

HOUSING AVAILABILITY — REGIONS

299. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. I go back to the question, which was: will the Premier's failure to invest in housing and land in regional communities leave industry with no option but to increase its fly-in fly-out workforce, and will the Premier commit to ruling out new FIFO camps for operational workforces within 60 kilometres of major regional towns?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Bizarre! The Nationals WA has not moved on in any way from its election loss in 2017. I will just explain a couple of things. During COVID, we actually shut down most FIFO from the east. I would have thought that is the biggest issue—that people from New South Wales, Victoria or Tasmania come over here and occupy roles that should be occupied by Western Australians. Many of those people moved here. Major employers are now employing Western Australians. Does the Leader of the Opposition know who opposed and criticised that? The Liberals and Nationals did. They criticised us over that. We stopped FIFO from the east and got attacked by the Liberals and Nationals. Around half of the mining workforce —

Ms M.J. Davies: It's remarkable—your rewriting of history.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I will go and find it. Next you will say Clive Palmer was not your friend! That is the next thing you will say.

Around half of the workforce in mining is FIFO and the other half works in regional towns. There are a range of reasons behind that. There are a number of people who want to live in regional communities, and we support that. A number of people want to live in the city and access their work via that technique, and they might have family who go to school here and might have spouses with jobs in the city. For me, that is a personal choice. If we can give the workforce a personal choice, that is a good thing. The National Party seems to object to personal choice. It seems to say that people should not have a right to have a personal choice in their lifestyle. I do not agree with the Leader of the Opposition there. We have vibrant, exciting, booming regional communities, yet she objects to that, and says that somehow people exercising personal choice is wrong. She has not moved on since 2017. She might have seen what happened to Brendon Grylls; he lost his seat. She might have seen what happened to Terry Redman; he lost his seat. I would hate to think that is going to happen to her.