

CORONAVIRUS — INTERSTATE BORDER RESTRICTIONS

**693. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. Will the state be safely reopening its border on 1 February 2022—yes or no?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

As I said, the way government works is that progressively it makes decisions on time based upon evidence. No decision has been made on that, but it is clear that other states are making decisions to open their borders with New South Wales and Victoria, some of them quite imminently. As part of that, they are putting in place all sorts of restrictions. I outlined it to the member yesterday. South Australia is going to have all sorts of mask wearing and restrictions on the number of people who can go to homes and businesses, and who can go into the restaurants and cafes, all over the Christmas holidays. That is the decision they have made; that is the choice they have made. At the same time, they run the strong risk of having lockdowns and having people go to hospital. As we know, when people get COVID, many can die. That is the decision that other states are making. We are seeking to get to very high levels of vaccination so that we can hopefully avoid some of the worst impacts of COVID, particularly over that very important Christmas period.

I also note that yesterday, Victoria had 25 people die—25 people died from COVID. We are not going to go into some headlong rush, pushed by the opposition and pushed by some lobby groups, based upon some false reasoning by the opposition to rush into this after we have already gone through nearly two years of making the right decisions for Western Australia—making the right decisions based upon health advice and based upon making sure we keep the state safe. You can rush all you like; we are going to take a cautious, careful approach based upon the best of advice. When we do that, we get the best health outcomes and the best economic outcomes. One thing I definitely do not want to see is what has happened in Victoria and New South Wales. Twenty-five people died yesterday—25! Imagine that. If we follow the course the opposition is pushing us towards, and has done over the last two years, that is what would have happened in WA.