

Mr Chris Hatton; Mr Bill Johnston; Speaker; Ms Margaret Quirk; Ms Josie Farrer; Ms Wendy Duncan; Mr John Quigley; Acting Speaker; Mr Jan Norberger; Mr Frank Alban; Mr Nathan Morton; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr John Day

PREMIER'S STATEMENT

Consideration

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting

MR C.D. HATTON (Balcatta) [2.43 pm]: I would like to recommence my reflections on the Premier's Statement. Before the adjournment, I had a brief moment of maybe 30 seconds to a minute to enter into my reflections. I say again that I am excited to be involved in the Liberal–National government and what it is doing for the people of Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members! If anyone wants a private meeting, go outside. Member for Mandurah, I do not want to hear from you.

Mr C.D. HATTON: Western Australia will become an even greater place to live and a greater tourist destination as major infrastructure projects are completed in the next few years. While the economy moves across from mining–construction to the export phase, the domestic job market is buoyed by construction in the new home market and commercial ventures. Population pressure is adjusting and so is the job market, with 29 000 new home builds and major public and private investments in building and construction around the CBD and suburbs providing jobs in the building industry. Jobs are the key in this government.

The Liberal–National government is in its seventh year of stable government, presenting solid planning, sound policy, and a focused and committed team guided by strong leadership by the Premier and cabinet. As the Premier said, 2015 is a year of consolidation leading into the planned delivery of major and necessary infrastructure projects across WA. The Liberal–National government will continue building for Western Australians, legislating in the house for good policy and future directions for Western Australians in this modern world. Looking at the development of Perth —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Mandurah, I am now going to call you to order for the first time. I think we have had enough of that now.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: My understanding is that members are not permitted to read speeches in the chamber.

Mr N.W. Morton interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Forrestfield, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr P.B. Watson: Second! He's been naughty for the day.

The SPEAKER: I have got him down for the first time. Member for Albany, if I need your assistance I will ask for it—thank you, in any event! The member for Cannington had a point of order and I want to hear him in silence.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It does appear that the member for Balcatta is reading his speech. My understanding is that is not in accordance with the standing orders.

The SPEAKER: Member for Balcatta, you are allowed to refer to your notes, but please do not read them.

Debate Resumed

Mr C.D. HATTON: I think there has been a lot of reading during sessions.

Looking at Perth, construction in both the public and private sector is at a high. Key developments include the Perth City Link, Elizabeth Quay, Perth Children's Hospital, Perth Stadium, Kings Square, old Treasury building and even Queens Riverside.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Perth, I call you to order now for the first time. Can we just let the member for Balcatta get on with his speech.

Mr C.D. HATTON: Perth has become a more mature city under this government and a more vibrant and clean city that ranks high on world standards. In many ways we are catching up rapidly to the vibrancy of other great

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cities, such as Melbourne. The Yagan Square development will be Perth's equivalent to Melbourne's Federation Square. This government has opened up the doors to the hospitality industry and associated small businesses that have emerged to provide people with places to recreate and enjoy. By reducing red tape on small bars and retail outlets, there is now greater confidence in small business and investment confidence is growing daily. This government promotes entertainment, international sporting events and public art. This government is committed to providing world-class venues for events and promoting tourism and associated business opportunities that bring jobs to Western Australians. The Fringe World Festival, *The Giants* and the Perth International Arts Festival have all demonstrated lately how vibrant this city is, and Perth is the way it is because of the investment of government.

Perth has matured into an attractive city that offers vibrancy, but more importantly this government continues to recognise the need for retaining its culture and heritage that reflects our identity and our past. Heritage is valued, and as we walk through Perth and beyond, particularly along St Georges Terrace, we see the government's commitment to heritage. Now the government will consolidate that commitment by introducing the new Heritage bill, which will provide protections within the development needs of Perth and greater Western Australia.

The benefits of living in Perth, Western Australia, are great. It is clean and vibrant. The schools are the best in Australia, and the hospitals rank right up there on world standards. Walking the streets of Northbridge is now a pleasurable experience for all. The new policing model will create grassroots contacts with communities. The spending that this government has done has shown forward vision. It has been planned for the people of Western Australia. It is not being wasteful. This government will consolidate and deliver major building and transport infrastructure projects in the next few years.

Point of Order

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I think the member might be reading from an official document, and I ask that he table it.

Mr C.D. HATTON: I am quite happy to table this.

The SPEAKER: It is not necessary to table it if it is not an official document.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The suspicion of the member for Girrawheen is that this document has actually been prepared by a government agency, and that is why we believe it may be an official document, in which case it needs to be tabled.

The SPEAKER: Member for Balcatta, can you tell us what that document is that you are reading from?

Mr C.D. HATTON: This is a 17-page document written in my own handwriting.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much. There is no need to table it.

Debate Resumed

Mr C.D. HATTON: The private building industry sector is investing in major construction of hotels. The private sector invests confidently with this stable government, something it would not do with a Labor government. There are the Ritz-Carlton and Hilton Hotels, Elizabeth Quay Crown Towers and many more investments. These investments will promote tourism. They bring jobs to Perth, and I again mention that jobs are very important to us. They provide accommodation options and create economic security. I welcome the Perth city act to capture the vibrancy of this city. Like Melbourne and other vibrant, proud cities, Perth has become a proud city, as was demonstrated by the attendance of 1.4 million people at *The Giants*. Western Australia is showing that it is the place to be.

This government is demonstrating that it will continue to be stable as a government, but progressive in creating opportunities for businesses, employment and growth. It will continue reforms towards red tape reduction, often replacing outdated legislation with more modern legislation. There will be continuing work on trading hours, planning, liquor licence reform, and also reform in the mining and agricultural sectors. There are some challenging reforms, as the Premier has stated, and there always will be. However, I and people around me are proud to be part of a government that cares for people and cares for those in our community who are more vulnerable.

This government has a strong track record in the area of providing disability services. My involvement in my own communities around Balcatta and my parliamentary committee work demonstrates the support that this government gives to that sector. Since 2008, this government has funded disability services to a high level, up to an average of eight per cent over six years above previous funding. This year there is the proposed construction of Western Australia's first disability justice centre, to be operated by the Disability Services Commission. I must say at this point that the opposition displayed appalling judgement in effectively stalling the passage of

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the Declared Places (Mentally Impaired Accused) Bill 2013. The opposition debate focused on the location of the centre and not on the needs of these vulnerable people.

Similarly, I am proud of this government's commitment to the mental health needs of Western Australians. The passage through Parliament of the Mental Health Bill in 2014 now allows safeguards for vulnerable people with mental health issues and allows greater family involvement. This government has strengthened its commitment to mental health by adopting, in 2014, a 10-year mental health plan that promotes system-wide change and includes the staged closure of the ageing Graylands site. Once again, I must say that I am proud that this government is setting a strong agenda in disability and mental health services. I am encouraged that residents in the Balcatta electorate and beyond will have some doors opened for their needs, including at Osborne Park Hospital and the Medicare Local in Main Street, now called Panorama Health, I believe. I will continue to work alongside those people in my communities who are more vulnerable and who need assistance for essential services and support.

I would now like to highlight the benefits that this government has brought to Western Australia in the very important areas of health, schools and education. In the area of health, there has been enormous investment in building and upgrading hospitals in metropolitan and regional Western Australia. There has been a \$7 billion build from 2008 until now. Fiona Stanley Hospital is operational—a world-class hospital to cater for Western Australia's needs for decades to come. The Perth Children's Hospital will be complete by 2015–16 to cater for children's medical needs for decades to come. The Midland hospital will be opening soon. There is the delivery of good hospitals for regional Western Australia as well. Busselton Health Campus is opening next month. The Kalgoorlie and Broome campuses are on board, and Exmouth and Carnarvon are being upgraded, to name some regional hospitals. The Karratha hospital contract is also coming up, and a start will be made in 2016. There is also a half-billion-dollar spend on the state's southern sector to improve the Esperance and Merredin hospitals. Clearly, there has been a massive investment in hospitals across Western Australia since 2008 by this government and, as the Premier said, 2015 will be a consolidation year that recognises all that has been done to provide for future generations of Western Australians.

I will talk a bit about schools now. As is the case with hospitals, the construction of school buildings and infrastructure has been absolutely massive, and the money invested has been for generations of schoolchildren in the future so that they can have positive learning experiences. Since 2008, there has been a \$40 billion spend on school infrastructure by this government, with \$23.5 billion more to be spent over the next four years. It is clear that the opposition would not be capable of delivering what this government has delivered since 2008, not only in the areas of disability and mental health, but also with hospitals and schools. The opposition is not capable of delivering for the people of Western Australia, as this government has demonstrated.

This government's debt is good debt—investment to the public, for the public. Ninety per cent of the debt is related to providing essential services in power, water, roads, hospitals and schools. Now and into the future the people of Western Australia will see a return on this investment, and that is why this government will consolidate in 2015. The investment builds, the upgrades, have been consistent over six years of this government and major projects are expected to be completed on time and, surprisingly for the opposition, occasionally under budget.

The people of Western Australia do not want another Labor government fiasco like the Labor government attempt to build Perth Arena. It was an appalling example of mismanagement and wasting taxpayers' money. It took a new government to come in and mop up the mess, as most conservative governments do. The arena opened in 2011, 31 months overdue. It cost \$548.7 million and was 243 per cent above the original budget estimate. The Labor government, from 2004 on, failed in many areas of major infrastructure. It failed in scoping and planning. It failed in monitoring and reporting. It had insufficient analysis and legal advice. This opposition here, the legacy of poor Labor management and wasteful spending of taxpayers' money, still attempts to throw dirt on our management. I suggest that this opposition, if it is still capable, starts wiping off its own dirt. Unlike Labor, this government is building for Western Australia, within budget or under budget, and providing opportunities for employment and jobs for the future.

While this Labor opposition continues to master the art of doing less with more, like in 2001–2008 and the running down of the electricity sector, the Liberal–National-led government, with its strong Premier and cabinet, will do the hard yards for Western Australians. The Liberal–National government spends when needed where needed and works toward providing employment and jobs. The years of the WA Gallop–Carpenter government of 2001–2008 was a lacklustre time. Investment in business was dull, infrastructure was not delivered, and hospitals and schools were neglected. The Leader of the Opposition will well remember the difficult times in his education work. Now we have a transforming education system in WA that is highly regarded across Australia and in parts of the world. We adopted the recommendations of the Gonski and Teese reports. We have moved to

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better funded schools with equitable per student funding and funding for special needs and Aboriginals. We have the independent public school uptake to a total of approximately 440 schools, with 178 new schools coming on board, representing 70 per cent of the teaching and student population of our government schools. The transition of year 7s to high school this year has been smooth, with the government spending \$230 million on the buildings and infrastructure for this to happen. This government has done it the right way—unlike what we see from opposition members; they need to get it right, like us. Secondary school curriculum changes have been positive and are continuing to be positive with the Western Australian Certificate of Education enabling and ensuring that young Western Australians will be better equipped for further education and employment pathways into the future. Again, this government is helping to provide job opportunities.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr C.D. HATTON: Public schools have record funding leading into 2015. There has been a 61 per cent increase in funding since 2008. I am pleased that the new funding model will support individual needs, whether metropolitan or regional, and the needs of Aboriginals across Western Australia. I will continue my support for schools in the Balcatta electorate. West Balcatta Primary School was school of the year in 2012. I am discussing some possible playground issues at Tuart Hill Primary School at the moment. Takari Primary School presented 800 signatures to me; I work with the parents of Takari on school traffic issues and flashing lights. At Glendale Primary School in Hamersley, they already have their 40-kilometre-an-hour flashing lights installed. I am discussing lights and traffic issues with St Kieran Catholic Primary School, and doing the same at St Denis Catholic Primary School. Balcatta Primary School is doing very well under its principal, Mr Gates. I am having further discussions with Balcatta Senior High School, particularly on the possible upgrade of their home economics room. Osborne Primary School has some parking issues. Tuart College is a fantastic senior level-type college. I am on their board and they have been doing great work there.

In conclusion, this Liberal–National government has a comprehensive legislation and policy agenda, not just in health, education, and law and order, but also in areas of special needs, such as disabilities and mental health. This government continues its commitment to govern for the people and into the future as it has done since 2008. This government has committed to necessary reforms and building for new and future generations of Western Australians. This government has delivered since 2008, during the global financial crisis and some difficult political times across Australia and the world; but also this government remains strong, stable, focused and ready to deliver health services, disability funding and mental health planning, and to deliver world-class education and training for the future, with investment in training for specialised jobs. Employment in WA is stable, and our state has one of the best employment figures in the whole of Australia, if not the best. This government is providing vibrant environments and building tourism, which means more jobs in hospitality and small business. This government is providing transport networks and choices for housing and new home starts—29 000 in the last year.

This government has a good solid track record, unlike Labor governments that invest in bureaucratic backdoor jobs. They mishandle major infrastructure projects and they stall good legislation—legislation that is essential for vulnerable Western Australians, such as with declared places. It is appalling. Put simply, this opposition has weak policy, or no policy. Under the direction of this government's strong leadership, this Liberal–National government of the Premier and cabinet, I will continue to work for the people in the Balcatta electorate. I look forward to providing some transport and traffic congestion options and to improving the liveability and services in local areas.

Mr M.P. Murray: What's your mark?

Mr C.D. HATTON: It is 7.4, which is not bad actually!

I am pleased to announce that the Reid Highway upgrade —

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr C.D. HATTON: The member should look at his own mark.

The Reid Highway upgrade through Balcatta is a major infrastructure investment in the electorate. It will start this year with over \$48 million worth of investment, completed as early as 2016. Again I say, this is more delivery to the people of Balcatta than any Labor government has ever delivered.

I finish by saying that I fully support the initiatives of this Liberal–National government under the command of our strong Premier and his cabinet. I thank you, Mr Speaker.

MS J. FARRER (Kimberley) [3.08 pm]: Last year I raised questions in this Parliament directed to the Premier regarding violence and antisocial behaviour in Broome. I was very disappointed with the Premier's response, as it seemed his single-mindedness was on blaming the Shire of Broome for this government's decision years ago

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to withdraw funding to build a hostel in that town. This issue was not solved by only having a hostel built in Broome. A multi-agency approach is urgently needed I have spoken about that with the Shire of Broome, the police, the Yarool Enterprise Aboriginal Corporation and others. I wrote to the Minister for Police on this issue in November last year, who I have not received a response from, and I have also spoken to the Minister for Housing, asking them to assist in improving this serious matter. As we know from living in Broome, a lot more needs to be done. Urban revitalisation is needed the most, especially in an area called the “Bronx in Broome”, where a lot of antisocial behaviour is played out.

Residents of Broome feel that they have been ignored by the Premier and this government. The Premier stated that what is being experienced in Broome and the Kimberley is one of the most serious issues in our state, yet I have not seen any changes or any action from the government to help make those changes. Last week, while I was in Broome, an Aboriginal person was murdered on Male Oval. That person was one of the Aboriginal people who had been displaced from their Aboriginal communities out in the desert. After this murder happened at that oval in Broome, I wrote to the Premier asking for support. I have not seen or heard any action from the government on a lot of these issues. Since that murder, I have written to the Premier asking him to intervene and meet with the Broome shire, Yawuru Aboriginal Corporation and local business owners to develop a solution. Today, I urge the Premier to do this immediately.

Youth crime is also an ongoing issue throughout my electorate. In Broome, there is a known youth gang called the Bill Boys. To become a member of that Bill Boys group a kid has to commit arson. We saw a lot of that happening over the Christmas break when kids got together and set fire to houses, stole motorbikes and stole and set fire to cars. They do all these things but it seems that nothing can change them. There have also been serious break-ins when people have gone away on holiday. I have heard many accounts of youths breaking into houses to steal food, and that is just one part of it. An article on Monday described how a group of youths aged between 10 to 14 years old stole vehicles, including a bus, and drove around Fitzroy Crossing before becoming bogged. There was another incident last night involving about seven of the kids in Fitzroy, the oldest being about 12 years old. Those seven children were in a vehicle that rolled over and one of the girls was killed. That happened only last night. I am a bit heartbroken not knowing why the help we have asked for is not given since I came to Parliament in 2013.

In September last year, I tabled the report titled “Kimberley Juvenile Justice: Improving the Current Juvenile Justice System”. I would like to know whether the government has taken the time to read the report or taken any notice of the 19 recommendations in it. Those 19 recommendations were from the people of West Kimberley who got together to try to work out some ways of breaking the pattern of kids going into prison. As the member for Kimberley, I have not heard anything, and I am a bit disappointed because kids are still being brought down to Perth, and we hear stories from the kids after they have been released. Youth justice services need more resourcing, as do many organisations in the Kimberley. The Yiriman Project has outlined its need for more funding. It does a lot of work with Aboriginal kids who have been sentenced. They take them out to the bush to educate them because the education they receive from some of the old people is different from mainstream education. It teaches them a lot about respecting who they are and respecting other people and the public. The funding required is vital to make sure the Yiriman Project is ongoing.

There is definitely a need for youth services to be available in the evenings everywhere across the Kimberley. Youth work is not just a job to some people. Youth workers start working at 7.00 in the evening and close at 9.00 am. It seems to me—I live in Halls Creek and I see it all the time—that once school is out, a lot of the kids have free time between nine o’clock and the early hours of the morning. They stand beside the roadway and throw rocks at some of the big trucks and the Greyhound buses as they drive past. The police are trying to deal with it, but they need a lot more support. I believe the youth work around the Kimberley should be from 8.00 in the evening until six o’clock in the morning because that is the time when the kids roam the streets. I guess in one sense that is part of the lifestyle of Aboriginal kids because they used to hunt at night for the food they needed. The best parts of the day, during midday and the afternoon are when they had their nap. School provides that rest time for a lot of the kids because they are in school. At night, they are bored, so some of the services should be looking at programs that occupy their minds and keep them off the street. There should be somewhere for them to go where programs are provided that help them to understand that they cannot go out destroying homes and properties or throwing rocks at trucks. We have heard this right across the Kimberley. I think it is happening also in the Pilbara. I believe there should be some guidelines attached to youth programs to work with those kids. Most support programs for parents and carers—alternative education programs in our schools—also would support that so that struggling youth are engaged and actually want to attend school.

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The issue of antisocial behaviour among youth is very closely linked to suicide. I talked about suicide in my maiden speech. It is a huge issue in my electorate. There is a feeling of hopelessness among a lot of our young kids. That hopelessness is felt by many in the Kimberley, including adults. I have decided to read out a section of my 2014 reply to the Premier's Statement, which reads —

I wish to raise serious ongoing issues in my electorate and to say that despite numerous pleas for the government to take urgent action, the situation has not improved. Over the Christmas period, many members travelled overseas and managed to have a small break from constituent work. In my electorate during this time, there were three completed suicides in January. That meant that I spent much of my time consoling family members of the deceased.

...

Suicide continues to create a wave of grief throughout my electorate.

I call on all members—everyone who is a member of Parliament, particularly the government, and the Legislative Assembly—to think about the bipartisan commitment given by members to this issue last year. What has happened since that time in communities to improve and support the mental health and wellbeing of people who need it? During the lead-up to this Christmas period, there were eight suicides in eight weeks. That is a lot of people to lose. Just last night, there was another suicide in the community of Bayulu, which is just outside Fitzroy Crossing. That makes nine. In just this one week since I have been in Perth, there have been three deaths. It is a trying time for a lot of people in the Kimberley. I spoke about suicide in my maiden speech and I have raised it again and again in this Parliament. I would like every member of Parliament to consider what I have spoken about in the last three years that I have been in Parliament. It is a sad time for us. What saddens me most is when we go to funerals there are little children there. Long ago, when we used to go to funerals, we never took our children to funerals or to attend burials of family members. These days we take a lot of our kids to see what goes on. It saddens me to hear children talking about funerals, to hear the descriptions they give about the way they see funerals. One of the kids said, “When I get buried, mate, I want my funeral to be a lot better than this one. I want this and that.” Those are the sorts of things that kids see and talk about as part of normal life and death.

Recently I attended the opening of Alive and Kicking Goals in Broome. Minister Morton was there. I was glad she was there and glad that she listened to the issues that people spoke about, people who work for Alive and Kicking Goals. It is sad to hear that after 30 June this year, there will be no more funding for those who are doing that marvellous job. Another example is the lack of government support for the Standby program. The Standby program involves a group of people who work with Alive and Kicking Goals. It works right through the Kimberley with families who are grieving because they have lost a loved one. However, funding for that program is also uncertain past 30 June this year. The Standby program has already been forced to let go its only Aboriginal male staff member due to funding cuts. I am not sure where the government is spending money to prevent suicide, but it is certainly not hitting the ground in the Kimberley. As I said before, I have stood in this chamber and asked for bipartisan commitment to tackle suicide. Has the government done anything differently since then? I would like community members to receive support and counselling when they lose a member of their family. Suicide is a big issue in the Kimberley, even though there are not thousands or millions of people living there; indeed, most of those who live there are Indigenous and everybody knows everyone even though the Kimberley is a big place that covers a huge area of land. I would like local Kimberley people in all towns and communities to be trained in mental health first aid and suicide prevention. I want the government to invest in our youth. I have been sitting in Parliament all week. I have heard bits and pieces and a lot of things have been said across the chamber. I am talking about the future of our young people; we should be taking this seriously. I know that the Kimberley is a far-off place from metropolitan Perth, but there are real concerns.

The Kimberley Empowerment Project is delivering powerful training, but the government has provided minimal funding. We must ensure that funding is given not only to treat it when it happens or after it happens; rather, it should be ongoing. This government needs to show forward thinking. When I say forward thinking, I am talking about the whole of the Kimberley. A lot of people live on unemployment cheques that come in from one fortnight to another. They have to stretch their money for every reason possible—the cost of living is high, buying food is expensive and utility bills are high. We have talked about the rise in the cost of power, water and rent. Late last year before Parliament broke, the Premier announced that the government would be closing 150 Aboriginal communities. I would like to know whether the government has planned for the 150 Aboriginal communities that are supposed to be shut down to make sure that it meets the needs of their people and will accommodate them—make sure that they are all housed. We have already had one incident with the Oombulgurri people.

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[Member's time extended.]

Ms J. FARRER: Oombulgurri was closed and was bulldozed last year. The people who come from Oombulgurri are still fringe dwellers in their own country. A lot of them are living under trees or tarpaulins because they have not been housed. I have written a letter to the Minister for Housing. I have copies of that letter here. Even though the government has said that everyone has been housed, I and a lot of Kimberley people know that they have not been housed. It is really sad to have a government that says that it is doing this and doing that. We know; we are the people who live up there and we know when things are not being done.

I urge all my fellow members of Parliament to listen to what I have been asking for. One hundred and seventy-five people are still on the housing waitlist after being taken from their community of Oombulgurri, where they had adequate housing, and placed in Wyndham. They are still sleeping rough—very rough. A lot of them are not on the housing waitlist. This government is ludicrous for not meeting their needs. I say that as the member for Kimberley because there is a big issue in the Kimberley.

Are people listening? When Aboriginal people talk to their kids, they say, “Listen.” There is a difference in the way we talk about listening. Our people teach young kids to listen with their inner ear because then they start thinking and that places responsibility on them to listen. This is the sort of listening I would have thought we in Parliament would have been doing. We are all elected by the people in our area and every one of us who sits in Parliament has Aboriginal people in their electorate. I want more changes in the Kimberley. I want to hear about the issues and I want those issues to be addressed. I speak sincerely as a member who represents the Kimberley. The government needs to listen to people right across the Kimberley. I cannot speak for those in the Pilbara and the desert area, but a lot of transient people come to the Kimberley because they face the same issues in their area. They come to the Kimberley thinking that they will be housed and cared for. That is a serious thing about our people, transient people. There are records in schools that state that a child has not attended school for however many months, but there is a seriousness attached to why people are moving around. We need to listen and do something about it.

MS W.M. DUNCAN (Kalgoorlie — Deputy Speaker) [3.29 pm]: I welcome this opportunity to respond to the Premier's Statement and talk about some of the things that are happening in my electorate of Kalgoorlie. The goldfields have had it pretty tough over the past 18 months with low gold prices, a high cost of production and a lot of uncertainty in the nickel industry, particularly with BHP Billiton's Nickel West at first endeavouring to sell its assets in that region and then subsequently deciding to keep them with the company but reduce the operation and not engage in expansion. Today we heard a further announcement from BHP Billiton's Nickel West that more people from that operation will be made redundant.

Mr D.A. Templeman: How many is that?

Ms W.M. DUNCAN: I think it is 35, from memory; I do not have the media statement with me. That is on top of previous large redundancies. Fortunately for the towns in my electorate in the goldfields, a lot of those redundancies have been in Perth but there has also been quite a big impact on the town of Leinster. I really hope that 2015 will be a much better year for the goldfields. We believe that we have lost about 1 000 people from the gold industry. I am told anecdotally that over 60 shops have closed in the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. There are vacant houses and rents have dropped by an average of \$100 a week. One of the things I love about the people of Kalgoorlie-Boulder and my electorate is that they are born and bred mining people. They have seen this before. They understand the commodity cycle. I see that the member for Collie-Preston agrees with me. They say, “She'll be right. We just have to batten down the hatches. We will see good times again. It is an opportunity to clear out some of the deadwood in our operations.” That is one of the things that I really admire about the people whom I represent in the electorate of Kalgoorlie and the people of the goldfields but they are very concerned about some of the things that are happening in the mining industry.

In the media this week has been the issue of the gold royalty. The government has been undertaking a review and there is a great deal of concern in the gold industry that because they are really low-hanging fruit, companies may find themselves faced with a royalty increase. I have spent a lot of time talking to mining companies in my electorate and to the Gold Royalties Response Group. My branch took a resolution through to the National's state conference, which was successfully carried, that the Nationals do not support any increase in the gold royalty. I really hope that that will send a message to government. We have a fiscal issue in the state and we have a review of the royalties system.

I support the words of the member for Pilbara yesterday when he said that perhaps we should be looking at new ways of doing things, particularly in the iron ore industry. Through its own production strategies, we have seen a drop in the price of iron ore and a loss of \$1.7 billion from the state's royalty receipts. Many of those arrangements are under state agreements that were first established in the 1960s. Those state agreements have

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mutual obligations from not only the government but also the mining companies that are signatories to them. They have delivered great benefits to the mining companies over time. I particularly cite the example of Leinster in my electorate, which is the subject of a state agreement. A mining company has been given special conditions to undertake its business there. Some of the conditions of the state agreement are not being adhered to; for instance, managing the upgrade and maintenance of the police station. There are plenty of examples, mostly in the electorate of the member for Pilbara, where the terms of these state agreements are redundant.

Leinster is a place of concern to me. When I was there before Christmas, I went to all the northern goldfields schools for their assemblies and to their various Christmas parties just to find out what was going on. I got a very strong message from the people of Leinster that they want their town to be looked after during this period of uncertainty. When I was up there, I heard that perhaps the police station will close, perhaps Department of Transport services will no longer be delivered and that the community resource centre would close. I am really pleased to say that after communications with the Minister for Transport and with the district superintendent of police, I have had assurances that those services will not be taken out of Leinster. The CRC is a different matter. I was just contacted by the *Kalgoorlie Miner* today and told that the CRC in Leinster has closed. I have had an assurance from the Minister for Regional Development that the government is looking for a new way to ensure that that facility operates and that the services are available. We need to look after our remote communities. They are places where precious Australians choose to live and work. They are just as deserving of state services as others.

I have had a lot of contact with prospectors, in particular, and those in the non-corporate mining sector recently. It is proposed that mining prospector fees be increased from 1 July. In fact, I will be making a statement on this issue in grievances next week. I am really grateful to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, who has given me a good hearing on this issue. Hopefully when I raise this more directly with him next week, he will have some answers for me. One of the issues is that there is a proposal for an increase in fees from zero to \$590 to put in a program of works and \$6 950 for a mining proposal. They are new fees. On their own, they might not seem like a lot, although they are coming from a base of zero. The thing about our prospectors is that many of them do not have very sophisticated businesses. Many of them go out into the bush. They are not on the dole; they are not using other government services. They go out and look for their fortune. There is no weekly salary for prospectors. To pay these up-front fees before they have even found anything is really problematic for them. On top of that are the incredible increases in local government rates that have been announced for holders of exploration licences, prospecting licences and mining licences. For instance, the fee for a non-graticular exploration licence will increase by 236 per cent increase over seven years. The fee for a graticular exploration licence will increase by 300 per cent over seven years. A prospector came to me with a handwritten list of some of the fees he will face over the next period. I might add that a lot of these prospectors are Aboriginal people. They have been doing this for generations and earning an income for themselves. This gentleman gave me a list of the fees that he would be paying. For instance, the fee for one of his exploration licences start at \$4 789 and will go up to \$19 637, while another will increase from \$10 412 to \$42 691. This is a complex issue relating to the Valuer-General and the valuation of leases. I have had an assurance from both the Minister for Mines and Petroleum and the Minister for Regional Development; Lands that they are very much aware of the impost and will endeavour to resolve it. I look forward to hearing more about that.

The member for Kimberley mentioned the issues concerning our remote communities. She relayed the story about the withdrawal of federal government funding from remote communities. I do not think that the state government handled the response particularly well. I was particularly pleased to hear the Premier say last week that no communities will close over the next three years and that the government will take a considerable amount of time to consult with communities and ensure that there is a good understanding of what will happen. The interesting thing about the federal funding that is now being withdrawn from remote communities is that nearly half of it—\$29 million—actually goes in diesel. We really need to start looking at some innovative ways to make Aboriginal communities more sustainable and I applaud the Minister for Regional Development for saying that we should use royalties for regions to assist our remote Aboriginal communities to change for the better and to be more sustainable. That is not just pouring in money when the federal government pulls out because, as someone said—I am not sure whether it was Einstein—if we do the same thing over and over again, we should not be surprised if we get the same result. We need to do something different and I am really pleased to back royalties for regions to be used in that way.

The member for Kimberley talked about the report “Kimberley Juvenile Justice: Improving the Current Juvenile Justice System” and whether anybody had read it. I have and I commend the member for Kimberley for that report. However, I alert her to the fact that there has been a considerable amount of royalties for regions money

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directed to just those issues she has been raising. In fact, I had the honour as parliamentary secretary in the previous term of this government to go to Kununurra and launch the juvenile justice program there. I heard from the government officers there that for the first time they actually had enough resources to deal with the young people who came into their care, to endeavour to find foster families, to give them that support and to try to keep them out of the legal system, which is exactly what needs to happen. The member for Kimberley talks about young people roaming the streets at night and we absolutely need to focus on that, but we also need to focus on their families and where the support is in their communities. One of the challenges for this juvenile justice program that I launched in Kununurra was that sufficient foster families to look after these young children could not be found, and I think that is a really big challenge. I heard the comments on Closing the Gap over the last couple of weeks and the very, very sad figure that 50 per cent of children in state care are Aboriginal. There has been some talk that we are creating another stolen generation, but, as the member for Kimberley says, we need to all work together to ensure these children are cared for, given access to education and fed. The responsibility lies in many places. I was at a meeting in Laverton a couple of weeks ago and spoke to a highly respected Aboriginal elder. We were talking about liquor control and people's rights and so on and he said to me, "We don't have the right to kill or neglect our children. We don't have the right to assault our loved ones." That was a very difficult thing for that gentleman to say and he needs all support he can get for what we try to achieve in places such as Laverton.

One of the things I took a great deal of interest in previously in my role as member for the Mining and Pastoral Region and now as the member for Kalgoorlie is the issue of the foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. I was in the Fitzroy Valley when the Lililwan project was first launched by June Oscar and when there were First Nation people there from Canada talking about their experience and establishing that research project. Foetal alcohol spectrum disorder is not limited to Aboriginal communities. People say it is not their problem and it is up there in the Fitzroy Valley, but it is not just there, it is everywhere. The terrible thing is that it is preventable, but it is not curable. We need state and federal governments to give greater attention to FASD and we need to first of all recognise it as a disability so that those who are affected by this affliction can get the help they need. We need warning labels on beverages and public awareness campaigns. More importantly, we need supported accommodation for these children, because really the first time they get any help is when they fall foul of the law and that is not a satisfactory outcome. I was talking today over lunch with the Minister for Disability Services and I got a very sympathetic hearing from her about this need for our children.

I am aware that other people want to speak this afternoon and we are running out of time. There are two final matters I will raise. First of all, I want to alert the house to a young gentleman who lives in Kalgoorlie-Boulder whose beautiful young wife was rushed to King Edward Memorial Hospital to give birth to a beautiful but premature baby. He came down to visit her. The hospital said he needed a whooping cough vaccination before he could see his wife or his baby, which he had. That young man suffered a one-in-a-million reaction to that vaccination and he is now paralysed from the chest down. Because there was no negligence involved and because the vaccine was not faulty, that young man is in dire straits. Having been a well-paid mining man and quite capable of keeping his family magnificently, he is now at risk of losing his home. Nineteen countries in the world—a substantial number—have no-fault immunisation insurance, but Australia does not. We all benefit from the protection of compulsory immunisation, so we should wrap our arms around someone in the community who has one of these very rare reactions. I have written to the Premier, the Attorney General and the Minister for Health asking for an ex gratia payment to this young man and I would absolutely welcome the support of members.

My final comments today are about the price of fuel. I was driving from Kalgoorlie-Boulder to Perth before Christmas when the price of fuel was up around 140c a litre in Kalgoorlie, 126c in Southern Cross and about 110c in Perth. I decided to ask the question on Facebook to please explain why there is this differential. In fact, I also put on my Facebook page a link to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission so people could make a complaint about the price of fuel. The information I gathered is that the average differential between the price of fuel in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the average of five metropolitan cities in Australia is 6.7c a litre. Just before Christmas it went out to nearly 40c a litre. Thanks to the Facebook page campaign—one of our constituents set up the goldfields best fuel prices Facebook page—the price of fuel dropped by about 20c a litre. There is still a big differential between Kalgoorlie-Boulder and Perth and I think we need to do something more about that. The member for Kimberley talked about the cost of food and the cost of fuel and so on. It is all absolutely related to this differential and this gouging of fuel prices in regional areas. Six and a half thousand people engaged with me on Facebook about the price of fuel and subsequently the ACCC has agreed that it will investigate.

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MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler) [3.49 pm]: I rise to respond to the Premier's Statement and to highlight the Barnett government's broken promises on the provision of the rail extension from Butler to Yanchep. This has been a devastating blow for all those people in my electorate who were relying on the government's clear undertakings and promises before the vote in 2013 to have this line to Yanchep completed by 2020. I note that the member for Wanneroo is shaking his airhead from side to side and saying that that is not true. We will examine that, because the member for Wanneroo has been misleading my local community by saying that this is still on track. Let us look at it.

Upon coming to government in 2008, the Premier commissioned an independent report into public transport needs for Perth from 2008 to 2030. In doing that, he halted the Butler line, which had been started by Alannah MacTiernan and Labor before we lost government in September 2008. He froze those works, but in response to overwhelming public demonstrations, he reinstituted that line. He reinstituted that line not at the urging of the public, but after listening to the sensible arguments of Mr Nigel Satterley, who was in joint venture with LandCorp, which asked how it would sell all the land at Butler that it was developing together and get the money for the government unless the rail was put through. The Premier relented and put the line through to Butler. We know that the government did a botched job because it did not put down the anti-vibration matting—it caused so much damage to people's homes in Butler it is unbelievable—and then wiped its hands of that mess.

I go back to the government's promise to complete this rail line to Yanchep by 2020. I have the report here. It states —

The State Government asked an Independent Panel to consider the public transport needs of the Perth and Peel Regions for 2031 supported by a longer-term vision that considers public transport in a city of 3.5 million.

I wish to put on the record who was on this committee. There were no politicians. It was an independent committee. It was chaired by Mr Stuart Hicks, AO, a transport policy and strategy expert. The members of the panel were none other than Mr Reece Waldock, director general of the Department of Transport; Mr Eric Lumsden, PSM, director general of the Department of Planning; Mr Mark Burgess, managing director of the Public Transport Authority; Mr Menno Henneveld, managing director of Main Roads WA; Mr Anthony Kannis, executive director of infrastructure and finance at the Department of Treasury and Finance; Mr Neil Smith, a bus industry expert; Mr Fred Affleck, a rail industry expert; and Mr Howard Croxon, OAM, from the transport industry. They took over two years to do a complete, detailed study of what Perth needed in public transport and what projects would return the best value for the investment made. It was split into two categories, including those projects that they called stage 1 projects. The report states —

Projects that can be implemented to provide a network of rapid transit services across Perth before 2020 are grouped into:

- Transformational projects;

The number one project in the list of transformational projects was the northern suburbs rail extension. The report states —

The NSR is committed to extend north to Butler. Extending north to Yanchep will support the development of the Yanchep City Centre with a station precinct at its centre. Future developments between Butler and Yanchep will lead to future development of stations, potentially at Alkimos and Eglinton.

The early development of this line will provide developers with the certainty required to develop at a higher density, particularly around train stations and within walkable catchments of services. It will support a much more sustainable form of urban development with significantly lower levels of car use.

That was the first project on their list to be done before 2020. The second project was the Metro Area Express light rail. What was the government's response to this report? The government's response to this report was delivered by none other than the then Minister for Transport, Mr Troy Buswell. His media statement, which is headed "Light rail, bus rapid transit and railway to Yanchep part of 20-year public transport plan", states —

Transport Minister Troy Buswell said the 'Public Transport in Perth in 2031' plan outlined a strategy to increase capacity and efficiency of the current network ...

...

"Our two key transformational projects to redefine travel and development patterns are the extension of the Northern Suburbs Railway to Yanchep and a light rail from Mirrabooka to the CBD.

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“The extension of the rail line north to Yanchep will support the development of the Yanchep City Centre, with a station at its centre, and the fast-tracking of this line will provide developers with the certainty they need to proceed with higher density development.

...

Mr Buswell said the Government would use \$11million allocated in the 2011–12 State Budget to progress planning for the three priority projects.

Last year when the Liberal Party state conference was convened, the Premier threw the recommendations of the independent committee in the bin. He announced that there would be a \$2.2 billion rail project to the airport and Forrestfield, including tunnels under the river. When questioned, he said that after that, the government would look at MAX light rail and after that, it would look at the Yanchep rail extension. The local community became enraged by this about-face by the Premier, after it had been induced to vote Liberal by the promise that the rail line would be through to Yanchep by 2020. The community was enraged by this statement by the Premier and made its displeasure well known. The member for Wanneroo asserted to the local community that there had been no change and that there was no delay in this project. His comments in that regard were given wide coverage in the local media. Those lies have been put to the sword by none other than a senior cabinet minister and upper house member for North Metropolitan Region, Mr Michael Mischin. The local community wrote to Mr Mischin, as its local member in the upper house, expressing its concern about the broken promise by the Barnett government and Mr Mischin wrote back and said —

“The decision to delay the Yanchep line from its original 2020 schedule was made on patronage grounds,” ...

Withdrawal of Remark

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): Member, you have used the word “lies”. That is unparliamentary, so I ask you to withdraw it and rephrase that sentence.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Okay.

Debate Resumed

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: The grossly dishonest assertions by the member for Wanneroo have been put to the sword by the very revealing letter of Hon Michael Mischin, the Attorney General, who said —

“The decision to delay the Yanchep line from its original 2020 schedule was made on patronage grounds,” ...

He is saying that there has been a decision to delay the line beyond its original planned date and puts to the sword the gross dishonesty practised by the member for Wanneroo. The Attorney General went on to say —

“Although I accept completely that the population of the general Yanchep/Two Rocks area is increasing rapidly, —

He must have read that in the paper because he is never seen out there —

I cannot accept that we need to build costly infrastructure right now to service a potential situation that is still over 20 years away.

That is not what the independent report shows. The independent report shows that this will create enormous employment opportunities in Yanchep. It is a matter not just of getting people in the south on the rail line, but establishing the university, the hospitals and everything else that the Tokyu Corporation is waiting to build. The member for Kingsley knows that, because I was with the member for Kingsley in Tokyu’s boardroom in Tokyo less than 12 months ago when Tokyu said that all that it was waiting for to press the go button on a university campus and other facilities in Yanchep was confirmation that the rail line was going through. All the Liberal Party members who were on that delegation, including the Speaker, left that meeting with Mr Nomoto at the Tokyu Corporation convinced that this was, as the committee recognises, a priority project.

The committee went on to say that with all the roadworks taking place around the airport, a rail line to the airport was not needed until 2030 and could be in the second tranche. The Premier stood all this on its head for base political reasons, because he wants to try to increase the vote in the seat of Forrestfield held by “Junior”, and also the seat of Belmont. That has now been confirmed by Mr Mischin, who is also the Attorney General and Minister for Commerce, who said that the government was committed to extending the rail line when it was both affordable and efficient. He sees construction starting around 2024 or 2025. The member for Wanneroo is going around misleading the community saying that there is no delay. What a crock! How dishonest is the member that

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the people of Wanneroo are burdened with? Bring on 2017. They will not forget the betrayal that they have suffered at the hands of the Premier, supported by the member for Wanneroo, who has gone around dishonestly asserting, “Don’t look here. There’s nothing happening; no delay. Move on!” The people of Wanneroo are not that silly. The headline in the *North Coast Times* is “Response to rail rankles residents.” They are more than rankled with what has been revealed by the Attorney General. They are angry. They have been induced into this area of the promise —

Several members interjected.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Mr Acting Speaker (Mr P. Abetz), could you remind the peanuts in the peanut gallery that I do not want to hear their squeaks during my speech, thank you very much?

Several members interjected.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: There he goes again! He is a schoolteacher, but he cannot understand common English: we are not talking to the peanuts during this debate. The people are very upset. There are two roads into Yanchep: There is Wanneroo Road, which the people do not use now because they would have to go right up Yanchep Beach Road to get to Wanneroo to travel south, and which does not take them anywhere near the freeway anyway, and there is Marmion Avenue, which is essentially a single carriageway with entrances to a few subdivisions and which has been dualled for turning lanes; it is frightfully dangerous. More than that, there is no employment in the northern suburbs. Apart from the Clarkson shopping centre and the Butler shopping centre, which has a Masters and a couple of other little shops at this stage, there is no employment. The Premier identified it as the fastest growing area in Australia, but it has no employment opportunities. One of the biggest corporations in Japan, Tokyu Corporation, owns all of that Yanchep area in a joint venture with the Ang family. Gin Wah Ang is now managing director of the joint venture. They are sitting waiting to start development of the employment hub in the Yanchep city centre, but are now being told that that is on ice until about 2030, because the government will not even start construction until 2025. This is scandalous. What the member for Wanneroo is saying is scandalous. He is dishonestly saying —

Mr P.T. Miles interjected.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Mr Acting Speaker, can you tell the vegetable on the other side to shut his carrot top?

Mr P.T. Miles interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo!

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: He is saying that the local paper is verballing him because he is reported in the local paper —

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr J. NORBERGER: I do believe that the member for Butler referred to the member for Wanneroo as a vegetable, which I think is quite unparliamentary. I ask if you could ask him to take that back.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): Two things: firstly, only I have the authority as Acting Speaker to sit anyone down; and, secondly, I never heard the phrase. Had I heard it, I definitely would have asked for a withdrawal.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: I did say it. I will withdraw it, because he is a peanut and a peanut is not a vegetable. I do withdraw it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: That is qualified. I want an unqualified withdrawal.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: I withdraw it.

Debate Resumed

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: I revert to the member for Wanneroo’s gross dishonesty, which is more to the point. He is saying that I verballled him and he is accusing the *North Coast Times* of verballing him.

Point of Order

Mr F.A. ALBAN: I have been out of the chamber for a while, but what is the relevance with the character of the member for Wanneroo as to what the member for—wherever he is from—is saying?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): It was a response to an interjection. He is getting back to it.

Debate Resumed

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: To help the member for no railway at Ellenbrook, who also wants to see no railway at Yanchep, the point was that the member for Wanneroo has been dishonest with the local community by saying

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there was no delay. That is the problem. This is getting wide circulation in the electorate of Butler and along that coastal strip. The government and this parliamentary secretary, the member for Wanneroo, have been grossly dishonest and duplicitous.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member, you cannot use the word “dishonest” because it is an implication. Say it again.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: I am sorry; the last Chair said that that was okay.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I have just been informed that that is unparliamentary.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: He has been grossly untruthful.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I accept that.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Thank you very much, Mr Acting Speaker. The member for Wanneroo has been wildly untruthful with the local community by saying that there has been no delay, when Mr Mischin has put the member’s untruths to the sword by revealing that construction will not start before 2024–25, which means no rail until 2030. As I have clearly demonstrated, the government went to the last election promising that this rail will be built by 2020.

I seek an extension of a mere 10 minutes since everyone is so enthralled and because I have some more revelations to make.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: The transport situation in my electorate is dire. When the government came to power in 2008, it talked about extending the freeway to Hester Avenue, but it did not want to do it. The government drew up a consultative committee of local people to tell the government how to plan the freeway and it kept those people busy for two or three years. As I said before, where was this committee going to say the freeway would go? It could only go smack up the middle of the freeway reserve, but the committee took two or three years to resolve to build the freeway on the freeway reserve. That kept the local community distracted for a few years. Then the election came and the government said that it would build the freeway to Hester Avenue—another promise. The Premier said, “You’ll soon see a contract for \$250 million or \$350 million signed to extend the freeway.” The government is waiting until the eighth year of its term in government—its very last year—before it starts work so that it can go to an election and say, “We’ve started the freeway.” “Tricky Dicky” over there is smiling. I am sorry; the grossly untruthful member for Wanneroo over there is smiling at the government’s duplicity in this matter. He takes pride in it. The member for Wanneroo takes pride in the fact that the government has been able to trick the local community. This is what gets people so despondent about politicians—they will say these things just to get their vote. As the Premier said, it is not about the truth; it is about the vibe. Do not worry about the promises; it is about the vibe. The member created an exciting vibe, and everyone voted for him, but after the election it was, “You silly people! Get away! It was about the vibe. These weren’t commitments. I wasn’t making a commitment about Yanchep rail. I’ve got a vibe happening up there. I peeled a couple of per cent off the member for Butler’s margin, because I’ve got the vibe going.” These people are not silly; they have been done like a dinner. It is absolutely disgraceful.

There was not one word in the Premier’s Statement about the crisis on Marmion Avenue, with everyone pouring down from Yanchep on a single carriageway. We are getting a lot of accidents on that single carriageway. It has to be dualled, and there is not one dollar in the budget or anywhere else for the dualling of Marmion Avenue, which is at a crisis point. I will read a portion of the article in response to Hon Michael Mischin’s stunning revelation, which was not really a surprise, that the government has delayed this project. Ms Lanario is reported as saying that Hon Michael Mischin —

“obviously hasn’t been on Marmion Avenue” during the morning traffic.

“It’s bumper to bumper,” she said.

This is bumper to bumper 50 kilometres north of Perth. We have seen on the news recently all the chokepoints on the freeway system, and where are they? They are all on Mitchell Freeway north, in the Erindale Road area, further north at Whitfords Avenue, and up near Joondalup. There are all these chokepoints, but what is the government’s answer? Simply to deliver more cars onto the top of the freeway to join the 50-kilometre parking lot or queue to Perth, not to put in the rail as promised by the Premier. It is disgraceful of the Barnett government, and it will pay for it at the next election. The member for Wanneroo will also feel the backlash for his dishonest conduct for trying to fool everyone that there has been no delay. What is writ large in the Attorney General’s letter is that there has been a delay, and that delay has meant that not only will there be no rail by 2020, work on it will not even start until 2025. What a joke; what a disgrace!

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I want to raise a couple of other matters with the house that really rankle with the community out there. One of those is Two Rocks Marina. This facility is owned by the government and operated by the Department of Transport, and it has one boat launching ramp. The next boat launching ramp is down at Mindarie. Everyone who moves to the coast up there wants to use the ocean and gets a boat. That is why they choose that lifestyle. I will read from an article in the local community newspaper —

Residents Michael and Vicki Thiel said they and other local boaties were angry at the inadequate boat launching facilities.

“The problem has existed for a long time but was exacerbated on (December 30) with long queues of boat trailers and vehicles stretching back for up to 500m from 5am and lasting for hours,” Mr Thiel said.

“People reported having to wait in excess of 90 minutes to launch their craft.

“Parking was also chaotic with drivers parking up to 400m from the launching ramp.

“This of course caused further delays and congestion on the ramp while they walked back to the ramp to move their craft.

“The congestion was worse as the boaties returned and boat skippers needed to circle for long periods while waiting to recover their vessels.”

Mr Thiel said he had planned to take his boat out on December 30, but decided to turn around and go home rather than wait up to two hours to get it into the water.

“When you can’t get your boat in, it’s pretty sad,” he said.

This is a fairly basic facility. I used to be a member of Royal Perth Yacht Club, and raced out of there for about 25 years. Right next to Matilda Bay Restaurant there are two or three boat ramps together inside the club premises. There are another four boat ramps a little further up at Mounts Bay. Around the corner, there are more boat ramps. People in the western suburbs can all get their boats launched. If they go down to the mouth of the river and want to go out to the ocean, there are places at Bicton and Fremantle where they can enter the water. This area of Two Rocks which, as the Premier has said, houses the fastest growing population in Australia, has one boat ramp for the whole of the area. I represent, in this chamber, more people than any other member. We were all evened out to a rough average of 24 500 people per electorate before the last election, and members might be surprised—why I am tired is because I am working so hard—that I am servicing 34 000 electors, more than any other person in this Legislative Assembly. The only reason I say that is to give members some idea of the growth that is happening in the area. I must lose one-third of the electorate before the next election to bring me back to par. There will have to be another seat somewhere in that area; everyone knows that. This exploding population is being denied public transport, is being denied rail and has an inadequate road system.

Let me get to law and order. What a joke that is. We know that home break-ins—not of the kind we will be discussing next week that involve rape and violence, but the average home break-in while the homeowner is not home for the purpose of stealing valuables to buy drugs—are exploding. From the figures published we know that we are at all-time record lows in the figures for police apprehending offenders. I have here an article from *The Sunday Times* of 14 February headed, “Police get caught short”. It states that 50 per cent of crimes in Western Australia are never solved. It states that the crime sanction rate has fallen out of sight. Back in the last years of the Labor government, in 2009–10, 64.3 per cent of offenders were brought to book. Under this failing Minister for Police—the worst Minister for Police in Australia—the rate has plummeted to 46.7 per cent.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Will the Acting Speaker remind the new member in the chamber that I am not taking interjections. We will have some fun together next week.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, the member has only two minutes left.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: The newspaper states that fewer crimes are being solved than ever.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Fewer crimes than ever are being reported.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: The minister should come out to Butler and say that. We will have a chance next week, when the minister is at the ministerial table, to cross-examine her on that and other things that she has very injudiciously said, misleading this chamber in a serious way. However, we will come to those next week.

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We have a crime problem out there, and we have now reverted to policing on the cheap. This new policing model has been introduced because the commissioner said that the affordability of policing in Western Australia is becoming beyond the reach of the government's resources; they had to come up with a new basis. That is in the preface to his report. The Productivity Commission's report of 2013–14 revealed that Western Australia had the highest home burglary rate in Australia. I am not talking about the serious ones that get mandatory sentencing, which is going to be introduced next week and which we will be supporting, but I am talking about the highest home burglary rate and the highest car theft rate in Australia. It is out of control! Now 12 police officers have been withdrawn from Clarkson and put back into Joondalup. They are in retreat! That is disgraceful.

I will conclude by saying this: we are saddled with a no-hoper police minister. Her best quality is smiling and batting her eyelashes at the press gallery. In terms of delivering for Western Australia, she has failed! We have the worst crime rates in Australia. This is absolutely disgraceful.

MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield) [4.21 pm]: Wow! I cannot wait for next week. Bring it on! I want to start by correcting the record. Last night I was unfortunate to be in the chamber and listen to the deranged contribution of the member for Cannington. I have an uncorrected proof of *Hansard*, so I will not quote it, but I will reference it.

Mr J. Norberger interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: I will get to that, member for Joondalup.

He made the absurd and completely untrue comment that I arrogantly said in this place that I am going to win the election in 2017. I can say without equivocation that I have never made that comment. Whether it was in this chamber or out of this chamber, I have never once said that, ever, or an iteration of that. I would never be so arrogant as to take my constituents or my electorate for granted the way the Labor Party has taken the eastern suburbs for granted for generations. I would never do that. I will continue to work for my electorate. I will continue to deliver for my electorate where I can, and I will stand on my record in 2017 and be judged on that by my constituents. I will never make those comments and I never have. I did not appreciate that.

Mr F.A. Alban interjected.

Mr N.W. MORTON: We are used to the member for Cannington coming into this chamber day after day as he walks off, peddling Labor lies. I will see him next week. We all know his standards or lack thereof.

Withdrawal of Remark

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): The member for Forrestfield needs to withdraw that statement about lies.

Mr N.W. MORTON: I withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Mr N.W. MORTON: I was commenting on the member for Cannington's standards or lack thereof, which was evident in the way he ran the 2008 campaign. I am sure that members who were taking notice back then would remember the kind of behaviours of the then state director of the Labor Party.

I want to reflect on the Leader of the Opposition's reply to the Premier's Statement. It convinced me that the Leader of the Opposition is a man of no substance, no direction and no alternative. He stood and blatantly made throwaway lines such as, "I hate payroll tax." There was no vision about what he is going to do or how he will tackle payroll tax; he just said he hates payroll tax and moved on to the next throwaway line.

The Leader of the Opposition said that the government has dropped the ball on diversification. I get around the state and into various communities in Western Australia and I speak to people. I notice things such as diversification in medical research. One only needs to look at the fantastic facility at the new Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research, the science innovation at the University of Western Australia, the International Centre for Radio Astronomy Research or spend five minutes with Professor Peter Quinn to see what we are delivering in science and innovation in Western Australia. It is truly outstanding. It is all part of the diversification of the Western Australian economy and it is being done under the leadership and guidance of this Liberal–National government.

We have all heard that the mining and resources sector is going from construction to production, so obviously a government with foresight would ensure that construction jobs are there and there for the taking. Let me focus on some of those construction jobs: Elizabeth Quay, Perth City Link, the new Perth Stadium, Gateway WA—we heard the Minister for Transport this week in question time mention 1 300 construction jobs—and, of course, the

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\$2 billion Forrestfield–Airport Link. Look at the growth of the agriculture industry both domestically and internationally. We heard the Deputy Premier also talk this week about tourism in this state.

The Leader of the Opposition is also worried about education. Is that not interesting! I may have made a comment or two about the Leader of the Opposition when he was Minister for Education, as I was working in the system at the time. I do not say it lightly, but he is considered by a number of my former colleagues as one of the worst education ministers in recent times. Can I say, on the flipside of that: the current Premier is recognised as one of the best education ministers of current times.

Mr P. Papalia: You've got to get out more.

Mr N.W. MORTON: I spent 10 years in the system and I have got to get out more! That is another pathetic interjection from the member for Warnbro.

Getting back to education and the Leader of the Opposition's passion for education in Western Australia, when he was Minister for Education, what did he do? He disillusioned the entire workplace and bungled curriculum implementation changes. Would he listen to teachers? No. Would he give them the remuneration they deserved? No. What he did was spend \$666 000 of taxpayers money refurbishing his office. Where were his priorities? The Labor Party is all about the little person, the common folk, yet here we saw a minister turn his back on public education and make sure his office was suited out to a tee. I leave it at that by referring to an article in *The Sunday Times* on 29 June 2008, entitled "Minister counts refit cost", which states —

WHILE teachers battle the Carpenter Government for better pay, Education Minister Mark McGowan has spent \$666,000 of taxpayers' cash refitting his luxurious St Georges Tce offices.

Shame! I think the people of Western Australia can judge that.

Then the Leader of the Opposition went on to talk about stable government and cast aspersions on the Liberal–National government as not being a stable government. Please! Let us look at the record of the Leader of the Opposition as a minister. Are members ready? It is like a revolving door: 10 March 2005, appointed as a minister; seven months later, reshuffle; one month later, reshuffle; three months later, reshuffle; 10 months later, reshuffle; one month later, reshuffle; two months later, reshuffle; one month later, reshuffle; six months later, voted out. Thank God! That all occurred with the backdrop of the revolving door of the Corruption and Crime Commission, in which Labor ministers one after another high-fived each other as they tag teamed in and tag teamed out. They were a disgrace! But let me qualify it: that is the Leader of the Opposition's view on stable government. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for that lovely insight into his thinking and his clear vision for stable government in Western Australia. He said that people were leaving the state in droves, which again was proven to be another Labor lie when the Deputy Premier got up in question time and said that was not the case. WA is a great place to live. WA is the best place to live. If you want to have a job, raise a family, be secure, and have quality education and quality infrastructure, Western Australia is the place to live.

I now want to talk about some of the things happening in my part of the world. A lot has been said about some of these projects. Look at the Gateway WA project, a \$1 billion investment in road infrastructure. I do not think anyone on either side of the chamber could say that they have not been through that project and not seen the transformation taking place. It truly is a transformation. Furthermore, it is six months ahead of schedule and \$45 million under budget. That is a clear testimony to this state government's management of contracts. Six hundred Western Australian businesses are benefiting from investment in the project and 1 300 construction jobs are being created. The Gateway Alliance has dished out \$400 million worth of contracts. Further to that is the Roe Highway–Berkshire Road intersection, which is under construction now. Last year, the Leader of the Opposition tried to throw a bit of mud and say that I had lied to the people of Forrestfield and was not delivering it. I drive through there all the time and every time I do, I get a bit confused about where I am. That is the common feedback I get from constituents. The landscape is changing so rapidly that people get a bit disoriented. That is another project being delivered to the people of Forrestfield, one that Labor talked about but never filled the space or delivered.

I go on to talk about the real game changer for the eastern suburbs, the \$2 billion Forrestfield–Airport Link. I will not speak at length on this project, but for \$2 billion, there will be a 20-minute train ride into the city, a major bus interchange and 2 000 to 2 500 car bays. This will be a real game changer for the eastern suburbs and will make public transport a viable commute to the city daily, including the weekend. It gave me great pleasure last week to be out with the Minister for Transport looking at some of the geotechnical work. Core samples are being taken to get a geotechnical analysis of the area so that tenderers will know exactly what they are dealing with when construction of the tunnel under the river starts.

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It would be remiss of me if I did not talk about schools. I will not talk about education; I had a chance to talk about that the other day. A lot of capital investment has been made into schools in my electorate. At the end of last year, with the Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, I had an opportunity to open a new year 7 block. It is great; I drive past it regularly and the year 7s look as though they have been there forever and it looks like it has been part of the landscape forever. It is fantastic; they have made it their home. Brand-new facilities have been delivered by this government. It gives me great pleasure to know that in a week or two, the Minister for Education and I will open the updated facilities at Maida Vale Primary School, the result of a \$5 million investment, which was well and truly long overdue. The school is over the moon about it, and it will deliver first-class facilities for those kids to learn in.

I could go on, but I will conclude my comments there. Needless to say, I am always impressed by the people and organisations that reside within my electorate. It gives me great joy and I am very humbled to be able to continue to represent them in this Parliament.

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [4.32 pm]: On a sunny Tuesday morning in early December last year a tradesman inadvertently left a door open at a house in Walbrook Mews, Landsdale. In a matter of seconds, a blond-haired toddler slipped away. That disappearance of young Sam Trott evoked an incredible community response. People came from as far away as Rockingham and Warnbro to help in the search for the toddler. So many people volunteered to assist that some had to be turned away. Seasoned police observed that it was the largest community response in the metropolitan area seen in decades. Day turned into night and the desperate search for Sam, combing surrounding streets, parks and bushland, was extended. Joining a large police contingent on foot and on horseback were the Salvation Army, St John Ambulance, police dogs, the air wing unit, local rangers, 40 State Emergency Service volunteers and neighbours. People arriving home in the area were urged through the media by Sam's dad, Matthew, to check their front yards, their bushes and drains as concerns for Sam's welfare increased as darkness fell.

The people were told that Sam was autistic and this meant he may not play with normal toys, so he could be hiding in a garden. In his moving appeal, grandfather Geoff Trott told us, "Sam doesn't talk much, so he may not respond to having his name called." After a long and anxious night, police called off the extensive search on Wednesday morning and cleared volunteers from around the lake at Warradale Park near the boy's home. Divers recovered the body just before 10.00 am. Volunteers who had gathered to help with the search were visibly upset as news broke that his body had been found. From somewhere across the lake, a lone bagpiper was heard playing *Amazing Grace*. Later, in an amazing address to the media, Sam's grandfather Geoff said that the family was struggling to come to terms with their loss. He said, "Sam was so dear to us all and his premature passing is a tragedy we are still struggling to deal with. He was a happy, affectionate and loving child, with an infectious smile, and brought so much sunshine into our lives." I know that all members here will join with me in extending condolences to Sam's family. "As with all parents, upon the diagnosis of autism, they've strived to give Sam the best life possible, and since his diagnosis of autism they've been unrelenting in their quest to create every opportunity for him to thrive and to fill his potential", said his grandfather. After this dreadful news, the community conducted a candlelight vigil as a way of letting the family know of their empathy and regret for the loss of young Sam and to convey their condolences. A week or so later the family had an opportunity to thank the community at the Landsdale carols by candlelight. The quiet dignity of grandfather Geoff was very moving.

Like the Trotts, many young families in WA do their utmost when they receive the diagnosis that their child has autism spectrum disorder. It is by no means a given that therapy is readily available. It is well established that early intervention significantly improves outcomes and once a diagnosis is received, parents want to respond swiftly. Many families are compelled to access private treatment, and that compounds the stress, anxiety and uncertainty of what lies ahead and how the diagnosis will impact on the child's future. Even if a family can afford treatment, it must be supplemented by many hours of close work with the child at home by a parent or parents. I want to take this opportunity to commend the work of the Autism Association of Western Australia, as they do much to support families, but it is a sad fact that for those who cannot afford private treatment, for the limited services publicly available, demand far outstrips supply. Even simple outings are problematic for parents with kids with ASD. There is little public awareness of the daily challenges; for example, in the northern suburbs a playgroup of mums with kids with ASD meet regularly. They tell me there are few places in the region where they can take their children to play. Few places are fenced, but fencing is vital because children with autism have a strong tendency to wander. Instead of a happy and natural outing, which most families take for granted, this becomes a major logistical exercise for mums. It is examples such as this that show we should be focusing on important details that materially improve the lives of families and not be solely focusing on the bigger picture. Focusing on the bigger picture means that people fall through the cracks. The overwhelming community response to the missing toddler graphically illustrates that it considers the wellbeing of every individual child to matter.

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Finally, there has been an extraordinary public response to the appeal that instead of sending flowers to the family, a donation should be made to the Autism Association of Western Australia. The very generous public of Western Australia donated a total of \$50 000 in memory of Sam. It is great that mum, Lyndal, and dad, Matthew, are working with the association to identify how they would like those funds spent in memory of their son.

This week in Parliament, we rightly focused on the botched and costly attempt to force local government changes. As with its counterparts federally and in Queensland and Victoria on other issues, I think it is fair to say that the government did not convince the public of the merits of its proposals. It made the fatal assumption that, inherently, it knew what was best and that giving ratepayers a measure of democratic say was an obstacle to getting its own way. The process was characterised by an extraordinary level of arrogance. As the saying goes, “Arrogance is weakness disguised as strength.” The emperor’s new clothes do not exist. The Premier’s “can-do” attitude has been exposed as “I don’t care what you think”. The sortie was doomed from the outset, with regional local authorities cynically exempt and the western suburbs councils, which were the much-cited exemplar of the inefficiencies of small local governments, deferred from consideration until some indeterminate time in the future.

My electorate encompasses three local government authorities—Joondalup, Wanneroo and Stirling. Only the latter was subject to boundary changes. I happened to be in a meeting at the City of Stirling just before Christmas when the CEO and the mayor were bracing themselves to advise 70 staff that their jobs were likely to be made redundant. Such an undertaking is never pleasant and the months, if not years, of uncertainty leading to that decision would have had an impact on productivity and staff morale. It is also apparent that the unrepentant government will not reimburse councils for its ham-fisted foray into so-called reform. I leave the last word on the issue to the Mayor of the City of Stirling, Giovanni Italiano. In a press release issued on 10 February, he said —

Being a ‘model’ local government, the City of Stirling has previously supported reform of the local government sector yet it has fought impacts on its boundaries with the overwhelming support of its community to stay as is. Stirling was told to just get on with it along with many others, and has done so up until now.

The Mayor Giovanni Italiano said “Over the last few days where community after community have been afforded the right to cast their votes and have overwhelmingly said no to reform.”

“You can’t have partial reform, it’s all or nothing and we are calling on the State Government to be consistent in their approach and abandon the whole process once and for all.”

“The City has already spent over \$800,000 on this process to date and with the current declaration by the Premier that if local communities don’t want to take part in the reform process they won’t have to, we believe the process should be completely scrapped and councils should be compensated for what they have spent so far.”

“What is really frustrating is that more than 23,000 of my ratepayers, who are earmarked to move into other proposed local governments, were not afforded the right to vote on this.”

“Over 7,000 residents had either made a submission to the Local Government Advisory Board or signed petitions against this reform going ahead and despite also personally writing to the Premier and Minister seeking the pole provisions to be enacted, we were refused.”

“How is this democratic when you have somewhere like East Fremantle who has a population of 5,178 residents who are (justly) afforded the right to have a say, but no, not our 23,000 residents who feel the same way.”

“It is clear from the overwhelming result over the weekend that those polled don’t want a bar of it and I guarantee you that the story would be much the same for all other areas not afforded the right to vote.”

“To push on regardless of what your community wants and forcing a partial reform of the sector is ludicrous.”

“All Local Members need to listen up, step up and do what their constituents want and encourage the Premier to scrap this reform process completely and immediately.”

“I have no confidence that the current approach to local government reform will result in any benefits for the City of Stirling or the wider community of Perth.”

I have a lot of dealings with the City of Stirling and I think that really sums up what I consider to be a well-run and efficient local government, by and large. The chaos that has been caused by this botched reform is evident to all.

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Next, I want to turn to a recent policy announcement that was made, ostensibly, to assist plugging up the hole left by the \$1.3 billion budget deficit, which is the first in 15 years. I believe this so-called workforce renewal strategy has some disturbing implications. I note that the workforce renewal strategy has a rather Orwellian title. An article in *The West Australian* of 23 December 2014 states —

Treasurer Mike Nahan announced a new “workforce renewal policy” that involves 40 per cent of the salary of a public servant who retires or resigns being harvested by Treasury as savings. Agencies will retain only 60 per cent of that salary.

WA has the greatest proportion of public servants aged over 55 in Australia and Dr Nahan said the intention was to make the public service younger but also to reduce the number of public servants classified level 6 or above.

Level 6 employees are paid between \$94,000 and \$104,000 a year and have grown from about one-fifth of the public service in 2008–9 to one-third in 2013–14.

Whose fault was that? It continues —

The policy will be different for certain “front line” jobs including teachers, nurses, police and emergency services, where only 10 per cent of salaries will be clawed back.

The article goes on to quote the Community and Public Sector Union WA secretary, Toni Walkington, who said —

... public servants were already struggling under the impact of rounds of cuts and efficiency measures.

“The Barnett Government expects people to swallow their spin that this will be an opportunity for young people but it is just another cut to public services,” she said.

“There are no job opportunities or careers in a shrinking sector.”

This policy is objectionable on a number of levels, and I think it will ultimately lead to a reduction in services to the community. First, it sends signals to employers in both the public and private sectors that it is legitimate to put out to pasture all workers over 55 years of age, irrespective of merit, service and capacity to efficiently deliver services. We have a major issue with unemployment of older persons, which is usually characterised as persons over 45. Such a blunt policy sends a disturbing signal that older workers are to be put on the scrapheap. The government should set an example and not give others the excuse for bad inequitable behaviour to their employees.

A submission to the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee from the Council on the Ageing addresses this issue. The submission states —

The cumulative evidence is that discrimination against older workers is quite widespread. That conclusion emerges from observations that are, in themselves, suggestive rather than definitive, but coming from many different sources, they cohere into a convincing picture of exclusion.

...

Older persons make up more than half of Australia’s ‘discouraged job seekers’ (56% ... These are people who are willing and able to work but are not looking for a job because they believe they will not find one;

- data on length of un- and under-employment:

... in 2012 was 62 weeks. This compares with 34 weeks for persons aged 25–44 years, and 24 weeks for those aged 15–24 years. A similar difference is observed in the case of under-employment: 41 per cent of older workers were under-employed for more than a year, compared with 30 per cent of younger under-employed workers;

Then, of course, there were the complaints about age discrimination to the Australian Human Rights Commission. It found that the majority—69.2 per cent—of complaints were in the area of employment. The submission states —

The review gave examples of successfully conciliated outcomes, but in all six of their examples, the complainant received only an apology and/or some financial compensation. In no case was the older person employed.

I think that is a problem. The other indicator that there is massive age discrimination in employment is that the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that the average age at which people intend to retire is 62.9 years but the

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data showed that people were leaving the workforce earlier than they estimated, which the Human Rights Commission has interpreted as an indication that certain factors prevent people from working as long as they would like or for as long as they imagined.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: COTA goes on to say that one-third of the recruitment managers believed their organisation was biased to some extent against employing mature-age workers. Perceptions of career development professionals in the survey have cited this, and 57 per cent of career developers believe that discrimination against older workers is extremely widespread and most believe that discriminatory attitudes of employers and other employees impede the employment of older workers. It is important that older workers are welcomed into the workforce, yet we see from a range of sources that have been cited by COTA that this has not been happening. COTA makes a very good point that there are economic impacts to the whole economy from this entrenched attitude towards older workers. The submission states —

All the reports cited above quote the economic calculations in Treasury's series of *Intergenerational Reports* to explain why it is important to increase older workers participation in the workforce. Put starkly, the argument is: the longer older people work, the less demand on government expenditure:

The projected effect of ageing and health pressures is that spending is expected to exceed revenue by 2.75% of ... (GDP) in 2050 (creating a 'fiscal gap'). Increased labour force participation by mature age persons will potentially narrow or close this gap.

If for no other reason, if it is not a question of equity as social justice, there is the question that it is actually good for the economy. COTA's submission continues —

An extra 3 percentage points on participation among workers aged 55 and over would result in a \$33 billion boost to GDP—or around 1.6% of national income.

So these are figures we need to bear in mind. COTA goes on to recommend —

The WA Government should mirror the SA Government's commitment to increase the proportion of older South Australians who are engaged in the workforce by ten percentage points by 2020.

The government's response to the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee's report on the implications of ageing was tabled today, and not only is that recommendation rejected, but the government says under recommendation 29 —

In so far as the policy intent of Government may be to support the needs of older workers, this would appear to be the remit of the Department of Training and Workforce Development ... There does not appear to be any demonstrated need for a new government entity to be created to provide the employment agency recommended in the report.

The response of the government is that there is no problem, the issue is not a live one and there is no need to do anything about it. I am incredibly disappointed. The other thing I want to say about the so-called renewal policy is that I believe that if there is going to be this cut in salary, it should not be only for public sector employees but also those employed in ministerial offices. Looking at the last document that was tabled in November last year for ministerial office staffing, I consider that the classifications are much higher than they were in previous governments. For example, my chief of staff was a level 9, but most of the chiefs of staff now are class 2 or even above, and it seems that that is one area where savings could immediately be initiated and it would not necessarily reflect on frontline service delivery.

That brings me to the related matter of retraining or midlife career changes and addressing further skills shortages. As my colleagues mentioned this week, the exponential rise in TAFE fees of 515 per cent in the last year impacts on a range of people. First, there are school leavers who had intended to pursue a career path and now find that the fees are prohibitive or are taking out loans that are not justified because the salary they are likely to ultimately obtain once they have graduated will not be high. Last week *The West Australian* ran an article on this mentioning a young woman in my electorate—Jess Calder. She cited the fact that she and her contemporaries were having to rethink what they were going to do because they simply could not afford the fees. She had changed her mind and instead of doing a three-semester course would do a much shorter one because she could not afford to do the longer one.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I think it was a misunderstanding about what the total cost of that was going to be. I think you might find if you go back to your constituent that she has since had a conversation with the West Coast Institute, where I think she was enrolled, and it was explained to her that she had trebled the fee she had been quoted, thinking it would apply for each semester. In actual fact the fee she had been quoted was going to cover

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the whole course. There has just been a misunderstanding about how that fee was going to be applied. If you go back and ask her, she has had that explained to her and the cost of that course is now well in her remit.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: She was going to do a three-semester course for a diploma of youth work. The minister says it will cost one-third of \$20 000 and not the \$20 000 she thought it would be.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: That is correct, yes.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I understand that there have been a lot of tears. She is not the only person who has apparently been misled. People are getting retail jobs because studying at TAFE is so expensive. Does the minister disagree with the figure of 515 percent increase? The course will still cost \$6 000, minister.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: It is \$6 800 for the whole course, not for each semester—so she multiplied it by three. I accept there has been an increase in the cost of the course.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Does the minister concede that fees have gone up by 515 per cent?

Mrs L.M. Harvey: No, I do not believe that is correct, but \$6 800 is very different from \$20 000. I think if the member goes back to her constituent, she will find that she understands how that fee will be levied and that there was a misunderstanding of how that worked.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: That is a sum of \$6 800 for someone who has just finished school, who might be from a low socioeconomic background and who will ultimately not be earning a lot when she finishes the course—so much so that she will not necessarily be able to service her loan. As she says in the article, many of her friends have abandoned their plans to study at TAFE because of the high cost.

The second category of people affected are those who, for example, work in the mines or have been made redundant from other jobs who decide to reskill or retrain in another area. They have commitments, mortgages and so on and they simply cannot afford the fees. They might be people who have been made redundant in places like Roy Hill. They come back to Perth, they think they will reskill, but the cost of retraining and, for example, tooling up, which previously they had a subsidy for, is no longer affordable.

The third category of people affected are those who plan to undertake training in areas where there will be future shortages and I think of jobs like aged-care workers, nurses or childcare workers. It simply makes no sense that we compound what will be inevitable shortages with fees so high that they act as a deterrent.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Excuse me members, the conversations are getting louder, could you keep the level down.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: This measure will exclude those least able to afford training and consign many to insecure, casual jobs where no training is required. If there is one thing I believe we prided ourselves on in this state, it was that anyone with the ability and the inclination to work and undertake study would have access to education, and that is simply no longer the case. Our community is poorer for it.

Likewise, our new model for funding our schools is enshrined in inequality and it can no longer be said that irrespective of where a child is in the state he or she will have access to the same standard of education and resources. Girrawheen Senior High School will lose from its 2015 budget \$1.034 million, or \$2 473 per student; Ashdale Secondary College will lose \$315 000, or \$297 per student; Madeley Primary School will lose \$69 000, or \$120 per student; Marangaroo Primary School will lose \$24 000, or \$71 per student; and East Hamersley Primary School will lose \$12 000, or \$64 per student. This is clearly an anomaly and the systemic bias is somehow wrapped up in the system. The outcomes are definitely unequal when a school such as Girrawheen loses \$1 million. It is an area of high disadvantage, there is a large cohort of students whose families do not speak English at home and there are a number of Aboriginal students. Moreover, parents will be deterred from sending their kids to that school because they consider their children will be deprived of opportunities and resources that are available at other schools. The exodus will further compound the problem by reducing school numbers. I have known the teachers at Girrawheen high school for a number of years; they are very caring and committed staff and they work well, and this is the thanks and support they get. I am very sorry about that.

In schools such as Girrawheen, vocational education and training placement officers, psychologists, school chaplains and education assistants with particular links with a migrant group are essentials, not optional extras. The cuts have meant that such officers cannot be employed or are employed only on a part-time basis. These are cruel and short-sighted cuts. It needs to be remembered that schools such as Girrawheen recover only about one-third of the school fees imposed and the fees imposed are at minimum levels. With the rising cost of living, many parents are working long hours and are time poor, and their capacity to assist parents and citizens associations in fundraising is also very limited.

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So-called policies that are applied equally to everyone but produce unequal outcomes need revisiting. Then there is the failure to redevelop the Hainsworth primary school site, which I have talked about on many occasions. The site has now been vacant for a number of years and has the capacity for 90 or so affordable houses. I have lost count of the number of times I have raised the issue in the chamber—in estimates hearings, grievances, questions on notice, questions without notice, Address-in-Reply speeches and budget speeches. I have recently written to Minister Colin Holt. He is the fifth minister, if we count Minister Marmion twice, who has failed to progress this development. It is a site for antisocial behaviour, squatting and dumping of rubbish and presents a fire risk. I had to entreat the minister to address a number of these issues prior to Christmas. The residents are at their wit's end.

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [5.02 pm]: I also want to make a contribution in reply to the Premier's Statement. I would like to make Parliament aware that Drisana Levitzke-Gray, a Balga resident and, I am proud to say, a constituent in the seat of Mirrabooka, was recently awarded the Australia Day Council's Young Australian of the Year. She is the fifth generation in her family to be born deaf. Drisana Levitzke-Gray is dedicated to helping other deaf people and advocating their human rights. There are an estimated 20 000 children and adolescents in Australia with some form of hearing loss, with around 500 babies added each year to this demographic. Drisana is a strong advocate for Auslan, Australian sign language. She promotes the deaf community as one of rich culture, history, traditions and, most importantly, language. She challenges the community to view deafness as a gain of language, not a loss of hearing.

Coming from a family of Auslan speakers, Drisana was very proud to become the first Auslan juror in Australia in 2014. When I met with Drisana before she was awarded the Western Australian Young Australian of the Year, she outlined some key issues that concerned her and I would like to make Parliament aware of those. The first is that the National Disability Insurance Scheme looks as though it will not cover deaf people. Further, the federal government has defunded Deaf Australia, and the federal Better Start for Children with Disability program does not include teaching Auslan in the early intervention funding. It is of great concern to Drisana that young babies do not get access to Auslan. It is a fundamental issue for Drisana, as she points out that developing deaf language skills in deaf children prior to them going to school is pivotal to their emotional and psychosocial wellbeing. As 90 per cent of deaf babies are born to hearing parents, she is committed to increasing access for those hearing parents of deaf children. Drisana and Deaf Australia maintain that gaining access to Auslan training for parents can ensure that they commence communication with their babies and become empowered to assist their infants understand and communicate in their world. A quick net search indicates that sign language is beneficial for hearing babies, as well as deaf babies. A United Kingdom study by Drs Linda Acredolo and Susan Goodwyn, funded by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, found that there is a clear advantage to using signs with preverbal children. Parents within the study experienced reduced frustration and stronger bonds with their babies.

It is interesting to note that the Australian sign language, Auslan, received linguistic recognition only in 1989 through the compilation of the Auslan dictionary, supervised by Professor Trevor Johnston. Subsequently, Auslan was recognised as a community language in an Australian federal white paper on language policy in 1991. However, Auslan is yet to be recognised in federal or state legislation as a language, as occurred in Sweden in 1983, Britain in 2003, Austria in 2005 and New Zealand in 2006. Although the Australian government has recognised the deaf community as a distinct language group, it has not been largely useful in the legal realisation of its linguistic human right. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 provide for recognition of these rights. Although most states provide some limited services and, as we all know, there are some limited television captioning services, it is largely the responsibility of each state to judge where and when Auslan interpreters will be used.

One of the things I want to raise in this house is that if members of Parliament want an Auslan interpreter to come to their office because they would like to talk to Drisana about the issues she is advocating, they will have to pay for the Auslan interpreter out of their electorate allowance. That seems very unfair considering that Drisana cannot be understood unless an interpreter is used. It seems outrageous that, depending on where the deaf person is in a constituency, that cost has to be met and that it is not a broad right of that person to have an interpreter. This also goes across the board for other interpreting services. For example, in the seats of Mirrabooka and Girrawheen, people with complex issues come to see me and the member for Girrawheen. If we are to understand those issues well, we need an interpreter. Recently, I saw a woman who was the victim of domestic violence whose English was not sufficient to allow her to explain the issues that she was facing and an interpreter service was required. Again, there was no assistance for this woman and there was no capacity to bring her children in, because it was a very emotional issue. Parliament needs to be very aware that one of the critical capacities for a constituent to be able to communicate is not available through this government unless individuals want to pay.

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What is also concerning is that it appears that Auslan is under threat from increasing technological usage and decreasing deafness caused by disease. Although that is very good, Professor Johnston said in an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* in November 2014 that he believed that the possibility of Auslan's disappearance would be an unambiguous and linguistic tragedy. As we all know, we have dealt with linguistic tragedies, because many Aboriginal languages have been lost from Australia. We need to understand that language is an exceptionally important aspect of community and identity. Professor Johnston says that it is a kind of glue that binds people together in shared experiences. Professor Johnston also points out that if children do not learn a language within their first two years, it has a serious intellectual and cognitive consequence for the rest of their life. It makes it harder for people to learn sign language, because their brain has not processed language properly. Learning Auslan is vital for all deaf children, and their families, to thrive either with technology or without the technology if it is not successful. That is because a cochlear implant is not always successful. If we limit that early capacity for a deaf child to learn a language, Auslan, then we limit the capacity of that young child. This is a great concern of Drisana and she is trying to champion that. With the percentage of deaf children born to hearing parents, those hearing parents must be able to get some funding through the National Disability Insurance Scheme or other areas to get Auslan training to communicate with their children. Drisana is a shining example of the many advocates for Auslan throughout Australia and the world, as sign language speakers have had to campaign for many years for recognition and there is opposition from those who say that deaf education should focus on oral education in the absence of Auslan.

I, like my colleagues, would like to thank Department of Emergency and Fire Service officers and volunteers who fought on many fire fronts recently. I use this because Drisana raised an interesting point with me. She shared what occurred at the time of the Queensland floods, when all members will recall that an Auslan interpreter was beside the Queensland Premier for all television announcements. When the TV did not have any sound, Auslan speakers were able to keep informed a group of residents who were holed up in a hotel. That is a perfect example of when sometimes it helps to speak a different language, and one of sign. In light of the actions of the Queensland government in January 2011 during the flood disaster to have Auslan speakers on the updates on television, a number of review boards and advocacy groups, the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network being a primary example, are recommending the legislative implementation of Auslan interpreters during emergency broadcasts. I will be writing to the Minister for Emergency Services to request that he investigate implementing this recommendation.

I congratulate Drisana on her award. I recognise that her stance faces challenges from those in the community who see deafness as something to be fixed through technology such as the cochlear implant. Although I recognise that cochlear implants have benefited many people in the community, Drisana argues that when the implant is turned off, the battery runs flat or it just does not work, the person is still deaf and has a right to their language. This appears to be a self-evident truth.

I also add my voice to concern about the local government reform process, which has been a complete waste of resources that could otherwise have been spent to enhance the lives of many residents in the Mirrabooka electorate. On Tuesday night, 16 February, the City of Stirling voted unanimously to withdraw from the local government reform process. As the member for Girrawheen outlined, the City of Stirling spent over \$800 000 on this process. In a recent press release Mayor Italiano lamented that over 7 000 residents either had made a submission to the Local Government Advisory Board or had signed petitions against this reform going ahead. He said that despite writing personally to the Premier and the Minister for Local Government seeking the poll provisions to be implemented, he was refused. All the effort of residents could have been focused on building community and on the wellbeing of their local area. All of that effort could have been better spent in our community growing our community.

The City of Stirling recently released its Mirrabooka town centre structure plan and I note that it is planning a town centre on the basis of a light rail system. I have said in this place before that the people of Mirrabooka have been betrayed by this government's not delivering the Metro Area Express light rail. This betrayal is on display in this document, and it is time for this government to fess up before more people invest in the pipe dream that is now too far away for people to believe that it can be delivered. Page 6 of the Mirrabooka town centre structure plan states that the redevelopment of Mirrabooka town centre will be characterised by the introduction of rapid public transport, which will act as a catalyst for land-use change and build transformation. It is clear the government has no commitment to honour its promise to the people of Mirrabooka, because when this government is happy to spend \$100 million on a railway upgrade at Burswood to service Perth Stadium, plus an additional \$259 million—so a total of \$359 million—on integrated transport for the stadium, but nothing to deliver the promise made in 2008 to deliver the \$1.8 billion MAX light rail, which was supposed to be operating for the people of Mirrabooka, it is clear that is not going to be delivered. My concern now is that there are structure plans and other plans being put in place in Mirrabooka that are based on MAX going ahead. People will

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buy and develop land based on that promise. These people need surety and certainty; they do not need an off-in-the-future promise, when it is clear that the government has committed resources to other projects and does not have the resources to deliver.

I also want to echo my colleague's comments on TAFE. The Leader of the Opposition's response to the Premier's Statement highlighted that the economic pressure we face in Western Australia is a result of the Barnett government's failure to plan a budget effectively. As the Leader of the Opposition, Mark McGowan, said, the Liberal–National government is the architect of the current financial situation. An operating deficit of \$1.3 billion, which is the biggest operating deficit in 15 years since the Court Liberal government, and public sector debt that has grown to \$25.3 billion this financial year, has seen public services culled and the public sector and services to the community cut. The worst of this is that the people who are paying the most for this government's failure are those we need to rely on in the future—young people striving to educate themselves for this diversified job market that the Premier now lauds.

I would like to tell members about Samantha, an education assistant who lost her job in the recent education cuts. She has been forced into cancelling her enrolment in a childcare course at TAFE because of the fee increase. To add insult to injury, TAFE has told her that her prior learning for certificate III education assistant will not count towards her childcare studies and she will have to undertake a certificate III in childcare before she can achieve the diploma in early childhood education, adding a further six months to the study time. What makes it worse is that a certificate III will cost her \$2 600 to be paid on 10 weeks. Samantha has achieved her certificate III education assistant but she cannot use that as prior learning. She has been told she has to do a certificate III again but in childcare; and then she is told the diploma for early childhood education will be at a cost of \$3 190 per semester totalling \$11 000 for 18 months of study—this makes it impossible for her—to achieve an income of \$44 000 a year, which is \$10 000 less than she would have been paid as an education assistant. She would have been on \$55 000 a year as an education assistant, but that job is no longer there. Her contract has not been continued. She wants to retrain, but for retraining to be able to gain employment, she will have to pay \$11 000 to be able to earn \$10 000 a year less!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Will you please write to me about that, because that does not sound correct?

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: It is something that has come into our office and I am happy to write to the minister. If the minister can at least get Samantha's certificate III recognised, that may assist her.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Please do write to me as urgently as possible, because it does not sound correct.

Ms M.M. Quirk: You can't solve all of these problems on a case-by-case basis.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Thank you very much, member for Girrawheen.

From discussion with schools in the Mirrabooka electorate, I know that schools have lost one if not multiple education assistants in addition to the loss of Aboriginal and Islander education officers. All schools in the area have suffered through education cuts. Schools, such as Koondoola Primary School, although gifted with great teaching staff and students, are struggling. School board chairman and south ward councillor, Hugh Nguyen, said in a recent media report that cuts of more than \$1.5 million over the past three years had left the school struggling. He is the board chairman and he has said that these cuts have resulted in the loss of 25 staff positions at the school for 2015, including five full-time English language support staff—about 80 per cent of the number the school used to have—and support teacher positions. Mr Nguyen said that the amount of money that the government had allocated to make the student-centred funding model work was clearly insufficient. He said that in 2015 the school would have a student population of 360. There will be more than 30 different nationalities speaking 72 different languages, and about a third of students speaking English as a second language.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: This concern is not limited to Koondoola schools, but also affects schools such as Balga Senior High School, which is losing \$367 per student, and Waddington Primary School, which is losing \$317 per student. Schools have been forced to incorporate this extra cut in funding to the new funding model, and without the vital support of education assistants, ethnic assistants, and Aboriginal and Islander education officers.

I want to now talk about housing. The Premier's Statement boasted that the government will be reaching the target of 20 000 housing affordability opportunities by 2020 this year. With 19 000 people on the waiting list in WA and a zero budgeted for construction in the 2016 year, the people of Mirrabooka can certainly tell this house that the options available are not delivering to them. Indeed, this claim is not based on the original commitment made in this house. The target has witnessed an erasing of the bullseye by reframing itself.

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The then Treasurer and Minister for Housing, Hon Troy Buswell, in answer to a question without notice on 7 September 2011, committed to an aspirational goal in housing, to build 20 000 affordable houses by 2020. This is not an option or an opportunity; this is building houses. Looking at the number of people residing in Department of Housing residences in the suburbs of the Mirrabooka electorate will demonstrate that the Department of Housing is delivering to fewer people. For example, in Koondoola 14 fewer people have been housed in the years from 2011 to 2014, and in Westminster 17 fewer people have been housed. This is despite a growing waiting list. This government needs to act and build more public houses to deliver affordable housing to the people of Western Australia. It would be remiss of me not to say that I know of a place where those houses can be built—lots 60 and 61 Milldale Road, Mirrabooka. It is clear that the Department of Housing is incapable of progressing this and I now call on the Minister for Planning to have the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority take over the Mirrabooka town centre development—especially given that it is based on a rapid transit system that is not now going to happen—and work with City of Stirling to see this land developed. I am over it. It has to happen.

Dr K.D. Hames: Don't blame the Department of Health.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I am not blaming the Department of Health.

Frankly, if it is good enough for Scarborough, it is good enough for Mirrabooka, considering that land has been sitting there that still needs to be developed. Get on with it.

I want to finish by talking about the Fringe World Festival. The Premier and a number of members have patted themselves on the back for Fringe World and I want to shine some light on who really needs to be thanked for the vibrant festival that is Fringe World—the performers. Fringe World is an open-access event. Does anyone know what an open-access event is? There is a worldwide movement of open-access events. That means every artist has to pay a \$300 registration fee out of their own pocket and \$800 to advertise in the Fringe World program. Artists will not get any press during Fringe World if they do not pay a publicist, and that publicist can be provided by Fringe World. Fringe World takes \$3 from every ticket sold.

The government has congratulated itself for putting \$1.3 million into the Fringe World Festival, or \$1.5 million, depending on the press release. There is \$1 million from Lotterywest—that might be seen to be government, but it is really from the people—and \$60 000 to deliver Fringe World events in the wheatbelt, goldfields–Esperance, south west and great southern regions. As I understand, that is down from \$150 000 in 2012. The reality is that the people who should be congratulated for putting on this performance in Perth are the performers. They are the people who are actually funding it to happen. Fringe World gives venues to some people, but if the performers do not have a venue provided, they have to pay for the venue themselves. If the venue is provided, the stage manager, front-of-house person and lighting technician at the venue are all paid by Fringe World.

The reason I found this out was that I could not work out why we could not have a Fringe World event in Mirrabooka. I want a Fringe World event in Mirrabooka. We cannot, because to do that we would have to find someone who will sponsor a venue, otherwise the performers cannot put on a show. Midlandia does it, because it has the support of the City of Swan and there is one at Scarborough because the City of Stirling has made its summer festival fit in with that and has paid for the venue. Some assistance is needed to take the festival out further. It has been taken to areas such as Fremantle because the Fremantle council supports it, and Midland because the City of Swan supports it, and Geraldton because it comes out of royalties for regions. They get the \$60 000 to deliver it in those areas.

Actors are producing shows from their own pocket. Actors are not getting paid, but they must pay for transport, the hire of a rehearsal venue, parking, and dinners and drinks at the bar including overpriced bottles of water. Actors usually get paid from a profit-share arrangement, meaning that the amount left after all the bills are paid is split between the actors. Everyone else involved in Fringe World gets paid for their skills—the toilet cleaners, bar staff, people who put up the bunting, fence hire companies, box office and ticketing folks. The actors, it seems, are the ones that are doing it for love, and they are the ones we should thank for the vibrancy that is going on. It is a bit ironic that the only people who do not benefit financially from Fringe World are the artists.

I recently read an article by Vivienne Glance titled “Forget passion: unpaid work keeps fringe festivals afloat”. The essence of what it says is that Fringe World is an important contribution to the local economy. However, all publicity from the Fringe World Festival rarely reports the average returns for artists after they have paid fees, up-front expenses and production costs. The costs make it a very difficult decision for overseas artists to justify coming to Perth. It is a costly process; most of them get put up in other people's houses. I thank those artists for their faith in coming to Western Australia but really if we want it to continue, we need to find another way that we can support those artists. I would like to see it continue, and expand into areas such as Mirrabooka and Belmont. To do that, we need to get the venues, the stage lighting and all of those things. These artists will come.

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That is what Fringe World shows us. They want to perform to our people. We could go out and reach into those suburbs. They would like to be paid, but they will come. We have got to give them a place to come to in our communities, not just in central Perth. We need to dig a bit deeper.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Councils can contribute.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Yes, councils can contribute, and they have done so in the City of Stirling, but everything happens at Scarborough or Mt Lawley.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: They just have an active member.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Is the minister suggesting that I am not an active member? Would the minister like to put that on record? I think I am a pretty active member. I am standing here representing my constituents. I actively crowdfunded so that two very well respected and honoured Aboriginal elders in our area could print and launch their book. I want to be active, but apart from crowdfunding to get a venue, the government needs to stop patting itself on the back and saying, “Look what we funded.” It actually needs to get out there and make it happen, so that it could happen in the regions, and so that the performers can get a return for coming.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I will just put on the record that I did not mean to imply that you are not active.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: The Minister for Police could put on the record that I am an active member if she would like to do so.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: It was intended only as a pun—a light-hearted moment.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: In closing, I congratulate the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre, and in particular Anne Soreson, for *Cross Country/Cross Cultures*, which is on tonight at Fringe World and which I am going to. It was created by a cast of former refugees, migrants, first generation Australians and Indigenous Australians, and had its premiere at the twentieth international HIV/AIDs conference in Melbourne in 2014. It explores the themes of stigma, isolation and distance. The performers combine their unique experiences with site-specific investigations and research to create a provocative look at the Australian political and distant landscape and the culture of removal, isolation and discrimination that existed in the past and exists in the present day. I am told that the play is tender, beautiful and unique to Western Australia. It is supported by the Office of Multicultural Interests, the Department of Local Government and the government of Western Australia. All accolades for that, because that has meant that rehearsal halls and a few other things were paid for so that the actors did not have to clump together for it. But they still have had to live in each other’s houses and they are not going to get much out of it. This all shows what a great thing the Fringe World Festival has become because it brings a lot of different acts to Western Australia.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I would like to use the words of the member for Girrawheen: bread and circuses should apply to everyone and not just in central Perth. Not only should the Fringe World come to Mirrabooka, but also I look forward to seeing *The Giants* in Mirrabooka in the future.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**.