

LAVERTON HOSPITAL — UPGRADE

572. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. Considering the minister has now failed to allocate funding in two budgets and has provided no confirmation today, why does the minister not just confirm that he has abandoned this project?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

Quite frankly, it is because I have made repeated comments in this place and in the media that it is a project that we are committed to, like many others in the community. However, after eight and a half years of destroying the state's finances —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr R.H. COOK: After eight and a half years of enduring the government of —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members of the National Party, if you ask a question, you do not answer it; the minister will.

Mr R.H. COOK: With \$40 billion in debt, we had to take a few measures that ultimately put this state back on its feet. I am very pleased and very proud to be part of a government that is doing just that. We have not forgotten the people of Laverton. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Minister for Regional Development and I went out there, we met with the Laverton shire, and we spent time with the staff who work in that hospital and provide a great service to the community, and we know that we have to find the resources to fix it. But what we had to do first was just fix the mess that was left behind.