

SURF LIFE SAVING WA — DEVELOPMENT CENTRE — MARGARET RIVER

Statement by Minister for Volunteering

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Volunteering) [9.13 am]: I am very pleased to inform the house that on Wednesday, 23 August, I was really pleased to open the new Surf Life Saving WA development centre in Margaret River. It was wonderful to see the completion of this project that was part of the Lotterywest \$159 million COVID-19 relief fund providing support to not-for-profit and community organisations as they emerged from the pandemic. The new centre can accommodate approximately 100 people in lodge-style accommodation and provide facilities for training, equipment storage and administration. It will also provide upskilling for members in surf lifesaving and rescue volunteer training.

As Mr Craig Smith-Gander, AM, president of Surf Life Saving WA, noted at the opening, the growing popularity of south west beaches means that the new facility is ideally located to support regional development and volunteer development, and will deliver amazing experiences for its members and the community into the future. In 2021–22 alone, 5 860 volunteer surf lifesavers across Western Australia performed 101 697 patrol hours and 381 rescues, administered 1 293 first aid treatments and performed 17 862 preventive actions. This demonstrates their commitment and valued service to our community. I want to thank Surf Life Saving WA's volunteers who go out every weekend and during school holidays to keep beachgoers safe. They deserve the best facilities we can offer.

As a regional parliamentarian, I know how incredibly important volunteering is across all regional areas of Western Australia. We are blessed in the south west with some of the best beaches and most scenic coastlines of anywhere in Australia. The contribution of volunteers to support water safety in our communities is vital. I am immensely proud of Surf Life Saving's long tradition of injury prevention and saving lives. I believe that this new development centre will support and expand the outstanding work that Surf Life Saving WA does here in Western Australia.