

ROTTNEST ISLAND, IMPLEMENTATION OF TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Statement by Minister for Tourism

MR R.C. KUCERA (Yokine - Minister for Tourism) [2.12 pm]: I provide a further update to the House on the Gallop Government's achievements in implementing the recommendations of the report of the Rottnest Island Taskforce.

Since my last update to the House on 21 September there has been a great deal of progress on the island, and the feedback from visitors is extremely positive. I can now advise that over a quarter of the recommendations have been implemented, with a number of other projects nearing completion. There are a few in particular that I would like to draw to the attention of the House.

Recognition of indigenous history on Rottnest has long been an area of concern for the Aboriginal community. I am extremely pleased to advise the House that I have instructed the Rottnest Island Authority to complete the removal of the Allison cabins, which are located next to the Aboriginal burial ground, and repatriate the area into a parkland of remembrance. In close consultation with the Rottnest Island Deaths Group Aboriginal Corporation, a burial parkland telling the true history of Aboriginal suffering and experience on Rottnest will be established. This will go a long way towards educating visitors about the island's history.

To ensure that it was working with up-to-date and factual data, the task force coordinated an independent market research project to find out the true views of visitors to the island. The results of this work show that the direction taken by the task force is largely consistent with the desires of the marketplace. The data will now be used by the Rottnest Island Authority to determine future service provision standards and development options.

The provision of a safe, reliable source of feed water for the desalination plant will be achieved with the sinking of four beach wells at Longreach Bay, beginning next week. The wells will overcome the issue of iron-related bacteria that has affected the desalination plant. A further positive result of this will be the reduction in the reliance on ground bores on the island, which have become seriously depleted over past years; a subsequent replenishment of ground water cells will flow from that.

In line with the island's new ethos of boosting the number of visitors in off-peak times, all older Western Australians visiting the island tomorrow will pay only \$20 for their return trip departing from Fremantle in special recognition of Seniors Week. I invite the member for Hillarys to take advantage of that.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Perhaps you should go.

Mr R.C. KUCERA: I am, as a matter of fact.

A series of activities that encourage seniors to be active are teamed with an opportunity to see first-hand the improvements we have made to the island.

The Gallop Government is committed to ensuring the momentum that has been achieved in implementing the Rottnest Island Taskforce recommendations is maintained. Under our watch, Rottnest Island will never fall back to the degraded state it was in as a result of neglect by consecutive Governments.