

CORONAVIRUS — VACCINATIONS — INTRASTATE BORDER RESTRICTIONS

839. Mr V.A. CATANIA to the Minister for Tourism:

Noting the government has made public comments that there will be many intrastate borders in regional Western Australia if WA does not meet a 90 per cent vaccination threshold, which is a trigger for the WA border reopening, what support and guidance will be provided to tourism operators impacted by booking cancellations as a result of the government's intrastate borders?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: The minister, and only the minister, please.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. As the member knows all too well, we have made it very clear that vaccination is the way forward out of this. Every member in this place should be doing absolutely everything they possibly can within their communities, talking to their communities, talking to community organisations and to their constituents, to highlight that by reaching the targets that the Premier has highlighted continuously over a long period that that will be our way forward.

I want to congratulate the tourism industry. I, along with the member for Swan Hills, my parliamentary secretary, have been visiting the regions, as we have done with our tourism roadshows. We have been through most of the regions now; we have still got a couple to go. A range of operators and peak stakeholders and bodies have been doing their part because they realise that their wellbeing relies on high vaccination rates.

This government's key focus is on highlighting to everybody in Western Australia to get vaccinated, to not listen to the rubbish that some people are peddling on social media and other means, to stop listening to people like Hon Nick Goiran in the other place and remind themselves, their families, their loved ones and business owners that by getting vaccinated and achieving the targets that have been set that we will be on a very, very positive road forward. The member for North West Central needs to do that. It is incumbent on all of us to do it, particularly those people in regional Western Australia, particularly those people in the north west of Western Australia, because we recognise the take-up has to improve. The Premier was up in the north west only this week and, of course, the Commissioner of Police is also actively working within those communities, working with local members to highlight the importance of the vaccination rates.

As we reach towards our targets, a range of measures will need to be put in place to continue to protect Western Australians, to continue to protect those people who are working and living in regional Western Australia, as well as the metropolitan area. I can assure the member for North West Central and all other members here that our primary focus is to continue to protect our tourism industry and other businesses by achieving the vaccination rates. We know that in regional Western Australia particularly, the intrastate campaigns, including the Wander Out Yonder campaign and others, have been highly successful. In our regions, there have been record numbers of visitation, which is tremendous. When Western Australians were asked to wander out yonder and support local communities, regional communities and businesses and tourism enterprises, they did it in their tens and tens of thousands. Thank you to the people of Western Australia for doing that.

Now it is incumbent on all of us to achieve those vaccination rates. The member for North West Central has a key role to play as a local member. Show some responsibility and support the government's campaign.

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. Catania: I have a supplementary question.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Sit down, you mug!

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr V.A. Catania: What did you call yourself?

The SPEAKER: Minister for Water —

Mr V.A. Catania: What did you call yourself?

The SPEAKER: Please sit down, member.

Withdrawal of Remark

The SPEAKER: Minister for Water —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members! Minister for Water, I ask you to withdraw that remark.

Mr D.J. Kelly: I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Please stand.

Mr D.J. KELLY: I withdraw that.

Questions without Notice Resumed

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: There must be a drip in the house!

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Will the minister commit to providing financial support to tourism businesses —

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central, I am guessing you do not want your question heard because you would not have made a smart-arse remark at the start, if you actually wanted your question treated seriously. I will give you one last chance. Please stand, ask your question, and I would like to hear it in silence.