

FUTURE BATTERY INDUSTRY STRATEGY

**40. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Premier:**

I refer to this government's commitment to driving the development and growth of Western Australia's future battery industry.

- (1) Can the Premier outline to the house how the future battery industry strategy will grow the state into a leading exporter of minerals, materials, technology and expertise?
- (2) Can the Premier advise the house how the strategy will build on the McGowan Labor government's job-creating record, which has already seen an extra 31 000 Western Australians in work?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Bunbury for the question and I thank him, the member for Murray–Wellington and the member for Collie–Preston for their support in getting the Albemarle project off the ground in Kemerton.

- (1)–(2) This is an important opportunity for Western Australia to ensure we take advantage of our natural heritage; that is, lithium and the other minerals that go into creating a battery. For the first time ever, we have delivered a future battery industry strategy. Up until now, no work had been done to ensure we maximise the opportunities out of these minerals that Western Australia is lucky enough to possess. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum and I launched the strategy maybe 10 or 12 days ago. Representatives from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia who were there said about the strategy, I quote —

This will establish a solid foundation for industry ...

Over the course of the next 10 years, we want to make sure that Western Australia has a world-leading, sustainable, value-adding future battery industry. We are going to do that by expanding the range of future battery materials that are extracted and processed here in Western Australia; increasing the scale of processing and manufacturing service activities along the value chain; and increasing the research and development activities that are focused on battery materials. We have also committed \$6 million to the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre to be established in Western Australia, and have urged the commonwealth government to make a decision to place it here, which makes total sense considering we are the heart of lithium mining in Australia. This strategy is important. That the government will focus on maximising the jobs out of this industry was well received by the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, the unions, the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies and everyone else. As the member correctly identified, 31 000-plus jobs have been created since we arrived in office, which is the highest annual employment growth in six years. I am confident that this plan will continue to drive confidence in the Western Australian economy. I am confident that, under this government, we will continue to put Western Australian jobs first.