

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT — HIGH-PERFORMANCE SERVICE CENTRE

698. Mr I.M. BRITZA to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

Before I ask my question, I want to acknowledge students in the gallery from Santa Maria College, which is in the seat of Alfred Cove.

I noted with interest that Western Australia's Carrie Smith and Ella Clark took home both female and youth sailor of the year awards at the 2013 Australian Yachting Awards held recently in Sydney. With this in mind, can the minister please inform the house how these and other elite athletes in Western Australia benefit from the Liberal-National government's investment in the new high-performance centre for the Western Australian Institute of Sport?

Mr T.K. WALDRON replied:

I thank the member for Morley very much for his question, which is very timely.

This morning we undertook a very important milestone with the turning of the first sod for the new \$33.7 million Western Australian Institute of Sport high-performance service centre out there at Mt Claremont. It was great to have some of the finest athletes who have come through WAIS—Kim Mickle, Lauren Mitchell and Shaun Norris—there with us. I will just quickly acknowledge Kim Mickle, who won the silver medal for javelin at this year's World Championships. She has worked hard for many years, so well done to Kim; it was great to see her there.

This project, along with other sporting projects we have run under this government, has been carefully planned. This new facility will support and greatly assist our athletes, particularly those who vie for high honours at the Olympic and Paralympic events, at the Commonwealth Games and at World Championships. It will also nurture our young aspiring athletes as they come through the development pathways to be able to come to what will be a state-of-the-art facility. It will be absolutely fantastic.

The existing WAIS facility, which was built way back in the 1980s and is about 26 years old, has done a good job but by today's standards is serviceable at best. Most noticeably, and one aspect that the Premier and I saw when we were there some time ago, was no access or really poor access for our sportsmen and sportswomen who have a disability. This, along with a lot of other new amenities, will be addressed in this new service centre that we are building.

It will have the latest technology in it, particularly for the sports science and recovery areas. It will have laboratories for research and development. It will be one of the best facilities in Australia. The staff and the coaching staff there have pretty average facilities at the moment, and when they move into this centre they will have decent facilities in which to operate. That will ensure, along with the athletes' facilities, that we can attract the best athletes and attract and retain the best coaches, which will be great for our sport in Western Australia.

Just quickly, it will include a state-of-the-art testing and training facility, hydrotherapy and recovery pools, an indoor runway and a strengthening and conditioning gym. I will not go on but it will have all the modern things they need. WAIS runs programs for about 250 athletes across 11 dedicated sports, as well as for a host of athletes outside those dedicated sports. It is also the national base for our javelin and pole vault programs; so it is a very important facility.

This morning we also announced the builder, Esslemont Cockram, which has been awarded the contract to deliver this facility to be completed by early 2015. It will be a staged completion, so that it will actually start operating in late 2014. It really adds to that fantastic sporting complex. This is delivery at a high-performance level. The government has shown over the past five years that it has delivered facilities and programs, particularly at the grassroots level, where we are building a base. We have introduced new talent development programs and pathways for people and now this facility, which is a great achievement for sport in Western Australia.