

CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION MATERIALS — RECYCLING PROGRAM

**201. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Environment:**

I note that the minister recently launched a program to support greater recycling of construction and demolition materials to prevent them going to landfill. Can the minister please advise the house how this program will work?

**Mr A.P. JACOB replied:**

I thank the member for Swan Hills for the question. Recycling rates in Western Australia are something that we take very seriously as a government. Back in 2012, we set for ourselves some quite ambitious targets to achieve higher levels of recycling—levels more comparable with what is seen in other states. If we divide the waste stream into three main areas, being commercial and industrial waste, municipal and solid waste and construction and demolition waste, the area in which we lagged the furthest behind the other states was construction and demolition waste. We have taken two actions as a government. The first of those is a policy response with what we have done around the waste levy to drive recycling outcomes in the market. That is working exceptionally well as an incentive mechanism to drive waste away from landfill —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for West Swan, I call you to order for the second time. Member for Cockburn, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** We are aiming to drive waste away from landfill and towards recycled outcomes. Through our procurement program, we are also providing market incentives not only in the form of the levy, but also by setting aside \$10 million of those levy funds for the next five years, which sit as a dedicated grants program to incentivise local governments and other agencies to use that recycled product as either road base, drainage aggregate or clean fill. The way the system will work is that we will pay a per-tonne rate for every tonne of recycled material that can be channelled into, say, a local government road project, a car park base or drainage aggregate. It works on two levels. In the first instance, there is a per capita allocation towards metropolitan local governments to incentivise them to engage with us in the first instance and there is an unallocated pool from which local governments that may have already exceeded their allocated share can bid for further funds above and beyond. As I said, it is a \$10 million incentive program to take that waste.

We have on the one end of the stick, if you like, the motivator in a regulatory sense, which is now the waste levy, but we are also as a government looking towards incentives to drive a holistic market that delivers significant recycling outcomes. We have gone from a state that was lagging well behind our comparators to a state that in the future, we believe, can be a leader in this nation with the right policy settings. It contrasts again, very interestingly, with the policy position of members opposite. We are always happy to take interjections and have things thrown across the chamber at us, but when it comes to outlining an alternative vision, there is absolutely nothing there. There is some broad reference to insisting that material is re-used wherever possible, but not the hard, heavy policy work—not only the difficult decisions in the levy mechanism, but also engaging with industry to find incentives such as this \$10 million program over the next five years.