

VENUESWEST AND WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT — BOARD CHANGES

Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [9.10 am]: I rise to inform the house of a number of changes to important sporting boards in Western Australia. The chairs of both VenuesWest and the Western Australian Institute of Sport will be retiring in the coming weeks, and I put on the record our appreciation of their hard work.

Eight years ago the board of VenuesWest underwent a transformation as the business fundamentally changed. Graham Partridge took over as chair in 2007 and has led the significant growth of the organisation. I would like to detail just a few of the achievements of VenuesWest since Graham has been the chair. VenuesWest has grown from four venues to 13 venues, including Perth Arena and the new Perth Stadium. The number of customers has increased from two million total customers per annum to just less than four million, which is a remarkable increase. Graham was at the helm when the multimillion-dollar 10-year deal to outsource the management of Perth Arena was negotiated and signed. Perth Arena was recently announced as the worldwide number one arena in box office gross ticket sales, which is a great achievement for Western Australia. Most of all, Graham is a genuine person who can engage at all levels and this trait has helped define VenuesWest. I would also like to thank Giles Nunis, Wayne Cox, Mike Hussey, Narelle Finch and Rowan MacLean on behalf of the state for their contribution to the board over time and wish them well. I welcome Richard Muirhead as the new chair of VenuesWest. Richard has a vast experience in government, governance and tourism and will bring exciting leadership to the organisation. I also welcome new board members Stephanie McManus, Robert Kennedy and Dean Farmer, and Professor Paul Johnson from the University of Western Australia.

Western Australian Institute of Sport chairman, Grant Boyce, is also stepping down after 15 years of service on this board, 12 of which have been as chair. Mr Boyce's guidance will ensure that WAIS remains a central component of Western Australia's continued high-performance sporting success. Grant played a leading role in securing funding for the recently completed \$33.7 million WAIS High Performance Service Centre and has been a passionate ambassador for sport in this state. Throughout his period as chair, Western Australia was proportionally over-represented on Olympic, Paralympic and World Championship national teams and Western Australian athletes achieved notable firsts, such as Western Australia's first individual world record holder in the sport of swimming in Eamon Sullivan; Western Australia's first ever female world rowing champions in Amber Bradley and Joanna Lutz; Australia's first ever world athletics champion in Steve Hooker; Australia's first ever female world gymnastics champion in Lauren Mitchell; and Australia's first ever slalom canoe world champion in Robin Bell. These outcomes have ensured WA remains a significant influence in Australian sport, and our community has had many sporting champions to cheer and celebrate. Current board member Mr Peter Abery has accepted the position of WAIS chairman and will do an excellent job in continuing the WAIS legacy in promoting opportunities for local athletes to achieve excellence in sport. The WAIS board will also welcome three new members: dual Olympic swimming gold medallist Todd Pearson; RugbyWA chief financial officer, Maryanne Wilson; and KPMG audit partner and former national level hockey representative, Matthew Beevers.