

PEMBERTON TROUT HATCHERY

Statement by Minister for Fisheries

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries) [12.21 pm]: On Sunday, I joined representatives from south west freshwater angling groups and the team from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to celebrate 50 years of state government support for freshwater fisheries through the Pemberton Freshwater Research Centre, which is better known as the Pemberton trout hatchery. As part of the celebrations, I launched *A brief history of the Pemberton trout hatchery*, a book produced by the DPIRD freshwater aquaculture research and development team. The book tells the story of the facility and the people with a can-do spirit who have done so much to make it a significant government asset and help it connect to the social fabric of the community. Over the five decades the centre has been running, there have been only three managers and two of them, Tony Church and Terry Cabassi, were at the hatchery to mark the occasion.

The McGowan government has demonstrated an ongoing commitment to enhancing the freshwater fishing experience for recreational fisheries in Western Australia. In 2017, the McGowan government enabled changes to allow year-round access to freshwater fishing experiences for the thousands of recreational fishers who enjoy wetting a line in our freshwater rivers and dams in the south west. Recently, the state government allocated \$305 000 for DPIRD to develop a business case to upgrade this facility to help boost trout stocking programs and tourism across WA's south west. More than 60 per cent of the trout stockings each year are released into irrigation dams. In all, there are 55 dam and river locations that are stocked across the south west and Peel regions. Having legal-size rainbow and brown trout in the right place at the right time is part of the strategy to improve the experience for the nearly 10 000 fishers with a freshwater fishing licence.

I would like to give a shout-out to Dian's Little Cake House, which produced a cake for the celebration that bore a striking resemblance to a very large rainbow trout. I am pleased to say it was above the 300-millimetre size limit.