



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2021

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 9 September 2021

Legislative Assembly

Thursday, 9 September 2021

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) took the chair at 9.00 am, acknowledged country and read prayers.

BUDGET PRESENTATION

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [9.02 am]: I remind members that as the budget will be presented at 2.00 pm, members' 90-second statements will occur at 12.20 pm and questions without notice will be at 12.30 pm. After which, at 1.00 pm, I will leave the chair for the lunchbreak.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

*Inquiry into the Response of Western Australian Schools to Climate Change —
Terms of Reference — Statement by Speaker*

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [9.03 am]: The Education and Health Standing Committee has agreed to inquire into the response of Western Australian schools to climate change. In particular, the inquiry will consider —

- (a) the co-benefits of climate action in schools;
- (b) climate change mitigation and adaptation actions currently being undertaken in schools and the benefits they are achieving;
- (c) barriers that schools encounter in undertaking climate action and how these can be addressed; and
- (d) what more can be done to support schools to respond to climate change.

The committee will report to the house by 30 June 2022.

CHINA–WESTERN AUSTRALIA TRADE RELATIONS

Statement by Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade) [9.04 am]: The relationship between China and Western Australia is one that all Western Australians understand, appreciate and respect. Since taking on the portfolios of state development, jobs and trade after the recent election, I have been keen to further this critically important relationship, as I have, and will continue to do, with many of our Asian neighbours. For WA, this relationship is very important due to the fact that in 2020, 84 per cent of Western Australia's total goods exports went to Asia. The state contributed 56 per cent of the nation's goods exports to Asia, which is more than all the other states and territories combined.

Two weeks ago, I was asked to participate in the sixth annual Ping Pong Friendship Games held by the Australia China Business Council and the China Chamber of Commerce in Australia. Although I am sad to report that I was soundly beaten by my good friend Consul General Long Dingbin, before anyone gets too critical, in 2017, Premier McGowan was beaten as well. In addition to this being the sixth annual event, it also marked the fiftieth anniversary of ping-pong diplomacy, referring to the 1971 exchange of table tennis, or ping-pong, players between the United States, Australia and the People's Republic of China that resulted in a resumption of diplomatic and economic relations after 20 years. Although we acknowledge this relationship has been under some strain at a national level, Western Australia is working hard to ensure that the bond between WA and China is not only maintained, but also strengthened.

Only last week, on behalf of the WA government, Minister Punch and I formally opened the eighth annual Western Australia–Zhejiang Exchange Committee meeting in a virtual ceremony alongside the Vice Governor of Zhejiang and other government representatives in China. Western Australia and Zhejiang province have been sister states for almost 34 years, since November 1987, and last week's committee meeting explored further areas of collaboration in vocational education and training, cross-border ecommerce ventures and new energy initiatives, which are areas critical to the WA government's economic diversification agenda.

WA is located in the fastest-growing region in the world. It is incumbent upon us as a government to maintain meaningful and long-lasting trading and cultural relationships with our Asian neighbours. As Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade in the McGowan government, I look forward to continuing to build on these relationships as we work towards a bright and prosperous future.

POLICE AND COMMUNITY YOUTH CENTRES

Statement by Minister for Police

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [9.07 am]: Madam Speaker will appreciate better than most in this house the dire state that police and community youth centres were in under the previous government. The neglect of this great institution, which has served Western Australian communities for 80 years, was not only

a travesty, but also a clear indication of the previous government's attitude towards providing facilities to support youth who are overwhelmingly socially disadvantaged. Fortunately, the McGowan government stepped up and provided critically needed funding to operate the state's 16 centres, with an initial \$19 million in funding provided since coming to office and a further \$18 million allocated in the 2021–22 state budget. This investment by the McGowan government is improving the lives of young people and helping them to achieve better outcomes for themselves through structured activities.

Over the past two weeks, the Premier and I visited two regional PCYCs, in Broome and Carnarvon, where almost \$3 million has been invested in capital works to refurbish and fit-out facilities that will enable improved and additional service delivery to address some of the root causes of juvenile crime throughout Western Australia. As a community, we need to try to prevent young people from becoming caught up in criminal behaviour in the first place, and PCYCs often provide the support and mentoring some young people need.

CORONAVIRUS — SOLSAN HAND SANITATION UNITS

Statement by Minister for Finance

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Finance) [9.08 am]: I rise to bring to the attention of the house an exciting and innovative project that will help to keep visitors COVID-safe in some of our state's busiest locations. Local Henderson-based company Matrix Composites and Engineering has designed and manufactured 10 Solsan touchless hand sanitation units. The units incorporate smart technology that is used to send alerts when they require refilling. They are also solar powered and contain 30 litres of sanitiser, which is enough to deliver 37 500 shots. Four units have recently been installed at Optus Stadium. The units feature beautiful pieces of Indigenous artwork by Whadjuk Noongar artist Kevin Bynder, representing the Noongar six seasons, making them hard to miss when you are in the stadium precinct. The installation of these units could not have come at a better time, with Optus Stadium set to host the AFL grand final in a few weeks.

Our message to Western Australians throughout the pandemic has consistently been to keep up good hygiene habits, wash their hands regularly and use hand sanitiser when necessary. These units will help footy fans keep up those COVID-safe practices while at the stadium enjoying the football. Units will also be installed at RAC Arena, Perth Children's Hospital and the Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip in Perth, and will also be trialled at the Museum of Geraldton and the Mandurah train station.

The Solsan project has created six jobs through the development and trial phases, with a further 210 jobs expected to be created if the trial leads to further commercialisation. The project also marks the first market-led proposal to be completed, and shows how government and businesses are able to work together to deliver innovative projects to the community. I congratulate Matrix on bringing this proposal to government, and encourage the thousands and thousands of people who visit the stadium over the next few weeks to use the units and ensure they are being COVID-safe.

NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK

Statement by Minister for Child Protection

MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection) [9.11 am]: I have the great pleasure to update the house on National Child Protection Week 2021. National Child Protection Week runs from 5 to 11 September with the theme, "Every child, in every community, needs a fair go". The annual campaign is coordinated by the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and champions the protection of all Australian children regardless of circumstance or background. This week is about putting the best interests of children and young people at the forefront of the public's attention. To ensure the wellbeing and safety of every child, we need everyone to play their part in the community all year round.

To mark National Child Protection Week, the Department of Communities is helping to support a range of local community events led by district offices across the state. Activities range from sausage sizzles to community fun days. Some examples of events being held this week include Esperance primary schools taking part in a NAPCAN art project and the West Kimberley region hosting a hands on country fishing trip to Karajarri country that will be linked to a number of community activities. Communities' district offices have also been provided with cameras to allow children living in foster care within their district to reflect on and document the people, places and things that help them to thrive and be safe. A selection of the photos will be printed and displayed in district offices to celebrate and share the insights and experiences of children living in care. This week I was pleased to attend a function in my own electorate that gave me an opportunity to listen and learn from people working in frontline child protection positions and those who have a care experience. I am proud to be part of a government that is committed to supporting better outcomes for children living in out-of-home care and that continues to prioritise initiatives supporting those aims.

CHILD PROTECTION — CHARTER OF RIGHTS

Statement by Minister for Child Protection

MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection) [9.13 am]: I also have the great pleasure to update the house on the new charter of rights for parents and families involved with statutory child protection in Western Australia. Last week I formally launched the charter, which was developed through a partnership between

the Family Inclusion Network of Western Australia and the Department of Communities. It is the first in Australia to be formally endorsed by a child protection jurisdiction. The charter outlines the rights of parents and families across six areas: respect, information, support, fair treatment, participation and inclusion, and privacy and confidentiality. Although the safety and wellbeing of children continues to be the priority in all child protection matters, the charter recognises parents and families as key people in supporting a child's right to lifelong connection with family, community, country and culture. The charter reflects this by supporting a culture of respect for parents and families; encouraging staff to work with parents and families as equal partners; and listening to and including parents' and families' voices when working with children.

In shaping the charter, Fin WA engaged directly with families and communities involved in statutory child protection to ensure the document reflected their experiences. A key component of that process was understanding the challenges that families face when they interact with child protection proceedings. The charter seeks to promote their rights and ensure their voices are heard during what is a difficult time in their lives. I commend the Family Inclusion Network of WA, the Department of Communities and all the parents and families involved in developing this landmark resource. I am confident this charter will help to further improve the way the child protection system works, and will build better, stronger relationships with families.

YOUTH IN EMERGENCY SERVICES — BANKSIA HILL DETENTION CENTRE

Statement by Minister for Emergency Services

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Emergency Services) [9.15 am]: I would like to take this opportunity to update the house about the Youth in Emergency Services program being delivered at the Banksia Hill Detention Centre. The Banksia Hill YES program started in 2019, under the McGowan government—a partnership between the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Justice. In a fun and interactive way, the program provides young people in the centre with emergency skills that they would not usually be exposed to. On 3 September 2021, the ninth group of young people graduated from the program, bringing the total to almost 60 graduates since it started. I would like to acknowledge the Minister for Corrective Services, who attended on the day to present graduates with their certificates. Prior to the graduation ceremony, participants worked as a team to complete a live emergency exercise to demonstrate their new skills—casualty extraction, firefighting, basic first aid and radio communications. They worked together in a vehicle accident scenario taking on roles as incident controller and first responders.

The emergency services program is making a genuine difference to young people. On top of the practical and transferable life skills gained, centre staff have observed greater self-confidence and a sense of value amongst graduates. Importantly, young people are learning about emergency services volunteering from volunteers who give much to the community. The program can also lead to opportunities outside of detention, helping to put young people on a different path. Two recent graduates are already working with DFES youth programs staff after they expressed an interest in volunteering in emergency services.

I would like to personally acknowledge and thank all emergency services staff and volunteers who dedicate time to the program. Many take leave from their jobs to help out. Thank you to the DFES volunteers from the State Emergency Service, the Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, the Volunteer Fire and Emergency Services, Marine Rescue Western Australia, the volunteer bushfire service and staff from the career Fire and Rescue Service. Not only is this fantastic program helping graduates, but ultimately it is hoped that the community, too, will benefit from their life experience and perseverance. I hope this program will continue into the future and help graduates turn their lives around.

JURIEN BAY BOAT HARBOUR

Grievance

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.17 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Transport about the condition of the Jurien Bay marina, also known as the Jurien Bay Boat Harbour, located within an exclusion zone of the Jurien Bay Marine Park. In the past month, seagrass and sand has again washed into the mouth of the Jurien Bay marina, decomposing to make the water anoxic and ending fish life. This is a recurring environmental disaster that I have raised in this place repeatedly over the past eight years. The stench of hydrogen sulphide is unbearable and the situation presents a health risk for local residents and visitors alike.

The Jurien Bay marina was constructed in 1988 with an original budget of \$4.5 million. Expenditure was capped at \$10 million and the original design was never completed. The marina functioned as intended for about 12 years but sand and weed channelled into the marina has built up over the years, altering the depth and impeding the flushing of water in and out of the marina mouth. In October 2007 the then Department for Planning and Infrastructure proposed the construction of a spur groyne off Jurien harbour's northern breakwater as a remedy for the seasonal water quality problem. At that time the department advised that it did not have the \$705 000 in funding to proceed and nothing further was done. In February 2008 the office of the then Minister for Planning and Infrastructure advised that construction of a wraparound breakwater arm on either side of the marina was not a viable option. However, construction of a spur groyne off the harbour's northern breakwater was considered by DPI to be an important future work to minimise the movement of sand and weed into the harbour.

In November 2013, following successive seasonal fish kills, I raised a grievance with the then Minister for Transport. On 14 May 2014, I presented a petition signed by 1 778 petitioners about the state of the marina. In 2014, the minister established the Jurien Bay Boat Harbour Steering Committee as an advisory and reference group reporting to the Department of Transport. In the interim, a maintenance dredging program was carried out over four months in early 2015 at a cost of \$1.8 million. The dredging program successfully removed grass and sand, restoring navigable depths in the harbour entrance.

The Department of Transport study commenced in 2014 and spanned six years. It involved the compilation of comprehensive data and research to understand why sand and grass accumulates in the harbour. Long-term solutions were sought to prevent poor water quality, with extensive scientific studies undertaken to monitor water quality—dissolved oxygen, pH levels and turbidity—water exchange via flushing, and wind speed and direction. Trials were carried out, including dredging, trawling and the use of a bubble curtain to prevent wrack ingress into the harbour and to oxygenate the harbour water. These comprehensive studies delivered a preferred solution, which was detailed by the Department of Transport in July 2020. The solution involves reconfiguring the boat harbour entrance, with a large spur groyne considered the most effective when modelled against future tides, wind, wave and wrack movement. By reconfiguring the harbour entrance, approximately 80 per cent of wrack movement into the harbour should be diverted, with significant improvements to water quality, according to the Department of Transport’s fact sheet “Entrance Reconfiguration Concept: Jurien Bay Boat Harbour”.

In answer to a question on notice of 15 September 2020, the minister confirmed the following —

The Department of Transport ... has completed extensive data collection, modelling and study work, commissioned two independent studies into potential modifications to the northern breakwater and undertaken several trials to improve water quality.

...

A preliminary engineering design has been prepared for a 150 metre extension to the northern entrance breakwater.

The estimated cost then was \$7.8 million and funding was being sought. Following the most recent fish kill, I sought information via my colleague Hon Colin de Grussa. The question asked on 1 September states —

- (1) Given that dredging has only just occurred, will the government commit to clearing the harbour of seaweed such that the current impacts on the environment and the local community are addressed?
- (2) Will the government commit to build the 150-metre spur groyne addition to the northern breakwater of the harbour, as recommended by the minister’s own department?
- (3) If no to (2), how does the government intend to provide a long-term solution to this ongoing environmental and community issue?

Hon Sue Ellery replied on behalf of the minister —

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(3) Jurien Bay boat harbour gets dredged approximately every four to five years. The proposed extension to the harbour’s northern breakwater is under consideration as part of the annual budget process.

The response that dredging is carried out every four to five years is noncommittal and does not address the question or the situation. I quote the Shire of Dandaragan president, Councillor Leslee Holmes, in yesterday’s *Midwest Times* article headed “More fish kills degrade local marina”. Councillor Holmes states —

“We’re sick of the smell,” ... “Tourism is a vital part of Jurien Bay’s local economy, and unfortunately the current state of the marina is a big detractor from the amenity of the town.”

Councillor Holmes continues —

... there’s little the Shire can do ... which is why we need the State to accept responsibility and fix the problem,” ...

Minister, today the state government is expected to report a \$5 billion budget surplus. There is no reason for the deplorable condition of the Jurien Bay marina to continue. I request that the minister’s government fund the recommended spur groyne, thereby offering a long-term solution to this situation. These recurring fish kills in the Jurien Bay marina are an environmental disaster. They are inhumane and they must stop.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [9.23 am]: I thank the member for Moore for that grievance. From the outset, there are a number of major issues around the state with its interface with the ocean, whether it be with the construction of new marinas and harbours or with coastal erosion. What is emerging to be a major challenge for us is how we manage significant environmental challenges together with the ability for people to access the water. We are undertaking a number of projects along the coastline. Work is being undertaken

in Onslow, Esperance, Albany, Bunbury, Broome, Pilbara and Port Hedland—you name it! A significant amount of work is being undertaken, with a record spend on new harbours and marinas and on addressing coastal erosion. This continues to be a major issue. Each town has different issues and Jurien Bay Boat Harbour is no different. The boat harbour was constructed in 1988. The first water quality and fish kill event was noted in 2002. The events have been occurring with frequency and we have been studying the issues in the boat harbour. It is an issue that has been around for some time, but evidence from recent years shows that it has become worse.

I want to acknowledge in this house Hon Sandra Carr, our new upper house member, who has also engaged with the local community on this issue, and also the member for Kingsley, who is a frequent visitor to Jurien Bay and has raised the issue with me too. In the July school holidays, I spent a few days in Jurien Bay at the caravan park. It was a bit windy and wet, but it was really fun. I have to say that Jurien Bay is a beautiful place. The caravan park was great. The local cafes were very good. Perhaps visiting in the middle of July is a bit hardcore. With the push to wander out yonder, there were a lot of people in that caravan park, but my kids very much enjoyed it. It is a beautiful place and one that will grow in popularity over time due to its proximity to the city, its beautiful coastline and the exciting adventures in that area that are great for families.

I understand that this issue is an ongoing problem. As the member noted, each year over the winter months, seagrass tends to accumulate in the harbour. It starts to decompose, which reduces the oxygen levels in the water and gives off a smell. As I have found with all these long-term problems, we have to undertake the studies and do the work to find a solution. The member highlighted that a lot of work has been undertaken by the Department of Transport, which has been working with the local shire and also the community. I understand that the member is involved in one of these groups to help inform us of the shorter and longer term solutions to this problem. It is clear that the longer term strategy to address the water problem will require substantial breakwater modification to better prevent the seagrass from flowing into the boat harbour. It is interesting to note that a lot of the work that we are doing along the coastline addresses bad design—I say bad design, but I suppose that everything is great in hindsight. Sometimes the design of marinas and harbours can have an adverse environmental impact. We have seen that happen with coastal erosion in Busselton and around the state where projects, which were well intended, actually created further problems later on. The problems with this harbour have shown us that we now need to modify the breakwater.

As a result of the work undertaken by the Department of Transport, we have now completed a business case for which we are seeking funding. I expect that I will be approaching the commonwealth government very soon to see whether it will contribute, but we are very keen to secure funding as part of future budget processes to make those modifications. In the meantime, we have commenced the detailed planning, environmental and other approvals processes to make sure that should we get the funding, we will be able to go to market and construct that breakwater modification. We expect those environmental and other approvals to be provided in the second half of next year.

From December last year to March this year, about 40 000 cubic metres of sand and seagrass was dredged from the boat harbour, restoring the depths and improving the water quality. We continue to monitor the water quality and/or are attempting to dredge where we can and also to trawl the seagrass wrack out of the harbour. In the short term, we will continue to monitor the situation and take action to improve the water quality as much as we can. We have also developed a business case to seek funding. As I said, I will probably seek funding from the commonwealth as part of any future funding requests and put it forward in a future budget process. We are continuing to undertake the work to get the right approvals.

As I said, there are enormous challenges up and down the coast. I can go to any town and see that long-term issues have not been addressed. Much of my focus in this term of government is to improve the maritime infrastructure around the state, address coastal erosion issues and to really get better engagement of regional communities with the ocean. These beautiful towns should have the best quality infrastructure to maximise future tourism opportunities.

POLICE — MISSING PERSONS

Grievance

MS K.E. GIDDENS (Bateman) [9.30 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Police regarding seniors who go missing in our community. Recently, a senior from my electorate of Bateman went missing for a time. Locals within the area received a text message from the Western Australia Police Force alerting them to the situation and the community was asked to keep an eye out for the missing person. Although this particular incident ended well, thankfully, a number of constituents contacted my office about this matter and expressed their concerns regarding the welfare of seniors, particularly those with cognitive diseases such as dementia.

Dementia is the second leading cause of death of Australians and is of real concern to many seniors in my electorate and across Western Australia. There are an estimated 472 000 Australians living with dementia. Without a medical breakthrough, the number of people with dementia is expected to increase to nearly 600 000 by 2028 and to more than one million within the next 40 years. It is estimated that almost 1.6 million people in Australia are currently involved in the care of someone living with dementia. With the Australian population ageing, people going missing as a result of dementia will continue to be a growing concern for people diagnosed with dementia and their loved ones.

Like so many others, my family has cared for a loved one with dementia. It can be a constant worry to balance the physical safety of the person with dementia and their ongoing independence and connection to their home and community for as long as possible.

My electorate of Bateman has an ageing population, with above the state average of all age categories from 55 years onwards. In fact, Bateman has nearly twice the state average of people aged 85 years or older, so maybe there really is something in the air helping people to live long, and hopefully healthy, lives in my electorate! Many of my constituents have lived in the area for decades, perhaps raised their families there, and are familiar with the surroundings and local amenities and would like to age in place. As the local member, I would like to see seniors staying and ageing in our community for as long as possible.

The local government within my electorate, the City of Melville, has the second-highest rate of people living with dementia of all local government areas in Western Australia. I would like to take a moment to talk about the great work the city is doing to promote the safety and wellbeing of seniors in our community, because it really is a leader in this area. The City of Melville is a member of the World Health Organization Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities, which is made up of over 1 400 communities from around the world representing over 260 million people from 44 countries. The City of Melville is one of only six local government areas in WA that is a part of the WHO network, so it is quite an achievement.

It is worth noting that WA is also a leader nationally in this work, being the only Australian state, through the Department of Communities, to have what is called affiliate membership of the Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. The City of Melville is a great advocate for seniors in our community and continues to work towards being more age-friendly. The city has released its *Age-friendly Melville plan 2022–2026*. Through consultation with the local community, it has developed four priority areas to focus its attention on over the coming years. Two of these priority areas are community support and health services, and communication and information.

In the area of communication and information, the city will be working with relevant service providers and partners to continue to provide a diverse range of community education sessions and workshops. It will also promote intergenerational opportunities and initiatives that can be of assistance to those with dementia. As part of the Melville Age-friendly Accessible Business Network, the city has produced some fantastic videos via an age-friendly grant from the Department of Communities. These videos provide examples to businesses and community members about how dementia affects behaviour, thinking and the ability to perform everyday tasks, and how that might look in common community settings.

In the priority area of community support and health services, the city continues to support older residents, carers and families to live well with dementia in the community through different initiatives. For example, in the electorate of my colleague Lisa O'Malley, the member for Bicton, a monthly Memory Cafe is held at Cibo Sano at Hawaiian's Melville. Back in my electorate, Music and Memories is held bimonthly at the Blue Gum Community Centre in Brentwood.

I would like to acknowledge the leadership team at the City of Melville for its commitment and work in this area: Mayor George Gear, CEO Marten Tieleman and, in particular, director of community development Christine Young. Christine is also a new board member of the International Federation on Ageing organisation based in Toronto, which is a policy-advocacy organisation with United Nations status. This organisation also supports the WHO with the Global Network for Age-friendly Cities and Communities. She is also the current chair of Local Government Professionals Australia's Age Friendly Communities Network. Congratulations, Christine, and thank you for your work in this really important area.

Of course, people living with dementia are not the only vulnerable group at risk of going missing. People living with certain disabilities may also be at increased risk. For example, I had a constituent come to see me about a planning matter related to their newly constructed home that had been designed with their adult daughter in mind, who has autism and is non-verbal. Their child is prone to running away, and as they themselves age, they cannot always prevent this from happening, nor keep up with her if she does run. As the minister for the agency responsible for responding to missing persons, I would like to ask whether there have been any improvements to the systems and information used by police when trying to find a missing person, such as a senior or others who may be at risk. Are there any actions that people or their carers can take to make it easier to locate our seniors when they go missing? I thank the minister for any assistance in this matter.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [9.37 am]: I thank the member for her grievance and for raising this really important matter. The prevalence of people suffering dementia or cognitive disability that results in them going missing is increasingly common. I get reports daily of police responses to incidents of significance. This is only anecdotal from my perspective, but I expect that in the order of 20 per cent or 25 per cent of police time in responding to an incident is dedicated to this type of activity. If we take into account persons at risk generally, which also incorporates those threatening harm to themselves, certainly those who go missing through suffering from dementia or another cognitive disability that results in them being lost is a really significant task for the police, and it is only growing. As the member indicated, it is increasingly prevalent in her electorate, but it is a growing issue around the state and the nation.

At the outset, I join the member in commending her local government, the City of Melville, for its initiatives around this challenge and the support it is providing to its constituents. I have good news about something else that it can do and promote, as can the member. The data that the Western Australia Police Force provides confirms that the police are increasingly engaged in search operations for people with cognitive impairment, and predominantly people suffering dementia. However, as the member indicated, other people out there suffer from disabilities that result in them being lost and the police are required to search for them. I can tell the member that there were 46 such searches for people with dementia in 2017 when we first came to office. That number has increased to 75 as at the beginning of August this year and police are projecting up to 140 such searches by year's end. Think about that: in that short period, the growth rate we have witnessed suggests that this will be a massive impost on or challenge to police. It is not an impost; it is part of police tasking. It is certainly a really significant and growing task. There is no indication that it will diminish in any way in the near future; it will only absorb more time.

When these searches are undertaken, they often require a lot of police resources. Very frequently, the police air wing will be tasked to support our searches. Mounted police are used in some of the more rugged terrain when that is required. We use drones from the air wing, as well as helicopters, and many police on the ground. It is significant tasking for police, which draws them away from responding to other tasks. It is important that we do whatever we can to improve our ability to respond and reduce the time that people are lost and increase the likelihood of them being found safely. The national figures estimate that up to 250 Australians are added to the number of those living with dementia each day. As I said earlier, that confirms it will only be a more significant task as we go forward.

Since we took office, the government has been supporting WA police to embrace technology and improve capability and efficiencies through the use of technology. One of the things the WA Police Force did in 2019 was to engage with the MedicAlert Foundation to develop the Safe and Found WA initiative. MedicAlert is a not-for-profit organisation and provides people with a database for their medical issues. MedicAlert is the group that provides a bracelet or necklace that alerts first responders or other members of the public to a person's particular medical issue. MedicAlert has created the Safe and Found WA initiative, which I was very pleased to launch at the Maylands police centre on 12 August. It provides immediate access. If we join up our loved one to Safe and Found with the MedicAlert Foundation, which charges just to cover costs, they will get a bracelet, and, more important, data on our loved one is included in a database that can be accessed by police. Thanks to the McGowan government, every police officer now has the OneForce technology, which is a mobile phone that accesses databases and the Safe and Found app. People can enter what their loved one looks like and some of the important information that is used in searches that can really improve the response speed, such as locations their loved one may have been familiar with and their behaviours prior to them suffering from dementia. I have found that people often revert to past behaviours or return to past locations. That database provides immediate access and precludes the necessity for the person, often the partner—who may also be aged—who is very worried about their lost loved one from having to contemplate that sort of information while they are under the stress of having lost somebody. It is much better if that data is provided in advance and the police can access it very easily.

I encourage the member for Bateman, the City of Melville, all local government authorities and all members of Parliament to tell their constituents and Western Australians generally to sign up their loved ones to the Safe and Found initiative. It is a not-for-profit organisation partnered with the Western Australia Police Force and it will ensure that searches are much more efficient and speedy and, with luck, will save people from being lost in the future.

CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR — REGIONS

Grievance

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [9.43 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Police and again highlights some of the enormous challenges being experienced by towns in my electorate as a result of unacceptable and escalating crime levels and antisocial destructive behaviour right across regional WA. That is now reaching a crisis point in some towns.

Firstly, I would like the minister to confirm whether it was Labor Party policy in the lead-up to the 2017 election to reduce Aboriginal incarceration rates by 25 per cent. It is my understanding that that is the Labor Party's policy. Has the minister or his predecessor directed the Commissioner of Police to direct police not to charge Aboriginal youth under the age of 15 years to be able to meet the government's Aboriginal incarceration target?

I understand that there is a story behind the issues every child and teenager faces. However, it is now at a point in our communities at which respite is needed due to the amount of crime occurring in places such as Carnarvon and Meekatharra. It is at the point at which the community fears that someone will be hurt or killed because of the level of crime and antisocial behaviour. Businesses have been broken into; for example, a veterinary clinic has been broken into four times in four days. The TAFE was broken into only two days ago, as was the shire office only a day ago. Cars have been stolen.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.A. Munday): Ministers!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: We are at a point at which the community has had enough. We understand that this is not a police issue, but is to do with the lack of support services for dealing with youth. Those services are simply not there in Carnarvon, which is one town that is at breaking point. I know that the Minister for Police was there last week and I am sure that he would have got the same feedback. I understand he did get that same feedback from the community, which is at breaking point due to the level of crime. As I said, people will not know that there was a stabbing in Carnarvon two weeks ago. Only yesterday, a person was attacked in the shops, and there has been break-in after break-in at schools in Carnarvon due to youth roaming around.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I understand; I have been on a bus and spoken to the youths themselves, and they do not want to go home for various reasons. It is time that we brought up those reasons—that is, families being dysfunctional because of families being drunk and because of the drug issue. Kids do not want to go home. It is important that there are programs that work with families, the parents and the schools. The youth who are roaming the streets are often coerced by older teenagers to do crime.

We need respite in our regional towns. Kids have broken into places multiple times. I heard the other day of one who had done it 100 times, but they have finally been locked up to provide the respite that is needed for the town.

I understand that these kids have issues at home and they have issues themselves. School attendance is obviously suffering, because kids who roam the streets at night do not end up going to school because they are tired. This obviously has an impact on their education and the school. As I said, the community is at breaking point because of this and needs respite. This is not about being racist; it is the reality of what is happening where crime is out of control.

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Perhaps members opposite should sit through a home invasion.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister! Let us let the member for North West Central finish his last two minutes.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.

Only in the school holidays someone broke into my house and a rental property has been broken into twice in that same period. This is what is happening in Carnarvon. I have been able to experience it, like many others.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: This is why we need to have programs.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I understand that a government program tries to deal with those first offenders and work with those kids, which is what is needed, but there are no other programs when it comes to repeat offenders. These youths and their parents need help to ensure that we are working on the issues that these children are experiencing—why they are not going home—and get them to school.

I would also like to push for the fact that the Gascoyne and Murchison are the only two regions that do not have a banned drinkers register. That is something that we need to introduce, rather than having overall liquor bans that penalise the whole community, not those who are the offenders when it comes to alcohol. The banned drinkers register needs to be rolled out in the Gascoyne and Murchison regions to target those who need to be targeted who cannot drink appropriately. All these issues are making it very difficult for staff when it comes to police officers. There are lots of gaps in policing in places like Carnarvon and Meekatharra. They are hard to staff due to these incidents and the level of crime that is occurring in these towns.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [9.51 am]: I thank the member for bringing this matter to Parliament. At the outset, I would like to place on the record that any one victim of a crime understandably feels aggrieved, hurt and accosted. Most of us, I imagine, have been a victim of crime at some stage in their lives. If they are as old as me, they definitely have. I understand how people feel and that is why the McGowan government is so intent on supporting, resourcing, funding and equipping our police force better than at any time in history. That is what we have been doing in response to the demand for safer communities and greater support of communities. That is the McGowan government's policy on crime. We are funding it far better than our predecessors ever did. We will be providing a record number of police officers over the coming years and the member would be aware that there has been an increase of police officers in Carnarvon since his party was in office, and more officers will come.

I say, though, that the nature of the member's grievance is not helpful and he knows that. I think he was very aware that what he said was calculated; it is not helpful at all in dealing with his own community. What he actually said is very likely to engender division within his community and encourage people to be split apart instead of focused together on better outcomes. I do not think that is a positive thing for a member of Parliament to do. He is a leader of his community and I am pretty disappointed in him for doing that, because I know that he is aware. He referred to the complex nature of juvenile offending and how it must be dealt with in a part of his presentation.

I can confirm that the McGowan government's policy on crime is to tackle it far more forcefully, vigorously and effectively than ever before and to absolutely resource our police and increase their numbers far more than our predecessors did, and we are doing that. As the member said, I was in Carnarvon last week, but since the election I have been to the member's electorate three times as Minister for Police and Carnarvon a couple of times, as the member would be aware. The very focus of much of my two visits to Carnarvon in recent times was about juvenile offending and what we can do to prevent it. The member would know that the McGowan government, as I stated in a brief ministerial statement earlier today, has invested significantly in re-invigorating the police and community youth centre after the neglect that it suffered under the Liberal–National government, particularly the one in Carnarvon, which is an extraordinary facility that I opened with the Premier only last week. A total of \$1.3 million was invested in that magnificent facility for the people of Carnarvon—all the people of Carnarvon, not just at-risk youths. It is very much focused on the provision of a world-class response to tackling at-risk kids and getting them on the right path and preventing them from getting into trouble. That is what PCYC's partnership with the Western Australian McGowan government is. It is very focused on that.

I have to place on the record a commendation to Bree Maher, the PCYC coordinator there, who is a partner of a police officer in town. You get a great package with that couple! What an extraordinary job she has done and is doing in partnering with many other community groups with the local council. Eddie Smith, the president of the local council was there, and he did not say what the member said. He did not advise me of the view that the member gave. There are concerns about crime, as there are in all communities, but he is very positive and optimistic. He was complimentary about our response, particularly with regard to the PCYC's focus on getting kids who might be at risk of getting on the wrong path onto the right path and supporting them. The member would know, I think, that we have two youth police officers in Carnarvon as a consequence of the McGowan government's investment. They are both Aboriginal police liaison officers who are incredibly positive and engaged with the community and are working to get kids who are at risk into programs. They run a range of programs that will be run out of the new PCYC.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am responding to what the member said earlier. We have made a significant investment and have focus. There are things such as a safe space for young people to engage in physical and group activities. It is an environment where PCYC staff and police work regularly so that young people can come to know the police and see them as positive mentors rather than a threat. There are meals for children on some nights of the week and they are keeping young people engaged and helping them avoid becoming involved in criminal activity. There is an opportunity through that relationship to identify underlying issues, with staff focusing on them. I would like to place on the record and commend the officer in charge there, Mitchell Howard, who is a great guy doing an incredible job with his team. He is not as focused as the member is on scaremongering and creating division. He is about getting people to work together on the task of getting and keeping kids on the right path. His team is doing a good job in that regard. It is working on rolling out a version of Target 120, and I will be working with the Minister for Community Services on possibly expanding that.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for North West Central!

Mr P. PAPALIA: There is a reason for optimism in Carnarvon. Crime is down 23 per cent in Carnarvon from its peak under the Liberal–National government. Despite what the member presented, there is reason for optimism in Carnarvon and part of it is that great people are working with the McGowan government on tackling youth crime and getting better outcomes for our young Western Australians.

WATER — PFAS — BULLSBROOK

Grievance

MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills — Parliamentary Secretary) [9.58 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Water and I thank him for taking it. It is about the terrible treatment meted out to my community in west Bullsbrook at the hands of the Morrison government and its abject failure to address the issues of PFAS contamination of groundwater sources. In 2016, the federal Department of Defence commenced investigations into the presence of PFAS contamination at RAAF Base Pearce following the use of firefighting foam in the area. As a precaution, it offered packaged water to 150 properties for more than three years. In November 2017, that investigation confirmed that contamination had leached off the base, affecting groundwater beneath private properties across west Bullsbrook. It is important to appreciate that in west Bullsbrook there is no scheme water. Residents are using their bore water for drinking, bathing, washing and irrigating. Let us fast forward to 2019, when Department of Defence decided

to hold a community information session in which it provided west Bullsbrook residents with information about the outcomes of its investigations. Those investigations found that PFAS levels were above health-based guideline values for drinking water in residential bores at 11 properties in the area, and that PFAS levels were at concentrations above the limit of reporting at a further 15 properties.

The information session that was held was terrible. There was a range of open questions. The methodology that was adopted to test the contamination was very sketchily outlined, and a lot of the questions that were asked were not answered. One particular question that was asked was about whether PFAS contaminants move as a plume throughout the groundwater source. Some really important questions about some very irregular results were unanswered. For example, in a street with three houses, two of the houses would test positive for PFAS, and the house in the middle would not, yet they were drawing water from exactly the same groundwater source. The Department of Defence could not provide any answers to those questions. That showed that very little is known about the migration of PFAS through water sources. In fact, at the session, the department's own consultants admitted that the hydrology is so complex that the PFAS contamination could spread even further once residents started to use their bores again and the water source activity increased. That is absolutely terrible.

Despite the clear unease and clear grievances expressed by my community, the Department of Defence announced at the forum that it was going to remove the provision of packaged water for the west Bullsbrook community and provide point-of-use individual water treatment systems to only 26 out of the 150 properties that had originally been identified as part of the study area. The technology that the department proposed to use was new technology. It was being used at township scale in the United States, but it had not been tested. It was not available in Australia, and it had not been developed or used at a micro or household scale anywhere else in the world. It struck me as a little strange that this experimental technology was proposed to be used in my community of west Bullsbrook. There was a lot of unease in the room about that. The other issue with this experimental technology was that although the Department of Defence would install it at its cost, it would operate it for only three years, and at that point the property owners would be left hanging—they would be responsible for the ongoing operations and maintenance. If a person is a pensioner or an elderly person, I would challenge their ability to be able to operate and maintain an experimental, brand new technology that has never been rolled out at scale anywhere else in the world. It was an absolutely inadequate solution. I said at the time that the best and most effective solution for my community would be to install reticulated water, to give my community the access to safe and uncontaminated drinking water that should be their right. I have repeatedly advocated for that.

In December 2018, a Senate inquiry into the management of PFAS contamination found that the federal government should compensate property owners and businesses for financial losses associated with PFAS contamination. That inquiry also backed up the polluter-pays principle. I know that this state government subscribes to that principle. The federal government created the mess, and the federal government needs to fix it. The federal government has completely failed to take responsibility. It has absolutely absented the field. That attitude endures to this day.

In other PFAS-affected communities in Australia, the commonwealth government's response was to assemble an army of lawyers. It provisioned \$53 million to mount a legal battle against the community of Williamstown in New South Wales, which was similarly just trying to assert its right to clean drinking water. Landholders in Williamstown in New South Wales, Oakey in Queensland and Katherine in the Northern Territory have commenced a class action against Defence. I am pleased to see that west Bullsbrook residents have taken a similar step. In response, the federal government has funded the provision of scheme water in Oakey and Williamstown, and the installation of rainwater tanks on properties in Katherine. But it has done nothing for the residents of west Bullsbrook. We need an immediate solution. We have waited for years. This uncertainty is causing extreme angst in my community. The properties of my constituents have been devalued. Banks are refusing to provide loans or refinance. My constituents are clearly and very legitimately aggrieved. I would like to thank those residents, in particular the Bullsbrook Residents and Ratepayers Association, which has advocated in such a measured and effective way over the years. Overwhelmingly, my constituents have been steadfast and resolute in how they have chosen to approach this issue, in the face of stonewalling and callous indifference from the federal government, and also, unfortunately, bullying and extreme harassment, and often unreasonable and at times outright menacing conduct from other quarters. I will never stand for that sort of behaviour or with anyone who perpetuates it.

Minister, we have been working for years now on a reticulated water solution. I have written to Hon Christian Porter, the Minister for Industry, Science and Technology, who absented the field long before his current difficulties, and to the former Minister for Defence, Linda Reynolds, a Western Australian Senator, who shamefully refused to respond—she refused to even reply or acknowledge my letter. I have been advocating for reticulated water on an ongoing basis. I know that the Minister for Water has put forward a solution to the Department of Defence for a project that is estimated to cost between \$7 million and \$9 million. I urge the minister to continue to support my community and advocate to the federal government for a solution.

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Water) [10.05 am]: I thank the member for Swan Hills for raising this grievance with me. It is indeed a very important issue. I want to thank her for the forceful way in which she has progressed this issue over the time that she has been in Parliament. The strength of the member's grievance this morning is a clear indication of the work that she has done on this issue.

Can I begin by providing the house with a bit of background about the PFAS contamination in the vicinity of RAAF Base Pearce in west Bullsbrook. For those unfamiliar with PFAS, it is a group of synthetic compounds that has been used widely since the 1950s to make products that will resist heat, stain, grease and water. The PFAS group of compounds is persistent in both the environment and the human body. That means that those compounds do not break down and can accumulate over time. There is evidence that exposure to PFAS can cause adverse human health effects.

PFAS contained in firefighting foam was used regularly at RAAF Base Pearce during firefighting drills from the 1970s through until 2004. In November 2018, as the member for Swan Hills has indicated, the Department of Defence completed an environmental investigation into the presence of PFAS on and in the vicinity of RAAF Base Pearce. This review found PFAS contamination at 26 private bores on nearby residential properties. Importantly, the residents of west Bullsbrook are in an area that is not connected to a reticulated water supply. The residents have previously relied on groundwater for all their watering needs—for drinking, cooking, cleaning and bathing. As the member for Swan Hills has pointed out, the PFAS pollution from the RAAF base has caused significant distress and financial impacts for the people of west Bullsbrook. As a government, we understand the concern that is causing. We are hearing stories of families who are concerned about the health of their children from coming into contact with PFAS contamination simply because of their basic human need for a safe water supply. The distress is sincere and deeply felt. The difficulties with property prices and the like that the member for Swan Hills talked about are clear.

As a state government, we accept and support the principle that the polluter should pay. It is the responsibility of the Department of Defence and the federal government to clean up the mess that they have created and to find a long-term solution for the impacted residents. As the member for Swan Hills has articulated, clearly the most logical and sensible solution would be to extend the reticulated water supply scheme to these properties. As the member has also outlined, there have been suggestions from the Department of Defence that other technologies be used. My understanding is that those technologies have not been successfully or extensively used anywhere else in the world. The most sensible long-term solution, based on what we currently know, would be to extend reticulated scheme water to all the affected residents—that is, not cherry-pick certain residents, but provide it to the whole community. By providing scheme water, families in the area will have peace of mind, knowing that when they turn on their taps, they are getting clean and safe drinking water supplied by a trusted supplier—the Water Corporation.

As far back as 2018, I wrote to the then Minister for Defence, Hon Christopher Pyne, urging the federal government to take responsibility for the issue and commence the work to connect these properties to scheme water. The Water Corporation has provided an estimate for the design and delivery of a scheme water expansion connecting properties in west Bullsbrook to mains water. The project would likely involve a two-kilometre water main extension from east Bullsbrook, constructing a localised reticulated network, installing service points and meters to 130 west Bullsbrook residents and reconfiguration of household plumbing to allow for mains connection. I am informed by the Water Corporation that the cost would be in the order of \$6 million to \$10 million. That is really a drop in the ocean when we look at the broader defence budget.

Estimates suggest that the project could be delivered in under a year. I am disappointed that three years after writing to Minister Pyne, the federal government has not yet delivered the appropriate solution. The member for Swan Hills mentioned some of the other people who have had their hands on this issue and not yet delivered. Senator Linda Reynolds is a Western Australian senator and, as the Minister for Defence, should have stepped up and dealt with this issue. Christian Porter, the current member for Pearce, really did nothing on this issue. He failed to deliver for his constituents. I just hope that the new federal member, Melissa Price, the current member for Durack, takes up this issue and delivers the result that residents deserve.

I can report that we recently received a letter from Hon Andrew Gee, the Minister for Veterans' Affairs, to the Premier dated 19 August this year. He talks about the Department of Defence wanting to engage with the Water Corporation on what a scheme might look like. There is no commitment in this letter to deliver or fund the scheme, just a request for further work to be done. I hope this is a glimmer of hope and that after all these years, the federal government will finally acknowledge its responsibilities and work with the state government to own up as the polluter in these circumstances and pay for reticulated water for the residents of west Bullsbrook. This is what they deserve and this is what the federal government should deliver.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

First Report — Annual Report 2020–21 — Tabling

MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda) [10.12 am]: I present for tabling the first report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission titled *Annual Report 2020–21*.

[See paper [466](#).]

Mr M. HUGHES: The 2020–21 annual report summarises the activities of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021. As members may be aware, the committee's role is to monitor and report on the exercise of the functions of the Corruption and Crime Commission

and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission; commence own motion inquiries relating to means by which corruption prevention practices may be enhanced within the public sector; and carry out functions under the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003.

During the reporting period, the committee held 11 deliberative meetings and nine formal evidence hearings, with 26 witnesses. The previous committee undertook one formal inquiry and tabled three reports during the reporting period. In the seventeenth report, tabled in November 2020, *Meaningful reform overdue: The Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*, the previous committee called on the government to undertake a comprehensive review of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act. In June 2021, the government announced that the Department of Justice had commenced a complete review of the act. Although, to date, the committee is not aware of details of this review, this development is encouraging.

I welcome Matthew Zilko, SC, the new Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission, to this role. He is the first new inspector appointed to this role since 2013. His office, the Corruption and Crime Commission, and its commissioner play a vital role in ensuring the integrity of the public sector for the benefit of all Western Australians.

In tabling this report, which covers a period of the work of the committee of the fortieth Parliament, I wish to acknowledge the work of its principal research officer, Ms Vanessa Beckingham, and her associate research officers, Ms Sylvia Wolf and Ms Lucy Roberts; and the work of the members of the committee of the fortieth Parliament—the chair, Margaret Quirk, MLA; the deputy chair, Hon Jim Chown, MLC; and Hon Alison Xamon, MLC. I look forward to working with members of the committee in this Parliament to progress the important work of the committee. I wish to express my deep appreciation for the support provided to the committee by principal research officer, Ms Suzanne Veletta, and her colleague, Ms Jovita Hogan.

Second Report — If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force — Tabling

MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda) [10.15 am]: I present for tabling the second report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission titled *If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force*.

[See paper [467](#).]

Mr M. HUGHES: Madam Acting Speaker (Ms M.M. Quirk), as you are well aware, this report repeats the 52 findings and 13 recommendations in the fifteenth report tabled by the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission of the last Parliament. I was a member of that committee. That report, like today's report, was titled *If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force*. The government did not have the opportunity to respond to the recommendations in the fifteenth report due to the prorogation of Parliament. The current Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission resolved to request a government response to the recommendations in this Parliament.

I take this opportunity to highlight issues raised in this report. Allegations of excessive use of force by members of the Western Australia Police Force—that is, using more force than is justified by law—are treated as allegations of serious misconduct and, as such, fall within the remit of the CCC to oversight or investigate. As members may be aware, the committee's role is to oversight how the CCC exercises its functions. The former committee examined how excessive use of force by police officers in Western Australia are either independently investigated by the CCC or how police internal investigations are oversights by the CCC. The former committee was interested in examining whether the CCC was providing consistent, accountable and effective oversight of the Western Australia Police Force and whether CCC oversight was sufficient. It is important to note that members of the Western Australia Police Force have around 2.2 million interactions with members of the public each year compared with, on average, around 400 allegations of excessive use of force. Around 12 per cent of all misconduct allegations made against members of the Western Australia Police Force relate to excessive use of force. However, the former committee found that the use of force reporting by the Western Australia Police Force does not always capture instances of excessive use of force.

The CCC refers most allegations of excessive use of force it receives back to the Western Australia Police Force to deal with and investigate. The CCC closely oversights only a small number of Western Australia Police Force investigations. An even smaller percentage of allegations are either independently investigated by the CCC or subject to a cooperative investigation between the CCC and the Western Australia Police Force. Since July 2015, the Corruption and Crime Commission has independently or cooperatively investigated around two per cent of excessive use of force allegations. The former committee was not convinced that the CCC complaints process is working as well as it could. In the experience of some complainants, the complaints process is circular, costly, inefficient and time-consuming. The former committee heard that in some circumstances, there is a lack of confidence in the complaints process while, in other instances, people who may have been subject to police excessive use of force did not make a complaint. The former committee was particularly troubled to learn that over the past two years,

the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia had a disinclination to contact the CCC about alleged incidents of excessive use of force and had referred only a handful of matters to the CCC because it had no confidence that the CCC would investigate the allegations. Peter Collins, the director of legal services for the Aboriginal Legal Service, advised the former committee —

In our experience ... the CCC is completely tone deaf when it comes to dealing with Aboriginal people and issues ...

The Aboriginal Legal Service gave evidence that it more often goes directly to the Western Australia Police Force with allegations of excessive use of force and that senior WA police personnel were more receptive to investigating allegations and working cooperatively to address them. The former committee noted that it would like to see the CCC give serious consideration to the systemic issues raised by the Aboriginal Legal Service, including the use of police dogs. The fifteenth report noted that the CCC's approach to assessing complaints had changed since 2015 when the CCC began to take a more targeted and strategic approach to carrying out its oversight functions across the public sector, including the Western Australia Police Force. Six strategic factors inform the CCC's decision-making about the allegations it receives, one of these being use of force.

The former committee was not convinced that the CCC's current method of assessment adequately prioritises police oversight. The view of the committee was that police oversight of excessive use of force allegations should be prioritised over and above other strategic themes. While it noted that the Western Australia Police Force had refined and improved internal oversight of excessive force allegations, it found that even if there were more robust internal police oversight, the CCC cannot abrogate its responsibility to oversee excessive use of force complaints. It said that oversight of misconduct and corruption within the WA Police Force should be seen as a core function and that the Western Australia Police Force was intended to be a particular priority for the CCC by virtue of its genesis in the Kennedy Royal Commission into Whether There Has Been Any Corrupt or Criminal Conduct by Western Australian Police Officers. As I noted in this house on the tabling of the fifteenth report on 24 September 2020, the CCC is no different from other agencies in that agency activity is subject to the prioritisation of resources. The Corruption and Crime Commissioner, Hon John McKechnie, has more than once talked about the difficulty of prioritising investigations with finite resources. As I said last year, it is important to understand that the balance between the allocation of CCC resources to police oversight as opposed to the resources allocated to its role as the anti-corruption body overseeing the rest of the public sector has long been a tension that has proved difficult to resolve. Also, as I said last year, it is a fact that the bulk of the CCC's oversight team is focused on police matters. In 2019, the CCC advised the former committee that, at that time, 75 per cent of the work of the oversight team was on police matters. Again, as I said last year, it is important to note that when the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003, as it is now known, was introduced in 2003, police oversight was not accorded any particular importance over and above public sector misconduct; thus, it is open to conclude that in accordance with the current act, the CCC has been fulfilling its function in accordance with the statutory role it was given.

The former committee was concerned about how many use of force allegations the police sent to police districts and divisions to investigate. Referring allegations to the district in which an incident has occurred can result in either real or perceived conflicts of interests and there may be limited specialised investigative skills available to undertake adequate investigations. The responsibility for imposing sanctions on WA Police Force members who have been found to have used excessive use of force rests with the Commissioner of Police. The committee found that there needs to be transparent and accessible publication of the outcomes of investigations into these allegations. In a positive development, the Western Australia Police Force advised that this will occur in the publication of its next annual report.

The report to which I am now referring contains a number of recommendations, including that the CCC should: refocus its efforts and current resources on police oversight primarily in line with what is arguably a key mandate; regularly interrogate Western Australia Police Force data to identify trends and analyse at-risk areas or officers; undertake regular audits of the Western Australia Police Force's IAPro system or internal policy systems to determine whether use of force incidents are being adequately reported and investigated; reconsider its prioritisation of complaints to ensure a renewed focus on the needs of Aboriginal people; consider whether conduct is accompanied by racist comments or conduct when assessing whether an allegation of excessive use of force meets its seriousness threshold; be proactive in investigating the systemic issues raised by the Aboriginal Legal Service; audit dog bite incidents to determine whether the use of force was justified and adequately reported to the Western Australia Police Force; and establish mechanisms to improve its engagement with Aboriginal people in Western Australia.

The report recommends that the Minister for Police and the Attorney General ensure that the Western Australia Police Force and the CCC publish statistics on their investigations into allegations of excessive use of force. Finally, the report recommends that the Attorney General should ensure that the Office of the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission is sufficiently resourced to provide services that are culturally appropriate and accessible to Aboriginal people and that any review of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act considers the prioritisation of police oversight in the legislation. This last recommendation is particularly relevant at this time because the government has announced that the Department of Justice is reviewing the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003. In 2012, concerns raised by the then parliamentary inspector prompted the then Joint Standing

Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission to also recommend a legislative amendment to mandate a particular focus on police oversight by the CCC. There may well have been some changes to policies or practices in this space since the tabling of the fifteenth report in September last year. For example, the CCC's final review of the Western Australia Police Force response to an incident in a police lock-up in a country town, which was tabled in this house on 17 June 2021, noted that in February 2021, the Western Australia Police Force informed the CCC that the police use of force policy had been amended whereby a use of force report is now required if bodily injury is identified by an officer or identified or claimed by the subject, regardless of whether medical care was received or declined by the subject.

Last year, when the fifteenth report was tabled, I said —

This report should encourage the CCC to reflect on the effectiveness of the active oversight approach and its interface with the WA police commissioner in ensuring complaints against the police are thoroughly investigated. It is timely for the CCC to review the processes and procedures in place to investigate complaints against the police for excessive use of force generally and particularly the level of confidence that Indigenous Western Australians have in the investigation of allegations of excessive use of force by the police against that section of the community. The CCC should hear the Aboriginal Legal Service's view that matters concerning excessive use of force by police against Aboriginal members of our community receive too little attention.

I look forward to receiving the government's response to the report that I tabled today. It is in the interests of all Western Australians to establish appropriate, independent and robust mechanisms to review incidents of excessive use of force by police.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION

First Report — City of Kalamunda Dogs Local Law 2021 — Tabling

MR G. BAKER (South Perth) [10.31 am]: I present for tabling the first report of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation titled *City of Kalamunda Dogs Local Law 2021*.

[See paper [468](#).]

Mr G. BAKER: The report I have just tabled advises the house of the committee's view that the City of Kalamunda did not follow the mandatory procedures prescribed in sections 3.12 and 3.13 of the Local Government Act 1995 when it made the City of Kalamunda Dogs Local Law 2021. In making the local law, the city breached section 3.12(4) by adopting a law that was significantly different from that proposed. Further, section 3.13 of the Local Government Act 1995 requires the city to recommence the local lawmaking procedures prescribed in section 3.12; however, the city failed to do so. In the committee's view the local law was made invalidly and consequently is not within the power granted by the empowering acts. The committee recommends the local law be disallowed. I commend the report to the house.

VETERINARY PRACTICE BILL 2021

First Reading

Bill read a first time, on motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Minister for Tourism)**.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Tourism) [10.34 am]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill will modernise the regulation of veterinary practice in Western Australia. It is now 60 years since the current act, the Veterinary Surgeons Act, was passed by the WA Parliament. Bringing it into line with current practices in other Australian jurisdictions and the modern-day economy is long overdue.

Veterinary and pet care services make an ever-increasing contribution to the WA economy. Australia has one of the highest proportions of pet ownership in the world. In 2018–19, Australian households spent over \$13 billion on their pets, with veterinary services contributing approximately \$4 billion to the economy.

Veterinary practitioners also play a vital role in providing livestock owners with animal health, welfare and production advice and by investigating, preventing, controlling and treating disease. They are an integral part of programs to detect and respond to significant animal disease incidents in Australia. These activities support and protect our valuable domestic and export markets. The gross value of agricultural production from the WA cattle industry is \$828 million, and from the sheep industry it is \$1.5 billion.

Commensurate with this growing consumer demand for veterinary services, the number of veterinarians in Western Australia has been steadily increasing in recent years, and from 2012 to September 2021 it has increased by 35 per cent. The number of veterinary schools in Australia has gone from four to seven in the past decade. A rapidly growing industry requires modern regulation, which this bill will deliver.

The bill will introduce the mutual recognition of veterinarians registered in other Australian jurisdictions. In 2006, a national recognition of veterinarians' scheme was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments' Primary Industries Ministerial Council, and in 2015, the Australian Productivity Commission recommended mutual recognition of veterinarians. The introduction of mutual recognition of veterinarians in the bill will bring Western Australia into line with the other Australian states and the ACT. Veterinarians registered interstate will be able to practise in Western Australia without Western Australian registration unless, and until, they move their principal place of residence to Western Australia for more than three months.

In response to deregulation initiatives in 1995, when national competition policy reforms lifted restrictions on the ownership of veterinary practices, the bill will allow non-veterinarians to own veterinary practices, bringing WA into line with all other Australian jurisdictions, except New South Wales. Consequently, non-veterinarians will be able to own and operate veterinary practices provided a registered veterinarian makes decisions relating to veterinary treatment and care.

The bill will also introduce the registration of Western Australian veterinary nurses, making Western Australia the first Australian jurisdiction to do so. This inclusion in the bill is supported by veterinary nurses and the veterinary community as a whole. It will lift the profile of veterinary nurses within the profession and will properly reflect the significant responsibilities that veterinary nurses discharge. Bringing veterinary nurses within the formal legislative framework of the bill will allow the new Veterinary Practice Board to better respond to concerns of unprofessional conduct or impairment relating to veterinary nurses.

There is evidence that veterinarians experience higher than average levels of depression, anxiety, stress and burnout compared with the general population. Contributing factors are said to include long working hours, personnel issues, poor work-life balance and compassion fatigue. The risk of these factors resulting in substance abuse may be increased by access to restricted veterinary drugs, which can detrimentally affect the ability of a veterinarian or a veterinary nurse to practise competently and safely.

The only option available to the current Veterinary Surgeons' Board of Western Australia for concerns about mental impairment of veterinarians under the current act is to refer the matter to the State Administrative Tribunal for the matter to be dealt with as a complaint. This can be extremely stressful and can exacerbate the impairment. The bill will enable the new board to deal with these impairments separately from unprofessional conduct matters. As such, the bill will allow a veterinarian or veterinary nurse suffering from an impairment to be dealt with in a much more sympathetic and constructive manner. For example, it may be sufficient to impose conditions on registration to permit the veterinarian or veterinary nurse to continue practising while also ensuring competent and safe outcomes.

A finding of impairment under the bill will not on its own attract punitive penalties. This will allow for support for the mental and physical health of veterinarians and veterinary nurses, while simultaneously reducing the risk of negative impacts for their clients. Importantly, impairment will fall within the provisions of the bill only if it detrimentally affects the veterinary practitioner's ability to practise veterinary medicine or to work as a veterinary nurse. An impairment that does not have this effect will not be dealt with under the bill.

The bill will allow the new board to make an immediate action order relating to a veterinarian or a veterinary nurse, if it is satisfied that there is an imminent risk of substantial injury or harm to any person, including the veterinarian or veterinary nurse, or to an animal. Immediate action orders will operate in these circumstances to restrict or prohibit veterinarians or veterinary nurses from practising for up to 28 days. Procedural fairness through a show-cause mechanism will be embedded in this process and the board's decision to make an immediate action order will be reviewable by the State Administrative Tribunal. Many Australian jurisdictions have legislated similar provisions, so this aspect will bring Western Australia into line with those jurisdictions.

The bill will return to the new board the power to deal with minor disciplinary matters. The current board lost that power in 2005, when SAT was established. Subsequently, the current board has had to refer all disciplinary matters to SAT. However, a report by the Standing Committee on Legislation in May 2009 concluded that the current board should regain the power to deal with minor disciplinary matters and to impose penalties such as a fine or a reprimand. In response, the bill will introduce a two-tier system of handling unprofessional conduct by veterinarians and veterinary nurses. The lower tier will be dealt with by the new board, while more serious conduct matters in the upper tier will be referred to SAT.

Another key feature of the bill is that it will increase membership of the new board from five to eight members. This will allow the inclusion of a veterinary nurse, as they will now be under the jurisdiction of the new board. It will also introduce consumer and legal representatives to ensure a balanced overview of matters before the new board. Although all members will be appointed by the minister responsible for administering the act, one veterinarian and a veterinary nurse appointee will be elected by the profession, and the minister must invite and consider recommendations by the profession's representative bodies when determining the appointment of veterinarians to the board. Appointment by the minister, or on the recommendation of the minister, is a characteristic shared in all Australian jurisdictions, and five out of seven jurisdictions have a community or consumer representative on the board.

I am confident that this bill and the framework it will establish will serve our state well as we meet the challenges of the next 15 to 20 years, and will help the veterinary profession continue to make a significant contribution to the Western Australian economy.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

FINANCE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (EMERGENCY RELIEF) BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from 8 September.

MR P. LILBURNE (Carine) [10.44 am]: I would like to continue my contribution in support of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. I was speaking about the events of 11 September 2001; we are approaching the twentieth anniversary of that event.

The collision caused a massive explosion that showered burning debris over surrounding buildings and onto the streets below. A total of 2 996 people were killed in the attacks, including the 19 hijackers aboard the four aeroplanes. Citizens of 78 countries died in New York, Washington DC and Pennsylvania. The Australian government declared that the attacks in New York City and Washington DC constituted an attack upon the United States within the meaning of articles 4 and 5 of the Australia, New Zealand and United States of America defence treaty, and fully justified the Australian government's commitment to support, within Australia's capabilities, US-led action against those it deemed responsible for those tragic attacks.

During my career in the Department for Child Protection, now known as the Department of Communities, I worked under legislation that protected Western Australians during times of state emergency. My roles at DCP were classified as district emergency services officer and local emergency services officer. In my district emergency services officer role, I oversaw preparations within the Midland, Kalamunda and Mirrabooka districts. In the event of an emergency, I was tasked with overseeing the establishment of emergency evacuation centres. I was also tasked with coordinating the Fire and Emergency Services Authority, the Western Australia Police Force, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and other agencies, at both federal and state levels.

Australia's ability to respond quickly is the critical component of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021, put forward by the Minister for Finance. The Western Australian Labor Party is determined to keep Western Australians safe, and this bill will continue to facilitate the COVID-19 relief the government considers necessary, as well as other measures, into the future. I commend the bill to the house.

MS E.J. KELSBIE (Warren–Blackwood) [10.47 am]: I rise to speak to the second reading debate on the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. Emergency services providers across my electorate of Warren–Blackwood, including a huge number of volunteers, help keep us and our environment safe. They are a huge part of the heart and soul of our communities. Our volunteers are frontline, dealing with distressing and sometimes volatile situations, including bushfires, floods, earthquakes and, now, COVID-19. These volunteers come from all areas of our communities: local business owners, teachers, tradies, scientists, kitchenhands and truck drivers. They help rebuild our communities, stronger than ever, in the face of hardship.

Whether it is bushfires, droughts, flooding or, more recently, the public health emergency of the COVID-19 global pandemic, unforeseen disasters occur when we least expect them, and often without warning. The Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 will be vital in helping to swiftly deliver financial relief to those in our regions affected by such disasters, and will help relieve the financial or economic impacts of declared emergencies.

The bill seeks to amend the Taxation Administration Act 2003 and the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, and will allow the Treasurer to declare the tax or grant relief measures considered necessary in the face of emergencies and disasters. The government requires flexibility to respond in a timely fashion to those who are affected in times of need. Amending the Taxation Administration Act 2003 and the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 will allow the Treasurer to do exactly that—declare the necessary tax or grant relief measures in record speed, ultimately minimising the anguish or stress felt by affected businesses and individuals at times of need.

This sense of loss, devastation and intense anguish was felt close to 10 years ago when blazing fires tore through picturesque Margaret River in the Warren–Blackwood region. On 23 November 2011, people in Margaret River woke to a clear blue day, but within days, 39 homes had been destroyed and damage had been done to 26 others. At the time, it was the second-highest number of houses lost in a single fire. Members of the community in that region have been piecing their lives back together in the years since and say that without the support of their community, they would not have made it through the testing times of the rebuilding.

In 2018, bushfires also threatened my friend and colleague the member for Albany's region and its surrounds. I can remember sitting at a home on one side of Frenchman Bay watching the hills on the other side of Frenchman Bay going up in flames. It was pretty scary to watch. At the same time, Peaceful Bay in my electorate, and Stirling Range

and Porongurup Range, were also under direct attack from fire. Homes, livestock and sheds were lost as well as 17 000 hectares of land burnt in the Porongurup area. Not only was the habitat burnt, but also many wildlife were injured. It was very distressing.

Recently in 2021, severe rains, winds and floods hit Albany, Denmark and surrounds, with disaster assistance provided to many in the community for flooded homes, farmland and community buildings, and lost livestock. Significant damage was caused to roads and the coast. Over 100 millimetres of rain was recorded; trees were felled and powerlines were down. Over 15 500 homes were affected. Major remediation works continue on the roads around Denmark, and at Ocean Beach to address the coastal erosion.

I give my heartfelt thanks to the emergency services workers and volunteers who support our communities. They save lives and also coordinate disaster relief so that we are able to get back on our feet swiftly. Their work is invaluable. I am proud to be part of the emergency response team as part of the Denmark Surf Life Saving Club. My role is one of communications. I help the team stay in touch with the families of those out on searches, working with police divers and other emergency service agencies. It is rewarding, but also stressful.

I offer my personal thanks to some of the emergency service providers, career and volunteer, across my electorate, including volunteers from 10 volunteer bushfire services in the Shire of Denmark—11 in Plantagenet; 10 in Bridgetown–Greenbushes; nine in Nannup; 25 across Manjimup; 12 in Donnybrook–Balingup; 10 in Augusta–Margaret River; and 16 in the lovely Boyup Brook. I thank also the marine rescue service volunteers from Denmark Volunteer Marine Rescue Group, with which I work closely; Walpole Volunteer Marine Rescue; Windy Harbour Volunteer Marine Rescue; Peaceful Bay Sea Rescue Group; Margaret River Volunteer Sea Rescue Group; and the Augusta Volunteer Marine and Rescue Group.

A huge number of volunteers are also part of the lifesaving services in Margaret River and Denmark, both with emergency response teams. I offer thanks to State Emergency Service volunteers from Bridgetown SES, Denmark SES, Gnowangerup SES, Manjimup SES, Mt Barker SES and Walpole SES. I personally have worked with the people from Denmark SES and they are absolutely outstanding in delivering those services to the local communities. I offer thanks also to our health service and volunteers across the WA Country Health Service and St John Ambulance. I thank the police services across the region. Recently with Minister Papalia, I met the officers at all the police stations in the south west of my electorate. They are doing an amazing job. That is not to forget the animal welfare volunteers who in times of crisis are there to rehouse and rehabilitate, as well as coordinate services, to ensure that not only our pets, but also our wildlife are looked after and supported.

As people who live in the regions know, community resource centres are imperative, and in times of crisis they are often the lynchpin, assisting to coordinate drop-off points for clothing, food and the like, and providing more broad support for people who may find themselves homeless. Passing this bill quickly will ensure the government can respond effectively and efficiently to emergencies in our state. Those affected by natural disaster or public health crises need any relief they can get, and they need it quickly. This bill will help limit anguish and concern in times already riddled with stress and trauma. A tax relief measure means a waiver of tax, a reduction in tax rate, an exemption from tax, or a deferral of the due date for lodging payroll tax returns, which members can imagine would be a huge support for those in a time of crisis. These amendments are important and include safeguards to ensure declarations can be used only in limited circumstances and tax relief can be declared only in connection with a state of emergency or an emergency situation declared under the Emergency Management Act 2005 or a public health state of emergency declared under the Public Health Act 2016. The Treasurer's declaration must be specific and must state and describe the relief measures that are to apply and articulate the period for which they apply. The declaration must also specify to whom the measures will apply.

The First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 will also be updated to allow the Treasurer to declare an increase to the grant or cap amount to alleviate the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. I bought my first house in Spearwood. We accessed a first home owner grant. Without it we would not have been able to step up onto the homebuyer ladder. I was pregnant at the time with my eldest, Amy. We moved into the house in the December, before she was born at the end of January 1997. I loved our home in Spearwood. It holds so many great memories. It is where my daughter Amy used to play in the backyard on a warm summer's evening. She had a swing in one of the backyard trees. She used to eat lemons from a neighbour's garden and play happily in her paddling pool. One of my favourite memories of my home in Spearwood is of my mum, who sadly passed away just before Amy turned three. Amy was in a high chair—a little one that sits on the ground—diving into an entire watermelon that my mum had bought her. She was covered in it. They both had the best day. Once she had finished scoffing the watermelon, we hosed her down. That is a memory that will always stay with me. But without the opportunity of that first home owner grant, I would not have those memories because we would not have had our own home.

Many people seek the financial support and assistance of first home owner grants. These amendments will allow the Treasurer to declare an increase to the grant to alleviate the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. To reiterate, the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 will enable the government to better support communities financially in a timely manner when faced with times of declared emergency. I commend the bill to the house.

MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.58 am]: I rise to speak in support of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. Like me, the member for Geraldton has also recently experienced a tragic, catastrophic event in her community, and this bill is very pertinent to us. We have just passed the six-month date from the Wooroloo bushfire. That underscores the importance of not just immediate relief that is provided to communities, but also the enduring supports that need to be provided to communities that have experienced disaster. The care, custodianship and support needs to last long after the sirens have gone, the dust has settled and the crack teams that were assembled have moved away. This bill facilitates forms of support that can be provided through the state government that are integral to recovery and response relief. I will briefly run through what this legislation will facilitate and, with your indulgence, Madam Acting Speaker, talk about the sorts of ongoing support that has been provided.

I have spoken on several occasions now about the incredible first response and the fabulous volunteer bush fire brigades and all the agencies that were right in the thick of it. However, many agencies are now contributing to the recovery effort and it is important to acknowledge their work. I think sometimes that people do not realise just what an effort is involved in rebuilding communities. Before I go into that, this Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill will amend the Taxation Administration Act and the First Home Owner Grant Act to allow the government to respond quickly to emergencies and will facilitate the Treasurer to declare tax relief measures that he or she considers are necessary to provide relief from the financial or economic effects of a declared emergency. Those measures could include a waiver or partial waiver of tax, a reduction in a tax rate, an exemption and a deferral of a requirement to lodge a payroll tax return, which can be invaluable to a business in a bit of strife. The powers can be declared only in response to a state of emergency, so they cannot be used willy-nilly; there needs to be a trigger. As I say, it will go some way towards supporting communities that experience disaster. Indeed, those communities require quite a lot of support, so I will take some time to, I suppose, acknowledge all the organisations that have been assisting my own community as we have recovered from the Wooroloo bushfires.

I sit on the state recovery coordination group partnership forum, which meets on a monthly basis and goes through every agency that has a touchpoint in this disaster. We all go through and give our perspectives on what we see in the community, what we perceive are needs, how we are working together, what we can do to assist one another and what enduring supports are required. As I say, I have acknowledged my fire brigades and indicated my deep eternal appreciation to them for their work and that of all the first responders who were present at the evacuation centres. The efforts of other agencies also require acknowledgement and today I indeed want to acknowledge them. The first person I want to acknowledge is Dr Ron Edwards, the State Recovery Controller. Ron was appointed in the aftermath of the fire, and ever since then he has been pulling us all together, advocating for my community and speaking with me at length about the sorts of support I can provide. He has been a mentor and guide to me. He has been a very willing ear when I have raised issues with him that I have considered need addressing. Indeed, we have worked hand in hand to support our communities. I am very grateful for his leadership; he really has done an absolutely fantastic job. Thank you, Ron. You do not know how much I appreciate all you have done.

Mr D.A. Templeman: He's a good man.

Ms J.J. SHAW: He really is, minister. Indeed, the minister and I bumped into him the other day. It was lovely to see him and his wife taking a well-earned couple of days out. It is remarkable—they were back in the saddle yesterday for our state recovery coordination group partnership forum meeting. As I said, it is convened every month by Dr Edwards. He has been fabulous.

The Western Australia Police Force was also involved, immediately managing the roadblocks and ensuring that the community felt safe. I will come back to the work the Minderoo Foundation has been doing. I acknowledge the Department of Communities, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. The community recovery support officers of the Shire of Mundaring and the City of Swan have been amazing as, obviously, has the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. Disaster Relief Australia is a really interesting organisation. I first met its people immediately after the fire who were flown in to provide some support, given its incredible efforts in response to bushfires on the east coast. It has recruited a whole series of volunteers as part of DRA. The efforts it has undertaken to assist the communities to recover have been amazing. In fact, my old next-door neighbour, as it turns out, is now working for DRA. He has been coordinating the drone program. It facilitated the recovery effort and the review of the state of properties through drone surveillance, which has considerably fast-tracked the assessment of fire damage and has helped to coordinate recovery efforts. DRA has done a great job.

The Housing Industry Association has been right in there. I wrote to it when it became apparent that we were facing tradesmen shortages and said to the Housing Industry Association and the Master Builders Association that we would really struggle to secure trades to rebuild homes. I asked them to advocate to their members. Everybody knows we are in a bit of a building boom at the moment. My folk in Gidgegannup in particular, where there has been a very significant loss of properties, could do with the HIA and the Master Builders Association encouraging their members to prioritise the reconstruction of homes in the Perth hills. I certainly thank the Housing Industry Association and the Construction Training Fund, which has come to the party to see what can be done to promote

the building trades' support for the recovery efforts. The Insurance Council of Australia has also been involved. I will say that in the early days, there were some real issues around insurance. I am aware that about \$93 million worth of damage has resulted in 1 039 claims being received by insurers associated with the Wooroloo fires. Seven hundred and seven of those claims have been closed, which is about 65 per cent; 385 claims remain open; and 30 are going through a dispute process. It has been good to see that although there were hiccups to begin with, the insurers have largely been fantastic in supporting the community. In fact, I was evacuated myself; the fire got to the boundary of my neighbour's property and when I went to the evacuation centre, pretty much the next morning insurance companies were there with teams available helping people to navigate through their claims and the Insurance Council of Australia was there. It was great to see the support provided by the Insurance Council and the insurance companies themselves.

The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage was also there assisting people to understand the planning requirements that will apply as indeed were the staff of the shires and the City of Swan. The Business Council of Australia was there too to understand what can be done to support small businesses that had difficulties, particularly those that lost tools and other equipment they needed to do their jobs. We do not think through the implications of these sorts of events on communities and small businesses. All these organisations now have these enduring touchpoints with community.

Western Power came to the party and in a remarkable way rebuilt the electricity network that had been decimated throughout Wooroloo and Gidgegannup. Where it was economic to do so, it replaced some of the distribution network with microgrids, which, of course, is very dear to my heart and certainly something I have been advocating for, particularly in Gidgegannup. It was really pleasing to see that Western Power does not just talk the talk; it walks the walk. Where the opportunities were presented to roll out sustainable affordable microgrid technologies, it did so. It was great to see the innovation there.

The Department of Health was there assessing water. People do not think about water running off rooftops into water tanks. Where planes have been over and dumped fire retardant, it can present issues for the safety of water supply, so the Department of Health and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation were involved in that, so our thanks go to them. The City of Perth was right there with the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund. It participated in every meeting and talked about how it could quickly get funding into the Gidgegannup and Wooroloo communities. In fact, its rapid-response grant of \$25 000 got into the pockets of property owners out there with lightning speed. People were genuinely in severe distress, thinking, "What on earth are we going to be able to do?", and \$25 000 was given straight to them to determine what sorts of emergency accommodation relief would be most appropriate for their circumstances. They were able to make those decisions and certainly I am very grateful to the City of Perth for the administration of that fund. One of the things people were very worried about when we were undertaking fundraising efforts in the community was whether the money would get right where it needed to be. We have heard that in response to other disasters funding has come in but has not necessarily gone to the front line, instead being absorbed by the overheads. The City of Perth came to the party and said that every dollar donated to the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund would get to the people concerned. The City of Perth absorbed the administration and overhead costs of running the fund, and we are deeply grateful. That support has endured and the vast majority of that funding has now been dispensed into the community. I hope that the people of Western Australia, who are so remarkably generous in their support, take great comfort in knowing that every dollar that they donated has gone directly to the people who need it most. That is something that we should be very grateful for.

The Mental Health Commission has been right in there, monitoring the ongoing mental health impacts of a disaster like this on my community and providing ongoing support and counselling. The Department of Communities and the Red Cross have been involved in these enduring supports that are required. The Small Business Development Corporation has been talking to small businesses about how they can recover and pivot, and how it can assist them to rebuild. The Australian Defence Force is on this working group, and has looked at what sort of logistical support it could provide in the immediate aftermath and all the way through the recovery and rebuilding process. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is in there looking after the animal husbandry elements. Tragically, a lot of horses, cows and sheep were affected and it sometimes took some time to identify where the need was. DPIRD was right in there. WA Wildlife is looking after our native fauna as well, and with the Australian Veterinary Association responded by establishing the state's very first animal bushfire emergency centre out at Mundaring oval. I visited that centre and it was absolutely fantastic. In terms of ongoing guidance and support, as we have understood more deeply the impacts on domestic livestock, our pets and our native fauna, the Australian Veterinary Association has been right there. The Western Australian Local Government Association is part of this recovery group. A remarkable enduring effort is required to assist a community through a disaster, far beyond the supports outlined in this bill, which I absolutely welcome, but we need to put on the public record just what remarkable work has been done in an enduring fashion.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms J.J. SHAW: I want to talk through how the recovery effort is going after the Wooroloo bushfires, because remarkable progress has been made in the last six months. I want to give a shout-out to a few individuals who have

gone above and beyond. I want to give everybody an update, because, as I said, it is not just about the immediate response. The Wooroloo Bushfire Coordinated Residential Clean-up Program is close to completion. Of the properties registered with the scheme, 98 per cent, or 132 of the 135 registered properties, have now been cleared. That is a remarkable effort. I know it has been a frustrating and traumatic process, but I have spoken to people who are involved in the recovery on the east coast. When we compare what is happening there with what we are seeing in response to the Wooroloo fires, the amount of work that has gone on here has been incredible. I commend everybody who has been involved in the residential clean-up program. I thank them as well for the sensitivity with which they have handled the clean-up program. Minister Whitby and I visited Cherry Alford, who lost her property in Gidgegannup. I have visited a lot of people's properties in Gidgegannup, but I will not name them, because they are going through some quite traumatic experiences. Whenever contractors have come on site, they have been remarkably sensitive. They will sift through the debris on the properties, and when they find tea cups or little china trinkets, they collect them and then walk the owners through the property and present them with stuff. They have been remarkably sensitive and compassionate. I have heard nothing but high praise from all the residents who have worked with the clean-up organisations. I want to thank them for their sensitivity and compassion. No doubt, as I have, they have also spoken to people and had to give a sympathetic ear to some really quite tragic stories from people who have lost lifetimes of valuables and who wake up every day and see the devastation of their properties. I know the clean-up folk have been remarkably compassionate. I want to sincerely thank them.

I want to acknowledge our amazing local recovery staff from the City of Swan and the Shire of Mundaring who have led the community effort in recovery. They have been the touchpoints for people in the Shire of Mundaring and the City of Swan. They have gone above and beyond by helping to draw all these different agencies together, identify needs and deploy resources. I want to particularly acknowledge Adrian Dyson, Karen White and Karen Dore at the Shire of Mundaring, and Heath Stenton, Ian Robinson and Telia Reilly at the City of Swan. They have been welcoming, friendly and familiar. They really brought people together. They have attended community events and provided emotional support. They have been buoyant, supportive, compassionate and sympathetic. I want to thank them for their remarkable efforts. I acknowledge them and put on the record the gratitude that we feel. I also acknowledge the 25 organisations and agencies that attended the evacuation centres that were set up in response to the Wooroloo fires. There were a lot of charities and community groups. It was like a village sprang up overnight in Swan View. As I said, I was there and those agencies were remarkable. Nothing was too much trouble. It was just absolutely remarkable.

The process of recovery goes on. I want to quickly outline the support services that are being provided. A lot of social supports are required. Both individuals and families need access to recovery and support services. There is an ongoing need for the monitoring of people's mental health and wellbeing. Certain people have reached out and sought quite specific counselling help, and in response to that need, funding of about \$1.5 million was delivered to the Wooroloo bushfire community recovery and outreach program by the Department of Communities. I thank the Minister for Community Services, who is sitting in front of me. Her staff have been outstanding. I want to express my gratitude to her team in their purple shirts. They are always at community events and are absolutely fantastic. We did not realise what a bow wave of evacuees we were going to deal with. I was on the phone with the minister, and within half an hour another evacuation centre was being set up; her staff were remarkable. I want to thank the minister and her agencies for their support during the fires. Of course, the City of Swan, Shire of Mundaring and Red Cross have also been involved in the Wooroloo bushfire community recovery and outreach program. That program has funded five community recovery officers and a whole heap of activities to facilitate positive community connections, such as morning teas, dinners, community recovery seminars, outreach events and quiz nights, involving a whole heap of agencies. They are great fun. It has been lovely to see what an opportunity that has created for people who live in Gidgegannup and Wooroloo who had never met one another before to come together. It has been a great privilege to have been part of those events and see community building in real time.

I was a little worried when I saw the impacts of the bushfires and spoke to people over east about how they had managed the recovery efforts. People told me to brace myself, because in six months' time, many people would not come back and most people would leave. They said that people see the devastation, cannot face the idea of rebuilding their homes and decide it is easier to sell their property and leave. In Gidgegannup and Wooroloo, some people have made that choice. Of course I understand that, but when I have talked to people and asked how it is all going, everyone says, "We love the community here. We want to stay." I was particularly a little worried about Gidgegannup Primary School. We have a cracking little primary school up there. The principal, Michael Kovalevs, is a wonderful principal. I said to him, "How's it all going? Are you seeing kids leaving? Are you seeing families go?", and he said, "No; they're staying." The board chair of Gidgegannup Primary School, Maureen, lost her home in the fires. I can tell members that she is an amazing, stoic and resilient woman. Even though her home had been devastated, she wanted to stay to support that school community and make sure those kids are all right.

It was interesting. For the kids in particular, the fires happened, and there was obviously a lot of upheaval for those children, but then the school term started and the kids could all go back to school and be with their friends again. However, it was then school holidays, a fair time after the fires, and the kids were home all day. For those families who had been relocated to their properties in the Minderoo pods—again, my gratitude to Minderoo Foundation

for the 42 pods that have been deployed onto properties throughout Gidgegannup—those kids were home and wanted to run around in the bushland, as we do in the hills. Kids can get out on their quad bikes and go feral, and that is part of the reason that we love the hills lifestyle. However, all of a sudden, the kids were in this nuclear zone of absolute devastation. The kids had come home to that, and their parents were seeing that every day. I know that has put strain on the school community. However, through the support that has been provided through the Department of Education and the various agencies associated with counselling for school communities, we have not seen an exodus of people despite that hardship. That is because of the community spirit in Gidgegannup. It is because of the support that has been provided by these agencies. I am so pleased that so many people have stuck it out.

Red Cross has been amazing. People from Red Cross even doorknocked my house to make sure that I was all right, because I was in the red zone and had been evacuated. They doorknocked all the homes in the whole red zone of the Woorloo fires, including the areas that had not had any property damage. Red Cross is providing incredible support. As recently as 14 August, Red Cross hosted training for recovery staff and volunteers covering practical aspects of community recovery, such as psychological first aid. These are, again, long-term supports that are provided and that are needed in communities as they recover.

The natural environment is an interesting one. Obviously, we have beautiful forests all the way through the hills. That is part of the reason that we love living there. There is a hyper-consciousness in my community from those who have seen destruction in their properties about not only rebuilding their homes, but also recovering their properties in an environmentally sustainable and sensible way that is sympathetic to the natural environment and seeks to reinstate the flora and fauna species that existed previously, control weeds, and look for nesting sites for the birds that have lost their homes. In fact, at one of the Gidgegannup dinners that I attended, we heard from Simon Cherriman. If members ever have an opportunity, they should hear one of Simon's presentations about his work with wedge-tailed eagles. He gave a remarkable presentation about the impacts on our wedge-tail eagle population right through the Woorloo fires footprint, and the proactive steps that people can take to redesign their properties to encourage the wildlife to recover. Indeed, planting days are going on, and nurseries are donating seedlings for property recovery. There is enduring support, work that will take years—decades—but that we should be supporting on an ongoing basis.

Speaking of landscaping and environment planning, on Saturday 31 July, I went to a community bushfire-prone landscaping forum, along with Hon Lorna Harper from the other place, and our amazing candidate for the federal seat of Hasluck, Tania Lawrence. Tania is a hills local. She lives in Mundaring. She is a member of a community that also faces bushfire risk. She was very keen to come with me to that forum. There was a whole heap of local community and industry leaders, and television personalities, looking at how to establish sustainable properties, fire-wise gardens, and fauna and habitat rehabilitation. A range of forums were delivered. One was called "How to know, feel and heal country". That was all about: What does our ecosystem look like across the hills? How can we rebuild our ecosystem? How can we be sensitive to the history of the place, not only the western history but also the tens of thousands of years of Aboriginal history in that place? There were forums on sustainable gardening, and on designing and creating a fire-wise property. In fact, tomorrow I will be meeting Chris Ferreira, who delivered that forum.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

Ms J.J. SHAW: Chris is great, yes. Chris and I have worked a lot on fire-wise property design. He will be popping in tomorrow to have a chat about more work that we are doing on fire-wise property design. There are some really tricky aspects as well. Seminars were presented on bushfire property standards. The City of Swan and Shire of Mundaring now both have dedicated resources available to help people understand bushfire attack level implications on their home designs if they want to rebuild. It is practical advice. It costs a lot. It is now available to people affected in the hills for free, and will provide long-term enduring support in the aftermath that will have a significant impact on helping my community to recover.

One final thing I will mention—because there is a chance that someone might watch this speech!—is that I want to thank the Minister for Fire and Emergency Services for his support, and in particular for engaging with me and my constituents and providing me with every support through his office as we have tackled the recovery effort. People should be aware that the terms of reference for the independent bushfire inquiry have been announced. I strongly encourage community members to prepare submissions into that process. I have gone around the traps quite a bit and have met with most of the bush fire brigades in my electorate as part of the debrief process. I have also taken meetings with individual firefighters, first responders, property owners, council employees and not-for-profit organisations, who have all given me their views. Some of them do not feel comfortable about making submissions in their own right. I am preparing a submission that I will be putting into the independent inquiry. I will be very happy to do what I can to assist people to put their viewpoints forward into that process. I can anonymise feedback. We need to learn from this as a community and as a state government. Please feel free to contact my office for any assistance.

On that comment, finally, Lynn Grierson in my office retired recently. She was an absolutely outstanding staff member. She was the point person in my office bringing all this together. That placed her under remarkable stress. She was absolutely amazing in the support she gave me and the support she gave my constituents. I congratulate her on her retirement and thank her for the efforts that she went to in helping my community through the Woorloo fires. I commend the bill to the house.

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [11.28 am]: This is my first opportunity to speak on the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021, a bill that has been brought into the house by a very good friend of mine, the Minister for Finance. It is a great pleasure to have an opportunity to put some words into this discussion. I will not be long, but I wish to raise a few points on this bill so that it will be part of the *Hansard* record. The Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill will allow the state Treasurer to declare tax or grant relief measures considered necessary to relieve the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency.

Can I say at the start that not only is this a bill that I am very proud to speak to, and one that was brought into the house by a friend of mine, it also a bill that really demonstrates what a Labor government is all about. It is all about supporting the most vulnerable in the most difficult circumstances. I am very proud to be part of this Labor government, which has brought so many innovations forward and continues to do so. I look forward to the budget being brought down this afternoon. We have already heard about the inclusion of social housing commitments, which have been a long time coming in my view. I sat through years of the Liberal–National government, which did very little in this area. I am so proud that we are now seeing such a significant commitment from the McGowan Labor government into proper social housing that is co-designed and well developed and will hopefully address some of the incredible need. I have spoken about homelessness in this place for many years. People understand the plight of the homeless in our state. Vulnerability and social exclusion are two incredibly difficult and complex problems in our society. They are increasing; they are not going away. As a developed country, we should be ashamed of the plight of the homeless in our state. The package of housing commitments in the budget is remarkable and timely. I am very proud that this Labor government has made that commitment.

I return to the finance legislation amendment bill. It is all about emergency relief for people who are finding it very tough because of circumstances that more often than not are completely out of their control. Passing this bill quickly will ensure that the McGowan government can provide further COVID-19 relief as it considers necessary or, similarly, we could give tax or grant relief in response to state emergencies. Over my lifetime, emergencies in this state have pretty much been restricted to bushfires, cyclones or damage caused by wind. A big hailstorm also caused damage some years ago. The emergence of a pandemic has changed all of our lives. Like me, I assume that it has changed everyone’s opinion about what constitutes an emergency and what is required legislatively by the leadership in a community to make significant contributions towards not only addressing an emergency situation, but also working on the ground with individuals to see them through very difficult times.

I want to talk briefly about some of the emergencies that we have seen in this state, since I have been in this house anyway. I recall the Roleystone fires that occurred some years ago, which were devastating for many people in the Perth hills. They created havoc and took away the livelihoods and homes of many residents. The minister who brought this bill to the house would remember them because they were in his electorate. We learnt from those fires. Independent reports were written, which were handed down before our time in government. I hope that some of the lessons were carried forward.

Back in January 2014, I was very closely involved in the response to the Parkerville fires. Within 10 years, we had another state disaster. The Parkerville fires took away 57 homes from residents in the Perth hills. Some of them were owned by friends of mine. I particularly want to mention Paul and Alanna Randles-Freeman, who lost their home in the January 2014 bushfires. I remember distinctly pulling out onto Great Eastern Highway on the morning of those fires, looking to the left up the highway and seeing an immense mushroom cloud forming. I said to the friend who was in the car with me, “I don’t think that’s a good sign. I think we might just go back to the property in Mundaring that I own and keep an eye on things”, and we did. Not long after that—about two hours later—Alanna, my friend, arrived with her horse float full of ponies, dogs, a cat, chickens and a whole bunch of other stuff. She arrived on my doorstep because people who live in fire-prone areas have a network and they are ready to respond quickly if their friends need help. When she arrived—she did not have her children with her; she sent them off in a different direction in the spare vehicle—she was very concerned to get her animals to safety, assuming that her children would be safe. Her horses stayed with me for a couple of months, but she was able to take her dogs and the cat back home fairly quickly. Watching the process that then ensued when people had lost their properties was coloured for me on a drive through a fire-prone area after a bushfire. We see a level of bushfire that is breathtaking in its complete annihilation of everything that we are used to seeing as trees, grass, plants and animals—everything is gone. It is just black and white and horrible. To see friends’ houses reduced to that level as well, again, is dreadful.

As a result of that fire, 57 properties were lost and 1 000 acres were burnt out. It was a truly dreadful situation. I should point out that there was very little coordination or response for the animals that were caught up in the Parkerville fires. I remember Alanna and Paul getting home and having no access to water and power. They found it very difficult to get out of what was left of their home to get diesel to put in the generator because of the police roadblocks. I want to pick up on that point in a minute.

I would like to bring members forward to something that the member for Swan Hills spoke about in detail—the Wooroloo fires. After the Parkerville fires, independent reports put forward a number of suggestions, some of which the government took on board. I want to draw members’ attention to the fact that after a major emergency bushfire, a report is done, and we should learn from it. The subject of roadblocks is a vexing one. I want to talk about that

in relation to not only Roleystone and Parkerville, but also Wooroloo. In relation to Wooroloo, some friends of mine were quoted in an article that was published in one of the local papers several months ago, and also in the *Countryman*, talking about the Wooroloo fires. They were in the direct line of the fires on 1 February. I will paraphrase the article that appeared in the newspaper. I ask members to indulge me while I scroll through the article on my telephone. This couple was in the direct line of fire on 1 February. They stayed at home and managed to save it, although it suffered substantial damage, including two caravans, excavators and other equipment. Their business is home based, and a lot of that was taken out. Four of their close neighbours lost their homes, and the whole experience was incredibly scary. When they tried to get access to things like diesel so they could run their generator, they were told that they could not get through roadblocks to get hold of that diesel. There was no relief for them in terms of having firefighting pumps on or anything like that because they simply ran out of petrol. Members may remember that the fire went on for several days. They needed to respond to that threat level over several days. They needed to keep the generators going, but they could not get out because they were not allowed to cross the roadblocks.

I turn to the recommendations in the Ferguson report—the big inquiry into the Waroona–Yarloop fires that happened some time ago. The first lines of chapter 12 are about traffic management, and state —

During the course of the Special Inquiry the single most common complaint was around the operation of Vehicle Control Points ... People already traumatised by the damage the fire had caused, were obstructed from returning to their homes to start to deal with the stock and property losses.

Others were thwarted from carrying out their livelihood.

Recommendation 14 at the end of that chapter states —

The State Emergency Management Committee to review the policy for traffic management at emergency incidents so it reflects national ‘best practice’. This includes the production and issuing of an aide-memoire to guide traffic management, emergency and incident management personnel.

The policy should provide a practical balance between risk to life and the public value of enabling the timely restoration of livelihoods and the movement of critical resources, (including essential services, critical business and livestock welfare services), through traffic management points.

That does not appear to have been the case from the evidence of those who were on the ground during the Wooroloo fires. It clearly shows that we still have a way to go in this area. I encourage the Minister for Emergency Services and the agencies involved in an emergency response to look closely at chapter 12 of the Ferguson report and ensure that, after consultation with the people who were on the ground and have been through the experience, that we respond in a timely way. Having personally been through a bushfire—it did not take out my property but burnt around the sides of it—and then being refused entry to my property, which was about two kilometres away, I am totally aware of the stress levels of not being able to access my home. This stress is particularly heightened by bunches of gawking people, who drive to the end of the road that you live on, park their car and block your way because they want to have a look at the fire. I understand that human nature is a complex thing, but when there are so many people in the way and all you can think about is trying to get home to save the creatures that you care about and are responsible for or to help the people who live on a property, it is very stressful. I urge the government to fully implement chapter 12 of the Ferguson report in consultation with the people who have a lived experience in this area.

Perhaps on a more positive note, one of the great highlights in the State Emergency Management Committee’s advances in dealing with bushfire emergencies was when Dr Garnett Hall led the Animal Emergency Response Group to attend the Mundaring and Wooroloo fires. Like my friend the member for Swan Hills, I was delighted to visit the area to see the tens of veterinarians, tens of veterinary nurses and the many rescue and emergency care groups that arrived to help. These groups all needed coordinating. Since I have been in this role, there have been four bushfires for which I have received a barrage of offers to help. I am sure that members would understand, given my work in animal welfare has made me, I suppose, the go-to person on a lot of these issues, that people from all over the world in some cases have phoned and said, “How can we help?”, “What can we do?”, “How can we donate?” It is easy to refer them to the Lord Mayor’s Distress Relief Fund, but many people want to make a specific donation to help injured animals. It was a source of concern that there was no coordination of this stuff. For example, some practitioners wanted to make available some veterinary medicines to help the wounded animals, but because of some of the legal restrictions in place in Western Australia, if those medicines are not prescribed and do not go through the correct channels—for obvious reasons, of course—they cannot be passed on in an emergency situation. We need to look at how we can free up those things, because there are often cases in which medicines are on the borderline of being out of date or are just out of date, but bandages and things like that can, of course, still be used. We need a better and more streamlined approach.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: Watching people from the Animal Emergency Response Group work on the ground was a joy to behold despite the stressful circumstances. Once they were allowed in, they walked the bush and picked up injured

animals. They took them back to their centre and treated them for burns. A lot of farming and companion animals on people's properties were in great pain. The owners of the properties were not allowed to go to their homes, but the vets, nurses and emergency helpers, through careful management, were able to find these animals and very often put them out of misery by euthanising them. Euthanising injured animals is a complex issue because nobody can just walk onto a property and euthanise a creature; they need the right permission to do that. Horses are often worth what their owners think they are worth. From my understanding having worked with horses, some of them are worth hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not more, so letting somebody onto a property to let them to make the call about whether an injured horse needs to be euthanised is a pretty tall order when we are talking about a quarter of a million dollars' worth of horse flesh. It is a pretty tall order to take that on, so the right checks and balances need to be in place. Of course, a severely injured horse needs to be put out of any pain and suffering, but we need clear lines of accountability and responsibility so that vets can do their work, animal owners can be confident that their animals are being properly treated and there is no inherent liability involved for anyone who is just trying to do the right thing.

I got a message back from my colleague Dr Garnett Hall, who led the response, which was the first such response of its kind in Western Australia. I very much congratulate the State Emergency Management Committee for its work in this area because what we actually saw on the ground was remarkable. Another thing that is well worth commenting on is that I have been in many discussions over a long period with the Minister for Community Services about Communities' response to companion animals in emergency situations. The department previously had quite an unrealistic response and said that people could not take their companion animals to a shelter during an emergency situation. People in other countries and other states of Australia have died because of that rule. If I had to leave for an evacuation centre during an emergency and I was told that I could not take my companion animal, there is no way that I would go. The Department of Communities has shifted its position and now has a twenty-first century view about the role that companion animals play in many people's lives. Its policy is to now allow some animals to be taken to shelters if they are properly managed. Not everybody has a pet guinea pig, dog or cat. Some people keep snakes and all sort of things for pets and we probably do not want them running or slithering around unsupervised in an evacuation centre! But given the right conditions, companion animals should be allowed to be evacuated with their families.

One of the lessons that I have been asked to pass on from volunteers and those from the Animal Emergency Response Group is the need to practise how to do this. It is not complicated. If we were to offer a fast emergency response, it would require some forward planning. I would like to call on the relevant authorities to put some annual planning together, and some training, that brings all agencies to the table and on the ground practically working out how these emergency animal response centres can be run more effectively. There are policies—I have mentioned one—about how to dispose of an injured animal without incurring any liability. There is a structure and there are policies and equipment, all of which needs to be brought together in a more coherent fashion. We are at the gates, we are ready to start, but we need a bit more focus on this. I ask all those involved to do some strategic planning every year, and some training, for the agencies to make sure that they can deliver this kind of service promptly and effectively.

Another thing I will mention from that experience is that the vets also requested that I consider whether the government should look at phasing out the branding of horses and replacing it with microchipping. It seems that in order to try to identify where horses live and where they came from, microchipping is a much faster and more effective way to do that because the vet can just run handheld equipment over the animal and find out where its home is. Branding does not work like that. Horses are branded when they are very young. Horses may have changed owners three, four or five times since they were branded. A microchip is current and can be updated. It is a far more effective way of tracing horses and making sure that they are being properly cared for, and being able to reunite them with their correct owners in times of emergency. I put that out there. I would really like the government to look at microchipping all horses. I am sure that my industry, the equestrian industry, would look at it favourably. I will be more than happy to work on that in the future.

Before I finish mentioning the emergency animal response centre that was set up in Mundaring, I should recognise the Shire of Mundaring and the wonderful staff from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, along with the City of Swan, for setting up the centre and organising for Garnett, the vet, and others to come along. They did an amazing job. I thank them so much on behalf of the many people and animals who were affected by the Wooroloo fires. They set up three animal feed distribution centres. Another huge issue in this kind of emergency is how to get food and water to animals that are suffering, or have not had access to food and water for several days. They set up three stations: one each at Chidlow and Gidgegannup; I cannot remember where the third one was—maybe it was Stoneville. The three centres took in food donations and allowed them to be distributed across the fire zone. They did an amazing job in my view. I am very thankful to the City of Swan, the Shire of Mundaring and the DPIRD staff. I met some of the DPIRD staff when I was at the evacuation centre. They are amazing and committed individuals. It was heartening to see their commitment. Of course they were there Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. They staffed that centre around the clock to make sure that the animals that came in were properly cared for. I thank all the wildlife rescue groups that were involved in that effort for their remarkable work. Thank you so much.

I am sorry, but my next topic has nothing to do with the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021! We have just come out of the Olympics. Before I sit down, and I promise to be very quick, I want to recognise the work of the Australian Paralympics team and just say how inspirational and remarkable all of those elite athletes are. For those interested, it was the twenty-fifth anniversary of the introduction of para-equestrian events at the Paralympic Games. For those members who do not know, the word “Paralympics” is short for “parallel Olympics”. I ask members to remember that. It is not about a disability; it is about a parallel Olympics. I also put on the record that all four Australian riders, for the first time ever, finished in the top 10 for their respective grades. It was the very first time that Australia had achieved this. It is only the twenty-fifth anniversary, and Australia is still young in this field because we did not come on board with a para-equestrian team until quite recently.

I recognise the incredible work of Western Australian Sharon Jarvis from the iconic Donnybrook. Sharon has represented Australia a record three times in the Paralympics, including Beijing in 2008 and Rio in 2016. Sharon Jarvis and her horse Romanos did an amazing job for us. I am so proud to call her a friend. The work that she does is remarkable. I also recognise Amelia White and her beautiful international horse Genius. Amelia is based in Europe, not in Australia. She did an amazing job. She is someone to watch in the future. Amelia is an incredible elite athlete. Victoria Davies and her beautiful PRE—pura raza espanola—chunky boy Celere, was one of the hot-ticket items for the television cameras at the Games! He is a very good looking stallion; a beautiful boy.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Do you think the “neighs” should have it!

Ms L.L. BAKER: I think the “neighs” had it, well and truly!

Finally, I acknowledge Emma Booth. It was Emma’s second Paralympics. She also rode for Australia in Rio in 2016. Her horse Zidane, and Sharon’s horse Romanos, are both retiring; as is Sharon, I might add. We are looking for some new para-equestrian athletes to take us through to Paris. I have just been announced as a member of the national high performance panel for the para-equestrian discipline. I am very proud to be part of preparing for Paris 2024. Elite athletes and their horses train every day, every week of every month, to achieve this outcome for Australia. Thank you for your persistence, commitment and dedication. I thank all of those athletes and their wonderful horses for the work that they have done to really put Australia on the international map. I look forward to working with my colleagues Danielle Fraillon, Sally Francis and Anna Muldoon, with support from Stef Maraun, on the national high performance panel to move the para-equestrian discipline forward on the international stage and see Australia go from strength to strength into the future.

MR S.J. PRICE (Forresterfield — Deputy Speaker) [11.57 am]: I, too, would like to start by congratulating our Paralympic team on the wonderful Paralympics they have just completed. I certainly look forward to hearing about some of the para-equestrians the member for Maylands just spoke about in the future. It was wonderful to hear.

It gives me great pleasure to stand in support of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. I would like to acknowledge the great work of the Minister for Finance in ensuring that this bill came to the house as quickly as it did. We are in strange times. I often wonder what future members of Parliament will think when they look at some of the legislation we have had to pass over the last 18 months because of the really unusual situation we find ourselves in, in dealing with a global pandemic. Who would ever have thought that this emergency would take the shape of a global pandemic in the form of the COVID-19 outbreak that we have seen over the last couple of years now, and still with a long time to run. We are quite familiar with dealing with other emergencies. Cyclones have been a fairly constant part of life in WA, depending on where people live. More recently, cyclone Seroja came further south than any other cyclone that we have experienced in WA. Cyclones have normally been confined to the Pilbara. A change in weather patterns is affecting a number of different situations that we deal with. Cyclone Seroja certainly highlighted that fact: we had a cyclone that came a long way south, causing devastation, and mainly because of our building codes. Historically, identified cyclone areas have had additional building requirements to prepare buildings and houses for cyclones. When extreme events happen outside places that we traditionally associate them with, we get the outcomes that occurred in the midwest during Seroja. It means we really have to stop and think about where we are going in the future in terms of dealing with different emergencies.

Historically, we have also had to deal with fires. We have heard a bit about the devastating impact of fires, and I will talk a little more about that as well, because I have a bit of a background in that area. The government announced yesterday, I think it was, the protection of our native forests from logging, and that is part of recognising that climate change is happening and that we will have to deal with the effects of it. As I said earlier, it has a significant impact on the weather events we have to deal with, whether they are storms, declining rainfall, increasing summer temperatures or increasing fire activity.

The member for Darling Range spoke about his personal experience of bushfires in the area where he lives. Unfortunately, we are seeing an increase in unpredictable bushfire behaviour. I will touch on a few examples of the bushfires that I have experienced. In a past life I was the deputy chief bushfire control officer for the Shire of Dardanup. I was a member of the West Dardanup Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade from about 2000 to 2007—something like that—and for the last couple of years I was captain of the brigade. Dardanup is a lovely rural town just outside Bunbury. It has a lot of semirural properties that are exposed to fire events, including larger, fully-fledged farming

properties, and smaller five-acre lots and subdivisions. There is a lot of fire risk in the area, and through my involvement with the volunteer bush fire brigade I developed a pretty good understanding of fire behaviour and the things that need to be done to mitigate fire risks.

When there is a serious fire incident in Western Australia, volunteer brigades from all over the state travel to different areas to help out with the response. Through that, volunteers get to experience different fire behaviours in different parts of the state. What happens in Margaret River, for example, will be different from what happens in Albany, and what happens in Albany will be different from what happens in the Perth hills, which will again be different from what happens out in Kalgoorlie. There are different fuel loadings and fire behaviours, depending upon where you are in the state. I experienced quite a lot of different fire behaviours, which was a very good learning curve.

I was also one of a number of people who were sent over to New South Wales in, I think, 2005, for the fires in the Blue Mountains. That was quite an experience. We were cutting firebreaks with rake-hoes; if members do not know what a rake-hoe is, it is an instrument that is a combination of a rake and a hoe—hence the name! It is a tool that is used to scrape a bare-earth firebreak. We were putting firebreaks in terrain that you actually could not walk through; it was mountain goat country. If a fire were to come through there, you would not be there anyway, because it would be too dangerous to put anyone in that situation to try to fight the fire. What you can do is to cut a firebreak and then back-burn off it, to put a larger buffer in the area to protect it. That is what we were doing, and we spent two weeks climbing up and down these mountains, cutting firebreaks, which was an interesting experience.

Fires have obviously impacted on communities more locally. The member for Maylands touched on some of the improvements we have been able to make with regard to animal welfare over the years. It is great that we now consider them in our emergency responses, and I fully support her request that we do some forward planning for how we handle extreme situations when we have a large number of animals that need to be moved out of an area for their protection.

As everyone, including the Acting Speaker (Mrs L.A. Munday), is probably aware, I grew up in Harvey, and I spent a lot of time in Yarloop. The member for Collie–Preston spoke about the devastating fires that went through Yarloop. One of the buildings that burnt down there that the member forgot to mention was the Yarloop tavern—a place where I spent quite a bit of time, from a very young age, actually! I used to go and play cricket at Yarloop when I was a young teenager.

Ms C.M. Rowe: From 18 onwards, member!

Mr S.J. PRICE: That is correct! We would always end up in the tavern after a game of cricket, but I also spent quite a number of years working for Alcoa at the Wagerup alumina refinery as well. It was a long drive from Wagerup back to Dardanup, where I was living at the time, so we used to drop in there quite regularly to get a couple of cans of Coke for the trip home! There was a lot of history in that old tavern.

I was up in Kalbarri when the fire went through Yarloop, but my mother still lives in Harvey. Harvey was a little under threat at the time as well, so I was constantly on the phone to her, suggesting that she should probably go down to her sister's place in Australind. Not long after that we were allowed back through Yarloop, and when I drove through for the first time it was actually very, very devastating. I was surprised at the impact the fire had had. All the places I knew there were gone; it was almost like a bomb had hit the place. It was absolutely terrible. Friends' houses were not there anymore, and tragically there were a couple of fatalities as well.

The impact of the fires was incredible, but the really interesting thing about it was the fire behaviour that was experienced. The fire came out of nowhere. It was initially a long way away, and it was always a risk, but it changed direction in a matter of minutes and ran across the town. It did not stop until it was almost out to the coast. If you drive down Forrest Highway, you can see all the regrowth out towards Preston. Nothing was going to stop that fire, and that was fire behaviour that we had not seen before. We have had fires in the hills around Harvey, Yarloop and Waroona in the past, but nothing like what happened on that day.

That is symptomatic and reflective of how things are changing; that fire should not have done what it did. I think more than 160 houses were lost in the hour or so it took for the fire to run through the town; it was not very long. The devastation is still there today. If you go through Yarloop now, it is not the same. It is back—the resilience of the Yarloopians is well known, and it is to their credit that Yarloop is back and happening—but what the member for Collie–Preston said about all the shops and buildings that are no longer there is true. It is devastating to see what happened to that town.

The City of Kalamunda is a bushfire-prone area. I live in Wattle Grove, which is a semirural part of the city in the foothills as you head up towards Lesmurdie. We have a lot of risk and exposure to bushfires in that area. The year before last there was a small fire in the foothills, in Forrestfield, and it ran up towards Lesmurdie in a matter of minutes. If not for the great response from the aerial support of the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, the outcome of that fire would have been a lot different. Because of the terrain, there was no way vehicles or people could have got anywhere near where that fire was going, but because aerial attack is now available, DFES was able to control that fire and stop it from doing damage to properties. It really drove home to me some of our risks.

The member for Darling Range spoke about being prepared, and he is absolutely right. If you think you know what a fire is going to do, you do not. If you think you have enough time to get out when a fire is coming, you do not. If you have to stop and think about what you are going to do, you are in trouble. People need to be fully prepared for what their actions will be when a fire happens. Where I live is interesting, and I have a bit of a background in fire exposure and risk. As I drive to my place, I start to push up the hill towards Lesmurdie, but then to get to my place I go down the hill, and then the road stops. It is not a cul-de-sac; it is actually a dead end. It takes a three-point turn to turn a car around at the bottom of the little hill. I know that in the planning for bushfire-prone areas, cul-de-sacs are supposed to be large enough to allow big fire trucks to turn around. That is the thought process behind the planning in bushfire-prone areas. However, my place has obviously been there for a quite a while. It was built under old regulations. Members should see the poor old rubbish truck man trying to turn his truck around at the bottom of the hill! It takes quite a long time. If a fire came through where I live at the moment—it is quite a heavily treed area—it would be devastating. In my view, we would not risk putting people down into that area to try to put out a fire because if it came around behind them, there would be no way out. My family knows that my fire plan is to grab the dogs, get in the car and go. I would not risk trying to protect the place myself. A lot of areas around the hills are similar to that. Kalamunda has some great emergency services—the Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade, the Kalamunda Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service and the Kalamunda SES—and all do a fabulous job. The fire control officers from the City of Kalamunda are very diligent in their job of ensuring that people are prepared for the bushfire season.

I had my bushfire inspection last year. My dogs were running around the backyard as they do and the guy wanted to look around the house to make sure everything was fine. I said to him, “It’s all right, mate, I’ll go and put the dogs inside.” While I was doing that, he was looking at my gutters. I had a little bit of leaf litter hanging over one of the gutters. He looked around the back and said it was all good, but as we were walking towards the front, he said, “You’ve got to clean out your gutters. You’ve got a bit of leaf litter up there.” I thought to myself that if I had only left the dogs outside, he would have come in and gone out and would not have seen that and I would not have had to do that! Anyway, I got up there to clean the gutters and I was surprised at how much leaf litter there was. My house is a brick house with a tin roof. Really, it should not burn, but with the amount of litter in the gutters at the time, if a spark got in there, it would have been a different story. I was quite thankful to him for being so diligent when checking on things. As a consequence, I had to clean them and I had to get him back to check that I had done it, which is great. People often complain about fire control officers telling them that they have to do this and they have to do that, but they are right. The more we can do to protect ourselves and mitigate the risk of a fire and their devastating consequences, the better.

DFES has a training centre in Forrestfield, and there is also a volunteer fire and rescue service there. I was fortunate enough to do a tour recently of the training centre with the Minister for Emergency Services, and it was good to see. Some of the technology that was demonstrated to us, such as the virtual reality training, is incredible. It is difficult to train someone to deal with a house fire, for example, without putting them at risk and exposing them to that. We were shown one of the virtual reality training programs for a house fire. We were sitting with the VR goggles on and this thing was extremely real. The technology being developed to train firefighters is first class.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr S.J. PRICE: The beauty of the technology being developed is that it can be used in regional areas as well, so firefighters do not have to come up to the training centre to get exposure to it. The training centre itself is an incredible place and is used to train not only the career firefighters, but also the volunteers. In a previous life I was able to do a “hot training” session there. It was quite eye opening and certainly a worthwhile experience.

I turn to the unexpected behaviour of our weather patterns at the moment. It is climate change; it is climate change; it is climate change. Those who do not believe in climate change certainly have it wrong. The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions looks after the majority of unallocated crown land across the state. It is that department that does the prescribed burning. I hear people complain about the smoke that comes from a prescribed burn. They need to talk to the people who have lost their house to a bushfire and see who has the worse situation. Once again, in a previous life, when I worked for the Australian Workers’ Union, we represented workers of the old Department of Conservation and Land Management, then the Department of Environment and Conservation and now DBCA. I spent a fair bit of time with those guys out on the firegrounds when they were dealing with fires, but also when they were doing the prescribed burns.

The DBCA is the world leader in fire prevention. Its knowledge of the bush in Western Australia is first class. The department sends our people to places around the world, such as America and Canada, to teach them and help them fight fires. Our knowledge and skill in prescribed burning and back-burning to deal with a fire situation is second to none. We need to do the fuel-reduction burns. That is the only way we can deal with it in a state the size of Western Australia. I do not know how people think there are other ways we can do this. With the size of the land we have to deal with, the most effective way of reducing that fuel loading is through prescribed burning. If we do not, situations will occur such as the Black Cat Creek Fire in Albany in 2012. Unfortunately, one of the ladies, Wendy Bearfoot, who worked for the then DEC, was killed as a result of a flashover in the fire truck she was in. That fire did things that no-one expected. It was also in an area that had not been burnt for 50-odd years, so there was a very

high fuel loading in that area. Unfortunately, they were not aware of that at the time and when they went there, they faced unexpected fire behaviour, which resulted in the flashover and Wendy being burnt and, unfortunately, dying. We have to take opportunities to learn from those sorts of things. Fortunately, we did and a lot of improved safety equipment and procedures were put in place for the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions workers. Hopefully, should that ever happen again, it will certainly increase their chance of survival. Once again, unexpected fire behaviour caused that issue, which was a result of a lack of prescribed burning and unexpected fire behaviour due to weather elements.

There is history here. Members might remember the Boorabbin National Park fire in 2007—the one that blew across Great Eastern Highway towards Kalgoorlie. Some trucks were caught up in it and some truck drivers died as a result. There are flat plains as far as we can see yet we have fires that we cannot control.

Ms M.J. Davies: It's fast when it gets going.

Mr S.J. PRICE: Absolutely it is; it goes very fast when it gets going.

These are things we need to take into consideration as we deal with emergencies going forward.

I go back to the beginning about what is an emergency. This legislation will apply to a declared emergency but we do not know what that emergency will be in the future. We never thought an emergency would be a pandemic or that a cyclone would come so far south. We probably have some idea that an emergency might apply to a fire because we have a history of fires that we cannot control, unfortunately. However, we have to continue to do what we can to mitigate all those risks. Apart from the pandemic, which we cannot blame on climate change, a lot of the stuff we will have to deal with going forward will be impacted on by climate change. We need to be mindful of some of the issues we have to deal with. That is when, as I said in my opening statement, some of the legislation that legislators will look at in decades to come will be referenced to and as a result of a global pandemic. People will sit back and think that it is very unusual legislation. Good legislation has come through.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3762.]

SOUTH EAST PREMIUM WHEAT GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Statement by Member for Roe

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [12.22 pm]: I would like to acknowledge the activities of the South East Premium Wheat Growers Association, otherwise known as SEPWA, in supporting the grain farmers of the south east region. This important group was established back in 1993 to represent wheat growers in the Esperance port zone, and has since expanded its vision to improve the overall profitability and sustainability of Esperance port zone grain growers. On 11 August, SEPWA held a ladies day with the theme “Thriving women, thriving communities”. This event allowed members to meet, enjoy each other’s company and delve into some of the issues that make a difference in regional communities. In particular, I would like to congratulate Tara De Landgraft, an Esperance radio journalist who connected via Zoom with the keynote speaker Shanna Whan. Ms Whan is the founder of the national charity Sober in the Community, a charity that aims to raise awareness about alcohol culture in rural Australia and support people who choose not to imbibe alcohol for any reason. Other speakers who deserve a special mention include Abbie Jones, Kris Perks, Sam Starceovich, Tara Vermeersch, Charlotte Della Vedova, Megan McDowall, and Bec Lawson. Congratulations to SEPWA and their members for working to improve outcomes for grain growers and communities in the Esperance region.

It is okay to say no!

SEEDS IN SPACE

Statement by Member for Forrestfield

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield — Deputy Speaker) [12.23 pm]: “What’ll happen to the Wattle?” is an exciting STEM project investigating the effect space travel has on seeds. Woodlupine Primary School year 6 students, Jett, Cody, Sukhpreet and Jaslyn, guided by the school gardener, Tammy, and teacher Karena Joyce, submitted a successful written nomination and short video to the One Giant Leap Australia Foundation to join their Seeds in Space educational program. Seeds from our national floral emblem, the golden wattle, journeyed from Australia to Japan, then on to the US where they were launched into space on a SpaceX flight. The seeds were in space for six months, from December 2020 to June 2021, before beginning their long journey home. Following biosecurity clearance, the space seeds, together with seeds from the same seed lot, made their final trip to the successful schools around Australia. Woodlupine Primary School excitedly received its seeds on Tuesday, 31 August 2021. This exciting space experiment is yet another example of the innovative learning that is taking place at Woodlupine Primary School. The school also collaborates with the Western Australian Herbarium on its seed bank project that protects critically endangered native plant species. I would like to congratulate principal Trevor Phoebe and all the teachers and staff on their dedication to sustainability and the continual pursuit of purposeful and unique learning opportunities for these wonderful students.

SARAH HALES — LIFESAVING ACTION*Statement by Member for Vasse*

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) [12.25 pm]: Last month I had the privilege to present the inaugural Dunsborough Bay Yacht Club honours board award to Sarah Hales for her brave, lifesaving actions. Leafy Liu had her first seizure at the age of six months. By the age of two, she was having about 60 seizures a day. Leafy has a rare form of epilepsy that has no cure. She loves sailing and, in November last year, was attending the DBYC children's coaching clinic with another 12 children and Sarah, who was her coach at the time. Sarah is a highly skilled sailor, who in her early teens competed in European regattas. Leafy had finished her lesson with Sarah and went for a swim while her friends were bringing in their boats. Leafy was spotted face down in the water, and Sarah was the first to get to her by sailing over. She pulled Leafy into the boat, who was blue and grey and not breathing. Sarah gave chest compressions but Leafy remained unresponsive. Sarah gave two breaths and, thankfully, Leafy drew her first breath in over three minutes. Sarah then instructed a parent to push the defibrillator alarm linked to St John Ambulance. Leafy had experienced a seizure while she was swimming but was breathing by the time the ambulance arrived. If it was not for Sarah's decisive action that day, Leafy may not be with us. It is a credit to Sarah's skills and her decisive action that she was able to save the life of a fellow club member. It is also a credit to the Dunsborough Bay Yacht Club's junior sailing program that we witness such capability on the water in the face of a life-threatening situation.

JMH GROUP — HEAVY-VEHICLE BRAKE TESTING FACILITY — GERALDTON*Statement by Member for Geraldton*

MS L. DALTON (Geraldton) [12.26 pm]: The regional economic development grants program has once again delivered for business and people in the electorate of Geraldton. The Minister for Regional Development, Alannah MacTiernan, officially opened the midwest's first heavy-vehicle brake testing facility at JMH Group in Geraldton recently. The McGowan government provided a \$66 700 grant through its regional economic development grants program to help build local capabilities. The Geraldton facility will see maintenance and servicing of heavy vehicles occur in Geraldton, rather than taking place in Perth. The new equipment provides for brake testing, steering and suspension inspection, and weighing vehicles in one drive-through process, reducing downtime and identifying faults before failures occur. The project has created five jobs over 12 months and facilitated the training and upskilling of employees, including apprentices, in the heavy automotive and mining industry. JMH Group was also recognised as the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry business of the year for 2021. Huge congratulations to JMH Group, in particular Leah and Jaydon Hirst. Well done for accessing the RED grants program. I would encourage others to do so. Well done for having the vision to bring these services to Geraldton and well done for being recognised by your peers as the 2021 business of the year.

MUSTARD SEED ORPHANAGE — MYANMAR*Statement by Member for Moore*

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [12.28 pm]: I rise today to acknowledge the efforts of Wubin residents Pam Wasley and her daughter Sandy de Trafford, who raise funds for Mustard Seed Orphanage in Myanmar. The Australian Mustard Seed Organisation Inc is a registered charity that operates orphanages in Yangon, the former capital of Myanmar, and a regional location many hours away from Yangon. Pam says that children may come to the orphanage in ill health having contracted diseases such as tuberculosis or hepatitis B, or because families cannot support them. She says that the local population is desperately poor, with many living in houses with bamboo frames and palm leaf walls. Seventy per cent of donations to Mustard Seed Organisation are used for medical care and the feeding, educating and clothing of children. Pam and her daughter Sandy live in the small community of Wubin, 270 kilometres north of Perth, and knit items such as baby clothes to raise funds that can be sent to the orphanage. These items are sold at the Dalwallinu craft shop and the Wubin museum, with every cent going to the Australian Mustard Seed Organisation. Most recently they were able to buy a refrigerator to reduce food spoilage and wastage. When Pam is not raising funds for children from Myanmar, she volunteers her time at the Wubin Wheatbin Museum, an excellent museum that depicts the local wheat-growing industry, offering a pictorial comparison of present day and historical grain-handling systems, and is situated alongside one of CBH's original 1930s wheat bins. Thank you, Pam and Sandy, for your contribution to the children of Myanmar.

COOLGARDIE RODEO AND UTE MUSTER*Statement by Member for Kalgoorlie*

MS A.E. KENT (Kalgoorlie) [12.29 pm]: On 21 August 2021, I had the honour of opening the inaugural Coolgardie Rodeo and Ute Muster on behalf of Hon David Templeman, Minister for Tourism, and Hon Alannah MacTiernan, Minister for Regional Development. This event was a sellout, with nearly 3 000 people attending, including 1 000 people who camped overnight. Many of the competitors and attendees travelled from all over Western Australia. In these times of COVID-19 restrictions, although minimal here in WA—thanks, Premier—it is a magnificent achievement to deliver an event of this scale. The event was so successful that big plans are underway to make the rodeo an annual event. That will mean more tourism dollars and more investment into the region.

I would like to make special mention of the Gareth Laurent memorial novice bull ride event, won by Trent Dawson. This was named after a goldfields local and rodeo enthusiast who had been instrumental in organising the Menzies rodeo two years ago. Gareth tragically lost his life in a car accident in 2019. I would like to congratulate and thank the operations manager, Bodean Buckingham, committee members and all the volunteers who worked tirelessly to make this event such a roaring success.

In closing, I would like to thank the McGowan government for its commitment to events such as the Coolgardie Rodeo and Ute Muster through the regional events scheme.

JOINT SITTING — ELECTION OF SENATOR

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [12.30 pm]: Members, I wish to advise that I have consulted with the President of the Legislative Council in relation to holding a joint sitting to fill the vacancy in the Senate created by the resignation of Senator Rachel Siewert, and that the joint sitting will be held on Tuesday, 14 September, at 12 noon in the Legislative Council chamber.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER — PHOTOGRAPHER AND TELEVISION CAMERA ACCESS

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [12.31 pm]: Members, I advise that I have approved the presence of television cameras and photographers from 2.00 pm today to enable coverage of the handing down of the state budget.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CORONAVIRUS — VACCINATIONS — BORDER RESTRICTIONS

497. **Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the Premier's public comment that he will not be opening the borders until April, after vaccination rates reach between 80 and 90 per cent. Given the imprecise, ambiguous and unscientific definition of "between 80 and 90 per cent", can the minister confirm that decisions are no longer being based on well-defined health advice; rather, they are now based on political decisions, because the Western Australian health system is still not prepared, even after 18 months, for a COVID-19 outbreak?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for the question, because it allows me the opportunity to remind the chamber once again that the McGowan government has kept Western Australians safe.

Ms L. Mettam: Not if they want to go to an emergency department.

Mr R.H. COOK: Member, the McGowan government has kept people safe, and, as a result of that, they voted at the last election to reduce you to a rump of two! That is the endorsement by the WA people, who value the leadership provided by Premier McGowan in ensuring that we continue to keep Western Australians safe, keep our economy strong and make sure that we are creating the jobs of the future.

It is not surprising to hear that the Premier is now saying that he wants to keep people safe. He does not want to make a decision that will lead to illness, severe illness and potentially death. I think it is a fairly reasonable proposition that we do not want Western Australians to die unnecessarily.

Ms M.J. Davies: We'd like a health system that actually works.

Mr R.H. COOK: The member will have the opportunity to ask after this about the health system, which has also kept us safe.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: The Premier and all the Premiers of this country are utilising public health social measures to ensure that they keep their communities safe. That goes to the issue around the two-square-metre rule, which we do not have in Western Australia. It goes to the issue of mask wearing, which we do not have in Western Australia. It goes to the issue of ensuring that we keep out the disease, which we do not have in Western Australia. Our borders have been an important part of keeping people safe and keeping our economy strong. So, it is not surprising to hear the Premier say that that is the way he wants to make it. The borders are an integral part of our public health social measures around keeping us strong. We continue to seek and receive advice from the Chief Health Officer about what level of vaccination will allow us to rely less upon the public health social measures and more upon the impact of vaccination. But let us not hang onto glib numbers in the same way the Prime Minister does. There is no point having 80 per cent of people here vaccinated if 90 per cent of the Aboriginal community is not vaccinated, because that will lead to chronic disease and death, as sure as night follows day.

There is no certainty about the future. The only certainty we can have is that the Delta variant will be part of our lives. The only certainty we have today is that vaccination is the key to allowing us to get out of the COVID-19 pandemic

experience. That is what we as a community should be focused on. Do not worry about what is going to happen in the future. The future will take care of itself once we become vaccinated. What we should be doing now—because now is the only thing we do have certainty over—is vaccination. Once we get a comprehensive spread of vaccination and immunisation in our community, we can consider opening up further.

CORONAVIRUS — VACCINATIONS — BORDER RESTRICTIONS

498. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. Has any jurisdiction in the world reached 90 per cent vaccination, and does the minister have evidence that that rate is achievable in Western Australia; and, if so, will he table the advice that has been provided on that basis?

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: The Minister for Health—not transport, health.

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

Madam Speaker, there are some great examples of countries and jurisdictions that have done a great job of immunising their community, such as Israel. There are also some examples of jurisdictions that have absolutely failed their people, such as the Brazilian government and the New South Wales government. So, yes, there are examples of countries that have got up to around a 90 per cent vaccination rate. One of those is Israel. Israel continues to have disease and continues to have death and it continues to have public health social measures. Those are all the issues that we need to consider. Israel has a very high level of vaccination, but it still has lots of pre-cautious and deliberate public health social measures to keep its people safe. In Western Australia, the fortunate nature of our geographical positioning means that we can keep people safe with strong borders, we can keep people in work, we can keep our economy growing and we can stop people dying. That is what the Premier is trying to achieve.

INVESTMENT ATTRACTION AND NEW INDUSTRIES FUND

499. Ms S.E. WINTON to the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to diversify the state's economy through the \$100 million investment attraction and new industries fund. Can the minister outline to the house how this fund will support new and emerging industries, as well as help create new jobs across Western Australia?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for the question. It is a very important one. The member and others will remember that back in early 2021—nice memories for some, not so for others—we said that if the McGowan government was re-elected, we would do two things. Utilising the dual success that we had around COVID-19, as well as keeping the state's finances strong, we could then look forward to how we could continue to deliver and create jobs and make sure that we could diversify and grow the economy.

Last week, I was very pleased to be with the Premier and Minister Punch to announce the commitment of \$100 million towards the establishment of an investment attraction and new industries fund. The fund signals a more proactive approach to investment attraction that will see the government building on the state's existing strengths and leveraging industries' knowledge and expertise to bring further investment, jobs and new industries into Western Australia.

The Western Australian economy is strong, driven by the success of our world-class resources sector, but our state is competing with other jurisdictions across Australia and around the world to attract investment into new and emerging industries. We cannot rest on our laurels; we have to make sure that we reach out to ensure that these companies and new industries that are emerging in the economies around the world are attracted to Western Australia and we create the jobs and the new opportunities that come with them.

This fund will facilitate a targeted approach to the government's economic diversification agenda, complementing the strategic reforms we have already made in our investment attraction approach. The focus of the fund will be to support industry attraction through assistance or grants across a range of sectors, including battery manufacturing, renewable hydrogen, green steel and cybersecurity. It will also be used to encourage and support the relocation of industries and company headquarters to Western Australia. The fund will build on the government's existing economic development initiatives, including the future battery industry strategy and the renewable hydrogen strategy, providing targeted incentives to encourage investment when there are no other sources of funding. The fund includes \$16.7 million for the new industries fund, which is stewarded by Minister Punch. We very much look forward to seeing more success from that component of the fund, as well as \$4 million from the fund that has already been set aside to grow WA's emerging space industry, attracting investment and providing support for start-ups and small to medium-sized enterprises.

The McGowan government's number one priority is jobs. The McGowan government is creating the jobs of the future. Diversification of the economy is key to making sure that we can create those jobs, keep our economy strong and keep our people safe.

Visitors — Beenyup Primary School

The SPEAKER: Before I take the next question, on behalf of the member for Darling Range, I would like to acknowledge the year 5 and 6 students from Beenyup Primary School in Byford, and the parents and teachers who accompanied them. I note that their teacher, Mrs Tran, is married to our member for Darling Range. Welcome to you all.

HEALTH — 2021–22 STATE BUDGET

500. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the fact that almost one in four priority 1 ambulance calls were not responded to within an acceptable 15 minutes last month, along with record ramping and code yellow capacity emergencies. What assurance can the minister provide that today's budget will immediately address the crisis facing our hospital system?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for the question. As I am sure the member will learn in a very short period, the McGowan government budget will deliver for Western Australia, making sure that we can utilise those twin successes: getting the state's finances under control, and keeping the people of Western Australia and our economy safe and growing. It is true that our ambulance system, like all components of our health system and, indeed, every other health system in Australia and in many parts of the world, is under significant pressure. In 2019, we had 8 145 ambulance call-outs; in 2021, that number grew to 9 751. That is a 20 per cent increase over 2019. Our ambulance services, like our health and hospital services, are under significant pressure. That pressure is associated with increased acuity of disease as a result of the post-COVID-19 period, as well as a spike in demand. We have the opportunity to invest heavily in our health system. We have already announced our \$1.9 billion funding package, which is not only a COVID-19 response, but also a staff and mental health services response. The member will have the opportunity to see what other investments we make not only in health care, but also right across our system to make sure that Western Australia remains a great place to live.

HEALTH — 2021–22 STATE BUDGET

501. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. Given that emergency department presentations have been predictable and on trend since 2019, what confidence can the Western Australian public have that the government is taking this issue seriously when all we hear is spin and deflection about the issues facing WA patients and health workers in this state?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

As usual, the member for Vasse is just plain wrong. The premise of her question is entirely incorrect. No-one could have predicted that we would have an 18 per cent increase in triage 2 category presentations between July 2018 and July 2021. That was a significant increase. No-one could predict the shocks associated with the demands on our system, in particular, the impact of long-stay patients because of the federal Liberal government's failure to deliver a National Disability Insurance Scheme that would ensure that people could get the care they need. Over 100 patients have been in hospital for over 150 days because of the failure of the federal government to manage the NDIS properly.

Even though the member for Vasse completely predicted the global pandemic, I suspect that the rest of us did not have those insights. The global pandemic has been a significant shock to the system. No-one could predict that our GPs would be spending many of their waking hours immunising people against COVID-19 rather than seeing them for other issues, so therefore people have to go to their local ED. No-one could predict that we would have an increase in anxiety in our community, which has tipped people into mental health episodes. We saw an 86 per cent increase in kids presenting with eating disorder problems between July 2020 and July 2021. These are extraordinary times. We have a government that can invest in the health system and stands by the health system. Unfortunately, we also have an opposition that is continually trying to undermine public confidence with its negative commentary.

HOMELESSNESS — COMMON GROUND FACILITIES

502. Mrs L.A. MUNDAY to the Minister for Community Services:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record investment in both housing and support for those experiencing homelessness. Can the minister outline to the house what the new Common Ground facility in Mandurah will mean for those experiencing chronic homelessness as well as those on low incomes?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

I can indeed talk about those things. It was very pleasing to be in Mandurah yesterday with the member for Dawesville, the member for Mandurah, the Mayor of the City of Mandurah and some of the administration staff to announce that we have now chosen the site for the second Common Ground facility. It will be on Allnutt Street in Mandurah. We also announced funding of an additional \$28.1 million, so we now have a defined budget for that facility, which will deliver 50 units for people in largely supported accommodation. Members might remember that the Common Ground model was adopted from a New York initiative from 20 years ago. It is essentially about self-contained apartments in usually multi-apartment complexes, with half of those apartments going to people

who are chronically homeless. It is permanent housing for them. The other part is social housing, so we are not mixing people with complex needs too much in one set of units. Half of those people will be people who were previously homeless. There will be built-in supports for people. There will be a 24/7 concierge, and usually room for a couple of businesses downstairs. I have been to the larger Brisbane Common Ground and noticed that a social enterprise, a cafe and a medical suite were downstairs. We also had images from the two 40-unit Common Ground complexes in Canberra suburbs.

It is quite exciting to have a total budget across these facilities. The Mandurah and the Perth sites will have 160 units, using a Common Ground model. Not only is that exciting, but also it demonstrates our government's practical commitment to break the cycle of homelessness. Members in this chamber will have heard me speak a number of times about the fact that this government, with some contributions from the federal government, spends over \$100 million a year providing supports to people who are homeless. That is largely done by community sector organisations or community housing organisations. They do a fantastic job, but there is always more to do. This is a complex area of public policy and service delivery.

It is really difficult when members who face me are waving to people in the public gallery; I am really trying to resist the temptation to wave back! I will not wave back.

In addition to the \$100 million for homelessness supports, we are delivering new money to the Housing First Homelessness Initiative. We now have outreach workers on the ground in the metropolitan area and in Mandurah, Rockingham, Bunbury and Geraldton. They are starting to engage with people who are chronically homeless—they are our priority cohort—about their housing needs and support needs. We are providing new accommodation through projects such as Common Ground and, of course, in partnership with my colleague the Minister for Housing, John Carey, who has made a significant announcement as part of the state budget for a huge uplift in social and public housing, we are increasing not only the amount of accommodation but also the type of accommodation that we make available.

Finally, we are focused very much on reforming the system so that we are better targeting those people who have very complex needs and using the evidence that is available across the world to give people the best chance to, as I said, end the cycle of homelessness.

CORONAVIRUS — TESTING — EUCLA

503. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the introduction of rapid antigen testing for truck drivers crossing the border into Western Australia. Was anyone in the WA Country Health Service or in the affected communities made aware of the direction being given at the Eucla checkpoint to people with unclear test results to travel to Esperance or Kalgoorlie and isolate?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

To the best of my knowledge, member, that decision would have been circulated through the player group, so to speak. It may not have reached everyone, because these situations, as the member knows, often unfold fairly rapidly. There are two reasons why we put in the directions for rapid antigen testing for those truckies who had not yet received a result from their COVID-19 test. First, the member will remember that those truckies who were tested on 25 August in Sydney were already in Kewdale by the time they got their results back and, in that particular case, as the member will recall, they tested positive. Second, we have since received anecdotal reports from South Australia and Queensland that they are getting an increasing number of truckies who are COVID-positive so we thought that we needed to take a much more proactive stance. The directions require someone who is presenting at the border at Eucla or Kununurra who has not yet received a negative result to undertake a rapid antigen test, which is either taken at the border at Eucla or at Kununurra Hospital. In the event that they produce a positive result—unfortunately, rapid antigen testing is still about one in five—they are required to do one of two things; they can wait for their pending result to actually come through or they can make their way to a testing post, which might be in Norseman or some other location. We put these processes in place because we know that Delta will continue to throw curve balls at us, so we need to continue to adapt as we go forward. Sometimes we have to adapt very quickly and not everyone can necessarily be in the loop. We are obviously trying to make sure that everyone gets the advice so they know, as part of the team, what decisions and steps to take in the event that they are involved in that circumstance.

CORONAVIRUS — TESTING — EUCLA

504. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. Why has there been such a significant failure in communication? Does the minister not think —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Does the minister think it is unfair and irresponsible to not inform the communities of Esperance and Kalgoorlie before sending in truck drivers with unclear test results and unclear quarantine arrangements?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

Let me get this straight, Madam Speaker. The team that wanted to rip down the borders and is onboard, one assumes, with Prime Minister Scott Morrison and your National Party leader, Barnaby Joyce, says that we should open the borders, and now you are complaining that our borders are not tight enough! I will take lessons and advice from a whole range of people about how we can better respond to COVID-19, but the last people I will take advice from is this sorry lot.

MINERALS RESEARCH INSTITUTE

505. Ms A.E. KENT to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to the additional \$6 million the McGowan Labor government is investing in the Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia. Can the minister outline to the house how this funding boost will help attract more investment into the state's mining industry and help create a pipeline of jobs for Western Australians?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

I am very pleased to answer the question from my favourite backbench member of Parliament!

Several members interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is great news that I was able to announce yesterday that the Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia is being put on a solid footing for its future. We are investing \$6 million over the next four years into the Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia, and, for the first time ever, the ongoing research funding for MRIWA is now part of the activities of budget and not a one-off contribution. This is on top of the \$1 million that we also announced yesterday that has been allocated to MRIWA to support its work in zero-carbon steel, and that is finishing an election commitment.

The Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia is a very important body that supports innovation in the mining industry. People may not realise that the decarbonisation agenda requires more mining and, therefore, we have to do it in a more efficient and safer way and we have to improve recoveries. I know my colleagues on the other side of the chamber are not interested in innovation; look at the way they attacked this government over its investment into wave energy. I know they do not like innovation, but we are determined to support innovation. I am pleased to say that on 13 October, MRIWA will be holding the Net Zero Emission Mining WA Conference to bring together leading ideas and approaches to reducing carbon emissions in mining.

I can also let members know about some of the PhDs that MRIWA is supporting. It is supporting PhDs to investigate mechanisms to better quantify the stability of tailing storage facilities. People might remember the big number of deaths in Brazil because of the failure of the TSF. We are investigating how to make them more stable. It is investigating how to achieve sustained positive development outcomes for Indigenous land-connected communities. Again, Western Australia is very proud of the relationship between the mining industry and Indigenous communities. There is a PhD program on improved underground support provided by shotcrete using tailings and waste rock—in other words, using the waste products produced by mining to improve ground stability and, therefore, safety for underground miners. We have multiple PhDs looking at improved exploration and processing techniques for lithium because we know that lithium is one of those future-facing metals. We have multiple PhDs in data analytics to improve mineral processing and maintenance activities. Applying data to solve maintenance challenges is a really remarkable idea because we can bring together these new technologies to solve old problems and, again, increase safety. It is pleasing to say that for every \$1 million that the government invests in MRIWA, we are getting a \$3.1 million benefit to the state. There is \$67 million so far in research programs by MRIWA.

This government wants to see good ideas lead to highly skilled, high-wage jobs. Members can see our investment into the future battery industry strategy, the hydrogen strategy, the Minister for Health's future fund for medical research—you can see a theme here, members—wave energy and now this continued investment into the Minerals Research Institute of Western Australia. We are a government that understands the connection between ideas and the future. We are very pleased, under the leadership of Premier McGowan, to support the skilled workers of the future because we understand the need to solve the skills gap in Western Australia.

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Liberal Party with the last question.

POLICE — VIOLENCE — TRAIN STATIONS

506. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Police:

Before I ask my question, I want to recognise that today is R U OK? Day. I hope that all members in this chamber are okay.

I refer to the innocent woman who was viciously punched and kicked outside Maylands train station in broad daylight in August, the young schoolboy who was on his way to school when he was attacked with a hammer at Edgewater station in the same month and the senseless attack that was reported on this morning's front page of *The West Australian*. What is the minister and the Minister for Transport doing to stop the spate of violent attacks in and around train stations?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for his question. I have to say at the outset, assaults are always a horrible thing, terrible to witness and something that the police are always focused on. We always encourage the police to take the harshest possible measures to diminish the likelihood of those incidents. However, many of them—in particular, the three that the member referred to—are pretty much unpredictable in the nature of the way they come about. They are individuals behaving appallingly and often without any warning and no indication that that type of event is about to place.

That aside, I want to reflect a little on the nature of the member's question and follow on from the embarrassing and pretty much very divisive and negative grievance I received from the member for North West Central earlier today. Leader of the Opposition, I really do implore you to consider the nature of the contributions from your side of the house with respect to these matters. It does no-one any good to engender division in the community around what are horrible events and things that none of us would like to see happen. The way in which questions are asked reflects on poor leadership—poor leadership by the Leader of the Liberal Party and poor leadership by you, Leader of the Opposition, for allowing your member to behave the way he did this morning.

Several members interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I want to reflect on the fact that the Leader of the Liberal Party used the phrase “the spate of” incidents—over a large period, a spate of three incidents. What I can say is that the latest Western Australia Police Force crime statistics to 30 June this year show that, overall, there has been a 22 per cent reduction in crime from the peaks experienced under the Liberal–National government. That is something we should reflect on when members opposite ask these questions. There are some 65 000 fewer offences from that peak: home burglaries are down by 48 per cent; motor vehicle theft is down by 38 per cent; stealing is down by 37.6 per cent; and property damage offences are down by 28 per cent. Those are all things that hurt people and impact on the community and people's sense of wellbeing, and they are all down significantly from the peaks that were experienced under the Liberal–National government.

There are always these other crimes, these offences against the individual that are horrible and deplorable, and we should do everything we can to reduce them. What I said earlier —

The SPEAKER: Minister, I apologise, but given the time, I am concluding question time at this point for the prescribed lunchbreak. I anticipate seeing everyone back here at two o'clock.

Sitting suspended from 1.03 to 2.00 pm

APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2021–22) BILL 2021

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr M. McGowan (Treasurer)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

Second Reading

MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Treasurer) [2.02 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

[The Treasurer read the following speech.]

INTRODUCTION

Today, I am honoured to deliver my Government's fifth Budget.

The first of our second term and my first as Treasurer of our great State.

This Budget sets up Western Australia... for the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been one of the most significant global challenges since the Second World War with more than 4.5 million deaths and 220 million cases worldwide.

Throughout the pandemic, my Government has done everything it can to keep Western Australians safe. Crushing the virus as quickly as possible is the best way to protect Western Australians and keep our economy strong.

I am grateful for the sacrifice and understanding of Western Australians over this period.

Since coming to Government, and throughout the pandemic, we have made the responsible decisions to place our finances on a solid footing. We brought spending under control, turned deficits into surpluses, and put our debt on a much more sustainable trajectory.

Our fiscal capacity has been bolstered by our strong economy and our efforts to keep the mining sector, and indeed the whole economy, operating safely throughout the pandemic.

Western Australia is the strongest State in the country—with the brightest future.

So with this Budget—we build for the future.

This Budget uses the capacity we created, to tackle the challenges we face, continue the fight against COVID-19, address the pressures in our health system and to protect our most vulnerable.

This Budget is an investment in our future—in our hospitals, in addressing climate change, saving our forests, growing new industries, building METRONET, building Westport and creating quality local jobs.

This is a Budget that uses the financial success and prosperity of today to provide better infrastructure and services for the future.

An investment in a safer, stronger, fairer future for WA.

WA ECONOMY

Madam Speaker, WA's economy is not just the strongest in the nation—it's one of the strongest in the world.

Our domestic economy has grown by 5.7% since the start of the pandemic, almost double the growth of the rest of the nation.

Annual growth in our domestic economy was the strongest of the States for a second year in a row last financial year. This comes after every State's economy, except WA, contracted in 2019–20.

Treasury estimates Western Australia's Gross State Product grew by 3.25% in 2020–21, and is expected to accelerate to 3.5% in 2021–22, the fastest rate of growth in eight years.

Our domestic economy is crucial to this growth, with very strong activity forecast in housing construction, as well as business and government investment.

Driving our strong economic performance and projections is confidence. Western Australian households and businesses have consistently been among the most confident in the nation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, given our successful response in crushing the virus.

Consumption has been supported by surging retail trade, which has been growing at the fastest rates on record and the strongest of any jurisdiction.

Our Building Bonus has not only maintained the pipeline of works and protected the jobs of more than 65,000 residential construction workers during the pandemic, but created a boom in activity.

Business investment is also expected to grow strongly for a third consecutive year in 2021–22.

Our decisions have kept the mining sector operating safely throughout the pandemic, which has been vital, not just in supporting the Western Australian economy but also the entire nation.

Western Australia's exports grew to a record \$223 billion last financial year, accounting for well over half of national exports.

In addition, this Labor Government will deliver a record investment in infrastructure to support local businesses and create jobs over the next four years and beyond.

Madam Speaker, despite the pandemic, I am proud to report more Western Australians now have a job than ever before.

Since coming to office, around 107,000 WA jobs have been created.

An additional 34,000 Western Australians are expected to gain employment in 2021–22, with job vacancies at around their highest level since the peak of the mining investment boom in 2012.

The unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest level in more than seven years and is expected to average just 4.5% from 2022–23.

The economic opportunities in Western Australia have prompted more people living on the east coast to move West. Our policies have encouraged eastern State FIFO workers to move to WA, thus ensuring the benefits of those high incomes stay in WA.

STATE FINANCES

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to report that last financial year, Western Australia's net operating surplus was stronger than expected, at a record \$5.6 billion.

This is the result of strong financial management and our strong economy.

Revenues are higher across a range of sources as a result of strong economic conditions, including increased royalties from a higher iron ore price.

However, as we know, the iron ore price is extremely unpredictable. Western Australia is exposed to this volatility unlike any other State.

Indeed—since its peak in May, the iron ore price fell over \$US100 per tonne or almost half.

An important lesson to those who call for permanent recurrent spending increases on the back of temporary revenue boosts.

Other States have used that temporary spike in iron ore prices to try to unravel the GST reforms we fought so hard to achieve.

They don't acknowledge that all States and the Commonwealth have benefitted from high iron ore prices.

They don't recognise that the structure of the Western Australian economy is different and that if iron ore royalties were collected through, for instance, payroll tax, Western Australia would retain all of its GST share.

WA continues to receive a lower share of GST than any other State in history, at 70 cents in the dollar, and despite the reforms, is expected to provide a \$2.4 billion GST subsidy to other jurisdictions in 2021–22.

The GST arrangement is used by other States as an excuse for their lack of financial discipline. As a consequence, debt levels are rising rapidly in all the other States.

In contrast, we worked hard prior to the pandemic to place our finances on a sustainable path.

In 2021–22, a net operating surplus of \$2.8 billion is projected, with solid surpluses expected to continue across the forward estimates based on prudent revenue assumptions.

This is what responsible financial management looks like in Western Australia—we must assume the worst, plan for surpluses and retain the capacity to respond to whatever the world throws at us, come what may.

By budgeting responsibly, Western Australia's net debt is forecast to fall for a third year in a row to \$32.1 billion in 2021–22, more than \$11 billion lower than the \$43.7 billion projected under the last Liberal–National Government.

Our net debt position is now stable, a stark contrast to the increasing net debt projections of other States, and the Commonwealth.

Significantly, no additional borrowings are required by the Consolidated Account over the next four years, with only a limited rise in debt held by government trading enterprises.

COVID-19 RESPONSE

Madam Speaker, our work to fix the finances has allowed us to deliver an unprecedented response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with almost \$9 billion announced to date as part of the WA Recovery Plan and additional measures.

More than \$4.4 billion has been spent since the start of the pandemic, including over \$1 billion on frontline services to keep us safe—including the vaccine roll-out, COVID testing, hotel quarantine, PPE, contact tracing and managing our borders.

More than \$2.6 billion has been provided to support WA businesses and households—with business assistance grants, fees and charges relief and electricity bill credits.

Hundreds of projects are under construction as part of our WA Recovery Plan—to invest in our schools and TAFEs, build community infrastructure and drive industry development, with projects like the extension and expansion of the Australian Marine Complex at Henderson to grow our defence industry capability.

We have committed a further \$605 million for our frontline services and community health and safety initiatives in this Budget to continue our fight against COVID-19, with a key focus on delivering the vaccine roll-out.

A further \$800 million has been allocated to deal with any costs that may arise, including due to the virus, with \$240 million set aside specifically for WA Health.

Every effort is being made to ensure we can achieve a high vaccination rate across our large and diverse State—putting us in the safest position possible when the time is right to open international and interstate borders.

HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH

Madam Speaker, the McGowan Labor Government has approved a massive \$1.9 billion boost in spending for health and mental health.

This includes an additional \$960 million for WA Health and a record \$495 million for the Mental Health Commission to expand and improve services.

Our health system has been under significant pressure given unprecedented demand during the pandemic, especially in our emergency departments.

A large proportion of this investment will go towards an additional 332 beds, supported by around 100 new doctors and 500 nurses.

A \$100 million Emergency Department Support Package is underway that includes at least 50 additional staff, better triaging of patients in ambulances, and targeted measures to boost capacity at the Perth Children's Hospital.

WA Health has employed a record number of staff since the start of the pandemic. Despite this, like other States, the supply of healthcare workers is not keeping up with demand.

This Budget includes specific measures to attract more healthcare workers, including hiring more graduate nurses, as well as a local, national and international recruitment campaign.

An additional \$311 million is being invested in community-based mental health services. These services are designed to treat people in more appropriate settings, reducing pressure on our hospitals and EDs. The increased funding includes \$130 million specifically to enhance services for youth mental health.

The 2021–22 Budget allocates \$3.1 billion to expand our WA Health system.

\$1.3 billion of that is invested over coming years to improve health infrastructure, with major redevelopments and expansions of hospitals underway across metro and regional Western Australia. These upgrades will add a further 314 new hospital beds, in addition to the 332 beds in this Budget.

We have also taken the financially responsible decision to set aside \$1.8 billion to build the new Women and Babies Hospital in Nedlands.

SOCIAL HOUSING

My WA Labor Government will always protect our most vulnerable.

We know that stronger demand for housing is making it difficult for vulnerable Western Australians to secure affordable homes and accommodation.

This Budget delivers a record \$875 million additional spend on social housing—including the establishment of a new \$750 million Social Housing Investment Fund to help vulnerable Western Australians access safe and secure housing.

This increases the total spend on social housing in this Budget to over \$2.1 billion, which will fund around 3,300 homes.

Given strong activity in the construction market, innovative approaches will be used to deliver the social housing more quickly, including modular homes in the regions. We are also exploring options to leverage investment by the Community Housing sector.

Housing is one of the most basic of human needs—and this Budget makes sure that more Western Australians have a roof over their heads.

SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES

This Budget also delivers on our election commitments for a significant boost in services to support victims of family and domestic violence, as well as those at risk of homelessness and seniors.

Most notably amongst them will be the delivery of our election commitment to expand the Home Stretch WA program, to allow children in foster care to remain there if they wish until the age of 21. At the moment, they are only funded up until the age of 18.

\$41 million has been committed to this initiative, as well as increased funding for Youth Futures to deliver crisis accommodation for teenagers.

Madam Speaker, this will change lives for the better.

In addition, we will invest:

- \$93 million in increased funding for child protection services;
- \$46 million for a range of measures to prevent family and domestic violence and support victims, including measures to rapidly re-house women and children and improve safety, as well as prevention and education initiatives;
- \$6 million for planning and land acquisition for an Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation facility in the Perth CBD for people visiting for medical, cultural or family reasons;
- \$12 million for rebates to seniors for home security and safety equipment; and
- \$4 million to establish an elder abuse advocacy service.

Suburbs and towns across Western Australia will benefit from \$136 million to build and upgrade community infrastructure, plus \$49 million on a range of community-based initiatives and to fund commitments to sporting clubs, community and local arts groups.

INVESTING IN THE REGIONS

Madam Speaker, this WA Labor Government is a Government for all Western Australians, no matter where they work or live.

We have a proud record of delivering for regional WA—and this Budget is no exception.

Under this Labor Government, the Royalties for Regions program is secure, with more than \$4 billion to be invested over the next four years.

This Budget delivers \$627 million in regional election commitments and additional initiatives, with significant investments in education, health and mental health, growing regional industries, upgrading tourism infrastructure, road safety, promoting Aboriginal well-being and much more.

The State Budget delivers the Government's election commitment to enhance the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme, increasing the accommodation subsidy to \$100 per night, and increasing eligibility for vulnerable and disadvantaged people, and women travelling to give birth.

An additional 25 full-time equivalent paid paramedics will also be employed throughout regional WA to support its network of volunteer paramedics.

The Budget also includes \$19.8 million towards the Regional Airfare Zone Cap to make air travel for regional residents more affordable.

Over the next four years, a record \$9.1 billion has been committed for regional infrastructure, as well as billions more in State-wide infrastructure programs.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Madam Speaker, when it comes to investing in the future—there is nothing more important than education and training.

We need to ensure that our young Western Australians have the skills they need for when they enter the workforce.

\$486 million will be invested in new education infrastructure over the next five years, with a focus on enhancing STEM education in our schools.

In addition, we will help meet our future skills needs by investing \$121.4 million in training and workforce development initiatives, including:

- incentives for mature-age apprentices;
- industry placements for TAFE lecturers;
- additional VET places for Year 11 and 12 students;
- introducing a VET Taster Program for Year 9 students; and
- further upgrades to TAFE infrastructure.

\$59 million has also been delivered to assist our children in planning for work, with career practitioners being placed in 70 schools and increased industry training for VET teachers.

And Madam Speaker, we will support them in the classroom, by:

- funding an additional 100 school psychologists by 2025;
- expanding the school chaplaincy service to provide emotional and social support; and
- expanding the Alternative Learning Settings program to an additional eight sites across the State.

POLICE

The 2021–22 Budget ensures that we provide our WA Police with the resources they need to serve our community.

\$41 million will be spent building new police stations in Baldivis and Forrestfield—as committed to at the recent State election.

Also in keeping with our commitments, WA Police will be funded to ensure opening hours at Gosnells, Warwick and Rockingham stations will be extended to 7pm on weeknights.

\$83.6 million will be spent for the refurbishment and expansion of police stations to help house the additional 950 police officers being delivered by this Labor Government.

And \$27.5 million will be invested to purchase and operate a second new police helicopter, in addition to the helicopter already being built for WA Police.

Therefore in 2023, WA Police will have two, new capable helicopters.

There will also be \$18 million to fund services delivered by Police and Community Youth Centres; providing safe spaces and structured programs to support at-risk and disadvantaged youth across the State.

ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION

Madam Speaker, my Labor Government is not just addressing the issues the State faces today, but investing in WA's future.

While the world continues the battle against COVID-19, the biggest global threat over the next century and beyond is climate change. All nations, big and small, must respond.

While the nation sorely needs leadership on climate from the Commonwealth—WA cannot wait any longer.

From 2024, WA will end the logging of our native forests, protecting at least an additional 400,000 hectares of native forest in our South West.

At the same time, we will invest a record \$350 million over ten years in softwood plantations—planting up to 50 million pine trees, sequestering at least 7.9 million tonnes of carbon and creating hundreds of new jobs, and supporting thousands more, including providing certainty for the construction industry.

That \$350 million investment is part of our new \$750 million Climate Action Fund with other initiatives including:

- \$206 million for renewable energy projects, including standalone power systems, and wind turbine manufacturing;
- \$50 million to support the development of a renewable hydrogen industry; and
- \$144 million in climate response measures such as addressing coastal erosion and capacity for future initiatives.

With climate change, severe weather events and natural disasters becoming far more frequent, this Budget delivers an additional \$232 million to respond to natural disasters, particularly Severe Tropical Cyclone Seroja.

DESALINATION PLANT

The long-run decline in rainfall in southwest WA, combined with our growing population, means that investment in a new major water source will soon be required.

The Water Corporation has identified that the most cost-effective option for Perth's next water source is a third desalination plant.

This Budget sets aside \$1.4 billion to help fund Perth's next desalination plant, which will be powered by renewable energy.

Planning for the next desalination plant is currently underway and a final investment decision will be made in a future Budget.

INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

Madam Speaker, our 2021–22 Budget delivers a record \$30.7 billion investment in infrastructure over the next four years.

Importantly, we have heeded the calls from the private sector to ensure that our record infrastructure program does not overheat the economy at a time of strong private investment.

By working with industry to smooth out our investment in infrastructure, we can ensure that public activity does not create a bidding war with the private sector for workers, equipment and supplies, and instead creates jobs and confidence when we need it most.

However, our unprecedented investment in rail, road and transport infrastructure continues, with an additional \$2.4 billion in this Budget. This includes delivery of our election commitments such as the Mandurah Estuary Bridge, the Regional Road Safety Program, and upgrading key priority black spot locations across the State.

When it comes to METRONET—it's all happening.

This Budget includes \$5.7 billion for 15 METRONET projects—planned, under construction or completed.

This year, the first METRONET project was completed—the Bellevue Railcar Facility, bringing railcar manufacturing back to Western Australia after 25 years.

Nine METRONET projects are currently under construction:

- Forrestfield Airport Link;
- Morley–Ellenbrook Line;
- Thornlie–Cockburn Link;
- Yanchep Rail Extension;
- the new Bayswater Station;
- the new Lakelands Station;

- the Mandurah Station Multi-Storey Car Park;
- Denny Avenue Level Crossing Removal; and
- the Thomas Road Bridge, as part of the Byford Rail Extension.

Our Budget also includes funding for additional level crossing removals on the Armadale and Midland lines, the Byford Rail Extension and additional bus services.

The 2021–22 Budget also contains new funding for METRONET with \$38 million to deliver a 700 bay multi-storey carpark at Greenwood Station, a key commitment at the State election.

With this Budget, METRONET remains the sensible, affordable, essential building program to transform our city and our suburbs.

Western Australia's growing population means that we must also expand our port capacity.

Westport is a once in a century investment—a new container port with quality transport links, built to provide for the future success of our trading State.

\$400 million has been allocated to Westport for strategic land acquisition for priority industrial lots and road corridors.

Westport will set up WA's long-term future, in the strategic location of the Kwinana industrial area.

This Budget also makes significant investments in our social, cultural and environmental future, with:

- \$105 million to build a state-of-the-art film studio and screen production facility in Fremantle;
- \$50 million to plan and seed fund the nation-leading Aboriginal Cultural Centre; and
- \$30 million to commence delivery of the Perth Zoo Master Plan.

ECONOMIC REFORM

The 2021–22 Budget delivers the single biggest investment in red-tape reduction in the State's history.

A record \$120 million has been provided to streamline Western Australia's approvals system and unlock billions of dollars in new projects. 150 additional staff will be employed by relevant agencies to speed up project approvals, while at the same time ensuring we retain the level of protection of our environment, heritage and communities the public expects.

We will continue to diversify and strengthen our economy with \$100 million to establish an Investment Attraction and New Industries Fund, plus \$50 million for an Industrial Land Development Fund, both significant elements of our WA Jobs Plan.

The off-the-plan transfer duty rebate for multi-storey developments has been extended at 50% for a further two years, at a cost of \$26 million. This will assist in smoothing the pipeline of work for the residential construction sector as the impact of recent grants unwind.

This highlights WA's ability to provide tax relief when the Budget is managed responsibly.

ICT

Everyone understands the importance of ensuring that Government can operate safely in an increasingly online environment.

Whether it's delivering more online services to the public, back of house operations or ensuring our information and systems are secure.

In order to keep pace with the demands of the digital world, this Government has committed \$500 million over the next four years to upgrade ICT systems across Government.

This investment will ensure that service delivery keeps pace with public expectations and protects key agencies against cyber-attacks and operational threats.

HOUSEHOLD FEES AND CHARGES

Madam Speaker, my WA Labor Government has always limited cost of living pressures on Western Australian households.

We understand the pressures it places on making ends meet, for families right across the State.

And we have taken action to avoid the hikes seen under the former Liberal–National Government.

This Budget keeps our promise to cap electricity and water price rises to inflation.

In fact, it limits growth in the household basket of fees and charges to less than CPI, and continues to increase concessions to our most vulnerable, at a cost of \$397 million. Relative to pre-COVID levels, fees and charges have risen just 0.6% since 2019–20.

Public transport fares, including TransWA fares, are frozen for another year.

Importantly, this Budget delivers our election commitment to cap public transport fares at two zones.

This means that from January 1, people living further from the city will no longer be penalised for using public transport. The introduction of our two-zone fare cap will save families hundreds, or thousands of dollars, every year.

WAGES POLICY

Finally, one of the key measures to fix the financial mess left by the previous Government was to limit public sector wages growth to \$1,000 per year, and a freeze on the pay of politicians and the highest paid public servants. The policy balanced Budget repair with reasonable wage rises, particularly for lower paid workers.

Last year, given the initial economic and financial uncertainty caused by the pandemic, the policy was extended, with a review to be undertaken in 2023.

However, given the State's stronger than expected financial position, this review will now be brought forward to begin immediately.

We value our public sector workforce for the essential work they do for the community.

We will consult public sector unions and stakeholders prior to announcing a new wages policy by early 2022.

CONCLUSION

Madam Speaker, the 2021–22 Budget shows that hard work pays off.

My Government worked hard over many years to place the finances on a sustainable pathway. While our fiscal capacity has been bolstered by the strong economy here in WA, this Budget is built on a foundation of spending restraint and prudent decisions.

By responsibly managing the finances, and building a strong and resilient economy, we can deliver on our commitments and make some of the biggest ever investments in our State's future.

This Budget continues the fight against COVID, invests heavily in our hospitals and health care workforce, and takes essential action on climate change.

This Budget is also a major investment in:

- more social housing;
- bringing new industries to WA;
- bringing manufacturing back to WA;
- our schools and TAFEs;
- METRONET;
- Westport;
- better regional roads;
- digital capability;
- cutting red tape;
- renewable energy;
- a new film studio;
- the Aboriginal Cultural Centre;
- the Perth Zoo Master plan;
- a new desalination plant;
- softwood plantations;
- preserving our forests;
- preventing family and domestic violence;
- supporting foster children; and
- protecting the most vulnerable in the community.

Madam Speaker, this Budget is an investment in WA's future.

A future that is safe, strong, and full of opportunity... for everyone.

Madam Speaker, I commend the Budget to the House.

[Applause.]

Mr M. McGOWAN: I would now like to proceed with the formalities.

Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 is for recurrent services, which comprise the delivery of services and administered grants, subsidies and other transfer payments.

Recurrent service estimates of \$26,350,953,000 include a sum of \$2,542,175,000 permanently appropriated under Special Acts, leaving an amount of \$23,808,778,000 that is to be appropriated in the manner shown in the Schedule to Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021.

The Bill seeks supply of \$11,115,104,500, with the residual \$12,693,673,500 authorised by the *Supply Act 2021*.

Madam Speaker, I commend the Bill to the House.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2021–22) BILL 2021

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr M. McGowan (Treasurer)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

Second Reading

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Treasurer) [2.41 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The bill seeks supply and appropriation from the consolidated account for capital purposes during the 2021–22 financial year, as expressed in the schedule to the bill and as detailed under “Agency Information in Support of the Estimates” in the 2021–22 *Budget statements*. Included in the capital expenditure and financing transactions estimates of \$9 653 035 000 is an amount of \$878 508 000 authorised by other statutes, leaving an amount of \$8 774 527 000 which is to be appropriated in the manner shown in the schedule to the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021.

The bill seeks supply of \$6 360 102 000, with the residual \$2 414 425 000 authorised by the Supply Act 2021.

I commend the bill to the house and I now table the Treasurer’s speech, budget paper No 1; the *Budget statements*, budget paper No 2; and the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, budget paper No 3.

[See papers [469](#) to [472](#).]

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

FINANCE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (EMERGENCY RELIEF) BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield — Deputy Speaker) [2.43 pm]: It gives me pleasure to rise and complete my contribution on the second reading debate on the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. It is amazing what a difference a budget speech makes. The chamber was almost empty earlier; everyone is here now! Shall I go back and recap some of my previous contribution?

In the limited time that I have left, I acknowledge and thank all emergency services volunteers right across the state. There has been a number of emergencies recently in the midwest, and, prior to that, we had the Wooroloo fires, as well. Without our emergency services volunteers right across Western Australia, we would not be able to deal with a lot of the issues that we have to deal with. Whether those are volunteers at joint facilities up in the Kimberley or the Pilbara, where we have co-location of the bush fire brigades and fire and rescue and the State Emergency Service people, we have to appreciate and thank everyone who is a member of these brigades, organisations and services, because we see predominantly the same people throughout the different agencies. A limited number of people actually make the commitment to volunteer with their local emergency services, and it is a significant commitment to make. We recently had National Volunteer Week in recognition of our volunteers. Without those volunteers, we would certainly struggle to deal with a lot of the situations and emergencies that we have across the very broad state of Western Australia.

Those volunteers do an amazing job. When we cannot provide enough career professionals in our emergency services, whether for fire, ambulance or any of the emergency responses in Western Australia, we rely on volunteers to fill those voids. It takes a lot of commitment from the people who volunteer to do the training and to respond when there are incidents right around Western Australia. The training is first class. These people respond to life-threatening situations and they respond extremely well. The St John Ambulance volunteers around Western Australia do an outstanding job. They provide a life-saving response to so many people not only in our regional areas, but also in other situations. For example, St John Ambulance volunteers turn up for sporting events around the state to help with injuries at sports carnivals, and at some of the local football clubs and netball associations to ensure that they have ambulances at their games. We rely significantly on our volunteers to provide these services.

Certainly, we have seen the extent of the response of our volunteers more recently with cyclone Seroja and also the Wooroloo bushfires, but also, as I mentioned earlier, it is really pleasing to see that it now extends into animal welfare, as well. During the recent bushfires, the provision of animal welfare was a very large logistical exercise. Without volunteers to ensure that that could happen, it would not have happened. We know that in this day and age, people are a lot more aware of ensuring that there are places for animals to go during emergencies, and it is just another example of how we are providing a better response in emergency situations.

I go back to the beginning of my contribution, when I talked about what constitutes an emergency. This legislation refers to a declared emergency. We do not know what that is going to look like into the future, but we do know that this legislation will assist people who encounter some sort of financial or economic impact from a declared emergency and who need relief.

Once again, I thank the minister and all his staff for bringing this legislation to the house. It has been a very interesting debate and I have really enjoyed the contributions of this side of the house. I commend the bill to the house.

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [2.49 pm]: I, too, wish to make a contribution to the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. I begin by acknowledging the work of the Minister for Finance for bringing this really important legislation to this place. Other members have already touched on the emergency situation that has been unfolding right before our eyes over the last 18 months. Coronavirus has swept across the globe and is having a devastating effect on people's health. There has been loss of life and economic impacts in many parts of the globe and, indeed, in this country. We, in Western Australia, have been incredibly lucky because the government has acted swiftly to ensure that COVID-19 has been stopped at our border. WA may not have experienced the same impacts of the virus as elsewhere, but that is not to say that people have not been impacted economically by lockdowns. Pertinent to the debate on this bill is how important it is for the Treasurer, in conjunction with the Minister for Finance, to be able to declare necessary tax or grant relief measures to help people impacted by emergencies to receive economic and financial relief during such difficult times.

One area I would like to touch on—I know the member for Forrestfield and other members have touched on this in their contributions—is the COVID-19 pandemic. It is an obvious example because we know about it and are all living through it. But it is also important to mention other types of emergencies for which this legislation will be incredibly helpful. The member for Swan Hills talked about the impact fires have had on her community. The member for Geraldton talked about the devastating impact of cyclones. But it is fair to say that climate change really has changed how regularly natural disasters are experienced in this country. We were all moved in 2020 by the stories in the nightly news of the terrible fires that raged across the eastern seaboard. We may have been removed from them over here, but we were moved by the loss of life and plight of survivors who lost property and experienced economic loss in terms of the impact on their businesses and so forth.

It is very apparent that climate change is a key factor in the increasing incidence of these types of events. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the work our government is doing in this space. We cannot simply leave it to the federal government to address climate change. Thank God we are not, because the federal government simply does nothing.

I want to acknowledge the work of our government, and especially the announcement yesterday by the Minister for Environment, who is nothing short of formidable. I must say that one of the first things that really motivated me as a child was to see the forests saved. It certainly was something that galvanised me later to get involved in politics and join the Labor Party—that is, to see action on the environment. I was absolutely impressed, to say the least, when I learnt that all logging of native forests in Western Australia will end. It is a very proud day for me, the government and Western Australians in general, because we will be saving an important part of our state for future generations. We will be preserving 400 000 hectares of karri, jarrah and wandoo forests.

This morning I was at a NAIDOC assembly at a local school in my electorate, St Maria Goretti's Catholic School, at which a local Indigenous man was invited to talk about the NAIDOC theme this year, which is hill and country. He spoke to the children about how important the forest networks right across Western Australia are to him as a First Nations man, in particular those in our south west region. He mentioned the karri, jarrah and wandoo forests in particular. They obviously are culturally important, but also important in protecting and maintaining critical biodiversity. Furthermore, they create critical carbon capture and storage.

I would like to touch on what that means in figures. Western Australian south west native forests store approximately 600 million tonnes of carbon dioxide. That is roughly 116 years' worth of annual emissions for every car in Western Australia. That is what we will be setting about to preserve, hopefully, in perpetuity. That is not even to mention preserving them for their beauty or how attractive they are from a tourism point of view. As the minister said yesterday, they will also foster other important industries such as beekeeping, honey production, ecotourism and the like. Aboriginal cultural heritage is very important as well. Carbon capture and storage is critically important, being faced with such an obvious lack of action on climate change from our federal colleagues and the fact that the world is getting hotter. Science is absolutely pointing to the fact that climate change is due to human activity, so it is beholden on us to do everything we can to combat it for future generations, so I congratulate the minister for what she has done.

The globe is heating and climate change is undeniable. There is less rainfall as a result of climate change. I also experienced to an extent the threat of emergencies in the form of fires. I grew up in Mt Macedon in north western Victoria.

Ms M.M. Quirk: *Picnic at Hanging Rock.*

Ms C.M. ROWE: *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, indeed. The school in that movie is the school that I went to.

The area around Mt Macedon in regional Victoria is beautiful and densely wooded. Members may recall that a horrific bushfire swept through that region on Ash Wednesday 1983. More than 100 fires across Victoria spread across the border into South Australia. Tragically, those fires resulted in the loss of a total of 75 lives and destroyed over 2 050 homes. That is not to mention the countless businesses that were destroyed and the financial loss that resulted. I will never forget growing up in that community. I was too young to remember the actual fire—I was only three and we were not actually living in the region at the time. We were living in Essendon. My mum reminds me from time to time of the time we were having a party at our house. I was out the front yard in our home in suburban Essendon and I started to scream. She came outside to see what I was screaming about and found that I was terrified because burning eucalyptus leaves were falling from the sky. Although I do not recall that memory, that story speaks to the ferocity of that fire.

The Ash Wednesday fires were certainly forever present in the years I was living in Mt Macedon. Everybody was impacted by them and, like in many communities, the volunteer fire brigade was very active. Those poor firefighters who went out on the frontline to try to save other people's homes inevitably lost their own. The father of one of my best friends, Catherine McInnes, was one of those firefighters, and she does not have any baby photos. Her family was very touched by that. They lost absolutely all their belongings on that terrible, terrible day. As the member has just said, I went to school on Mt Macedon. Our school had fire drills every year and we were all acutely aware of the risk presented by fire. We had minor fires over the years when I was living in Mt Macedon. The threat was real and it was very, very scary. Although I do not recall Ash Wednesday, as I mentioned, I understand the impact that it had because the devastation was still felt years later by that community. Those who had been touched by it were very, very distraught by the impacts of it, and that stayed with me for many, many years.

I would like to finish my contribution by acknowledging how terrible emergencies such as bushfires can be for an entire community like Ash Wednesday was for Mt Macedon. To be able to speak on a bill that will provide financial support to those who experience an emergency is a wonderful thing. I commend the bill to the house.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Finance) [3.01 pm] — in reply: I would like to respond to the various contributions to the debate on the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. I thank all the opposition and government members who have spoken on this bill. I want to address some specific issues raised by the member for Moore. He is not in the chamber at the moment, so I will leave that for now and go through the various contributions by members on the government side. I will address some of the member for Moore's concerns at the end of my speech.

The member for Darling Range relayed the bushfires that occurred in the Kelmscott–Roleystone area on 6 February 2011, which at the time resulted in the greatest loss of homes in Western Australia in a domestic fire situation. I think either 71 or 73 homes were lost, and the member relayed the personal nature of that as his sister was quite near the fires. Where I lived at that time was only about two and a half to three kilometres from the fires. The fires at Kelmscott crossed over from being in the more densely forested area to a suburban area. It got into the various air-conditioning systems and destroyed homes in an area that we thought would not be destroyed. I have to pay respects to the former Mayor of the City of Armadale, Linton Reynolds, who provided fantastic leadership at the time. For some days, it was difficult to verify whether some homes had survived. Unfortunately, misinformation was given to some people. Some people thought their homes had been saved but they had not been, and some people thought their homes had been destroyed but they were saved. It was a very stressful time for my local community. It was not in my electorate, but many of the people who lost their homes and live in the area are part of my community. One of the homes relayed on the Channel Seven news that night was the home of the coach of my son's football team.

I want to clear up one of the things that the member for Darling Range said in his contribution. He mentioned that the bill will provide a land tax exemption for properties affected by the Wooroloo bushfire and cyclone Seroja disasters. I want to clarify that this bill will not directly exempt land tax for these properties, but will provide a mechanism for the Treasurer to deliver that relief. After this legislation is passed, the Treasurer will declare a tax relief measure to exempt the affected properties, and that declaration will be published in the *Government Gazette*.

The member for Churchlands, in a very considered response, which is what I would expect from the member for Churchlands, talked about the need for governments to have a speedy response to emergencies and the need for relief measures to not only be quick but also have a degree of certainty. When we provide relief in an emergency, it is important that people who are to receive tax relief have some degree of certainty. The member for Churchlands emphasised that need and also related some personal situations. I thank the member for the contribution.

The member for Mirrabooka talked about the pandemic situation that we have experienced for the past 20 months or so; how this government has dealt with that; and the need to overcome uncertainty because emergency situations breed uncertainty. Therefore, if we are going to have a stimulus package or tax relief measures, there needs to be certainty with that and they should be delivered in a speedy manner.

The member for Collie–Preston in her contribution talked about the effects that natural disasters often have on business. When we have bushfires and cyclones et cetera, local business communities can be affected severely. Everyone knows the catalyst effects in the way that the economy works, with the multiplier effect and so forth. Only one business premises may be affected physically, but it can have a ripple effect throughout the community. It was interesting listening to the member for Collie–Preston. She lives in Collie, the town that I was born in, unlike the former Minister for Sport and Recreation; he was a great advocate for Collie but he was not born in Collie, so he is not a real Collie person! People have to be born in Collie to be a real Collie person. I was born in Collie and lived the first nine years of my life in Collie. The member for Collie–Preston talked about the bushfires in Yarloop. I have an incredibly close connection to Yarloop, because even though my mum was born in Collie, she grew up in Yarloop. What was her family home, which is on the highway, survived the bushfires. I think the member for Forrestfield mentioned in his contribution, which I will talk about later, driving through Yarloop and all the things that were not there anymore. The school that my mum went to—destroyed. The church that my mum married my dad in—destroyed. The hospital that my eldest sister was born in—destroyed. The Yarloop fires, of course, had a significant effect on the community there, and also on the people who have some connection to Yarloop. There was a need to provide emergency relief to help people get back on their feet. The member for Collie–Preston talked about the cyclones that she experienced while living in the Pilbara as a schoolteacher in Tom Price, and also cyclone Alby, which severely affected the south west. I think the ABC building in Bunbury was destroyed by cyclone Alby. The ABC studios were destroyed by one of the cyclones and I think it was cyclone Alby, or maybe it was later —

Mr D.A. Templeman: The federal government is doing a lot to destroy the ABC now!

Dr A.D. BUTI: Exactly right. She also mentioned the Busselton jetty, which is an iconic structure that was affected by the cyclones. Her description of the Yarloop bushfires that occurred in January 2016 was very moving. Two lives were lost, unfortunately, and it took 17 days for the fire to come under control, which is phenomenal.

The member for Burns Beach, a former police officer, talked about the various emergency situations that he has experienced in his former career as a bush fire fighter. Basically, he attended a number of emergency situations in his previous career. He also talked about floods. I was a little boy living in Collie when the flood came through Collie. Our home at 2 Coombes Street in Collie was only about 100 metres from the Collie River when that was flooded. Floods can have a devastating effect on property and lives.

The member for Geraldton experienced the most recent natural disaster—cyclone Seroja. The Minister for Emergency Services is here and I would like to compliment him on the response he provided for the communities in that region. The minister has been outstanding. He has been up there a number of times and provided outstanding support. Thank you for that. The member for Geraldton talked about how Geraldton missed the major impact of cyclone Seroja compared with Northampton, but obviously it was affected. The homes were not really cyclone-ready. We know the devastation that occurred in Kalbarri and Northampton. Is part of that in the member for Moore’s electorate?

Mr R.S. Love: Most of the damaged area is in my electorate, yes. The town of Kalbarri was excluded at the last election; it went to North West Central. The rest of the area is in my electorate.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The member has firsthand knowledge of the destruction that happened there. Led by the Minister for Emergency Services, the government has put in various programs and relief measures to try to help the communities up there, including the business communities. That will continue as we go forward.

The member for Kalgoorlie mentioned that the state of Western Australia has had many emergency situations. She talked about 2015 in Esperance when livestock were lost and there was much disruption as a result of bushfires after temperatures of over 40 degrees and very strong winds. She also talked about the 2019 Northam fire. Part of Eyre Highway was closed, which is a major transport route leading into and out of Western Australia. She talked about the need to fund emergency services and how emergency services are very, very important in fighting and helping during natural disasters.

The member for Cockburn talked about various issues. He said he does not live in a peri-urban area. Arguably, it is peri-urban. The Deputy Speaker does not agree! Obviously, parts of his electorate are in bushfire-prone areas. He talked about the need to be prepared for fires. People who live in Western Australia need to be prepared for bushfires. He talked about the impact of climate change. He also referred to a report by Carolyn Palmer titled *‘Flood and fire and famine’: Tax policy lessons from the Australian responses to natural disasters*. It referred to the need to have fast, effective tax relief in emergency situations. This bill will provide fast, effective and certain relief, which I think is really, really important. I thank the member for Cockburn for his contribution.

The member for Riverton, being a medical doctor, obviously knows the health effects of disasters. He talked about the need to have swift, timely support during times of emergency. He mentioned a friend or an acquaintance who had a fitness studio. We have been very lucky and fortunate in Western Australia to have had very few lockdowns,

but the lockdowns we have had have affected local business operators. He talked about how his friend's fitness studio was affected economically by the lockdowns. The government's relief response was very important. He talked about how important swift, timely support was.

The member for Carine went for the almighty—not natural disasters, but obviously the emergency that came about from 9/11 in 2001 at New York's Twin Towers, and of course the destruction that that caused on the city of New York and the ripple effects that has had across the world. He was a schoolteacher at the time and talked about witnessing it on TV.

The member for Warren–Blackwood represents a large regional area in the south west. Obviously, she is very close to potential natural disasters, whether from the coast or inland. She talked about bushfires in the Albany region in 2018 and the Margaret River fires in 2011. At the time, the number of homes destroyed was the second highest number. At that time, the Kelmscott bushfires had the largest loss. Was it 71 or 73 homes, member for Darling Range?

Mr H.T. Jones: Seventy-two.

Dr A.D. BUTI: There you go—right in between! I think the number was in the 50s in Margaret River. Anyway, it was quite substantial. The member for Warren–Blackwood spoke about how important the support was that was provided by the local community. She talked about the importance of the various voluntary emergency service organisations in her region. She is actually part of that by being a member of the surf lifesaving team in the Denmark region. She has a communication role, which obviously is very important in emergency situations. She also talked about the first home buyers grant and how she was a beneficiary of that for her first home in the city.

The member for Swan Hills represents an area that was subjected to the most recent bushfire of a grand scale, that being the Wooroloo bushfire, which is what this bill was specifically targeted to provide relief for, along with cyclone Seroja. The member talked about how the state emergency response task force had been incredibly important; the various fire brigades and first responders. She said that great progress had been made. She complimented Ron Edwards, who is the state emergency response controller; I think that is the correct title. She talked about how constituents in her electorate had benefited from the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund, up to \$25 000 each, which of course is very important. She also talked about the need to provide social support—mental health and wellbeing obviously being very important.

The member for Maylands knows the hills area very well. She believes this bill is a very good Labor measure to provide instant, quick relief to people during a state of emergency and how important that is. She talked about animal welfare. As we know, she is a champion of animal welfare. One of the things we often forget in bushfires is the animals that lose their lives and the stress that they must be under when they see a bushfire coming towards them. It is devastating to think about the amount of wildlife that is lost during bushfires or other natural disasters. The member for Maylands talked about how the Shire of Mundaring and the City of Swan came together to provide relief regarding animal welfare, providing three animal feed distribution centres, which was very much needed during that bushfire disaster. She talked about the equestrian division of the Paralympics. There were four members in the Australian team and they all finished in the top 10, including Sharon Jarvis from Western Australia.

The member for Forrestfield provided a broad narrative of cyclones and fires in Western Australia, and brought the discussion back to climate change and how significant that has been in the unpredictability of our weather patterns and how it has resulted in unpredictable behaviour when it comes to bushfires. Of course, that makes them harder to manage and control. I think his role was deputy chief commissioner for bushfires down at the Dardanup brigade. Dardanup is a beautiful part of the south west. In that role, the member experienced various fires. He also talked about the foothills of Forrestfield and how fires started in that area. Was it last summer?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It was last summer. He went up the Darling Range escarpment towards Lesmurdie. The topography made things very difficult, but the Department of Fire and Emergency Services' sophisticated equipment helped in fighting those fires.

The member for Belmont also connected bushfires and other natural disasters to climate change. We cannot deny climate change; we have climate change. It is really quite amazing that we are one of the few western democracies where there is still debate on whether climate change exists. We just give up hope on the Liberal Party on this issue. Obviously, the National Party in Queensland is a bit of a problem in this area, but I would think that the Nationals WA, which has many farmers as members and supporters, understands the effects of climate change, because it is affecting the livelihoods of its members and supporters on a daily basis. I very much hope that the Nationals WA, which is very progressive on some social issues compared with its counterparts over east, will be sensible and understand the science. People can debate the measures that we need to take, but they cannot debate the science that we have climate change. I will leave that for now.

Mr R.S. Love: The National Party of Western Australia accepts that climate change is happening and that actions are needed.

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is good.

Mr R.S. Love: We may disagree about the action.

Dr A.D. BUTI: There can be legitimate debate about the action we need to take, but we cannot keep putting it off; that is the point. We need to act now.

The member for Belmont also mentioned the Ash Wednesday bushfires in Victoria in 1983. As members can see, I am a bit older than the member for Belmont, so I do recall those fires and how they jumped the border and went into South Australia. Unbelievably, 75 lives were lost and 2 050 homes were destroyed. I think in 2005, or 2006 or 2007, there was another major bushfire in Victoria.

Ms C.M. Rowe: It was 2006.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It was 2006. The member for Belmont spoke about the need for our voluntary fire brigades and the service they provide to our community. I thank those members for their contributions.

I note that the member for Darling Range is back in the chamber, so I will clarify something for him. The member said that the bill will provide a land tax exemption for properties affected by the Wooroloo bushfire and cyclone Seroja disasters. The bill will not directly exempt land tax on these properties; it will provide a mechanism for the Treasurer to provide relief. That is why the bill is very important.

I thank the member for Moore very much for his contribution and the questions and concerns he raised about this bill. I hope that I can address the very legitimate concerns he raised. The member for Moore asked why a tax or grant relief declaration will not be a disallowable instrument. As members would know, a tax or grant relief measure can only be beneficial to taxpayers and grant applicants; it cannot be detrimental. It is a tax relief measure, so it is beneficial to taxpayers. If we required the tax or grant relief declaration to be disallowable, that would introduce uncertainty and possibly inequity for taxpayers. I will explain that. If the declaration is disallowed by Parliament and the emergency relief is withdrawn, it could mean that some taxpayers have received the benefit of the relief measure while other taxpayers have not, and that is inequitable. Therefore, it is undesirable to provide a disallowable instrument for urgent financial assistance following an emergency. If the government is providing a benefit by the tax relief measure for a declared emergency and Parliament disallows it, some people would have received the benefit and others would not have received it, and that would be inequitable.

I am sure the member would agree that another important point is that the Treasurer being able to make a declaration for relief that is not disallowable by Parliament will provide some certainty in times of major stress. This is important because it is critical in emergency situations to have some certainty because people's livelihoods are often in jeopardy. This approach is consistent with the emergency relief power in Victoria whereby the Treasurer's direction to the taxation commissioner to administer a tax relief measure is not disallowable by Parliament. But we provide other safeguards in this bill that are not in the Victorian legislation. The other safeguards in the bill that I hope might ease the member's concerns about it not being a disallowable instrument include: firstly, that the powers can be used only in response to an emergency situation declared under the Emergency Management Act 2005 or a public health state of emergency declared under the Public Health Act 2016; secondly, that the Treasurer must consider it necessary to provide relief to taxpayers for the purpose of alleviating the financial economic effects of the declared emergency; thirdly, the powers can be used only to provide relief for up to two years—after that the government needs to bring in legislation—and the powers cannot be used to declare a tax or grant relief measure more than 12 months after the emergency has ended; and, fourthly, the tax or grant declarations that set out the eligibility conditions and details of the measure must be published in the *Government Gazette*, which will provide more transparency for taxpayers and grant applicants. The member for Moore raised a legitimate concern about transparency, but I hope that publishing the details of the measure in the *Government Gazette* will provide transparency for taxpayers and grant applicants.

The Pay-roll Tax Relief (COVID-19 Response) Amendment Bill 2020 was urgently drafted and passed last year before RevenueWA could deliver the four-month payroll tax waiver for small businesses. The bill was drafted and passed in approximately two weeks, with the usual cabinet and parliamentary time frames waived to allow it to pass as an urgent bill. But the complexity of the legislation required to deliver what was a simple temporary measure to benefit taxpayers in an emergency was not considered to be the best way to deliver similar relief in the future. That relief was needed, but because we did not have this bill before us, it could be implemented only by drafting legislation. That legislation had to go through a complex process and we had to waive the normal cabinet procedures and parliamentary time frames. This legislation will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to bring in a beneficial tax relief measure urgently and not have to go through the complex process of introducing legislation. If the emergency powers we seek to introduce with this bill had been in place last year, a tax relief declaration could have been drafted and published in the *Government Gazette* within days of the announcement, allowing the Commissioner of State Revenue to immediately administer tax relief and for drafting resources to be directed to other urgent legislation. A lot of the Parliamentary Counsel's Office's time was spent on very quickly drafting complex legislation.

There may be emergencies in which it is not appropriate to waive parliamentary time frames to deliver urgent tax relief; for example, natural disasters that affect only a particular local area. As the member for Moore is a regional member, he knows that sometimes a disaster will affect just one little area—cyclone Seroja, for instance. With this measure we are seeking to enable the eligible recipients in areas affected by cyclone Seroja and the Wooroloo

bushfire to access land tax exemption relief quite quickly instead of having to wait for us to draft legislation for a specific region, which can become quite complex and cumbersome and take some time—the normal parliamentary process might take months.

It is not unprecedented for relief to be provided without parliamentary scrutiny. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the government delivered a one-off grant of \$17 500 to support small to medium-sized businesses and the Building Bonus grant without passing legislation. So we have done it. Expenditure on relief measures is always disclosed in the budget papers each year, which are subject to scrutiny as part of the budget estimates hearings. We will be going through those hearings in two weeks' time.

The member for Moore asked what taxes tax relief measures can be applied to. A tax relief measure can apply to only the following taxes: duties, which includes transfer duty; landholder duty; insurance duty and vehicle licence duty; land tax; payroll tax; betting tax; metropolitan region improvement tax; on-demand passenger transport levy; declared pest rates; and penalty tax payable under the Taxation Administration Act. A tax relief measure cannot be declared for royalties.

The member asked about the timing of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. We are bringing it in now because the Treasurer intends to use these new powers to continue land tax exemptions into 2021–22 and 2022–23 for eligible properties that have been destroyed by rural bushfires and the cyclone Seroja disaster. Several members have spoken to that and it is obviously very personal to the member for Moore because part of that occurred in the member's electorate. This bill has been brought in now because we want to continue that relief measure.

The member for Moore asked very legitimate and reasonable questions. I hope that I have addressed them in my response. One of the member's main issues was with the inability to make declarations disallowable. We do not want to create uncertainty by allowing a disallowable measure when this relief will benefit people. Doing that would not only create uncertainty, but also be inequitable, because some people will have already received the relief, and we are not going to be able to take it back from them, while others in the same situation may have missed out on getting relief. With those comments, I conclude my response. Once again, I thank everyone for their contribution.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Dr A.D. Buti (Minister for Finance)**, and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 3.30 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING — PORTFOLIOS — TRAFFIC INFRINGEMENTS

183. Ms M.J. Davies to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to all agencies or departments under the Minister's responsibility and I ask for the period 30 June 2017 to date:

- (a) How many traffic infringements have been received by employees for any taxpayer funded vehicle within any department or agency? Please detail each offence by financial year, cost of infringement and damage caused to the vehicle;
- (b) For those in (a) please detail:
- (i) Cost of infringement;
 - (ii) Damage caused to the vehicle;
 - (iii) If the vehicle needed replacement or repairs and if yes, the cost(s) associated;
 - (iv) If any injuries occurred, to whom and what type of injury;
 - (v) If the driver could not be identified; and
 - (vi) If WA Police seized the vehicle and for how long; and
- (c) What is the total value of infringements by each financial year?

Mr T.J. Healy replied:

Department of Education

(a)

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Speeding	68	75	96	90	1
Contravention of road rule	1	0	0	0	0
Infringement withdrawal	2	1	1	1	0
Red light	2	3	0	2	0
Drive contrary to traffic lane arrows at intersection	0	0	2	0	0
Contravene a red arrow signal by proceeding beyond the stop line	0	0	1	0	0

- (b) (i) This information is not recorded. However, there is nil cost to the Department of Education.
- (ii)–(iv) Information about insurance claims relating to vehicle damage or injury resulting from a driving incident that was subject of an infringement is not held by the Department of Education.
- (v) Nil.
- (vi) Nil.
- (c) This information is not recorded. However, there is nil cost to the Department of Education.

Department of Training and Workforce Development

- (a)–(b) There is no cost to the Department of Training and Workforce Development. Employees are required to meet the cost of an infringement.

2017–18

1 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicle

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2018–19

5 exceeding the speed limit

1 contravening a red arrow signal by proceeding beyond the stop line

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$300	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2019–20

4 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2020–21

3 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2021–2022

Nil. Not applicable.

(c) There is no cost to the Department of Training and Workforce Development

Financial Year	Total cost of Infringements
2017–2018	\$100
2018–2019	\$1,000
2019–2020	\$600
2020–2021	\$500
2021–2022 to date	Nil

North Metropolitan TAFE

(a)–(b) There is no cost to the North Metropolitan TAFE. Employees are required to meet the cost of an infringement.

2017–18

4 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2018–19

15 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$150	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2019–20

6 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2020–21

4 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2021–2022

1 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

(c) There is no cost to the North Metropolitan TAFE.

Financial Year	Total cost of Infringements
2017–2018	\$500
2018–2019	\$2,350
2019–2020	\$800
2020–2021	\$600
2021–2022 to date	\$200

South Metropolitan TAFE

(a)–(b) There is no cost to the South Metropolitan TAFE. Employees are required to meet the cost of an infringement.

2017–18

13 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2018–19

10 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2019–20

10 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2020–21

15 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$600	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$600	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$600	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2021–2022

2 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

(c) There is no cost to South Metropolitan TAFE.

Financial Year	Total cost of Infringements
2017–2018	\$3,800
2018–2019	\$2,400
2019–2020	\$2,000
2020–2021	\$4,500
2021–2022 to date	\$200

North Regional TAFE

- (a) There is no cost to the North Regional TAFE. Employees are required to meet the cost of an infringement.

	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Speeding	1	0	3	0	0

- (b) There is no cost to North Regional TAFE.

- (i) Record not kept by North Regional TAFE.
- (ii) No damage caused to the vehicle.
- (iii) Nil.
- (iv) Nil.
- (v) Driver identified for all infringements.
- (vi) No vehicles were seized.

- (c) Record not kept by North Regional TAFE. There is no cost to North Regional TAFE.

Central Regional TAFE

- (a)–(b) There is no cost to the Central Regional TAFE. Employees are required to meet the cost of an infringement.

2017–18

13 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$800	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2018–19

1 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2019–20

4 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2020–21

7 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2021–2022

Nil. Not applicable.

(c) There is no cost to Central Regional TAFE

Financial Year	Total cost of Infringements
2017–2018	\$4,200
2018–2019	\$400
2019–2020	\$1,200
2020–2021	\$2,000
2021–2022 to date	Nil

South Regional TAFE

(a)–(b) There is no cost to the South Regional TAFE. Employees are required to meet the cost of an infringement.

2017–18

6 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$800	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$800	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$800	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2018–19

5 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$800	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2019–20

2 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2020–21

9 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2021–2022

1 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicles

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

(c) There is no cost to South Regional TAFE.

Financial Year	Total cost of Infringements
2017–2018	\$3,200
2018–2019	\$2,000
2019–2020	\$600
2020–2021	\$2,200
2021–2022 to date	\$200

Construction Training Fund(a)–(b) 2017–18

Nil. Not applicable.

2018–19

Nil. Not applicable.

2019–2020

1 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicle.

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver identified	Vehicle not seized

2020–21

1 exceeding the speed limit

No damage caused to vehicle.

(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Driver not identified	Vehicle not seized

(c) Value of infringements by financial year

Financial Year	Total Cost of Infringements
2017–18	Nil
2018–19	Nil
2019–20	\$400
2020–21	\$200
2021–22 to date	Nil
