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<tr>
<th>Member</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Visit Scope</th>
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<tr>
<td>HON B HOUSE MLC</td>
<td>11-Apr-14</td>
<td>VISIT LEGISLATURES TO DEVELOP INTERPARLIAMENTAL EXCHANGE WITH WESTERN CANADA</td>
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<tr>
<td>W DUNCAN MLA</td>
<td>11-Apr-14</td>
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<td>R COOK MLA</td>
<td>11-Apr-14</td>
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<td>HON P BROWN MLA</td>
<td>11-Apr-14</td>
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<td>G JACOBS MLA</td>
<td>11-Apr-14</td>
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<tr>
<td>HON A HAYDEN MLC</td>
<td>13-Apr-14</td>
<td>INVITED TO SPEAK AT THE ABORIGINAL TOURISM ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA 2014 CONFERENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P ABETZ MLA</td>
<td>13-Apr-14</td>
<td>MEETINGS ON ISSUES RELATING TO PROSTITUTION LAW REFORM AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING</td>
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<td>HON R MCSWEENEY MLC</td>
<td>13-Apr-14</td>
<td>MEETINGS ON ISSUES RELATING TO PROSTITUTION LAW REFORM AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING</td>
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<td>L BAKER MLA</td>
<td>21-Apr-14</td>
<td>VARIOUS MEETINGS TO DISCUSS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S RIGHTS AND GLOBAL ANIMAL WELFARE</td>
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<td>M MURRAY MLA</td>
<td>1-May-14 11-May-14</td>
<td>HONG KONG</td>
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<td>J MCGRATH MLA</td>
<td>4-May-14 8-May-14</td>
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**TOTAL FOR PARLIAMENT TRAVEL ALLOWANCE VISITS: 17** $178,647
REPORT OF OVERSEAS TRAVEL UNDERTAKEN BY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FUNDED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL ALLOWANCE

FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

This report contains a summary of all overseas travel undertaken by Members of Parliament on official business funded by the Parliamentary Travel Allowance.
REPORT OF THE PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION TO WESTERN CANADA

JUNE 2014

Presented by the Hon. Barry House MLC
President of the Legislative Council

26 June 2014
Members of the Western Australian parliamentary delegation at the British Columbia Legislature with Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Mr Craig James
Introduction

Western Australia and the Western Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia share a great number of similarities, including parliamentary institutions, socio-economic circumstances, issues of national-provincial relations, indigenous matters and cultural diversity. Both Western Australia and Western Canada are resource rich, have very extensive agricultural undertakings, deal with vast and often remote areas, experience some climatic extremes, and have medical, educational, and other challenges, particularly in remote areas. At the parliamentary level, even though British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan are unicameral and Western Australia is bicameral, we have evolved from a similar background and have Houses and Committees operating under similar circumstances.

In 2012, the idea was mooted to establish a much closer association between the Parliaments of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Western Australia by an initial exchange of delegations. The aim of this exchange program was to encourage practical professional development through learning from each other, examination of practices and by the sharing of information and experiences amongst members and parliamentary staff in the respective legislatures. The three Canadian Provinces, particularly Saskatchewan, welcomed a closer association with the State of Western Australia, and it was therefore proposed that the first delegation would come from Saskatchewan to Western Australia in September 2013, and a return delegation from Western Australia to Saskatchewan in the first half of 2014.

Based on the success of these two initial exchanges, discussions will now take place to determine how to develop and strengthen these relationships in the future.
WA Parliamentary Delegation Visit to Western Canada: 11 to 26 April 2014

The delegation was comprised of:

- Hon. Barry House MLC, President of the Legislative Council, Member for South West Region
- Ms Wendy Duncan MLA, Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Member for Kalgoorlie
- Hon. Kate Doust MLC, Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council, Member for South Metropolitan Region
- Mr Roger Cook MLA, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Member for Kwinana
- Hon. Paul Brown MLC, Member for Agricultural Region
- Dr Graham Jacobs MLA, Member for Eyre
- Mr Nigel Pratt, Clerk of the Legislative Council
- Mr Russell Bremner, Executive Manager, Parliamentary Services
- Ms Kirsten Robinson, Deputy Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

Outline of Visit

In September 2013, Western Australia hosted a delegation of members and staff from Saskatchewan for approximately two weeks. In the first week, the visiting members were allocated to two WA members each and travelled to their electorates to pursue issues of interest to them. In the second week, they undertook a familiarisation and study program about the Parliament itself and the operations of the Houses and their Committees.

Following the success of this visit, a return visit was arranged along the same lines for a Western Australian parliamentary delegation to visit Western Canada in April 2014. The Presiding Officers sought expressions of interest from Members from both Houses and five members were selected for the exchange: three members from the Legislative Assembly and two members from the Legislative Council. In addition to the delegation selected, the President of the Legislative Council also joined the group. Three staff from the three parliamentary departments accompanied the delegation and undertook their own professional development program. The exchange included a brief visit to Alberta and British Columbia, with the main part of the program taking place in Saskatchewan.

Alberta

The delegation visited the Alberta Legislative Assembly in Edmonton on Monday, 14 April 2014 and was welcomed by the Clerk, Dr David McNeil and his staff. The delegation was provided with an overview of the parliamentary system in Alberta, which is a unicameral Parliament with 87 seats, followed by a discussion by senior staff on the Legislature’s committee system.

As the delegation members were interested to learn about the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund, they were provided with a briefing about the Fund and the work of the Standing Committee which oversees the Fund, by the Chair of the Standing Committee, Mr Ron Casey MLA. Mr Aaron Brown, Director of Portfolio Management, Capital Markets, Treasury Board and Finance provided technical details about the Fund. The delegation heard that it is an approximately $17 billion fund made up of revenues from non-renewable resources which was started in the 1970s. The all-party Standing Committee, which consists of nine Members of the Legislative Assembly, reviews and reports to the House on the fund’s operations and results.
This was followed by an overview of the province of Alberta by Mr Phil Burke, Director Intergovernmental Relations, Europe, Southeast Asia and Oceania, Alberta International and Intergovernmental Relations. He spoke about Alberta's political system, its geography, economic factors and Australia-Alberta relations. After lunch, the delegation was taken on a tour of the Legislative Building and was then seated in the Speaker's Gallery where they were formally introduced to the House before viewing a very interesting and fast-paced Oral Question Period. The final formal meeting of the day was with Mr Rob Anderson MLA, Official Opposition House Leader who spoke with the delegation on the role of the official opposition and the challenges presented by the small number of official opposition members in the Alberta Legislature.

In the evening, the Speaker of the Alberta Legislative Assembly, the Hon. Gene Zwozdesky MLA, hosted a dinner for the delegation, which was also attended by Mrs Mary Anne Jablonski MLA, Deputy Chair of Committees and Mr Robert H. Reynolds QC, Law Clerk and Director of Interparliamentary Relations at the Saskatchewan Parliament.

Saskatchewan

The delegation was hosted by the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly from Tuesday, 15 April to Wednesday, 23 April 2014. The Clerk, Mr Gregory Putz and his staff prepared an extensive and varied program for the delegation. As the House was sitting when the delegation arrived, the first three days covered the workings of the Parliament and its committees, including viewing a public hearing of the Public Accounts Committee and the WA MPs being invited to attend Government and Opposition Caucus Meetings. A highlight for all the delegation was being introduced to the House, which involved Saskatchewan members' thumping on their desks as their form of greeting. On several occasions, the WA MPs were invited to view proceedings from the Chamber floor, which had an unusual seating arrangement whereby the 49 government members were ranged on one side of the Chamber with the 9 opposition members on the other side, in a House totalling 58 seats.

As the Saskatchewan delegation visiting Perth in 2013 had been particularly attracted to the Legislative Assembly's grievance procedure, the Hon. Barry House and Ms Wendy Duncan gave a presentation on Thursday, 17 April 2014 to Saskatchewan members and staff on "Private Members' Opportunities", which included grievances and other procedures available to government and opposition backbenchers in both Houses of the Western Australian Parliament.

In the evening on Thursday, 17 April 2014, the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan, Her Honour the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield hosted an official dinner at Government House for the Western Australian parliamentary delegation. Guests were invited to take a tour of the Government House Museum, and during the dinner speeches were made by the Lieutenant Governor; the Hon. Dan D'Autremont MLA, Speaker of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly; the Minister for Advanced Education, the Hon. Rob Norris MLA; Opposition Member Mr David Forbes MLA; and the Deputy Mayor of the City of Regina, Mr Bob Hawkins. The Hon. Barry House MLC gave the Loyal Toast.

In the second week, the Western Australian MPs were paired with Saskatchewan members who took them to their electorates where they visited institutions and organisations and gained an understanding of the local issues. The pairings were as follows:
Further information about the Members’ experiences can be found in their individual reports in the Appendices to this Report.

**Staff Program**

While the members spent time with their host members, Mr Nigel Pratt, Mr Russell Bremner and Ms Kirsten Robinson undertook a professional development program at the Saskatchewan Legislature. The program included briefings and discussions about the following:

- the Legislative Assembly Service and its operations;
- parliamentary committees;
- the Legislative Assembly's procedural database and recording of precedents;
- Hansard and broadcasting services;
- Members’ services;
- the role of Visitor Services, including public tours and school visits;
- the Speaker’s Outreach Program, which involves the Speaker making personal visits to Saskatchewan schools to inform students about the province’s parliamentary processes;
- the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program and Chamber Page Program;
- the role and operation of the Board of Internal Economy, which has responsibility for the financial and administrative policies affecting the Legislative Assembly, its members and the Legislative Assembly Service;
- human resource matters;
- budget setting for Parliament;
- security arrangements;
- risk management and strategic planning; and
- facilities and asset management.

The staff also met with and were provided with an overview of the roles of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Mr Ron Barclay QC, who advises all members about their obligations under the *Members’ Conflict of Interest Act*; Ms Mary McFadyen, Ombudsman; and the Acting Provincial Auditor, Ms Judy Ferguson who, as one of her duties, acts as a Special Adviser to the Public Accounts Committee.
**Historical, cultural and other visits**

During the visit to Saskatchewan, the delegation had the opportunity to visit the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Heritage Centre, the STARS Air Ambulance (Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service) and the First Nations University of Canada. Some members also toured the various faculties at the University of Saskatchewan.

On Good Friday, 18 April 2014, the delegation toured the Batoche National Historic Site, which is a sacred place for the Métis, who are a recognised indigenous people of mixed First Nations and European heritage. Batoche is an historic and culturally significant place which commemorates the site of armed conflict between the Métis provisional government and the Canadian government in 1885. It also provides an unique insight into the history and culture of the Métis.

On Easter Saturday, the delegation toured the McArthur River Uranium Mine in the Athabasca Basin. Mr Rick Morrison, Manager, Safety, Health, Radiation, Environment, Quality, Compliance & Licensing at Cameco Corporation escorted the delegation around the mine, which included a tour of the underground operations. The members were informed about the mine’s significance in terms of the grade and production of uranium ore and its contribution to the province and the local community of the North West of the Saskatchewan.

**British Columbia**

The delegation visited the British Columbia Legislative Assembly in Victoria on Friday, 25 April 2014, where members were welcomed by the Clerk of the House, Mr Craig James and other senior parliamentary staff. To begin with, Mr Don Haney, Executive Director, Economic Policy and Asia Pacific Relations and Mr Marc-André Ouellette, Chief of Protocol and Executive Director, Office of Protocol from the Intergovernmental Relations Secretariat provided an excellent briefing on the province of British Columbia, including its economic, social, political and cultural aspects. This was followed by an overview by Mr James and senior staff on British Columbia’s parliamentary system, which is a unicameral Parliament with 85 seats. The delegation members then had a fruitful roundtable discussion on the British Columbia political situation with Mr Douglas Horne MLA, Deputy Speaker and Mr Marc Dalton MLA, Parliamentary Secretary for Independent Schools.

Although it was disappointing that the House was not in session, the delegation was conducted on a tour of the magnificent legislative building after lunch. Delegation MPs then met with Ms Neilane Mayhew from the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation about Aboriginal relations in British Columbia, while staff met with Mr Robert Sutherland, Director of Hansard Services to discuss reporting and broadcasting services in the House.

In the evening, Ms Kate Ryan-Lloyd, Deputy Clerk and Clerk of Committees, hosted a dinner for the delegation, which was attended by several of the staff of the Legislature.
Costs

As the funding arrangement for the MPs' travel costs was that 50% was to be met by each Member, the total cost paid by the six Members was $49,525. The total cost paid by the Parliament, which included the other 50% for each of the MPs and the full cost for the three staff members, was $99,220 and is detailed as follows:

- **Airfares**: $61,434
- **Accommodation & meals**: $27,779
- **Allowances**: $6,300
- **Gifts**: $1,894
- **Ground transport**: $1,813

Conclusion

The delegation acknowledges the excellent assistance and warm hospitality received from the Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia Parliaments. We sincerely thank all legislatures and their staff for arranging interesting and informative programs for the delegation. In Alberta, the delegation wishes to extend its appreciation to the Speaker, the Hon. Gene Zwozdesky MLA and Dr David McNeil, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly; in British Columbia, Mr Craig James, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly; and in Saskatchewan, the Hon. Dan D’Autremont MLA and the Clerk, Mr Gregory Putz. In particular, we thank Mr D’Autremont and Mr Putz for the generous giving of their time during a busy April sitting period and their decision to travel with the delegation, along with several of the Saskatchewan parliamentary staff, to the northern parts of the province over the Easter weekend.

In Saskatchewan, the visits by members of the delegation to the ridings of their Saskatchewan host members provided a unique insight into the issues affecting those constituencies. The relationships developed and built upon during the visit will be invaluable given the many similarities shared by the two jurisdictions. The delegation thanks the Saskatchewan members for taking time out of their busy schedules to share their knowledge and experiences with the Western Australian members.

The delegation's visit highlights the importance of exchanges of this kind and developing closer relationships between Western Australia and the Western Canadian provinces. The sharing of information and experiences amongst jurisdictions which have so much in common provides not only important professional development opportunities for individual members and staff, but also improves and strengthens our respective parliamentary institutions.

HON. BARRY HOUSE MLC
PRESIDENT
APPENDIX 1 – REPORT BY HON BARRY HOUSE MLC
APPENDIX 2 – REPORT BY MS WENDY DUNCAN MLA
APPENDIX 3 – REPORT BY HON KATE DOUST MLC
APPENDIX 4 – REPORT BY MR ROGER COOK MLA
APPENDIX 5 – REPORT BY HON PAUL BROWN MLC
APPENDIX 6 – REPORT BY DR GRAHAM JACOBS MLA
The visit to the Legislatures of Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia was the first from the Western Australian Parliament in the developing Inter-Parliamentary Exchange between WA and Western Canada.

This exchange was instigated by several visits to Canada in recent years by former Speaker Hon Grant Woodhams and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Peter McHugh. The exchange has developed on the back of a range of synergies in our jurisdictions based on history, governance, economics, geography and culture.

While there are quite a few similarities in practice, there are obvious differences as each Westminster based Parliament adopts its own unique characteristics. There is a lot to be learnt about ourselves as a result of this delegations visit.

It was an outstanding professional development exercise for all participating members and staff. The preparation, itinerary and activities were exhaustive and comprehensive, covering all aspects of Parliamentary and elected representative responsibilities. The welcome and hospitality from our Canadian hosts was warm, friendly and constructive at all times. All Members and staff on this delegation were professional and committed. They were well suited to the experience which I'm sure will benefit their careers, the Institution and the people of WA.

My observations, findings and recommendations in a variety of areas are as follows;

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE AND ADMINISTRATION

1) The Parliament buildings in Regina (Saskatchewan), Edmonton (Alberta) and Victoria (British Columbia) are substantial and prominent and highlight the relative inadequacies of the WA Parliament building.
Built generally in the same era (1850-1920) as the WA and most other Australian Parliaments the size and stature indicate the strong emphasis placed on governance in the evolution of the Canadian Federation and Provincial Legislatures. We can certainly learn from these examples. By comparison the West Australian Parliament built in 1904, was significantly downsized from the original plans. Despite the Eastern extension, opened 50 years ago, the WA Parliament has struggled to keep up with increasing demands and remains inferior for the requirements of a modern sophisticated Legislature.

It has reinforced my view of the urgent need for a building programme and update in capacity for our Parliament to properly house Members and staff for Legislative, Committee, public and administrative purposes as well as linking the WA Parliament, West Perth and Kings Park with the Perth CBD via a cover, providing a “people’s space,” over the Mitchell Freeway. I hope this will gain bipartisan support as well as media and community acceptance in the near future.

2) While the Canadian Provincial Legislatures are Uni-Cameral, and ours is Bi-Cameral, it is easy to see aspects of each of our systems in the others, through Standing Orders, Committee work and practices. Indeed the Saskatchewan Parliament has already adapted significant aspects of WA’s “Public Accounts” and “Estimates and Financial Operations” Committees.

A major deviation we saw in Regina though was the Auditor-General sitting with the Committee Chair to advise and provide explanations.

It reinforced my belief in the value of a Bicameral system as this system provides better checks and balances than a one-chamber Legislature, which as we saw in Alberta and Saskatchewan, can become extremely lop-sided with Governments having large majorities and the small official Opposition very restricted in their ability to scrutinise. A “first past the post” voting system seems to compound this situation. The current debate in Australia resulting from the WA Senate election re-run seems to favour an optional preferential system which appears to be the best option to overcome extremes.

In my view our system, on the whole offers better diversity of representation and more opportunities for scrutiny and accountability.

3) While the Saskatchewan Parliament, built in 1912, is a magnificent building still providing great service to that Province after a century, there are some aspects of administration where I think we do well by comparison.

For example;

a) The Saskatchewan building also houses the Executive – The Premier and Ministers Offices.
The Executive consequently tend to dominate in terms of management of the building and its services as well as Parliamentary proceedings.

In my view, there is not enough "Separation of Powers" with the Executive crowding out the Legislature.

While our building is poor by comparison, we have a better separation of the Legislature from the Executive, particularly since the WA Premier, most Ministers and Cabinet rooms are located in their own "precinct".

Our setup allows for most of the Legislature management and administration to reside where it should – with the Presiding Officers - while the Executive have easy access to Parliament but don’t dictate all proceedings.

Our geographical location and space demonstrate great foresight by our forefathers and we have the opportunity to enshrine this classic "Separation of Powers" with Parliamentary Precinct Legislation and dedicated buildings which this State will be thankful for well into our future.

b) WA’s catering services are delivered internally. I feel this produces a better quality service for Members, staff and visitors than we saw in Regina.

c) The British Columbia Parliament recently had a major security scare, which has been a lesson for all of us, and also makes use of lighting at night to highlight the magnificent building. Recently the WA Parliament has installed a LED lighting system to achieve some of these aims.

d) Interesting comparisons can be made between our Legislatures in relation to Question Time, Committee activities and servicing Members’ salaries, offices, staff and entitlements. On balance my conclusion is that, despite some shortcomings, our system is pretty good.

4) All 3 of the Legislatures visited, as well as other Canadian jurisdictions, adopt a slightly different practice in relation to Hansard. Hansard Reporters don’t sit on the floor of the Chamber and proceedings are monitored from the Gallery and on the electronic feed with slightly more emphasis on a “Verbatim” than a “Statement of Record” format. The result is a very timely, professional and accurate Hansard.
Our method of producing Hansard has no obvious advantages over this method. There appears to be significant costs, resource and technological advantages for us to move to a system like this.

A significant by-product of changing to this system in WA would be freeing up some scarce office space for Members in our building.

ELECTORATE AND COMMUNITY ISSUES

1) The visit to the Cameco Uranium Mine at MacArthur River was a unique and valuable experience. It is the richest uranium mine in the world, producing 16% of the world’s supply, using outstanding cutting edge technology. Significant employment of the “First Nations” people and attention to detail showed Cameco as good Corporate Citizens. As the owners of the Kintyre and Yeelirle uranium deposits in WA I have every confidence in Cameco’s ability to successfully operate these mines if, and when, they come to fruition.

2) With the development of the new WA Sports Stadium at Burswood in progress I was interested to receive a briefing on a proposed new Stadium in Regina to host the “Roughriders,” the local team who are the current Canadian Football League Champions. This project is smaller in scale and is being driven by the Mayor and the City of Regina, with support from the Provincial Government – different from the WA Stadium Project.

3) Canadian Liquor Laws are very heavily regulated by comparison to WA. The Saskatchewan Government are beginning to relax their laws with licences issued for 4 new privately owned liquor stores – but there are major barriers to Australian wine producers from Margaret River for example, to get a foothold into the Canadian market.

4) A visit to Comox Valley Airport on Vancouver Island, operated in partnership with the Airforce, contained an excellent governance model for the not-for-profit business Management Corporation which the Busselton airport, so vital to the future of the South West, could adapt.

From this example, I would support a broader governance model for the Busselton Airport - as the gateway to the Margaret River Region. While the Busselton Airport is owned and operated by the City of Busselton, I believe a broader governance model consisting of members from both Busselton and Augusta-Margaret River Shires, the South West Development Commission, Chambers of Commerce from the Capes Region, the 2 Tourist Associations and perhaps others.

5) The delegation gave me the opportunity to follow up a previous visit to Canada in 1998 when I was the Deputy Chairman of the Select Committee on Native Title Rights in Western Australia. I am pleased to reflect that, after this passage of time, both Canada and Western Australia have moved relatively
successfully towards negotiation and agreements, rather than legislation producing endless litigation, as the best way forward to resolve Native Title issues.

6) It was also a great pleasure to renew acquaintances with Mr Russell Irvine, now a retired public servant, who was one of the main drivers of the "Trans Canada Trail." During the 1990s I chaired a Ministerial Taskforce on Western Australian Trails development which I'm pleased to say, established the structure and support base for the establishment of a network of walking, cycling, equestrian and non-motorised community trails which service our State well.

Russell Irvine was, and still is, seen as one of the world's pre-eminent people in this area and has been a guest speaker at several WA Trails Conferences over the years. This visit enabled me to reflect on the success of these concepts and facilities in making our communities better places to live.

**SUMMARY**

The Western Australian Parliamentary delegation, consisting of Members from both the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly, and staff across all three Parliamentary Departments, was a positive and constructive professional development opportunity which will produce significant outcomes for the Parliament of WA.
PARLIAMENTARY EXCHANGE TO WESTERN CANADA

April, 2014

Report by Wendy Duncan MLA, Member for Kalgoorlie

The Parliamentary exchange with Western Canada commenced under the previous term of government as an initiative of the then speaker, Mr Grant Woodhams. The object of the exchange is for Members of Parliament to see the operation of similar legislatures based on the Westminster system and embed themselves in the electorates of Members of Parliament with similar interests. Western Canada is a good choice for such an exchange not only because of the common link to the British parliamentary system and membership of the Commonwealth, but also because of the similarities in being resource rich provinces with sometimes sparse population which includes significant numbers of First Nation and Métis people with similar challenges to the Aboriginal people of Australia.

The tour consisted of visiting the Parliaments of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia where we were warmly welcomed by the Speaker and staff in each jurisdiction as well as given the opportunity to meet with key parliamentary staff, vice regal representatives and members of various political parties.

**Alberta**

Alberta has had particular challenges in relation to its natural resources and struggled with many overlaps and uncertainties in relation to jurisdiction with the federal government. It was not until the 1930’s that Alberta gained control of its natural resources and not until 1982, when the Canadian constitution was repatriated from Britain, that jurisdictional responsibilities were more clearly defined. However, the amending formula in the constitution has made it virtually impossible to amend the constitution since that date.

**Question period** was a rowdy affair where both sides of the House loudly thumped their desks as their member posed a question or provided the response. It was virtually impossible to hear and the fracas was supplemented by very loud conversations and accusations across the Chamber where appeared to be acceptable to the Speaker. It is probably because of this each desk had a small earpiece that the questioner would reach for when the Minister rose to respond. Question period allows approximately 18 questions with 2 supplementaries with no preamble.

**Parliamentary Privilege** was an interesting topic for discussion as it is not codified in Alberta and members refer to a test case that found that Parliamentary Privilege is embodied in the Constitution by way of the Legislature’s relationship with the British parliament.
The Committee System in Alberta has developed as a result of the long history of huge majority governments. The legislature has both standing committees and policy committees. The policy committees can undertake self-initiated reviews and the government has 150 days to respond once the report is handed down.

Of particular interest to me was the BRIK (Bitumen Royalty In Kind) policy whereby the government received royalties in kind from a resources company. This engendered considerable discussion, particular the risk involved in volatile commodity prices.

The Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund was also of interest in that it is a future fund that has been established to provide health care, education, medical research and infrastructure into the future from the income earned. The investment strategy for the fund expressly required a spread of investments, many outside of Canada, to smooth the financial and commodity cycles. Investment is in bonds, private companies on international stock markets, and infrastructure.

Hansard is recorded on digital equipment with just one officer on the floor of the house managing the console which directs the microphones to the speaker on their feet and identifies specific issues to assist the transcription of the digital recording. Transcription occurs offsite.

Saskatchewan

The majority of the exchange took place in Saskatchewan, a province with many similarities to Western Australia. The province is very large (by Canadian standards - twice the size of the electorate of Kalgoorlie), quite sparsely populated, underpinned by significant natural resources and home to a large number of First Nation and Métis people. The marked difference with Western Australia is the strong connection between city and the regions. There is still a very clear understanding in the city, and in the Parliament, of the important role that the regions play in the economy and the need to support agricultural and mining industries and regional populations to ensure a strong and stable economy. This is different to Western Australia where the disconnect between Perth and the rest of the State is quite pronounced.

Question period is strictly controlled with 1 minute allowed for the question and 1 minute for the reply. The Speaker noted that some leeway would be afforded to the Premier and Leader of the Opposition up to a maximum of 1 minute 15 seconds. Questions are not allowed on party political matters and on the Board of Internal Economy. Question period is limited to 25 minutes and is preceded by a period of 90 second statements (7 in total).

Ministerial statements must be no more than five minutes and the opposition is afforded the same amount of time to respond.
An interesting feature of the Saskatchewan legislature is the period at the commencement of each day where members on the floor introduce guests in the gallery. This is an opportunity to acknowledge constituents who have reached milestones or achievements and is extensively used by members.

Bills are dealt with after 2 days’ notice and the second reading is limited to 20 hours of debate. Once that time limit is reached final clauses must be put without debate. The opposition can agree to allow a bill to move forward with less than 20 hours debate.

Following the second reading speeches the bill is referred to one of four standing committees for detailed consideration. This is where the third reading is dealt with. It is rare for the third reading to take place in a committee of the whole.

The Legislative Assembly sits for 65 days a year with the autumn sitting devoted to legislation and the spring sitting dedicated to scrutiny of the budget. The budget is presented in the third week of March followed by 28 days of debate.

Friday is considered to be constituent day for Members and the Legislature rises at 1.00pm on Thursday to allow them to return to their constituency.

Hansard is again recorded digitally with one officer in the house operating the console that directs the microphones and provides guidance to the media room in Parliament. All proceedings of Parliament are televised and broadcast through the shopping channel in Saskatchewan. The officer operating the console has a separate microphone to a dubbing channel to record the names of speakers (especially in committee where it may be various agency officers) and other key information that will assist Hansard staff in their ofsite transcription.

Hansard is recorded virtually verbatim with Members not afforded the opportunity to see a draft and correct errors.

As a representative of the presiding officers I was particularly interested in the operation of Hansard and we requested the opportunity to visit the ofsite transcription unit. Here about 40 staff (approximately 17fte) work on transcribing the digital recordings streamed from the house. This was a very useful visit.

Members’ remuneration and allowances were discussed and it was noted that in Saskatchewan Members were expected to negotiate and pay for the lease of their office, motor vehicle and engagement of staff through their parliamentary allowance. Reimbursement for expenses relating to their responsibilities and activities is strictly on the submission of receipts, right down to the cup of coffee on the trip back to Parliament. This is a very onerous system, with very high administrative costs and high risk of error.

Private Members’ Opportunities is a topic that the Saskatchewan delegation wanted to further discuss following their visit to Western Australia last year. They were
particularly interested in the grievance debate and the opportunity it gave members to gain an answer from the Minister on a matter of importance in their electorate. In response to this request the President, the Hon. Barry House and I gave a presentation on such opportunities in both Houses in Western Australia. Many thanks to the staff of the Parliament of Western Australia for their assistance in preparing this.

**British Columbia**

The legislature in British Columbia (on Vancouver Island) is a magnificent building with wonderful public open space surrounding it. Unfortunately the parliament was not sitting at the time of our visit but we were made very welcome by the Clerk and his key personnel who provided us with an overview of the Province of British Columbia and the operations of the Parliament. British Columbia only has 13.5% of Canada's population and therefore suffers from not having a strong voice in the federal government, similar to Western Australia.

BC is also challenged by the fact that it is the only province in Canada that does not have treaties with First Nation peoples and therefore the court system is used to define and establish rights. This causes a great deal of uncertainty and cost and it was estimated in a study conducted in 1999 that this resulted in billions of dollars of lost opportunities. Reconciliation agreements have been the vehicle to deal with this issue. These are tri-partite agreements between the First Nation people, the province and the federal government. They need to be backed by legislation in both parliaments.

The issue of overlapping rights and claims is very significant, but the onus is on the First Nation people to resolve the issue and assert their rights before the province and federal government will come to the table.

Some interesting observations about the operation of the BC parliament are:

**Question period** is the only time in the house that members are not permitted to use social media such as Twitter or read from an electronic device. In the BC parliament everything is televised and there is a video stream on the website.

**Salaries and allowances** were a hot topic with the Legislature in the process of responding to demands that the details of Members' expenditure that is reimbursed (ie every cheque and every receipt) be made available on the public record. This was a matter of some frustration to the staff who could envisage very high administrative costs with little demonstrable benefit to the public.

**Constituency Visit**

The highlight of the tour was the few days spent as the guest of Nadine Wilson who is the Member of Parliament for the riding (electorate) of Saskatchewan Rivers. Saskatchewan Rivers is a provincial electoral district for the Legislative Assembly of
Saskatchewan, Canada. This constituency is located where the North Saskatchewan River and the South Saskatchewan River merge. Communities in the riding include the towns of Big River and Choiceland; and the villages of White Fox, Debden, Meath Park, Candle Lake, Smeaton, and Christopher Lake. (Acknowledgement to Wikipedia and apologies to those members of the media who object to cutting and pasting from the web).

Nadine defeated the sitting member to be elected in 2007 and was re-elected in 2011 with 65.92% in a constituency of 10,240 electors. The electorate is made up of mainly open farmland, northern forests and lakes and a significant number of First Nation communities. We therefore had a great deal in common.

The highlight of my stay with Nadine was the very warm welcome and generous hospitality in her home with her husband Doug and all the family and grandchildren over Easter. She was also very generous in her time taking me on visits to a bison farm, an equestrian centre which provided support and rehabilitation to young people with disabilities and challenging behaviours, a saw mill and a First Nation community.

The visit to the Bison farm was particularly interesting as these animals were very apprehensive about human interaction and would never be considered "domesticated" as would beef cattle and sheep. This meant that specialised feeding and handling systems were required. I gained a detailed insight into these systems as I believe they would be useful in handling feral animals such as camels in the remote areas of my electorate.

Our trip out to the Big River First Nation community was a wonderful experience as a considerable amount is to be learned from how this community is working with corporations and government to educate and train their people and ensure they have employment at the end of the process. The Band (Community Council) headed by Chief Bruce Morin had made incredible progress in reducing dependency on welfare from over 90% to around 60% through tailored training to meet the needs of the corporations with whom they partnered and a commitment to provide employment for every graduate. This is delivered through the Big River First Nation Centre of Excellence for Business Development, a facility providing adult education and business incubator opportunities on the Big River First Nation Reserve. The Centre offers skill development, job training and counselling for job opportunities, as well as post-secondary opportunities. It is an excellent educational institution built on site and negotiations were underway to build oil well equipment there to use as a training tool to meet the needs of the corporation who had committed the funds for the equipment. There would be a guarantee of work for anyone who completed the course on the equipment. (source: http://www.brfn.ca/gallery.html)

The Band assisted its people to transition from $250/month welfare payment to $100,000 per year in the mining industry. They also worked with the mining
company to develop rosters (usually one week on/one week off) to suit the cultural needs of the employees as well as ensure that First Nation people went into the workforce in groups so they had peer support from their own people.

We saw this in operation when we visited the McArthur River uranium mine hosted by Cameco. There is certainly a lot to learn from how this mine is operated, and its commitment to employing people from the local region and, in particular, First Nation people.

**Conclusion**

This report is just a snapshot of some of the benefits I have gained from the exchange with the Parliaments of Western Canada. We were provided with many documents, reports and PowerPoint presentations which go into these issues at greater depth and provide a reference as we apply our learning to our own parliament and electorates.

I think the benefit of the trip was summed up by the President of the Legislative Council, the Hon. Barry House, in his comments at the farewell dinner with our hosts from the Legislature of Saskatchewan. He said that such delegations “transformed politicians to parliamentarians” by giving them the opportunity to look past their local policy and party political focus and see the broader picture of how our parliaments work, how we can make the institution and its operation better and how we can serve our people and our nation to the best of our ability.

Thank you to the staff of the Parliament of Western Australia, particularly Kirsten Robinson, for all their work in making sure travel arrangements ran smoothly and that we were all fully engaged from early in the morning until late at night every day.
Hon Kate Doust MLC
Parliamentary study exchange with the Western Canadian provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia
11-26 April 2014

Introduction
This report provides some comments on the parliamentary study exchange, and provides a general list of events attended and shared meetings in the regions of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Victoria.

This was an excellent opportunity to observe the parliamentary practices in three quite different regions of Canada. A number of similarities are noted with our own State in terms of the key industries of mining and agriculture, political party structures, and current financial issues for our state and their region.

It also provided an excellent opportunity to meet a range of people to discuss issues around local content in manufacturing, asbestos, industrial relations, occupational safety and health issue in the workplace. Policing and environmental and indigenous native title issues were also canvassed across a range of additional meetings.

Other activities included a series of meetings at the Saskatoon University looking a number of innovations in the areas of agriculture (including dairy research), medicine (including medical research in the area of vaccine development and technologies against infectious diseases) and commercialisation and incubator support for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Finally a visit to the Synchrotron that scientists can use to gather information about the structural and chemical properties of materials at the molecular level at the university and an explanation of the type of research done in that facility.

On a personal level it was a useful experience to observe different parliamentary and committee practices in a different version of the Westminster system. Western Australia being bicameral compared to all the provincial legislatures in Canada being unicameral.

Legislative Assembly visits
Some notable differences were the basic procedures practised in the legislatures of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia which we visited.

Commencing with the sitting of the Legislative Assembly in Alberta on Monday 14 April. On the first sitting day of each week the speaker invites a professional, a member of the public or a community group to start the day with the singing of the nation anthem, ‘O Canada’.

The Speaker also offers a prayer every day to commence which is changed each sitting day. On the day of our visit a simple pray was given: “let us pray that our actions today result in improvements tomorrow for those whom we are pledged to serve in this Assembly. Amen.”

Although I like the concept of a changing prayer, I think to arrive at an appropriate prayer each sitting day would be a constant challenge.
The other two legislatures that we visited, Saskatchewan and British Columbia, also read prayers every day at the sitting of the Assembly before any business is entered upon, however it is not changed on a daily basis.

Visitors
Each of the legislatures demonstrated an interesting form of acknowledgment to visitors and guests to the chamber; which included both naming the individual or group and a brief description of background and a formal welcome to their chamber.

I thought this was a positive manner to engage, and include the community in the ownership of the parliament as a true peoples place. This acknowledgement was traditionally followed by clapping from all members for the visitor.

The clapping by members was also used in a couple the legislatures both as mechanism to allow a speaker thinking time and as applause; which is fully allowed by each speaker. Not a practise that has been allowed or demonstrated in any Australian parliament except on rare occasions. This was also followed up by vigorous table thumping at key times to make or emphasise a point. This practice would not occur in the Western Australian Parliament—an interesting custom and practice and strategic tool.

Debate
Another difference noted was the 'Seventy-five minute debate' in the Saskatchewan legislature. Once a week in session a debate for 75 minutes will happen on a current matter of public interest.

The first 65 minutes are conducted in a similar manner to how the Council would conduct a non-government business with allowance for speakers on both sides with set speaking times. The final ten minutes of the debate are reserved for a question period.

The only people who are asked questions are the members who spoke on the matter from either side of the debate. It is a fast and lively session and allows members to ask questions about any unresolved matters arising from the debate or to seek additional direct answers from participating members.

Matters for debate are allocated to each party on a rotational basis. It allows a real-time and boisterous debate on matters of public interest not dissimilar to our Legislative Council non-government debates, but with key difference of the additional question time. This is also a useful training session for backbenchers, allowing them to have an opportunity to speak on matters and to gain experience answering questions without notice.

This is an interesting method of debate and worthy of consideration in the future for the Western Australia Legislative Council.

Question period
In the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan question time also saw some key differences with questions being put to the leader of the house, or the relevant minister, and then deflecting the question to another minister at that point to provide an answer.

Other procedural matters were related to how the committee as a whole were managed. This included time limits on periods of debate before a vote is taken on a bill and also the number of hours spent by a committee inquiring into a referred bill or matter.
Rules and procedures
Meetings in each of the three parliaments addressed such things as different processes for siting procedures, committee practices, financial operation of both the parliament and accountability requirements for members of parliament, management of Hansard reporting, and caucus function of each party.

Other meetings Saskatchewan and Regina
My host member from the Saskatchewan Legislature was Mr Roger Parent MLA. Mr Parent arranged a number of meetings in both Saskatoon and Regina. I would like to express my appreciation to both Mr Parent for organising the meetings and to those individuals that I met with over those couple of days.

21 April 2014
Meeting with Mr David Forbes MLA (New Democratic Party, Deputy Chair Standing Committee on Human Services) and Mr Jesse Todd (Saskatchewan Asbestos Disease Awareness Organization) allowed discussions on the private members bill that was debated and past to amend the Public Health Act, to provide for online access to information relating to asbestos in public buildings.

Saskatchewan had an on-line registry for reporting asbestos in public buildings; however it was not mandatory for schools, health care facilities, and other public places to submit a list of their buildings to that registry.

The belief is that public buildings that contain asbestos that are currently in the control of the Government of Saskatchewan, or any of its agencies, should be making the information easily available to give workers, patients, and the public more facts to help them make informed decisions about their health and their safety.

22 April 2014
I met with Mr Ross Fraser, General Manager at Supreme Steel Ltd. and Mr Bert Royer, Canadian Regional Director, Ironworker Management Progressive Action Cooperative Trust (IMPACT). Discussions included; first nation and youth employment and training issues, apprentices, union activity, local content and trade.

I met with Mr Darcy Bear, Chief of the Whitecap Dakota First Nation (WDFN). We spoke about the history and culture of the Whitecap and how they fit into the larger Dakota First Nation. Other discussions included governance, challenges faced, and current first nation matters such as the Indian Act. Their plans for development in the community, and comparison of health and education matters shared by Canadian first nation peoples and Western Australian aboriginal people were also discussed. I toured the community and visited the Dakota Dunes Casino operating within the community.

In Regina I was accompanied by local Member of Parliament and Opposition House Leader Mr Warren McCall MLA (New Democratic Party), at a meeting with Mr Larry Hubich, President of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and Alex Furlong Regional Director Prairie Region of the Canadian Labour Congress.

23 April 2014
I visited the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Academy, "Depot" Division in Regina where I received a briefing and tour by Sgt. Pharanae Jaques-Croisetiere. We addressed a number of
matters including; attraction and training officers, occupational safety and health, employment conditions, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) issues, and the history of the RCMP. I viewed a range of training session and site facilities.

I attended a community event with the Ukrainian-Canadian community. Ukrainians are the sixth largest ethnic group in Saskatchewan (ninth in Canada). There have been several waves of Ukrainians settling in Canada; in the 1890's, after World War I, also again after World War II and more recently following Ukraine's declaration of independence in 1991.

12 April 2014
In Victoria, along with Mr Roger Cook Western Australia Shadow Minister for Health, I met with Ms Judy Daroy MLA for New Westminster Opposition Critic for Health. Health, education, employment and housing issues in the Vancouver area were discussed.

Other
Meetings with Members of Parliament and Parliamentary staff focused on electoral affairs, campaigning, and community engagement.

Conclusion
This was an excellent opportunity to observe a different set of parliamentary practices over a number of Canadian regional parliaments. This is extremely useful to determine if there are opportunities for our own Legislative Council Chamber to adapt or adopt practices to improve the functioning of the Council.
This report is to provide impressions and findings in relation to my participation on the parliamentary delegation to the Western provinces of British Columbia, Alberta and Saskatchewan. The delegation was an exchange with the Saskatchewan Parliament in return for a similar visit from that parliament in September 2013. The exchange was an invaluable opportunity to gain insights into the parliamentary procedures and approaches of different legislatures but also to investigate individual policy interests detailed in my initial expression of interest for the delegation.

I was particularly interested in gaining an understanding about a range of issues in health and indigenous affairs. In particular I was interested in:

- Medical research funding options;
- The Alberta Cancer Plan,
- Indigenous cultural issues, and
- Delivery of Indigenous Health Services

Parliamentary Procedures

The delegation was fortunate to be able to observe a number of parliamentary sessions mostly focusing on question time and debate around main policy issues. There was limited opportunity to observe committees but we gained an insight into how the Saskatchewan Parliament has incorporated elements of the estimates committee process in Western Australia into their budgetary and policy review system.

I was particularly taken with the parliamentary question time in both the Alberta and Saskatchewan parliaments which limit time used for both questions and answers. This has the impact of reducing the depth of response which allows for more supplementary questions and responses, creating an exchange that appears more genuine and inquiring than the system of Question Time used in Western Australia.

Of particular interest was the use of a debate called the '75 Minute' debate in the Saskatchewan Parliament which was something akin to our MPI debates. At the conclusion of the debate both sides have an opportunity to test the other side's arguments through a short question and answer exchange that provided both a good forum for backbenchers but also provided a good brake on hubris as members' parliamentary rhetoric can be cross-examined.

Medical Research funding options

A session with members of the public service of Alberta provided an invaluable opportunity to explore the public policy issues of the Alberta Heritage Trust sovereign wealth fund. Despite great vision and gains early in the fund’s existence, it was clear that, like many hypothecated funds, the initial vision and purpose had been lost over time. Recent efforts to refresh that vision and to continue to build the fund have been important to regain the effectiveness of the policy approach. It was clear from the presentation that a sovereign wealth fund relied upon a low debt profile for the overall state of the public finances. Alberta has historically low levels of public debt which means the gains of the sovereign wealth fund are not offset by payments to service the debt.

Medical research funding was a particular focus for the fund in the initial period following its establishment. While the fund remains important to medical research, this aspect of its application
was identified as needing further refinement due to an observed dampening of competitive tension in the medical research field. It will be interesting to see how these changes are implemented and their impact on the medical research effort in Alberta.

Indigenous Cultural Issues

Although not a primary objective from the tour I wanted to get a greater appreciation of Canadian attitudes and government approaches to the First Nations and Metis communities.

It is clear from the Canadian approach that Western Australia has a long way to go in its attitudes to its Indigenous people. I observed the appropriate and respectful recording of history. We visited the museum in Batoche which details and explains the issues surrounding the Battle of Batoche, recording the events surrounding a violent response by authorities to Metis land claims. The delegation also witnessed the celebration of Indigenous icons in public art. There was appropriate provision of resources and recognition through the treaty process which has led to land and treaty rights and institutions. Across the community and Government there was a recognition and understanding of the relationship between Canada and its first people.

At the practical level, on the table in the Saskatchewan Parliament there was a woven mat given to the Parliament by a representative of the Metis people. This simple but central piece of symbolism stands as a recognition of inclusive powers of a parliament and compares admirably to our chamber which features no icons of the Western Australian traditional owners.

Resources have also been committed to major cultural centres that serve as cultural, tourism, and academic institutions. I had the opportunity to visit the First Nations University with the delegation and the Waniskawin Cultural Centre with my host MP Warren Michelson, Member for Moose Jaw North. I was impressed with the way culture was embraced, nurtured, and promoted through these major institutions.

The First Nations University, with its demonstration of Indigenous values and iconography in its architecture was a highlight of the tour. One aspect of the First Nations University, SIAST Pallise Campus and Wascana training facility I was impressed with was the use of paid elders to provide guidance and mentoring to Indigenous students and to provide pastoral care on Indigenous issues for the institution in which they are based. The explicit use of elders and recognizing the importance of their role through appropriate funding struck me as an informed and culturally sensitive way to provide services to First Nations and Metis people.

The First Nations and Metis people still confront many of the same economic and social issues that often impact on Indigenous peoples; however, it seems that in the Western provinces we visited there was an effort to proudly highlight the strong cultural values of these people rather than perpetuate implicit or explicit policies that maintain their invisibility.

Delivery of Indigenous Health Services

During my time with my host MP I had an opportunity to visit a range of First Nation organisations to discuss and observe the delivery of health services to their communities. While I had hoped to gain an insight into remote health service delivery (beyond the visit to the Helicopter-based medical evacuation organisation) my visit was limited to discussions on health services in urban Saskatoon. Nevertheless this experienced reinforced the strongly held conviction of WA Aboriginal medical services that their effectiveness was very much linked to being culturally owned and aligned with community they serve.
Other Issues:

Meeting with City of Moose Jaw
I attended a meeting with the Mayor and Business Development Manager at Moose Jaw to discuss economic stimulation strategies in the town centre.

LEAN Health Initiatives, Moose Jaw Hospital
Met with representatives of the Moose Jaw Hospital who are using the principles of LEAN to develop design concepts for the new Moose Jaw Hospital currently under construction.

Workforce Training and Development
Toured a range of SIAST training facilities in Moose Jaw (Pallise Campus) and Regina (Wascana nurse teaching college) The Wascana facility provided an interesting insight into integrated nurse training and developing a centre of excellence in nursing.

Conclusion
Joining the delegation to Western Canada was an invaluable opportunity to appreciate different policy options to a range of issues that impact our State. Many of the issues that are prevalent to these provinces are being grappled with by Western Australia. The importance of these types of delegations cannot be underestimated in appreciating the wide range of public policy approaches and in continuing the development of our cohort of parliamentarians.
Monday, April 21, 2014

Tour of the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

Members of the delegation and host members were afforded the opportunity to tour facilities and observe the advancements being made in the provision of a range of regional services being delivered through the University of Saskatchewan.

College of Medicine

This new facility at the University delivers a range of in-house, real-time medical and allied health education opportunities. Members were given a tour of this state-of-the-art facility that allows students to undergo learning in practical situations that will lead to better understanding of the requirements that they will face as medical professionals. The tour allowed the delegation members present to observe students as they were learning and we were able to see first-hand the benefits of a learning centre that is adapted to the changes taking place in modern society.

Many of the facilities and amenities here allow students to participate both in face to face and remote instruction modes. A modern approach to delivery of education through the use of world-class technology also allows this facility to be very user friendly. A good example of this is the ongoing replacement and transition of the traditional hardback library to a digital library that can be accessed from anywhere within the University or through internet connectivity.

Academic Health Science

Delegation members were treated to a real-time demonstration of the remote nursing, allied health and learning facility that is based at the University of Saskatchewan and delivered to a number of regional centres throughout Saskatchewan.

Members were given the opportunity to observe how, through the use of remote, manoeuvrable robotic stations, students in isolated and regional communities were able to participate in higher learning courses.

The academic leadership in this Health Science Centre were able to fully display the benefit of the application of these types of alternative learning modes to regional students, and show to us how the provision of advanced telecommunications can lead to better health and education outcomes in regional and remote centres.
Lunch with the University Faculty

Delegation Members were hosted by the University President and other members of the faculty. A lengthy discussion of the difficulties in providing education across vast states such as Saskatchewan and Western Australia was undertaken over lunch. As both States share many similarities, it was a very worthwhile opportunity to discuss the challenges that the University has been able to overcome, particularly when having to provide their education services over a large state with a relatively small population.

College of Agriculture, Dairy Facility

For many members of the delegation, particularly those representing regional electorates, this was a very good opportunity to see how the use of technology in agriculture can lead to increased production.

Members were given a tour of the state-of-the-art dairy facility that acts both in a research capacity as part of the School of veterinary medicine, but also as display of the cutting edge technological advances that are enabling dairy farmers in Saskatchewan to be world leaders in supply and productivity in this sector.

Various parts of the tour highlighted to the members the high level of animal welfare and staff training, the advanced technology in place, along with the delivery of education packages to the public to promote the industry.

InterVac-VIDO

This was very informative session at the facility where the Virus and Infectious Diseases Organisation (VIDO) is housed. VIDO provided members with a short presentation of the services that they provide to agriculture world-wide and to their increasing provision of human health products.

Canadian Light Source –Cincatron

Members were given the opportunity to tour this cutting-edge facility that provides a range of world leading science services to the human and veterinary health industry, along with allowing science and technology institutes world-wide the ability to run physical experiments to validate their theoretical hypotheses.

Tour of Regional Saskatchewan

Host Member, John Nilson, and I undertook a tour of regional facilities throughout the Saskatoon/Regina districts. Attention was given to rail and water facilities, while particular discussion and observation of the regional road system was undertaken as well. Saskatchewan has the unenviable task of providing an extensive road network that has to combat the extreme seasonal temperature variations of +40 to -40 degrees Celsius.
Tuesday, April 22, 2014

Host Member Day

Meeting with Mayor of Fort Qu’Appelle

Host member, John Nilson, and I were given the opportunity to meet with the Mayor and former Speaker of the Saskatchewan Legislature, Mr. Ron Osika. We were able to discuss a range of issues affecting local government that he was able to expand upon as the local Mayor, and given his time in the State Legislature. The local, or municipal, governments in Saskatchewan are only providers of amenities to the township itself, and not the surrounding associated rural areas. This leads to townships and the amenities being used by the rural residents that do not pay any taxes or levies for the services.

We also undertook a tour of the township and the amenities that they are required to provide, along with having a lengthy conversation with many of the local residents over lunch at one of the many local eateries.

Saskatchewan Government Insurance Corporation (SGIC)

This meeting was provided so that as a regional member, I could gain a better understanding of an issue that has had particular relevance in my electorate recently, Multi-Peril Crop Insurance (MPCI).

The SGIC were able to provide to me the benefits to Saskatchewan of the range of insurance products that they provide to the agricultural sector.

While my personal beliefs were different to other members in the room, it was still a valuable presentation and discussion none the less.

Petroleum Technology Research Institute (PTRI)

Being a member of the Environment and Public Affairs Committee, which is currently inquiring into the implications of ‘fracking’ on Western Australia, I thought that it would be prudent to inform myself further about this industry and technology. This industry also has particular concern for residents in my electorate.

The PTRI is an independent government agency that is considered to be one of the world leaders in development of oil and gas technology.
Having participated in the most recent visit to Western Australia by a delegation of Members of the Saskatchewan Parliament, I was able to form the foundation of a very collegial relationship and was able to enhance those relationships by being part of the Western Australian Parliamentary Exchange Delegation to visit Western Canada.

Western Canada, but more particularly Saskatchewan, has itself some tremendous examples of what the Government of Western Australia is currently undergoing.

Saskatchewan is a State that is very much similar to Western Australia, in that it is has for a long time been seen as predominantly as an agricultural commodity producing area that is undergoing structural change within its economy. Whilst it is a land locked area, its burgeoning mineral and resource sector, along with the vast area it occupies as part of Canada and its relatively small population across that vast area allows it to have a range of similarities with Western Australia.

Saskatchewan has a quite extensive road and rail network that I had the opportunity to explore more extensively whilst on the exchange program. As we are currently experiencing a number of road and rail funding issues, both in our major population centres and throughout our regions, I personally gained a greater understanding of how the Western Canadian states, and in particularly Saskatchewan, are able to fund and utilise this infrastructure and what lessons WA can learn from that.

My participation in the delegation allowed me to increase my understanding of how this region is managing a range of issues that I believe are relevant to Western Australia.

Those issues are:

- The ability for Saskatchewan to provide essential services and community amenities across a vast area to a small population that is predominantly centralised in the 2 major population centres.
- To understand how Saskatchewan is able to fund and enhance its existing road and rail infrastructure across its commodity base, in particular agriculture, given that it has an extensive system of short rail networks and a vast highway and road system.
- To see firsthand how Saskatchewan is able to balance its need for development of natural resources against the needs of the people of the First Nations, and what programs that Saskatchewan has in place to allow for those affected people to gain productive prosperity as a participant in that development.
As a new Parliamentarian, I found the visits to the Legislative Assemblies of Alberta, Saskatchewan and British Columbia to be of great value and interest. We were welcomed most warmly by the Speaker, the Members and staff who sought to provide us with the most detailed information not only of their Parliamentary systems, but also their rich histories in the Commonwealth.

An important part of the exchange program where those days that were organised by my Host, Mr John Nilson MLA, Regina Lakeview –New Democratic Party, of which I found particularly relevant to my regional electorate. These are as follows:

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how the provision of advanced telecommunications can lead to better health and education outcomes in regional and remote centres.

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The PTRI is an independent government agency that is considered to be one of the world leaders in development of oil and gas technology.

Independent Research

At the conclusion of the formal exchange program, I took the opportunity to spend a few days researching similar topics of interest to my agricultural electorate. This research was undertaken over the period of April 27th to May 2nd, returning to Western Australia over the period of the 3rd and 4th May.
Meetings undertaken:

- Attended the Agricultural Department Estimate Hearing, Parliament of British Columbia
- Meeting with Agricultural Minister, Hon Norm Letnick

A general discussion took place on a range of issues in common with the Agricultural Region.

- Meeting with Minister for Education, Hon Peter Fassbender.

A general discussion took place on the challenges of delivering regional education, the past, the future and the possibilities.

- Meeting with Mike McKay, Department of Education to discuss regional and remote education and community leadership programs.
- Attended Question Time, as a guest on the floor of the Parliament.
- Meeting with South Island Distant Education Service Principal, Kevin White to discuss the use of technology in the external delivery of regional and remote education and how this compares with regional WA.
- Meeting with the Ministry of Education, Learning division – Tim Winkelmans and Ted Cadwallader concerning Aboriginal Education.
- Meeting with Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, Government of Saskatchewan to discuss delivery of agricultural commodities via road and rail and attended an extensive site tour with government and industry representatives.
- Attended an information evening and cocktail function with members of the Potash Industry as an invitee of the Saskatchewan Government.

The final day was spent with my Host Member, Hon John Nilson and other government members of the Saskatchewan Government, saying my goodbyes and expressing my gratitude for their hospitality.

Total Parliamentary Travel Allowance claimed for this trip was $12,064.30.

Yours Sincerely

Hon Paul Brown MLC
Member for the Agricultural Region

21 August 2014
REPORT:

West Australian Parliamentary Joint Delegation tour to Western Canada.

Dr Graham Jacobs MLA, Member for Eyre

11-28 April 2014
I was pleased to be part of a joint delegation, of Lower House and Upper House Members from Government and Opposition, to Western Canada.

The visit saw us away for 17 days starting in Vancouver then to Edmonton in Alberta, Regina in Saskatchewan and northern parts of Elk Ridge and McArthur River Uranium Mine via Saskatoon. Finally we returned to Vancouver via a sensational ferry trip to beautiful Victoria where the BC Legislature resides.

This trip was in response to the province of Saskatchewan’s legislature visit last year. I was privileged, then, to host the member of Last Mountain Touchdown, Mr Glen Hart MP, who was the Deputy Speaker and represented this central “riding” in Saskatchewan. Our trip included shorter visits as outlined above to the other western provinces in Canada namely British Columbia and Alberta. This allowed a good overview of the states with vast areas, agriculture and mining interests and the synergies with the state of WA. However it was also a privilege to see the system of government, the mechanisms of parliament and party management. For me, I pursued some learning in relation to policy around agriculture, particularly grain growing.

**System of government**
The system in Western Canada is one of provincial governments with one house (unicameral) and a bicameral national government. There are around 51 seats in the assembly in Saskatchewan of which the members are elected in a "first past the post" voting system. The Saskatchewan party (a social Conservative party) has a large majority of 42 seats of which my host is a member.

Voting is not compulsory in Canadian elections and the voter turnout can be as low as 50%. These two features lead to significant swings which see the New Democrats go from a majority government, just a term or so ago, to a miserable minority. A deed to this is the difficulty in predicting the result of elections depending on which demographic feels moved to vote when a significant issue arises. The recent experience in Alberta saw the election of a never predicted party come to power. Also interestingly the relatively new Premier had recently resigned over travel abuse allegations, and when we were there, her return to the house as a Member was eagerly awaited by an enthusiastic press. I must thank Rob Reynolds and Alison Quast on their organisation for us to witness question time in Alberta Parliament.

**Parliamentary Procedures**
It was interesting to witness the different procedures during the question time. The age old practice on beating on the parliamentary desk in applause (as well as allowing clapping) was amazing. Ministers were encouraged by these expressions as they were asked a question and indeed opposition would also thump the desk. I was told that this practice dates back to early days when a member was always ready with his hand on his sword and only had one hand to applaud. Questions were limited in their time to ask and so was the answer. Often the Speaker would be seen winding up the Minister in his answer by motioning with a rotating finger movement after 35 seconds. Some leeway was given in seconds, but if time exceeded the Speaker had control of the Minister’s microphone and would duly turn it off!

What was a great experience and indeed privilege was, having arrived in Regina on the 15th April, not only to witness question time but the next day to attend Government Party Room (they call caucus) and see how it works. The differences to ours are stark, firstly the meeting takes place every day, the meeting is chaired by an elected chair from the MPs and not the Premier and the process is interactive with all members sitting at a long table with Members
facing each other. Each day the members were briefed by the senior media adviser who addressed the topics and issues of the day and week. The collegiate nature of the Conservative Government caucus with interaction is a positive feature.

The 17th April saw our presentation and suggestions to the Saskatchewan Parliament around the opportunity of private members to present their issues. Glen Hart MP, my Member Host, was particularly attracted to the concept of grievances which is not available to Members in their Parliament. Maybe they will take on our practice into the future!

**Remote Services**

It was great to see how the Canadians are servicing acute injury or illness with their helicopter retrieval service. We visited STARS (Sickness, Trauma Acute Retrieval Service) and later in the day the training facility for police called the RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police). There were lessons here on how this large state of nearly 500,000 square kilometres, provides police and emergency health services and the extra challenges of the climate.

The next day we were bussed to the north, via Saskatoon. Although technically spring, spring had not sprung in the northern hemisphere and much of our trip was snowed on. Encouraged by a stop at the ubiquitous Tim Horton’s chain (coffee and donuts) finally after a 400km trial we arrived at Elk Ridge.

**Uranium Mine Tour**

On the 19th April, via moose coach to Port Albert, we flew to McArthur River and the world’s largest uranium mine. Here we saw an operation owned and managed by Cameco and Areva (French partners) with a most unique mining technique where the ore body is buffer frozen and then reamed between two levels. The mine manager Rick showed us state of the art clean, remote control bogging of ore and refuge bays. Of an associated interest, Cameco has stake in potential uranium ore in WA, but the challenges to bring this to full development are around the present world price of yellow cake (U3O8). Indigenous employment rates at McArthur River are up to 50% and the company is committed to training of this demographic.
Back to Elk Ridge and as a regular jogger I found the morning exercise a different challenge!

Bussing back to Saskatoon revealed a thawing Saskatchewan River where, not far from our park hotel, was the joining of north and south Saskatchewan rivers, the word being an Indian meaning for "fast flowing".

**University Tour**
The major University in Saskatchewan is in Saskatoon and we toured the newly built wing which incorporated biological health sciences, where all students of Health including doctors, nurses and allied health, including the valuable nurse practitioner, come to study. It was sensational to see the remote area training for nurses from northern parts, with remote robot tele-monitoring used in their training.

Another area of the University was the dairy centre where research in dairy is carried out including three times per day milking to boost production by 10% and automated milking processes. Their education centre was about educating young people of the origins of food and the value and indeed career opportunities in agriculture.

Later this day we were taken by our host Glen Hart MP to Cupar where we visited his office and experienced his constituency.

**Agriculture**
Largely a grain growing region, where there exists a short growing season of 4 months in which seeding commences when the snow thaws and they harvest by September. I was able to see farm storage of grain and the large machinery associated with broad acre farming much like WA. Much of the farm implements seen in Australia are designed and made in Saskatchewan.

As to moving grain to the coast i.e. gateway to market, there have been some difficulties in getting grain access to rail in competition with mining product. Like us, the debate around viability of grain elevators on subsidiary lines is a question with the advent of larger road haulage units.

Glen was good enough to take me to a neighbouring town called Melville and meet with the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation (founded in 1972). This was created under the Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Act. Because Paul Brown and myself had witnessed a budget estimates in Agriculture session earlier while in Regina, much of the session focussed on what was headed risk management and risk mitigation.

In short, the provincial government has created a corporation to guarantee a pool which grain growers contribute around $131 million in premiums. This is a yield based insurance scheme and mitigates growers losses in response to the vagaries of seasons. The system had 22,000 cropping customers and included Agriculture Stability and Western Livestock Price Insurance as well as an Agriculture Investment Scheme. The average premiums amount to around $7.50 per acre depending on the level of the cover (including perils of drought, frost, flooding, winds and tornado). Although not all this would or could apply to our agriculture in WA, what this underscored to me was the value of farmers to Canada and the importance of mitigating against the risks inherent in farming (the advent of around 280 to 300 grain
growers who are in need of debt re-structure brought on largely by poor seasons and thus subject to potential farm assistance programmes). This would be obviated by this example in adoption of some of these risk mitigation measures in the long term. Clearly the Canadians are well advanced in this area.

**Indigenous Health**

Our visit to the First Nation hospital at Fort Qu'Appelle (meaning: who calls) was well received. This purpose built, multi-purpose health facility, built on treaty reserve land, has significant outreach services and targets all demographics. It is interesting to note the re-introduction of maternity services delivering around 180 babies a year. Here was recognition that low risk deliveries were safer than the population not engaging any service and appearing on a hospital door step or indeed delivering in the community. The other services included occasions of service numbering 9,000 and in-patient beds of 14. The message was to engage the community in delivering health services as bottom up not top down.

**British Columbia**

Finally a trip to Victoria to visit the Legislature in British Columbia, and the challenges of a state trying desperately to establish an LNG industry which could contribute to the increased world demand for greener energy. In Canada there are 14 sites of potential gas reserves faced with challenges of First Nation claimants, environmental approvals and other concerns re: fracking. No site has been developed to an operating project as yet.

**Conclusion**

In summary this trip contributed to my knowledge of other jurisdictions and lessons for WA. This ranges from the functioning of an effective interactive party room, more concise question times and information seeking budget estimates. Advancement in delivering health training for remote nursing is an example for us to study. The way that Canadians value their grain producers and have systems to mitigate risk is laudable and is worth examination. The engagement of the indigenous peoples in health delivery and employment by First Nation people in remote mines are lessons for us.
PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL REPORT FORM

Members are to provide a report to the Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet on the cost, purpose and benefits of all overseas trips within two months of the completion of the trip. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet collates and coordinates the tabling of the reports in Parliament on a quarterly basis.

The report below should be clear, concise and focus on the benefits of your trip to your constituents and/or parliamentary processes, the Western Australian community and/or the State of Western Australia. Please do not attach PowerPoint presentations, research reports or reports otherwise available to the Parliament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF MEMBER:</th>
<th>Hon Alyssa Hayden MLC</th>
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<td>DESTINATION(S):</td>
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PURPOSE OF TRIP:
The purpose of the above trip followed an invitation to speak at the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC 2014 Conference, on Aboriginal Tourism in Western Australia.

To build and develop international partnerships to improve the States Aboriginal Tourism development program.

BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THE TRIP FOR THE STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA:
(A brief report of no more than 2 pages may be attached if required)

British Columbia is a world leader in developing and supporting Aboriginal Tourism through AtBC (Aboriginal Tourism British Columbia). The opportunity to visit, meet and witness first-hand the policies and the organisation that have been implemented to support this, has provided me with valuable information, knowledge and awareness of achievements made within this industry that can be duplicated and implemented within Western Australia.

The importance of ensuring an authentic experience / product was advocated strongly as the true essence of real aboriginal tourism being successful.

The Topic of this Conference was the importance of building partnerships across all levels of government, between the different Nations, organisations and the general community. The partnerships made during this conference will continue to grow my knowledge and understanding on how we can work towards creating a successful Aboriginal Tourism Industry for Western Australia.
PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL REPORT FORM

Members are to provide a report to the Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet on the cost, purpose and benefits of all overseas trips within two months of the completion of the trip. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet collates and coordinates the tabling of the reports in Parliament on a quarterly basis.

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<table>
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<th>NAME OF MEMBER:</th>
<th>Peter Abetz</th>
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<td>DESTINATION/S:</td>
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PURPOSE OF TRIP:
To study issues related to prostitution and human trafficking, taking special note of the Nordic approach to dealing with prostitution, and to see first hand the impacts of prostitution law reform on the levels of prostitution and methods of policing, as well as studying the exit programs on offer in various countries, and how these are affected by the legislation relevant to that country.
BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THE TRIP FOR THE STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA:
(A brief report of no more than 2 pages may be attached if required)

**France:** meeting with an MP, Govt authorities and NGOs helped me understand the motivations within France for introducing the legislation for the Nordic model, and how the proponents were able to gain widespread public support in the face of opposition of the pro-prostitution groups.

(While in France I took the opportunity to visit a Waste to Energy plant in suburban Paris – this was unrelated to the purpose of the study tour, but as WA is moving towards WtE plants, this gave me some good insights into the operation of such plants and their economic and environmental benefits.)

**Sweden:** Meeting with Government officials and those responsible for enforcing the Nordic approach to prostitution (police, prosecutors) and NGOs running rehab programs, gave us a very good overview of how the Nordic model has worked out in practice since 1999, having resulted in a major reduction in the size of the sex industry in that country, and resulting in changed attitudes within Swedish society. Our meeting with the main opponent in Sweden of the Nordic approach, also gave us useful insights. It helped us see that the opposition was ideologically driven, and not evidence based. Visiting the rehab centres also made us aware of the massive investment required to rehabilitate a person who has been in prostitution for any significant length of time, as it takes between 2 and 5 years residential rehab for such women to recover sufficiently to begin to re-enter mainstream life.

**Korea:** In 2004 this nation enacted laws that were modelled on the Nordic approach, but differed in that both the purchaser and the seller can be prosecuted. In our short time in Korea, we felt that the law was not seemingly enforced with any clear focus, as we could be shown well known street prostitution areas, and we were told that police make no attempt to arrest those involved. We visited a number of rehab centres for people leaving the sex industry, and were advised that there is no waiting list for entry into such a facility. These are well funded by the government, but run by NGOs. These facilities are normal houses in the residential areas, so that neighbours are generally unaware that they have a rehab centre next door.

**Key point learnt for the benefit of WA:** There is a well proven and tested alternative way of addressing prostitution and human trafficking that does not require legalising or decriminalising of prostitution. Countries that have adopted the Nordic approach, and devote resources to enforcing their laws, have much less prostitution and far lower incidences of human trafficking than nations which have gone down the path of legalising/decriminalising prostitution.
Parliamentary Travel Report

France, Sweden & South Korea

14th April 2014 to 3rd May 2014

Hon. Robyn McSweeney JP MLC
Member for South West Region
Cost of Trip:

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Purpose of Trip:

A Parliamentary Study Tour with Australia delegates and NGO's studied:

- the Prostitution Laws of France, Sweden and South Korea,
- Sexual trafficking of women and girls, and
- Exit programs in each country.

Peter Abetz MLA has reported on this trip in an extensive manner.

Benefits Derived from the Trip for the State of Western Australia:

Many meetings were held in each country to ascertain what laws would be suitable for Western Australia by studying the French, Swedish and South Korean legislation.

My greatest interest was in how to manage exit programs for prostitutes wishing to leave the sex trade.

Trafficked women from other countries who are found in Western Australia and Australia could be treated as in Sweden even though I recognise this as being a Federal matter.

When we do debate prostitution laws for Western Australia, I now have so much information and being Chair of the Legislation Committee, I expect to have a great deal of input into these laws.

Hon. Robyn McSweeney JP MLC
Member for South West Region
PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL REPORT FORM

<table>
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<th>NAME OF MEMBER:</th>
<th>Lisa Baker MLA</th>
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<td>DATE OF TRAVEL:</td>
<td>21 April – 4 May 2014</td>
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PURPOSE OF TRIP:

*Brussels, Belgium*

*Meeting with Mr Bruno Vanobbergen, Flemish Children’s Rights Commissioner*

Mr Bruno Vanobbergen is the Children’s Rights Commissioner (CRC) for the Flemish community in Belgium. The CRC reports to the Flemish Parliament. Regulated by the decree of 15 July 1997, the role of the CRC is to be the independent spokesperson for children and young people and to monitor the work of the Children’s Rights Commission in Flanders. The work of the Flemish CRC is similar to that of an Ombudsman. The CRC also makes policy recommendations on issues to do with the rights of children and young people to the Flemish Parliament and the Federal Parliament.

The CRC has a 'complaints' line for children under 18. It investigates complaints thoroughly and independently, mediates and provides clear advice to translate the complaint into a solution in the interest of the child. To date, most of the complaints received by CRC have been made by parents, guardians and concerned family members of children.

In relation to its advisory work and topics of research and advice to Parliaments, Mr Vanobbergen lists children, young people and the media, family support, children on the move, young people and the police, inclusive education, and young people and euthanasia as key issues.

*Photo: Outside the offices of the Flemish Children’s Rights Commissioner and the Belgian Federal Parliament*
Meeting with Stephen Durviaux, Counselor of the Children’s Ombudsman for the French community of Belgium

Again, this role is an Ombudsman for children and young people. As such, the Counselor works side by side with the Flemish CRC. Both are driven by different political agendas and therefore sometimes may have different policy focuses.

Mr Durviaux described an interesting project which is run through their Department of Social Service, called ‘1712’. This is a telephone call line and referral point for children reporting abuse. The project has been very successful offering a holistic ‘healing centre’ for children and parents.

The key issues being focussed on by the French (Belgian) Ombudsman include housing affordability and homelessness, the waterfall effect of homelessness on education (30 per cent of children in poor homes are not accessing stable education), providing legal advice and guardians unaccompanied minors. The Ombudsman is also running a campaign against female genital mutilation. Their campaign is focused on educating doctors and others who may come into contact with this issue.

Another major issue is children’s rights in relation to the explosion in social problems with the use of social media. The Ombudsman has followed the United Nations’ statement on ‘industry standards’ as a key component in protecting children in the sphere of social media.

Meeting with Mr Aleksandar Romanovic, Directorate-General of Justice, Senior Expert on Children’s Rights

Mr Aleksandar Romanovic is a senior expert working in the Directorate General of Justice working on the rights of the child. The major focus of Mr Romanovic’s work crosses all major issues that relate to European Countries’ advancement of the rights of the child. There are 20 employees in the Fundamental Human Rights (FHR) Unit and four specifically working as experts on children’s rights.

The FHR Unit provides policy recommendations to the European Commission. The FHR Unit has established a high level Interservice Group which includes representatives from all Ministries. The Group has two main roles, to coordinate work on children’s rights across the European Commission and then to identify specific issues reflecting children’s rights where Ministries want to drive change.

Child friendly justice is a key issue for the 41 member states of the European Union. The FHR Unit has built a set of guidelines on how to ensure child friendly justice processes. The guidelines specifically focus on vulnerable children, runaways and victims of abuse.

Strasbourg, France

Meeting with Ms Polina Atanasova of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children

Ms Polina Atanasova is the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) Secretariat Coordinator. The ENOC is an association of children’s rights institutions focused on promoting and protecting the rights of children as they are outlined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Six ENOC members are not permitted under their legislation to investigate individual complaints. These six are Denmark, England, Finland, Norway, Scotland and Sweden. There are other European ombudsman’s offices which are limited to investigating breaches of children’s rights perpetrated by state authorities. It was reported that Ombudsman’s offices experienced difficulties in promoting their services to children, particularly those in difficult situations (detention, seeking asylum etc). Most individual complaints come from parents or adult friends of children. Ways that they have tried to promote their services include posters, brochures, advertisements in children’s magazines, and TV programmes, training days in schools and institutions, websites, hotlines and free text messaging services.

The message for WA appears to be that additional resources are required in order to make this role effective in the community.

Berlin and Frankfurt, Germany

Meeting with Michael and Christa Blanke, Founders of global animal welfare charity Animals Angels

Frankfurt is the global head office for this charity and Christa Blanke is the President of Animals Angels.
Animals Angels was founded in 1998 and operates in 25 countries around the world. Its mission is to improve the lives of stock animals, encourage industry compliance and to work with the industry to educate farmers and transporters as well as those charged with compliance duties.

Christa Blanke believes the greatest cruelty is seen in stock animals being moved by farmers to export, or slaughter. This is a global business that is intrinsically bound with economics and covers all aspects of animals’ lives.

**Small Business Institute**

This meeting was cancelled by the other party two weeks prior to the commencement of my trip. I decided to complete the journey as booked to avoid a flight cancellation charge of $2,500. While in Berlin for one day, I visited historical sights relevant to the fall of the Berlin Wall and the original parliamentary building in East Berlin.

**BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THE TRIP**

**FOR THE STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA:**

This study tour was completed to extend my knowledge and thereby increase the ability of the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People (JSCCYP) to deliver effective outcomes for WA children. The primary role and function of the JSCCYP is to monitor, review and report to Parliament on the exercise of the functions of the Commissioner for Children and Young People. As the Chair of the JSCCYP, I lead this Committee in its deliberations and to ensure that the Committee has the opportunity to make a reasoned and fair assessment of the work of the OCCYP. As a result of the meetings and investigations completed during this study tour, I informed myself of best practice models for children’s’ commissioners, ombudsman roles and children’s’ rights offices.

My visit provided me with direct links to the Animals Angels global network and enabled me to connect face to face with the founders of the Charity. I expect that this will benefit my work on legislation regarding animal welfare in WA.

Lisa Baker MLA
Member for Maylands
Purpose and benefits

Purpose:

The purpose of the travel to Japan was to reinforce the Sister State relationship between Western Australia and the Hyogo Prefecture and to learn about existing and future trade opportunities for Western Australia.

The delegation had meetings with three large Japanese companies that have invested billions of dollars into the Western Australian economy over the last decade. These meetings transpired to advance the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between their companies and Western Australia.

A meeting with Kawasaki Heavy Industries (KHI) Ltd and tour of their Hydrogen Gas Project plant was organized. This followed on from their feasibility study tour to Western Australia undertaken in June 2013, in relation to their proposal to extract hydrogen gas from brown coal and constructing the requisite hydrogen gas plant.

A tour of the Ariake Waste to Energy plant was organized, so as to educate those members of the delegation who had not previously observed a facility such as this in operation. It was intended that the potential benefits of having such a facility in Western Australia would be recognized by members of the delegation.

Benefits:

In 2011, Japan was the State’s largest market for agriculture and food, with exports totalling ($881million); wheat ($374million), barley ($49million) and oats ($4million), and third largest market for beef ($14million) and seafood ($31million).

The Japanese market is of vital importance to the Western Australian economy, with Japan being the State’s second largest trading partner and export market. Japan is the world’s largest importer of LNG and has been this State’s largest LNG market since 1989. Western Australia’s goods exports to Japan grew from $8billion in 2002 to $23billion in 2011  However, despite this growth, Japan’s share of this State’s total exports has declined from 26% to 19% over the same period. To maintain and improve upon Western Australia’s role as a major trading partner with Japan, it is vital that we remain highly visible and aware of all trading options and opportunities.
Ninety percent of Western Australia’s steel fabricators operate out of the South Metropolitan Region, for which I share a responsibility with other Members. Meetings with both Mitsubishi Corporation and Mitsui & Co focussed on Local Content and the need to increase the opportunity for Western Australian steel fabricators to tender for projects in the Oil and Gas Industry, as well as the protection of jobs for Western Australians.

The tour of the Hydrogen gas project plant was extremely beneficial. Should this proposal receive approvals and proceed, it will be a major boost to the Western Australian economy with projected export derived revenue of $1 billion per annum. In relation to employment, this project would create 1000 jobs during the peak construction phase, moderating to 600 on average and an estimated 130 jobs once operational.

The Western Australian State Government has made its own legislative changes to combat the issue of rising waste generation and its management, by introducing its “Zero Waste to Landfill by 2020” policy. By following the three Rs (reduce, reuse, recycle) of waste management, the construction of a Waste to Energy plant here in Western Australia will be of benefit to current and future generations by being a source of renewable energy and in the process, creating a re-usable product such as bricks. Whilst this was not my first visit to the Ariake Waste to Energy Plant, it was for the remainder of the delegation. It was extremely beneficial for them to see a waste to energy plant in operation, so as to enable them to comprehend the technology behind the proposals that are being promulgated around Western Australia currently.

In closing, it is important to note that in 2011, I accompanied Premier Barnett on his visit to Japan to celebrate the 30 year anniversary of the signing of the Sister State relationship with the Hyogo Prefecture. On this visit, four koalas were presented to the Governor of Hyogo Prefecture for their inclusion at the Awaji Farm Park. I am pleased to announce the recent birth in February of a new joey to one of those, which is the second joey since its arrival at the Park. All four koalas appear to be thriving and have adjusted well to their new home.
PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL REPORT

HON BRIAN ELLIS MLC

VISIT TO JAPAN – 22nd-29th APRIL 2014

Purpose of Trip

To reinforce the Sister State relationship between Western Australia and the Hyogo Prefecture and to learn about existing and future trade opportunities for Western Australia.

Report

It came as a surprise to me to learn that Japanese-Australian trade has existed since the time of Federation. Indeed, Mitsui & Co first opened an office in Sydney in 1901. By 1925 Mitsui had shipped a record 40,000 tonnes of Australian wheat to Japan. The company has continued its interest in Australian trade over the past 113 years.

On 1 February 2014 the Asia Pacific Editor of The Australian wrote: ‘The top priority for Mitsui’s massive investments in Australia is starting to shift from resources to agribusiness. As a Member for the Agricultural Region, and as a third generation farmer, it was a valuable opportunity to meet with that company in Japan.

An early indicator of their shift to agriculture was when the company bought 25 per cent of WA grain handler Plum Grove. Mitsui Australia is one of the biggest investors in Australia, having taken stakes worth $13 billion over the last ten years. It is also the fourth-largest exporter from Australia.

This trade relationship with just one Japanese company reflects the larger picture of Japanese-Australian trade. Japan is currently WA’s second largest trading partner and is Australia’s third largest foreign direct investor.

For a nation which is the world’s second largest developed economy, 91% of the population lives in urban areas. Despite having one of the world’s highest levels of crop yields per unit area, Japan is the second-largest agricultural product importer in the world. WA comes out pretty well from this. Japan is WA’s top export market for agriculture – worth more than A$900 million in 2012.

Japan is also WA’s largest market for petroleum exports and the move away from nuclear energy has made it WA’s number one buyer for LNG.

Despite Japan’s century old trade relationship with Australia and its relationship with the agricultural sector I realised I knew very little about the Japanese business culture and Japanese government. I am indebted in this regard to the knowledge and guidance of Craig Peacock (Commissioner, North Asia Agency) and to Noriko Hirata (Regional Director of the WA Government Kobe Office). Fresh from the rigours of an Abbott Trade Agreement, Craig and his team facilitated a broad-ranging itinerary which included visits to energy and heavy-industry groups, and the University of Kobe.
As a lupin grower, I was especially interested in the Kobe university visit as it takes a key role in the WA-Japan-China trilateral research collaboration agreement. Kobe University is currently collaborating on the exploration of lupin functional food R&D with the University of WA.

Lupins are imported into Japan as a stockfeed source, but are prohibited from importation as human food. I believe there is an opportunity for industry, farmers and farmer organisations to look ahead to value-add lupins for human consumption.

It is hard to keep politicians away from politics, and we had the privilege of learning about governance at both the prefectural and the national level. Hyogo Prefectural Assembly is a unicameral legislature with a term of office of four years.

Hyogo has been our sister city since 1981, and a Parliamentary Friendship Association was formed between the WA Parliament and the Hyogo Prefectural Assembly in 1994. It was a valued opportunity to meet with our counterparts in the year of the 20th anniversary of the friendship.

We also had the honour of being presented to the Governor and Vice Governor of the Hyogo Prefectural Government, and of touring the National Diet to meet with Diet members of this constitutional monarchy.

Japan is the world's second largest developed economy, but its challenges include huge government debt - 219 1% GDP. This has come from government borrowing, social welfare spending associated with an aging, shrinking society, stagnant tax revenues, persistent deflation, reliance on exports to drive growth; and increasing manufacturing competition from rival companies in other countries. Our culture, language and politics may have some differences, but I came to understand that we share some familiar issues.

I was interested to learn that many Japanese women move to the city looking for work. They do not wish to have children and some wish to pursue careers rather than marriage. This creates social issues which have some similarity to country life in WA where small towns are becoming smaller as young people migrate to the city, and aging regional parents require outside care.

Japan is Australia's third largest source of foreign direct investment, valued at $61 billion in 2012. Western Australia benefits from this investment including fourteen iron ore projects. These range from 7% equity in companies such as Shay Gap and Mt Whaleback, to 33% equity in projects such as Robe River and Cape Lambert. As a Member with an electorate which produces iron ore, it was a valued opportunity to learn more about the Japanese business culture to build on this trade relationship when I meet with proponents in the Mid West.

In conclusion, my previous parliamentary travel has been to countries with cultures similar to our own. This was my first official visit to a country with its own unique social and business culture, and I valued and benefited from the experience.
Hon Nigel Hallett MLC
MEMBER FOR SOUTH WEST REGION

13 May 2014

Mr Peter Conran
Director General
Department of Premier & Cabinet
Locked Bag 3001
WEST PERTH WA 6872

Attention: Laurie Birrell

Dear Peter

Report of Japan Visit 24 to 30 April 2014

As there are no direct flights from Perth to Kansai International Airport, the Japan Delegation had a 24 hour stopover in Denpasar and during this time the Delegation visited the Bali Bombing Memorial (Ground Zero Monument) which we found to be a very moving experience.

After arriving at Kansai Airport on 24 April, we checked in and proceeded to Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd (KHI) Akashi Works where we toured around the plant and were informed that Kawasaki had built a hydrogen gas plant to demonstrate that they could build a plant here in Western Australia, south of Geraldton. If built, this would cost approximately $650 million and create around 1000 jobs in construction and 130 operational staff.

The Delegation then toured the Kobe University. We found that Japan is experiencing the migration, particularly of young women, from rural areas of Japan into cities. These young women are not having families, so it is expected that the population of Japan will drop from 127 million to 80 million by 2050. This massive drop will change Japanese trade. Japan is also experiencing numerous health issues such as type 2 diabetes and dementia in the aging population.

Meeting with Hyogo Prefectural Assembly WA – Hyogo Friendship Members
Hyogo has been our sister city since 1981 and a Parliamentary friendship Association was formed between the WA Parliament and the Hyogo Prefectural Assembly in 1994. We were informed about governance both at a prefectural and at a National level. We also had the pleasure of meeting with Governor Ido which was an honour for the Delegation.

Tour of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Memorial - Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution, consisting of two Museums. The facility gives a human dimension to the Great Hanshin Earthquake, which measured 7.3 on the Ritcher scale. Covered in glass and constructed to withstand any earthquake it conveys the a vivid account of the Earthquake and everything that followed.
Phoenix Energy Waste to Clean Energy Tour

Mitsui & Co Meeting with Mr Yasushi Yoshikai Managing Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Energy Business Unit II – Mr Yukio Takebe Managing Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Mineral & Metal Resources Business Unit – Mr Hiroyuki Tsurugi General Manager, Planning & Administrative Dib (Energy) – Mr Yasunori Mori General Manager, Overseas Dept Corporate Planning & Strategy Div. One of the first comments from this group was Western Australia has the ability to construct risk management in agriculture. The company would like to invest in Agriculture in its own entity in Western Australia. This is a very positive role from Mitsui, which can only move Agriculture in Western Australia forward in a positive way.

Mitsubishi Corporation Meeting with Mr Hajime Hirano Senior Vice President, Deputy Division COO, Natural Gas Business Division – Mr Masaki Fujiiwara General Manager, Americas E&P/Business Development Department, E&P Business Division, Energy Business Group – Mr Taimei Watanabe – Deputy General Manager Global Strategy & Business Development. Mitsubishi Corp are keen to increase their interest in the Agricultural Sector and are also expressing interest to increasing investments in our Energy Sector particularly domestic Energy which hopefully in the future will be free for more investment. This investment in Western Australia from Japan would bring competition to our domestic market which is very encouraging and will bring comfort that Western Australia can continue to attract high-quality investment and will benefit with job opportunity for local people and the export income it will earn.

Tour National Diet and Met with Diet Members - Ever since the adoption of the current constitution following World War II, the Diet has consisted of the House of Councillors and the House of Representatives. Members of both houses are now elected directly by the citizenry. Our discussion and main interest was Agriculture and Trade and the current Trade Agreement which has useful benefits that should be worked on.

Ariake Waste to Energy Plant Tour – Seeing this Plant operating and understanding the technology was an eye opening experience into what these Waste to Energy Plants entail. Understanding how the Industry derives the majority of its income from gate pricing for waste and for processing the ash that is generated into bricks and other commodities and how this surpasses the funding that it receives from selling energy. This tour has given us an understanding of waste management and what they are proposing to do.

Appointments made following the Japan Trip

WA Trade Commission TBC
WA Corporate Company TBC

Yours sincerely

Hon Nigel Hallett MLC
Member for South West
Parliamentary Travel Report
JAPAN
April 2014
Purpose and Benefits

Purpose:

The purpose of the travel to Japan was to understand and build on existing strong business, trade and cultural links between Western Australia and Japan with a view to expanding future opportunities.

One key focus of the visit was the Hyogo Prefecture which shares a sister-state relationship with Western Australia.

Visits were organised with three large Japanese industrial companies that have made long term investments in WA. Other visits included meetings with delegations from the Hyogo Prefecture, the Governor of Hyogo, members of the Japanese National Parliament (Diet) and a visit to the Hyogo University which conducts collaborative research with the University of Western Australia.

Several large facilities were inspected on the visit including the Kawasaki Heavy Industries (KHI) Hydrogen Gas Project, the Great Hanshin – Awaji Earthquake Memorial/Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution and the Ariake waste-to-energy plant.

Benefits:

In the weeks leading up to the visit to Japan, the main waste management facility in Perth’s northern suburbs (Mindarie Regional Council) made a decision to pursue the prospect of investing in a waste-to-energy plant by 2020. One of the key drivers of this decision was the WA State Government’s ‘Zero Waste to Landfill by 2020’ policy.

In this context, and given the significant cost of investment that would be required to build this proposed plant, it was extremely informative to examine a working waste-to-energy plant and to investigate the economics underpinning the operation.

The plant, like many others in Japan, was set up in a high to medium density mixed use area surrounded by commercial, industrial and residential estates. As described by the plant operators, it met and exceeded all agreed environmental standards so that emissions for the plant were of no major concern either to regulators or nearby residents. Also as described by the plant operators, the financial structure of the plant was strongly underpinned by fees for waste (gate fees) with returns from by-products such as steam, electricity and paving products made from the incinerated waste being secured...
opportunistically as market forces allowed. The post 2011 Japanese energy shortage caused by a shutdown of local nuclear reactors allowed the plant to secure a premium for its electricity production on spot markets however there did not appear to be a long term 'off take' contract in place to undermine the financial returns for the plant.

This is important to note in the context of proposed WA plants, including any future plant built by Mindarie Regional Council. Assuming strict environmental conditions are met, these proposed plants would have to meet financial benchmarks in the context of WA's current oversupplied electricity market. Caution needs to be used to ensure that the introduction of these plants does not lead to higher gate fees which would be passed onto WA households in the form of higher rates or other similar charges.

KHI presented a very interesting proposal to utilise low grade coal deposits to create liquid hydrogen that would be used for the next generation of hydrogen-powered motor vehicles. Their impressive Hydrogen Gas Project laboratory gave us a view into the future and it has been proposed that one of the first plants to utilise this technology may be built in WA. This has the potential to create a new and exciting export industry in places that did not necessarily benefit from the latest mining boom. With other competitors for this project (including Victoria) it is important that WA continues to work closely to secure the benefits of further investment and new job opportunities that may flow from this proposal.

Both Mitsui and Mitsubishi are long term investors in WA and clearly articulated their appetite for further strategic investment in our state if the opportunity arises. Both companies expressed their desire to increase their investment in agribusiness within our state. Importantly, they also indicated a very keen interest in any opportunities to invest in critical infrastructure in areas such as power generation and ports. This shows that international investors remain committed to building on existing links with WA to maximise mutually beneficial opportunities.

It was clear in meetings with representatives of Hyogo prefecture and the governor himself that there is strong respect and great affection for WA at the most senior levels in Hyogo. This long term relationship is a solid foundation to build on even stronger economic and cultural ties in the future.

The research work that the Hyogo University is doing around the impacts of ageing is fascinating and, given our own nation's rapidly ageing population, the benefits of collaborative research with UWA will flow to both nations which reinforces the advantages to be gained by such collaborative international research projects.

The opportunity to undertake this visit to Japan enhanced my knowledge of the strength of the investment and cultural ties between us. It gave me an insight into several strategically important new initiatives and in particular it gave me a better understanding of a proposed new major investment project in my own electorate which if handled correctly can bring major benefits but where the downside risk may flow into higher costs for local households.

Hon Peter Katsambanis MLC
Member for North Metropolitan Region
PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL REPORT
JAPAN
April 2014

Hon Rick Mazza MLC
Member for Agriculture Region

A focus of the trip was to observe how the environmentally effective conversion of waste to energy was implemented and, is being practiced with great success across some of Japan’s major cities also Kawasaki’s Brown Coal to Hydrogen technology with plans to establish a plant and shipping system in Western Australia.

In addition we visited the Hyogo University and I was surprised at the close bonds with UWA and their research co-operative. Of particular interest is the changing demographic of Japan with young Japanese, particularly women leaving rural areas and moving to major cities. The trend is that these women are predominantly not having children with an estimation that Japan’s population will fall from approximately 120 million to 80 million by 2050, this also leads to an aging population, presenting challenges not unlike Australia’s.

Aging population together with growing health issues like type 2 diabetes is creating medical services as the largest emerging industry in Japan. Health forecast and monitoring systems are being developed to provide 24 hour assessment of patients where ever they maybe in Japan. There are many parallels that can be drawn between our two countries in this area where trade opportunities in technologies and services can be mutually beneficial.

A visit to the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake Memorial – Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution provided a confronting realisation of the level devastation that occurred during the earthquake that took place 15 years ago. The facility is also dedicated to the development of Emergency Measures Planning, Reconstruction – including infrastructure, social, economic and public policy. It also has a focus on communicating the lessons learned from these naturally occurring tragedies. The strategy has been used as a blueprint for responding to earthquakes in other countries and could be adapted for the recovery phase for most natural disasters such as occurred during the Queensland floods and would be a valuable reference point should Western Australia have the misfortune of experience a catastrophic event.

In March of this year I met with representatives of Okabe, a world leading Japanese company that constructs Fish Aggregating Devices (FADs). Recfishwest has funded a project for the deployment of ten FADs in Perth’s metropolitan waters. These sub-merged devices are secured
to the seabed to provide an artificial habitat for fish to breed and to shelter. They have the potential to improve fish stocks and fishing opportunities for recreational and commercial fishermen along a wide expanse of our coastline and enhance our tourism potential. My travel to Japan was an opportune time to visit Okabe and I am convinced that the deployment of additional FAD’s in targeted recreational, commercial and tourism locations would bring significant economic benefits to many coastal regions of WA. Okabe is obviously interested in pursing a market in Western Australia and I was encouraged by their expertise and professionalism.

The opportunity to inspect waste to energy facilities, and to see how the industry’s activities had been integrated into communities without causing detriment to the physical amenity of the location, was of great value. The portfolio area of waste management is germane to my electorate of Agriculture Region, and I was able to relate a lot of the information that I acquired to the concerns of residents in York. It is clear however, that Western Australia is in its infancy in matters relating to this portfolio.

Prior to visiting Japan, I had associated Kawasaki with motorcycles and little else. A meeting at Kawasaki’s Akashi Works revealed an enormously diverse industrial behemoth that includes operating bulk carriers and container ships, building trains, aircraft and space equipment. Kawasaki manufactures missiles, electronics and rocket components. They build gas, steam and diesel turbines and engines for a range of heavy duty equipment as well as manufacturing cement, conveyors and tunnel boring machines. The organisation also has a waste treatment facility. The Akashi Works does make motorcycles and operates worldwide including plants in Brazil, China, Indonesia, Thailand, Korea, the UK and USA.

Travelling to Western Australia’s sister state of Hyogo also provided me with an increased appreciation of the value of sister-state relations that include cultural and diversity exchanges, business development and the opportunity to compare legislative systems, structures and protocols.

We also met with well-known Japanese company Mitsui who have been investors in Australia since 1901. In WA Mitsui is involved in many joint ventures and have invested in salt, fertiliser, mining, chemical and grain enterprises. Mitsui has a view to further invest in WA’s agricultural region undertaking farming activities with an initial plan to purchase 120,000 ha. Our meeting with Mitsubishi also highlighted the extensive interests they have in WA and their enthusiasm for further investment is encouraging.

In conclusion, The experience of visiting Western Australia’s Japanese sister state equivalent of Hyogo Prefecture served as an opportunity for significant professional and personal development and enhancing the connection of trade between Japan and Western Australia.

Rick Mazza MLC
Member for Agricultural Region

June 2014
PARLIAMENTARY TRAVEL REPORT FORM

Members are to provide a report to the Director General, Department of the Premier and Cabinet on the cost, purpose and benefits of all overseas trips within two months of the completion of the trip. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet collates and coordinates the tabling of the reports in Parliament on a quarterly basis.

The report below should be clear, concise and focus on the benefits of your trip to your constituents and/or parliamentary processes, the Western Australian community and/or the State of Western Australia. Please do not attach PowerPoint presentations, research reports or reports otherwise available to the Parliament.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME OF MEMBER:</th>
<th>Mick Murray, Member for Collie-Preston</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DESTINATION/S:</td>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td>DATE OF TRAVEL:</td>
<td>1 May – 11 May 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>PURPOSE OF TRIP:</td>
<td>Attend the 35th Asian Racing Conference in my capacity as Shadow Minister for Racing and Gaming.</td>
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**BENEFITS DERIVED FROM THE TRIP FOR THE STATE OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA:**

(A brief report of no more than 2 pages may be attached if required)

See attached
The 35th Asian Racing Conference was held in Hong Kong from 4 May 2014 to 8th May 2014. There were approximately 800 attendees from around the world.

The conference agenda featured 15 seminars and included site visits to racing venues in Hong Kong, namely Sha Tin and Happy Valley race courses.

Details of seminars attended include:

3rd May – pre-registration for 35th Asian Racing Conference

4th May – attend race meet at Sha Tin Race Course

5th May – Racecourse Operations Seminar

6th May – Racing’s Lifeblood, wagering forecasts, International Movement of Elite Horses, Community Impact of Racecourses and Fair Competition and Drug Control, Racecourses and Environmental Sustainability

7th May – Technology in Sports Broadcasting, Customer Relations, Racing and Popular Culture, attend Happy Valley Race Meeting

8th May – Event Management, Sports Integrity and Closing Ceremony and Farewell Dinner

Cost and Benefits:

Total Parliamentary Travel Allowance Claimed - $9275.35
The way money is wagered on race meetings (and other sports) is changing significantly. More and more funds are being drawn away from racing towards sports betting in general. There are impacts affecting racing because wagering provides the majority of revenue for the industry. International speakers confirmed that in the UK, US and Japan wagering is on the decline.

Venues need to be updated and offer more than just betting and racing facilities to attract and retain punters. Western Australia’s facilities are poor in comparison to venues around the world, it is proven that good facilities attract good crowds.

In Western Australia, racing venues need to follow this same path, offering live entertainment, various dining options and after race events to keep patrons at venues.

Wagering in Australia is at a standstill and on-line (digital) wagering is steadily growing. Government owned tote agencies (TAB Operators) need to adjust to compete with corporate bookmakers who return significantly less to the industry.

This trend needs to be reversed to ensure appropriate infrastructure is retained at RWWA venues.

The sport integrity program, while highly technical, was a reminder that match or race fixing is an ever-present threat and complex computer programs in some countries are a must to keep out illegal gambling.

At the conference, many Australian representatives considered Western Australia a fine example of how growth can be achieved to benefit everyone in the sporting and racing industry, because there was a strong focus on the racing, pacing and chasing industry through the WA TAB.

The 35th Asian Racing Conference was attended by leading figures from the Australian Industry with many acting as guest speakers or presenting high quality papers to the conference.
16 June 2014

Mr Peter Conran,
Department of Premier and Cabinet
5th floor, Dumas House,
2 Havelock Street,
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Mr Conran,

From May 4th to 8th I attended the 35th Asian Racing Conference in Hong Kong. My interest stemmed from being chairman of a joint-standing committee inquiry into Racing and Wagering Western Australia in 2008-2009. I was accompanied on the trip to Hong Kong by the Member for Collie-Preston, shadow minister for Racing, Gaming and Liquor Licensing. The Conference attracted nearly 800 delegates. The increasing relevance of the ARC globally was shown by attendance breakdowns, with more than 100 delegates coming from Europe and 35 from the United States and Canada.

The conference comprised 15 seminars featuring presentations from many of racing’s high profile figures, business leaders and industry experts – including several from Australia. It also included visits by delegates to the Hong Kong Jockey Club’s Shatin and Happy Valley racetracks, with inspections of amenities at both courses.

My main interest was in the future of wagering, given the challenges facing the racing industry worldwide.

Keynote Speakers on Wagering

Winfried Engelbrecht-Bresges, CEO Hong Kong Jockey Club
Jennifer Owens, research consultant, Aspire Wealth Management
Breon Corcoran, CEO Betfair
Paul Biliter, CEO British Horseracing Authority
David Attenborough, Managing director and CEO Tabcorp (Aust)

Observations:
The wagering landscape around the world is changing by the day.

In 2014 sports betting internationally will overtake race betting ($133 billion to $132 billion) for the first time. This is a problem for the racing industry because, unlike sports, it relies 80% on wagering revenue. Sport, on the other hand, derives most of its revenue from TV rights, attendances etc.

Wagering is on the decline in the UK, US and Japan. Racecourse facilities must be modernised to attract new customers.
In 2006 the Hong Kong Jockey Club found that its business had dropped by 26% in six years, due mainly to the growth in the number of casinos in Macau. The HKJC commissioned a systematic customer analysis and also introduced a rebate system of 10% on losing bets.

The analysis identified the need to invest heavily in better racetrack amenities to cater for three types of racegoer – the racing and lifestyle seeker; the racing hobbyist, the money driven regular (punters). The HKJC invested $HK3.5 billion (about $A500 million) in upgrading facilities at Shatin and Happy Valley. It embraced the digital revolution to create a completely new experience for the racegoer e.g. a race simulator App to assist punters in making a selection. The simulation of the race is based on computer analysis of the form of the runners and their racing patterns. Customers can access this free of charge.

The HKJC says it has achieved growth by being customer centric. Meetings at Happy Valley on Wednesday nights target the younger set, with bars, discos and bands all available as well as the usual racing attractions. Both Hong Kong tracks also offer a range of dining facilities for customers to make the races a more enjoyable and relaxed experience.

The Australian Experience (Speaker David Attenborough)

The wagering market in Australia exceeds $20 billion but has not grown. Tabcorp is responsible for 45% of the total turnover. Corporate bookmakers are responsible for 25%. Fixed-odds betting has grown from 29% to 42% in three years while tote betting has fallen from 71% to 58%.

Tabcorp is now the biggest fixed odds bookmaker in Australia with $1.6 billion in annual turnover. That is tipped to increase to $3 billion next year.

Digital wagering has grown from 32% to 42% while cash/phone betting has dropped from 68% to 58%.

In Australia the challenge for traditional TAB operators comes from corporate bookmakers, which do not return as much to the industry. In 2013 Tabcorp, which is licensed to operate in NSW and Victoria, returned $657 million to the industry in those states.

Corporate bookmakers returned only $80 million to the industry Australia wide. Tabcorp returned $2.25 billion in state taxes in NSW and Victoria, compared to $2.5 million by the corporates to the Northern Territory Government.

UK-Irish-owned bookmaking companies have increased their presence in Australia – William Hill, Paddy Power, Ladbrokes, Bet 365 have entered the market.

Yours sincerely

JOHN MCGRATH MLA
Member for South Perth
Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier