

**ABC CLASSIC FM'S CHOIR OF THE YEAR COMPETITION**

*Statement by Member for Yokine*

**MR R.C. KUCERA (Yokine)** [12.50 pm]: Earlier this month I had the pleasure of attending the WA state finals of the ABC Classic FM's choir of the year at His Majesty's Theatre. Especially as an expatriate Welshman, it was a fantastic experience. Broadcast across Australia, the choir of the year competition is Australia's largest choral competition. Over 7 000 singers from more than 250 choirs came together for auditions in every capital city. In the WA finals, presented by Damien Beaumont, four youth and four adult choirs sang out for the state title before a full house of music lovers. I congratulate the youth choir winner, Schola Cantori, as well as the other finalists: the City of Rockingham Children's Choir, Exordium from St Stephen's School, and St Brigid's College Select Choir. It was wonderful to see so many young people enjoying themselves singing some truly beautiful music.

In the adult choir finals, the Western Australian Youth Chorale took out the state title, with other finalists Vocal Evolution, the Real Sing and the Band of Angels Gospel Choir not far behind. The two winning Western Australian choirs have also been chosen by the judges to compete in the national title at Sydney's City Recital Hall in late September. This already places each group near the pinnacle of choral music in Australia, with only three choirs chosen to compete in each division.

In the youth division, Schola Cantori is made up of 15 to 17-year-old students from Perth Modern School. The winners of the adult division were a group of young people from the Western Australian Youth Music Association called the Western Australian Youth Chorale. This choir of 16 to 26-year-olds is co-conducted by Dr Robert Braham and Mr Andrew Bushell. Many students from my electorate, including my lovely niece Yana Buvari, are very excited to be representing our state.

Our national broadcaster, the ABC, must be praised for its continuing contribution to Australia's culture and art. I think I speak for all Western Australian music lovers when I congratulate both choirs and wish them all the best.