

COMMUNITY COASTAL REHABILITATION PROJECTS

67. Mr A.P. O'GORMAN to the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:

What is the Gallop government doing to ensure funding for community rehabilitation projects along the coast since the federal government's decision to cease the joint Coastwest-Coastcare program?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN replied:

Mr Speaker -

Dr G.I. Gallop: Is the Leader of the Opposition listening to this?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: I do not think so. It impacts on the metropolitan area as well as the country - enough to make him turn off his hearing aid. I will not be able to repeat the stellar performance of the member next to me. However, I am pleased to announce today the \$500 000 Coastwest grants for 2005, an important project that has allowed many community groups, local governments and educational groups to come together with the state government to implement projects to repair, remediate and improve the coastal environment. The seats of the members for Joondalup and Mindarie will be the beneficiaries of these fantastic projects.

Ms K. Hodson-Thomas: Any other seats?

Ms A.J.G. MacTIERNAN: Yes, I am sure that some projects in the member's area have benefited. Indeed, over the years, projects have been delivered up and down the coast, from Broome to Esperance. This used to be a jointly funded project. State funding was matched by funds from the commonwealth until 2002, when the commonwealth decided it was no longer interested and adopted a new funding model. When the federal government introduced its new funding model - the National Heritage Trust - 13 per cent of those funds were to be spent on equivalent projects. I regret to report that in 2003-04 only 1.4 per cent, not 13 per cent, of federal funds were spent. We did slightly better last year, with about 3.2 per cent being spent on these coastal areas where pressure is increasing from both growing populations and recreational needs. However, once again, the Gallop government is stepping in to fill the breach. Not only are we continuing this project but also prior to the last election we announced that, as from the next round of funding later this year, we will allocate another \$250 000 to these coastal repair programs. I urge all the community, especially members who represent coastal areas, to send in their applications.