorsed by the Parliamentary Liberal Party. All those issues are under consideration at the moment, as they should be. The shadow minister, who is sitting to my right at the moment and is not in her normal place, will make further comments on that issue.

Mr M. McGowan: Hiding?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: For the record, the member is certainly not hiding. She is minding the Whip's seat in case the phone rings. She is far from hiding.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr J.P.D. Edwards): I take it that the member for Carine is the acting Whip for the Liberal Party.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: As I have said, there is a big need for the construction of new schools in fast-growing areas of the State. For example, I am aware that there is a lot of pressure for a high school to be built in Ellenbrook, which is a very fast-growing area. It now has between 11 000 and 12 000 residents, and clearly it will need a high school built in the fairly near future. As is currently planned, a high school is expected to open in Ellenbrook in 2008. I was interested to hear the comments of the Minister for Education and Training in this Chamber last week in a grievance about the need for a secondary school in Ellenbrook. He said that work on Ellenbrook high school will begin in the forthcoming financial year and the target for its opening is 2007. He is saying that work will commence in 2004-05. However, I have been through the budget papers and I have found no reference to any allocation of funds for a high school in Ellenbrook. Is the Minister for Education and Training telling us the full story? I will be very interested to hear from the minister where that allocation can be found in the budget. I will pursue that during the estimates committee hearing, if not before. I have found no reference - I do not believe there is any reference - in the budget papers to any allocation of funds for the construction of a new high school in Ellenbrook. The two things do not seem to add up at the moment, and that needs to be explored further.

I note that there is an allocation of \$1 million for the refurbishment and construction of some new facilities at the Kalamunda Senior High School in my electorate of Darling Range. In fact, the total amount to be spent is more than

\$1 million, because there has been a pooling of funds from an allocation to the education support centre at Kalamunda Senior High School. I understand that a small amount of supplementary funding has been provided to enable the whole project to go ahead. That is very welcome of course, but it needs to be recognised that the original \$1 million was allocated in 2000 and was announced by the previous Minister for Education, the now Leader of the Opposition. That money has flowed from funds from the sale of AlintaGas. It was always expected that the refurbishment of Kalamunda Senior High School would be funded in the fourth year of the high school refurbishment program, which was announced by the Leader of the Opposition when he was Minister for Education. There is nothing new about this allocation, even though the current Government is trying to make a big thing about the allocation for upgrades at Kalamunda Senior High School. The reality is that the funds have flowed from the sale of AlintaGas. I make that point because it is the Labor Party that is trying to make a big issue of privatisation, despite the fact that it engaged in privatisation activities when it was in government at both the federal and state level. The Government is quick to criticise any prospect of privatisation because it believes it is unpopular, but it is spending a large amount of money from the sale of AlintaGas. The southern metropolitan railway is only being built as a result of a \$350 million injection of funds from the sale of AlintaGas. We are hearing large doses of hypocrisy from the State Labor Government.

Mr M. McGowan: What else are you proposing to sell?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Nothing; I am contrasting the Government's rhetoric on the one hand with its absolute hypocrisy on the other.

Mr M. McGowan: Can you not see the hypocrisy of your own position?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Not at all.

Mr M. McGowan: You are saying that it is okay to sell things, but you do not intend to sell anything.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: We do not have an ideological opposition to privatisation if it makes sense in the public interest. Saying that does not imply that we have plans to sell anything at all. It must be realised that both the state and federal Labor Parties have been advocates of privatisation in the past and have also practised it in a very big way. I see a large amount of hypocrisy from the Labor Party on this issue. There has been a very disappointing increase in the education budget, in comparison to the increases in other core areas of government. The increase is only 3.1 per cent, and after the effect of inflation and the growth in student numbers there is no real growth at all. Last year's budget papers made reference to the fact that \$30 million a year will be removed from the education and training budget as from 1 July 2004. On a continuing annual basis \$30 million will be factored out of the education and training budget, as advised in last year's budget papers. There will be a great deal of pressure on the education system to meet all needs across the State.

I have made reference to the welcome upgrading of the Kalamunda Senior High School, which is now well under way, but the biggest issue at the moment, as far as the responsibilities of the State Government are concerned, is the future of the Kalamunda District Community Hospital. I have spoken on many occasions in this Chamber about the need for the redevelopment of the hospital, but now the Labor Government is planning to remove many of the services provided at the hospital. We are now in the fourth year of uncertainty, prevarication and delay in relation to the redevelopment of the hospital, since the last state election. A redevelopment was planned and funded by the previous Government, but unfortunately when the election was called the tender process for redevelopment had to go on hold. Since the change of Government nothing of any consequence has happened. We have heard lots of talk from the Government that the funds are still there, and I acknowledge that the funds are maintained in the long-term parts of the state budget, but we have certainly not seen any action of any consequence on the redevelopment. It should have been completed two years ago, but unfortunately there is still a very large degree of uncertainty about the future of the hospital and what form the redevelopment will take, if indeed it ever occurs under the present Government. It will quite clearly not occur during this term of government, and the best thing for Kalamunda hospital, as I will come back to later, will be a change of Government. There will be a very clear commitment from a future Liberal Government to the redevelopment of the hospital and the maintenance of existing services there. The Reid report, produced for the Government and made public six or eight weeks ago, has unfortunately recommended that the number of beds at Kalamunda be reduced from 53 to 25. In fact, the total capacity of Kalamunda hospital is about 75 beds, but I understand that over past few years it has operated around the level of 53 beds. Even at that lower level, the reduction in size and activity at the hospital is really quite astounding. As I said, the Government plans to reduce the number of beds to 25.

In addition to that, it is also the stated intention of the Government, following the Reid recommendations, to remove the existing obstetric services at the hospital and many of the surgical services it currently provides. In early April a large public meeting was held in Kalamunda, attended by at least 1 500 people. I am pleased that the shadow Minister for Health was able to attend. Like everybody else there, he saw a very large amount of anger expressed by the local community, both in the number of people attending the meeting and the comments made. For 1 500 people to attend a public meeting in Kalamunda on a Sunday morning shows a strong degree of anger and interest in this issue. In addition, a petition calling for the maintenance of the existing services at the hospital is circulating at the moment and has so far been signed by more than 13 000 people. I look forward to presenting the petition to Parliament in the near future.

In order to justify its plan to remove services from Kalamunda hospital, the minister for health is relying on the so-called safety issue. He is arguing that the safety of mothers and babies will be better provided for and more likely to be guaranteed if obstetric services are provided in another hospital where a larger number of births take place. It must be remembered that about 430 births occurred last year at Kalamunda hospital, which is by no means an insignificant number. It is a relatively high number by the standards of many hospitals both in the metropolitan area and throughout the State. If all the private facilities in the metropolitan area are taken into account, I understand that there are many hospitals that have a much lower number of deliveries each year. I agree very strongly that the safety of mothers and babies is absolutely paramount. When I was Minister for Health I established the inquiry into clinical services at King Edward Memorial Hospital. That inquiry arose out of a very strong concern over some clinical standards in the 10 years prior to 2000, and was based on a lot of advice provided to me as Minister for Health. As an aside, when the Labor Government came into office, despite all the comments it had made while in opposition about the need for such an inquiry, it did not really want to know much about it. It all got too hard. The Government regarded the cost as being too high, and when the inquiry was nearing the end of its process but had not completed its task, the Government did not want to finish the inquiry as it should have. As a consequence, a large amount of important information that could assist clinicians not only in this State but in other parts of Australia and the world has not been published or tabled in this Parliament as it should have been. If we are talking about the safety and interests of mothers and babies, this Government stands condemned for not completing the King Edward Memorial Hospital inquiry as it should have done, so that the information could be made public. About 96 clinical cases, with all personal information de-identified, giving clear examples of where things were going wrong at King Edward Memorial Hospital, could have been made available to the public and to clinicians to learn from. This Government stands condemned for the fact that it has not taken the action that would have enabled that inquiry to be completed properly.

I return to Kalamunda hospital, and in particular the safety of obstetric services. Where is the evidence to sustain the argument put by the Minister for Health that mothers and babies would be safer if their deliveries occurred elsewhere? I have always said that if clear professional advice is provided by reputable bodies such as the Royal Australian College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists that the provision of such services at Kalamunda hospital is unsafe or inappropriate in some way, that would be a completely different situation and I would be the first to agree that those services need to be moved elsewhere. However, that evidence and those sorts of comments and advice are simply not there. Therefore, the minister is skating on very thin ice when he seeks to rely on that argument. Doctors and nursing staff, midwifery staff in particular, at Kalamunda hospital are very angry about the attitude that has been taken by the State Government. They are very angry about the cloud that has been cast over the hospital, and over the standard of clinical care that is being provided at that hospital, by the Minister for Health because of his unsubstantiated comments about safety aspects at that hospital.

We need to look at some of the comments that have been made about Kalamunda hospital that very much do not back up the argument being put by the Minister for Health with regard to the safety of obstetric services. I am aware of a letter that has been written to the Minister for Health by Dr Richard Christie, a paediatrician, dated 6 April 2004. I will not read all of the letter, but Dr Christie has been attending at Kalamunda hospital, and also Swan District Hospital and Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital, since 1986, and he assists general practitioner-obstetricians in the care of newborn infants. He says in his letter-

Firstly I would like to make the observation that "bigger is not always best". I am not sure where the data supporting a minimum of 2000 deliveries per neonatal unit was established. Certainly I believe the same question has been asked by Dr Warwick Ruse who is Chairman of the Bentley Medical Advisory Committee.

Secondly it is my impression that the opposite is in fact true. The very "busyness" of King Edward Maternity Hospital may have contributed to some of the issues that have recently been in the public arena.

Thirdly the quality of care given is not related to throughput but to patient satisfaction and on these grounds I do believe Kalamunda stands up very well in relation to other similar units throughout the State.

I have had the privilege to work with the General Practitioner/Obstetricians at Kalamunda Hospital over many years and have been impressed by their duty of care and diligence. There is also an Obstetric on call back up should caesarean sections be required.

He goes on -

Finally while I do support the need to expand and renovate the Swan District Hospital Health site, I do believe that there is an important role for smaller maternity units such as Kalamunda and for the day surgery cover they also provide to the local and extended community beyond the Kalamunda Shire limits. As I understand it there are Surgeons who only operate at Kalamunda Hospital in the public sector who would not offer the same services at Swan District Hospital if these day surgery services were withdrawn.

That is a strong endorsement by Dr Richard Christie of obstetric services at Kalamunda hospital.

Another letter written by Dr Graeme Johnstone, a consultant anaesthetist, and addressed to Dr Warren Thyer of the obstetric management committee at Kalamunda hospital states -

I have worked at Kalamunda Hospital for over 15 years providing general anaesthetic services for both elective cases and emergencies, including obstetrics, when required.

Although I do relatively little obstetrics at the hospital I have invariably been impressed by the standard of care provided to these patients.

In particular the anaesthetic cover and emergency care have been ,and I am sure will continue to be, of a particularly high calibre.

We can also benefit from considering the Department of Health WA "State Patient Satisfaction Survey 2002-2003". The maternity services at Kalamunda hospital were examined as part of that survey. The survey was undertaken by the Department of Health, so it was quite independent of Kalamunda hospital. The survey makes the comment that -

Kalamunda performs well with patient Satisfaction and patient outcomes. Kalamunda hospital was rated as the highest overall performer across the State Maternity Public Health providers with an overall rating of 84.5%, followed by the Metro Tertiary at 81.2% and Non Tertiary at 80.2%. Additionally, the patient rated Outcome of Stay was favorably ranked with Tertiary and Non Tertiary providers.

Areas of high performance were:

- availability of people to care for client,
- information and communication - staff and client,
- meeting personal and clinical needs,
- consistency of advice,
- involvement in care and treatment, and
- exercising rights as a patient.

The evidence that is available dispels the myth that has been put out by the Minister for Health that there is a safety issue with regard to obstetric services at Kalamunda hospital.

I am also aware of the Cohen report, which has been prepared for the Government on the provision of obstetric services across the State but which has not been adopted by the Government, as I understand it. It would seem that, because the Minister for Health is relying on this report to some extent to back up his argument, that he is being very selective in the information that he is choosing to provide. However, if we are to consider the Cohen report, we need to look at comments such as the one in paragraph two at page 21 -

There is a need to fully explore a model of 'shared care' and access for General Practitioner Obstetricians. Shared care, recognises that the General Practitioners provide ongoing care, that may extend over more than one pregnancy and adopts a 'whole of life approach', that maintains support for mothers and children. The role of the General Practitioner and the Midwife in the provision of care in the home is an area that certainly requires further development and consultation. The concept of the 'seamless hospital' needs to be promoted and supported in the community.

This is the situation that exists at Kalamunda hospital. It provides a very high standard of services to patients. There is a strong connection between the staff and the patients, and the wider community. There is a very strong desire by the local community to maintain the services that are provided to the highest standard and in an easily accessible way. The model of care that is being provided at Kalamunda hospital follows the suggestion in the report that opportunities need to be provided for general practitioners to act as obstetricians, for continuity of care, and for the seamless provision of health care. One of the benefits of the services that are provided at Kalamunda hospital is that there is a good degree of continuity of care. Patients are generally able to follow through with one doctor from start to finish, whether it be for obstetric services or other services. Local doctors tend to know the needs and concerns of their patients and the types of treatments they are having, and they do not need to start from scratch, as is often the case in a larger tertiary hospital or, for that matter, in some of the larger secondary hospitals. The model that is provided at Kalamunda hospital is one that we should be seeking to replicate elsewhere.

I agree entirely, as I said, that safety aspects, particularly with regard to obstetric services, are paramount, and I will always put that first. However, when there is good advice that the standards of care at Kalamunda hospital are high and that the needs of patients are being met, then I will fight very strongly to maintain those services at Kalamunda hospital. Removing obstetric services, which is what the Government is planning to do, will have the effect of removing some of the medical practitioners who currently provide care in the Kalamunda district. Some general practitioners who currently provide obstetric services will not remain in the Kalamunda area if they are not able to provide obstetric services at Kalamunda District Community Hospital. That would be a matter of enormous concern to the local community. It is hard enough at the moment to get doctors in the outer metropolitan areas. The federal Government has programs in place to provide incentives for doctors to move to the outer metropolitan areas of our capital cities,

including Perth and the shire of Kalamunda. If this Government goes through with its plan, some of those doctors will be removed.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 2782.]

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

WINDIMURRA VANADIUM MINE

251. Mr C.J. BARNETT to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to the front page article in the business section of today's *The West Australian* - the headline reads "State knocks back Windimurra rescue" - relating to the closure of the vanadium mine near Mt Magnet, which is owned by Swiss mining house Xstrata.

- (1) Is the Premier aware that the Windimurra mine is a high value-adding project, one of the most efficient and largest vanadium mines in the world, and, at current vanadium prices, could operate on a very profitable basis of \$6 compared with \$3.50?
- (2) Is the Premier aware that, if reopened, this mine has the potential to produce \$150 million per annum in additional exports, employ 200 Western Australians and generate \$3 million per annum in royalties to the State?
- (3) What action has the State Government taken to encourage Xstrata to either reopen the mine or place it on the market as a complete project?
- (4) Will the Premier accept my offer of bipartisan support for immediate action to ensure the mine is reopened or sold to a third party in the interests of developing employment in the mid west region of Western Australia?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

- (1)-(4) The headline in today's *The West Australian* is quite misleading. In answer to the specific questions raised by the Leader of the Opposition, in general terms I am aware of this project and of its potential. In terms of action, clearly it would be in the interests of Western Australia to have this project up and running. There is no question about that. The Minister for State Development has made that very clear in all the comments he has made on this matter. Unfortunately, from the Government's point of view, having looked into this issue, there are very few levers. When state support was given to the project through Western Power, under the watch of the now Leader of the Opposition, no conditions were attached to protect the public interest of Western Australia. Who is responsible for that? It is the Leader of the Opposition. There is no doubt that the Leader of the Opposition ensured that Western Power entered into this arrangement, which is costing a significant amount of money every year. In terms of guaranteeing that the project would be ongoing, nothing was done by the then Government. What is this Government doing? The Minister for State Development has spoken to all the stakeholders, including the company that has expressed some interest in buying out the project and the company that currently has the controlling interest. I am confident that in those discussions the Minister for State Development is representing the public interest of Western Australia firmly, as he always does. When this Government deals with these types of issues, as it frequently does, it makes sure that it has levers so that the public interest can be protected in the future. The responsibility for the failure of the previous Government to provide conditions on the project to support its sustainability lies with the Leader of the Opposition. This Government is taking action. The Minister for State Development is doing all that he can to press upon those involved that there ought to be a chance for the marketplace to determine whether this project goes ahead. That is the position the Government is taking and it is putting it forcefully. I repeat: there are no levers available to us. Why? It is because of the incompetence of the now Leader of the Opposition.

WINDIMURRA VANADIUM MINE

252. Mr C.J. BARNETT to the Premier:

I ask a supplementary question. Has either the Premier or the Minister for State Development been in direct contact with senior management of Xstrata in Switzerland about this project?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

The Minister for State Development has been in contact with Xstrata on this particular project.

The SPEAKER: I acknowledge the presence in my gallery of the Consul General of the Republic of Croatia, Mr Tihomir Telisman, and the Mayor of Blato, Mr Ivo Gavranich.

[Applause.]

FEDERAL BUDGET, STATE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE

253. Mr J.J.M. BOWLER to the Premier:

Will the Premier outline the State Government's response to the federal lucky dip - I should say budget - that was handed down last night?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

Obviously, the Government welcomes the tax cuts and the family benefits, although as the Labor Party we say, because we believe in supporting those in our community on lower incomes, that there are no benefits for the battlers in our community. The Labor Party, when it puts its alternative position, will have a different philosophy and approach. I look forward to Mark Latham's approach on this issue. We welcome the rebate for the wine equalisation tax. We have been lobbying the federal Government for a long time on that issue. I applaud the efforts of the Minister for State Development on that issue. We also look forward to seeing what Western Australia's allocation will be for AusLink and for the research and development and the tourism dollars that have been referred to in general terms, but for which there is no allocation to the States. The important issue that affects the member for Eyre's community and the State of Western Australia is our resource industry.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What about Windimurra?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I think the Leader of the Opposition has a guilty conscience about Windimurra. That is why is he covering his backside on this issue and raising the matter in the way that he has. Why will he not release the cabinet minutes that led to the decision by the then Government to support the project? Why will he not do that? The request has been made by the Treasurer.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What do you think is in them?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: Why will he not release them?

Mr C.J. Barnett: Get real.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: We have an open and accountable Leader of the Opposition!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr J.N. Hyde interjected.

Ms S.E. Walker interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the members for Perth and Nedlands to order for the first time.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: Let us look at the Western Australian economy. Currently, our best estimate is that we are growing at 6.75 per cent. We are making a significant contribution to the nation through what we are doing in Western Australia. However, the costs involved in sustaining that growth are not being recognised by the Commonwealth. What are those costs? They are all about infrastructure and making sure that we are in a position to realise our potential and to create jobs and opportunities for all Western Australians. I have been raising these matters with the Commonwealth on behalf of the people of Western Australia. Let us have a look at the response from the Commonwealth. Is there any support for the Ravensthorpe project in the federal budget? No. Is there any support for geological surveys in the federal budget, despite all the breast beating that went on from the federal minister late last year and despite the fact that we put \$12 million into the exploration survey in Western Australia? No. Was there any response from the Commonwealth to the Prosser and Bowler reports in terms of the flow through share scheme? No. Was there any response from the Commonwealth to our desire to make sure that tax zone rebates reflect the real cost of living in rural and regional Western Australia? No. As far as John Howard is concerned, Western Australia is out of sight, out of mind. He does not know how the State operates. He does not know what we need to do to build jobs for all Australians. He has delivered none of those things to the people of Western Australia. The federal budget is concerned with winning marginal seats on the eastern coast of Australia. It is not about building on Western Australia's potential. The member for Eyre can tell the constituents in his electorate that no-one in Canberra is listening to the important industries that are based in his electorate. The federal Government is not talking about committing to the exploration and surveying to which this Government is committed; it will not upgrade the zone tax rebates; it has not committed to building the necessary infrastructure to fund major projects like Ravensthorpe; and the flow-through share scheme has not been included in the federal Government's calculations. Once again Western Australia is not being given the serious support that it needs to build jobs for all Western Australians. Western Australia is growing at more than six per cent. We have tremendous potential. We want to work with the Commonwealth Government to bring about that potential. The fact is that we need a Labor Government in Canberra to do it.

SECONDARY EDUCATION AND TRAINING, FUNDING

254. Mr J.H.D. DAY to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer the minister to his pre-election commitment to improve secondary education and lift retention rates.

- (1) Is the minister aware that in last week's budget there was no real increase in funding to secondary education in Western Australia?
- (2) Is he also aware that in last week's budget his Government cut funding to vocational education and training?
- (3) Will the minister now concede that his commitment to secondary education and training in this State does not extend beyond press releases, publicity stunts and photo opportunities?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:

- (1)-(3) I thank the member for the question, although I am very disappointed by it. I am almost hurt by the tone of the question. However, I will not dwell upon my own feelings.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Kalgoorlie to order for the first time.

Mr M.J. Birney: Give us some razzamatazz.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Kalgoorlie to order for the second time.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: In its last four years in office, the previous Government spent about \$5.8 billion on education and training. This Government has spent several billion more than that. In answer to a ridiculous question, in the next four years - the member should have a look at the budget papers - this Government will spend about \$12 billion on education and training in Western Australia. That is almost the equivalent of the entire state budget this year. Over the next four years the Government will spend around \$12 billion. Any suggestion that we are not providing adequate financial support is absolutely ludicrous. The last person in all of Western Australia who should raise his little voice about how this Government funds and manages education and training is the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You should not point your finger. We had achievements.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: The Leader of the Opposition is rapidly being deserted by his friends on the front bench and is left with only his enemies. He would be well advised to keep quiet on the issue of education and training. I have been very kind and gentle to the Leader of the Opposition. I could have been very mean to him on education and training but I have taken it easy on him. I am waiting for my friend, Doug Shave, to come forward and do some of that work himself. Doug Shave is coming back into Parliament; I do not have to worry too much about the Leader of the Opposition. The member's own side is taking care of him, so I do not have to worry about him.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Even I would back Doug if he stood for Willagee!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: The Government will spend about \$12 billion on education and training over the next four years. The average amount of money spent on education and training per student has increased from about \$8 000 to \$10 000. The State is being let down - I will talk about this at another time - by the Commonwealth. Everybody knows that the State is being let down badly by the Commonwealth.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: What members can hear is the voice of privilege, the voice of the born-to-rule set rising up against someone who supports public education.

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING, FUNDING REDUCTION

255. Mr J.H.D. DAY to the Minister for Education and Training:

I will give the minister an opportunity to say something of substance. Is he aware that there has been a reduction of \$300 000 in funding for vocational education and training this year? Why is that the case?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:

I invite the member to look at the figures in the budget. The budget for education and training has increased by \$72 million.

CRIME STATISTICS

256. Mr J.N. HYDE to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services:

I am particularly interested to know how the Government's campaign to reduce home burglaries is progressing. Will the minister advise the House of the latest crime statistics? As the current member for Perth, I am very interested to hear of the latest burglary figures for the state seat of Perth over the past three years under the Gallop-Roberts-Hyde troika.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Perth for the question and for some notice of it, albeit not the last part! I also thank him for his longstanding commitment to community safety and his involvement in crime prevention. The March quarter figures for

2004 demonstrate that the Government is winning the war against home burglary and crime. The member for Perth will be particularly pleased that home burglary in his district, which is the central district - maybe the member for Nedlands might share in the member for Perth's happiness - has decreased by some 46.2 per cent compared with the same time last year. That is a massive decrease. For the first three months of March this year compared with the first three months leading up to March last year, there has been a 46.2 per cent decrease in home burglaries.

Mr M.J. Birney: Tell us about the robberies.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Members opposite do not want to hear this. For years under the coalition Government crime escalated.

Mr M.J. Birney: What about sexual assault? Tell us about manslaughter.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Members opposite incessantly interject. The member for Kalgoorlie just asked me to tell him about sexual assault. Sexual assault was reduced by 26 per cent for the quarter and was reduced by 25 per cent over nine months. However, I will not be diverted. The statewide quarterly figures show that in the first three months of this year compared with the same period last year home burglary has decreased by a massive 22.5 per cent. That is a significant decrease and it is reflected in the year-to-date statistics that show there were 4 429 fewer home burglaries. Most police districts have reported significant decreases in home burglary. Home burglary in the east metropolitan area, which covers Midland, decreased by 35.3 per cent. The south east metropolitan area, the great southern, the south west, goldfields-Esperance and the Kimberley reported decreases of 27.8 per cent, 21.8 per cent, 23.1 per cent, 13.4 per cent and 40.7 per cent respectively compared with the same time last year. Overall, the latest crime statistics report a decrease of 12.4 per cent compared with the same time last year. I repeat: 12.4 per cent fewer crimes were committed this year compared with last year. One in 10 crimes has been eliminated.

Ms S.E. Walker interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Nedlands!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I think the harpies are back at it. They do not want to hear this good news.

Ms S.E. Walker: Tell us the truth.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Sadly, members opposite do not share our joy at seeing reports that show the number of crimes has reduced and that the community is safer. Importantly, offences against the person and property have decreased. The year-to-date statistics show that of the 19 offence categories reported, 18 have shown a decrease. All three police regions report overall year-to-date decreases in reported offences. From 1 July last year to 31 March this year there has been a 10.2 per cent decrease in the metropolitan region, a 6.1 per cent decrease in the southern region and a 6.2 per cent decrease in the north eastern region. The latest crime statistics indicate significant decreases in the rates of home burglary, theft, aggravated robbery, sexual assault, arson and threatening behaviour. Through our Government's commitment to resourcing police operations, public awareness campaigns and DNA profiling, crime is decreasing and clearance rates are improving.

Mr P.D. Omodei: That's what you told us last night, the night before and the night before that.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is sad to hear members opposite, rather than congratulate the Police Service and the Government -

Mr P.D. Omodei interjected.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call to order for the first time the members for Warren-Blackwood and Kingsley.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is sad that members opposite, rather than congratulate both the Police Service -

Mr P.D. Omodei interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call to order for the second time the member for Warren-Blackwood.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: It is very sad that members opposite fail to congratulate the Police Service and the Government for turning around crime statistics in this State. It is with some pleasure that I table the March quarterly statistics of the Western Australia Police Service.

[See paper No 2346.]

ELLENBROOK HIGH SCHOOL, CONSTRUCTION

257. Mr J.H.D. DAY to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the minister's comment to the member for Swan Hills in this House on 6 May, the day the budget was presented, when he said -

The member can go back to her constituency and say that the Minister for Education has stood up in the Parliament and said that work on Ellenbrook high school will begin in the forthcoming financial year and the target for its opening is 2007.

- (1) Is the minister aware that there is not one cent of funding in the Department of Education and Training's capital works budget to begin Ellenbrook high school in the forthcoming financial year?
- (2) Will the minister now admit that he has misled both this House and the people of Swan Hills?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:

- (1)-(2) This question demonstrates why this Government inherited a State with finances that had been hopelessly mismanaged. The former education minister, who was incapable of running an education budget, blew out the finances by hundreds of millions of dollars and now another former senior minister has stood and made that assertion. The money is in the budget.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Where?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: The money is in the budget.

GERALDTON REGIONAL HOSPITAL, SALARIED DOCTORS

258. Mr S.R. HILL to the Minister for Health:

Will the minister please update the House on the current situation relating to the doctors at Geraldton Regional Hospital?

Mr J.A. McGINTY replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

On 11 December 2003, a commitment was made to employ a minimum of six new salaried doctors for the hospital. The implementation of those arrangements commenced in early January 2004. Unfortunately, negotiations with local general practitioners regarding their participation in the hospital broke down, and visiting medical practitioners withdrew their services from the hospital on 1 March 2004. That necessitated local doctors being engaged to cover the rosters while the recruitment and selection of permanent doctors took place to ensure the continuity of medical services to the people of Geraldton.

I am very pleased to advise the House that the Government has satisfactorily resolved with all parties involved, particularly the local general practitioners, the staffing dispute at the Geraldton Regional Hospital. As a result of the agreement, two salaried doctors have commenced at the hospital and a further two doctors will take up positions in mid June 2004. Advertisements for three staff specialist positions close in mid May; these are positions for directors of anaesthetics, emergency medicine and general medicine, and all those staff are expected to begin later this year. The permanent appointment of the director of medical services has been made and the appointee will commence in mid June 2004.

I believe the new medical arrangements will be an enormous shot in the arm for the people of Geraldton and for the provision of health care to the people of that region. It will be beneficial for the patients, the local doctors and the hospital's effectiveness. The Geraldton community can now look forward to more immediate medical attention at the hospital's emergency department; a reduction in workload demand pressures on local GPs during the busiest time of their working day; a choice for local doctors in their level of participation in the hospital's medical rosters; an enhancement of patient medical care at no extra cost; an improved standard of medical administration in the hospital; and higher quality care for the people of Geraldton and the surrounding area closer to home. The appointment of those new medical staff will assist in the training of junior doctors in Geraldton.

I thank the member for Geraldton for his support in what has been a tough few months with the doctors in Geraldton. I am confident that the new arrangements will be an enormous boost to the people of Geraldton.

PATHWAYS HOME PROGRAM, COMMONWEALTH FUNDING

259. Mr M.W. TRENORDEN to the Minister for Health:

I refer to \$23 million in funding provided by the Commonwealth as part of the Pathways Home program to build two new subacute centres for the relocation of existing hospital-based rehabilitation services and for the introduction of new step-down services in the north and south metropolitan health regions.

- (1) Will the minister confirm that the facilities will be utilised primarily by elderly patients with age-related and mental illnesses, for example, Alzheimer's disease and dementia?
- (2) Will any of the \$23 million be made available to mainstream psychiatric patients, many of whom will be left without voluntary beds as a result of planned bed closures at Sir Charles Gairdner and Royal Perth Hospitals?
- (3) Will the minister please table the five-year plan submitted to the Commonwealth outlining how the funds will be spent?

Mr J.A. McGINTY replied:

I thank the Leader of the National Party for his question.

- (1) Yes. As a condition of funding, the Pathways Home program for Western Australia will aim to maximise quality of life and independence, particularly for older people following hospital treatment. As per the criteria outlined in clause 7 of schedule B, Western Australia targeted its proposals towards older people living with special needs, particularly those with mental illnesses and chronic disease.
- (2) No. The proposal was targeted at community-based care for older people living with mental illnesses and chronic disease. Plans for psychiatric beds at Royal Perth and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospitals are still under consideration, following my meeting last week with a very large number of psychiatrists.
- (3) I will provide information on the submission to the Commonwealth, subject to there being no objection from the Commonwealth. I will make immediate inquiries of the Commonwealth and if there is no objection, I will happily make that information available to the Leader of the National Party.

ACCOMMODATION SERVICES, FEDERAL FUNDING

260. Mr A.P. O'GORMAN to the Minister for Disability Services:

What does yesterday's federal budget do to specifically address the unmet need for accommodation services to assist ageing carers and people with a disability in Western Australia?

Ms S.M. McHALE replied:

I thank the member for his question and his concern for very vulnerable people in our community.

The federal budget for people with disabilities falls well short of community expectations. Although I acknowledge that it recognises the plight of many carers, the short answer to the member for Joondalup's question is that it does absolutely nothing to further relieve the pressure on and anxiety of parents who need permanent alternative accommodation for their sons and daughters. That is the essence of the Australian budget for people with disabilities. I acknowledge that carers will get a one-off payment, but it is not sustained. That will not help ageing parents. The Howard Government has not done the right thing by people with disabilities, as there is no substantial increase in recurrent funding. There is an indication in the budget of support for respite care, but the sting in the tail is that the States must pay for half of it. In other words, the State must pay for the federal Government's budget announcements. Is that a commitment to people with disabilities? I think not. Unfortunately, the promise of respite is only half funded. The commitment pales into insignificance when compared with the major announcement that our Government made last week. Over the next four years, more than \$25 million in recurrent funding will go to assist more than 450 people with disabilities.

Let us look at what the sector said about our budget and what it wants from the federal Government. Mrs Mary-Louise Allen, President of the Developmental Disability Council of WA, said that the increases in our state budget will go a significant way towards ensuring that people with a disability, and their families, can exercise their basic human rights and enjoy the quality of life that our community expects for all its members. DDC also called on the federal Government to match our commitment and our leadership for a lasting resolution of unmet need. Has the federal Government done that? The answer is no.

As I said at the outset, the federal Government has recognised some of the pressures on carers. That is welcomed. I pay tribute to the work of Judy Brewer-Fischer and Carol Franklin from Western Australia. The announcements in the budget yesterday fell well short of the expectations of families, who were anticipating more help. Quite frankly, the federal budget falls well short of our Government's commitment to people with disabilities.

SAFECARE PROGRAM

261. Ms S.E. WALKER to the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth:

It is Law Week in Western Australia, and its theme was outlined in *The West Australian* on Monday as follows -

No one is above the law - not lawyers, nor the media, nor the Government.

It offends our sense of justice if people can flout the law and get away with it . . .

- (1) Why is the minister's Government continuing to allow the program SafeCare, which exposes sexually abused children to further sexual molestation by their offenders and undermines the criminal justice system, to exist?
- (2) Does the minister agree with the comments of SafeCare program director, Christabel Chamarette, who said on Channel Nine on Friday that SafeCare is independent of the law?

Ms S.M. McHALE replied:

- (1)-(2) I thank the member for Nedlands for her question. She has been peddling her dissatisfaction with SafeCare for quite a number of months. She cannot get her head around the complexity of sexual abuse and the complexity of the behaviour of perpetrators. I am not in the business of closing down a service just because a member of the Opposition cannot get her head around the complexity of perpetrators.

I saw the article in *The Australian* today. Once again the Opposition has put its support for mandatory reporting on the public record, and is somehow linking SafeCare to its policy position. That is its right. However, is it not interesting that when in government it refused to support mandatory reporting and had nothing to do with it? People can say whatever they like in opposition, but in government it is a different matter.

SafeCare has been funded by both Governments since about 1990.

Ms S.E. Walker: In what form?

Ms S.M. McHALE: For the service that the member is talking about. The Liberal Government funded SafeCare and had no problems with it. The Labor Government has funded the work around perpetrators and their families, and has had no problem with that. However, the member for Nedlands has a problem with it because she cannot get her head around the complexities.

It is important to understand that with child sexual abuse and the treatment of perpetrators, a range of services are needed. The services for perpetrators are very limited. This is one service that is attracting national interest. The importance of this service is that it grew out of a recognition by clients that they would come forward and seek treatment a lot earlier if they would not automatically be subject to proceedings in a criminal court. The families did not want to raise the matter because of the fear of losing the perpetrator from the family. This is the reality that we are dealing with.

Therefore, I ask the question: is it not better to have a service which everybody other than the member for Nedlands thinks is serving a purpose and which allows perpetrators to come forward and seek treatment, rather than allowing them to continue to abuse the kids in their families behind closed doors? That is the important message. This service has been reviewed, and I understand that it has just received federal funding for another review. I am not in the business of closing a service because the member for Nedlands does not like it and cannot get her head around it. That is the important matter.

SAFECARE PROGRAM

262. Ms S.E. WALKER to the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth:

I have a supplementary question. Will the minister investigate and report on that organisation's view that it is above and beyond the law?

Ms S.M. McHALE replied:

I simply do not agree with that statement. No organisation is beyond the law.

SOUTHERN SUBURBS RAILWAY, OPPOSITION'S POSITION

263. Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

Will the minister advise the House of the latest opposition position on the southern suburbs railway?

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN replied:

I was going to say that the Opposition has more positions than the number of positions in a rather well-known Indian book. However, the people of the southern suburbs certainly deserve a straight answer from the Opposition on this matter. A brigade of Liberal Party camp followers are continuing to run the anti-rail line and to demand that it be stopped. They are, as we know, doing the dirty work for the Opposition, which of course is in a difficult position. We know that one of those rail opponents, Mr Peter Breuchle, is the Opposition's transport spokesperson and adviser on rail. Indeed, he has been complaining about the amount of work he has had to do for the member for Carine. Therefore, it is not surprising that the member for Carine has said that the whole project should be canned; even if it cost \$1 billion to not build a rail line, that was a good idea. She was contradicted by the Leader of the Opposition, who in turn contradicted himself. As we all know, if he is in West Perth, he says that the rail is not such a good idea, and that the Liberal Party would take it only to Thomsons Lake. Then it would think about Rockingham and it would think later about Mandurah. However, when he is in Mandurah, of course, he has a different story.

The latest contribution that I must share with the House is from the opposition leader in waiting, the member for Kalgoorlie. He is now pontificating on rail. In his first contribution, just last Monday, he said -

Our current position -

This is hot off the press, folks -

is that we would go back to the Kenwick route . . .

He went on to indicate that when he leaves his electorate, he goes straight to Bali and does not stop anywhere in Perth on the way. He went on to say, in true Wee Willy Packer fashion -

. . . there's only about 200 people that travel from Mandurah to Perth every day . . .

He wants to buy all of them a Mercedes Benz.

Several members interjected.

Ms A.J. MacTIERNAN: He is after the member's seat.

This is really a serious matter for the people of the southern suburbs. Where does the Liberal Party stand on this important matter? I can tell the House that the people of the southern suburbs are getting the message very loudly and clearly that only one party is unambiguously committed to developing a rail link to Rockingham and to Mandurah, and it is the Gallop Labor Party.

ELLENBROOK HIGH SCHOOL, CONSTRUCTION

264. Mr J.H.D. DAY to the Minister for Education and Training:

Are funds allocated in the 2004-05 budget to commence the construction of a high school in Ellenbrook in the next financial year? If so, how much is allocated, and where is it shown in the budget papers?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER replied:

This is marvellous. I am flattered that I am getting so much attention from the shadow Minister for Education and Training after so long. The answer to the question is that money is allocated for Ellenbrook in the budget papers. I have a brilliant idea -

Mr M.J. Birney: You are the best!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: The member is like a little toy. Press the button and he pops up and says, "You are the best. You are a genius."

Mr M.J. Birney: Did you bring your lunch box?

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: How good is this guy? We really need to reform the whole way in which the budget process takes place. As an idea, why not set aside a whole week so that the Opposition may sit in this Chamber and ask ministers questions about the budget? Why not call it estimates?

ELLENBROOK HIGH SCHOOL, BUDGET FUNDING

Standing Orders Suspension

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the Opposition) [2.41 pm] - without notice: I move -

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as is necessary to allow the Minister for Education and Training to -

- (a) explain to the House where in the state budget funding is provided for the proposed Ellenbrook high school; or
- (b) apologise to the House for earlier today claiming that funding for the Ellenbrook high school is in the state budget.

This is a clear case of a minister having misled the Parliament within the past half hour. What clearly happened on budget day was that the member for Swan Hills had been briefed on the content of the budget.

Ms J.A. Radisich: I have been campaigning on the issue for three years.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member for Swan Hills will have the opportunity to speak in this debate. I will welcome the contribution from the member for Swan Hills, because there is no doubt that the most important issue in the electorate of the member for Swan Hills is the lack of a high school at Ellenbrook, which is an urban area with a rapidly growing population. When I was the Minister for Education, primary schools were developed in that area. That school age population is now moving into high school, and clearly Ellenbrook is one of those growth areas where the primary school population is large and where young boys and girls are now reaching high school age.

Clearly the member for Swan Hills discovered that Ellenbrook high school was not in the budget. Therefore on budget day, the member for Swan Hills moved a grievance in this place, quite correctly. I said at the time that she was right because Ellenbrook does need a high school development. In response to the grievance, the Minister for Education and Training made comments to the effect that he could assure her the project would be under way this coming financial year and that in 2007 the school would be opened. Ellenbrook high school is not in this budget. When asked today on two occasions by the member for Darling Range if the minister could simply identify where Ellenbrook high school appeared in the state budget, on what page the allocation was listed and how much was allocated for it, he got into his usual abusive, taunting style, which he directed at the member for Nedlands and the member for Kalgoorlie, who are quite capable of looking after themselves. Everyone in this House could see that the Minister for Education and Training had misled this Parliament. That is why we must suspend standing orders.

Members can go through the 1 000 pages of the budget papers. They will find no reference to Ellenbrook high school, yet this minister stood in the Parliament during the grievance on the day of the budget last Thursday and talked about Ellenbrook high school being in the budget and work about to be under way, and in response to a question today made a clear statement that it was in the budget. Is that telling the truth; is it telling a lie; is it telling an untruth; is it simply plain dishonesty; is it straight up and down dishonesty? I put it to members that it is dishonesty. The reason that we need to suspend standing orders is to give the Minister for Education and Training the opportunity to respond. We have read the budget papers right the way through, but we may have missed the reference. The minister might show me where the reference is to Ellenbrook and give me the specific item relating to Ellenbrook high school and the amount of funding. I will apologise to him if we are wrong, but we could not find it in the budget. The minister said today that it was there. Perhaps he will show us. Will he tell us where it is in the budget? Can he point out where it is in the budget? It is a pretty simple request. He need only tell us the line number and the page number.

Point of Order

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: It is always difficult on a motion to suspend standing orders to decide whether the member moving the suspension is speaking on matters relating to why we should suspend standing orders or matters that may be debated should the motion succeed. It is not only a difficult matter but it also varies from time to time. We are in the middle of the second reading debate on the appropriation Bills, which means that any member can speak to any matter for 45 minutes. It is also Wednesday and just a little short of private members' time when it would be possible for the Opposition to raise the matter. On that basis I would put to you, Mr Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition should be speaking to procedural matters very quickly and not, as he currently is, seeking to make the arguments. The arguments do not exist. They do not require rebuttal. This motion is an absolute fit of pique by the Leader of the Opposition, who is wasting the time of the House on a matter that could be raised by a range of other means. It could be raised during the whole of next week's estimates when detail can be brought out on the budget. This is simply a silly, childish stunt. On that basis we should not be wasting the time of the House. We should be debating the matter before the House, which is the suspension of standing orders and why we should not be proceeding with normal business but should suspend standing orders.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: The Opposition totally rejects what the Leader of the House is saying. We know that he is trying to protect his minister, but this is a very serious issue. It is almost a matter of privilege when a minister is accused of deliberately misleading the House.

The SPEAKER: In fact, that is not the motion.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: I will not canvass your ruling obviously, Mr Speaker, but the Leader of the House has just raised all sorts of superfluous comments about the Leader of the Opposition. I am merely responding. We on this side of the House believe that the minister has misled the House in answers to questions that have been put to him. That is why the Leader of the Opposition has moved to suspend standing orders. It will give the minister the opportunity to correct his earlier comments. The Leader of the Opposition has been speaking for only four minutes. I can assure you, Mr Speaker, and the House that we will not prolong this debate. We just want a bit of fairness to enable the Leader of the Opposition to finish his comments and allow the minister to correct his comments.

The SPEAKER: The point of order is correct. On a motion to suspend standing orders debate should be restricted to why there should be a suspension. I point out to the Leader of the Opposition that his motion does not give him the capacity to enter into allegations against the minister that are not in his motion, and I would warn him against that. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will keep his comments to the motion itself.

Debate Resumed

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I do not wish to say much more. I will just summarise the issue before the House. Last Thursday, prior to the budget being delivered, the member for Swan Hills quite properly made a grievance on behalf of her constituents in the rapidly growing area of Ellenbrook. Ellenbrook has a burgeoning population, particularly of families with children in preschool and primary school education. I was Minister for Education, so I am aware of the growth in that area. That student population is now moving into high school years. A high school in Ellenbrook is therefore clearly needed. I would suggest that the member for Swan Hills discovered to her dismay that Ellenbrook high school was not included in the state budget. Therefore, she raised a grievance. The Minister for Education and Training, acutely conscious that there was no funding in the budget for Ellenbrook high school, tried to use words that would be of some electoral and political comfort to the member for Swan Hills. The minister spoke in terms such as work will be under way in the coming financial year and the school will open in 2007. The reason we have moved to suspend standing orders is that the member for Darling Range asked one specific question on that issue. He wanted to ascertain where the reference to funding for Ellenbrook high school appears in the budget. The minister failed to answer that question. He followed his usual style in this House. The member for Darling Range asked a very similarly worded question a second time, and again the Minister for Education and Training failed to answer. He cannot have it both ways. There are two options, but maybe there are three. Is funding for Ellenbrook in the budget? If it is, I am wrong and I will apologise in advance. The minister can point out to me and all members of Parliament where the funding allocation for Ellenbrook high school appears in the budget papers. If it is

not in the budget, the minister had better explain to this House what he meant by the comments he made earlier today. What did he mean when he told this House only in the past half an hour that there was funding in the budget for Ellenbrook high school? I refer to the Treasurer's budget speech. At page 13, it states -

We have also provided funding to commence the construction of four new primary schools and one new secondary school to open in 2006.

Which school is that? It is the Secret Harbour middle school, which is referred to in the budget papers. There is no reference in the budget papers, member for Swan Hills, to Ellenbrook high school. I would be sensitive if I were the member, because she has failed her electorate.

The SPEAKER: I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition heard my comments about the motion to suspend standing orders. From the moment I sat down, he proceeded to debate the issue rather than the motion, and I call on him to direct his comments specifically to the motion.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The minister now has this immediate opportunity. That is why we have moved to suspend standing orders. In my view the minister has misled the House. I conclude my comments by saying that the Minister for Education and Training has the opportunity to stand in this place now and prove that I am wrong. He has the opportunity to stand in this place and say that he is wrong and apologise to the House. He has the opportunity to explain why I believe he misled this House during question time. That is why we should suspend standing orders. I believe that the minister has not given an honest and forthright answer on two occasions during question time.

Question to be Put

MR J.C. KOBELKE (Nollamara - Leader of the House) [2.54 pm]: I move -

That the question be now put.

Point of Order

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Mr Speaker, I was on my feet seeking your attention for the call but you gave the call to the Leader of the House, even though I believe I was on my feet before he was.

The SPEAKER: That is the member's opinion.

Debate Resumed

The SPEAKER: The question is that the question be put. A division has been called. Ring the bells.

Division taken with the following result -

Ayes (30)

Mr P.W. Andrews	Mrs D.J. Guise	Mr M. McGowan	Mr E.S. Ripper
Mr J.J.M. Bowler	Mr S.R. Hill	Ms S.M. McHale	Mrs M.H. Roberts
Mr C.M. Brown	Mr J.N. Hyde	Mr A.D. McRae	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr A.J. Carpenter	Mr J.C. Kobelke	Mr N.R. Marlborough	Mr P.B. Watson
Mr A.J. Dean	Mr R.C. Kucera	Mr M.P. Murray	Mr M.P. Whitely
Mr J.B. D'Orazio	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr A.P. O'Gorman	Ms M.M. Quirk (<i>Teller</i>)
Dr J.M. Edwards	Ms A.J. MacTiernan	Mr J.R. Quigley	
Dr G.I. Gallop	Mr J.A. McGinty	Ms J.A. Radisich	

Noes (19)

Mr C.J. Barnett	Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr R.F. Johnson	Mr M.W. Trenorden
Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan	Mrs C.L. Edwardes	Mr A.D. Marshall	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr M.J. Birney	Mr J.P.D. Edwards	Mr B.K. Masters	Ms S.E. Walker
Mr M.F. Board	Ms K. Hodson-Thomas	Mr P.D. Omodei	Mr J.L. Bradshaw (<i>Teller</i>)
Dr E. Constable	Mr M.G. House	Mr P.G. Pandal	

Independent Pair

Dr J.M. Woollard

Question thus passed.

Standing Orders Suspension Resumed

The SPEAKER: The question is that standing orders be suspended. To be passed, this motion requires the concurrence of an absolute majority. There being a dissentient voice, it is necessary for the House to divide.

Division taken with the following result -

Ayes (19)

Mr C.J. Barnett	Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr R.F. Johnson	Mr M.W. Trenorden
Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan	Mrs C.L. Edwardes	Mr A.D. Marshall	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr M.J. Birney	Mr J.P.D. Edwards	Mr B.K. Masters	Ms S.E. Walker
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Mr J.B. D'Orazio	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr A.P. O'Gorman	Ms M.M. Quirk (<i>Teller</i>)
Dr J.M. Edwards	Ms A.J. MacTiernan	Mr J.R. Quigley	
Dr G.I. Gallop	Mr J.A. McGinty	Ms J.A. Radisich	

Pair

Mr R.A. Ainsworth Mrs C.A. Martin

Independent Pair

Dr J.M. Woollard

Question thus negated.

ELLENBROOK HIGH SCHOOL, STATEMENTS BY MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Standing Orders Suspension

MR M.W. TRENORDEN (Avon - Leader of the National Party) [3.00 pm] - without notice: I move -

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as is necessary to allow the following motion to be moved forthwith -

That this House condemns the Minister for Education and Training for misleading the House in an answer to a question without notice today concerning Ellenbrook high school.

Point of Order

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: We have just dealt with a motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition that was substantially to suspend standing orders.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr J.C. KOBELKE: That motion to suspend standing orders related to debating a matter with regard to Ellenbrook high school. I put it to you, Mr Speaker, that we now have a motion that is in substantially the same form. The previous motion having been defeated, I ask you to consider, Mr Speaker, whether it is appropriate to again have a motion that seeks to suspend standing orders to deal with substantially the same matter.

Mr R.F. JOHNSON: Once again, I believe the Leader of the House has got it absolutely wrong. The previous motion to suspend standing orders was to enable the minister to give an answer and to point out where in the budget papers there is any allocation for the building of Ellenbrook high school. The minister wanted to give just a one-minute explanation. However, the Leader of the House would not allow that, and he gagged the debate. Therefore, today a second motion for the suspension of standing orders has been put. That motion is not asking the minister to point something out. That motion is that this House condemns the Minister for Education and Training for misleading the House. It is the same motion to suspend standing orders, but it is a very different substantive motion.

The SPEAKER: Order! The standing order referred to is Standing Order No 126, which reads -

A question will not be proposed which is the same as any question which has been resolved in the affirmative or negative during the same session.

Previous Speakers have been asked to rule on this standing order. I have to say, having looked at the two motions, that there is sufficient difference in the motions to not offend Standing Order No 126.

Debate Resumed

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. We can all be blasé and play the games in this House that we are often wont to do, but the reality is that members opposite, particularly those members who are ministers in this House, have a responsibility in this Chamber not just to the Opposition but also, as you know very well, Mr Speaker, to the public of Western Australia. The Premier has said in this House on many occasions that he and his Government - the Gallop Labor Government - will be open and accountable. We cannot get any clearer requirement than to answer a simple question. I will set the parameters for why the question needs to be asked. I refer the House to page 2456 of *Hansard* and to a couple of answers that were given by the minister to indicate why I have moved this motion to suspend standing orders. Members opposite may or may not want to believe it, but I had no idea of what the Liberal Party was going to do in this debate.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: We believe it!

Dr G.I. Gallop: That is the coalition at work!

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: The Premier is the one who said that his Government would be open and accountable. The Premier is the one who said that he would be answerable to the people of Western Australia. This question could have been answered in 30 seconds - in just a few moments. However, the minister decided not to do that. It is reasonable that he answer the question. The reason I have decided to move this motion is that now that the question is out in the stratosphere, it will hang over this Parliament, and the Press, until it is answered.

Mr N.R. Marlborough: Rubbish! All you want to do is ingratiate yourself with the Liberal Party so that you will become the Minister for Transport! That is what you want.

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: Everything the member for Peel says is rubbish.

The only opportunity that is available to the House to get an answer to the question is either in question time tomorrow, or the next time the House sits, or during the estimates committee, as someone has said. However, what would happen if the answer were the same? This is a simple process. A very simple and reasonable grievance was raised by the member for Swan Hills. The response that was given by the minister on the pages of *Hansard* to which I have referred was as follows-

... I can stand in Parliament and say that the work in Ellenbrook can start this year - in the forthcoming financial year. Ellenbrook High School will be open for business - if we can get the bricks. That is a problem.

Further on, the minister states -

The member can go back to her constituency -

He is referring to the member for Swan Hills -

and say that the Minister for Education has stood up in the Parliament and said that work on Ellenbrook High School will begin in the forthcoming financial year and the target for its opening is 2007.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: If that is true, we would expect it to be listed in the budget. One would hope that would mean the beginning of the 2007 school year, so we are talking about a two-year gap. We all know that in order for that school to be built in 2007, it will need to be in this year's budget. This is a simple process. It comes back to the moral standing of the Premier and the moral standing of the ministers and whether they are prepared to be open and accountable. It is ridiculous that it is necessary for me to move this motion. However, a question as simple as the one raised in the grievance by the member for Swan Hills requires a simple answer. It is not a complicated process. Whether it will cost \$4 million or \$5 million, which I presume is what a high school would cost to build -

Ms J.A. Radisich: Try \$22 million for a high school!

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: It would depend on how big it is.

Ms J.A. Radisich: Try \$22 million to \$30 million!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Leader of the National Party has the call.

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: Okay. It would cost a lot less to build than would a school in the country. However, the fact that it may cost \$20 million makes the member's argument even more pertinent. It is harder to find \$20 million than it is to find \$5 million. The member for Swan Hills might be a brand new member of Parliament, but she could start to count. Five is a lot less than 20. If there is meant to be \$20 million in the budget, then there will be a line item in the budget. This is a very simple process. Where is the line item in the budget papers? Forget about telling the Opposition, me or the Leader of the Opposition; tell the people of Swan Hills - the member's constituency - because

they need to know. Why is the member for Swan Hills so worried about this motion? Why is she arguing against us trying to find out the information?

Ms J.A. Radisich: I cannot believe that you have been in this House for so many years, and none of you knows how the budget works or how much a primary school or a high school costs. That is what I am outraged about.

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: Do I not know how the budget works?

Ms J.A. Radisich: No. You are proving that today, and I am very disappointed.

The SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the National Party, you have been a member of this House for a long time. I am sure you know that you should address the motion to suspend standing orders and not the essence of what you wish to debate if the motion succeeds. You have been going for about five minutes and touched upon that briefly. Accepting interjections is clearly outside the scope of what you should be doing.

Mr M.W. TRENORDEN: I agree with you, Mr Speaker. I should not have been responding to the interjections. This is a simple matter. Under our system of democracy, misleading the House is a serious matter. We have got to that position this afternoon within the space of half an hour. This motion has been moved, and I believe the minister has a case to answer. If he comes forward with the line item, that will be fantastic. However, we should then question him about why he has wasted an hour of this House's time.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Darling Range) [3.11 pm]: I strongly support the motion moved by the Leader of the National Party. I also supported the motion earlier moved by the Leader of the Opposition. The standing orders should be suspended so that the Minister for Education and Training has another opportunity to explain to this House where is the allocation of funds for the beginning of work on a high school at Ellenbrook. He now has had three opportunities today to provide information to this House about where in the budget papers there is an allocation of funding for work on a high school at Ellenbrook, and he has failed to provide that information on every occasion. It is important that standing orders be suspended so that the House can get this information. This is not just some light, trivial issue. Coincidentally, it is an issue that I raised in my contribution to the budget debate - which I am part way through - prior to question time. I know there is a need for a high school to be built at Ellenbrook in the relatively near future. I know the area; in fact, I was in Ellenbrook this morning. I know that very fast growth is occurring in that area. Between 11 000 and 12 000 people now reside in that area, and a lot of additional subdivisions are being built around Ellenbrook and the neighbouring areas of Vale and Henley Brook. There is clearly a need for a high school. I can understand why the member for Swan Hills raised the issue as a grievance last week. I was very interested in that. I was in the Chamber during the exchange between the member for Swan Hills and the Minister for Education and Training that occurred on Thursday morning of last week, the day the budget was presented. I heard the exchange that was referred to by the Leader of the National Party. I very clearly recall hearing it. I now read from *Hansard* of last week. Among other things, the minister said -

I was in a position to ask what was the earliest possible time this project could proceed without compromising one other project in Western Australia. The answer was that, given this year's budget, I can stand in Parliament and say that the work in Ellenbrook can start this year - in the forthcoming financial year. Ellenbrook high school will be open for business - if we can get the bricks. That is a problem.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Why don't you just believe people? If that is what the minister said, why won't you just accept it?

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I would not have any reason to do anything other than believe people, as the Minister for Police and Emergency Services puts it, particularly the Minister for Education and Training.

The SPEAKER: Order! I urge the speakers not to take interjections. You should be dealing directly with the reasons we should suspend standing orders, and then maybe we can go into the debate about Ellenbrook. Member for Darling Range, the fact that you visited Ellenbrook yesterday or today is irrelevant to whether we should suspend standing orders. I direct that you comply with the requirement to speak to the motion.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am arguing why we should suspend standing orders to condemn the Minister for Education and Training for not providing to the House information that he has been asked to provide on three occasions. As I was saying, I would like to believe him, but only if the evidence could be shown in the budget papers. However, we cannot see that information in the budget papers. Last week, the minister went on to say -

The member can go back to her constituency and say that the Minister for Education has stood up in the Parliament and said that work on Ellenbrook high school will begin in the forthcoming financial year and the target for its opening is 2007.

We should suspend standing orders so that the minister can account for the comments he made last week on the day the budget was presented. He created an expectation by saying that work will begin on a high school at Ellenbrook in the forthcoming financial year. However, he is not able to show any allocation of funding for the project in this year's

budget. As late as today, the Minister for Education and Training maintains that the money is provided in the budget. He says that it is in the budget. Where in the budget papers is it? We need to know where it is in the budget papers so -

Mr C.J. Barnett: Secret Harbour is there.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: An allocation for Secret Harbour middle school is there, as the Leader of the Opposition says. Funds for the rebuilding of Kwinana Senior High School are there, but where is the reference to a high school at Ellenbrook? There is reference to completed works on an Ellenbrook primary school. The minister might try to rely on that and say it is the reference to Ellenbrook high school, but it has nothing to do with a high school being built at Ellenbrook. The minister may try to rely on a meagre allocation of \$500 000 for planning fees for new high schools. Is that what he will rely on?

Mr A.J. Carpenter: That is it.

Several members interjected.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: How tricky!

Mr C.J. Barnett: What a joke! Planning fees for future high schools. That is the Ellenbrook high school. Well done, member for Swan Hills. You have done well for your constituents; you have got planning fees. You will have a planning document done. Well done! A great triumph for you!

The SPEAKER: Order, members! Member for Darling Range, I presume you have finished your comments on the suspension.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: No.

The SPEAKER: You appeared to be nowhere near the topic in the past couple of minutes. I direct that you deal forthwith with the reasons for suspension.

Mr P.G. Pandal: It is also very hard to hear above the interjections.

The SPEAKER: Absolutely.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I argue that standing orders should be suspended to allow the House to condemn the Minister for Education and Training for misleading the Parliament. With his interjection, the case has been proved. In arguing why standing orders should be suspended, I repeat that, on the one hand, the minister said last week that work on the school could start in the forthcoming financial year, but, on the other hand, there is no allocation of funds for the commencement of a high school at Ellenbrook.

Ms J.A. Radisich interjected.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The minister has been caught out misleading this House and the people of Swan Hills, particularly the residents of Ellenbrook. That is why we should suspend standing orders to allow a debate in which he can be condemned.

MR A.J. CARPENTER (Willagee - Minister for Education and Training) [3.17 pm]: With all due regard to the member for Darling Range, he has solved his own problem and his argument has collapsed. I stood in the Parliament last Thursday in response to a grievance from the member for Swan Hills about the need for a high school at Ellenbrook, and I told her that I had been given every assurance from the Department of Education and Training that we could put in place a process by which Ellenbrook high school would open in 2007, and that we could start work in the forthcoming financial year. We will.

Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan: You talked about getting bricks.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: This is incredible. I wish the member for Kalgoorlie were still here. A former education, health and police minister is sitting over there and going red in the face shouting. He oversaw very big budgets, including capital works budgets -

Mr J.H.D. Day: They were line items in the budget.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: Despite that, members opposite are unable to understand how the budget process -

Mr M.W. Trenorden: \$20 million.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: It is \$22 million. The advice from the Department of Education and Training is that it will be a \$22 million project. Planning money -

Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan: Where is that in the budget?

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: This may explain one or two of the issues within education, but most times, planning precedes action. Most of the time, when something is about to be built, including a high school, it is planned. We will plan it.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You will talk about the school and not build it. You will talk about it for a year. Well done! That will make the member for Swan Hills happy. You will have a conversation about the school. You will have a chat about the school. You have done well for your electorate, member for Swan Hills.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: It is a pity that the Chamber is not televised to the whole community so people could see the level of intelligence that opposition members apply to a debate. They have gone through the budget papers and found the answer. I now expect the member for Cottesloe to rise to his feet and graciously apologise to me for the terrible things he has said. He said he would do it. Does he have the courage to do it? I would never describe the member for Cottesloe as cowardly.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You are.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: No. I would never describe the member as cowardly. That is the label he has thrown at me. He has said that if I proved him wrong, he would apologise. The member for Darling Range found the answer and has proved that the Leader of the Opposition was wrong. The Leader of the Opposition now has the opportunity to apologise.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Simply show me the line item and the page and I will apologise. That is what I said I would do. Show me the line item for the Ellenbrook high school.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: The line item is on page 886 under "planning fees - new high school"; it says \$500 000. Building projects that are not physically being bricked together in the next financial year do not appear in the budget. The project will be started. Planning will start in the forthcoming financial year.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Rockingham to order the first time.

Mr A.J. CARPENTER: It is an interesting possibility. We could have a new initiative in education: to build schools without even bothering to plan them. I wonder what would happen. What would they look like? All the little workmen would go down there with their trowels and bricks and say, "Why don't we put a brick here, mate. We will put a window over there. I tell you what, we'll put a Bunsen burner next to the lav and open the place up for business." Instead of that, it might be more prudent to go through a planning process. It is no wonder the state budget was in a mess under the previous Government. Fair go, this is pathetic. This is utterly ridiculous. Planning is the precursor to construction. I admit that it is a necessary evil, but it is necessary. The Leader of the Opposition has the chance to get to his feet. Some \$500 000 was set aside for new high schools in the forthcoming year. The Ellenbrook high school will cost \$22 million to build. Unless we cannot get the bricks, it will be open for business in the beginning of 2007.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the honourable member for Warren-Blackwood to order. I do not need his advice about to whom to give the call. That is his third call.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the Opposition) [3.23 pm]: This motion seeks to suspend standing orders to enable us to condemn the Minister for Education and Training for misleading the House, which he has done. He has now had four opportunities to point out to this House where in the budget -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! This motion has taken long enough. Interjections do not assist the process.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The minister has had four opportunities to point out that he has not misled the House, and he has failed. Not only did he fail on these occasions, but also the Leader of the House gagged debate without any other member having had an opportunity to speak on the earlier motion.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: I thought you were making a big enough fool of yourself on your own. I was trying to protect you.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I do not know what type of Parliament we are running, but a serious motion was gagged without any response or debate. That is why the Leader of the National Party moved a secondary motion to again condemn the Minister for Education and Training. He made a clear statement in Parliament last week in response to a grievance from the member for Swan Hills. The minister said -

The member can go back to her constituency -

Will the member for Swan Hills do that? The minister continued -

and say that the Minister for Education has stood up in the Parliament and said that work on Ellenbrook high school will begin in the forthcoming financial year and the target for its opening is 2007.

I understand "work" to mean -

Mr J.C. Kobelke: He did not say construction; he said work.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: He did not say construction, did he? I thank the Leader of the House. Construction will not start in Ellenbrook in the forthcoming financial year. The Leader of the House just admitted it. There will be no construction.

Mr A.J. Carpenter: I did not say there would be.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: When the Minister for Education and Training was challenged in Parliament today to point to the line item in the budget, he said that it is in the budget. Despite repeated opportunities, he cannot point to a reference to the Ellenbrook high school in the budget.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: He just did.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Where? Please, show me the page where it says Ellenbrook high school in the budget. Show me the page that says Ellenbrook high school! E-L-L-E-N-B-R-O-O-K H-I-G-H S-C-H-O-O-L! Show me where it is. I am waiting.

The SPEAKER: I am waiting for the Leader of the Opposition to address the motion and not the substance of what -

Mr A.J. Carpenter interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the Minister for Education and Training to order for the first time. I am waiting for the Leader of the Opposition to address the motion and not the substance of what the Leader of the Opposition wishes to debate.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Standing orders should be suspended because the Minister for Education and Training failed to explain that before. We have given him an opportunity to explain. What was his response? He has said that the budget allocates \$500 000 for school planning. I was an education minister for five years. Planning always occurs for all schools, including high schools, primary schools, additions to schools and kindergarten centres. There are some 770 government schools in this State and a range of additions, alterations and changes are made to them, and new schools are built. However, there is no reference at all to Ellenbrook high school in the budget. There is no doubt in my mind that the Minister for Education and Training has misled the Parliament on two occasions. We know that because the Leader of the House guillotined debate so that the Minister for Education and Training could not get to his feet and respond, which proves that the Minister for Education and Training misled this Parliament. That is why standing orders should be suspended. I have no confidence in the Minister for Education and Training.

It is a serious matter when a minister of the Crown or any member of Parliament misleads the House, as the minister has done. Mr Speaker, you have sat in the Chair and observed it for yourself. You know in your heart of hearts that the minister misled the Parliament. The Leader of the House knows that the minister misled the Parliament, which is why he gagged the debate.

The Minister for Education and Training asked me to apologise. I made it clear that if he could point out to me where in this budget there is reference to a line item for Ellenbrook high school, I would admit that I was wrong and apologise. However, there is absolutely no reference to Ellenbrook high school in this budget. The minister has misled Parliament and the member for Swan Hills has misled her constituents in Ellenbrook. She has told them that construction will start on the Ellenbrook high school, but it will not.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: I direct the Leader of the Opposition to withdraw the comment about the member for Swan Hills misleading her electorate.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I withdraw that comment, but I do not believe -

Dr G.I. Gallop: No buts, just withdraw it.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I have withdrawn it.

Debate Resumed

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am interested to know how the Minister for Education and Training will explain his, in my opinion, misleading of Parliament. I am equally interested to know how the member for Swan Hills will go to her constituents and tell them that construction on the Ellenbrook high school will not begin because there is no reference to it in the budget. There is no line item for it and, by the admission of the Leader of the House, we are not talking about construction but about planning. A meeting will be held at Ellenbrook. I can understand why this Premier, who will do anything but be open and accountable, will have his Leader of the House gag debate. It is because he has a minister who has misled this Parliament.

MS J.A. RADISICH (Swan Hills) [3.30 pm]: I oppose the motion. I find it the most offensive and ridiculous motion that has been put to this House in quite a long time. The Minister for Education and Training has been nothing but open and honest to and particularly supportive of both me, as the member for Swan Hills, and the Ellenbrook community. If it were not for the Minister for Education and Training, Ellenbrook high school would not be on the agenda until 2009

or 2010. The Minister for Education and Training understands how the budget works, as do we all on this side of the House. This Government will provide for and fund many projects in the next financial year that do not appear as specific line items in the budget. As has been said, the budget amounts to more than 1 000 pages. I assure members that it would be a heck of a lot more than that if we itemised every single project that will occur in the next year. Of course planning will commence this year; that is the only way the 2007 deadline for this project can be achieved.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members!

Ms J.A. RADISICH: The minister said that it is a \$22 million project.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Member for Swan Hills, there are two pages of schools in this State listed for capital works; not one of them is Ellenbrook.

The SPEAKER: I call the Leader of the Opposition to order for the second time.

Ms J.A. RADISICH: It is a \$22 million project. We do not go around spending \$22 million willy-nilly.

Point of Order

Mr P.G. PENDAL: Mr Speaker, you have previously directed speakers to speak to the suspension motion. The member is not doing that. She is canvassing matters she hopes to address later. I draw your attention to that, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: In every case in which I have drawn a member's attention to the motion, I have allowed the member to speak for more than one minute. The member for South Perth may think that because a member comes from one side of the House the member should speak only to the motion, as all members should. However, I will allow some leniency in members' opening statements and then I will direct members to adhere to the motion.

Debate Resumed

Ms J.A. RADISICH: I will direct my comments to the motion that we are discussing today. The motion is contemptuous towards the current Minister for Education and Training.

Mr R.F. Johnson: No, the motion is to suspend standing orders.

Ms J.A. RADISICH: Yes, to suspend standing orders to move a motion -

Mr R.F. Johnson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Hillarys!

Ms J.A. RADISICH: The fact of the matter is that a \$22 million project is not a project to be entered into lightly. A high school takes approximately 30 months to build from go to whoa - from the day of its announcement to the day the students walk through the door of the school. Mr Speaker, I know that you are aware of what must occur in those 30 months: people must be consulted and the community's views sought.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, Leader of the Opposition!

Ms J.A. RADISICH: Planning and community consultation are the key preliminary works for any major project, including a major education project. My community understands that it takes up to 30 months to build a high school and that it cannot be built tomorrow, even from the day of the announcement of a commitment to build it. I wholeheartedly oppose the motion on the basis that there is a time frame involved here, that there are more budgets to come that will include money for construction of the project and that there is sufficient money in the current budget to allow for the adequate planning of this major project.

The SPEAKER: The question is that standing orders be suspended. To be passed, this motion requires the concurrence of an absolute majority. There being a dissentient voice, it is necessary for the House to divide.

Division taken with the following result -

Ayes (19)

Mr C.J. Barnett	Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr R.F. Johnson	Mr M.W. Trenorden
Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan	Mrs C.L. Edwardes	Mr A.D. Marshall	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr M.J. Birney	Mr J.P.D. Edwards	Mr B.K. Masters	Ms S.E. Walker
Mr M.F. Board	Ms K. Hodson-Thomas	Mr P.D. Omodei	Mr J.L. Bradshaw (<i>Teller</i>)
Dr E. Constable	Mr M.G. House	Mr P.G. Pendal	

Noes (30)

Mr P.W. Andrews	Mrs D.J. Guise	Mr M. McGowan	Mr E.S. Ripper
Mr J.J.M. Bowler	Mr S.R. Hill	Ms S.M. McHale	Mrs M.H. Roberts
Mr C.M. Brown	Mr J.N. Hyde	Mr A.D. McRae	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr A.J. Carpenter	Mr J.C. Kobelke	Mr N.R. Marlborough	Mr P.B. Watson
Mr A.J. Dean	Mr R.C. Kucera	Mr M.P. Murray	Mr M.P. Whitely
Mr J.B. D'Orazio	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr A.P. O'Gorman	Ms M.M. Quirk (<i>Teller</i>)
Dr J.M. Edwards	Ms A.J. MacTiernan	Mr J.R. Quigley	
Dr G.I. Gallop	Mr J.A. McGinty	Ms J.A. Radisich	

Pair

Mr R.A. Ainsworth Mrs C.A. Martin

Independent Pair

Dr J.M. Woollard

Question thus negatived.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 1) 2004
APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 2) 2004

Second Reading - Cognate Debate

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Darling Range) [3.38 pm]: Before question time I was speaking about the need for a new high school at Ellenbrook. We have just had a very illuminating debate about that issue. Quite clearly the Labor Party has been caught out. It tried to create the impression to people that construction work would commence on a new high school at Ellenbrook in the next financial year. The debate we have just had showed that nothing of that sort at all will occur. Indeed, there is no specific allocation in this year's budget for work to commence on a high school at Ellenbrook. The Leader of the Opposition, other opposition members and I have made the point very strongly that there is no line item in this year's budget for a high school at Ellenbrook.

Mr A.D. McRae: Will work start?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: No. The work that the Labor Party has been implying to the local community is not building work - laying bricks - that will commence for a high school at Ellenbrook. Indeed, the Minister for Education and Training, in his comments last week, made reference to whether the bricks would be able to be obtained. Therefore, the clear impression that the Labor Government has been seeking to create in Ellenbrook is that building work will commence in the next 12 months. However, everybody now knows that that is not the case.

Mr A.D. McRae: Member for Darling Range, you know, because you have *Hansard* in front of you, that the minister said that if the bricks were available, the school would be opened in 2007.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I know that proper planning money allocated for the construction of most government facilities such as hospitals, schools and police stations is normally about 10 per cent of the total cost of the project. Indeed, in this year's budget is an allocation of funds for some replacement primary schools. For example, the member for Warren-Blackwood referred to the Manjimup Primary School replacement, at a total cost of \$6 million. An amount of \$750 000 is allocated in the forthcoming financial year. Likewise, the total cost of a new primary school at Two Rocks is \$6 million. An amount of \$500 000 is allocated for the coming financial year. Those funds are for planning works for new schools in those locations. If serious planning money was allocated for the construction of a new high school in Ellenbrook, it would be at least \$1 million, and probably \$2 million, being 10 per cent of the final cost of about \$22 million.

The Minister for Education and Training and the Gallop Labor Government have been caught out on this. They have tried to create the impression for the people of Swan Hills, and Ellenbrook in particular, that building work will commence in the next financial year. We now know that that will not occur. I believe that the debate we have had over the past hour or so, and the questions that I asked in question time, have been very illuminating.

In the eight minutes that I have left for my contribution to the budget debate I will make some comments about the needs of health services in my electorate, and more broadly. Before question time I was pointing out that if the Government goes ahead with its stated intention to remove obstetric and multi-day surgery services from Kalamunda District Community Hospital, that will result in a loss of general practitioners from the area. It will be an absolute

tragedy if that occurs, because there is an under-supply of at least six GPs in the Kalamunda district at the moment. However, more than that, if those services are removed, it will be an absolute tragedy because the plans for a major new privately funded co-located medical centre adjacent to Kalamunda hospital will not go ahead. The doctors will not put their funds into building such a new medical centre if it is not possible to continue to provide the full range of services that currently exist at Kalamunda hospital.

The tragedy could be even worse. There is the prospect of a primary care training centre being established, together with the hospital and the new medical centre, to assist in the training of general practitioners and other health professionals on the Kalamunda hospital site. However, those training facilities will not be able to go ahead if services are withdrawn. Quite clearly, for all those reasons and the points that I made before question time, the existing services should be maintained at Kalamunda hospital while ever the clinical staff are available. They are simply too good to lose from the Kalamunda district. I should say that it is not just people from the Kalamunda district who use the hospital. A lot of people come from much wider afield - from some rural areas and other parts of the metropolitan area - to have their babies at Kalamunda hospital, because the standard of care is so good and the general environment of the hospital is appreciated and desired so much by the local and the wider community.

The Liberal Party has made it very clear, through the shadow Minister for Health, that if we are returned to government, the existing services will be maintained at Kalamunda hospital, and we will get on with the redevelopment as soon as we are re-elected to government. If the Government goes ahead and removes those services soon, it will be a tragedy if good clinical staff - doctors and midwives - are lost to the hospital, because that will make it very difficult to re-establish the obstetric services in particular. If that occurs, it will be an absolute disgrace and an indictment of the existing Government. I call on the Government to not remove those services prior to the next election. If there is a change of Government, as we obviously hope there will be, there will be a guarantee that the services will be able to continue while ever appropriately qualified clinical staff are available at Kalamunda hospital.

As far as the health needs in the east metropolitan area more generally are concerned, I am aware that there is an increasing degree of disquiet about what is proposed by the Reid report and its recommendations, and the endorsement by the Government of all except one of those recommendations. I am aware that was the recommendation to move Princess Margaret Hospital for Children to the site of the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre. The Government has said it will not go ahead with that. It has managed to rule out this recommendation. Why it cannot question some of the other recommendations more closely escapes me. I believe that a lot of people's minds will turn to this issue over the next eight or nine months or so.

I am aware specifically that the Clinical Association Executive at Royal Perth Hospital, which is chaired by Dr James Flexman, recently sent a letter to the Minister for Health, expressing a great deal of concern about the plans to abolish the East Metropolitan Health Service, and in particular to do so before all the new facilities that are contemplated in the Reid report are established. We know that there is a time frame of about 13 years to establish a new southern tertiary hospital - obviously in the southern part of the metropolitan area - and to make other changes in the northern part of the metropolitan area. I believe that it is the case, and it appears to be increasingly apparent, that the needs of the eastern metropolitan area are being overlooked. They need to be much better addressed by the Government than has been the case so far.

Among other things stated in the letter that has been signed by Dr Flexman and 14 other senior clinicians at Royal Perth Hospital, they make the following comment -

The clinical advisory group gave its support to the outcomes of the Options for Clinical Services Discussion Paper in November 2003. However, the final report contained major alterations and was published without further consultation. The interim report did not refer to a "North-South" model comprising a single major hospital north of the river, and did not envisage the break-up of the Eastern Metropolitan Region. The Royal Perth Hospital members of that clinical advisory group are greatly concerned that their agreement to the final report has been assumed in spite of major policy shifts. **The effect of the recommendations of the Report on the Eastern Region is of major concern to the clinical staff.**

It appears that various proposals were put forward in the discussion paper that was released in November 2003. They were broadly endorsed by clinicians at Royal Perth Hospital and others in the east metropolitan area. However, what was finally produced in the Reid report recommendations was quite different. That is a matter of concern, particularly the assumption that has been made that clinicians at Royal Perth Hospital would support the recommendations of the Reid report, when they are so different from what was suggested in the discussion paper that was released late last year.

I am glad that the Deputy Premier and member for Belmont is in the Chamber, because these issues will concern him. The future of Kalamunda hospital will concern him, because most of the urban part of High Wycombe will go into the Belmont electorate at the next election. As an east metropolitan member, he should take a strong interest in the concerns that have been expressed by the Clinical Association Executive at Royal Perth Hospital and by others.

The budget is disappointing, particularly, as I said at the beginning of my comments, the education and training budget. However, there are other major concerns. I am pleased that there is an allocation of funds in the police budget for the

traffic operations facilities to move to the Midland railway workshops site. That should have happened a long time ago. It was planned by the previous Government. It should never be forgotten that the decision to establish major police facilities on the Midland railway workshops site was a decision of the previous Government. I am pleased to say that it was made when I was Minister for Police. However, things should have happened much faster than has occurred under this Government. Unfortunately, the transfer of those police facilities has bogged down.

MS K. HODSON-THOMAS (Carine) [3.50 pm]: I will start my speech by commenting on road funding. I then intend to cover a number of areas that I have been reviewing in the 2004-05 budget papers. The Functional Review Taskforce recommended that Main Roads cut its capital works budget by \$50 million per annum. That recommendation was part of this Government's policy. There was a determination that over a four-year period \$200 million would be cut from the Main Roads capital works budget. We know that over the past three years Main Roads has in fact cut \$150 million from its capital works budget. This continued policy will have a long-term impact on the expansion and growth of the State's road network. We also know that another \$12 million has been cut from local government road funding, which also places massive pressure on the State's local road network. The member for Greenough raised this issue in his budget speech yesterday. It is no wonder that the Western Australian Local Government Association ran the Operation Outrage road funding campaign in the lead up to this year's state budget. As members would know, the state road funds to local government agreement is due to expire on 30 June 2005. The agreement provides for the continuation of the existing partnership between state and local government to preserve and enhance the State's vital road network.

So that members know, I will give them a little detail about the minimum allocation in the agreement. For 2002-03 the minimum allocation was \$92.8 million. One needs to commend the Government, because it allocated a greater amount that year. The Government allocated \$100.02 million to local authorities. The Treasurer need not think that I will congratulate him for the years 2003-04 and 2004-05, because for each of those two years the minimum allocation was \$92 million but the actual allocation was in fact only \$80.06 million in 2003-04 and \$80.68 million in 2004-05, which is a shortfall of \$24 million. That might not sound like much in the grand scheme of things, but given that local government manages 72 per cent of the State's road network, which is about 120 000 kilometres, it is an enormous amount of money.

Many country members have raised issues with me about their local roads; certainly members on my side of the House have, although the Treasurer's colleagues might not be lobbying me. My colleagues have told me about a number of roads in their constituencies that need some improvement. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has allocated more money for the maintenance of roads, because the State has an ageing road network. There is no doubt about that. The term network contracts that were put in place by the coalition have ensured that those roads are maintained, which is critical. We need to maintain the State's road network, because if the State does not have a good, sound, safe road network, there will be road fatalities.

It is disappointing that the budget papers show an increase of only two per cent for capital works funding for new road projects. It seriously highlights for me the total disregard that this Government has for regional and rural Western Australia and the fact that this Government does not care about roads. Many people in the regions have said to me that the Government does not care about their local roads but is spending a lot of money on the railway. It would not be one of my speeches without my making some comments on the railways, but I will save my comments for down the track because I want to deal with roads now. The meagre \$12 million or two per cent increase in road funding in the 2004-05 budget is trivial when compared with the \$150 million cut to the capital works budget over the past three years. It is simply a spit in the ocean. The long-term outlook for roads is pretty bleak, with the Government foreshadowing another \$161 million worth of road funding cuts over the next four years. Having a well-maintained road system is the first step towards making the State's roads safe and preventing accidents. I believe that should be first and foremost in our minds. We also need a good road network because it is vital for maintaining the viability of some of the State's major industries. Much of their product is transported on the State's roads to ports. Our large State of Western Australia has a number of ports along its 12 500-kilometre coastline. Roads in disrepair are bad for business. They increase the safety risk to people travelling on them. The \$12 million increase in this budget will go nowhere near making up for past cuts to the maintenance of local roads, nor assisting further capital works.

In respect of capital works, I want to talk about the Fremantle eastern bypass. It is an issue that is dear to the hearts of many of us on this side of the House. We did not support this Government's position to delete the Fremantle eastern bypass from the metropolitan region scheme. Not a single member on this side of the House supports that. We understand that for long-term planning we need roads that are designed to cater for heavy vehicles and are capable of carrying that kind of vehicle movement off local roads. I believe that some members on the other side of the House probably agree with us, but because the other side of the House claims to have the right of solidarity, government members have chosen not to say anything. I believe that this Government will rue the day that it made the determination to delete that very important and vital road from the metropolitan region scheme. I suspect that the member for Riverton will be subject to fierce pressure from many of his electors because of the deletion of that road reservation. I believe that the Minister for Education and Training, the member for Willagee, will also come under enormous pressure. If the designs for the intersection of Stock Road and Leach Highway that have come out of Main

Roads are to be believed, it is a terrible proposition to expect any members of the community to accept as a reasonable outcome the deletion of the Fremantle eastern bypass. It is simply not good enough.

It was a political decision to delete the Fremantle eastern bypass from the metropolitan region scheme. It was a dumb political decision. I can understand why in many respects it is not there. It would be a fairly expensive road to construct. There are some environmental issues relating to Roe Highway stage 8. However, all these issues can be managed. They could be managed if the Government were talking to communities and bringing people together with a view to trying to give people information so that they can truly understand why, for safety reasons, the road needs to be built. I do not believe that deleting the Fremantle eastern bypass will provide a safer and more reliable road network for the people of the southern suburbs. The members for Riverton and Willagee will face enormous problems in the lead-up to the next election. There is no funding in the capital works budget for the Fremantle eastern bypass. However, the Government might make some money from the sale of the land.

I also want to talk about the Peel deviation. It is a very important road for the south west corridor. It would impact on the electorates of the members for Murray-Wellington, Mandurah, Dawesville, Warren-Blackwood and Vasse. A number of electorates would benefit from the construction of the Peel deviation. It has been interesting to see the toing-and-froing between the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and the federal minister, Senator Hon Ian Campbell.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 2802.]

DENTAL PROSTHETISTS AMENDMENT BILL 2004

Second Reading

MR M.W. TRENORDEN (Avon - Leader of the National Party) [4.00 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this Bill is to amend the Dental Prosthetists Act 1985 to allow dental prosthetists to construct and fit partial dentures. Many members will recall that I introduced a Bill in late 2003 to achieve this end. However, that Bill contained a serious error that I felt warranted its immediate withdrawal. Today I introduce a new Bill that more appropriately represents the outcome I am seeking; that is, to allow appropriately qualified dental prosthetists to construct and fit fully and partially removable dentures in a healthy mouth.

The Dental Prosthetists Act 1985 currently prohibits dental prosthetists from fitting and constructing partial dentures because of a view at the time that Act was drafted that dental prosthetists were not adequately trained to construct and fit partial dentures. The Dental Prosthetists Act was originally introduced to provide an alternative dental prosthetists service to consumers and to legalise an activity that had been pursued illegally for many years. The original Act was passed through the Legislative Assembly with little change and was passed by the Legislative Council only after a conference of managers and the removal of the ability for dental prosthetists to construct and fit partial dentures. Although the passage of the original Bill was directed towards allowing a grandfather provision, this has not been the case for the past 13 years. All licensed prosthetists must now have prescribed qualifications endorsed by the Dental Prosthetists Advisory Committee. During these past 13 years the dental prosthetists profession has accepted the need for higher qualifications to ensure that strict and accountable practices are maintained to ensure compliance with the conditions as required under the Dental Prosthetists Act.

Western Australia is now the only State in Australia that restricts dental prosthetists from undertaking partial denture procedures. Tasmania has enjoyed this status since 1958, New South Wales since 1975, Queensland since 1991, Victoria since 1995 and South Australia since July 2003. Supporting this Bill is a two-year-old recommendation from the Department of Health and commitment from the current Government. In June 2001 the then Minister for Health, Hon Bob Kucera, MLA, released a report titled "Key Directions: Review of Western Australian Practitioner Legislation" prepared by the legal and legislative services branch of the Department of Health. On page 5 of the key directions, one recommendation states -

The definition of dental prosthetics will be amended to encompass the construction and fitting of partial dentures.

Another recommendation specifically states -

Dental Prosthetists will be permitted to construct and fit partial dentures providing the practitioner meets specific training requirements established by the Board.

In the foreword to the review, the then Minister for Health announced that the State Government had recently approved the drafting of new health practitioner Acts based on the outcome of the review of the Western Australian health practitioner legislation. The effect of this approval was that replacement legislation would be developed for health professionals regulated under a number of Acts, including the Dental Prosthetists Act 1985. Further, on 5 December 2001, the then Minister for Health wrote to Mr Ron Adams, Executive Officer of the Australian Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Society, informing him as follows -

As you are aware the Government has endorsed the recommendations for new health practitioner legislation including the recommendation that prosthetists with appropriate training be authorised to construct and fit partial dentures. The drafting of replacement Acts has been approved and I am keen to see the legislation progressed.

Clearly there is a commitment to see this change implemented. However, two years have passed without any progress on the recommendations. The Australian Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Society has informed me that it is supportive of the proposed new dental health legislation. However, it has put very strongly to me, and I believe to the Government, that it would be appropriate to incorporate the agreed amendments in the current Dental Prosthetists Act until the new dental health legislation is ready to proceed. I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J.L. Bradshaw.

[Quorum formed.]

VICTIMS OF CRIME

Motion

MS S.E. WALKER (Nedlands) [4.08 pm]: I move -

That this House condemns the Gallop Government's failure to properly protect and respect victims of crime in this State.

As I said earlier during question time, this week is Law Week. I say that because government members may not be aware of that. Every year Law Week starts with a church service, and this year the service was held at St George's Cathedral. Judges from the Supreme and District Courts and other courts and members of the legal profession attended the service. Where was the Attorney General? He was not there. Everybody asked where the government representatives were at the beginning of Law Week. They were not there.

Ms M.M. Quirk: We were not asked.

Ms S.E. WALKER: Where was the member for Girrawheen?

Ms M.M. Quirk: We were not asked.

Ms S.E. WALKER: The member for Girrawheen is not in her seat. She is standing behind her seat. Why was the member not at the service? She is a member of the legal profession.

Ms M.M. Quirk: I was not asked.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Girrawheen will need to resume her seat.

Ms S.E. WALKER: The point is that on the other side of the House, the law of the jungle prevails when it comes to respecting and dealing with victims of crime. We have a situation in which those leopards will not be changing their spots. It is their values of the law in this State and of victims of crime that separates members opposite from members on this side. We on this side of the House do not believe in the law of the jungle. We believe in values and in the rights of victims. That was enshrined in the Victims of Crimes Act 1994 by the former Attorney General, the member for Kingsley. We do not believe in being governed by the law of the jungle, because, under the law of the jungle, people cannot get justice. High-profile victims of crime in this State - people with whom ministers should be dealing, and to whom they should be listening - are not getting justice in this State. We believe that we get justice only when we govern by the rule of law.

A classic example of the divide between members on the government side of the House and members on this side of the House can be found in an article in *The West Australian* that was distributed by the Law Society on Monday, 10 May, at the beginning of Law Week. I will hold up the article, because obviously no-one on that side of the House has a clue about what is going on in Perth this week. The theme of Law Week this year is that no-one is above the law. The article commences with the statement -

NO ONE is above the law - not lawyers, nor the media, nor the Government.

It offends our sense of justice if people can flout the law and get away with it, especially the rich and the powerful.

The article then states -

Rule of law or law of the jungle

No justice system is perfect, but a system based on the Rule of Law is better than a system based on the rule of a jungle.

What we mean by the rule of the jungle is that some people, especially the powerful, can do as they like and our rights can be taken without any "due process".

I put on record that the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth has come into the Chamber. I am pleased about that, because she is one of the ministers I want to target in relation to victims of crime. I also want to target the Minister for Police and Emergency Services for how she has dealt with victims of crime, and the Premier and the Attorney General.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: We are a victim of your voice!

Ms S.E. WALKER: I do not want to listen to the minister's voice all day. I do not want to target just one minister. Ever since I have been elected, I have been visited by victims of crime who feel disappointed and let down by the attitude of this Government, for a variety of reasons. I refer to an article on the front page of *The West Australian* not long ago - on Wednesday, 24 March 2004. I will be speaking about four victims of crime. Having dealt with and having taken many victims of crime through the courts, I treat these issues seriously. I ask those backbenchers on my left not to make silly and immature comments just because they are bored and have nothing to do in this House. The headline of that article could not have been any larger. I do not know whether it was also on the news.

Mr A.D. McRae interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: The member for Riverton should be quiet and listen to what women in this State are going through. Ms Pamela Logue says in that article that she is just waiting to die. She says she will be murdered on 22 November. I will not be saying a lot about that case, because it is subject to appeal. I want to talk about how the ministers who are in charge of law enforcement agencies, such as the Minister for Community Development, have treated this woman. They have ignored her. Can members believe that? When I read this story, I thought how can we help this woman and her children? She obviously is terrified. We know from what has been happening in and around Perth that women such as Ms Logue, and sometimes also their children, are murdered. I wondered how I could help this woman, so I made inquiries about whether she wanted to come and see me. However, I had a lot of Bills to deal with at the time, so a couple of weeks passed before I rang her and invited her to come to my office. Let us not forget that this woman has been subjected to a long series of threats to kill by her former partner. However, as I have said, that matter is subject to appeal, so I will not make any further comments at this stage.

Before this woman came to my office, I noticed a press release article that stated -

The Department of Justice has moved to crack down on prisoners who send hate mail to people who have taken out violence restraining orders against them.

The move was prompted by a prison mail system review after Perth mother Pamela Logue predicted that she would be killed when her estranged partner was released from jail later this year.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: It does not get any more serious than that, minister. The first thought that went through my mind was that the police minister must have sat down and had a chat with this woman, but I would like to see her anyway to see what I could do so. When Ms Logue came to my office, I said, "Are you pleased with this, because you have obviously seen the minister?" She said, "No. I have not seen the minister, Sue." This minister - a woman minister - had not even called her! The Minister for Community Development stood here yesterday and today and talked about the changes that she will be making to the Restraining Orders Act 1997. This minister also had not even contacted this woman! That is a disgrace. I rang this woman about an hour ago, just to make sure that nobody had contacted her since. This woman had to pay \$300 to get her trial transcript from the Magistrates Court. The Attorney General has not bothered to contact her. I will say this about the Attorney General: when he is shamed into contacting a victim of crime, as he was through the *Sunday Times* article a while ago, he soon turns up quick smart. This woman is in fear of her life. The first thing I would have done as Attorney General is ring her and ask her to come to my office. I have phoned a prosecutor from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions and have asked that person to look at her file. What can we do? What is the solution here? All this Minister for Police has done for this woman, and for other women in this State who are under threat of death, with their children, is issue a paltry press release. It is disgraceful. This is one of the most serious crimes that is happening to women and children in this State. Pamela Logue said to me today that she has tried to make contact by letter with these ministers, but all she has received is a blanket reply. She said also that she has sent an e-mail - I think it was to the Minister for Community Development - giving some suggestions about how to change the system. Did the Minister for Community Development say, "Please come and see me"? No, she did not. I will stand here and give some solutions to this problem. This woman should not have had to pay \$300 for her transcript from the Magistrates Court. Here is a suggestion for the Attorney General. For a start, women who are the subject of domestic violence restraining orders should be able to get their transcript automatically published and given to them for free. I will offer an invitation also to the Chief Magistrate and the Chief Deputy Magistrate to look at the transcript - in fact, I will send it to them - to see how the magistrate dealt with her victim impact statement in another matter. I was astonished when I read the transcript from the Court of Petty Sessions and saw how that court had dealt with her victim impact statement. It is incumbent on the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate, in cases such as this, to immediately call for the transcript so that he can see what is happening to women, particularly

when their partners have been inside and are serving sentences for threats to kill under the Criminal Code. It should be mandatory.

Ms Logue said that no minister had bothered to contact her, so I will do it for her here. She would like an increase in the maximum penalty for the breach of a violence restraining order. She would like to see the removal of a fine being imposed as a penalty for breaching a violence restraining order. She would like offenders who breach a violence restraining order to be imprisoned immediately. There is much more behind this case than what was published on the front page of *The West Australian*. People in government departments, including in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, are trained to look at that type of thing. Ms Logue said that it should be mandatory for the court to send perpetrators of domestic violence to attend domestic violence programs and that if they do not attend one session, they should automatically have one month added to their sentences. She would like penalties increased for offenders who repeatedly offend against the same victim. She would like to remove concurrent sentencing for repeat offenders and she would like to abolish taking one-third off all sentences that are imposed by a magistrate or judge. Some of those legal points are already in place.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I will not listen to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services. The minister should not interject after the way she has dealt with this woman. The minister is a disgrace. Please do not interject. As I said, Ms Logue suggests abolishing taking one-third off all sentences that are imposed by a magistrate or a judge. She is not talking about the old system of the one-third remission; she is talking about the new laws whereby, when a judge calculates a sentence, if the offender were sentenced to X number of months in prison, the judge must reduce the head sentence to accommodate that. That is what she is talking about. She suggests that the defendant should not view the victim impact statement. I think I read in this transcript a suggestion that Ms Logue be cross-examined on her victim impact statement. She told me that the victim impact statement was taken outside the courtroom and was given to the defence counsel. These are things I would like the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate to correct. It is the practice in the superior courts that a victim impact statement does not go outside the courtroom. The reason for that is in New South Wales defendants who were inside prison were getting victim impact statements and salivating over the hurt the victims had suffered. That is humiliating and is a gross invasion of the victims' privacy. Ms Logue would like more funding to be given to children's counselling programs. She would like perpetrators to complete a parenting course during their sentences and to be able to demonstrate the changes they had learnt. She would like the children of domestic violence perpetrators to be ordered by the Family Court to have access visits within the prison system under supervision. I could say a lot more about Ms Logue's case. I would like to see some basic changes made. When I spoke to Ms Logue today, I told her that I would continue to go through the transcript of her case. I hope that the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate can look at this issue. There is no reason that transcripts of cases like this, in which people's lives are in danger, particularly when threats have been made to kill someone, should not go to the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate. This case has a long history, which is one of the problems with it. Every time a police prosecutor gets involved with it, he must look at the file again. Police prosecutors do a good job; I am not decrying police prosecutors. When a threat to kill has been made in an indictable matter, files regarding women and children whose lives are in danger should automatically go to the DPP. The DPP and the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate should look at this system. It is not enough for the Minister for Justice to issue a one-page media statement that somebody else has cobbled together for her. I will leave the subject of Ms Logue for the moment. Ms Logue believes she is living in the law of the jungle. She told me that her partner would be out of prison by January and she had started to buy nice things for the kids. She is scared. Transcripts of the proceedings in the Magistrates Court are not usually available, unlike the proceedings in the District and Supreme Courts, which Spark and Cannon Pty Ltd transcribe each day for everybody who wants a copy. People must order transcripts from the Magistrates Court. Ms Logue is living in the law of the jungle, and this Government is keeping her there. The Government pays lip service to domestic violence and to women and children who live under the threat of death.

The next person's case I will refer to is that of Mrs Margaret Hunter. The Attorney General has shown a complete and callous disregard for Mrs Hunter. The Attorney General is not here for this motion on victims of crime. Last week he did not attend the rally outside Parliament House below the office in which he was sitting. He sent down the Minister for Community Development to attend the rally. When I came up early from the rally, the Attorney General was just coming out of his office. I asked him why he was not at the rally. The rally was made up of mums and dads whose children had died. They were helping Lifeline WA, which helps counsel children who are considering suicide. Lifeline WA wanted an extra \$300 000. The politicians standing there at the time said that the Minister for Community Development would have that amount of money in her handbag. One woman who had lost two sons gave an impassioned plea asking people to help Lifeline WA. Where was the Attorney General? He had been invited. It was his portfolio.

Mr P.B. Watson: Will you take an interjection?

Ms S.E. WALKER: No, I will not. I will not take an interjection. The Minister for Health is also the Attorney General. As Colleen Egan said in the *Sunday Times* this week, he holds a unique position. However, he did not have the courage or the gumption to speak to the mums and dads.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: They wanted him there. He is the one who pulls the strings in this Government most of the time. He is the one who pulls the strings.

Mr F.M. Logan: You never gave them any money.

Ms S.E. WALKER: Was that the member for Albany? I am speaking now. I was not in the last Government but from what I have seen, it did a damned good job for victims. When the member for Kingsley was the Attorney General, she introduced the Victims of Crime Act, which this Government has weakened. I want to talk about an article by -

Mr P.B. Watson: Have you done an anger management course?

Ms S.E. WALKER: Just listen. I want to talk about victims of crime. Colleen Egan wrote in the *Sunday Times* that one of the greatest responsibilities of the State is to protect its citizens from harm and another is to protect the rights of the community's most vulnerable members. She was talking about Narkle's latest victim. She made some very apposite comments in her article. She said that in his unique position as Attorney General and Minister for Health, Mr McGinty met Kylie on Friday and explained his efforts afterwards to the *Sunday Times*. The suggestion was that Mr Narkle be taken off the streets because he was declared mentally unfit and that Mr McGinty would fight in the courts any challenges by Mr Narkle to that decision. Colleen Egan said that to his credit Mr McGinty was not afraid of that challenge. Who can forget the photograph in the paper of the Attorney General's arm on Kylie's back?

At about 10.30 last night I had finished writing what I would say to Mrs Hunter and left a message for her to ring me. I had not spoken to her for a week. I told her that this motion would be debated today and that I would speak about her case. She said, "Sue, I have to tell you that I was so angry when I saw that *Sunday Times* article because it made the Attorney General look compassionate." I said that was funny because it made me angry too and I thought of her case. Mrs Margaret Hunter rang my office a couple of weeks ago. She said in a telephone message to me that her daughter had been murdered and that she would like to discuss the issue with me, and so she came to see me. I did not know who she was; I had absolutely no idea. I sat and listened to her. It emerged that she was the mother of a young 22-year-old lady who had been brutally and violently killed by her former partner, Mr Marks. I was partly familiar with the story because I had seen it dealt with prominently in *The West Australian*. The newspaper had run a series of articles in which concerns were raised that, notwithstanding that Mr Marks had been ordered to be detained at an authorised hospital at the Governor's pleasure - that is, an indefinite sentence - he was out on the streets within 10 months following a recommendation to the Mentally Impaired Defendants Review Board. I assume that the recommendation was from a psychiatrist at Graylands Hospital. It was accepted by the Attorney General and Marks was allowed into the community. Mrs Hunter is very distressed and despairing about that. I will tell the House why. I will explain the human side of what happened to Mrs Hunter. She rang the office of the Attorney General to speak to him because she wanted to see him about this. What did the Attorney General do? He declined to see her. I will not go into morbid or graphic descriptions, like some members of this House do, but I think it is important to tell Mrs Hunter's story and what has happened to her since her daughter died. Mrs Hunter and her mother, Michelle's grandmother, found her daughter in her home. Before being strangled, her daughter had her front teeth knocked loose, her nose broken, her liver split from stomping on her body, as well as various other injuries. She says that she knows and lives everyday that her daughter died in pain. Her daughter was a slightly built young woman. She was popular and managed a cafe in the northern suburbs. She was a responsible woman. Mrs Hunter says she is in unending agony everyday. Whenever I am visited by a victim, I always ask whether I can read everything in his or her possession including victim impact statements, their statements and any trial transcripts. As such, I have read some of her thoughts. I will mention some of those thoughts later. I wanted to read some of her thoughts to the House to give a human side to the face of this lady and because this case raises some legal issues. She feels a sense of injustice as a victim because she feels that she is living in a jungle. As I quoted before -

NO ONE is above the law - not lawyers, nor the media, nor the Government.

It offends our sense of justice if people can flout the law and get away with it, especially the rich and powerful.

Why is this case important? She feels a sense of injustice because she found her daughter, who died in terrible pain, yet the offender was acquitted because of unsoundness of mind and sent to Graylands Hospital on a custody order. That person is now out in the community. She fears that she will bump into him. During the interview, what angered me the most was when she told me the Attorney General had refused to see her. Apart from the callousness of the Attorney General, I would have thought that he wanted to see this woman. This matter raises issues concerning legal and policy decisions. Would not a person want to get to the bottom of this? Would not a person want to improve things and know what the woman was going through and what the system was all about? Would not a person want to work out what to do to help such people? According to what the Attorney General says in the article titled "Deliver us from evil", he will have Mr Narkle off the streets. He should be off the streets now. I am surprised that the Attorney General has not said so in the House. That article raises questions about the mental health system and the legal system, as does this case. When I talk about such issues I try to not criticise but to think of some solutions. I am not in government; I do not have a handle on all the departments. The Attorney General, the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, the Minister

for Community Development and the Premier have all these things at their disposal. Before I talk about that I will raise a disturbing aspect about this matter, which is the inability of Mrs Hunter to obtain a full transcript of the trial from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. There is danger here. She told me today that since the trial she has been chasing the trial transcript. She started asking the police but they said she had to wait until it was passed to the DPP. She started ringing the DPP and leaving messages for the prosecutor to ring her. He never returned her calls. She finally got hold of him and he said she could come in and read it but it was too large for her to have a copy. Why? Under the Victims of Crime Act, Mrs Hunter is a victim. She is entitled to a copy of the transcript. Instead of photocopying it for her, she was told she had to go to the office to read it. She said she needed to read it to try to get some answers. Why is this woman struggling to get answers herself? Why are some of the ministers opposite not helping her? She said that at the trial a person is so traumatised and stressed that a lot goes over a person's head. She said that even when she went to the DPP to read the transcript she felt she was under pressure so she asked for a copy. The prosecutor said he would ring her next week. That was at the end of November, but he never rang. She has been ringing since then to try to get a copy. Why can she not get one? Everyone in the group she belongs to has got theirs. She belongs to the Homicide Victims Support Group. They did not have the trouble she has had. She asks whether they want her to have a copy. She feels there is a big cover-up with Graylands Hospital. The hospital had Mr Marks for six years on and off before he murdered Michelle. It was said at the trial that he was not responsible for the murder. Mrs Hunter asks: who is? She said she was so bitter with all of them; that is, the people in charge at Graylands, the Attorney General and the Mentally Impaired Defendants Review Board. She asks whether anyone cares whether this person bashed and killed her beautiful daughter. No-one is taking any responsibility and nobody cares.

When I spoke to Mrs Hunter I looked at the Criminal Code as well as the summing up by the trial judge. A person cannot be subject to section 653 of the Criminal Code, acquittal on the unsoundness of mind, unless the jury finds that the accused person killed the victim. Is this something that needs to be looked at? Once the accused sets up a defence of unsoundness of mind, the onus shifts and he has to prove he had an unsound mind. The jury found that he did because it appears drugs were involved; he had cannabis and other drugs in his system. The judge then has to make a custody order. The convicted person goes to Graylands and is detained at the Governor's pleasure. He can be released at any time. The Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Defendants) Act empowers the Governor to give such a person a leave of absence. The Governor is able to make a release order at any time. Mrs Hunter found that Marks was released after 10 months. I believe that she found out by reading a newspaper or some other means. It was certainly not through any system set up by the Attorney General. She was contacted by the victim notification register. She read a report in a newspaper dated 1 April 2004 titled "Insane killer out on trips". The article states that the victim's family fear meeting the man who ruined their lives. It refers to an insane killer detained at Graylands Hospital after he choked his girlfriend to death in his Westminster home in 2001. The man was taken on community day trips less than one year after being sentenced indefinitely to Graylands Hospital. The day release was sanctioned by the Attorney General, Hon Jim McGinty, and has left the dead woman's mother, grandmother and sister fearing a face-to-face confrontation with the man who has devastated their lives. That newspaper article was run on 1 April. Mrs Hunter asked to see the Attorney General on 7 April, but he would not see her. Could the Attorney General not have sat down with Mrs Hunter and said to her that the offender had to be let out of hospital because there was no room for him to move around, or whatever the problem was? Do we need a bigger institution? I do not know. I am not in government. However, this is one policy issue to which the Attorney General should address his mind. As Colleen Egan of the *Sunday Times* said, one of the greatest responsibilities of the State is to protect its citizens from harm. Mrs Hunter is fearful of this man. Mrs Hunter's daughter was killed by him in appalling circumstances and 10 months later she found herself bumping into him in a chemist's shop. This matter raises all sorts of other issues. The Attorney General does not know who was with Mr Marks when he was let out of Graylands Hospital. Mrs Hunter asked the members of the Mentally Impaired Defendants Review Board, but they did not know. We do not know whether Mr Marks is under any restraint while he is out.

I would like the Attorney General to find out for Mrs Hunter why she has been given the runaround in her attempts to get a copy of the trial transcript. She rang me after she came to see me and said that she had spoken to the secretary to the Director of Public Prosecutions. She told me that the prosecutor had gone to see the director. She wants a copy of the medical evidence and a copy of the Crown's opening that were presented at the trial. She has received other parts of the transcript, but she cannot get those parts. We do not want to create the perception, as appears to be happening with Mrs Hunter, that somehow the DPP's office is being politicised. We do not want that in this State. Mrs Hunter, as a victim of crime, should be able to get the transcript if she requests it as soon as the DPP's office can provide it. As the trial ended in March last year, she should not still be waiting for it. Mrs Hunter has a deep sense of injustice. We know how the system is treating Mr Marks, but how is the system treating Mrs Hunter? I would say abysmally. I ask the Attorney General why no-one told Mrs Hunter what was happening with Mr Marks; why the board's decisions are taken in secret; and why a distressed woman has to beg and plead - she says she has to beg and plead - to the DPP for the transcript of the trial of her daughter's killer?

I have considered some of the solutions that are open to the Attorney General and the facilities that are available for killers who have a mental illness. Do the facilities need upgrading so that those people can be kept inside and victims can be safe from them? Mrs Hunter should not have to say that Mr Marks can go to Fremantle and she will go

elsewhere. This is another classic example of the lack of respect this Government has for victims and its lack of protection for them, as referred to in my motion. The way Mrs Hunter is being treated by another minister of this Government is shabby, disgraceful and shameful. I sincerely hope that I, on behalf of Mrs Hunter, have covered as much as I could. It is important to me that I have covered everything, but if I have not, Mrs Hunter will tell me and I will be back. I hope that the Attorney General will get in contact with Mrs Hunter and that he will deal with these issues.

I refer now to the way in which another victim of crime has been dealt with. I raise again the case of Leo McVeigh. Mr McVeigh feels that he is in the jungle too. I asked a question on this issue in the House on 3 March, which reads -

I refer to my letter to the Premier dated 25 August 2003 in which I sought his help to have the Minister for Police respond properly to Mr Leo McVeigh's request for a formal written explanation from the police or the Director of Public Prosecutions about why his allegations of child sexual abuse committed against him by a former Catholic priest were not pursued.

(1) Is the Premier aware that after eight months the police minister still has not provided a response?

I did receive a response from the police minister - a letter I had already received - but I did not get a response to Mr McVeigh's request, which was for a formal written explanation of why this matter was not pursued. When victims come to see me about an issue, I do not stand in this place just to criticise the minister; I try to find a solution to the issue. It appears to me that when issues are raised in the Royal Commission Into Whether There Has Been Any Corrupt or Criminal Conduct by Western Australian Police Officers - such as the Barry Cable issue about people in high places not pursuing a prosecution - and when a victim feels that an alleged perpetrator has connections with politicians and police, the only way around that is to make a policy decision that the DPP or the police give a formal written explanation. I have not got that explanation. I went on to ask -

(2) Does the Premier support, as a matter of policy, that a victim of child sexual abuse should be able to receive a formal written explanation from law enforcement agencies of why the victim's complaint has not been pursued?

There was no response to that question. It appears to me to be the most simple matter to put down in writing the reason a complaint has not been pursued. There is the case of Longman on that issue that could be thrown into an explanation. I further asked the Premier -

(3) Given the circumstances of this case, has the Premier inquired or will he inquire into whether there has been any improper intervention from any person to prevent this complaint proceeding?

The Premier did not respond to that either. Mr McVeigh came with his mother and father to see me. He had been to see a few politicians. He asked me whether I would consider where he was coming from. He said he was coming from a position in which he felt it offended our sense of justice if people could flout the law and get away with it, especially the rich and powerful. Mr McVeigh's allegation is that as a young boy he was raped by a former Catholic priest. He came with his parents to see me - all devout Catholics - because he believed that his case was being brushed under the carpet and the offender had escaped justice and could be a danger to other children. His case is different from the other victims of crime that I have spoken about, because there has been no trial. After I asked this question in the House, there was an article in "Inside Cover" in *The West Australian* that suggested I had not mentioned the political connections. I am not going to do that because I do not want to cloud the issue. I would like to see a policy decision implemented.

I want to talk also about how the Premier and the minister have dealt with this issue when they know it is a little sensitive. Mr McVeigh said that he first complained to the church in January 1998 and that he received counselling from the church between January and September 1998. On 14 October 1998 he made a formal complaint to the professional standards resource group of the church outlining what had happened to him. I have a copy of that complaint and I have read it. He told me the person he was dealing with was, I think, Father Des O'Sullivan, the director of professional standards. Mr McVeigh said that in his presence Mr O'Sullivan telephoned Jackie Ellis of the child abuse unit on 23 October 1998. The police said, by and large, that they would take a statement in four to six weeks. After six weeks Mr McVeigh started ringing the child abuse unit and was just fobbed off. About three and a half months later, Father O'Sullivan recorded a meeting with then Assistant Commissioner Tim Atherton in the presence of David Caporn and John Wibberley. On 19 March 1999 Mr O'Sullivan had a further meeting with John Wibberley. The McVeighs were aware that there was a connection with a politician and they went to see the politician. He is now a minister and he has done nothing about this matter.

The fact that there was a political connection to this case was considered important to the church, because in the 1990s or thereabouts Leo went to inspect the church file. He was told by Father O'Sullivan that he could not take a copy of it, so he recorded it all verbally on a tape, and wrote out the notes afterwards. I have all the notes with me, and I have read them. He said that there was a large heading about the political connection. I should mention that I have with me a letter written to Leo by Father O'Sullivan, the director of professional standards, which confirms all his meetings with Assistant Commissioner Atherton and with, I think, Detective John Wibberley. Leo took a copy of those notes. He sent

a letter to the Royal Commission Into Whether There Has Been Any Corrupt or Criminal Conduct by Western Australian Police Officers. It states -

In November, . . .

That is in 1999. It continues -

I rang the sexual abuse unit to speak with Officer Cresswell to enquire what progress had been made. I was informed she was on sick leave and that there was no-one available to speak with. I rang the following day and was informed that Michaela Cresswell had been transferred to the Fremantle Police Station. The same month I rang the sexual abuse unit to ask who had taken over my case from Officer Cresswell. The receptionist informed me straight away that Officer Cresswell was on holiday leave. I asked to speak to someone in charge and Detective Sergeant Wibberley came to the phone -

He was at the meeting -

and he informed me that he was very busy and asked what I wanted.

He mentioned that he had heard that Officer Cresswell was on holiday leave. It continues -

I asked him what was going on about my case and who was investigating it. His response was, "There is no-one here to investigate this." "What; was it just these two times? This will go nowhere."

He states -

In the year 2000, I persistently tried to find out who had taken on my case, since I had not had any contact from the sexual abuse unit. Every time I rang, the receptionist informed me that there was no-one to take my calls, and she could give me no information. Promises of returned phone calls were never kept.

Only after ringing the victims support unit, who on my behalf rang the sexual abuse unit, did Detective Fergus McKinnon ring me, as to what I wanted. After much frustration and discouragement on my part, Fergus McKinnon organised a meeting with me at the sexual abuse unit in Perth. Detective McKinnon seemed to be more interested with who I'd told about these allegations than asking me for specific details. He said it did not look as though he could go any further with this case but also admitted that nothing had been done to that date.

He further states -

After a phone conversation with the D.P.P. Office, it was confirmed to me -

He had been told that his file had been transferred to the DPP -

that no such file had been received by their department. After several phone calls regarding my file, Officer John Adam of the Sexual Abuse Unit enquired of Detective McKinnon why the file was still with the sexual abuse unit. Officer John Adam forwarded my file to Mr Geoff Lawrence at the D.P.P. Office.

A request was made by myself to meet with Mr Lawrence to discuss the file which he had recently received. I let him know during that meeting that I wanted charges to be laid After that meeting Mr Lawrence said he would contact me at a later date. During the contact of that later date, he informed me by phone that no charges would be laid and that this case was finished.

I am not casting any aspersions on Mr Lawrence or any of the police officers. I go back to Law Week. It offends our sense of justice if people can flout the law and get away with it, especially the rich and powerful with friends in high places. I am not saying that this is an allegation; I am saying that there is a perception in this case. Other perceptions arose during the police royal commission. I ask myself how we can get around this. We can get around it by asking the law enforcement agencies to give us a formal written response.

When Mr McVeigh came to see me with his parents about this issue, he said that he felt fobbed off. This is reflected in the letter to the royal commission that I have read. He does not want the law of the jungle to apply in this State. As I said, it offends his sense of justice to think that this man's political and police connections have led to this matter being swept under the carpet. Everyone sees this case as being too hot to handle. Why? It is because of connections and because the accused, as was stated in the "Inside Cover" article, is no longer a priest and a professional person. I accept that. That is why I am not naming names. There is a simple solution, as I said: a formal written explanation.

When I first wrote to the Minister for Police, who buried her head on this issue, I am sure that if she had got the police or the Director of Public Prosecutions to give a proper formal response, Mr McVeigh would have been happy. I am quite sure about that. What happened? Let us look at the attitude of Minister Roberts, the Attorney General and the Premier on this issue. I originally wrote to the Commissioner of Police on 22 April about this matter. I said that I had been approached by Mr McVeigh, who had asked me for assistance in determining why the police and the DPP did not pursue his allegations of sexual abuse. He went on to say that he reported the allegations to the child abuse unit. I asked for a copy of the police brief, and whether he could obtain copies of that.

Mr Matthews, the Commissioner of Police, was away at the time. I will not go through the correspondence. However, his office could not recall ever receiving that letter. However, funnily enough, in May, my electoral office received a response regarding Leo McVeigh from Alison Karmelich, the parliamentary liaison officer to the Minister for Police - on an important matter like this. That seemed strange to me, because when I tried to ring or speak to the Commissioner of Police, he said that he had been told that the protocol was to go through the minister; yet this issue concerning Mr McVeigh was given to a minion in the minister's office to try to deal with it. I wrote to the minister on 10 June. I gave her all the letters and asked for a proper explanation of why the matter was not pursued by the DPP, whether a police complaint had been made out and whether there had been an investigation into whether there had been a fobbing off. My office rang the minister's office and there was no response.

I had a discussion with the member for Kingsley about how I should handle this matter, because I did not want to raise any political connections. However, I wanted to get to the bottom of it, for Mr McVeigh's sake. Therefore, I wrote to the Premier, Geoff Gallop, on 25 August and stated -

Please find attached copies of letters between myself and Minister for Police . . . which are self-explanatory. Mr McVeigh has come to see me because he wishes a formal written explanation from the Police Commissioner and the Director of Public Prosecutions as to why . . .

It goes on. I told him why I was writing to him and nobody else. I stated -

I do not wish to politicise this matter but am very disappointed that the Police Minister appears to be 'burying her head in the sand' and hoping that it will go away. . . .

I am requesting from you on behalf of Mr McVeigh, a formal letter of response from the Police Minister as the office has only received an email from a "parliamentary liaison officer" which I think is entirely inappropriate.

As a matter of public policy any child who alleges sexual abuse and has the courage to come forward when they are older ought to be able to obtain a formal written response as to why the matter is not proceeding.

I asked for certain other things regarding that matter.

The Premier, to his credit, did write to me. It must be borne in mind that the Premier waxed lyrical about the Hollingworth crisis. I will refer to that. I have a document dated Wednesday, 20 February 2003, which states -

Premier Geoff Gallop said yesterday the approach by the churches to sex abuse over the years, in general, had been appalling.

Dr Gallop made particular reference to the way the churches had failed to take into account the interests and emotions of the victims.

I was relying on the Premier's view of child abuse and his comments that other people had failed to take into account the interests and emotions of the victims. He was reported in *The West Australian* of Saturday, 3 May as saying -

Child abuse is a very significant issue and because of its significance I think the Governor General would help himself and everyone else if he moved aside from the position.

He was a strong and strident campaigner for Dr Hollingworth to stand aside. He stated -

The removal of Governor-General Peter Hollingworth would send a strong signal against child abuse,

Therefore, I wrote to the Premier, hoping that he could get for me the formal written response about why this matter was not pursued. The minister wrote back to me. She thanked me and wrote that with regard to why the matter was not pursued by the Director of Public Prosecutions, it should be noted that the DPP was not in the best place to respond, since it was after consideration of all the available facts that the had DPP determined that there was insufficient evidence to proceed. She wrote that, accordingly, she had taken the liberty of referring my correspondence to the DPP for his consideration and direct response.

I wrote back and asked for a copy of that letter. I have never received it. I have not heard a word from the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. I do not even know whether he received a letter from the minister. This letter was sent to me on 1 September after I had written to her in April. I am now reluctant to send anything to the minister when victims come into my office. She wrote that the DPP's determination was also the conclusion of Detective McKinnon, who considered after extensive investigation that there was insufficient evidence to proffer charges with regard to the allegations.

She went on to detail that they had confirmed the content of a Channel Seven television program; that they had approached the complainant's sister; that they had contacted church members, who had no knowledge of the alleged incidents; that they had assessed the actions of Mr McVeigh on the day of an alleged incident at Perth Zoo; and that they had interviewed the alleged offender. She also referred to the sensitive nature of this case, but why was it sensitive? She wrote that Detective McKinnon took the further step of seeking the opinion of the DPP regarding this matter and provided a comprehensive report of the available evidence.

The DPP's view was that it should not proceed. I wrote and asked whether the minister could forward me a copy of the covering letter to the DPP, and whether she could tell me which church leaders were contacted and on what date. We know that there is a church file. I have all the notes that Mr McVeigh said that he made. I asked where and on what date the offender was interviewed; what actions of Mr McVeigh on the day of the alleged incident at the zoo were assessed; and why Detective McKinnon thought the matter sensitive. I received a response to that. The response was tabled by the Premier on the day that I asked the questions. That response was final.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: You said twice that you did not receive a response and now you are saying that you have a response. Your argument is hard to follow.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I am trying to find the response that I received on that day, because the Premier referred to it when he tabled it. It is not good enough simply to write to a victim and say that there is insufficient evidence. It is not good enough to say that all the questions that have been asked will not be answered because of confidentiality and operational matters.

When the "Inside Cover" article was written the reporter did not know what I had listed. I believe it was perfectly reasonable to ask which church members were contacted. If church members were contacted, what is happening in the church, because there is a church file? I am disappointed with the way in which the Minister for Police tried to palm this matter off because she thought it was too hot to handle. I am disappointed in her incompetence in not going to the DPP and asking him to give her a proper answer on this issue. It is important, as it is Law Week, and the Law Society also considers it important, that when people have connections with people in high places, there is not the perception that they are pulling strings. That is why I am choosing not to talk about the connections but the issue of policy. That is why I am choosing to talk about the Premier knowing full well the perception of this matter. It was he who during the Hollingworth crisis got on the front foot and started talking about the victims of abuse by priests. It was he who talked about victims' emotions and how we should be considering them. The sheer hypocrisy of the attitude of the Premier and ministers to victims of crime in this State is appalling. It is the law of the jungle on the other side of the House, not the values of the Liberal Party, which have been expressed time and again through the Victims of Crime Act.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Ms S.E. WALKER: The member for Girrawheen sits there like a troglodyte in the corner, continually carping on. She never gets up to speak. We are talking about women, domestic violence and death.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I think you will find, Mr Acting Speaker, that the member for Nedlands has used an unparliamentary term when referring to the member for Girrawheen, which is disappointing considering the subject matter she is talking about. I would have thought that when referring to women members of Parliament, her gratuitously directing comments like that to another woman member of Parliament was completely out of order. Of course, her comments are hypocritical.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: There is absolutely no point of order. The member for Nedlands -

Mr P.B. Watson: Where are your standards?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr A.P. O'Gorman): Order, member for Albany!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members! I am trying to hear a point of order. It does not help when members interject. I want to hear the point of order so that I can make a ruling.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I would not have thought that the term "troglodyte" was particularly offensive. The member for Nedlands commented that the member for Girrawheen was effectively behaving like a troglodyte.

Ms M.M. Quirk: She did not say that. She said that I never got up and never spoke in this place.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: That would be a very accurate observation. The member rarely speaks. Whether or not she speaks in this Parliament is a matter for her and not a matter for the Chair. The member for Nedlands can make whatever reference she wants about the parliamentary performance of any member in this place. There is absolutely no point of order at all. The member for Girrawheen can get up and speak on this debate, and I hope she does.

Mr C.M. BROWN: A point of order was moved to resolve parliamentary standards. It is a point of order that has been raised on many occasions. The fact of the matter is that the point of order needs to be upheld. The member for Nedlands needs to withdraw if the member for Nedlands and Liberal Party members are interested in standards.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What needs to be withdrawn?

Mr C.M. BROWN: The problem with the Leader of the Opposition is that he can never be quiet. I do not know how he ever gets on. He is right about everything. He must have had a difficult upbringing, because he is right about every conceivable thing that happens in the world. I wish that I could be right so many times like the Leader of the Opposition. He is just unbelievable.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Tell us what the point of order is.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr C.M. BROWN: The way he can -

Mr R.F. Johnson: He is disgraceful.

Mr C.M. BROWN: He interjected -

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, members on both sides! It does not help when members are interjecting. The Minister for State Development has the floor and is talking to the point of order. Members on my left and right are interjecting. I am still trying to resolve the point of order that the minister raised. I would like to hear both sides, but with everybody interjecting I cannot. I ask all other members to be quiet.

Mr C.M. BROWN: I was making the obvious point that this point of order is about standards in the House. My submission is that the point of order should be upheld if we are interested in improving the standards of this House.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What is this point of order?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order, members!

Mr C.M. Brown: That is the point of order. Don't you understand it? Jesus, you're bloody hopeless! No wonder your party's in disarray.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, Minister for State Development!

I remind the member for Nedlands that we have standards in this place. I ask her to withdraw the reference. I have just looked up exactly what it means, because I was unsure. I believe it is not in keeping with our standards in the House.

Ms S.E. WALKER: I withdraw the reference to the member for Girrawheen as a cave dweller; that is, a troglodyte.

Debate Resumed

Ms S.E. WALKER: I made that remark because, frankly, the member for Girrawheen sits there and carps at me all the time while I am talking about serious issues. I looked at the definition of the term "troglodyte". It is a cave dweller.

The point is that when the Premier tabled that document, he attached to it a briefing note by Assistant Commissioner Tim Atherton, who is now the acting deputy commissioner. He was at the original meeting with Father Des O'Sullivan when they discussed this issue. We need to get rid of the perception that people in the police department, the DPP or any law enforcement agency or in politics, or people who have friends in high places, are pulling strings. There should be a policy whereby a child abuse victim of any age is allowed to have a written formal explanation for why the charges will not proceed.

Mr R.F. Johnson: When was the complaint laid?

Ms S.E. WALKER: The complaint was laid in 1999. Mr McVeigh has been trying to get his statement signed ever since. He feels strongly about the matter. He is a devout Catholic. He is still in the church, as are his parents. He does not mind my raising his name in Parliament. I spoke to him late last night and told him that I would raise this issue again in Parliament. I want to know why the police thought the matter was sensitive. I want to know why a person who says that he has been sexually assaulted by a priest has to continually ring to get a statement signed. Why is this happening? How can we stop it happening? Those questions need to be asked. The Premier should be asking those questions, because he is the one who takes every political opportunity to talk about child abuse. He hollered from the highest tree about the Hollingworth issue and why we should consider the emotions and concerns of victims. He has done nothing. When he tabled that letter, he did not answer my question about whether he believed it was a matter of policy, instead of just calling people in, sitting them down and telling them that it would not be done because of this or that. They go away feeling totally confused when they come up against a blank wall. The Premier is in a position to do something about it. Frankly, I am in this place to speak on behalf of victims of crime. I take seriously what they have to say. Members on this side of the House value the rights of victims of crime. We do not value the law of the jungle. We value the rule of the law. We think that only by exercising the rule of the law properly and with integrity will people in this State get justice. Those people about whom I have spoken think they are living in a jungle. I hope that the four ministers I have mentioned today have the integrity to contact some of these victims and try to work something out for them.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland - Minister for Police and Emergency Services) [5.12 pm]: I am very pleased to have the opportunity to respond to this motion for a variety of reasons, but principally to clearly demonstrate that our Government has done a significantly better job of supporting victims of crime in three years than the previous Government did in its full eight years in government. I remind the House up front of the Governments that have supported victims of crime in this State. I note that the Victim Support Service was launched in July 1992 by a Labor

Government. Further, the Victim Notification Register started in October 2001, again under a Labor Government. Both services are designed to notify victims of crime and provide support. Of course, it is rather shallow for the member for Nedlands to say that the Liberal Party now supports victims of crime. It is not on record as ever having done that in government. Labor Governments are on record as supporting victims of crime.

Our Government has done a lot over the past three years to support victims of crime, but I do not expect the member for Nedlands to acknowledge that. I will run through some of our initiatives, and their impact on some of the cases that the member has read out of the newspaper today. The justice mediation initiative in court 37 is a court-based program that commenced in May 2003. It offers victims the opportunity to mediate settlements with offenders prior to court hearings. Since it commenced, that program has had referrals from 255 victims. Of these victims, 52 per cent have agreed to be involved. The court is provided with a report on the outcome of every referral. Approximately \$1.5 million has been allocated over a three-year period to establish and expand that program, both in metropolitan and regional Magistrates Courts. This includes funding for a pilot program to enhance the referral process for victims via the Victim Support Service. A review of that mediation service will be done this year. However, feedback from stakeholder groups indicates very strong support by everyone for this initiative. In October 2001 we put in place the Victim Notification Register, which provides an information service for victims of crime at a cost of \$60 000. It allows registered victims to receive information, such as sentence information and changes to offender circumstances, as long as that person is under the supervision of the Department of Justice. I am advised that the number of offenders being monitored has increased from 228 about a year ago to some 450 currently.

The court conferencing pilot program commenced in October 2001 in the Perth Children's Court. That was later established in all metropolitan Children's Courts. This expanded the concept of juvenile justice teams by providing courts with an option for victims of more serious offences to become involved in the outcome. Twelve to 18 months after being referred to court conferencing, 75 per cent of referrals had not returned to court, and the current victim attendance rate is 55 per cent. Ninety-two per cent of victims surveyed stated that they were satisfied with the outcome, while all believed that they had benefited from the process.

The introduction of the Criminal Property Confiscation Act 2000 has provided some good results. The first round of grants was disbursed in June 2003 and totalled \$1.2 million for some 25 projects. Many of these community grants provide assistance to victims of crime. The second round of grants, totalling \$800 000, was recently advertised for applications and they are currently being assessed. Members will also recall that we established the Gordon Inquiry into Response by Government Agencies to Complaints of Family Violence and Child Abuse in Aboriginal Communities. A significant amount of money has been allocated in response to the recommendations to combat child abuse and family violence in Aboriginal communities. A senior Aboriginal liaison officer has been appointed to the Child Victim Witness Service to work with service providers across the State to address the needs of Aboriginal children. New services in outlying areas across the Kimberley, Pilbara and goldfields are being provided, and we are extending the use of Victim Support Service contractors instead of providing a fly in, fly out service to regions.

In January this year Cabinet agreed to the establishment of a child sex offender register, and will include anti-loitering offences and a range of other offences. We have taken action resulting from the recommendations of the Skinner report. As has already been mentioned, for the first time we have put in place a comprehensive tracking system to identify all prisoners who have a violence restraining order lodged against them. This will prevent their making contact with their victims. We are also putting in place a notification system on the prison database system to ensure that all mail from prisoners who are in custody and who are subject to violence restraining orders is screened.

We have put in place a range of new legislation. More legislation is currently in the drafting process and will soon be introduced into Parliament. Services for victims include the Child Victim Witness Service, the Coronial Counselling Service and the Family Violence Court, which began as a pilot court in Joondalup. Those best practice features are being rolled out to other courts. The Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal has significantly improved its collection rate. The amount of compensation payable to victims has increased from \$50 000 to \$75 000. Interim payments are available to meet urgent medical, dental, counselling and funeral costs, among other items. The Department of Justice policy on victims of crime was launched by the Attorney General in January 2003, and all parts of the department have reported their achievements in response to that policy. The Department of Justice is the first government agency to have a specific policy on victims of crime, and this will form a model for other agencies. There is cross-government coordination of victims issues. Protocols for secondary victims of homicide have been established between the Director of Public Prosecutions, the Police Service, the Coroner's Court and the Victim Support Service to ensure prompt and effective delivery of services to secondary victims of homicide. Nowhere else in Australia is there a set of protocols as comprehensive as the ones we have put in place in Western Australia. A victims services directory has been published and made available to victims of crime and service providers. A video has been produced to assist Aboriginal victims of crime prepare for court processes. I understand that is titled "Taking the Stand".

Sadly, in the notice that we were given of this motion, we were presented just with the generic statement that this House condemns the Gallop Government for not supporting victims of crime. I have demonstrated briefly a range of things that the Gallop Government is doing to support victims of crime, and how it has enhanced its efforts to support victims of crime both in resourcing and in legislation. More legislation is to come to further support victims of crime.

I turn now to a couple of cases, neither of which the member for Nedlands gave me notice that she would be raising today. I want to put a few things on record with regard to those cases. The first case is that of Ms Pamela Logue. The member for Nedlands all but suggested that the Government had done nothing. She then went on to say how we had changed the prison mail process as a result of that case. She suggested also that there had been requests for meetings with ministers, particularly the Minister for Community Development, Women's Interests, Seniors and Youth, and that those requests had been denied. My understanding is that there was no request to the Minister for Community Development for a meeting. Yes, there was an e-mail dated 1 April this year that made a number of points and asked for a range of matters to be taken into consideration. My understanding is that those matters have been given consideration and will continue to be given consideration, and that the Minister for Community Development has responded by way of a letter to that e-mail.

Subsequently, I have been advised that the Department for Community Development in Armadale has been in touch with Ms Logue. I understand also that Ms Logue has been speaking with the domestic violence police officers at Cannington Police Station. Again, I do not want to go into the details, because it is possible that the offender will read *Hansard* or pick up on the public information. All I want to do is place on record that the advice from the DCD officers in Armadale is that they have been in contact with Ms Logue, and that they spoke to her only last week and she reaffirmed that she had been having good dealings with the domestic violence police officers at Cannington and had been assured that she would be contacted prior to the release of the offender from prison and that things would be put in place. It is not as though, as the member for Nedlands suggested, she has not been contacted.

Ms S.E. Walker: It is Ms Logue who has suggested that. Listen to what she is saying.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I am advised that Ms Logue has spoken to officers from both DCD and the Police Service, and they have given her assurances.

I turn now to the McVeigh case, which the member for Nedlands also raised. I sought some further information on this matter from the Police Service in March of this year, and I received some advice from the then Acting Deputy Commissioner, Tim Atherton. He made a number of points to me, and it would be useful to put those points on the record. He says -

In response to your request for information concerning the matters raised in Parliament yesterday by Ms Sue Walker, member for Nedlands, concerning the above named person, I provide the following information -

1. Child Abuse Investigation Unit have dealt with the complaint from McVeigh having initially received a complaint on 21 October 1998
2. McVeigh signed his typed statement on 13 April 1999
3. The Person of Interest was interviewed on video on 13 October 1999 and denied any offences

I note at this point that this all happened during the term of the previous coalition Government. A lot of allegations have been made that, somehow, I received a complaint, or that the current Premier, this Government or its ministers have somehow covered this up or are trying to protect someone, or that there is some issue there. The fact is that the complaint was made in 1998. The signed, typed statement was made on 13 April 1999. That is two years before the change of Government. Now, of course, all the expectations are on the current Government, not on the previous Government, even though this relates to its time in office. The acting deputy commissioner's letter continues -

4. McVeigh's brother signed a statement on 30 March 2000
5. On 31 July 2000 the Investigation file was submitted to Director of Public Prosecution for opinion whether there was sufficient evidence to proceed
6. Proecutor from the DPP, Mr Geoff Lawrence, provided a written reply advising that on 21 February 2001 he had -

Ms S.E. Walker: A written reply to whom, minister?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Does the member for Nedlands know how many times during her speech she said that she would not take interjections? I am giving a direct quote from the acting deputy commissioner of police and -

Ms S.E. Walker interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr A.P. O'Gorman): Order! Members, the minister was clearly not accepting the interjections. We are trying to get through this process in which the minister is providing her response. I ask that the member for Nedlands listen to the response, as she has raised this very important issue.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I will continue on from the point at which I was so rudely interrupted -

6. Proecutor from the DPP, Mr Geoff Lawrence, provided a written reply advising that on 21 February 2001 he had spoken personally to Mr McVeigh and advised him that there was insufficient evidence to instigate criminal proceedings against the Person of Interest and the reasons for the decision.

I seems to me that if that is the advice from the Director of Public Prosecutions on 23 February 2001, it is a little difficult now to try to lay this at the feet of the current Government. It is really a nonsense; it is a beat-up. It is another attempt by the member for Nedlands to come up with some dreadful, misleading and terrible conspiracy that has no basis in the facts. The advice continues -

7. On 11 December 2003 you responded to the Member for Nedlands concerning matters she has raised in regard to the investigation. (Copy attached)

Of course, I responded to the member for Nedlands. My understanding is that this matter has been addressed. The member for Nedlands is trying to rake over some old coals, to come up with a bit of smear and innuendo as she often seeks to do in this House, and to cast a few aspersions in a few directions. The fact of the matter is that I do not interfere in police investigations. How the deputy commissioner and the Director of Public Prosecutions go about an investigation, and the conclusions they come to, are not for me to question. It is not for me to tell them to prosecute or not to prosecute someone. I have to be assured that the appropriate processes have been gone through, and the acting deputy commissioner of police has given me that assurance. The Director of Public Prosecutions has come to the same conclusion but, sadly, the member for Nedlands will not accept it. I am hardly likely to demand that the Police Service, for example - never mind the Director of Public Prosecutions, for whom I am not responsible -

Ms S.E. Walker interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order, member for Nedlands!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I am hardly likely to demand that the Police Service provide to the member for Nedlands, or anyone else for that matter, information that it tells me that for operational, personal security, identification or whatever reasons, it does not believe should be handed over. It is not my role to instruct the police who to investigate and who not to investigate, or who to prosecute and who not to prosecute. The Government has received a point-by-point response from the Acting Deputy Commissioner of Police. He has advised the Government that the Director of Public Prosecutions was directly in touch with Mr McVeigh and that the DPP had explained those circumstances. I can understand the situation. Mr McVeigh is simply not happy with the answer he was given. Indeed, many victims of crime might not be happy with an answer from the DPP that their cases will not be prosecuted. However, there is little point in prosecuting a case if there is little chance of its being successful. That would be a waste of public resources and also it would cause a lot of trauma for those involved if the action was not likely to be successful in court. Those decisions are best made - appropriately - by the DPP. Frankly, the DPP is someone of standing and integrity in the community. It is up to him or his office to determine what level of information should be disclosed. If people are not happy with that, they can go to other agencies. Part of the advice that was given to Mr McVeigh was that if he was not happy about the way in which the police had conducted matters, appropriate procedures were in place to make a complaint and have the matters investigated. I am not aware whether he has taken up that option, and it is not necessary for me to be aware of that. On the basis of what I have seen, I am satisfied that the police have dealt with this matter objectively.

The member for Nedlands has sadly engaged in a lot more muckraking that has no substance. As I said at the beginning of my speech, if members looked at the substance of the support services the Government put in place for victims of crime since it formed Government, they would see that those further support services will be ongoing and that legislation on this matter will be introduced into this House in coming months. This Government has a vastly superior record on victim support than do members opposite.

MRS C.L. EDWARDES (Kingsley) [5.33 pm]: I support the motion. It does not matter what the minister has done in government, whether something was done in the late 1980s or the early 1990s, what we did in government in the 1990s or what this Government has done. The member for Nedlands raised three serious cases. She raised the matter of a victim of domestic violence who is having some difficulty getting support even though a man could be released - I am conscious of the fact that the case will be appealed -

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Were you out of the Chamber when I responded? It is a tad unfair for you to suggest that I have not responded to that, because I have pointed out the government agencies that have been in touch with the victim and what they have done.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: I am not talking about that issue. A number of people who have killed their partners had been violent towards women and had breached their violence restraining orders. Some women have had the police place alarms in their properties. The question that the member for Nedlands raised is: what else can possibly be done to help those women? We are talking about not only the cases that the member for Nedlands raised, but also the protection of women whose partners could breach their violence restraining orders. The number of examples this year alone means we do not have to refer to other years. An amazing number of women have been killed by violent partners. I do not have the answer to this. If an alarm put in a house by the police to give some comfort and security to a woman and her children is not enough and has proved to be insufficient to allow enough time for the police to arrive before a person is killed, what do we do next? That is the question being asked. In a policy sense, there has to be something more. We

have heard about the suspect in the Claremont killings being tagged by the police. Is that the next step in cases in which the police have serious concerns that more violence may be perpetrated against a victim of domestic violence? That is the question raised by the member for Nedlands. What else do we do to protect those women? The support services put in place and the people who have been in touch are all well and good, but we are talking about a policy decision. The fact that victims also have to pay to obtain a copy of the transcript of their trial needs to be addressed. They are already victims of the system. It is already costing them. The Government should make a policy decision that, in those circumstances, victims can have access to transcripts.

The member for Nedlands raised another case about the mother who found the dead body of her daughter. The mother is going through trauma just dealing with the process. Again, it is not the support services and the like that people are looking for; they are looking for a change of direction and policy. They are looking for a decision maker such as the Government or the minister to change the process. Why has the woman not been given access to the transcript? It does not make sense to me. If there is a problem with her getting access to her transcript, the Government should find out what is holding up the process. How can we help? Is there a change in process or system that needs to be put in place to enable her to get a copy of her transcript? That is what we are talking about. We are not talking about all the things we have done, including enacting legislation, establishing support services and the like. They are in place. We know we have done all that. However, the three cases cited tonight have been brought to the attention of the Parliament because the system and the processes have not worked for those three people.

The other issue raised was the use of victim impact statements. That was a major initiative. If, somewhere along the line, after a decade of use, they are dealt with inappropriately in the lower courts, the Government should look at it. This is not for the counselling or support services to look at; it is for the Government to ask the Chief Stipendiary Magistrate whether there is a problem and whether he can investigate and report. He should advise whether the Government can do something about that. We are looking at transcripts, the process and the use of victim impact statements. We are also looking at what else we can do for breaches of violence restraining orders.

What happens when offenders are let out again? The system needs to acknowledge that some people never learn; and, if they never learn, what else can we do to protect women and their kids and prevent them from being continually victimised? They are already vulnerable and powerless, and they feel further powerless in their attempts to deal with the system. How do we deal with that? Was the case of the killer being released from a mental institution without the mother and grandmother being notified a case of a breakdown in the system? Do we need to put in place a proper process? There is a process of parole; therefore, does the system automatically place conditions on someone who goes back into the community on release from a mental institution? That is what we need to know. We want to hear from the Government whether further changes need to be put in place to protect those victims, not what the Government did in the late 1980s and in 1991.

This afternoon the Opposition has identified a failure in the system in three important cases. Unfortunately, in these cases there was no room for errors of judgment. Errors of judgment have already occurred this year with some violence restraining orders. Serious consequences can result from errors of judgment and mistakes in the system. We need to ensure that a process is in place that can be constantly scrutinised and built on. The Government cannot just put in place a process and hope it will work for all. It must examine the system when it breaks down and results in victims being further victimised. There is nothing wrong with ensuring that the system in place requires the Director of Public Prosecutions, who is independent of the Police Service, to explain to victims the reason their case is not proceeding. The DPP can ask the police why the case was not pursued. If there is a need to reconsider the Leo McVeigh case, let us reconsider it.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: I think you might have been out of the Chamber when I said that the advice from the DPP to the Police Service was that the officer, whom the DPP named, had personally contacted Mr McVeigh and explained the reasons to him. The DPP is not my department, but I say in the DPP's defence that a senior officer from the DPP contacted Mr McVeigh and explained the reasons that the police were not going ahead with the matter. That occurred at the time of the change of government in February 2001. If Mr McVeigh was not satisfied with that explanation, there would certainly be an avenue for further communication directly -

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: That is exactly what was in the letter last year to the minister. Mr McVeigh obviously is not satisfied with that.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Maybe he will never be satisfied.

Mr R.C. Kucera: Member for Kingsley, it is part of the grieving process for people to challenge these things and to work their way through them. Some people will never be satisfied.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: Okay, he is not satisfied with that, and that was the reason for his letter last year. He and his family would appreciate it if the matter could be taken up and considered more seriously. He has alleged that he was a victim of child abuse. All of a sudden he was told that there was insufficient evidence to support that allegation and he has said, "Excuse me, I am evidence. I was abused as a child."

Mrs M.H. Roberts: It is not helpful then to encourage conspiracy theories about why he has not been dealt with. The fact is that he was given that advice by the DPP on or about February 2001. The decision on whether to proceed does not even relate to our term in office.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: The minister can understand why some people might think that way if they feel they are not being properly listened to. That is even more reason to ensure a proper explanation is provided that Mr McVeigh can feel comfortable with. He might never be happy about it, but at least it would provide some level of comfort about why the decision was made. Otherwise, conspiracy theories will always abound.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Especially if they are promoted.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: They are not being promoted. The member for Nedlands has never identified; it has been deliberately the case. We want assistance for Leo McVeigh.

A number of things need to be looked at. I refer to access to transcripts. Mrs Hunter needs her transcript, for her own sake as part of the grieving process, and she should have a right to that transcript. If there is a problem in the process of victims getting access to their transcripts, it should be solved. Victims should receive their transcripts, and receive them free of charge. The use and breaches of violence restraining orders is a serious issue that all Governments must consider. How can we deal with the increasing levels of violence perpetrated against women? Police alarms are not sufficient in that regard. Consideration must be given to whether greater improvements are needed in the mental health institution release process to ensure strong conditions are put in place, such as those applying through the Parole Board, to protect victims if perpetrators are released back into the community.

MR P.G. PENDAL (South Perth) [5.47 pm]: Ordinarily, I would be inclined to support a motion of this kind. I will not support this motion, largely on the grounds that it is too broad. I think the minister has made out a case to say that in the broad most people would argue that the system properly protects people and, in the main, respects victims of crime in this State. The motion might have had more capacity for support if it had specified those areas, or those cases, with common agreement, in which victims have failed to be adequately protected or supported. In the course of this debate, and in debates similar to this here and in the wider community, we run a risk of doing some other injustices on our way to preserving equity for most people. There is no guarantee that our system is infallible. The larger our system, and the bigger our community, the more chance there is that some cases are intractable - that is, they have no solution. That is not a political or governmental thing; it is a reality.

I point to two issues of late in which I think injustices have occurred on the part of people trying to correct injustices of another kind. One is the Claremont killer suspect. It was an appalling act on the part of whomever it was in the Police Service who leaked the name of that individual so that he could be confronted by the media periodically, as it continues. The only occasion on which that person's name should properly have been disclosed was once charges had been laid and the person was brought before the courts. However, in the case of that man, we have allowed a judgment to be made that even if the evidence to charge him does not exist, there is sufficient evidence, in the eyes of some police, to leak his name to the media; thus he begins a punishment -

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Member for South Perth, I am not sure that you are correct in that. I think that the person may have himself gone to the media in the first instance.

Mr P.G. PENDAL: My understanding is that that is not the case. However, I stand corrected. My understanding is that the media was led there by a police leak. I would be delighted to learn that the individual nominated himself. I cannot imagine a circumstance in which a person would nominate himself. However, in the end, it is a very serious matter that we were confronted with.

Secondly, we are all familiar with the other recent case relating to Narkle, in which there was indisputably a victim of a horrific crime. Narkle did not fail to be convicted in the court because of a failure on the part of the police; Narkle failed to be convicted in the court because the victim said that she could not go through with giving evidence in the court again, if I remember correctly. That is not the fault of the police or the Director of Public Prosecutions. I dare say it is not even the fault of the alleged victim. However, the fact remains that she is not the victim in that case because the law has not made out a case that she is. The reason for the incapacity of the law to make out a case to demonstrate that she was the victim of a serial rapist was that she chose to not proceed with giving evidence in the court. There may have been compelling reasons for that. The psychological impact on that woman must have been enormous.

I objected when I read in the newspapers, for example, that the Minister for Health, or the Attorney General - I am not sure in which capacity he was acting - said that he would therefore see whether Narkle could be detained, treated or dealt with under the mental health laws of Western Australia.

Mr R.C. Kucera: Why would you object to that?

Mr P.G. PENDAL: I objected to it because it seemed to me that it was a way in which the law, having failed to get a person one way, could see whether there was another way to achieve what to that woman would have been justice. In both cases, the point that I am trying to make is that injustices do get left in our wake. This is not a perfect society. Our

system is not perfect. I believe that the arguments of the member for Nedlands would have been more compelling had she been able to demonstrate to the Parliament that, let us say, 30 per cent of people who were charged were somehow getting off criminal charges because they could contact people in high places and use improper contacts to do so. However, I do not imagine we are talking about massive numbers of cases.

I can understand why, in the end, people go to members of Parliament, whether it be the member for Nedlands, the member for Widgiemooltha or the member for South Perth. As we know, mostly when people come to us, they have exhausted every other avenue. We are the point of last hope for some of those people. However, that does not ordinarily mean that a member of Parliament, or the Parliament, will be able to achieve for that person what the system has been unable to achieve. I believe that there is every good reason for us to bring cases of a personal nature into the House.

I heard what the Minister for Police said by way of interjection about one of the individuals who had complained to the member for Nedlands. It may be true that these matters were referred to the police and investigated, and that resulted in at least a partial statement from Assistant Commissioner Atherton being read into the record today. That was all to demonstrate that, in the final analysis, there is not enough evidence to take to a court of law. I remember becoming a bit crabby several years ago when watching a television program about the suspect in the Claremont killings. A concerned, earnest, decent, hard-working and probably very frustrated police officer told the television cameraman, "We have everything to get this person except the evidence." I could not believe that I was watching something of that nature on television. Whether we like it or not, that is the one element that is needed to sustain a case in a court of law in Western Australia, especially a case in which those sorts of charges are being levelled or alleged against a person. In the end, I do not think the motion should get up for that reason alone. There may be other specific cases that ought to be brought to the House in which we can deal in specifics and can point out that the system has failed. Even then, I doubt very much whether as a House of Parliament we would be able to sheet home the blame for the failure to the Gallop Labor Government any more than we could to the Court Government or any other Government of Western Australia. For those reasons, I do not intend to support the motion.

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen - Parliamentary Secretary) [5.57 pm]: I rise from my primordial slime to respond to some of the comments made about what this Government has done for victims of crime. I do not support the motion. It is inappropriate to label this Government as callous and disregarding of the interests of victims of crime. As the minister has already outlined, our record has been very good in this regard and we have been very sensitive to the issues. Late last year I had carriage of some legislation that related to ensuring a seamless treatment of victims of crime by all interested agencies. It enabled the Director of Public Prosecutions and the Western Australia Police Service to communicate with the Victim Support Service and ensure that the victim's interests were paramount.

I find it interesting that the member for Nedlands is suddenly a champion of victims of crime. I was cited an example by a woman from a homicide victims group who had lost a loved one through homicide. I understand that the member for Nedlands said to a homicide victims support group that its members were not truly victims and that the victims of homicide were in fact the deceased. I am very pleased that the member for Nedlands has now embraced the interests -

Ms S.E. Walker: What a load of twaddle. I would never have said that. If you are going to speak in here, you should tell the truth.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The member has cited conversations she has had with people, and they were not challenged. I deserve the same courtesy and respect that I afforded her with regard to those conversations. I am very pleased that the member for Nedlands has now -

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr A.P. O'Gorman): I will not have shouting across the Chamber. This place should be treated more respectfully. Shouting across the Chamber in this manner will not be tolerated while I am in the Chair.

Point of Order

Mr P.D. OMODEI: The member has intimated that the member for Nedlands made some comments that were an imputation of improper motive. I ask that you, Mr Acting Speaker, rule under standing order No 92.

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order. The member for Nedlands may disagree with what the member for Girrawheen said, but the member for Girrawheen is trying to make a point. I will not have shouting across this Chamber. There is no point of order.

Mr P.D. Omodei: How does the member for Nedlands handle untruths?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member for Warren-Blackwood, I have ruled on the point of order. I will not take further questions.

Debate Resumed

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I have concluded my comments.

Question put and a division taken with the following result -

Ayes (16)

Mr C.J. Barnett	Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr R.F. Johnson	Mr M.W. Trenorden
Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan	Mrs C.L. Edwardes	Mr A.D. Marshall	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr M.J. Birney	Ms K. Hodson-Thomas	Mr P.D. Omodei	Ms S.E. Walker
Mr M.F. Board	Mr M.G. House	Mr R.N. Sweetman	Mr J.L. Bradshaw (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (29)

Mr P.W. Andrews	Mrs D.J. Guise	Mr M. McGowan	Mrs M.H. Roberts
Mr J.J.M. Bowler	Mr S.R. Hill	Ms S.M. McHale	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr C.M. Brown	Mr J.N. Hyde	Mr A.D. McRae	Mr P.B. Watson
Mr A.J. Carpenter	Mr J.C. Kobelke	Mr M.P. Murray	Mr M.P. Whitely
Dr E. Constable	Mr R.C. Kucera	Mr P.G. Pental	Ms M.M. Quirk (<i>Teller</i>)
Mr A.J. Dean	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr J.R. Quigley	
Dr J.M. Edwards	Ms A.J. MacTiernan	Ms J.A. Radisich	
Dr G.I. Gallop	Mr J.A. McGinty	Mr E.S. Ripper	

Pair

Mr R.A. Ainsworth

Mrs C.A. Martin

Independent Pair

Dr J.M. Woollard

Question thus negatived.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 1) 2004
APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (NO. 2) 2004

Second Reading - Cognate Debate

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MS K. HODSON-THOMAS (Carine) [7.00 pm]: As you can tell, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr A.J. Dean), I am very eager to recap on the comments I made previously on the budget. Prior to private members' business I was talking about road funding, particularly the Functional Review Task Force recommendation that Main Roads WA capital works budget be slashed by \$50 million per annum. I also referred to the Fremantle eastern bypass.

Before private members' business took precedence, I referred to the Peel deviation and its importance, particularly in the south west corridor, to electorates such as Dawesville, Warren-Blackwood, Mandurah, Murray-Wellington and even Vasse. It is a road of major importance. I referred to the toing-and-froing between our state Minister for Planning and Infrastructure and Hon Ian Campbell, the federal Minister for Territories, Local Government and Roads and manager of government business in the Senate. In a media statement on 5 May regarding the Peel deviation he said -

This is a crucial road in developing a complete transport system for Mandurah, Bunbury and the south west region.

It is interesting to compare his media statements with those of the Western Australian Minister for Planning and Infrastructure. It is clear that the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure is not likely to provide any funding for this very important road project. I say that because the Functional Review Task Force has recommended that Main Roads capital works budget be slashed by approximately \$200 million over four years. Over the past three years \$150 million has been slashed from Main Roads budget. Capital investment in Main Roads has been increased by only about two per cent, and that will not go very far. It will not fund this very vital road for the south west region, which I understand is estimated to cost \$340 million. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has stated that she has a time line for work on the Peel deviation, which I understand is 2008. An article in today's *The West Australian* said that she was having a good rethink about the time line. Nevertheless, the budget papers do not show any funding for that road.

While the minister has been in charge of the Main Roads budget, \$800 000 has been spent on the detailed design work and a further \$5 million on land purchases. That amounts to \$5.8 million, which is barely a spit in the ocean for this very important \$340 million project. It looks as though the federal Government is willing to come to the table and negotiate the funding for this road. However, this Government has put all its eggs in one basket; namely, the southern railway link. I will come back to that issue. As I said earlier, it would not be one of my speeches unless I spoke about the southern rail link. The Peel deviation is a very important road in the south west region for not only tourist traffic, but also the movement of freight. Industry in the south west is growing and we must provide good, sound infrastructure to accommodate those industries.

I will also talk about the school bus operators, a group of people who have operated under a dedicated contract since 1919. This system is underscored by an excellent record of safety, stability and reliability. It is a much valued service by the local communities. Most country members on both sides of the House have spoken about school bus operators and the service they provide to their local communities. It is a vital system for children in rural and remote communities who cannot access regular transport services to and from school. This industry group is feeling aggrieved by the process that this Government has embarked upon in renegotiating their contract. No doubt, school bus drivers operate also in your electorate, Mr Acting Speaker. Under the coalition they were party to a 13-page contract. Some might say that was not adequate. However, I referred earlier to the safety and reliability of the service, which has been underscored by a very clean record. This document I am holding in my hand is their new contract - a document of some 140 pages. At best, it can be described as punitive. We are talking about people who transport students to and from school. As a mother, I consider that they are very important cargo. When we put our children in the hands of someone who is driving them around, we want to be assured that they will be looked after. Country communities rely on this service, which has been provided very well by this wonderful group of small business operators. It is interesting to note that the Government is claiming in the budget papers that its work with school bus operators was a major achievement in 2003-04. I will come to the point about the feeling and mood of this group of people. There are some 715 contractors throughout the State, who take approximately 25 000 students to school each day. I understand that since this Government took office about 124 contracts have come onto the open market. That is unprecedented. The Government might want to claim as a major achievement that the new contract clearly articulates government and contractual responsibilities. They are wonderful words that sound warm and fuzzy because everybody has a responsibility. Great! We all have a responsibility. However, we are talking about a 140-page document that is causing these people a great deal of uncertainty. They do not feel that they can move forward. They have felt intimidated and threatened. They feel that nobody is listening to their concerns, some of which are simple concerns that could have been dealt with in a much better manner.

The Government is claiming that a new payment model, which provides fixed and variable costs with a single profit margin, is also a major achievement. However, school bus operators have told me that the payment model is wanting, and that is causing them a great deal of uncertainty. They lack trust in this Government.

Then there is the notion of the electronic mapping of all school bus services to provide accurate distances, using global positioning systems and topographic and cadastral technology. Wow! We are talking about a school bus route! I have some anecdotes about some of these students. People tell members such stories. I take them on face value. We are talking about a good, decent bunch of people who have been providing a fantastic service to their local community. Some students were getting on buses and were maybe only half an hour from their local school. Now they sit on the bus for one and a half hours and actually travel away from their school. I do not know whether this is a penny-pinching exercise. Quite frankly, when a Government wants to invest \$1.5 billion in a railway and is penny-pinching for the sake of maybe 20 minutes of travel for students, there hardly seems to be any equity.

The new branch structure is another major achievement for 2003, as listed in the budget papers, which state -

New branch structure to manage new business processes and better manage student transport entitlements to meet community expectation.

What does "community expectation" mean? Mums and dads want a guarantee that their children will get to school safely. I have spoken before about the safety and reliability of the service. Why are we going down this path? We are making 124 small business operators feel very uncertain about their future contracts, so they have put them on the market. Nobody wants to buy them. Why would anyone want to buy those contracts when there is so much uncertainty? I assure members that the community will not be giving the Government a big tick for that. Mr Acting Speaker (Mr A.J. Dean), you should be talking to school bus operators in Bunbury and getting on top of this issue. Giving this responsibility to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has really let those people down. They are saying that the Government should give this responsibility back to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, who was at one time the Minister Assisting the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure.

Mr P.B. Watson: That's a harsh call.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: While it was under her helm, member for Albany, people had a level of confidence. They do not have any confidence in this minister. I am absolutely certain that if school bus operators and local communities looked at the major achievements that are listed in the budget papers, they would say it is an absolute joke, because they do not have any faith in the minister or her agency. As I said, most of them told me that the Government should bring back the Minister for Police.

I wanted to raise a question that I put to the minister on full-time employees in relation to school bus operators. We are talking about providing greater efficiency and services to the local community and meeting community expectations. I was curious to see whether this was an exercise in just building a little bureaucracy to make the lives of school bus operators as difficult as possible. I asked the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure a question on notice on 24 March 2004, and I have not yet received a response. Ministers have three months in which to answer such questions. The minister obviously did not want to answer this question, which asks in part -

- (a) during which of the periods listed below was the School Bus Division within your area of Ministerial responsibility;

That is, before it went from education to transport to planning and infrastructure -

- (b) where the School Bus Division was within your area of Ministerial responsibility, how many staff were allocated to this division, what were the position, titles and levels of pay in each of the following years -

I then listed a number of financial years. The question continues -

- (c) given that staff are now expected to undertake a review and enforcement role in the management of school bus contracts, is it envisaged that this will be in addition to their existing duties, or will additional staff be required; and
- (d) if additional staff are envisaged, how many, at what level, and what will be their expected duties?

That is a fair question. It is about determining whether we are just seeing a bureaucracy being created to support the school bus division. There is nothing wrong with that. As I said before, we are talking about a group of operators who have provided a service since 1919, and have a record of stability, certainty and safety. I am not convinced that the minister has done the right thing by school bus operators. Page 799 of the budget papers shows an increase in the number of full-time employees from 869 to 995 and then to 1 030 over the respective financial years of 2002-03, 2003-04 and 2004-05.

Another simple issue that school bus operators have raised with me is airconditioning. Most people would not get too upset about airconditioning. School buses are delivered with airconditioning. As you can appreciate, Mr Acting Speaker, the windows do not open on most school buses. They are built to accommodate the airconditioning, which can provide both heating and cooling. The bus drivers are told that they can operate the airconditioners on only 50 days of the year. I do not think anyone needs to be an Einstein to realise that in a State such as Western Australia, with its climate, 50 days is not many days, particularly when there has been a long summer. It requires some commonsense, which does not seem to be applied in this matter. For everybody's information, the *Oxford Dictionary* defines commonsense as sound, practical sense, especially in everyday matters. It is an everyday matter. It should be a simple thing. Surely the school bus operators should be able to use some discretion about whether to use airconditioning on 50 days or 55 days. Students go to school for only 190 days a year. For goodness sake, we are quibbling over a couple of days just to save a bit of money!

I also want to talk about the *Prospector* service. Under the major achievements for 2003-04 on page 793 of the *Budget Statements* is an item on the delivery of new railcars and the commencement of high-speed services for the *Prospector* service to Kalgoorlie and the *AvonLink* to Northam. I understand that the delivery of the new railcars has been a disaster. Services were to commence in November last year. Here we are in May 2004 and the service is still not under way. I have been told that the railcars have been delivered and that there is a problem with them. That is difficult to understand and more difficult to accept when the budget papers state that this is a major achievement for 2003-04. That is hardly an achievement if the service is not running and if the cheque has been paid. I put a question on notice to the minister on 1 April 2004 in the following terms -

I refer to the rail service to Kalgoorlie and ask will the Minister advise -

- (a) when will the new train, 'The Prospector' begin service delivery;
- (b) when was the new Prospector originally scheduled to begin service delivery;
- (c) what were the reasons for the delay in introducing this new train;
- (d) have all the rail cars for the new Prospector been delivered;
- (e) if not, why not;
- (f) are any monies outstanding for these rail cars, and if so why; and
- (g) will the Minister explain why the services to Kalgoorlie are being neglected in favour of the massive funds being spent on the South West Metropolitan Railway?

I had to get that in! I will raise those issues with the minister during estimates committee debates.

Another matter that keeps occurring, and that I am being inundated with letters from members of the public complaining about, is cuts to bus services all over the metropolitan area. The Government has been grandstanding about how it is providing public transport services in the form of the New MetroRail to the southern suburbs, the extension of the Clarkson rail line and the soon to be opened Greenwood train station. These are all great things for the provision of public transport. However, seniors in local communities, such as the Premier's electorate of Victoria Park, are writing to me to say that they cannot get a bus to take them into the central business district or to the local hospital or shopping centre. That is simply not good enough.

Mr P.B. Watson: You must get a lot of mail from all these people talking to you!

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: I do. I am very popular. Do not distract me. I have 16 minutes left, and I have a lot more to tell members.

The member for Riverton chaired the South Metropolitan Transport East West Study, which looked at this very issue of the integration of bus and rail services, yet at the same time community members were up in arms writing and complaining about the loss of their regular bus service, not to mention also the removal of the taxi users subsidy scheme. The Government had intended to remove the taxi subsidy that disabled people have been entitled to for a long time if they need to use a wheelchair. I want to know exactly how much the Government thought it would save by removing that subsidy. I am glad the minister has had a complete re-think on that matter. People who are disabled and want to catch a taxi certainly should not be discriminated against. That was very mean-spirited on the part of the minister, but obviously enough members on the government side put pressure on the minister to cause her to have a re-think about the removal of that subsidy.

I turn now to Warwick train station. The member for Kingsley spoke in great detail about that matter in her speech. Warwick train station is actually within her electorate boundaries, but it abuts my electorate of Carine. That it is a very well utilised train station. As the member for Kingsley stated, it is very difficult after about 7.20 am to get a car parking space at that station. Although we should be encouraging people to catch buses to the railway station, people still elect to use their car, because that integration between bus and rail often does not exist; or, if it does exist, the frequency of service does not exist. That issue is at the heart of this matter. If we want to get people out of their cars and onto rail, we need to provide frequency of service. We have now found that another car parking station needs to be built at Greenwood to cater for not the number of commuters but the number of parking bays that are required for the people who want to use the Park 'n' Ride facilities. The same issue has arisen in the member for Murdoch's electorate. Recently I attended a public meeting in his electorate to discuss some of the concerns that people have raised, particularly about the environmental aspects of the proposed additional car parking station at Murdoch.

The member for Kingsley has highlighted the issue of Warwick train station. I share the member's view that although we need to make it possible for people to use public transport, we have not examined the issues thoroughly enough. One issue is the integration of bus and rail. Another issue is the number of railcars. I acknowledge that the coalition Government recognised that part of the problem was that the two-car sets that are currently being used on the northern suburb rail line are failing to cater for the number of commuters who want to use the rail service. People in the inner suburbs of Glendalough and Stirling often find that when they get to the station the railcars are already full and there is no room for them. Those people live only about five or 10 minutes away from the central business district, yet they cannot get on a train. It is now proposed to extend the platforms at the northern suburbs rail stations to provide for the next stage; that is, the new three-car sets for the northern suburbs rail line, which will extend to the New MetroRail to the member for Mandurah's electorate. Of course the member for Mandurah cannot wait for that rail line. However, he will never get the Peel deviation.

Mr P.B. Watson: Here he comes!

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: I knew he would! I knew I would get him started! I want to talk about the Mandurah railway. I have spoken about a number of aspects of that railway in great detail. However, the other day when I was reading the *Hansard* of the federal Parliament, I found some very interesting comments from Senator David Johnston from Western Australia. He talks in a matter of public interest debate about the Western Australian Labor Government and all the promises it made about being a Government for the people. He talks also about this Government's city-centric approach. What I found particularly interesting were his comments about the railway. I have asked a number of questions of the minister about the railway and the reports that have been commissioned by the Government on the railway. With your indulgence, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr A.J. Dean), I will quote a paragraph of Senator Johnston's speech in the Senate on 24 March 2004. He talks about how the proposed new route of the railway will go straight along the freeway and into Perth, because it was thought that that route would be 12 minutes quicker than the route that had been planned by the previous Government. This is the issue - it will be 12 minutes quicker. He continues -

However, it has recently come to light - but it has not been announced by the hapless Minister for Planning and Infrastructure -

Those are his words, not mine; they are a direct quote -

that the new system will not only service fewer people than was forecast by the previous coalition plan but take three minutes longer, as the train will have to slow down to a snail's pace for the last segment of its journey as it navigates the Narrows Bridge and the very expensive engineering nightmare of a new tunnel into Perth near the proposed station near Parliament House, west of the CBD.

I do not know that he has got that quite right. He continues -

The latest modelling by government appointed Voran Consultants is devastating news.

He is saying that the so-called 12-minute saving that the minister keeps playing on is in fact not true. It will actually take three minutes longer than the Kenwick route would have taken. I find that very interesting. I have put a number of

questions on notice to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure on that matter. As I have said, many of those questions have not been answered.

I have eight minutes left. I want to allocate some of that time to my electorate of Carine and to the people whom I represent and who have supported me in the time that I have been the member for Carine, to whom I am eternally grateful. The boundaries of my electorate have changed. As people would know, the southern boundary of my electorate now goes from Karrinyup Road to Scarborough Beach Road. My northern boundary was at Hepburn Avenue, but it has now moved down to Warwick Road. I will lose about 6 000 electors from the northern end of my electorate and I will pick up 12 000 voters from the southern end. Part of that electorate is the former electorate of Innaloo. That has created a number of new issues for me to deal with. Coastal planning will be a big election issue that will require a great deal of community discussion and understanding of matters that people feel very passionately about.

I would like to take up a couple of issues on behalf of my electorate. Firstly, there is the issue of power supply problems. I believe that this goes right across the board; it is not just in my electorate. We have heard all sorts of different stories about power supply problems over the past few months, and certainly during the summer months. Complaints have been ongoing in my electorate since I became the member, so it is not something the Opposition did not have a problem with when it was in government. This problem requires a large allocation of funds to resolve it, but I wish to raise these issues on behalf of my community. Carine Glades Shopping Centre endures constant power cuts. The shopping centre is adjacent to my electorate office, so I hear about it frequently. Last week the shopping centre suffered a power cut during which retail shops could not use their tills. One constituent in Duncraig listed five power cut events lasting from 15 to 21 hours between February and April this year. The many blackouts reported to us, and their duration - anything from a few minutes to several hours - indicate an unreliable supply. Explanations are always different - for example, debris from trees - but the main problem indicated was that the North Beach substation that supplies Carine is inadequate. It is fed by an overhead powerline known as the Waldorf feeder. As it is overhead, it is subject to a number of problems. Therefore, Western Power cannot and does not guarantee uninterrupted power supplies. In March 2003 the Minister for Energy said that the five-year reinforcement plan for the North Beach substation was almost complete, and that this should improve reliability in the area. The minister also said that work on a fourth feeder from the Landsdale zone substation, intended to relieve the load on the North Beach substation, was completed, and that this additional load transfer should further improve reliability in the Carine area. However, the reports I have received indicate that it continues to be a problem. Today when I came into the Parliament, I spoke to a staff member, in one of the ladies toilets, who told me that she had had power cuts at her home twice in the past two days. Today she had an electric hair device with her because she could not get ready at home. She could not even iron something to wear. That is most unfortunate. That person will remain nameless!

The other issue I raise in the last four minutes I have is the intersection of Beach and Davallia Roads. I have written to the minister on a number of occasions about this intersection. It is adjacent to my electorate office, and I can see it from my office window. I have witnessed a couple of very serious accidents there. Fortunately there have been no fatalities. The intersection was recently listed as the eighth worst intersection in the metropolitan area. There have been 13 traffic accidents, and four people have been hospitalised, but no fatalities. The right-hand arrow into Davallia Road from Beach Road was installed not very long ago, after I sought intervention for that intersection, but accidents continue to occur. Members need to understand the topography of this intersection. Okely Road should be a dual carriageway, but it is still only a single carriageway. There is a slight bend, and the line of sight makes it difficult for motorists heading from south to north to get a clear view of vehicles travelling in the opposite direction. The speed limit of 70 kilometres an hour on Beach Road should be questioned, particularly approaching those traffic lights. We have suggested that perhaps the limit be reduced to 60 kilometres an hour, but the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has decided that she will not support that. There are a number of entry points into the garage, the shopping centre and the sporting grounds, because the road is also adjacent to the lovely Carine open space, where huge numbers of people participate in physical activity both on weekends and during the week. Reduction of the speed limit east and west of the intersection would have an impact on the number of accidents. The setting sun is also a factor for motorists travelling west on Beach Road. All these issues require immediate attention. It certainly does not appear in this budget as black spot funding, yet it was listed as the eighth worst intersection in the metropolitan area. I understand that other intersections require just as much attention, and funding needs to be allocated to those. I know that in the electorate of the member for Girrawheen, for example, there is a terrible intersection on Mirrabooka Avenue that needs immediate attention. I would not be advocating that my electorate get funding before that of the member for Girrawheen.

Ms M.M. Quirk: You will be very pleased to know that we have been given black spot funding.

Ms K. HODSON-THOMAS: That is good to hear because it means that my electorate is closer to the top of the list. Does that mean that the intersection goes from eighth worst to seventh worst?

I have only one more minute left on the clock. I could raise an enormous number of matters. While some people will be pleased with this budget, from my perspective it is disappointing, particularly in the area of road funding. I alluded to that issue at the start of my address.

MR P.B. WATSON (Albany) [7.37 pm]: I fully support these Bills. I will not be negative like the previous speaker. I will talk only about the positives for my electorate.

Mr D.A. Templeman: They are all positives.

Mr P.B. WATSON: They are; that is right. Albany at the moment is buzzing. I will mention some of things Albany has achieved through the budget. First, \$750 000 has been allocated to undertake minor and other works at the Albany port. The port is a very important part of the Albany region. It handles the shipping of woodchips and grain all the time. I do not care where the money comes from, so long as there is money to upgrade the port. Under fire and emergency services, \$150 000 has been allocated to continue refurbishment of the Albany fire station. I congratulate Bruce Manning and the staff of the Great Southern Development Commission. They do a tremendous job, for not only Albany but the whole region. The sum of \$4.345 million has been allocated to continue work at the Albany small boat harbour, and \$64 000 has been provided to commence work on the Albany harbour footbridge to link the central business district with the harbour.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Mr P.B. WATSON: No, there is not much left for the member's electorate!

Mr D.A. Templeman: That is outrageous!

Mr P.B. WATSON: The Albany boat harbour footbridge will link the city and the waterfront. For the past 20 years, various Governments on both sides of the House have said that they would fix the Albany waterfront, and now the Government is doing something about it. It has put \$12.7 million towards developing a small boat harbour. Now the Albany footbridge will provide a link from Stirling Terrace right across to the waterfront. With all the trucks coming through loaded with woodchips, this will make it much safer for the tourists. There is nothing worse than seeing tourist boats come in and watching the people who come off those boats walking across the railway line to get to the city centre.

Mr B.K. Masters: Where is that money coming from? Which agency?

Mr P.B. WATSON: It is coming from the Great Southern Development Commission. The budget provides for \$820 000 for a day hospital for the centre for the aged. It is a great innovation, which means that people are in hospital for a short period and can go home, and then be picked up by Silver Chain and brought to hospital during the day for, say, physiotherapy, speech therapy and occupational therapy. It gives these people more independence. Most elderly people do not want to go to hospital because they think that when they go to hospital they will not come out, and sometimes that happens. This will give them a lot more independence.

In the budget \$10.4 million has been allocated for libraries. The City of Albany and I lobbied the minister very hard to get more funding for the library. I am a great user of the Albany library; I probably take out four or five books a week. Every time I visit the library I am lobbied very hard. It is great to see that \$10 million will be spent on libraries across Western Australia. Libraries are a very important part of our communities, especially in regional areas. Libraries are a great meeting place. People from the ages of one or two years up to 70 or 80 years of age and even older use libraries not just to borrow books but also as a meeting place.

An amount of \$7.4 million has been allocated to continue work on the Albany justice complex. An amount of \$1 million has been allocated to connect the Albany Regional Prison to the town's deep sewerage system. There are a lot of problems in the Little Grove area with seepage and water flowing into the harbour. The money will go a long way towards correcting that. An amount of \$6.5 million is to be used to continue work on the new district police complex, which is to cost a total of \$9.26 million. I congratulate John Watson and all the other police officers in the Albany region. John would like to congratulate them himself but unfortunately he is gagged! He and his staff do a tremendous job; they work right throughout the region. Since John was posted there he has put the region into gear. All the crime statistics are down. I am his referee for another police position. I do not know whether that is a positive or not. Let us see whether he gets the job. No-one has rung me yet. I do not know whether that is a good sign.

The Quaranup recreation camp near Albany is to receive \$808 000 for upgrading. Anyone visiting Albany should visit the camp and look across the harbour. It is one of the most serene places in the world. The Albany Leisure and Aquatic Centre is to receive \$1.5 million for redevelopment. It is a vital facility in the region. People from throughout the region use Albany's sporting services. It is great to see that they are receiving some money.

A total of \$11.92 million is allocated for works in the Albany region by the Water Corporation. A lot of people believe that Albany has plenty of water because it rains all the time. That is a myth; it has no water. It is a serious problem. The water drains away; it does not go into the catchment areas. An amount of \$608 000 is allocated for a new 25-megalitre tank at Mt Melville. Actually, we got it built without anybody going crook about how it looks! An amount of \$2.4 million is for infill sewerage at Little Grove. I spoke about that before. A lot of the effluent is flowing into the harbour. It will be replaced by a deep sewerage system.

Mr D.A. Templeman: If the member is not re-elected, there should be an inquiry!

Mr P.B. WATSON: These are some of the things that have been neglected in the past eight years.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr A.J. Dean): Order, members! This is not a private conversation.

Mr P.B. WATSON: Thank you for your protection from my own side, Mr Acting Speaker!

I congratulate the Gallop Labor Government for its \$1.8 billion investment over four years to ensure the safety and reliable quality of the electricity network throughout the State. It is not a problem in the Albany area because it has no pollution; it does not have any of the stuff that occurs in the city. Albany has beautiful and serene surroundings. However, Albany's hinterland does have problems. It is a real problem, especially 50 to 60 kilometres outside Albany.

A total of \$26.2 million will be spent on the maintenance and construction of road networks in the great southern. The area is having problems with trucks carrying woodchips. There are a lot of woodchip plantations in the area. I am pleased to see that the minister has a working group in the area dealing with the problem of access to the port. A lot of the woodchip farms were established on little farms serviced by gravel roads. I know of a lot of problems in the Mt Barker region. During the middle of winter the trucks churn up the roads. There are problems with school buses using the roads. I am glad that the minister is right on top of the issue.

I have talked about all the things that Albany will get and I will now talk a little about Albany itself. I want to talk about the Returned and Services League. The RSL in Albany is a tremendous movement. It works very hard. I want to mention my mate, "Digger" Cleak, who is the President of the RSL branch in Albany. "Digger" has a vision for Albany to be the Anzac town of Australia. I believe it can be even bigger. The dawn service in Albany is now an icon. It was recognised as the fourth most important out of 12 state icons.

Mr D.A. Templeman: You fought very hard for that.

Mr P.B. WATSON: I did; I fought very hard. An amount of \$250 000 is a gift from the State Government to the Anzac memorial park. It is part of the vision shared by "Digger" Cleak, the City of Albany and me to have the Anzac memorial park recognised as an icon. The distance between one side of the park and the other is the same as the distance between the trenches in Gallipoli; that is, the Australian and Turkish sides. We hope to have gardens on either side. One side will represent Australia and the other Turkey. We will have young children from local schools look after parts of the gardens. For example, children from Spencer Park Primary School may look after part of the Turkish garden, while children from Flinders Park Primary School may look after part of the Australian garden. It will encourage children to retain the memory of the soldiers who left Australia and gave their lives. I mentioned the other day that I have a photograph at the back of my office that shows Anzacs sitting on one of the pyramids in Egypt. The photograph shows many young men who went off to war. They thought it was a great adventure and that they would save their country. A lot of them did not return. The last they saw of Australia was Albany. With the \$250 000 from the State Government for the Anzac memorial park, "Digger" Cleak, the RSL and the City of Albany hope to obtain a further \$250 000 from the federal Government and an additional \$250 000 from the Turkish Government. Albany has another first over other Anzac-related areas of Australia. It has a sister city arrangement with Gallipoli. Last year the Mayor of Gallipoli visited Australia and signed an agreement. The Mayor of Albany had intended to travel to Gallipoli this year but unfortunately she became ill and the delegation did not travel. There is a strong tie between Albany and Gallipoli, and we hope to build on that. There is a statue of Atatürk on the boardwalk at Albany. When it was unveiled about 200 Turkish people from Perth visited Albany. I got to do Turkish dances with some of the ladies. I have just about got my back right! In 2014 it will be 100 years since the diggers left Albany. There will be great celebrations. Now is the time to plan for the celebration. We held an Anzac ball this year, which was run by "Digger" Cleak and his group. It was a great success; it is a stepping stone for the future. Things are really going well for Albany. I believe Albany is the Anzac town of Australia. We should encourage people to visit Australia. Many people do not want to visit Gallipoli because of the security problems. People can come to Australia and remember their grandfathers. There are plans for an interpreter service at which people can type in the names of their grandfathers to see their history in the Army or Navy.

I will refer now to the Nathan Drew Memorial Trust. It is amazing how, out of adversity, positive things come. Young Nathan was lost off rocks at Albany last year. It was a very sad event. The Drew family did not sit back and say that it was terrible, feel sorry for us. They wanted to make sure it did not happen again. They started the memorial trust to try to find ways of making it safer for people on the coast line. There is a new invention at the salmon fishing holes; it was developed with the assistance of the Department of Conservation and Land Management. It is a device which, when broken open, releases flotation balls that roll into the sea. As soon as the seal is broken they send a signal to a receiver on top of a nearby hill. That is necessary because mobile telephones do not work in the area. The signal automatically sends an SOS to the local police and other emergency services. They are trying to promote them right across Australia. Surveys have been done of near misses. On the plane on Monday night I was reading about how many near misses there had been in the Albany area. The survey asked how many people had been washed into the sea or had had near misses, and it was an amazing number. One gentleman told a meeting that he was washed into the sea 12 years ago near Walpole. He was in for an hour and a half, and he got himself out. No-one knew about it, and he did not even want to tell his wife but finally told the interviewer that he could now handle people knowing about it. It was great for him to tell people about it. Many people are washed off the rocks and are rescued. Rocks on the west coast generally are not high and it is not difficult to climb out of the sea. In my region, the coastal rocks can be 50 feet high, and people can be sucked under those rocks by the undertow. Even a strong swimmer can bump onto the rocks. People should swim out to sea away from the rocks, but the natural inclination is to swim in. The rocks can just crush people. I

congratulate all those involved in the Nathan Drew Memorial Trust as they do a wonderful job. I will approach the minister to get funding for that project. Many people have worked to turn a tragedy into a positive, and I am tremendously proud that they are part of my region.

I will also talk about Margaret Martin, who has a group in my electorate that I outlined in a 90-second statement that the member for Girrawheen kindly helped me with the other day. This group raises awareness among pregnant women about drinking alcohol and the adverse effects it can have on the child. I congratulate Margaret and her group. When the regional Parliament was held in Albany, Margaret took time to speak to most members of Parliament and she gave them flyers. It is not a very well-known program, and I am proud of Margaret and the group down there for the work they do.

This week is National Volunteer Week and I now refer to some volunteer groups in Albany. I am bound to miss some as there are so many. I was at the Albany Surf Life Saving Club awards on Saturday night as I am a patron down there. Many people are involved in the Albany surf club, which won the state award last year for the best club. Yes, Bunbury won it the year before, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr A.J. Dean) - do not look at me like that! We will probably win it again this year. It is a family orientated club. I cannot think of the young girl's name, but she is a short person -

Mr D.A. Templeman: That's rounded it down!

Mr B.K. Masters: Height deprived - not short.

Mr T.K. Waldron: Vertically challenged.

Mr P.B. WATSON: This is serious. I refer to a young lady who is a short person. The surf club bought her a board of her own. She was competing on the big boards and having a lot of trouble. The Surf Life Saving Association (WA) and the Albany Surf Life Saving Club provided a specially made board. If the smile the young girl had on her face could be sold, it would be worth a million dollars.

The Albany hospice has a tremendous group of volunteers. This is not meant in the wrong way, but the "Old Boilers", as I call them, on my hospice fundraising committee are the salt of the earth. They not only look after people in the hospice, but they rattle the tins and work in the Butterflies opportunity shop and give their time for nothing. A problem is that many of these people are getting older. As I say, they are my "Old Boilers", but I love them; they are the salt of the earth and beautiful people. We must get more younger people involved. When these people go, we will not have the volunteers. I congratulate them all.

Our State Emergency Service group is fantastic. Whenever functions are held that require traffic control and such matters, these people are there giving their time. If someone is washed off the rocks, they are out rescuing people in the middle of the night. They direct traffic at car accidents. Albany and Denmark have the youngest SES brigades in Western Australia. I congratulate all these members.

The Albany Police and Citizens Youth Club is tremendous with Terry Eaton and his group. Funding has been provided for the new centre. The State Government has put in \$1 million, and the Federal Government has put in only \$440 000. We have been pushing this project for some more. The centre is still \$200 000 down. I am sure that between the federal Government and the State Government we can get the centre going for our children. It is very important for our community.

I have a very arty person on the bench in front of me in the member for Mandurah. He can speak about such matters.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Hear, hear!

Mr P.B. WATSON: The Vancouver Arts Centre is fantastic. Every week, I receive an e-mail saying something different is happening in Albany. A rap group from Sydney visited a while ago, and I thought that that should be very good. They had everybody dancing. I had the honour at half-time of opening the Perth International Arts Festival in the area, but nobody wanted to know me! I was not rapping. If I had made a rap speech, I might have been all right.

The HarbourSound Festival is put on by another community group. We were on Middleton Beach the other night with all the jazz musicians assembled. It was tremendous.

Albany held the highland games this year. All people in Albany are active in trying to get people to visit Albany. It was great to see all those men in skirts!

The Albany Light Opera and Theatre Company put on a production of *HMS Pinafore*. I was very impressed by it.

Mr T.K. Waldron: I was in *HMS Pinafore* once - as a girl.

Mr P.B. WATSON: I can understand that.

Mr D.A. Templeman: As a mermaid?

Mr P.B. WATSON: Now, now; I am talking seriously here.

The cast included Chris Holden, Neil Jones, Mick Vertigan and Chris Morris, who works for the Water Corporation and played Dick Deadeye. I can never look him in the face again. He walked like the hunchback of Notre Dame - this will

not be captured correctly in *Hansard*. He stole the show; he was tremendous. The cast also included Trevor Dack, Robin Hughes, Terry Stevenson and Naomi Arrowsmith, who is from the Water and Rivers Commission. They all seem to be on the stage.

Mr D.A. Templeman: It's the thespian blood.

Mr P.B. WATSON: That is it. Naomi Arrowsmith, Gina Venturini and Susan Withingstall are tremendous singers. We had all the sailors in the cast. I must mention the director, John Taylor, and his assistant director, Janine Taylor. Findlay McNish, the musical director, is a legend in Albany. I spoke to him after the performance. He showed me each of the score pages for all the different instruments in the orchestra for the show, and I asked him how he worked it all out. He said that he looks down and gestures wildly. Findlay is there for any charity work needed for the community. I congratulate him. I also mention the Spectrum Theatre.

Mr D.A. Templeman: That is a great theatre. I visited it.

Mr P.B. WATSON: It is a great theatre. I am a member, and I hand out tickets and usher people to their seats. I refer also to the Great Southern Festival.

Aaron Probeski went with the Premier to the Somme and London as part of the Anzac group. Saffron Sharp, who only just missed out on making the Anzac trip with young Aaron, got up in front of 20 000 people and spoke at the Kings Park Anzac Day service. Saffron will go a long way. I congratulate her. She is not only a great spokesperson for Albany, but also a tremendous singer. She is a good young person. These are only two of the many tremendous young people in Albany. This was shown when the Youth Parliament was held in Albany. All the kids from the Albany region came into town. At first, we had to try to get them to talk and to be active as they were very quiet, but, by crikey, at the end of the day, they were up having their say about the real issues affecting youth. I was very proud of them.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Hear, hear!

Mr P.B. WATSON: I have spoken about John Watson and his staff.

I went down to the senior citizens centre the other day when Lotterywest provided a reclining chair for podiatry patients. A concert is put on every three weeks for seniors around town, and they have singing on Monday. I have been invited along next Monday to sing with the girls. I am sure it will be a highlight in everyone's life! If they can get a tape recording for those who cannot be there, I will bring it up to Parliament and lay it on the Table of the House.

Mr D.A. Templeman: What will you sing?

Mr P.B. WATSON: I do not know yet, but I am sure it will be great.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

Mr P.B. WATSON: The over-50s.

Dr E. Constable: What about a preview now?

Mr P.B. WATSON: I think I would get thrown out.

Dr E. Constable: Others have done it.

Mr P.B. WATSON: If I could have another five minutes, I would.

Dr E. Constable: Hon Ernie Bridge sang in here once.

Mr P.B. WATSON: I can yodel but I do not want to put anyone to sleep. The over-50s are a tremendous group of people. A lot of people in Albany have been put off work and are probably sitting at home. When the over-50s get together, they exercise and have meetings. The member for Dawesville would know all -

Mr A.D. Marshall: Marvellous people the over-50s. The over-65s are a little bit better, but the over-50s are good.

Mr P.B. WATSON: By the sound of it, the member just hit 66 years of age. Since I came into office, my staff and I have put on a senior's concert every year. One of the highlights this year will be the barber shop quartet. It will consist of Superintendent John Watson, if he is allowed to talk, Andrew Hammond, who is about six foot seven inches tall and will be standing next to John Watson who is not that tall, "Digger" Cleak and me. We are all going to have to shave off our hair to look like John Watson or he will have to grow hair to look like us.

I would like to thank my staff. When a member is away from his office, his staff is his life blood. I would like to thank Julie Hooper, Pam Stoney and Guy Wroth for the tremendous work they do.

Dr E. Constable: You have so many staff in Albany.

Mr P.B. WATSON: No, Julie and Pam job share, just in case anyone is getting upset.

The last thing I will talk about is a little more serious. In January I had an operation for prostate cancer. I was lucky. A person I know from Albany went along to see the doctor the same time as I did to get a blood test. His doctor told him

to wait for six months and not to go back to see a specialist. He took his doctor's advice and did not go back to see a specialist, and he is now no longer with us. When he eventually went back to the specialist, a biopsy was done and his cancer had spread from his prostate into his blood stream. I spoke to him at the hospital and he said that they had given him six months to live. Two weeks later, I was flying up to Perth and I read his death notice in the paper. Some men think "No, I don't want to get a prostate check. I do not want to have to go through the indignity of having a digital test done." Great, be tough, but at least go along to see a doctor. Men can get a blood test done; they do not have to have the digital test.

My dad died from prostate cancer. It was one of the most horribly things I have ever seen in my life. A man whom I respected and loved was just like a baby when he died. I did not want to put my family through that. Guys can be tough and say, "I am not going to do that. I am alright." However, they should go for a walk in the morning and see how many 70-year-old women are walking around compared with 70-year-old men. Men can be tough but at least go to the doctor and have the option. People will say that for someone to have prostate cancer they must have some symptoms. I did not have any symptoms. My dad died of prostate cancer. At 47 years of age, I went along to my doctor and he said to me, "Don't worry about testing. In America they say it does not matter." I went home and my wife said, "You go back and get tested." I got tested for prostate cancer for eight years with no problems. Then my blood test results went up and I had a biopsy done, which my friend did not do. The doctors noticed there was some darkness in the biopsy or something that they could not pick up. They said that there was something there they were not too sure of. I went back six months later and the cancer had become very aggressive. I made the decision to get it taken out.

In life a person can think that things are going really well, but when he is lying in a little cubicle in the hospital before an operation, he can get to thinking; "When they operate today, will they pull out the cancerous thing or will it have got into my blood stream or something like that?" I can tell members that in that situation a person reassesses his life. At least I had the option to do that. If people do not go and get the test done, they will not have that option. They can be happily going along when, all of a sudden, they get some bad test results and say, "Damn, I wish I had had the test done earlier." Some people get tested and the results will not be as bad as mine were or that of my friend's, but at least they will have the option and the chance to decide their course of treatment.

Next Wednesday in Albany we will be holding a men's awareness night. John Todd, Haydn Bunton and I will be talking about our experiences. People have pushed this issue under the carpet. I raised the issue with the Department of Health but its attitude was that every man gets prostate cancer. However, some men might get it earlier than others, and it will kill them. I am saying no more about the Department of Health. I do not want someone in the Department of Health telling me what I can and cannot do if it is going to make a difference to whether I live or die.. I fully support the Bill.

DR E. CONSTABLE (Churchlands) [8.05 pm]: This evening I want to concentrate on some of the issues that are clearly of concern in the electorate of Churchlands. The first matter that springs to mind deals with schools. In the Treasurer's second reading speech, he referred to developing a world-class education and training system. They were his words and that is the aim of this Government. If the Treasurer wants to develop a world-class education and training system, then it will cost a lot more than the Treasurer thinks, and certainly a lot more than he has indicated in this year's budget. Overall, the increase in funding in education and training does not keep up with the rate of inflation or the rate of the population increase. We will soon be running behind rather than ahead in the area of education. We cannot possibly maintain or improve standards unless we are prepared to pay for it, and education needs to be funded properly, not in a token way. The Minister for Education and Training and the Treasurer have spoken about a \$72 million increase, but it simply is not keeping up with the need.

Since the Beazley inquiry in the 1980s, there have been a string of changes to education in this State, most of which I would agree have been really important changes. However, most of those initiatives have not been funded adequately as we have gone along, and schools in many instances have had to struggle to keep up with the demands placed on them. We have constant change. We have had changes in the curriculum and changes in year 11 or 12 more than once. We have had the inclusion of many children with disabilities, something which I would be the first to support. We have had a major change to the school-entry age. Full-time preprimary education has been introduced as well as guaranteed kindergarten places, and the list goes on and on. All of these are very good initiatives but not one of them has been properly funded.

We are now talking about other changes. The Minister for Education - I support what he is doing - is talking about changing the school-leaving age. I will come back to that in a moment. I support these changes but we have to make sure that these things are funded properly. We are yet to have a definitive analysis of the impact of change in school-entry age on schools, which is looming in 2009. In 2009, the first cohort of children that were affected by that change in school-entry age will be turning 13 years of age and in year 7. That is really the crunch because that is a major change. A lot of questions are yet to be answered. Is 13 years of age too old to be in a primary school? What curriculum changes are needed if children of that age are at a primary school? I could rattle off a whole lot of questions that need to be answered, and we have not yet dealt with that issue. If it is decided that 13 years of age is too old to be in primary school, that has huge implications for the secondary school curriculum and for the organisation of schools. It

has huge implications for the physical plant. More classrooms will be needed in schools if we are going to think about putting those children into secondary schools. It is now the middle of 2004, and as yet, we have still not decided what to do with these children, and we are not planning for it. My fear is that we will end up with a hotchpotch of some children going to high schools, some staying in primary schools and some going into middle schools. However, we must deal with the educational issues before we can make our decisions. I do not see that debate happening. While we need that debate to occur and to get some definitive answers, we are launching into a new debate about the school leaving age. They are all very important issues that need to be dealt with now, not in a few years time. We need policy decisions as soon as we can possibly get them. We need to know what the funding implications of those decisions will be. My fear is that we will leave it too late, we will not make good decisions and there will certainly not be the funds set aside to deal with the change in the school entry age.

I mentioned a moment ago the current Minister for Education's initiative to debate the school leaving age, which is a very important topic that should be debated in the community. However, if members stop to think about that for a moment, they will realise that if we were to go through with such an initiative, it would carry with it major expenses and major funding over a number of years. On the basis of my calculations, we are talking about an extra 4 000 students in the State's high schools. It may even be more than that. In the main, we could probably safely assume that those 4 000 students will not be university bound. They will comprise children who leave school now at the ages of 15 or 16 years before year 12, so we can assume that they are looking at other pathways and other career options. If I am correct in assuming that those 4 000 students are not tertiary education bound, there are implications for the courses that they study in school, the curriculum, developing the curriculum, expanding the current curriculum, expanding capital expenditure, and perhaps specialised buildings that might be needed. We need to know whether there will be the teachers available to teach the subjects that those kids will want to study. Without taking more than a minute, members can see that it will have serious funding implications. There is no indication of where that money will come from. We will start to slip behind if we cannot fund education in the current budget to the level at which it needs to be funded.

Turning to the Churchlands electorate for a moment, one of the major issues facing schools in the Churchlands electorate is the need to upgrade ageing physical plant, such as buildings. For example, Wembley Primary School is 65 years old. Luckily \$1 million was found a few years ago to fund an upgrade of that school. Floreat Primary School is about 54 years old. All the schools in the electorate are more than 35 years old, and some very old indeed. If members look at the physical plant in those buildings, they will see that they were definitely built for another era. If they compare the buildings in those schools with modern schools that have been built in new areas, which of course must be built, they will see that architects are listening to educators and are building schools for not only the present but also the future. They are building schools with flexible spaces that can be used over a long period as the curriculum develops and changes, and as the needs of teachers and changes in teaching style and learning develop. The old schools are hamstrung by their design. It is becoming more and more difficult for teachers to provide the sorts of options they might wish to provide. That is one aspect of the curriculum and how it relates to the buildings in which children are taught.

The toilets at the Floreat Primary School and Lake Monger Primary School should have been replaced 10 to 15 years ago; they are disgusting. I understand, from talking to parents at both those schools, that some children refuse to use the toilets. It may seem trivial to some people but it is very important.

Mr B.K. Masters: It is happening at Vasse Primary School.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: It is happening at lots of primary schools. I am using these schools as an example.

Mr A.J. Dean: It is important for girls.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: It is important for both girls and boys. On a hot day in February kids do not want to use the toilets because they are disgusting, smelly and broken, and they do not work for most of the time. On a 40-degree day kids who do not want to use the toilets do not drink any fluids because they know that if they do, they must use the toilets. They hang on all day and get dehydrated, and they get sick. I sent the Minister for Education a scientific article on the medical impact on children of not using toilets at school. I am yet to get an answer from him. I hope that he has read the article and passed it on to people in the Department of Education and Training to read, because it is a serious issue. There is simply not enough money in the budget to provide for the necessary upgrade of school toilets. It is a serious issue that affects all children.

Mr D.A. Templeman: What are the demographics of those schools?

Dr E. CONSTABLE: The numbers have risen since I have been a member of Parliament. They are not as high as they once were, but in most of the Churchlands electorate demographics are changing and a younger group of people are emerging. It is moving through that cycle at the moment. It is a bit variable, but two or three of the schools are full and other attendance figures are holding pretty well.

Consideration should be given to providing other physical plant, such as libraries. The Minister for Education today opened the library and resource centre at Wembley Downs Primary School. The school has fought for four or five years to get that upgrade. The library was previously housed in the undercroft of a building that was never designed for a

library. The school has been struggling with space. The minister last year visited Woodlands Primary School, which has a library that was funded and built by parents many years ago. It is just over half the size of the standard resource centre and library in a new school. I understand that the school is at the top of the list in the west coast region of the Department of Education and Training. However, there is no guarantee that it will get a library. It has been waiting for some years. City Beach Primary School is desperate for a new library and resource centre.

There is a growing difference between new schools that are being built, which I do not deny need to be built, and older schools. We need to put far more money into upgrading schools in older and more established areas. I urge the minister to give serious consideration to that, because the difference between those schools is getting greater and greater every year. As the member for Vasse has said, a similar situation exists in schools in other areas. I can sum it up by saying that schools in established areas are not well suited to the needs of schools in the twenty-first century. Although I am sure that the minister is concerned about schools in areas of growth in new suburbs, he must be equally concerned about schools in electorates such as mine. Administration areas and teachers' preparation areas in some of the older schools are like rabbit warrens. Floreat Primary School is a case in point. It is very difficult for teachers there to find adequate space in which to prepare the lessons that they need to prepare. Those schools need areas that are specifically designed, so that teachers can do their complex job well and work in pleasant surroundings. There are many makeshift work spaces in older schools. They are becoming commonplace. There are old canteens and other spaces for art and music that need replacing.

Another issue that has arisen recently is that of the inadequate electrical supply at a number of schools. At Wembley Downs Primary School parents raised a lot of money, I think \$26 000, to provide some airconditioning in some of the classrooms, only to find that they needed to find the same amount of money to upgrade the electrical supply before they could install the airconditioning. That is pretty hard. The \$26 000 was a lot of money for parents to raise over a number of years. They struggled and worked hard to do it and then found that situation. If it were a new school, the electrical supply would have been adequate for the installation of the airconditioning. However, as it was an old school, the electrical supply was inadequate and everything needed upgrading. At first the parents were told that they must do it by themselves and find the money for the upgrade. However, I am pleased to say that money has been found to assist with that upgrade, although I think the school must provide some of the funding as well. It was a great shock to those parents, after many years of hard work to provide airconditioning for the school.

Money has been spent on the schools that I am referring to. Undercover assembly areas and one library have been constructed, and there have been some other upgrades of the schools. Two administration areas have been upgraded as well, but a lot more is required. I will certainly be quizzing the minister next week about what is in the current budget. From my first glance, it appears that there is less than there was last year, so we are not getting too far ahead in this area.

Another issue raised by the Treasurer was that it is an objective of this Government to ensure that we have a safe and supportive environment. I asked myself whether constituents in the Churchlands electorate feel safe and secure in their homes and in the environment in which they live. My observation was that they probably do not. As I walked around the Churchlands electorate over the past two or three weeks delivering a newsletter with supporters of mine, the thing that struck me over and over again was how people fortress themselves in their homes with gates that have special locks and windows that have locks. I am noticing more and more very large, loud dogs. Some dogs bark as one walks from one end of the block to the other, and become louder as one gets closer to them. They are really fierce dogs. To me they do not look like normal, docile pets. They are there to guard the houses, especially when the people who live in those homes are away during the day at work. I have noticed more and more of these large dogs.

The SPEAKER: I thought they were all in my electorate.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: No, there are a lot in mine too, Mr Speaker. I am sure there are lot in every electorate in this State.

Mr P.W. Andrews: None worse than mine.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: The member for Southern River has been bitten by one. That provides a source of great insecurity to members of Parliament if they want to go doorknocking. My advice is to avoid any house that has a large dog barking within it.

Mr P.W. Andrews interjected.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: I would not put myself in danger. My friend on my left, the member for Southern River, has had a bad experience with a dog. Was the member for Southern River doorknocking at the time?

Mr P.W. Andrews: I was.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: He was doorknocking at the time, so everybody should take my advice.

Mr B.K. Masters: In 1987 I was doorknocking for the Liberal Party in Kwinana and was bitten by a dog. The lady came up to me and said, "I'm so sorry; we vote Liberal as well."

Dr E. CONSTABLE: I would say it was not a very well-trained dog.

The SPEAKER: What thanks did the Liberal Party give it?

Mr P.W. Andrews: The dog that bit me was owned by Carol Martin's nephew.

Dr E. CONSTABLE: I will get back to my speech. We have had a little aside about dogs. The point is still a serious one; people see a need to fortress themselves in their homes and protect themselves in a number of ways with alarms and other very expensive systems. They also have animals that will act as a deterrent or protector.

One very important issue that gets down to the old infrastructure in established areas is expenditure on police stations. I am aware that funds are available in this budget for that purpose. However, I am very disappointed that no funds are available to upgrade the police stations in the western suburbs. A year or so ago, perhaps even two years ago, I visited a number of police stations in the area with the members for Nedlands and Cottesloe. We went to Wembley Police Station, which is very close to my electorate office, and Subiaco Police Station. I also went to Claremont Police Station and the other members went to the police stations in Nedlands and Cottesloe. What struck me, particularly at Wembley, was the appalling state of the old building in which the police and detectives work. They are expected to work under appalling conditions. I suspect that if occupational health and safety officers went into Wembley Police Station, they would close it. One can see how unsafe it is with one look. I will always remember a comment that a young woman detective made about the substandard conditions at Wembley Police Station. She said that there was only one toilet and that they must share it with the crooks. They also did not have an interview room. When they were interviewing a crook, to use her word, and the crook wanted to go to the toilet, that crook would use the toilet that the staff in the police station used. She said that they could not believe the mess the crooks made when they used it. That would of course be deliberate behaviour. I do not think our police should work under those conditions. I agree with the minister that the substandard, old-fashioned buildings are totally inadequate for the job. Two years ago a study of Wembley, Subiaco and other police stations was undertaken and recommendations were made for their upgrade. Not a brass razoo has been set aside in this budget for planning for or upgrading of the police stations in this area. The time has come for that to happen. I urge the minister to revisit this issue and make sure that funds are set aside as soon as possible to build a state-of-the-art police facility to service the Wembley and Subiaco areas. I do not believe that we need to replace both stations. As I have said to the minister before - I think it was during the last estimates committee - I could see one state-of-the-art police station fulfilling the role for the Wembley and Subiaco areas. To this point, the study undertaken on the needs in the area was a waste of time and effort.

I would like to make a few brief remarks about the quality of health care. Once again, the Treasurer said that an objective of this Government is to provide quality health care for our loved ones. Those were the words he used in his speech. One asks the question again: does this budget do what the Treasurer promised with regard to health? Much of the Treasurer's speech was based on the Reid report and the reforms that will supposedly come over the next 13 years. The Reid report recommendations will cost \$1.7 billion. The Treasurer referred to total spending on infrastructure over the next 13 years of \$2.6 billion. If that spending were averaged over 13 years, one would expect about \$200 million to be spent each year over the 13 years. However, in the next financial year \$162 million will be spent, in the following year \$169 million will be spent and spending will then drop to \$147.5 million. In the fourth year \$154.5 million will be spent. We all agree that health is a crucial area of need, but the figures in the budget indicate a half-hearted attempt by the Gallop Government to get on with the job of providing the infrastructure recommended in the Reid report.

The other fact that bewilders me is that the Reid blueprint promises very few new hospital beds - about 370 extra over the 13-year period. It hardly seems enough to cope with the increased demand that there will be. It is certainly not enough to cope with current demand. It beggars belief that enough new beds will be provided in hospitals in 13 years. At best, the Reid recommendations look like a reorganisation of the geography of the hospital facilities, particularly in the metropolitan area. Under these circumstances I cannot see how the quality or quantity of health care will improve very much for the people who need it now.

Ambulance funding is another case in point. For many years the ambulance service has been asking for increased funding from the State Government. There has been a recent announcement about an injection of funding for that service. I would be the first to support it. However, I am not sure that that injection of funding will solve the problems that we have. Ambulances will pick up people who are unwell from their homes or from an accident and take them to hospital. However, there will still be a bottleneck at the hospitals, because not enough beds will be available for people to go quickly through the system from the emergency service into beds in the hospital. That is the problem now. This Government is not providing any more beds in the near future to cope with that issue.

I have one more issue to raise before I finish. I refer to libraries. Library funding was raised in a question without notice yesterday by a government member. Of course, it was a dorothy dixer. It was raised also by the member for Albany in his speech. The Churchlands electorate is serviced by two excellent public libraries. One of those libraries is in the Town of Cambridge. That is a brand-new library - it was opened only last year - and it is in an excellent location at Floreat Forum. A lot of people use that library. It has excellent parking facilities. There are also wonderful facilities underneath the library that are used by all sorts of groups, such as for exercise classes for older people, and meeting rooms. It is a very well-used and beautiful facility. The other library that services the Churchlands electorate is in Gildercliffe Street in the City of Stirling. That also is an excellent library that was opened just a few years ago. Therefore, my electorate is serviced by very good library services and excellent librarians.

In recent weeks I, like probably most members of this Parliament, have been inundated with messages and letters from people urging me to put pressure on the Government to provide increased funding for books and resources for community libraries. It has been an issue of concern for a long time that Governments have not risen to the occasion and provided enough funding for libraries. Yesterday during question time the Minister for Culture and the Arts waxed lyrical about how the Government will be contributing \$10.3 million over the next four years to public libraries. That is \$2.575 million each year spread among the 268 public libraries in Western Australia. On average that is \$9 608 per library per year. When we look at it in that way, it does not sound very much. At this level, the appropriation for resources for public libraries is laughable. In the Town of Cambridge alone, this will mean 42c for each person on the electoral roll; that does not even account for the children in the Town of Cambridge. One cannot buy a *Phantom* comic for 42c, so the Government could not even buy a comic book for each person. One cannot buy a copy of *The West Australian* for 42c. We are not talking about providing a huge number of resources for each of the 268 public libraries in the State. Across Western Australia that will mean about \$1.35 per person. I understand from people whom I asked today that one cannot buy a *Phantom* comic for \$1.35 either, so the Government will not be providing very much per head of population by expending the amount of money that the minister was so excited about yesterday.

In anyone's language, the money that is being provided for public libraries is a paltry amount. The truth of the matter is that community libraries have been let down through successive Governments in this State for a long time. I agree with the minister that the Gallop Government has made an effort. However, it is clearly not enough to provide the sorts of resources that a modern library should have. Modern libraries that provide computer and other services for the community are very important. As others have pointed out, libraries provide a meeting place, a place at which information can be gained, a place from which people can send e-mails and access the Internet, and much more. The budget papers claim on page 979 that this funding is to meet the information, recreation and lifelong learning needs of the people of Western Australia. The amount of money being provided to public libraries will not do that. It is time that this Government, and any other Government that wants to take on this issue, did better than we have been doing over probably the past two or three decades. It might be a 44 per cent increase, as the minister stated yesterday during question time, but the minister now looks pretty silly if she thinks this is an adequate amount of money to spend on the information, recreation and lifelong learning needs of the people of Western Australia.

MR M.P. WHITELEY (Roleystone) [8.34 pm]: Recently I read an article in *The Bulletin* about mental health issues in Australia. I guess it is fair to say that that article was highlighting what the magazine described as a crisis in mental health in Australia. I was pleased to read that Western Australia has the highest per capita expenditure on mental health in the nation. However, simply having the highest level of expenditure does not guarantee best practice. Effective mental health services delivery is about not just the dollar quantum, but also how effective the expenditure is. Of course it is also heavily influenced by the quality of clinical practice in the State. I want to highlight an issue that I have highlighted previously in this Parliament, but on which I have since done some further research, in respect of children's mental health; that is, of course, the issue of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. As I have stated a number of times in this Parliament, the rate of prescription of amphetamines for the treatment of ADHD in Western Australia is four times the national average. In 2000, from memory, approximately 18 000 Western Australian children between the ages of four and 17 were routinely prescribed mostly dexamphetamine, and to a lesser extent methylphenidate, more commonly known by its brand name, Ritalin, for the treatment of ADHD. I do not have the latest figures, and I will be interested to see them when they become available, but the best estimate I can make is that approximately 20 000 children in Western Australia are currently using stimulant medication - amphetamines - for the treatment of ADHD.

When I came into the Parliament I set myself some goals, which obviously revolved around doing a good job for my electorate of Roleystone. However, I also set myself the personal goal of trying to influence policies in government that would reduce the rate of prescription of amphetamines for ADHD in Western Australia. I probably somewhat naively set myself the goal of trying to halve the rate of prescription in Western Australia. To put that in context, if we were to halve the rate of prescription per head of population in Western Australia, it would still be twice the national average. To put that further in context, Western Australia is not the only State that has concerns about sloppy diagnostic practices and the inappropriate prescription of amphetamines for ADHD. I have long campaigned on this issue. In 1998 when I was the Labor candidate for the seat of Tangney in the federal election, I wrote an article in the "thinking allowed" column of the *Fremantle Herald* titled "Action Deficit Disorder". The article highlighted the previous Government's failure to implement the recommendations of a report that it had commissioned on attention deficit disorder. That report was actually commissioned by four ministers in the previous Government - ministers Prince; Barnett, the current Leader of the Opposition; Edwardes, the member for Kingsley; and Minson. The report highlighted two key strategies that would, if implemented, help to address the problem of misdiagnosis and over-prescription. The first of those strategies was that the stimulants committee of the Department of Health be authorised to carry out random audits into the use of block authorisations, and that paediatricians and psychiatrists found to be failing to abide by the appropriate criteria have their block authorisation capacity removed. For the information of members, block authorisation was the practice whereby those clinicians who were the heaviest prescribers were assumed to be competent and were not held accountable for their prescriptions on an individual script basis. The previous Government did not take any steps to implement that recommendation. That recommendation was actually picked up by our Government, to the credit of the former Minister for Health, Mr Kucera, who made a policy announcement in

late 2002 that the Government would go further than just auditing the practice of block authorisation and would remove it. That was a success, I guess. That was one of the two key recommendations from that excellent report in 1996.

The second recommendation, which has not been picked up by this Government, and which I am now realising is probably the most critical recommendation of the two, is that state child health services be resourced further to establish multidisciplinary teams for the assessment and treatment of children with attentional disorders. I am convinced that that is the key to reducing the rate of prescription in Western Australia. That conviction follows a visit I made to the eastern States during the summer recess. I had a meeting with the Parliamentary Secretary for Health in Victoria, who told me that that is the model Victoria has adopted. Child and adolescent mental health services are localised and have multidisciplinary assessment teams involved in the diagnosis of ADHD. Parents concerned about aspects of the behaviour of their children can go to the public sector and get their child assessed by a group of experts who take the time to review the child's behaviour. I was informed that they have a minimum of three one-hour meetings with the child. Then, as a team, they decide whether the child fits the criteria for ADHD. That is the major reason the rate of prescription in Victoria is amongst the lowest in Australia, and is approximately one-sixth of the rate of prescription in Western Australia. That was the second recommendation of the 1996 report but as yet it has not been picked up. I am now convinced that, although the removal of block authorisation was a good step, the key to addressing the problem of misdiagnosis and over-prescription is to provide the opportunity for parents to get the assessment done in the public sector by qualified teams that assess the child and have no role in, and derive no economic benefit from, the ongoing treatment of the child. We have a privatised model in Western Australia under which most diagnosis is typically done by paediatricians, not child psychiatrists who are better equipped to look at the child as a whole, because they have a greater depth of psychological training. Paediatricians tend to follow the medical model, and the first line of action is too often to prescribe medication. Often those paediatricians are involved in the ongoing treatment of the child, so I am concerned that they derive an ongoing economic benefit from the diagnosis and medication of the child. We need to go back to that 1996 report and pick up some of the key recommendations in it; then at long last we will address the problem.

The 1996 report, which I said was a very good report, was written when the rate of prescription of amphetamines for children with ADHD was about 0.9 per cent of four to 17-year-olds. Now the best estimate is five or six per cent. The report was written when the rate of prescription was about one-sixth of what it currently is. Even at that time the rate of prescription was three to four times the national average. We have seen an exponential growth in the rates of prescription across Australia, but Western Australia has always maintained its relative position way out there as the heaviest prescriber. The report expressed concerns about the rigour with which the diagnosis of ADHD is made. The report said -

The parent is frequently the sole source of information and often educational and behavioural information is not sought. When information is sought from the school, the questions asked are frequently inappropriate. Behavioural observations are rarely obtained. The rating scales commonly used also present with difficulties.

I will say little bit more about rating scales later on.

This report is now eight years old. It was prepared when the rate of prescription was one-sixth of what it currently is, and it highlighted concerns with sloppy diagnostic practices that are no less true today. It addressed the issue of the rate of prescription in Western Australia as compared with the rest of Australia. It said that -

... compared with other States and Territories, Western Australia had a disproportionately high usage of both Dexamphetamine and Methylphenidate. This may indicate either that Western Australia is mis-diagnosing and/or over-prescribing stimulant medication or that the other States and Territories are yet to 'catch up'.

They never have actually caught up. They have rocketed forward, but they have never come close to approaching the rate of prescription that exists in Western Australia. The report also highlighted concerns about the differential rates of prescription across Western Australia. I will say a little more about that when I analyse the figures collected in 2000 about the relative rates of prescription in the various federal electorates representing Western Australia. The report concluded that the reason for differential rates across the Perth metropolitan area had nothing to do with socioeconomic factors. It stated -

It is the view of the Working Party that the differential rate of prescriptions may be more reflective of the prescribing patterns of paediatricians servicing the various areas, than it is of social or other factors associated with ADHD in those areas.

In other words, the doctors and not the patients were influencing the rates of prescription of ADHD drugs. At that time, in 1996, there were two particular areas with very high rates of prescription. One was the western suburbs, and the other was the south east corridor. At the time I was a teacher in the western suburbs, and now I represent an area in the south east corridor, and I can tell members that the demographics of the western suburbs and the south east corridor are enormously different, but the prescribing practices of the paediatricians servicing those areas are not. That was the key then, and I suggest that it is still the key now.

I have recently revisited the 1996 report and found that perhaps I should have paid more attention to it at the time. It said that some conditions commonly have symptoms similar to those of ADHD, including hearing impairment,

intellectual disability, specific learning disabilities, autism, brain injury, epilepsy, child depression and family dysfunction as well as being a normal active preschooler. Since that time, rather than describing those as conditions that have similar symptoms, the language of the ADHD debate has changed so that those conditions are now described as being co-morbid. Very often, children described as having ADHD are said to have a co-morbid condition such as mild autism or childhood depression, and that children have those co-morbid conditions in addition to ADHD. That highlights the fundamental flaw in the science of ADHD, which confuses the issue of cause and effect. I have researched this extensively and, frankly, I was a little timid when I first started expressing strong views about ADHD because I had no expertise in the area. However, the more I look at this the more I am convinced that it is dangerous pseudo-science that results in our children being prescribed dangerous medication in great droves. It is a result of this confusion of cause and effect. ADHD is in fact no more than a collection of symptoms. Nobody has ADHD that causes him or her to behave in such a way. A child may have a range of conditions that may cause him or her to display inattentive and/or hyperactive or compulsive behaviours that are characterised as ADHD. If ADHD exists, it exists by definition. In other words, if a child is observed displaying these core behaviours, that child has ADHD. ADHD does not cause the behaviours. Something causes the behaviours that are characterised as ADHD. That is the key point, and in some respects moving away from that point or giving way on that point loses the debate. That is where the ADHD industry - it is an industry - has been so successful in marketing drugs to our children.

ADHD is an incredibly controversial topic for two reasons. I will go into them in some depth. Firstly, the diagnosis is very subjective. I will read out the diagnostic criteria later. The member for Southern River and I have done it once before in the House but I will do it again because it helps to understand the issue. ADHD is even more controversial because the most common treatment is the use of amphetamines. When used for recreational purposes, amphetamines are illicit substances and a no-no. Amphetamines are sometimes prescribed for children younger than four years of age. Guidelines in Western Australia allow for children as young as four years of age to be regularly medicated. Treatment through psychostimulant medication - amphetamines - is controversial. There are divergent views about ADHD. I characterise them as belonging to those who are ADHD enthusiasts and those who are sceptics. I am obviously a sceptic. Regarding the cause and treatment of ADHD, enthusiasts believe that ADHD is a genetically predetermined biochemical imbalance in the brain that is best treated with psychostimulant medication. That is claimed in the absence of any evidence that an individual has a biochemical imbalance in the brain. There is no diagnostic tool that shows a biochemical imbalance in the brain. The enthusiasts believe a biochemical imbalance leads to the behaviours and that the best form of treatment is to address it through medication. Sceptics counter that the causes of such behaviours are many and varied and that there is no one underlying cause. To assume there is a biochemical imbalance in the brain is inherently dangerous when the consequence of that is to medicate to address the imbalance. I also have the concern that, in some cases, neurotoxins may cause a biochemical imbalance in the brain. In other words, there is something in the child's environment or diet that is causing the biochemical imbalance. We should be treating children by addressing the cause; we should be removing whatever it is from their environment or diet rather than medicating to try to get the balance right in the brain.

Mr D.A. Templeman: How long has ADHD been diagnosed in Western Australia? What have been the treatments?

Mr M.P. WHITELY: There has always been a condition known as hyperkinetic disorder, which represents the extreme cases of ADHD - children bouncing off the walls. Historically, that has been treated with amphetamines. The explosion of the diagnosis of ADHD has happened since the late 1980s - about 1988.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Have the young people in the 1980s who were diagnosed with that, who are now adults, been tracked or studied, now that they are in their mid to late 20s?

Mr M.P. WHITELY: To my knowledge, that is an area that has been largely ignored. In fact, most of the studies look at the short-term efficacy of the drugs and say that they induce changed behaviour. If people are given psychostimulant medication - mood-altering medication - it should be expected that their moods will alter. There has not been a great deal of study in that area but it is something that the committee conducting a review of ADHD in Western Australia might take up. It is a good point.

The second aspect I will discuss is the approach of enthusiasts and sceptics to the rates of diagnosis in Western Australia. Enthusiasts believe that prescription rates in Western Australia are so high because Western Australia is so good at diagnosing the condition and the other States are yet to catch up. It is supposed that we have best clinical practice and the other States are not as good as us. When I travelled to the east I visited the health departments in South Australia and Victoria as well as a number of ADHD-related organisations in New South Wales. When I put that proposition to them, they guffawed. Western Australia has an atrocious reputation. The clinical practice in Western Australia is held out as being very poor. Frankly, self-praise is no praise. Many of the heaviest prescribers are the ones who say they are the best at diagnosing. ADHD is quite often described in the media as the result of poor parenting. Pressure is put on parents by claims that poor parenting is leading children down the path to medication. I reject that totally. Parents do not medicate their children for ADHD. Parents do not write the prescriptions for ADHD. It is not poor parenting that is leading to this problem in Western Australia; it is poor doctoring. It is a fairly small pool in Western Australia.

Mr B.K. Masters: Do you not accept that high sugar levels in food and additives can be a factor?

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: I do; I think that is true. However, I do not think it is a universal cause. Children do not always present with symptoms in a clinician's office. If a child presents with symptoms or there is evidence of impulsive, hyperactive or inattentive behaviour, there should not be an automatic leap to medicate him. It is something that is done far too quickly in Western Australia. Far too much blame is attributed to parents when it is not poor parenting that is involved. The parents do not write the prescriptions; the doctors write the prescriptions.

Mr B.K. Masters: Parents must show some responsibility for the food eaten by their children etc.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: There is an inherent problem in trying to address the underlying causes of ADHD behaviours. Very often the solutions involve a range of options, some that may work in some cases and some that may work in others. For some children it may be diet modification. That can involve a lifestyle shift on behalf of parents. Certainly, the parents have a role to play. Parents are generally referred to a paediatrician by their GP. If the only option given to them by the paediatrician is that their child has a biochemical imbalance in the brain that is naturally occurring and needs medication, that view may ignore the fact that the child may drink one litre of coca-cola each day. Parents cannot be blamed for that. However, parents do have a role to play in the management of the condition. Very often, the solutions to the problems as they present are very complex and involve substantial lifestyle changes. The problem is that there is no magic bullet solution. There is no one simple answer.

Mr B.K. Masters: My wife is a preprimary teacher's assistant and I know that, when such a child presents, the parents are given a lot of assistance and information about diet and medication.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: That is excellent.

Mr B.K. Masters: Unfortunately, the message is not given strongly enough right across the government sector.

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Unquestionably, some parents are more receptive to those messages than others. There are parents who have access to greater financial resources. Some have a greater preparedness to listen, often depending on education levels. Some will challenge what they are told by the medical profession. There are a range of responses. Some parents are presented with options for their children that they choose not to take up. In turn, that can affect a child's behaviour.

Another point raised by those who argue that we are underdiagnosing ADHD is that undiagnosed ADHD is the cause of illicit drug use. The argument is that if a person has ADHD that remains undiagnosed and unmedicated, that person will self-medicate by using illicit substances and drugs to address the biochemical imbalance in his brain. It is the sort of argument put up by people like George O'Neil, who has a clinic in Subiaco. He says that often he sees undiagnosed ADHD sufferers who have self-medicated. The same people typically argue that Western Australia is the best State in Australia at diagnosing ADHD; therefore, we are better at prescribing. If it were true that we are best at spotting, diagnosing and prescribing, and if undiagnosed ADHD led to drug abuse, the rates of illicit drug use in Western Australia would be below the national average. Those rates in WA are above the national rates. From memory, there are eight classes of illicit drug use, and in only one class is Western Australia below the national average. In fact, the illicit use of amphetamines in Western Australia is twice the national average. Therefore, a very similar substance that is used to treat ADHD is abused in Western Australia at twice the national rate. The evidence far from supports the argument that we are best at diagnosing; therefore, we prevent undiagnosed people with ADHD from self-medicating. The evidence points in the other direction. The legal market in ADHD drugs in some way fuels the trade in illicit amphetamines.

A member interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: That is right. If we look at diagnostic criteria for ADHD, a child is supposed to have displayed the characteristics of ADHD before the age of seven years. If a person is diagnosed when age 25, and the clinician argues the person has a drug dependency because of the ADHD, the clinician must go back 18 years to assess behaviours. A time machine would be needed. There is a degree of nonsense every way one turns in these arguments.

In relation to these assumptions that there is an underlying chemical imbalance in the brain, I now refer to *DSM-IV-TR - Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, which is prepared by the American Psychiatric Association as the Bible of mental health in America, and used widely in Australia to diagnose conditions like ADHD. *DSM-IV-TR* acknowledges on page 88 -

There are no laboratory tests, neurological assessments, or attentional assessments that have been established as diagnostic in the clinical assessment of Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder.

One can only assess the behaviours. I will come to how they are assessed in a moment. Interestingly, *DSM-IV-TR* also reads on page 86 -

Signs of the disorder may be minimal or absent when the person is receiving frequent rewards for appropriate behaviour, is under close supervision, is in a novel setting, is engaged in especially interesting activities, or is in a one-to-one situations (e.g., the clinician's office.)

In other words, the clinicians do not even have to see these behaviours. The behaviours themselves are extremely subjective to assess. They involve impulsive and inattentive behaviours, and the clinician does not see those behaviours in his office because they are one-to-one situations. In an interesting or novel situation, under close supervision or receiving frequent rewards for appropriate behaviour, the behaviour will not be seen. The kids will not be seen not paying attention when in a novel or interesting environment. This is the nonsense of this stuff and the pseudo-science becomes apparent.

It is appropriate to read through the criteria. It demonstrates the subjectivity of the criteria. The diagnostic criteria for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are broken up into three categories - inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. A person previously had to show six inattentive behaviours and six hyperactive impulsive behaviours to be characterised as ADHD, but the diagnostic criteria have been loosened in recent years. Therefore, a person demonstrating six of one category or six of the other category is assessed as ADHD. In other words, that is six inattentive or six hyperactive impulsive behaviours. Let us go through the inattentive behaviours. I have noted these as follows -

- (a) Often fails to give close attentions to details and makes careless mistakes in school work, work, or other activities.

Remember, these are the criteria used to assess children as young as four years of age. They continue-

- (b) Often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities.
- (c) Often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly.
- (d) Often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish school work, chores or duties in the workplace.
- (e) Often has difficulty organizing tasks and activities.
- (f) Often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to engage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (such as school work and homework.)

Four-year-olds with homework; now there is an interesting concept! The criteria continue -

- (g) Often loses things necessary for tasks or activities (e.g. toys, school assignment, pencils, books or tools.)
- (h) Is often easily distracted by extraneous stimuli.
- (i) Is often forgetful in daily activities.

A person must show only six of those criteria to be assessed ADHD. There is no definition of "often". No line in the sand indicates how many times the behaviour must be shown. It is entirely at the judgment of the clinician.

Mr T.K. Waldron: Ninety-eight per cent of people in here are like that!

Mr M.P. WHITELY: Exactly. The hyperactive symptoms are as follows -

- (a) Often fidgets with hands and feet or squirms in seat.

You can sit up straight, please, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman)! The criteria continue -

- (b) Often leaves seat in classroom or other situations in which remaining seated is expected.

Has any member seen the member for Innaloo? Further -

- (c) Often runs about or climbs excessively in situations in which it is inappropriate.
- (d) Often has difficult playing or engaging in leisure activities quietly.
- (e) Is often on the go or often acts as if driven by a motor.
- (f) Often talks excessively.

Impulsivity

- (g) Often blurts out answers before questions have been completed.
- (h) Often has difficulty awaiting turn.
- (i) Often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g. butts into conversations or games.)

Those are the diagnostic criteria used to assess a condition that results in 20 000 Western Australian children being put on amphetamines. They are funny when they are read out as we all display those criteria, yet they result in 20 000 Western Australian children being put on amphetamines. Remember that I said that clinicians do not have to see these behaviours in their office, but the clinicians use the ADHD rating scale like the one prepared by the University of Massachusetts Medical Centre I have with me. This lists criteria, and applies four scale categories. For example, the

first criterion of fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes in school work, is followed by “Never or rarely”, “Sometimes”, “Often” and “Very often”. There is no categorisation of what constitutes “Often” or “Very Often”, but as soon as a child reaches the second highest of the categories, he or she makes the grade. The diagnostic criteria refer to often. There are 18 such behaviours, and a child must display six of them to be assessed or described as a ADHD predominantly active type or ADHD passive type. It is rubbery and subjective; it is disturbing.

Mr T.K. Waldron: In putting all those things together before someone is recommended to be looked at, are you saying that once they get that result, they are automatically referred?

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Anecdotally, and there is plenty of supporting evidence, and members can refer to the 1996 report I quoted previously as concerns were evident as early as 1996 in Western Australia, behaviour observations are rarely made; in fact, they rely on those sorts of scales and measures.

Mr T.K. Waldron: Is that done by the schoolteachers or -

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: That would typically be filled in by a schoolteacher. It is also worthy of note that this information comes from *DSM-IV-TR*. *DSM-III* had the same criteria but it was much tighter. A child had to have six of the impulsive hyperactive behaviours and six of the inattentive behaviours to be classified as having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; that is, they had to have at least 12 of the 18 behaviours. The criteria have been loosened now, so that a child can have either six of one or six of the other. There is another category of ADHD that is called “attention deficit activity disorder not otherwise specified”, which is defined as “symptom patterns that do not meet the full criteria for the disorder but have a behavioural pattern marked by sluggishness, daydreaming and hypoactivity”, which is being underactive. Children can be diagnosed with ADHD because they daydream too much, they are too sluggish, they are too hyperactive or they are just not paying attention. A child can also be diagnosed with it on the basis of this sort of the evidence, which is less scientific than a personality guide in an average women’s magazine.

Mr T.K. Waldron: Are you saying that responsible schoolteachers don’t take into account more than one of those set of six that you talked about?

Mr M.P. WHITELEY: Schoolteachers do not diagnose these children. Schoolteachers provide the evidence for the paediatrician or the child psychiatrist who makes the diagnosis. If a teacher has to report on a child’s behaviour and little Johnny has had a bad day and been misbehaving, it will influence how the teacher reports his behaviour. There is no definition of the word “often”, and yet that report ends up being the evidence upon which the clinician relies. As it says in *DSM-IV-TR*, the clinician will not see that child’s behaviour in his office. Members should also bear in mind that it says that children will not display that behaviour if they are in an especially interesting activity or situation. In other words, if a child has a teacher who enthral and excites them, they will not display ADHD behaviours. Members can see the subjective nature of the diagnosis.

I think that highlights the need for more tightly defined ADHD diagnostic criteria. The prescribing guidelines have to be developed cooperatively between the medical profession and state and federal health authorities to tighten up the diagnostic criteria. In fact, we may end up going back to using ADHD medications on only those children who have extreme hyperkinetic disorder. They are the kids who are really bouncing off the walls and who must have the medication to control their behaviour, at least in the short term, so that other interventions can be tried, but they can be medicated for only short periods. At the moment, children are being diagnosed for daydreaming too much, and then they are put on medication, possibly for life.

As I said, the diagnosis is controversial. The treatment is even more controversial because it involves the use of amphetamines. Typically, in Western Australia and Australia, dexamphetamine is used rather than methylphenidate because dexamphetamine is on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. Dexedrine is an American brand name for dexamphetamine. GlaxoSmithKline, the manufacturer of dexedrine, has on its web site the following warning that must be put on dexedrine sold in the United States -

Amphetamines have a high potential for abuse. Administration of amphetamines for prolonged periods of time may lead to drug dependence and must be avoided. Particular attention should be paid to the possibility of subjects obtaining amphetamines for non-therapeutic use or distribution to others, and the drugs should be prescribed or dispensed sparingly.

In other words, doctors need to be on the alert for doctor shoppers who will get a legal script and then use it for a black market trade.

GlaxoSmithKline’s web site then goes on to list the possible side effects of dexamphetamine, which include palpitations, tachycardia, elevated blood pressure, overstimulation, restlessness, dizziness, insomnia, euphoria or, conversely dysphoria, dyskinesia, tremor, headaches, motor tics, phonic tics, Tourette syndrome, dryness of the mouth, unpleasant taste, diarrhoea or conversely constipation, anorexia, urticaria, impotence, extreme psychological dependence and severe social disability - otherwise known as the Zombie effect. These are all the potential side effects of a drug that we, in Western Australia, routinely give to 20 000 children. The web site then goes on to state that overdose levels are highly individual with the prescribing information and -

Individual patient response to amphetamines varies widely. While toxic symptoms occasionally occur as an idiosyncrasy at doses as low as 2 mg, they are rare with doses of less than 15 mg; 30 mg can produce severe reactions, yet doses of 400 to 500 mg are not necessarily fatal.

I think the Learning and Attentional Disorders Society of Western Australia has put up a dartboard with my face on it. I am not its favourite son and, frankly, its members are not my favourite people either. Can I ask for an extension of time Mr Acting Speaker?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A. Templeman): No, I am afraid you are not able to have that member for Roleystone.

Mr M.P. WHITELY: Michele Toner, Executive Officer of LADS, appeared on *Face the Facts* on television Channel 31 when it ran a program on ADHD. On that program she and another spokesperson from LADS undersold the dangers of the medication and said that a person would need to take as many as 200 tablets to get a high. Typically, the tablets come in either five-milligram or 10-milligram tablets. Let us assume they are five-milligram tablets. Two hundred of those tablets amounts to 1 000 milligrams. GlaxoKlineSmith says on its web site that doses of 400 to 500 milligrams are not necessarily fatal. This is dangerous information and it is dangerous practice in Western Australia. What can we do about it? How does this relate to the budget? We need to urgently pick up the second of those two recommendations from the 1996 report. We need to urgently establish localised child and adolescent mental health services that have multidisciplinary teams that can be involved in the assessment of ADHD. Pilot programs along these lines have been established. A pilot program is being run at the Bentley Health Service, and the people there are doing a fantastic job. However, they are seeing an incredibly small number of children - I understand it is fewer than 100 children. Most of those 100 children are being taken off medication, and most of the remainder are having their dosages reduced. Frankly, it is too late to address the problem at the treatment end. We need to be addressing it at the front end. We need to have public sector assessment opportunities for parents who are concerned about their child's behaviour. They need to be able to approach a public sector service where there is no economic imperative and no economic benefit from misdiagnosis and overprescribing. Multidisciplinary teams need to make a collective decision about whether children in fact have ADHD or hyperkinetic disorder to such an extent.

Mr P.D. Omodei: Haven't you got an electorate to talk about?

Mr M.P. WHITELY: I may not have an electorate to talk about, but I consider this to be an incredibly serious issue. In fact, the health and welfare of 20 000 children is far more significant to me than whether we have a Liberal or a Labor Government. I am far more passionate about this than I am about any other issue, even those affecting my electorate. However, the rates of diagnosis and prescription in my electorate are the highest in Australia.

MR B.K. MASTERS (Vasse) [9.20 pm]: This is my first response to the appropriation Bills in my new capacity as an Independent member of the House. It may well be my last of course, but I am working as hard as I can to make sure that it is the first of many. I have been very pleasantly surprised at how much time I have to attend to electorate issues now that I no longer have responsibilities in the Liberal Party, the shadow Cabinet and so on. I commend to other members the concept of becoming an Independent. It has much to support the abolition of ties to major parties, because I have found that I have between 30 and 40 extra days a year to devote to other activities. At the moment those other activities involve issues within my electorate.

My intention tonight is to speak mainly about the electorate of Vasse, but I will make some comments towards the end about the overall financial impacts of the budget as well as the budget allocations into the areas of science and environment, which were my shadow ministry portfolio responsibilities until February of this year. I remind members yet again - I know I am sounding like a cracked record - that in the estimates committee of 2001 the then Minister for the South West, who is now the Minister for Health, made the comment that the south west corner of the State, including the electorate of Vasse, is seen by many people as the chardonnay coast. That would not have been an unreasonable statement, but he went on to say that as a result of that, he saw little need for further funding for that chardonnay coast area. Since that estimates committee statement, I have spent the past three years trying to point out to people in the Liberal Party, on what used to be my side of the House, as well as to government members on the other side of the House, that in fact there are many unmet needs within the electorate of Vasse.

I will very quickly go through a number of examples to highlight how the area is suffering, and at the same time enjoying, an annual population growth in the order of six per cent. It obviously creates problems because of shortages of appropriate infrastructure, as well as shortages of services as provided by staff and personnel. In the health area, there is no doubt that increasing pressures are being placed on nursing staff at Busselton District Hospital. Over the road from the hospital is the Kevin Cullen Community Health and Development Centre. I am waiting for a response to a question on notice that I asked the Minister for Health, but I am told that there are five or six unfilled vacancies at the community health centre, and that they are as a result of a deliberate policy decision by the Government to not fill the positions until the scream from the local community is so loud that it cannot be ignored. The Government will then find people to fill the vacancies.

The real shortage in the health service relates to nurses at Busselton District Hospital. The changes that are being forced on the nursing staff at the hospital mean that they are being given more and more duties to undertake, which means less and less patient contact time. When I speak to nurses I am told, almost without exception, that everyone

went into the nursing profession because they wanted to have personal day-to-day contact with patients. They wanted to be able to help them in a multitude of ways, one of which is personal contact. The pressures being placed on nurses in this modern era of health care provision is such that nurses do not have the ability to talk and interact, and psychologically, as well as physically, assist patients. No wonder nurses have been leaving the profession in droves. One of the main motivating factors that got them into the profession in the first place is now being denied to them.

Another issue of health services is that planning for the new Busselton hospital will now be at least three years late, if it starts at all in this term of government. In 2000 I made representation to the then Minister for Health, the member for Darling Range. I was told that the moneys that were about to be spent on Busselton District Hospital would allow it to continue for maybe three more years to provide efficient and competent hospital services. I was told again in 2001, by the new then Minister for Health, that planning for a new or upgraded hospital would begin at any tick of the clock. It is now almost three and a half years since the Gallop Labor Government was elected. To the best of my knowledge, no assessment has been made of the needs of Busselton District Hospital. Even though I have asked for things to be done, I keep being told that it will happen and that I must be patient. Unfortunately, the Shire of Busselton is still the fastest growing municipal area in Western Australia. Although it has dropped from being first to being the second fastest-growing area in Australia, it is clearly a shire under significant pressure. The hospital is only just coping with the pressures placed on it at certain times of the year.

There is also the question of whether the Kevin Cullen Community Health and Development Centre needs to be bulldozed and built somewhere else. I have been receiving mixed reports about it from people in my electorate. I am told that there is a multimillion dollar unmet maintenance program, for which funding has not yet been provided. That applies to both the hospital and the community health centre. If the significant dollars needed for the community health centre capital upgrade are not available over the next few years, an entirely new health centre will be needed. It disappoints me that some money is not provided to at least make the centre presentable, acceptable and workable in the interim while awaiting final decisions.

I continue to be frustrated because of the lack of adequate staffing levels in the South West Mental Health Service. Bunbury Regional Hospital has a dedicated psychiatric ward. I have been given all sorts of excuses over the past two or three years. I have been told that it is very difficult to find psychiatrists. It is, but I am not sure what sort of effort has been put into trying to find the right people. I have been told that it is very difficult to attract specialist psychiatric nurses to Bunbury. I am sure that is a fair statement, but nonetheless Bunbury is an area that desperately needs psychiatrists and psychiatric nurses. They are not being employed at staffing levels that enable the beds in that ward to be opened. I know of cases in which psychiatric patients who need to be involuntarily admitted to a psychiatric ward are taken to Perth because the staffing levels at Bunbury are inadequate.

Turning to the Water Corporation aspect of the budget, deep sewerage at one stage looked like being extended to virtually all of the Busselton and Dunsborough town sites by about 2004-05. However, when the Gallop Government came to power, if I may approximate, the whole program basically was cut in half. We were told that half as much work would be done each year, thereby doubling the lead time for the project. To the best of my knowledge, deep sewerage will now not be made available throughout the coastal low lying areas of the Busselton and Dunsborough town sites until 2009 or thereabouts. I will talk about that problem later on, because it has implications for both the way in which this budget fails to deliver to many Busselton people and the environment. Nutrients and other pollutants from septic tanks in a near-coastal sand-dune environment very quickly end up entering the nearby marine waters - in this case Geographe Bay. From the 1940s to the 1970s, there was a history of major seagrass degradation. The nutrients from farmland and septic tanks are likely to have been the cause of that major degradation.

I have been a regular complainant about the lack of professionalism of and commitment by Western Power to do things that I believe are absolutely essential. The Busselton community, as well as the communities of Dunsborough, Eagle Bay and Yallingup, have reported to me over the past year or so that there have been continuing and frequent power outages. They might be blackouts or brownouts. Nonetheless, there are power flicks, power surges and significant other problems that do not seem to get much better. One reason the quality of the power supply in Busselton is so poor is that the Busselton town site happens to be home to the rare and endangered ringtail possum, as well as the brush-tailed possum, which is more widespread. I am told time and again by Western Power that the reason for many of these outages is that possums climb the power poles and electrocute themselves. That may be true. If so, it has been true for so many years that one would have expected Western Power to have done something to alleviate that problem. I searched the Internet on this issue after Mr Billy Baldock was killed in a fire that was started, as I understand it, because a possum climbed a power pole east of Bridgetown. Mr Baldock was caught in the ensuing fire. The blame for that fire was laid not so much at the feet of Western Power but at the feet of this somewhat innocent possum that was allowed to climb this power pole. It was because of that accident that I searched on Google using the words "possum guard" or "animal guards". Right around the world animal guards have been designed and put in place on power systems for decades. These systems stop animals from climbing power poles, electrocuting themselves and causing power outages. It is an easy solution that is relatively cheap to implement, yet Western Power is still only conducting evaluation trials on a relatively small number of power poles within the Busselton town site. I am afraid that I find this to be unacceptable.

I will raise a grievance with the Minister for Education and Training tomorrow, so I will briefly outline that the student population of Dunsborough is rapidly increasing. The town site of Dunsborough will require a new primary school, probably as early as 2008 and certainly no later than 2010. Vasse Primary School is a most wonderful primary school. I remind members that Queen Elizabeth II visited Vasse Primary School some three years ago when she was in the south west. It was the only school she visited, and she did so because of its older-style buildings and the quality of the education environment at that school. The difficulty, however, is that Vasse Primary School is located in an area adjacent to very rapid urban growth. Some new subdivisions are coming on stream to the north of it. Not one house has been built in one of these subdivisions, yet a parent has already enrolled a child at Vasse Primary School for next year, because as soon as that family gets title to the land they will build on that block, and they want their child to go to Vasse Primary School. Vasse Primary School will also be surrounded by new urban development that will eventually hold 7 000 people. That is the Vasse Newtown development. I understand that the Department of Education and Training has not yet started the process of trying to determine the best way of meeting the primary school needs of the Vasse Newtown area, in addition to the fast-growing urban areas to the north and north east of the existing Vasse Primary School.

Anyone who is interested in education issues will know that Busselton Senior High School is in great disrepair. It has so many transportables that it is turning parents and children off coming to that school. A local area education planning recommendation is currently before the minister, which I will talk to him about in this place tomorrow. Something desperately needs to be done with secondary schooling in the Busselton area. West Busselton Primary School, which has experienced a reduction in student numbers because of the opening of the Geographe Primary School, still does not have a dedicated canteen, music room or art room. It is deficient in a number of other ways. I hope that over the coming years the Department of Education and Training will find appropriate funding for all those schools in my electorate.

I turn briefly to the portfolio held by the Minister for Community Development. I have been trying to emphasise to the minister a particular issue on which urgent action is needed. It relates to the provision of emergency or crisis accommodation within the Busselton town site for victims of sexual or domestic violence. I understand that the Government last year finally received a report on homelessness in the State, which showed that Busselton was the number one, or close to it, community that needed special accommodation for people who are homeless. I also understand that the Department for Community Development has an internal listing of the communities in which crisis and emergency accommodation with full-time support is needed. Number one or two on the list is Busselton. Busselton has been on that list for three, four or five years, yet in spite of trying to put pressure on the previous Government and despite three and a half years of asking this Government, there has been no funding allocation for Busselton via the federal Government's opportunities for supported accommodation funding. It is the State Government that allocates or decides where that money will go, and nothing has happened in that regard.

Having criticised the Government for that, I will thank journalist Eloise Dortch from *The West Australian*. Article after article in *The West Australian* and other forms of media have told how Busselton is a wonderful place in which to live and how it provides a seachange opportunity for anyone who wants to move from big, old, dirty, ugly, crowded Perth to the safe, wonderful environment of Busselton - I might also include Mandurah, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr D.A. Templeman) -

Mr M.P. Murray: And Collie.

Mr B.K. MASTERS: And Collie, of course. After article after article in the media about how wonderful it is to move down south, I was finally able to convince this journalist that a significant proportion of the people who move to the south west - to not just my electorate but also those of the members for Warren-Blackwood, Mitchell and Bunbury - are like any other people in Western Australia and have their fair share of problems. The end result is that many services and community infrastructure projects are needed in the south west. I was very pleased, therefore, to see that *The West Australian* last Saturday ran three very good articles about the fact that although Busselton may be an attractive place in which to live in many respects, it has its fair share of problems. I hope that the Government will look at those articles and make sure that we get some funding. This budget has missed out my area in that regard. Perhaps the situation will be different under a future Government.

As I will be saying shortly, there has been a significant and worthwhile improvement in the funding for the Department of Conservation and Land Management. I congratulate the Government on that. Nonetheless, in places like the south west corner of my electorate, even a four or five per cent increase in funding is still not enough. For example, the Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park extends for some 120 kilometres from Cape Naturaliste in the north to Cape Leeuwin in the south, yet fox baiting occurs only in the southern area around the Boranup forest. The financial implications of undertaking fox baiting to control foxes, and feral cats to a lesser degree, in the rest of the park make it too difficult, so it does not happen. While I am talking about local environmental issues, I must also say that I have been very disappointed that the Busselton office of the Department of Conservation and Land Management has not been able to fill certain positions that have been vacant for two or three years. People have not wanted to explain the reasons for that to me. That situation is unacceptable. I know that people of high quality have left the department because of

the uncertainties associated with the positions for which they have applied but for which they have been told applications will again be called. We do not know why.

I turn now to planning and infrastructure. A very big issue in that area continues to be coastal erosion. As I have been warning for some four or five years, the coastal erosion problem at places like Siesta Park and at the beachfront in front of most of urban Busselton has now extended and compounded into a problem of coastal erosion and seagrass accumulation in front of the Port Geographe development. I will not go into detail on that matter. However, I did say in this place only a couple of months ago that, in my view, if the current plan that has been ticked off on by the Department of Environmental Protection, the Department of Planning and Infrastructure, the developer, Axiom Properties Limited, and the shire, does not work - and we will know that this time next year - the only workable or credible solution to that coastal erosion problem at Port Geographe may almost require that the State Government put in between \$2 million and \$2.5 million of taxpayers' funds to rebuild the beach with a large volume of sand in the order of 150 000 or 200 000 cubic metres. It may also require that the Government assist the developer to buy a dredge that will be based at the Port Geographe marina full-time so that the problem of coastal erosion and the shoaling of sand and seagrass within the harbour mouth can be dealt with on an ongoing basis. I hasten to add that it would need to be an electric dredge, because it has been proved that a diesel-powered dredge that close to housing creates a significant noise and smell problem, so money would need to be made available for that electric dredge.

A Main Roads WA issue that again falls under the responsibility of the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure relates to the Dalyellup area. That is now the fastest growing area in the south west of Western Australia. There is 17 per cent population growth within the Shire of Capel, and almost all of it is within the Dalyellup development. There is an urgent need for a slip lane at the intersection of the main road with Bussell Highway. Also, I am sorry to say that the speed limit on that section of Bussell Highway - I think it is at the Norton Promenade-Bussell Highway intersection - must be lowered. The current speed limit of 100 kilometres an hour is far too high and too dangerous. I have seen a number of near accidents at that intersection. Significant decisions need to be made to help alleviate that problem. A final issue relating to Main Roads WA is that the section of Bussell Highway from Vasse to Margaret River suffers from twice the state average death rate and twice the state average serious accident rate. From my understanding there will not be any improvements to that section of Bussell Highway until 2005-06. I find that unacceptable.

As a final comment about the needs of my electorate, I remind the Treasurer, who unfortunately is not in the Chamber at the moment, that the Shire of Busselton is very keen to be given at peppercorn rental, or at a peppercorn sale price, the second-oldest police station-courthouse complex in the State - the one that was vacated by the Department of Justice and the Police Service some three years ago. That land obviously has a high value, but because the Shire of Busselton was never given endowment land in the same way the City of Bunbury was given endowment land, the Shire of Busselton has a very good case to argue in support of having the old police station-courthouse complex given to it free of charge.

These are some of the areas in which I believe the Busselton area in particular, and the electorate of Vasse overall, is deficient and therefore needs additional infrastructure and services expenditure. What has the budget delivered to meet all of these needs? I originally wrote down the word "zip", meaning nothing. However, on careful analysis of the budget papers, there are actually two new spending initiatives for Busselton. The first is \$1 million for the purchase of land for a new school site. I presume that this is to do with the middle school proposal that is subject to the local area education plan. I commend the Government for that. That is fantastic. The second is an unspecified amount of expenditure by Western Power to improve power supply facilities in the Ludlow area, which in turn will improve the power supplies for Busselton. Busselton is the fastest growing municipal area in Western Australia, and it has been in ongoing need of government assistance for all of the seven years that I have been a member of this Parliament, yet it will get only two new spending initiatives.

That can be compared with the city of Bunbury, which is on the northern boundary of my electorate. What will Bunbury get? Of course it is no surprise that Bunbury is a marginal seat. Bunbury will get seven new spending initiatives: a Bunbury community house; a Bunbury heritage museum; a Bunbury region capital works program that will be implemented by the South West Development Commission; the development of an action plan for renewal of the Bunbury central business district area; assistance with the redevelopment of the Bunbury outer harbour; another \$2.4 million for the Bunbury Back Beach project; and another \$200 000 for capital works of various types, including capping of the Koombana Bay groyne. The bottom line is that Bunbury, being a marginal seat, gets a heap of government funding in this budget. However, Busselton, in theory because it is a safe conservative seat, gets virtually nothing. I am pleased to say that Busselton, meaning the seat of Vasse, is now a marginal seat. It might still be a conservative seat, but it will now be a marginal seat to be won by either the Independent Liberal who is standing before members tonight or the candidate who has been endorsed by the Liberal Party. Recognising that the seat of Vasse is now a marginal seat, I would have thought a lot more expenditure would have been made available in this budget for my electorate. However, those funding initiatives have not come through, and I therefore express my disappointment at that.

More generally, I applaud the Government for having frozen the prices of water, sewerage, electricity and public transport. They will effectively be reductions in prices when we take inflation into account. Those reductions will be

appreciated by a significant proportion of the community. However, I point out to members that water in the Busselton area is supplied by the Busselton Water Board. My understanding is that the Government's freeze on water charges does not apply to the private instrumentalities of the Busselton Water Board and the Bunbury Water Board, known as Aqwest. Sewerage charges may well have been frozen. However, my understanding is that more than 40 per cent of Busselton home sites and businesses are still not connected to deep sewerage and cannot be connected because there is no sewerage line near them. Therefore, the end result is that for 40 per cent, or more, of my constituents, a freezing of sewerage rates will make absolutely no difference at all. Electricity prices may well have been frozen, but I can tell members that people in my electorate would be happy to spend an extra three or four per cent on their electricity charges if only they could get reliable electricity supplies. They cannot get that, as I pointed out earlier.

Finally, a freeze on public transport prices is wonderful. The only problem is that my electorate does not have particularly good public transport facilities; therefore, my constituents will not benefit all that much. I praise the Government for its decision to give a rebate on stamp duty for first home buyers. That is a worthwhile initiative. However, I did receive a telephone call from an invalid pensioner in Dunsborough. He quite rightly pointed out that in Dunsborough the median house price is so high that people virtually cannot find a house that costs less than the \$220 000 threshold level that the Government has set for the 100 per cent reduction in stamp duty for first home buyers. Even when we take into account the sliding scale for rebates up to \$330 000, the majority of people who live in communities like Dunsborough will not be able to benefit from the rebate should they be first home buyers. On one hand the Government can say how wonderful it is that people in Dunsborough and Busselton can live in houses that are so valuable, but on the other hand these are people who, as first home buyers, are having significant trouble borrowing the money, saving the deposit and doing all the things that are needed to get into their first home. The invalid pensioner who phoned me, who is married with children, advised me that his financial position is such that he would need a full rebate of stamp duty if he were ever to fulfil his dream of buying his first home in my electorate. While I praise the Government for its rebate on stamp duty, in my electorate it will not be used to the extent to which it would otherwise be used.

All in all, the budget implications for me are not at all bright or positive. I find it disappointing that the big picture in the state budget shows that state debt has blown out to that magic figure of 47 per cent. In other words, the Treasurer has borrowed right up to the hilt; he cannot borrow another cent. That means that, whether there is a change of Government at the next election or not, the next Government will be constrained in its ability to borrow money for the various purposes that would need to be funded by borrowings. Why has this massive increase in borrowing occurred? I think the figure is about \$1.5 billion. The answer is that there has been a misdirection of funds into the southern rail line. I am still quite happy to support the southern rail line on the Kenwick route, but the rail line on its present route will significantly disadvantage all those people currently using the bus lane on the freeway. More importantly, however, planning opportunities are provided by new rail lines in greenfields areas. My understanding is that this Government is not taking up all those opportunities because it wanted a rail line different from that of the previous Government. It did not matter whether it was better or not; it just had to be different, so it could be called the Gallop Government railway, rather than the Court Government railway. If that story is true, this Government deserves to be criticised for having made a \$1.4 billion or \$1.5 billion public capital investment decision on the basis of not much more than ego. I still believe that the Kenwick route is the best route. It would have upgraded the Armadale line at the same time and provided some very significant public transport benefits to everyone living in the south east corridor. Everyone living in the south west corridor and Rockingham and Mandurah would have benefited as well, and there would have been planning benefits. I will provide one specific example of what I mean by a planning benefit. If a rail station is built in a greenfields area, planning concessions can be given to land developers so that instead of having low or even medium density housing they can have medium to high density housing, so that there is a greater catchment population living within walking or cycling distance of that train station. The greater the population living around that train station, the more people will be using public transport, and therefore the operating deficit - there will never be a profit with public transport - will be lower. As a result of moving the rail line onto the freeway, from the Mount Henry Bridge north there is simply no opportunity to build any housing on one side of the rail line or around any of the railway stations, because it is right on the Swan and Canning River system and there is no opportunity whatsoever to increase housing density and urban population, and therefore no catchment population to put passengers onto the railway line.

There are a few other little misguided or misdirected allocations of funds. One I need to mention is the \$7 million being given to one of the world's biggest corporations, namely DaimlerChrysler, for a two-year fuel cell bus trial here in Perth. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure knows that I am a very strong supporter of using the cleanest possible energy in Perth's bus system. I will not talk about the trip that she and I made together during the time of the previous Government, and that last night in Berlin. I do not think she needs to be embarrassed about that, and neither do I for that matter.

Mr M.P. Whitely: I remember Berlin!

Mr B.K. MASTERS: I wish I did not remember Berlin! Nonetheless, \$7 million is going as a subsidy to one of the world's biggest corporations. It will be making a profit out of its fuel cell buses once it actually gets them right. It should be paying us to bring the buses here to operate in a Mediterranean climate, to see how well the fuel cell system, including a distribution system for hydrogen gas, will work in our climate.

I will briefly talk about those areas of what used to be my shadow portfolio responsibilities. I will begin by referring to page 613 of last year's *Budget Statements*, which relates to the Swan River Trust. In those budget papers, and those of the previous two years, under the heading "Significant Issues and Trends", the incredible pressures being placed on the Swan and Canning River system and the urgent need to take action were mentioned. I will quote a few words from that section -

- The population growth in Perth . . . is causing a marked increase in:
 - pressure for residential and commercial development . . .
 - the level of recreational and commercial use of the waterways . . .
 - the potential for environmental degradation . . .
- The increasing pressure on the use of, and condition of the rivers requires a planned approach to the development . . .
- Community demands for information advice and participation . . . are also increasing. . . .
- Algal blooms . . . are prevalent . . .

Later the paragraph states that the extent and severity of these blooms is causing problems. The statement continues -

- Seasonal erosion and accretion along the foreshores together with the deterioration of existing foreshore protection is increasing the demand for corrective work . . .

Anyone who read that introduction to the Swan River Trust section of last year's *Budget Statements* would have realised that the Swan and Canning River system is in some significant crisis. However, what has happened to this year's *Budget Statements*? The section on the Swan River Trust is on page 646. Under the same section, "Significant Issues and Trends", almost all of that expression of concern and alarm has been removed. The statements have been sanitised. I am wondering whether I should accuse the Minister for the Environment of either having got her own staff to write this introductory section, or heavying the staff at the Swan River Trust to tone down the tenor of the statement that introduces the Swan River Trust's activities and issues in this year's budget. For example, instead of referring to increased pressures and other problems, the worst the *Budget Statements* refer to this year is a large and persistent algal bloom that continues to dominate the upper reaches of the river. It then goes on to refer to wonderful things, such as -

- Much has been accomplished over the past 60 years to address these issues . . .
- . . . The new legislation . . . will provide the broad framework to bring together the contributions of State agencies, local government and the community.

I do not deny that the actions the Government is proposing to protect and enhance the Swan River are welcome, because they are. However, last year's very realistic, matter-of-fact and down-to-earth summary of the problems facing the Swan and Canning River system has been replaced with a sanitised account, and the minister, I am sorry to say, is hoping that everyone will forget just how significant the problems are in the Swan and Canning River system. We are still experiencing algal blooms and significant fish deaths in the river system. In spite of that, all the urgency seems to have been removed from the Swan River Trust. I find that to be quite unfortunate.

Going through the different portfolio areas, I am pleased to see that the Department of Conservation and Land Management has received a funding increase of 4.5 per cent. That is highly commendable. However, I think it is merely a reflection of the Government's old-growth forest policy, under which a significant increase in land area will soon, one hopes, go to national parks and nature reserves. It has been long in coming but at least it is finally here. I am sorry to say that the Kings Park Board has suffered a massive decrease in funding, partly because the walkway has been completed. Last year's total budget expenditures, being the total cost of outputs and capital contributions, were \$20.4 million, which was expended in this current year. In the coming year that figure drops to \$13.5 million. It is a 25 per cent reduction or more. Considering that Kings Park is the State's most popular tourist attraction, I find that to be very unfortunate. The Department of Environment has suffered a \$5 million cut in its total expenditures. When the total cost of outputs is added to the appropriation for administered grants and the capital contributions, we end up with a reduction of about \$5 million. Even if we accept that the Mt Walton waste disposal facility is not getting the \$2.6 million that it received last year, there is still a real reduction in the environmental protection portfolio budget compared with last year. The Water and Rivers Commission, which is now part of the Department of Environment, will suffer a cut in real terms. It is worse when allowing for inflation. Last year \$61.49 million was spent in capital and operating costs. This year the figure drops to \$58.75 million.

I have almost run out of time, so I cannot go into the budget's many details as much as I would like. However, I did put out a media summary concerning what I found in the environmental portfolios. I will read into *Hansard* the last three paragraphs of my media statement. I said -

"I agree with the Greens MPs. The environment is a big loser in the state budget and recent funding announcements by environment minister Judy Edwards have been made without mentioning the cuts in other core sections of her agencies," . . .

“I hope that the Greens will tell their supporters to put Labor last on their ballot paper when we have the state election next February.”

“Premier Gallop talks about having saved our old growth forests, and he has, but the rest of our environment is losing ground.”

I will speak very briefly about the science portfolio. It is almost impossible to understand. I am very pleased that I will be able to grill the Premier next week during the estimates hearings. The Government has promised a significant spending allocation in the field of science. However, the result is that, because there are no forward estimate details provided beyond the year after next, it is impossible to tell whether there is an increase, a decrease or a maintenance of the status quo over the next four to five years in the funding for science. In my media release about that I stated -

On available data, the science and innovation portfolio may have had a cut of up to \$16 million, but who knows? It may be less, it may be more, but it's impossible to work out.

In conclusion, as always, the budget has good and bad points. I will not repeat them. Overall, out of a score of 10 my assessment of the Treasurer's latest budget is 5.5. It is a pass but he can do significantly better. However, like me, he has run out of time.

MR T.K. WALDRON (Wagin) [10.04 pm]: It is incredible that I am standing here tonight to give my fourth budget reply speech. Like many members who first came to the Parliament in 2001, it seems like yesterday that we were giving our first speeches. I will kick off tonight by congratulating the Government on removing the stamp duty for first home buyers to the levels stated in the budget. I think it is a positive step and it is something that I support. I also welcome the five per cent reduction in stamp duty for others and the freeze on charges for power and water. However, I must say that stamp duty and charges have risen significantly in the past three years. While the measures will help, overall they are not as good as they sound.

As I said, this is my fourth budget reply speech. I have always focused on the inequities in country areas. I will focus this year on inequities in inland country areas of the State. One of the reasons I am in this place is those inequities. I used to witness them when I lived and worked in Perth for a period. Most of my work took me to the country, where I spent the majority of my life. I personally saw the inequities being brought home first-hand. That is one of the reasons I got involved - to try to help close the gap. Country people do not expect everything that is in the city. Generally, country people are very reasonable and fair. However, the gap seems to be getting wider and that concerns me. I think it is fair enough to ask why the gap is not being closed when we come to budget allocations, infrastructure and services to country areas, particularly inland areas. I note that the member for Merredin commented last night that wheat exports alone injected \$3 billion into the economy. Country areas play a very important part.

My electorate of Wagin did not get much from this budget. The press release for the great southern shows only Albany, Albany, Albany. The member for Albany confirmed that tonight when he went through the list of what is happening there. I have no problems with that because Albany is a major centre and a great place. It services a lot of the great southern. However, it seems that the imbalance has gone up. The *Budget Overview* lists five things for the great southern. Four of them relate directly to Albany. However, there is a wind-diesel project at Bremer Bay, which is fantastic. There is a message. I think country people are pretty smart about that. I heard Labor members talk about the federal budget yesterday. They cannot have it both ways.

I also want to concentrate on projects that were started by the previous Government but left unfinished. Stage 2 of the Narrogin link road is still unfinished after three years. The road goes nowhere. Money already spent has been wasted. The final stage of the Narrogin Regional Hospital is yet to be completed. The oil mallee plant deserves to be finished. I am sure members opposite will agree that for the sake of \$600 000 it should be finished. I will concentrate more on that later.

A lot of new things in my region have been established over the past few years but they have all been achieved with money from the previous Government. I am referring to the Narrogin hospital, the Wickiepin health centre, the Kukerin health centre, the Kojonup health centre, the Narrogin residential college, Katanning Senior High School, the Narrogin recreation centre and the link road stage 1 etc. The real emphasis in this budget has been on the metropolitan and major coastal centres, the Pilbara and the Kimberley. Inland country Western Australia in the south west land division misses out again. People in the area feel ignored, and it affects their confidence; it affects the whole area. If the Labor Government is back in power after the next election, I urge it to take a good look at this because it is necessary. Whichever Government is in power next time will have to address some of these issues.

I now want to refer to some of those issues. I will start with power, which is a huge problem right across WA, including the outer areas of the metropolitan area. I acknowledge the allocation of \$418.6 million in the budget to deal with power. It is a big increase and a step in the right direction and I welcome it. However, to where will that allocation be delivered? The member for Merredin spoke extensively in his speech last night about the budget allocation of \$12 million for the whole wheatbelt area; that is just not enough. The wheatbelt and other areas towards the edges of the network incur many of the major power problems. The Government must address those problems and an allocation of \$12 million to do that is just not enough. There appears to be no plan to fix the network in the next few years. I

blame all Governments of the past 20 years for running down the network. We need a blueprint plan to prioritise the problems and fix the network. There is no plan. This Government is just throwing money where it thinks it should go at the moment. Big ticket items, such as transmission and infrastructure, appear to be serving the populous coastal areas, when struggling inland areas really need attention. The main problems are reliability and safety of the network.

I want to talk a bit about safety on powerlines because it is a real issue. I note that I highlighted safety issues in my speech last year on the budget debate. I talked about the fire at Darkan that occurred on a really bad day of weather. That fire would have been catastrophic but for the great effort by firefighters and a fair bit of luck that day. I warned last year about the danger to life that a fire such as that posed. Unfortunately, this year a fire caused by the malfunction of a pole occurred at Tenterden, which resulted in the loss of life. This issue should not be taken lightly. The Government has taken the issue on board in the overall budget, but priority must be given to some of these country areas. The Government must have a plan of key priorities, it must follow that plan and it must get these issues fixed as soon as possible. Last night the member for Merredin referred to some of the power problems that are occurring right now. Just today some people from Woodanilling and Katanning in my electorate came to Parliament last Sunday. The power in many of their homes was out for seven hours. That is just not good enough. We need to get serious and fix it. There are major problems in my electorate with powerlines south and east of Kojonup and Katanning, in Yealering, Darkan and the eastern areas of the Great Southern Highway.

I return to the Narrogin oil mallee plant, which I have mentioned quite a few times in this place. It is now getting to a critical stage. I am prepared to wait another two to three weeks but then the Government must get serious with it. It can be fixed for an amount of \$600 000 and be up and running to proof of concept stage, thereby not wasting the \$9.3 million of taxpayers' money that has already been spent on it. I ask members to bear in mind that this pilot plant is about producing power, carbon and oil. The planting of oil mallee trees will assist the environment, thus helping to address the great problem of salinity. For the sake of \$600 000, it is a win-win project that we must get on with. I know that government members agree and I ask them to ask the Treasurer again to get this project happening.

In concluding my comments on Western Power, I congratulate Western Power line men - the guys on the ground. They cop a lot of flak from the public when the public is upset with Western Power. Those guys do the best they can. I know some of them quite well and I know they get exasperated at times when they want more help to deliver their services better. The problem is that as Western Power loses skilled workers, it takes a fair while to replace them and the skills. We need to take that into account.

Mr J.N. Hyde: The carbon oil mallee plant we are pushing very hard on. It has got to be an absolute winner.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Good. Let us just get it over the line together.

Mr J.N. Hyde: Your side may have got the technology wrong originally. The Labor Government has got to come in to fix it.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: That is not right. It is a pilot program that, it was found, needed the use of gas, which resulted in more safety issues. That caused a problem. However, I do not want to get into that debate tonight, as I do not have time. However, I will have a chat with the member for Perth about it later.

Mr J.N. Hyde: We are always chatting. However, it has worked everywhere else in the world, if you get it right up front.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I will talk to the member for Perth later about that.

Mr J.N. Hyde: Thanks for your assistance.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: No worries; I am always happy to help.

I want to talk about road funding. Roads are critical to country WA because we rely on our roads for everything. We travel great distances. Country members such as the members for Collie and Eyre travel miles in their work, as do most people in country WA. Roads are critical for business, schooling, health access and for social and everyday lives. We cannot ignore country roads. Unfortunately, they have been ignored a great deal for three and a half years.

I acknowledge some black spot funding in my area that I welcome. Three or four projects in my area have been funded, such as the Collie Lake King and 129 Gate Roads intersection, the \$24 000 allocation in Wagin and also the widening of the Piesseville Road intersection off Albany Highway. Also, one overtaking lane is being provided on the Albany Highway, which I welcome. It is terrific. However, the problem is that only 48 Main Roads projects are in the budget this year, which is a reduction from 110 projects. Also, \$340 million is to be spent on six projects in the Perth south east corridor. That is fine. We need money to be spent there as well; however, the regional road allocation is still only at \$23 million in direct grants and this figure was \$45.5 million only two years ago. That drop has a great effect on local roads that all local people must use.

At the local government conference last year, the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure met local governments from our region on this issue. The minister said that she would try to get the budget increased. It has not happened. Country people are thankful for the federal Government's roads to recovery program, as the reality is that this is keeping many shire roads going. Focus on that area is needed.

I mention a couple of important projects. The completion of the Narrogin link road is essential. I hope the minister will complete the next stage, which is critical. It has four stages. Stage one was undertaken by the previous Government, but the project has been going nowhere for the past three years. People would appreciate the provision of stage two. More passing lanes are needed on Albany Highway, which has been the forward thinking for some time. One passing lane is provided this year, but half a dozen should be in the budget. More money is needed for local roads. I also mention the Bridgetown to Donnybrook road. The member for Warren-Blackwood travels that road more than anyone. I do not use it a lot, but I know it needs attention.

I support road safety. I agree with the road safety education programs and promotions etc. I have been involved with them through football, and they are great and must be continued. We all acknowledge what happens on our roads, and we talk about road deaths, which are terrible. However, road trauma injuries affect families on an ongoing basis. Work is being done to improve that situation but road funding is lacking. Increases in traffic and heavy vehicle use on some roads make them very dangerous, and this will cause accidents.

I move next to tourism. I could not believe that this budget has a reduced allocation for tourism at this time. Tourism has had many problems in the past few years with world events and pilot strikes etc. This provides a great opportunity for Australia, particularly Western Australia, to capitalise on that situation by promoting and advancing our tourism. Cutting the tourism budget sends the wrong message, particularly to the many volunteers throughout country WA trying to make tourism work. Extra funding and focus is critical to the expanding industry. Rural WA needs to attract new industry to communities to build our towns. It is easy to say that, but hard to get the new industry. Tourism is an industry that is already in place. We need to help it grow and to enhance it and capitalise on it. I expected an increase in the tourism budget, and for the Government to focus on this area. It is an opportunity lost this year. The Premier talks a lot about tourism and makes quite a big noise about it, but he is not delivering. People have asked what there is to see in my region. There are many attractions, such as the developing wineries, farm stays, the Wagin historical village and giant ram, and the Dryandra Forest in which the night viewing area called Barna Mia has been established and which the minister opened last year. It is a fantastic tourist attraction. There is also the Kodja Place Interpretive Centre, which promotes cultural awareness of the various cultures of the Kojonup region; the Katanning Old Flour Mill; Police Pools in Katanning; the Williams Woolshed on Albany Highway; and the Facey Homestead in Wickiepin. I could go on and on listing them; there are a heap of tourism attractions in my electorate. However, we need financial and professional assistance to promote them and help link the tourist attractions. I mention the Heartlands tourism group, which is working well with all our local tourist bodies in each shire and town. Our local shires also have formed groups to work together to link tourism in our area. However, we need more assistance and coordination. We all pride ourselves on what a great State this is. Like most people, I love this place. We should spend more on tourism because it is an industry that already exists that is of great benefit to the State and the people in it.

I refer now to policing, which is extremely important. I have done quite a bit of work recently in that area in my electorate and in other parts of the country. I acknowledge the increase in the budget to recruit 75 extra police, although with attrition and retirement, at best, police numbers are being held; they are not actually increasing. In country Western Australia there are approximately 56 unfilled police positions. That does not bode well for law and order or crime prevention in country communities. This budget does not contain anything - I was hoping for something - to upgrade the police stations, particularly at Williams, Narrogin, Jurien Bay etc. With the minister's permission, the National Party has been touring country police stations. I toured the Williams, Narrogin, Kojonup and Wagin Police Stations. They have some problems. I have listed these problems before, but the occupational safety and health issues in these stations are huge. I think the member for Churchlands referred earlier to the fact that officers at Wembley Police Station were sharing facilities with offenders. At Williams, officers eat from the same table on which they take people's fingerprints and do blood tests because they have nowhere else to eat their lunch. The sergeant in charge's office is an old store room, which is not much bigger than the seats in front of me. It is not good enough. We need to do something about those stations. The Western Australian Police Union supports the community in this request. We need to do something about safe holding cells in the country. Only 25 per cent of those cells are safe and can be utilised. Only a certain number of police officers man country stations, and they are required to watch people when they are in the cells. That takes them away from other duties. Prisoners cannot be kept in those stations overnight, so two police officers must take them to Perth, Albany or wherever they must go. That travel can involve half to three quarters of a day, which means those officers are not at the stations. Police resources are being wasted in that way. If some of the cells could be strategically upgraded, that would reduce the burden on our already overtaxed police in the country.

In light of the 56 unfilled police positions, housing is a real issue. We must be able to provide a policeman who is posted with his wife and two children to a country area with a reasonable level of housing. Drugs are also a big issue. It would be terrific if we had a greater police presence so that more focused operations could be undertaken. However, I congratulate the police. They have had some very successful raids in Narrogin and Katanning where some real problems have emerged. I think they are doing a terrific job and I congratulate them, particularly Superintendent John Watson, whom the member for Albany has already acknowledged. He is doing a fantastic job. I would also like to acknowledge Sergeant Brian Wilkinson, who has just left Katanning and gone to Busselton. He will do a great job

there. In his two and a half years in Katanning, he got the crime and burglary rate down by around 50 per cent. He and his staff did a fantastic job and I thank him for the work he did there.

The magistrates circuit in my region has been cut, which is a real issue. We have taken it up with the Chief Magistrate Steven Heath. I do not know whether we will get back some of those circuits but it does cause real problems, particularly for those people who now have to travel to Narrogin. It is a long way for a lot of people from Corrigin, Wagin or Pingelly where the courts used to be held. Witnesses also have to travel, which is a real impost. Some people are choosing not to travel and therefore breaking bail, for which they can end up going to jail. This matter has been brought to my attention more and more by the local solicitors in our area. It is sad to see Safer WA go. However, it has gone and we have to get on with life. Some of our Safer WA committees have now formed into local committees such as the Safer Kojonup committee, and I am sure they will do a great job.

As the National Party spokesman for education, I want to concentrate on that topic a little tonight. There is a small budget increase of around about three per cent in education. That is a fair sort of increase, but I am concerned about the natural growth in schools of about 1.5 per cent and whether we are actually keeping up with that. The budget contains a lot of interesting initiatives, mainly for the minister's favourite projects. However, to be fair to country schools, they miss out, particularly in relation to capital works. Capital works is a real issue in country schools. Very little of the \$151.8 million in capital works funding has been made available to country schools, which is disappointing. The Government identified a number of significant issues and trends that will place teachers under greater pressure and heighten the expectation of government schools. Yet, there is little by way of new initiatives to support these challenges. In fact, the last year's certified agreement, the way that was handled and the failure to address key issues raised by the State School Teachers Union of WA suggest that we may be in for more conflict in the future as the expectations on our teachers rise and so too do demands for better work conditions. Whichever party is in government after the next election will need to be prepared to deal with these issues. School maintenance is a real issue in my area, having had our local Narrogin district budget cut last year by some \$200 000. I acknowledge the \$7 million one-off payment this year to assist, which helped, but only with basic things. There is no way that we are catching up. It is a bit like a farmer. If he does two or three kilometres of fencing every year, he can keep up with the maintenance issue on his farm with regard to fencing. However, if he does not do any fencing for 15 years, bang, he has a huge problem. I am concerned that that is happening to the schools in my region.

Yesterday, we were lucky to have the Minister for Education and Training and Paul Albert, Director General of the Department of Education and Training, look at the design and technology centre at the Narrogin Senior High School, which is really in an atrocious condition. We have equipment there from the early 1900s that came from the old Fremantle technical school. I think they both agreed that that needs attention, and I am hoping something will come of that. The Narrogin Agricultural College needs a new residential wing. It is a great agricultural college that has good facilities other than that. It is doing a fantastic job, and I think the minister who saw it understands that. I noticed that the member for Greenough talked about Kalbarri District High School. I am travelling to Kalbarri next Friday to look at that school because it has real issues, which I have written to the minister about.

I want to highlight a letter from the Dumbleyung Primary School parents and citizens association written by Tom Pearce, who is its president. Members may remember Tom Pearce; he was a great Claremont footballer who played in the premierships side in the 1980s.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

Mr T.K. Waldron: This letter is from Tommy, who the member for Albany would know is a great and reasonable bloke. The letter states -

Our children are currently being educated in an unsafe surrounding because of the state of our school grounds. The school grounds has many areas of cement slab paving which is uneven and unsafe and there is inadequate disabled access to the school.

If this was a workplace, and the children the employees I feel sure that it would be closed until the repairs are done as there would be unions up in arms and work safe involved but alas it is only a primary school in a small country town without much say.

He goes onto talk about how much money the P&C association spent on the school building undercover areas and new playgrounds - it spent \$5 000 to \$10 000. The P&C has identified other areas in which it needs to do more. More undercover area is required, and the P&C will provide that. I am happy for the Hansard reporters to have that letter. I believe it sets out a real problem. This is from a top fellow who would not write that on behalf of his P&C unless it were true. I have with me some photos that show that the paths in the school need attention.

Mr J.J.M. Bowler: Are you happy to table them?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I am happy to table them, as long as I get a copy back. I do not want to lose those photographs that the P&C took.

I want to move on to school retention rates, which the minister talks about a lot. The Government has identified the retention rates of 15 to 19-year-olds as a major issue in education. I do not think any of us would argue or disagree with

that principle. I certainly do not. I support that principle. However, I am concerned about the impact this may have on children in country Western Australia, particularly in the smaller areas with sparsely scattered groups of children, who historically have had more limited access to government services and facilities.

Yesterday we had a forum about raising the compulsory school leaving age to 17. It was a terrific day. The minister expressed the importance of design and technology areas as part of that plan. I looked at what we have at Narrogin, and it all fell into place very nicely. That was a good part of the day. I have an open mind about raising the compulsory leaving age. It would be great if we could keep our children in education of some sort. That includes working and having training on the job, apprenticeships, traineeships and TAFE courses etc. However, in country WA, we must be realistic. If we are to do this, we must have resources in place. I am talking about money, facilities and teachers, and business and industry supporting it, because, without that, we will not be able to deliver it. It is a great idea, but we must be able to deliver it.

In our small country towns, the issues of transport and accommodation will become an absolute reality when children are kept in education until they are 17. The issue of information technology will play a part in enabling us to do it. I will watch the results of the forums with great interest. It was a very positive forum yesterday. The issues that I am raising are the issues that the people are raising. The minister, or whoever wants to introduce this measure in the future, will need to make sure that all those things are in place before it is introduced. We do not want to find ourselves in a situation in which we cannot deliver it because we do not have the resources or the facilities. The public will lose confidence in it, it will fall in a hole, and that will put it back another 20 years. Let us make sure we have the resources to deliver it.

We have spoken in this place about relocating dysfunctional families to country towns. People have said that they do not want that to happen. I believe that it is okay if the services are there to support the families. At the end of the day, the families must be supported. It is no good dumping people with problems in Wyalkatchem, Kojonup, Newdegate or wherever if there are no services or resources there for them. The issue is the same with education.

I want to talk about incentives for teachers, because that is very important. I have raised with the minister in a grievance and in a question the issue of permanency incentives in country WA. He has agreed that we should have them. In fact, he said that it is a great idea; why did he not think of it; let us do it. However, it still has not happened. I believe that the minister might be running into problems with the Department of Education and Training, or perhaps he just has not got around to it. I will raise that matter with the minister again, because that is a key way in which we can attract teachers to the country.

Professional development in education is critical and costly. We need to have more professional development in the country regions. We must utilise our schools. We have been talking about utilising our schools for students by raising the compulsory leaving age to 17. Let us utilise the district offices and the professional people in country WA to deliver more professional development locally. More teachers will then undertake that professional development, and it will take the pressure off school budgets. I urge the minister to do that.

The issue of offering wider subject selection always arises in country WA. We must have a more flexible staffing formula to allow that to happen. There is some flexibility, but greater flexibility needs to be applied. If the compulsory school leaving age is lifted to 17 years, we will have to do it. The minister agreed with that yesterday at the forum. We will have to provide flexibility to have people able to deliver the policy. We need it now, particularly in some of our district high schools, but we must not get ahead of ourselves. I urge the minister to address that.

Another initiative in education is the increased use of information technology in schools. It provides the ideal opportunity for country students to gain access to subjects and information that may not otherwise be available. However, I would be very concerned to see this technology replacing a commitment from the Government to ensure that country schools are fully and adequately staffed. The issue of the cost and time involved in information technology maintenance remains unsolved. We must work together on staffing and the use of information technology. I must get off the subject of education or I will run out of time.

Mr D.A. Templeman: It is a very good speech. I am very impressed.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I thank the member. I am still going. I want to get onto the subject of agriculture, but I am glad the member is impressed. I have often said that I am a positive person. I think I have been quite positive about the budget as well as pointing out some obvious problems with it.

The budget for the Department of Agriculture has a small increase, but the real concern is the staff cuts. Any further staff cuts would be critical for agriculture, because during the past two years there have been substantial staff cuts. The staff in the Department of Agriculture cannot deliver the required advice and assistance to farmers, so they are not able to fulfil their proper role. The real threat applies to the control of vermin and noxious weeds, particularly dogs in the east, skeleton weed and, in my electorate over the past two years, more break-outs of footrot, ovine Johnes disease and bedstraw, which has never been seen in my electorate before and is a really critical issue. The Department of Agriculture staff who are trying to keep it under control, such as Graham Blacklock from Katanning and John Glauert from Albany, do a tremendous job. I have a real concern that we will see more of it happening. It is a real worry. I

would urge the Government to do something about staffing in the Department of Agriculture, remembering that agriculture is a major industry in this State and a very important one. It earned \$3 billion from the wheat crop alone this year, so the figures are substantial. There is a shift towards research and development through universities, which is fine, but we must make sure that we keep control of the agriculture budget, otherwise we will run into problems.

I will turn to health, because the clock keeps ticking. Once again being very positive, I welcome the \$178 million extra in the health budget, which is substantial. It will obviously be of great assistance. However, we must ask where it is going. From what we have seen in the past years and from what I can find in the budget, not much appears to be going to inland country Western Australia. Obviously the hospitals in Perth require a large chunk of the budget, but let us make sure that its distribution is fair and equitable. The real problem that is being experienced in country Western Australia is the diminishing role and services of our country hospitals. I want to refer to three in my electorate. They are in the towns of Dumbleyung, Wagin and Kojonup. They are small, thriving country towns containing strong communities that do a lot for themselves. However, they are seeing their hospitals lose services and play a diminishing role in the community. We must remember that they are more than hospitals; they are multipurpose facilities that deliver a wide range of health-related services. They are very much about preventive health. Obviously preventive health is the way to go, if it can be done, because it saves money down the track. The hospitals run programs such as the well women's clinics and men's clinics. The member for Albany talked about prostate cancer. I thought he spoke really well about it and about diagnosing it. Men do have a problem with it. In some of the eastern country areas it is a macho thing, but men's clinics give them the opportunity to have their health problems addressed, which will hopefully save lives. The hospitals also run educational health programs, child health services and therapy services. I could go on and on. Taking away the local accountability of our hospitals and the local input has been to the detriment of country hospitals. Local knowledge is still absolutely vital. People rely on their local hospitals, particularly young mothers, older people and single parents. It is really important for the people in country towns to have the ability to go to their local hospital at one o'clock in the morning for reassurance when their child is sick. I was a single parent for three years and can remember taking my daughter -

Ms S.M. McHale: Were you?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: For three years I was a single parent. At that stage I had a two-year-old and a three-and-a-half-year-old daughter. I can remember taking my daughters to Kojonup hospital at one o'clock in the morning simply because I was worried. I did not know what I could or could not do. On one occasion one of my daughters was quite ill, but she was eventually okay. However, on other occasions my daughter was fine and I was probably being a panicking dad because I did not have the knowledge. At least I went home knowing that she was okay. I had a good night's sleep and she slept well - maybe with some Panadol or something. In that way, I could perform well as a parent the next day. The problem is that people say that these services can be taken away and that people can use the phone. That is okay, but there is nothing like face-to-face reassurance. Quite often people in the country know the nurses at the hospital. It is a very localised thing. Whatever we do, let us not take that away. I think we can utilise our country hospitals better. The member for Churchlands spoke about a lack of hospital beds. Let us utilise some of the beds in country hospitals.

Another issue that is raised all the time is the accident and emergency services at our hospitals. The Department of Health has asked me why I want an accident and emergency unit at Dumbleyung hospital, because it can deliver only very basic services. A few months ago there was a motorbike accident in the area. Stabilising the patient at the Dumbleyung hospital before he was transferred to the Narrogin hospital was critical. I believe there should be three levels of accident and emergency units: a high-level unit for major accidents and emergencies, and people would know to go to that unit for the really bad accidents; a mid-level unit, where people could go for the mid-level accidents; and a very basic, local unit. People would know to go to the Narrogin hospital if it was a serious accident. If it was a minor accident, they could go to their local accident and emergency centre. That is something that should be considered.

I have spoken to the Minister for Health about a consultation process on changes to hospitals. The consultation process at Dumbleyung was appalling and it got the community offside right from the start. People in the country are sensible people. If the Government takes country communities with it, and consults with those people properly, it will get somewhere. It will get the changes that may be required, and in a responsible way, and it will not have a big fracas and outrage in the community. The people of Dumbleyung were treated very poorly, and I think the minister and the Department of Health now realise that they made a bad error. I hope that when they want to make major changes in the future, they talk to the people, tell them that they are looking at this, ask for their input and work it through. That is what we did in the end and it worked out well.

I turn now to sport and recreation, because I think that sport and recreation is greatly underestimated in our community at times. The value of a fit body and mind is really important to good health. I acknowledge the \$9.2 million that has been allocated in the budget for the community sporting and recreation facilities fund. The other day the minister said that well over 50 per cent of that money goes to country WA. That is fantastic, and I welcome that. It is a great scheme. It is critical for country WA to develop the facilities to accommodate sport, which has great and crucial social benefits in WA.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I did not talk about mental health because I ran out of time, but mental health is a problem. It is crucial to keep kids active and involved in clubs and to give them leadership opportunities through sport and recreation. I would like the scheme to be expanded.

I will also speak about the country sport enrichment scheme. It is not listed in the budget papers, but I hope it is still there. That scheme has been under some threat in the past year. It is a hugely successful scheme that brings major sporting events to country centres. We need to expand it to bring more sporting events to country centres, so let us not wind back that scheme. I will ask questions about that scheme during the estimates hearings. The Healthway "smarter than smoking" scholarships give country sportsmen and sportswomen the opportunity to train in senior squads and travel to Perth and interstate. It does a great job. I think it has a budget of about \$300 000, but that needs to be increased. There is a huge impost on country parents, who always want to do the best for their kids, in taking them to Perth for hockey, football or swimming. Huge costs are involved just in taking their kids to the local squads in their region. We need to increase that funding. If kids make it, that is great. However, if they do not make it and come back to country centres, they come back as leading citizens and take on leadership roles. They pass on their experiences and set examples for other kids in the area, which helps with our social and health problems. It is critically important. I know that I speak a lot about sport when I get the chance, but it is really important. I re-emphasise the importance of physical education in our schools and continued programs to address obesity issues.

I will talk about a couple of issues that we should look at in the future. One is the extension of new business establishment grants or low interest loans to new businesses that have proven they have something established and have raised certain amounts themselves, so that they are not just coming for handouts. AQ2 Pty Ltd, which is a company in Katanning, is providing fluorinating pumps to the Water Corporation. Its pumps are now also going to the eastern States. The company will probably get into providing systems for sprayers for agricultural businesses. I hope that the Minister for Agriculture will visit that company when he is in Katanning in the next few weeks. If that company could get just a little assistance from the State Government, it would make it. I am sure it would repay the Government fivefold.

I also mention business relocation grants. We are trying to attract business and industry to country WA. Quite a lot of businesses and industries get built out in the city. That happened to a horse feed business that has now gone to Williams. The company was based in Bayswater but had to get out because of the nature of the business and because the area was becoming more built up. No assistance is provided to companies to help them move, which they do at huge cost. We need to provide some assistance with that. We need to get the regional headworks scheme back on track as soon as possible, because it is very important.

I also raise the issue of the review of changes to the Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia. I want to make sure that the review takes place, because we need input from our fire brigades on how FESA is working. I recognise our fire brigades in country WA and the magnificent job that they do. I also recognise all those who fought the fires in Tenterden and all those in the community who have since helped the people affected by those fires to recover. It has been fantastic.

We are all Western Australians and we must have fairness and equity across Western Australia. Budgets are about people. We must remember that people live in the inland areas of Western Australia as well. I feel that those people have been neglected, and that the Government needs to put that right.

I will finish by thanking the people of my electorate. I am very fortunate in the Wagin electorate. If I am successful at the next election, my electorate will have expanded to take in Boyup Brook, Tambellup and the east ward of Bridgetown. I am very fortunate. I have a great electorate. They are fantastic people to work with. It is a great region made up of people who get off their backsides and make things happen. Although we will always look for government support, I think the people of that area set an example for the Government to follow, by making things happen. The Government should not neglect them, because they are very important to this State.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie) [10.47 pm]: I will say a few words on the budget and associated issues. I am quite happy with the way in which the electorate of Collie has progressed over the past three years. I have received help from within government. I have had to prod them a bit, but the ministers have certainly given me some support over the past couple of years to make sure that the town of Collie and surrounding areas have not been forgotten. It is great to have quite a list of projects that have started. Some have finished and some are still moving. One of the major issues in the middle of the electorate, which will be a boon to the entire south west in the future, is the Wellington National Park. Although the Opposition started that process and attempted to purchase the land, it was finished under the Labor Government. It is a case of showing that the Labor Government is committed to moving on and getting things done. There was a lot of consultation with green groups down there. There was quite a bit of argument about where the boundaries would be, but in the end a compromise was achieved. People are very happy with that.

The top end of the Ferguson Valley now has a full range of bed and breakfast facilities, ranging from five-star accommodation to a backpackers hostel and vineyards. I see it as being the Swan Valley of the south west in the future. It is certainly a lot closer to Perth -

Ms J.A. Radisich interjected.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: It will take over from that area; the member is getting pushed out. It is certainly an area of great growth. The prices of blocks of land have probably trebled in the past three or four years. Some of the bigger wineries have taken over some of the smaller growers. I do not know whether that is good or bad, but that area has boomed. It is also coupled up with the national park. The minister was down there recently to open a boardwalk around the king jarrah tree - a huge tree that started to suffer a bit of stress because of the number of visitors. That shows where the tourism is picking up. At the top end of the Dardanup shire near Wellington Mills is Gnomesville. I am sure quite a few people should end up there. That place is something special and it has been adopted by the community. One or two people started putting out plastic gnomes and at times the vandals got stuck into them, but the people kept going and now the vandals would have to be there for a week to smash all the gnomes.

Mr P.B. Watson: They breed well, do they?

Mr M.P. MURRAY: They do. People visit from all over Australia and from overseas as well. They are the things that the member for Wagin was talking about. People in small communities do not just sit back; they get off their butts and get things happening. That is something with a very low capital cost that brings in tourists. It has also resulted in a couple of restaurants starting up along the road from Bunbury. Those are the sorts of positive things that are happening in the Boyanup and Dardanup areas.

In the town of Collie itself, the call centre has been opened by the minister. It is now running at full steam with 30-odd jobs, and it has been a boon to the town. People in small businesses have commented to me that they have noticed the extra funding that is coming into the town. While they are not well-paid jobs, they are generally taken by people who do not have the money to travel out of town to spend it. It certainly keeps the money within the town. I made a personal visit to the call centre and it was great to see some of the kids from the town who had never had jobs before working there. It is a starting point. It was something special to see the look on their faces. As a politician, one gets a lot of abuse. However, one young guy who is quite large put both thumbs up, indicating that he had finally got a job at the age of 21. It was his first job! They take a bit of micky out of him, but he is very happy about his job.

The other area is the motor sports complex. The Government has put money into that over a period. It was not started by this Government, but it is pleasing to see how it is progressing. I believe the western five lakes project will be one of the biggest tourist attractions in the upper south west. It will hook onto the back of the Ferguson Valley and will really benefit Collie and the surrounding areas. At the moment that area is not ready to be opened up. The water quality is not quite high enough, but it is moving on very well and I am sure that after this winter, with some more rain, it will reach the mark of 5 pH. That one water body is two and a quarter kilometres long and one kilometre wide. It will be opened to skiing, jet skis and the like, as well as other recreational purposes. Anyone who has read the Press lately will have seen that the Waroona Dam and other dams have been shut for skiing. This is a growth area. In recent times people have been going down to the Margaret River and the Blackwood River for skiing. The water in the inland towns where people used to ski is not of adequate quality, such as Dumbleyung and a few of those areas. If we are able to get this area up and running, it will certainly be a boon to the tourist industry within Collie.

I want to push the point about how different projects have been promised but have not got off the ground. It took a bit of pushing and shoving to get the focus away from the coast. The coastal towns were sort of living off themselves and growing all the time, while the inland towns from Pinjarra through to the Collie turn-off, including Yarloop, Brunswick, Harvey and Waroona, were stagnating a lot because people preferred to live on the coast as the towns did not contain a great deal. I am pleased that the Labor Government has funded a feasibility study to look into the sustainability of those towns. Although those towns are not in my electorate at this stage, it certainly does affect people from one end of South West Highway to the other.

The member for Murray-Wellington complained a bit about what the Government has not done. What amazes me is that in the eight years that he was in government as the Whip, and in the 21 years that he has been the member for that area - a very well respected member, too; I do not take that away from him - he and his government did not get on with the job of making those towns sustainable. He and his government sat and watched as there was a drain of people towards the coast and real estate prices went up on the coast and down in the towns. At the same time, those towns on the coastal strip have been suffering from the downturn in the dairy industry. We know what happened with deregulation. I am sure my colleague on the other side understands that also. We are not out of the woods yet. I hope the study will have some positive outcomes and provide some directions to make these towns sustainable all the way along that coastal strip and as far inland as Wagin and those sorts of towns as well, because we must look after those towns too, as the member for Wagin did say. Every time a government department is taken out of a town, it has an effect on the town. I use Collie as an example. We do not have a Homeswest office in Collie. We have only a part-time Centrelink office. It costs \$7.85 to travel to Bunbury on South West Coachlines. There is no concession for people to travel to Bunbury. That causes all sorts of problems. It costs over \$15 for a return trip. That is a significant amount for people who are unemployed or on a low wage and need to travel to Bunbury for legal or Centrelink business. Centrelink has tried to alleviate some of the problems by allowing people to do their interviews over the telephone rather than travel to Bunbury, because if people miss their appointment they are in breach, which means that no money comes in and crime rates go up; it is just a general cycle. I hope that in the future the minister will look at

providing concession cards for low income earners, and also for students who need to travel to Bunbury to go to the South West Regional College of TAFE. To charge students \$15 a day to go up and down the hill is quite an expense for parents, who generally have to foot the bill.

The other issue that is of concern to me in the Donnybrook and Preston Valley area is power supply. The unreliability of power supplies is quite unfair at times for the people in the packing sheds, who employ quite a few workers. When the power goes off and they ring Western Power, they are told by the answering machine that the power will come back on again in two hours, so they get the staff back in and get ready to go again. However, when the power does not come back on in two hours and they ring again, they are again told that the power will come back on in another two hours, but because it is a recorded message, they cannot really get their point across. The system of having a recorded message about when the power will come back on again is antiquated. A lot of money needs to be spent on that system so that people can be made aware of when the power will come back on. Recently some people were without power for up to 17 hours. All the storage guys had gone away, because they expected the power to come back on again in a couple of hours, but then at the last minute they had to rush around and hook up to generators and shift fruit from one place to other so that it did not spoil and ruin their income. A fair bit of work still needs to be done in that area. I am sure the Treasurer and Minister for Energy is well aware of that from the number of phone calls that I got and passed on to him.

As I said, the motorsports complex is now being used by the Police Service for driver training. The school kids also use it for driver training. The student driver training program is a great program. They have tracked the people who have gone through that program. Of all the kids who have committed a breach somewhere along the line by speeding or having a crash, only 14 per cent of the ones who had done the driver training got into some sort of trouble as opposed to about 60 per cent of the other P-plate drivers, so the course really works and should be encouraged. Western Power sponsors the course to a great extent, and I thank it for that. Also, the high school works very closely with the course providers to make sure that every student in that age group gets a chance to do driver training. It has certainly saved lives and has saved money in that way within our community.

I am pleased to report that there has been some government funding to help Pinetec get off the ground in Collie. That is about a \$10 million project that will employ up to 30 people in the future, some of these being young people, whom we desperately need in Collie at the moment.

There has been an influx of older people into Collie - the grey power. However, most of them are hooking up their caravans and heading north, and the economy suffers from that. They moved into Collie just before the real estate prices increased. They bought very good houses on the coast for around \$120 000 and sold them for between \$300 000 and \$400 000. Therefore, they had a surplus when they sold them and could afford to buy a caravan and a four-wheel drive. From now on they will spend winter in Exmouth, Broome or Derby, which does not help Collie's economy. It puts a strain on it in another way, because more services must be provided for older people. I hope to get the chance to do that myself. However, Collie is a changing town and we must adjust to that. We need help to keep that adjustment going.

A couple of other projects are happening in Collie. An environmental clearance was given for the CollTech project, which is moving slowly. I have previously spoken about this in the House. The people in Albany are especially worried about the cowhides that CollTech uses to make a facial cream being contaminated with mad cow disease. I should not say anything about women putting it on, because it would only get me into trouble. A new process has enabled the product to be extracted from sheepskins. The worldwide market is crying out for it. CollTech is working in conjunction with the power station to use the distilled water from the cooling process, which needs a huge amount of clean water. The salty water that is left over goes into the sea through the saltwater pipeline. The production is environmentally safe and friendly, and will create 15 to 20 jobs. That is going very well.

These projects do not come about just by throwing money at them. I thank the Shire of Collie, which has worked very closely with me. It has given me a hand and pointed me in the right direction on many occasions on changing the economic base of Collie. Members are aware that for many years Collie relied on the underground and open-cut mines. When the underground mines shut, 300 jobs were lost in one hit. I remind the member for Warren-Blackwood that, unlike the timber industry, the coal industry got little assistance from the Government. Some \$200 000 was provided to retrain people and was spent on a few crane lessons, bobcat tickets and that type of thing. However, the people in the community did not lie down, cry and bleat, and ask for more money. They got off their butts and made sure that things happened.

Another issue that I am happy to say has finally come to fruition is the power procurement process, which has been a long time coming. It is probably a couple of years behind schedule, although both coal companies are happy that they now have a program to work to. It is Collie's last roll of the dice. It is very important that Collie have a chance to secure the next base load power station. I am confident it can. The companies have been accused of rotting the system over time, but those contracts were signed off on and, in some ways, I do not blame them for running the contracts for the full distance. It is not their fault that someone in Western Power was not smart enough or brave enough to say what the price should have been at the time. Technology has progressed and allowed coal to be produced more cheaply, but the contracts will be in place for another couple of years. Some of that money helped retool the coal industry, including when the underground mines shut. Some big shovels - the 2 800s - were brought from Newman. They are 40-cubic-

metre buckets. That probably does not mean a lot to many people. However, when I see two Toyotas parked in one of buckets, I know that things have changed. That money has allowed the industry to retool, so that it can become competitive in this next round. I was a union official at the time the underground mines shut, and I know that some of the changes were hard to take. However, with hindsight I can see why that was done. It will give us a chance to honour the contracts.

What does worry me is to see Western Power sign off contracts. Some of the figures given to me for the Kemerton power prices include 38c a unit. Coal is currently 6c a unit. I cannot see why it was allowed to happen or why it happened in Western Power. I know there are some forces of darkness in Western Power. I have certainly had face-to-face arguments with some of its people; they do not want coal at all. It would be a very foolish move as there is only one pipeline. Even that is in receivership. No doubt someone will buy it at a bargain basement price and possibly lay another pipe. At the moment we cannot afford to have the next base load on gas. We had a blackout earlier this year, and I am sure if that goes on and we have troubles with compressors, we will have the same problem again. Although not reported in the Press, I know from sources in Western Power that they had their fingers crossed and were riding like hell, hoping that nothing would go wrong and cause a blackout. In the end it caught up with them. I have raised the matter many times in my party. It does not matter what the excuses were, people want the power. To be quite honest, many medium to large businesses do not care about the price of power to a great degree. However, to have 30 or 40 workers sitting around doing nothing for two or three days certainly eats away at profits. The community of Collie has its fingers crossed. There will be a concerted push from people in the community to lobby the Government and Western Power very strongly to make sure it happens. At this stage I am quite confident that it will happen on price alone. The Minister for Energy told me that it would be done on price. I hope that others do not exert undue pressure and use the issue as a political football. We should do it for the State alone.

There are other issues I must bring forward. For a long time the mining companies just sat and took their profits. They have finally come to the realisation that they cannot just sit there. They have started chasing the new technology and trying to expand the markets. They have spent large sums of money to try to make briquettes that may be able to be used in the HIs melt process. That will require two or three million tonnes of coal a year. It would certainly be a saviour to the industry. Griffin Coal Mining Co Pty Ltd is looking at a direct-feed kiln that will feed coal into the HIs melt process. Both companies in the area are working very hard. They are looking at exporting the briquettes. Apparently the quality of the briquettes has been well received in Europe. A pilot plant is being built at the moment. I hope it gets up and proves itself enough to expand our markets.

I have travelled through the Kalgoorlie area and, to be quite honest - my colleague from up that way will not agree - the rehabilitation in the gold mining areas is absolutely appalling. If anyone wants to see what rehabilitation is about, he should go to the old coal mining areas. Millions of dollars have been spent on rehabilitation. There is reforestation, and the lakes are being treated so that their acid content is not too high. Budgerigars are able to drink from the lakes. Up north, they fall in and drown after they have a drink! A lot of work has been done on rehabilitation in the area. I believe the area is heading towards receiving one of the top environmental awards in Australia for rehabilitation. Both coal companies are working very hard to ensure that it is a sustainable industry so that they can go out and say in all honesty that they can match it with the gas people and show people on the ground exactly what it is. I am therefore very happy that those companies are doing that.

I return to the budget. I am very pleased that Collie will receive a grant of \$215 000 to clean up the river - which is really a drain - in the middle of the town. In the early 1960s and early 1980s the river flooded the town on a regular basis. It was then dredged, but not a lot of thought was put into it and it turned into a drain running through the middle of town. I hope that it can be tidied up enough to make it look like the river running through Busselton and that it will become a major feature of our community. With that grant I hope that a couple of riffles - stone banks - can be put across the river to make the water deeper where the weeds grow. That will allow revegetation along the banks of the river and, hopefully, people who visit Collie will see a special feature of the town and not a muddy drain. It probably will not be as good as Busselton's river, but it might be similar.

There is also an allocation in the budget to upgrade the Collie library. I am sure most members of this place have been lobbied for library books and libraries in their electorates. I was pleased to go back to the Collie community and say that yet again the Gallop Labor Government has listened to the community and put money into Collie to bring the library up to a standard that is acceptable to the community. In addition to that, the Minister for Education and Training visited Collie earlier this year and opened the school library. I was disappointed, to say the least, that the library is not a joint facility; however, other people did not want that to happen. The high school also had its library upgraded this year, which is very good for the community. I am sure members opposite will have some jibes to make about library books in Collie, but I will not go into that.

Another thing I am pleased to say is that the Minister for Peel and the South West is probably the most proactive minister appointed to deal with the south west that we have had for many years. It takes only a phone call to the minister and a short wait to have him organise a visit to the south west and meet with groups there. He has been extremely well received.

Mr P.D. Omodei interjected.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: That might be the member for Warren-Blackwood's opinion. However, I have heard many people from further south than Collie, probably as far as Manjimup and Warren-Blackwood, say that he is one of the best ministers they have had in the area for his willingness to make himself available, to visit the area and to listen to what people have to say. I thank the Minister for Peel and the South West for being available and for being helpful at all times.

As I said earlier, it was interesting to hear from the member for Murray-Wellington. I hope most members of this place realise there is a difference between country and city communities. I thank my colleagues, including those who sit on the back bench and give us hell, and those members opposite who lend a hand to country communities that get a bit stuck at times in explaining themselves. Country people in the main get together and work through their problems. I thank my country colleagues, particularly my fellow Labor country colleagues, for their help over the years. It has been a bit tough at times and we have stood together in the face of adversity. Sometimes we have had to swear a couple of times, but we managed to get our point across.

I have just been reminded that when the Premier visited the Shire of Harvey he was well received. However, someone said that it was the first time a Premier had visited the "new" Harvey shire building. I was told that the building had been open for 12 years. It is appalling that in the eight years previous to this Government's term, when the Opposition was in power, no Premier visited one of the safest Liberal seats. I found it a little hard to believe but I was assured that it was true. That just shows that a seat that is too safe can be taken for granted by either side. I therefore should get a lot of attention in the near future, given my 0.04 per cent majority, as I am sure will the Bunbury seat. That shows that this Government is willing to go out to communities and talk and listen to people. People do not always get the answer they want, as that is not always possible, but at least this Government is listening and pushing through on issues that are special in small communities. These facilities might not cost a lot, but people want them. These services are taken as normal in the city. Public transport is a classic example. Two buses a week run out of Collie. The member for Dawesville grizzles about buses taking too long to run from Perth to Mandurah. People take things for granted once they have the service. We do not take them for granted. The people of Collie will be happy to have a reasonable transport system.

I congratulate the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure for having the ticker to stand up and say that boat safety training is needed. That proposal has taken a fair hiding in the Press. As a keen boater, a fisherman and a diver, I believe that training is needed. People are able to pick up dad's 40-footer on the weekend without any training, which is a disaster waiting to happen. It applies to the 16-foot and 17-foot boats that are increasingly affordable. They are nothing special any more; people do not say, "Look - he has a boat!" If people want a boat, they can get one. People are buying boats but cannot back down the ramp, do not know the first thing about boating, do not know about safety gear or about which side of the markers they should be on. How do I know? I was one of them when I first started. I bought a brand-new boat, and on the first week I went straight up to Port Gregory and went 30 miles offshore with no auxiliary motor, no flares and no compass - but a good esky.

Mr A.D. Marshall: Do you need a licence now? That's the point.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: I need a basic refresher course. I do not think people who have been in the game for a long time need intensive training. Dinghies under 12 foot with a 10-horsepower motor probably should be exempt from the training to allow people who hire out boats in estuaries and such operations to be accommodated so businesses are not made bankrupt overnight. Some consideration must be given to people who hire out boats, as well as older people who have used small dinghies for a long time.

Mr A.D. Marshall: It has to be looked at, but experienced boat users do not need a licence. New people do.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: A prior-learning provision could be included. If a person can prove that he or she has had a boat for many years, maybe only a half-hour course is needed with a tick made in a box. In my town, a terrible tragedy occurred when a young man was run over by a boat that did not follow the laws of the water. The dive flag was up and he was hit. The worst part, I suppose, was that he lived for nearly 12 months, and his family suffered all the pain that went with that before he died. No-one owned up to that accident, so no insurance can be claimed. It could be a public liability insurance claim. The family could have received some compensation. It is small consolation. At least the two small kids' education would be secured into the future. It has not happened yet, but a police inquiry is still ongoing about what happened.

Mr A.D. Marshall: I'll tell you about the thoroughness of the sea rescue group in Mandurah. It ran a small boating course - it still does. Trying to be a good member and to set an example as a boat owner, I paid my money to do the course. The course was on Mondays and Wednesdays for 15 or 20 weeks. When I said to them after the second week that I would not be there the next Wednesday as I would be in Parliament, the person in charge said I should not come back if I could not do the course. I said that I knew most of what he was talking about. He said he had never had a failure, so I must do my lectures to do the course. I thought that was pretty good. That is how thorough it should be.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: The member for Dawesville said that it was all right at his age, so many other people would have to agree! There is certainly a problem and I hope it is followed through so that our waterways become safer. Another terrible accident occurred down south recently, where the mix of boats has become a problem. Over the past two or

three years, a huge fishing fleet has begun fishing in waters off the south west holiday areas during the summer period while, at the same time, the beaches are occupied by holiday-makers. Unfortunately, a couple of weeks ago a young child was killed. Not knowing all the circumstances, I should not say too much about it but we want to stop that sort of thing happening. Once when I was diving, a boat, about 60-foot long, went straight over me. I saw its propellers move above me while I was on the bottom of the sea in about 30 feet of water. The boat people were newcomers down there. When the crayfishers see divers, they run the sounder over them to see what they are diving on. However, because many of them were new they did not know that some of the divers use hooker diving gear, which generally uses 100 metres of hose. They calculated that they were within 50 metres of the boat. However, I was in 30 feet of water and saw a boat go over the top of me.

I then attended a code of conduct meeting with the fishing industry in Busselton. Unfortunately, only I and a young bloke turned up so the organisers said they would run another one. However, for some reason, I was not invited to it and my calls were not returned. Perhaps I was too outspoken at the first meeting. The same people have not returned my calls since that accident. I want the small boat community to have some input to consultations, rather than only the shires and the professional boating community. The amateur fishing industry should be represented on a committee to work out a code of conduct that is stronger than that proposed when I was there. When the professional fishers attended the seafood night at Parliament House, I broached the issue with a couple of people. I told them that some people were still doing what the industry said they would not do under the code of conduct. My comments were laughed off with the remark that there are always a few cowboys around. That is just not good enough. I am not saying that the boat involved in that accident was owned by a cowboy. However, when the industry says that there is still a problem, I do not know whether there are one, 10 or 20 cowboys. It takes only one to cause an accident. That must be sorted out and we must work very hard to ensure that both parties comply with a code of conduct. I am not saying that professional fishermen should not be able to earn a living. However, they must be aware of their surroundings. They are used to working further up the coast where there are not many small pleasure boats. They are used to putting their boat on automatic pilot and heading out to sea. They must pay more attention because there are more boats in the south west, especially over the holiday period. Something must be done to get both parties to work together to make sure those accidents do not happen. That issue has been of concern to me.

Another initiative that the Government has taken and that the member for Wagin has mentioned already, is establishment of the Fire and Emergency Services Authority levy. By gee, I took a lot of phone calls and received some flak over that when it was first introduced. Now we do not hear a word about it, because the fire brigades are now well resourced with good equipment. If they are not yet resourced, they will be in the future. Those people have changed their tune. It gives us pride to be in a Government that takes the difficult steps when most of the cockies oppose them. One of the phone calls I received from an older gentleman from the Boyup Brook area was a classic. He said that we did not need this levy because his old petrol-driven Bedford truck started every time; it was only 30 years old and all he needed was a new pump on the back so that he could give the cows water and then use it for bush fires. I do not think any Government should pay for that sort of infrastructure for those people. To be honest, that man annoyed the hell out of me. When the rest of the brigades had received their new machinery they went quiet. The Boddington crash crew, which patrols Albany Highway - I have spoken about it in this House before - does a remarkable job. When they got that gear, they were so happy because they believed they could save lives with the more efficient type of machinery they had - the new jaws of life and the jacks that open up cars so that they can get to injured people more quickly. They were so happy and so pleased that the Government had taken that step. I did have some earlier complaints from that area, but it has gone quiet now. This is just another initiative for which the Government should be applauded.

The other issue in Collie is probably 60 years old and relates to the amount of state housing in the town. Even though the housing budget has been increased, still more must be done in that area. While those houses remain in that condition, the people who live in them do not take the time or make the effort to keep them in any sort of reasonable condition. They treat them as they find them, which is pretty rough at times. I know that Homeswest is working hard to get a program up and running, and some of the houses it has done up are certainly excellent. However, we need to put more effort into that area. Social problems are associated with the amount of state housing we have. At times, it annoys me and the community when there is a social imbalance because of the number of Homeswest homes there. While everyone should be allowed to have a house, there should be some sort of screening to make sure that the social imbalance is not put too far out of kilter. It does take its toll on small communities - I have been criticised for saying this in another place but I stand by it - because it is not hard to put the social balance out of kilter. It really makes things tough for not only the police but also the social workers, the hospital workers and everyone else in that town. I put on record that we have to be careful about how we deal with this issue. We must spend more money in those areas. I agree that everyone should be housed within our so-called rich State, and to have people without housing is wrong. However, we have to be careful about how we sort that out. If the people in Subiaco had to have some of the houses in their area that we have down in our area, I am sure they would make a lot more noise than they do at present.

I take this opportunity to thank the Shires of Boyup Brook, Donnybrook-Balingup and Capel, which will move south owing to the new electoral boundaries. Perhaps, they will also be represented by a new member. They have worked well with me and I appreciate what they have done over time. With the change of boundaries occurring, I will not forget about those shires in the next eight to 10 months before we go to an election; I will still work for them. Their

residents are the people who elected me and I have a duty to finish off the job, but, at the same time, I look forward to working with the new electorate.

MRS D.J. GUISE (Wanneroo - Deputy Speaker) [11.27 pm]: I am happy to rise to participate in the budget debate tonight. I realise I am probably keeping members from going home - this is not a very pleasant place to be in - so I will try to make my speech reasonably quick.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: I think they are taking bids on how quickly I can do this.

I am incredibly happy with the budget announcements that have delivered for my electorate. First and foremost I want to speak about the changes for first home buyers. Most people in this place will know that, as the member for Wanneroo, I have expressed my unhappiness about the situation with stamp duty. I have spoken about it in previous budget speeches. When a person is representing a fair proportion of what is called "the mortgage belt", something like stamp duty hurts.

Mr A.D. Marshall: I feel sorry for the real estate salesperson.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: When a member is married to one, it also makes it interesting. My main concern was for the first home buyers. I am very pleased with the changes that will be made come 1 July with the conveyance allowance duty being abolished for first home owners buying homes worth less than \$220 000 and being reduced for those homes valued up to \$300 000. This means that a first home buyer will save just over \$8 000 on a property valued at \$220 000. If we add to that the State's first home owners grant, we are looking at a total saving of about \$15 230. That is a substantial amount of money that will go a long way to helping young families. Trust me; there is a growing number of them in my electorate who are trying to establish their first home, with all the associated costs. This is very good news indeed for them. Now when some people come into my electorate office, they are somewhat happier about the circumstances in which they find themselves. I say thank you to the Treasurer.

Another important facet of this budget about which I want to talk is health. The increase in health funding of \$178 million is substantial. It is a real increase of 4.4 per cent. Part of that will go into the northern region of the metropolitan area. I am incredibly pleased to know that a new after-hours bulk-billing medical centre will be put in place near the Joondalup Health Campus - one of the four that will be aligned with the other hospitals in the metropolitan area. I have also spoken in this place before about the lack of general practitioner services, and in particular the impossibility of getting a locum service north of Burns Beach Road. This after-hours GP service is most welcome, as is the news about the extra beds to be opened at the Joondalup Health Campus, and ultimately the upgrading of the hospital to a 300-bed general hospital over the next decade. The hospital will then be well placed to service the demand in the northern suburbs.

Two areas will continue to be monitored; that is, mental health and aged care. I hope that the changes to be made at Osborne Park Hospital will adequately accommodate those areas. Osborne Park Hospital currently has a terrific unit for aged care assessment and care. I am looking forward to that being expanded. I am particularly eager to see an improvement in mental health services, particularly for youth. Many young people are finding things very difficult. The waiting list for assistance is less than satisfactory. Therefore, the changes that will be made and the additional assistance that will be given are most welcome.

Policing, of course, is of interest to everyone across the State. An amazing amount of money is being spent on making our community safer, including new initiatives that will focus on child abuse, on the release of police officer resources to focus on operational imperatives, which is most welcome, and on improved delivery service to the community. An amount of \$616 million is involved, which is an incredible amount of money when one thinks about it. It will be well spent and is welcomed by the community.

The police officers in my electorate do an amazingly good job. They are hardworking and very responsive to the community's needs and wishes, and are always aiming to do better. In fact, the latest published statistics show that they have improved their collective rates. The reduction in crime speaks well for the hard work and efforts of all those police.

I am pleased to see that the remaining amount of money required to build the new Wanneroo Police Station has been allocated in this budget. I look forward to the pad going down and the signs going up, and the officers who currently serve in the Wanneroo Police Station being moved into the new establishment. I have spoken before about the state of the existing police station. Quite frankly, I would not put a dog in it. It is appalling, and is long overdue for an upgrade. I am sure that the community will welcome that initiative, and we all look forward to seeing the new station built.

The other good news for us is that about the police stations that will be open to the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Some stations such as the Joondalup district police station do provide a 24-hour service, but it is not the same as being able to walk into a police station at any time of the day. People want to know that they are able to do that, and

they will do it. The police will use additional public servants to make that possible, and, frankly, I would rather have the officers out on the road. This will be very well received by the community.

Moving on to transport, the continued freeze on public transport fares is welcome news for my electorate. It is the fourth consecutive year that the Government has delivered on this. Rail and bus transport are very important to the people in my region, as is the freeze on fares, because many of them are finding it tough out there. It is most welcome. Of course, the big news for the electorate is that we have been able to deliver, as promised, the extension of the Mitchell Freeway. Some \$30 million will be spent on the extension from Hodges Drive, and the freeway will ultimately extend to Burns Beach Road. The total project cost will be \$45.5 million. Frankly, I cannot wait to see the bulldozers move. This will ease a lot of pressure on the northernmost part of my electorate and ease the traffic build-up on Marmion Avenue. It will also help considerably to alleviate some of the pressure on Wanneroo Road, as cars will be able to deviate across onto the freeway. It is great news indeed for those in the northernmost regions of my electorate.

Another black spot that desperately needed attention will receive it. Some of the work on it has already started. It is the intersection at Gngangara Road and what is now called Rigali Way in Wangara. Rigali Way comes out of the big industrial estate to join Gngangara Road. An amazing number of trucks and heavy vehicles traverse Gngangara Road. Of course, the volume of traffic is increasing because of the development in the area. The intersection was a real problem that caused headache after headache. It was a shocker that had to be addressed. I am pleased to say that black spot funding has been made available.

I am looking forward to future assistance to extend Ocean Reef Road through to Gngangara Road, which will also help alleviate some of the pressure there. Further work on Wanneroo Road is of course essential. Part of that work includes not only a continuation of the dual lanes but also in the more immediate future work on two other areas that spring to mind. One is the intersection of Wanneroo Road and Joondalup Drive, where there is now a considerable build-up of traffic and which I am asking Main Roads to look at. The other is the situation in Kingsway around the shopping centre, where the traffic volume has increased. The shopping centre is perhaps not that well placed given the complexities of the road network, the schools, the aged care facility that is now on Kingsway and the very large sporting complex. It is a pretty bad mix when it is put all together. About 9 000 children alone are going through the sporting complex on any one Saturday. I think that is only for netball, so that is without any of the other sports. It is creating problems at Wanneroo Road and Kingsway.

I am also asking Main Roads to do something about another couple of spots further north on Wanneroo Road. Some extra road work is needed to bring it all together. This situation will of course in part be eased by the opening of the Clarkson railway station this year. People in the Wanneroo electorate use the railway, and use it well to the point where these days people are lucky to get a seat even at the first two stations. I can understand why my colleagues in Mandurah and Rockingham are keen to see the southern extension, because the railway is popular. Our line is so popular that its trains are full. The extra carriages that will be coming onto the system with the new train sets to operate from September will be welcome and will alleviate some of the pressure on the road network. We believe in rail first, road second.

The other part of the network is of course the encouragement of better east-west connections, particularly using bus and rail. I am pleased to see that Main Roads and MetroBus are starting to think along those lines. I think we will see the first east-west connection from Kingsway to Whitfords railway station, which is great news indeed. Those departments are to be congratulated for their lateral thinking.

I think I have become the member for opening schools, but it goes with the turf when there is growth such as that experienced in my electorate. Locally, more than \$14.9 million will be spent to complete the work on the four primary schools previously announced - Carramar, east Marangaroo and Landsdale primary schools and a replacement school in Wanneroo.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: I note that the member for Girrawheen is very pleased to hear about the east Marangaroo school. There are great people in that area. I am sure that, as the new member for Marangaroo under the new seat redistribution, she will be very pleased to attend the opening of that school. It has been a long time coming. I know the member for Girrawheen also has been involved. It will be great news for the electorate. A new primary school will also be built at Two Rocks. With the growth that is starting to happen in the most northern part of the electorate, this is very good news, because it will alleviate some of the pressure on the Yanchep District High School. Wanneroo High School, which has done incredibly well for some time now but which is in need of some attention, has been allocated \$1 million in this budget for additions and improvements. That is fantastic news for the schools I have mentioned.

Of course, the demand has not gone away. I have just been advised by my staff that, since February this year, I have another 3 000 householders in my electorate. That is common news for the seat of Wanneroo. That indicates that the growth demand is there. The situation will have to be monitored closely. There are expectations that a couple of other schools will need to be built, and particularly a high school.

In my contribution to the budget debate, I have followed closely behind the member for Swan Hills, who is eagerly awaiting a high school in Ellenbrook.

Mr A.D. McRae: Work will start on the high school in Ellenbrook in this coming financial year, and I think that is fantastic.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: It is indeed. I am watching closely, because my schools will follow in due course.

Mr A.D. McRae: It has been interesting to see that people have not been able to understand that you have to go through a very comprehensive planning process, community consultation and architectural design before you do the building. The debate we had earlier was absolutely remarkable for its ignorance.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: People do have to go through that process. It is amazing. It takes quite some time to do all that, but it can all come together and schools do get built. I know that the residents of Ellenbrook are eagerly awaiting the high school.

Some important planning also needs to take place in the tertiary sector in the northern suburbs. I have been encouraging the West Coast College of TAFE to think about its future planning for the area and work with developers who have 30-year plans. It is important that that encompass the training component, which West Coast College of TAFE does well and will be encouraged to expand in the future. Of course, I share with my colleague in Joondalup and with others in the northern region the wonderful Edith Cowan University campus at Joondalup. Those tertiary institutions do a tremendous job and are worthy of support.

I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to Quinns Beach Primary School. It is a relatively new school. It is doing a great job with a wonderful new initiative that is proving so popular with young parents that it is now running two sessions rather than the one it had originally planned. It is all about intervention in the early years of schooling and lives of young people, and parents also are involved. It is being run at the school effectively to bring the school and the home together in a very positive way. Those very early years prior to kindergarten, pre-primary and grade one are all being embraced. While I am on that subject, I think there is a need to embrace this one stop shop policy for some of our schools, particularly in areas in which the services perhaps have not been established and in which people can get ahead of the game a little. Community development, health in all its facets and education are all brought together to bring the services to where the people are. Sometimes it is a bit of a shock to find that people move into what we call greenfield sites that are on the fringe and do not realise that often they are way ahead of everything else. Yet they are the very people who need to be able to access the support services. It is imperative that we embrace this policy a little more closely. I am watching with interest what happens at Midland. I have heard only good things. I think there is a future for this. I was never that keen on losing some of the services that we used to deliver at schools, so it is good to see that some of the thinking is coming around on that.

Another community group that works closely with our schools is 6030 Community Connect, which has successfully implemented a number of programs and held events in the community. The work it has done has helped, supported and nourished the communities of Clarkson, Merriwa and surrounding areas in a wonderful way. They are a great team of people. Kay Abel was recognised by the City of Wanneroo in the Australia Day awards this year. She has led this group well. It is a great team that works together. I have nothing but good things to say about them. I went to an event earlier this year and it was astonishing to see the energy that everybody had put into the function and how well supported it was by the community at large.

I will also say thank you to the agencies, both government and non-government, that have seen the need to work together in the northern and eastern sectors to provide wonderful support to the community. In the past such people had traditional turf; they did not like to cross paths. A bit of territorial stuff sometimes goes on. However, I have seen no evidence of that in my electorate. They have put that to one side and have had the vision to work together in a cooperative way. The collaboration and cooperation is to be admired. I thank them for their efforts.

My electorate is quite varied. Another group of people who are to be commended on the work they do are the officers of the Department of Conservation and Land Management. They look after not only the regional parks but also the Gngangara park as it gradually returns to nature. That project will keep them busy for some years to come. It needs to be carefully managed as the pines are stripped from the plantation and the area is returned to nature. Careful thinning and replanting is required. That will be a big task. An amount of \$500 000 has been allocated to continue the improvements that they are making even at this early stage. Another wonderful body of work they are involved with is the Yanchep National Park. Part of that is to keep the rare critters alive and well. To that extent, the Government has allocated \$375 000 to complete emergency cave watering.

The Government has recognised a need in the north west coastal strip by allocating money for a new sports pavilion in Ridgewood. This is an issue of concern for me, because growth has been so rapid that we have forgotten about the need to have big enough ovals on which to have a decent game of Aussie Rules, soccer, cricket, T-ball or baseball, or the need for netball and basketball courts. We rely on those facilities, which are important for the wellbeing and nurturing of our young people. Some clubs are still operating further south. I tell them that they need to look north, because that is where their prospective customers are. I encourage them to do so.

I am also pleased that the infill sewerage program is being continued in Quinns Rock and Yanchep to the tune of \$981 000. That program will replace septic tanks with deep sewerage, which I consider to be of utmost importance. I am pleased that it is continuing. It cannot happen fast enough for me, from not only an environmental perspective but also a much more personal one. I know of somebody personally who had a very serious accident and suffered horrible injuries when a tank gave way underneath him. It was just horrific. I do worry about the public safety aspect of some of these very old tanks that exist in parts of my electorate.

Another subject that is near and dear to my heart - I am glad the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection is present because he will know what I am going to speak about - is the decision about delivering power equity to the park home owners and permanent residents of caravan parks. This is a wonderful win for the people who have chosen this style of living. I have never believed that people should be punished for this decision, which they were. There was a serious inequity about the cost of power that was being on-sold to them. From now on if the owners of these establishments are on-selling power they will need to do so at the uniform tariff. That will mean a substantial saving for the residents and a big win for them. It is fantastic news. It will mean additional money in their hip pockets which is good to see. It will also be good for the region. I urge the minister to rapidly progress park home legislation. I have been encouraging him to do that since day one to ensure that we address the issue of security of tenure, amongst other things, for park residents.

Mr J.C. Kobelke: Your representations have been heard very clearly.

Mrs D.J. GUISE: I am sure they have. I think it has been a weekly occurrence. Where is the legislation, she says? I will welcome it strenuously into this House.

I know it is getting late, so I will try to bring this to a close. The other two issues from which one cannot escape when one is the member for Wanneroo, and about which I am very interested and support, are the issues of land use and water management. Currently we are doing a lot of work, particularly in the southern section of east Wanneroo, where there is a more immediate need for change. At the end of May I am holding a planning forum for residents and landowners in this study area to get some feedback. We hope to be able to make a decision about what changes will be made in that area. We are also trying to provide some certainty about water supply for the remaining growers within the region. In a very bad year some \$98 million-worth of gross annual agricultural product comes out of Wanneroo catchment area. In a good year it is up to \$150 million. That is a considerable amount of money. This type of activity needs to have some certainty. The amount of water that is coming out of the Gnangara Mound to supply Perth currently has put pressure on the mound. I believe the bores have dropped four to five metres and even up to seven metres. We want to provide some certainty about the longevity of those businesses in that area. The other issue deals with the sheer growth. Recent discussions between developers, local government agencies and others is welcome news and everybody is talking about the need for a better approach. Planning will be staged in a far better way. On greenfield sites we are talking about perhaps bringing the town centres on at the same time to meet the railhead so there will be a better connection. Do not mind the pun. This bodes well for the future; it will not be so ad hoc and we can plan appropriately. We want to ensure that we can bring economic and urban development along together and not as separate entities. As I have said, I have a lot of McDonald's and Bunnings stores in my electorate. With all due respect to both of those businesses, I believe we need to do a bit better than that in the provision of real jobs for people.

I will finish on what I hope will be an announcement in the not too distant future to address some neglect within the Wanneroo townsite itself. Frankly, I have nothing but admiration for the people of Wanneroo who have hung in there and supported their local shopping centre. The shopping centre is a rather interesting establishment. It is not often that people would go into a shopping centre and see a hill inside it. That is always a bit of a challenge for the older members of my electorate. There is a substantial number of aged care facilities around that shopping centre. It is a bit of an ad hoc arrangement. We are working on a partnership agreement between the local government authority and the State Government. I am disappointed that it has been a bit slow in coming to fruition. However, I am hopeful that we will be able to pull it together and that funds will be allocated so that we can get on with it and the work will be done in the not too distant future.

Overall, I am very pleased with the budget. I think the northern suburbs have done well out of this budget. Despite a couple of tough years, and my disappointment about stamp duty, I believe the State Government will now be able to deliver a real social dividend due to the strong economic growth of the State, and its good management of the State. The Treasurer is to be commended for the work that he has done and the budgets that he has delivered not only this year but in the previous three years. I commend the Bills to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr J.C. Kobelke (Leader of the House).

House adjourned at 11.56 pm

QUESTION ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

FUNCTIONAL REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION TEAM, MEMBERSHIP

2548. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Premier

I refer the Premier to the Annual Report – 2002/2003 of the Department of Premier and Cabinet and ask -

- (a) who are the members of the Functional Review Implementation Team (FRIT);
- (b) what are the names, titles, levels and the Departments from which the 'small group of line agency personnel' have been seconded;
- (c) how often does the FRIT meet;
- (d) where does the FRIT meet;
- (e) what costs are associated with meetings of the FRIT;
- (f) what is the break down of these costs;
- (g) what format does the reporting of the FRIT to the Strategic Management Council take;
- (h) how many reports have been made;
- (i) will the Premier table these reports; and
- (j) if not, why not?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

- (a)-(b) The members of the Functional Review Implementation Team, including names, titles, levels and the Departments they were seconded from, as at 30 June 2003 were:

Name	Title	Level	Department
Mr Ron Mance	Executive Director	Class 3	Dept of Education and Training
Mr Paul Stafford	Project Director	Level 9	Dept of Industry and Resources
Mr Daryl Wrightson	Project Officer	Level 8	Dept of Treasury and Finance
Ms Karen Caple	Project Officer	Level 9	Dept of Sport and Recreation
Ms Melanja Kwiatkowski	Project Officer	Level 8	Dept of Education and Training
Mr Gary Baker	Project Officer	Level 9	Office of the Auditor General
Ms Trudy Grimshaw	Project Officer	Level 7	Department of Housing and Works
Ms Trish Fraga-Diaz	Project Officer	Level 7	Dept of Education and Training
Ms Janine Douglas	Project Officer	Level 8	Dept of Agriculture
Ms Vikki Santwyk	Executive Officer	Level 4	Dept of the Premier and Cabinet
Ms Leanne Randall	Admin Officer	Level 2	Dept of the Premier and Cabinet
Ms Justine Sargent	Admin Officer	Level 2	Dept of Treasury and Finance
Mr Tony Mills	Project Officer	HSOA 12	Dept of Health
Mr Russ Looker	Project Officer	Level 8	Dept of Treasury and Finance
Mr Rod Scott	Project Officer	Level 8	Dept of Health
Mr Cliff Gilliam	Project Officer	Level 9	Conservation and Land Management
Mr Mike Marsh	Project Officer	Class 1	Dept of Agriculture
Mr Jan Lipich	Project Officer	Level 9	Dept of Planning and Infrastructure

- (c) FRIT is an operational unit attached to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. FRIT operates during normal business hours. FRIT is not a taskforce or committee arrangement.
- (d) FRIT was located on the 11th floor London House (216 St Georges Tce, Perth) as at 30 June 2003.
- (e) There are no costs associated with the meetings of FRIT. However, FRIT has a notional budget allocation to meet operational costs. This budget is via the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. (\$4.333 million in 2002-03)

Note: The implementation of the reforms will ultimately contribute \$150m per annum (recurrent) in savings back to the sector.

- (f) Not applicable due to (e). See the 2003-04 budget papers for a description of FRIT funding.
- (g) FRIT reports on the progress of each FRIT reform to the Strategic Management Council (SMC) via SMC's various sub committees.

- (h) FRIT reported to the SMC, via the SMC sub committees on a six weekly basis.
 - (i) Progress reports to SMC are verbal in nature, however an extensive amount of information on FRIT reforms is available on its website at www.functionalreview.dpc.wa.gov.au.
 - (j) Not applicable.
-