

TOURISM — MARKETING — FUNDING

155. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government \$12 million boost to tourism marketing announced today. Can the Premier advise the house how this funding boost will attract more visitors to the state and support the tourism industry in creating more jobs for Western Australians?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Bunbury.

I was remiss in my earlier question not to acknowledge the member for Midland—25 years in Parliament today. She is the mother of the house, as I understand it, the first mother of the house in the history of Australia. We should all be very proud.

[Applause.]

Mr M. McGOWAN: She succeeded the former member for Cottesloe, as the father of the house.

This government has invested more in tourism than any other government in history, a record amount of tourism funding, and today it got bigger.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I was very pleased this morning to announce boost funding coming up in the current budget to support tourism —

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I mean, honestly, please. Stop this carping.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the first time. I warned you three times, I cannot do much more than that.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is just horrible. It is a straightforward question. Let me answer the question; opposition members can ask their questions then.

I announced boost funding of \$9 million of new money, and an additional \$3 million of existing money towards promoting international tourism to Western Australia.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That will be expended over the next 15 or 16 months. This, we expect, will see an improvement in international tourists coming to Western Australia. We have already seen a turnaround in international tourism.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: This will go to, in particular, cooperative marketing campaigns with airlines, overseas travel companies, online travel agencies and inbound tour operators in places like Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia and Hong Kong, as well as the United Kingdom, Germany and the United States.

It has been welcomed by industry. The tourism council CEO, Evan Hall, put out a statement today welcoming the boost. I quote from Evan Hall —

“This funding boost is what the industry needs to drive immediate bookings and maintain —

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the second time. You will be going on holidays soon.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I quote —

“This funding boost is what the industry needs to drive immediate bookings and maintain and grow visitors coming to Australia,” ...

I also note that Bradley Woods of the Australian Hotels Association put out a statement. I quote one of his paragraphs —

“The State Government’s announcement today strongly supports this investment and will lead to jobs growth.”

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members on my left!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Both major tourism industry organisations have welcomed what we have done today. This is the dividend of good financial management. When we manage the finances properly, we are able to free up capacity to do things such as this. When the former government had spend growth going at 6.7 per cent, it was difficult to do this. Obviously, we have spend growth down at the one or 1.2 per cent mark so we are able to actually free up resources to do this through good financial management. I would like to thank the Minister for Tourism, the Treasurer and cabinet for all their work to allow this important initiative to happen today.