

## **COMMUNITY POOLS REVITALISATION PROGRAM**

*Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation*

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Minister for Sport and Recreation)** [12.13 pm]: I rise today to talk about the second round of the state government's royalties for regions-funded community pools revitalisation program.

Last month I announced that 94 regional aquatic facilities would share in almost \$3 million of royalties for regions funding to assist in the revitalisation of those facilities. Through this program, regional local governments are able to apply for funding of up to \$32 000 per aquatic centre or \$10 000 per aquatic playground. This is an increase from the \$30 000 that was offered to successful aquatic centre applicants in round 1 of the program last year. For many country people, the local swimming pool is a central meeting place in town, a spot in which to cool off and socialise, not to mention a place for learning essential aquatic and lifesaving skills.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warnbro!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** As well as providing relief from the heat, swimming enables us to become healthier individuals, improves educational outcomes, and helps reduce chronic disease. Pools and aquatic centres form recreational, social and community hubs. Therefore, it is important they are maintained to the standard expected by the community that is using them.

It is important that local governments be given financial assistance to upgrade and maintain aquatic facilities. The upkeep of aquatic facilities is expensive, and I am pleased that the state government offers a helping hand for this essential service. Funding through the program can be used for new heating systems, lighting, replacement of filters, reduction of pool entry costs for patrons, staff development, or the purchase of pool-related equipment.

The latest funding announcement adds to the more than \$2.7 million allocated to 91 pools in round 1 of the program last year. Included were Broome Recreation Aquatic Centre, Coorow Town Pool, the Jerramungup, Kambalda West, Kellerberrin and Meekatharra swimming pools, the historic and recently restored Collie Mineworkers Memorial Pool, and Cue Water Park, to name a few. In total, the program will deliver \$13.2 million in royalties for regions funding over four years to our regional aquatic facilities. In addition to the increased individual grant limit, the latest round will enable regional local governments to apply for funding as part of a future capital project. Grants can be placed in a specified reserve account towards a capital project that may be undertaken over the next two financial years. The ability to accumulate funding will enable local governments to pursue more significant upgrades to their facilities.

There is no doubt that access to better aquatic facilities encourages healthier and more vibrant communities. This investment by the state government is enhancing the aquatic facility experience and providing associated benefits for regional Western Australians.