

CORONAVIRUS — REGIONAL TOURISM — GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

**258. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Tourism:**

I have a supplementary question. I thank the minister. The CEO of Australia's North West Tourism has said that the situation is like something out of a nightmare for businesses in the north. Will this government be announcing a tailored support package for the north of our state?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

What we have done to date—the member will no doubt have been watching as we announced the anticipated lifting of restrictions on 18 May—is enable travel within those four remaining regions. That is something that the Nationals WA was calling for only a week ago, demanding that the government enable movement between the midwest, Gascoyne and Pilbara. That is exactly what the government has done, amongst other regions, including removing internal borders in the Kimberley, enabling movement within those regions. It is all being done in accordance with health advice. It would be very dangerous for anybody to ignore the health advice. It has been world class. Within Australia, I think Western Australia has undeniably had one of the best responses, if not the best response, to this threat in the world. That is a direct consequence of great leadership and seeking and taking the best health advice in the world. There is no reason for abandoning that approach now. That would be foolhardy.

The advice that we have taken has resulted in some of these measures being slower than perhaps some people would like, but in terms of liberalisation, they are far in excess of those in any other state in the country. Victorians are not going to cafes and restaurants and arguing about how many can go in; they just are not going. In Queensland and New South Wales, there is a limit of 10 people and in South Australia, there is a limit of 10 for outdoor dining only. We are doing a lot for tourism businesses around the state. We are enabling those businesses to benefit from travel within their regions. On health advice, we will move towards giving greater opportunities in due course. We are looking at what else we can do to support some of those businesses that are likely to sustain difficulties for a much longer period than those in other parts of the state. We are looking at it and we will do what we can. Everything we have done to date has been focused on protecting the Western Australian community in its entirety, including tourism businesses. We will not have a tourism business to go back to if we cannot defend against the COVID threat.