

ROTTNEST ISLAND, REPAIR WORK

**1102. Mr J.R. QUIGLEY to the Minister for Tourism:**

Will the minister inform the House of the work being undertaken to address the serious storm damage sustained at Rottnest Island during the past winter?

**Mr R.C. KUCERA replied:**

I thank the member for Innaloo for his continued support for Rottnest Island. I see him there quite often.

Mrs C.L. Edwardes: This is a serious Government!

Mr R.C. KUCERA: This is a serious issue, member for Kingsley. The damage that was experienced this winter on Rottnest Island has been unprecedented in recent years. This winter Rottnest Island has experienced some of the worst and most damaging storms for many years.

Mr L. Graham: It is a commonwealth issue - it handles the weather!

Mr R.C. KUCERA: The noise that I heard in the background is like the storm that was experienced at Rottnest on 16 May, which was described as a freak storm because it involved a combination of record high tides and severe winds. I thank the member for Pilbara, because he reminded me of the severe winds.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr R.C. KUCERA: Thank you, Mr Speaker. This is a serious issue, because one of the most badly affected areas is Narrowneck. It is very concerning that that area of land - the isthmus, I think it is called - is now down to some 200 metres in width. There is a real danger that in years to come we may end up with two islands instead of one and will have Rott and Nest instead of Rottnest. The real concern, though, in all seriousness, is that the jetties, access stairs and access ramps were also affected by the storm and require extensive works. This Government has recognised the importance of Rottnest Island and the need to protect its unique environment, and, after discussions with the expenditure review committee and the Treasurer, it has allocated supplementary funding of \$797 000 to meet the cost of repairs not covered by insurance. Given the strong possibility that these areas will continue to be subject to further storm damage, I am pleased to advise also that the works are designed as much as possible to limit further damage in the future.

I must say also, in light of the upcoming school holidays, that we have completed the strutting of balconies at Longreach and Geordie Bays. That work should have been done over many years but was neglected by the previous Government -

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr R.C. KUCERA: There seems to be an even stronger wind blowing out of Hillarys at the moment. Rottnest Island is a fragile environment, and I am pleased that the Treasurer has seen fit, as part of the Government's commitment to Rottnest Island, to award this extra money. The Government remains committed to maintaining the integrity of the environment of Rottnest, as well as making sure that it remains the premier resort for families in Western Australia.

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Hillarys to order for the first time.