

ENTERTAINMENT AND SPORTS VENUE

549. Mr A.P. O'GORMAN to the Minister for Housing and Works:

Can the minister advise of the Carpenter government's plans to ensure that Western Australia has an entertainment and sports venue that will attract world-class events?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Joondalup for the question. On Sunday the Premier and I announced the new name, Perth Arena, and the final design for Western Australia's new state-of-the-art indoor sport and entertainment venue. The \$250 million indoor arena has been improved. It will now include 40 suites, with a total of more than 500 corporate seats. There will be additional break-out spaces, including an up-market club lounge. The capacity and flexibility of the roof structure has also been increased to provide for additional rigging equipment and lighting and to allow bigger and more ambitious events to be held. The acoustic treatments are also being enhanced. Significantly, these enhancements will provide an opportunity for increased revenue for the arena, which will ensure that it remains viable in the long term. The government has also committed to a 680-bay car park at a cost of \$70 million over the railway behind the arena. Apart from providing much-needed parking in the area, it will also provide a very good pedestrian link with Northbridge. In fact, Perth Arena patrons and others will be able to step onto an escalator, walk through a modern arcade and emerge in Roe Street, Northbridge. The area in the arena's forecourt will also be maximised, which is something that Perth very much needs, so that it will be able to have a big screen, just as there is in Federation Square, Melbourne. People will obviously be able to watch events such as the World Cup football, the AFL Grand Final, the Olympic and Commonwealth Games and the like. That will provide a fantastic space for Perth.

There are a few knockers opposite, but those people who know a little about this issue have been very positive. Andrew Vlahov said on Sunday that he had played in many arenas around the world and that he thought that this arena will be the best. Jack Bendat said that this is what we need and that if we want to get on the map and do something different, we cannot continue to build a square building.

Mr T. Buswell: Are you sure that is what he said?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The fuddy-duddys opposite will probably be in bed by the time any night-time events are held at the arena, so perhaps it does not interest them!

This arena will put Perth on the world map for entertainment and sporting events. This will be a fantastic enhancement for Perth. This arena is much needed and is something that our government firmly supports. I am delighted that it will be not only an iconic building, but an incredibly functional building. I am delighted that we will be providing car parking, and that as part of this project we will also be providing this fantastic additional space in the forecourt of the building. I think the arena will be sensational.