

## **BROOME BOATING FACILITY**

### *Grievance*

**MS J. FARRER (Kimberley)** [9.45 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Transport about the Broome boating facility. The Broome community is very engaged with and reliant upon the ocean and a range of maritime activities. Local people love to fish and recreate on the ocean with family and friends. Broome has one of the highest numbers of boat owners in Western Australia. Driving around the streets of Broome, many houses with boats in their front yards can be seen. On the weekends, the boat ramps are packed with four-wheel drives with trailers carrying boats. Furthermore, Broome has a vibrant and exciting tourism industry with many charter operators and tourists bringing their boats to Broome. The existing boat ramps are dangerous for people, bystanders, cars and boats. The boat ramps are ad hoc constructions, subject to very high tides and adverse weather conditions. The boat ramps are in proximity to rocks, and box jellyfish often congregate in the waters surrounding them. Weather conditions have resulted in countless vehicles and boats being damaged or lost. It has also resulted in many injuries, some serious, to locals and tourists alike.

On 11 February, I met with members of the Broome Fishing Club who told me some shocking stories of injuries and damage to property. I have photos from members of the fishing club of cars lost in the ocean and boats washed up on rocks as a result of inadequate boating facilities in Broome. I will hold them up to show the house and present them to be tabled. They are images of vehicles lost in the sea because of the high tides, of people trying to salvage their boats and other damage; also images of injuries to different people. These are images of some of the people from the Broome Fishing Club's experiences.

The local community have worked hard on a Broome boating facility plan for the last 20 years. This plan was supported and promised by the Barnett government in 2010. It involved the construction of a proper boating facility at a cost of \$47 million at Roebuck Bay alongside the port. The plan was committed to by the Barnett government before the 2013 election and, in fact, announced as one of many promises for Broome during the election campaign. Both myself and the Broome community were shocked and disappointed when the government cancelled the project and withdrew the \$47 million in December last year. This was a terrible blow to Broome and the local tourism and fishing communities who had tried so hard and worked for so long on this project.

I call on the Minister for Transport to honour his promise and reinstate the funding for this facility that was so cruelly torn away in December 2013. Furthermore, if the minister is not prepared to do that, can he please advise my community of a way forward and what he plans to do to prevent injuries occurring on a weekly basis. I will continue to campaign for my community. Thank you.

### *Tabling of Paper*

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I think the member was going to table something.

[The paper was tabled for the information of members.]

### *Grievance Resumed*

**MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Minister for Transport)** [9.49 am]: This may be my only role as Minister for Transport. I was hoping to get through having achieved absolutely nothing!

I thank the member for Kimberley for raising this important issue. I absolutely agree with her that the use and enjoyment of the marine environment, particularly boating, is very popular throughout Western Australia but particularly in the north—and certainly in Broome. The issue has always been that it is difficult and expensive to build a safe boating facility in Broome. An allocation of \$35 million was included in the 2010–11 state budget to build a new boating facility in Broome. Subsequent costs were then estimated to be \$50 million or more, and probably are significantly above that now. During the 2013 state election campaign, the Liberal Party did not commit to increase funding for that facility. The National Party may well have, but the Liberal Party did not. It is not a commitment of this government.

The issue is obviously exacerbated by the 10-metre tides, the coastline itself, the lack of rock for breakwaters and indeed some issues relating to the local Aboriginal people, the Yawuru. They objected to certain sites on heritage and cultural grounds. That is all very disappointing. Other sites have been looked at in terms of the creek near the Chinatown area. Some people think that is a better option; some do not. I regret to say that at a cost of \$50 million plus, this is not on the government's capital works program. Having said that, I do not deny the need for a decent boating facility in Broome for both current residents and for tourism, and for all those other purposes outlined. At the moment the state government is involved in constructing a \$35 million boating harbour project at Augusta. That is probably due for completion around September—maybe a little later, but due for completion this year. We are also working with the Town of Port Hedland on a boating facility. Again there is an

issue of which location might be chosen. The Environmental Protection Authority has ruled that the initially preferred site is unlikely ever to be acceptable from an environmental point of view. We are back to square one on the Port Hedland project. The government will continue, however—maybe on a different site at Port Hedland. That also is an expensive project. Once that is completed, I have some hope that we might be able to do a project in Broome. The need is not doubted, but the cost is just simply over the top. That is the problem. Unless someone can find a cheaper alternative, it is unlikely to go ahead in the immediate future. It is difficult because of not only the tidal movement, but also its exposure to cyclones and the like. It is a problem. The government has not lost interest in the project, but it is not in a position to fund it now. If the cost can be found to be reasonable, maybe it could be included in future budgets.

Other things are happening in Broome, including the involvement of the oil and gas industry. I guess in a sense historically Broome has opposed that industry having a presence there. I would have thought that might have been one very good opportunity to see not only facilities for the oil and gas industry developed, but also, maybe in conjunction, facilities developed for recreational boat users. After recent experiences, I simply do not know the attitude of Broome to those projects.