



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2020

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 19 November 2020

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) took the chair at 9.00 am, acknowledged country and read prayers.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I have no idea, but when I have finished with the wig, I am going to give it to Mick Murray, so he has got some hair!

VISITORS — COAST PORT BEACH OWNER AND PORT BEACH POLAR BEARS PRESIDENT

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [9.01 am]: On behalf of the member for Bicton, I would like to welcome the owner of Coast Port Beach and the president of the Port Beach Polar Bears who are in the Speaker's gallery today. I will just get myself comfortable. It is like wearing a big frock!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, the love that is coming towards me today is beautiful!

ARMADALE — REVITALISATION

Petition

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Leader of the Opposition) [9.02 am]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Assembly. It has 10 667 signatures and says —

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned say that the State Government should recognise the City of Armadale as an important and strategic Regional Centre and proactively invest in its revitalisation, by inter alia:

1. the State Government declaring a new local full-time equivalent jobs target for the City of Armadale to be achieved in three (3) years.
2. pledging to move a flagship State Government Department to the City of Armadale within three (3) years so no less than one thousand (1,000) State Government employees permanently work in Armadale.
3. offering a five (5) year payroll holiday for businesses which employ staff who work in the City of Armadale as from 1 January 2021.
4. committing to Westport and the construction of a new harbour in 2020.
5. build and secure funding for the operation of a fully-fledged TAFE college in Armadale.
6. funding the construction of the Wungong Regional Recreational Reserve which was due to commence FY18.
7. expediate the project definition and precinct master plan for the METRONET Byford Extension and make the investment commitment during FY21 for all works within the City of Armadale.
8. encouraging the City of Armadale to proactively stimulate private investment in its municipality.

And so substantively address and arrest its escalating high unemployment rate, (10.1% pre COVID19) and its poor Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage index score of 862 which naturally adversely impact on a host of troublesome social and other community issues.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to call upon the State Government to expediently undertake all the initiatives listed above.

[See petition 203.]

PORT BEACH — COASTAL EROSION

Petition

MRS L.M. O'MALLEY (Bicton) [9.05 am]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Assembly. It has 2 907 signatures and it says —

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

Port Beach is a West Australian icon; a beach beloved by locals and international visitors for decades.

This beautiful natural asset is under threat from coastal erosion and we are calling on the State Government to help us to save Port Beach.

We the undersigned, ask that the Legislative Assembly place the protection and preservation of Port Beach as a priority for the continuous use of current and future generations.

[See petition 204.]

DANGEROUS DRIVERS

Petition

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [9.05 am]: I have a petition that has been certified by the clerks containing 837 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say that the current laws for dangerous driving causing death in Western Australia have failed to properly hold dangerous drivers to account for the destruction they have caused and continue to fail in protecting the public of Western Australia from these dangerous drivers. Only tough mandatory minimum jail sentences will send a clear message to dangerous drivers and help improve road safety for our community.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to amend existing laws to provide tough minimum sentences of 20 years for dangerous drivers causing death to reflect the gravity and seriousness of this offence.

In tabling this petition, I pay credit to Mr Edwin Tjandra, who is in the Speaker's gallery today. He has tirelessly fought for reform of our dangerous driving laws since the tragic death of his son Leonardus and has collected this petition in memory of his loving son.

[See petition 205.]

RANFORD ROAD BRIDGE

Petition

MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River) [9.07 am]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Assembly. It says —

PETITION SUPPORTING TERRY HEALY'S CAMPAIGN TO WIDEN RANFORD ROAD BRIDGE TO EIGHT LANES

To the Honourable —

And now well dressed —

Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, support Terry Healy's campaign to widen Ranford Road Bridge from four lanes to eight lanes as part of METRONET works for the new Ranford Road train station.

We now ask the Legislative Assembly to show its support for Terry Healy, Rita Saffioti and Mark McGowan to widen Ranford Road bridge

It has three signatures.

[See petition 206.]

Nonconforming Petition

Mr T.J. HEALY: I have hundreds of nonconforming petitions couched in similar terms. I thank my community.

SOUTH STREET PEDESTRIAN CROSSING — HILTON

Petition

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection) [9.08 am]: I have a petition that has been certified by the Clerk as conforming with the standing orders. It has six signatures and reads —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, being residents business and shoppers who use the Hilton Town Centre, say that action is needed to improve the pedestrian crossing on South Street between Ethelwyn and Paget Streets. A study has shown that 2.4 vehicles per hour run this light putting the lives of pedestrians at significant risk and restricting the development of Hilton Town Centre as a vibrant town centre, and despite requests for action to the Road Safety Commission and Main Roads, the crossing is still dangerous.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to call on the State Government to improve the safety of the South Street pedestrian crossing by taking all required measures to ensure vehicles are stopping for pedestrians.

[See petition 207.]

Nonconforming Petition

Ms S.F. McGURK: I also have a similar petition that did not conform with the standing orders, which has 296 signatures.

PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

INTERNATIONAL MEN'S DAY

Statement by Minister for Health

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [9.10 am]: The development of the “Western Australian Men’s Health and Wellbeing Policy: A Roadmap for Healthier Western Australian Men and Boys” was an election commitment delivered by the McGowan Labor government to support the health and wellbeing of men and boys in WA. The clinical excellence division of the Department of Health was responsible for the development and promotion of the policy with guidance from the Western Australian Men’s Health and Wellbeing Policy Reference Group. The group has representation from across the men’s health sector and is chaired by Dr Andrew Robertson, Chief Health Officer.

Men’s Health and Wellbeing WA, an independent not-for-profit charity organisation dedicated to representing and promoting the health and wellbeing of boys and men in WA, provided representation to the policy reference group. Men’s Health and Wellbeing WA developed and promotes “The Blokes’ Book”, a resource that has been used by agencies for many years. “The Blokes’ Book” is for men, and men’s health and wellbeing service providers. It was created to provide easy-to-access, accurate, comprehensive and relevant information on the health and wellbeing services that males can access when they may need to. The book provides details and contact information about crisis services, financial, legal, mental and physical health services, relationships, fathering, self-help and support group contact details, accommodation, alcohol and other drug use, domestic violence and other helpful service information for all males in WA.

Due to a variety of reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the decision was made to develop an online version of “The Bloke’s Book” called the Mens Directory. The Mens Directory is an online searchable listing of services available to the men of WA and is available at www.menshealthwa.org.au. It will be continually updated as new services for men and boys are established or identified. Information and resources in the Mens Directory broadly align with the five domains of the WA Men’s Health and Wellbeing Policy: to build healthy public policy; create supportive environments; strengthen community actions; develop personal skills; and reorient health services. I am very pleased to promote the online Mens Directory on International Men’s Day, an annual international event held on 19 November 2020 to celebrate the positive value men bring to the world, their families and communities.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM BOOLA BARDIP

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [9.12 am]: Mr Speaker, there is no-one more cultural than you this morning!

It gives me great pleasure to rise and talk about our magnificent, world-class Museum Boola Bardip, which I am proud to be opening with Premier Mark McGowan this Saturday, 21 November. By remarkable coincidence, that also happens to be my birthday!

The Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip is a \$400 million state government project. The design and construction of the new building integrates beautifully with existing heritage buildings and includes heritage restoration works to the Old Perth Gaol and the Jubilee, Beaufort and Hackett Hall buildings. The Museum will be free for visitors for at least the first 18 months and it will always be free for children aged under 15 years. Boola Bardip is situated in the very heart of the Perth Cultural Centre and is a landmark building with extraordinary exhibitions and visitor experiences. It is three times the size of the previous Museum and around 54 000 people were engaged and had their say about the new Museum. It includes eight new permanent galleries, a 1 000-square-metre temporary exhibition gallery, and retail and cafe spaces. There are thousands of items from the Museum’s collections displayed in new and innovative ways, and exhibitions and experiences featuring stories from around Western Australia.

These are fascinating facts, members. The overall structure includes 1 600 tonnes of structural steel, more than 12 000 cubic metres of concrete and 1 000 glass facade panels. The roof of the Museum is around 38 metres above ground level. The cantilever over the Hackett Hall building is 17-metres wide and is made up of high-strength steel trusses that span 20 to 40 metres, some even up to 50 metres. In total, the new Museum project employed around 3 300 people, including some 2 700 construction workers and subcontractors and 600 creative industry workers.

The diamond shape in the Museum facade, or the veil, is a modern interpretation of the shape of the tread of the iron staircases in Hackett Hall. The gold throughout the Museum is inspired by WA's gold rush history and one of the first objects in the Museum collection is a piece of quartz with a gold vein running through it. The City Room is inspired by Nature's Window in Kalbarri, while the lines and form of the building reflect the land strata in WA. The colours in the Museum are inspired by the colours of Western Australia. The main terrazzo includes colours from Whadjuk boodja—the greens of the banksia, limestone and granite. The red terrazzo is reflective of the red earth of the Pilbara.

The very first exhibition in the temporary exhibition gallery is the groundbreaking, internationally renowned special exhibition *Songlines: Tracking the Seven Sisters*. Through paintings, photographs and multimedia, *Songlines* shares the story of the seven sisters as they traverse our ancient continent from Roebourne to the APY Lands in South Australia.

I urge all members to take their friends, family and neighbours—anyone—to see the world-class Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip.

The SPEAKER: Happy sixtieth birthday for Saturday, minister—or sixty-fifth!

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN RACING INDUSTRY — PRIDE MONTH

Statement by Minister for Racing and Gaming

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Racing and Gaming) [9.16 am]: It is my pleasure to rise to inform the house that the Western Australian racing industry will hold celebrations across all three racing codes from 19 to 21 November in support of Pride Month. Northam Race Club, Gloucester Park, Bunbury Trotting Club and Greyhounds WA Cannington will be hosting several on-course activities to showcase the Western Australian racing industry's support of the LGBTIQ+ community. Each harness and thoroughbred race held over the three-day period will feature a jockey and driver wearing pride colours. There will also be races named in support of Pride Month, with the winning horses and greyhounds to receive Pride-themed rugs. A number of TAB agencies will similarly be showing their support for Pride Month by putting up posters and other supporting material in their agencies.

Particularly in the COVID-19 environment, which has impacted the normal Pride parade celebrations, it is important that Western Australians celebrate Pride Month in any way we can. With many Western Australians attending racecourses to enjoy spring racing, it is a great opportunity for the racing industry to help spread the Pride message. It is great to see the WA racing industry embrace Pride Month and encourage all participants and spectators to celebrate diversity and inclusivity. I encourage all members to get to a race meeting at Northam, Gloucester Park, Bunbury or Cannington over the weekend to participate in the celebrations.

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT AND/OR HOUSING REFURBISHMENT BUILDERS PANEL

Statement by Minister for Housing

MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee — Minister for Housing) [9.17 am]: I rise to inform the house that the Department of Communities has established a panel of experienced builders to provide integrated project management, design and construction expertise to deliver a selection of single and grouped residential dwelling projects on behalf of Communities. Additionally, as part of this procurement process, Communities also developed a panel of contractors to undertake refurbishment work on social and public housing.

The Design and Construct and/or Housing Refurbishment Builders Panel will support, with the delivery of the current stimulus packages, the housing and homelessness investment package and the social housing economic recovery package, or SHERP. The panel will support Communities to deliver at least 300 social housing dwellings throughout the Perth metropolitan area and see 70 homes refurbished over the next two years. Proponents were required to demonstrate their commitment to meet a minimum Aboriginal employment target of three per cent and their intentions to work towards a five per cent target, along with a criterion covering inclusive employment outcomes. This is very much an inclusive project. The panel has been established for a period of two years with an option to extend if required. Sites and works allocated through the panel will serve to stimulate the local economy and influence positive change in the industry by encouraging the uptake of sustainable initiatives.

16 DAYS IN WA TO STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN CAMPAIGN

Statement by Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) [9.18 am]: I rise today to inform the house about 16 Days in WA to Stop Violence Against Women for 2020. Some members might have heard me speak about 16 Days in this place earlier this week. International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is 25 November and marks the beginning of the government's annual 16 Days in WA campaign. Many members in this place have supported this campaign since the McGowan government started it in 2017. As I have told this chamber before, the campaign is about drawing attention to the many impacts of violence and abuse on women. The 16 Days in WA campaign is important because it is about encouraging leaders to be part of the conversation about what we can do, individually and collectively, to end violence against women. It is about

encouraging community awareness and understanding to change views that allow victim blaming to occur and that can stop survivors seeking help and support. There are many ways to be involved. There is the Landmarks Alight program, with buildings and structures around Perth and regional WA being lit up in the campaign colour of orange, and information can be shared on social media about the impacts of violence on women and their children to educate, inform, and, importantly, show people's support for the campaign. Agents of change will be sending their message for why they think it is important to end violence against women. This year's theme is "Respect starts with you". I encourage all in this place and across the Western Australian community to show their support for 16 Days in WA this year.

SPORTS FACILITIES — MUCHEA AND DARDANUP

Grievance

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA) [9.20 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Sport and Recreation and concerns the provision of sports change rooms and facilities. Two quite separate centres are the subject of this grievance. One is in my electorate of Moore at Muchea and the other is in the minister's electorate of Collie–Preston. I know from discussions with him that he is very well aware of it. The issue has come to my attention thanks to the efforts of Nationals WA upper house member Hon Colin Holt and Mr Wayne Sanford, the Nationals candidate for the seat of Collie–Preston, which will be vacated by the minister on his retirement.

The Dardanup sporting and community clubs that use the Wells Recreation Reserve report that the current change room is a single demountable donga that has no running water. Players cannot shower after games or training, which is particularly damaging for the local junior soccer club. The kitchen facilities are also substandard such that fresh food cannot be prepared or sold onsite, meaning that clubs are unable to run self-sustainably through food and drink sales. The soccer club, the Eaton Dardanup Football Club, had 300 members when it moved there from Eaton five years ago to accommodate the Eaton Boomers football club. Eaton Dardanup Football Club is now down to fewer than 100 members because it lost its women's team and three of the men's teams, principally because of the poor change room facility and the inability to run its own fresh food canteen. The low standard of facilities reduces the socialising aspect of the clubs' sports and their ability to raise money. Clubs at the Wells Recreation Reserve include Eaton Dardanup Football Club, Dardanup Cricket Club, South West Veteran Car Club, Dardanup junior basketball club, Dardanup Tennis Club, Dardanup Bull and Barrel Festival and the South West Rose Society. There are approximately 500 users across all clubs, including 250 children.

The Shire of Dardanup recognises the need to improve the facility in its "Dardanup Townsite Community Facilities Plan 2018" and is currently completing improvement planning in consultation with user groups. There are plans to have a larger, shared building that includes catering facilities and a separate change room with shower and toilet facilities that will also double as public toilets. Verandah and spectator seating would be incorporated in the building and new tennis and basketball courts would replace the current ageing ones. There is a funding application to the state government, and the total cost of the project is \$2.45 million. A previous funding application for \$2.3 million was made as part of the shire's economic stimulus package of 2020 and was submitted to cabinet members at the regional cabinet in Collie. Wayne Sanford, Mia Davies and Colin Holt visited the club on 26 August and met with the secretary of Dardanup's sporting and community clubs, Jill Cross, and on the same day they also met with the Shire of Dardanup to discuss these issues.

I turn now to Chittering in the electorate of Moore. Muchea has a real and urgent need to upgrade its facilities. The area has a growing population, which was accelerated due to the recent completion of the Tonkin Highway extension linking Muchea to Perth Airport. In my view, the Muchea sports facility upgrades should have been supported much more strongly by the Shire of Chittering in the past, but it has been distracted by planning for a major sporting facility 12 kilometres to the east at Lower Chittering. That \$9.71 million project was based on a large federal grant of \$4.71 million to provide a shared facility with a local independent school. The Shire of Chittering was to fund the balance, with \$2 million to be paid back by the school. This massive project was poorly researched and always lacked community support, as evidenced by the change of council at the 2019 elections, which saw it take a new direction. The new council sought to divert part of the federal funding to provide upgraded facilities at Muchea and deliver a much more modest facility in Lower Chittering. The new application had my support and it included a \$2.2 million upgrade for Muchea. On 14 August 2020, the shire was informed by the federal government that the application to vary the grant was unsuccessful. The shire has now discontinued that project and has informed the federal government of that. The urgent need to upgrade the facilities at Muchea still exists. As recently as Monday, I met with Chittering shire president, Councillor Kylie Hughes, and members of the Muchea Hall users group at the oval.

The number of users at Muchea Hall is close to 500 a week. The Chittering Junior Football Club has now grown to include three girls' sides. The Western Australian Cricket Association has stated that the Chittering Junior Cricket Club in 2019 had 10 times more girls playing cricket compared with the state average, but that having no facilities of a proper standard for the female members will affect those teams. Muchea Oval is the central place for all junior football and cricket in the Shire of Chittering and beyond, with members coming from Bindoon, Chittering, Gingin,

Lower Chittering, Muchea, Bullsbrook and other areas. It is classified as lying in the wheatbelt region, but the positioning of Muchea Oval is critical for sporting competition due to its proximity to Perth, as all the teams that are based at Muchea Oval compete with metropolitan teams. Club membership numbers are growing rapidly. The latest figures are: netball, 95; senior cricket, 50; junior cricket, 85; and junior football, 266, including 53 girls. All the clubs are growing.

Currently, there is a funding request before the state government. The Muchea Hall users' group has accumulated contributions of approximately \$500 000, including GST, towards a change room and clubroom development, costing \$1.65 million, GST exclusive. There is an application for a community sporting and recreation facilities fund grant of \$550 000, with the shire making up the balance. The Muchea group has written, according to my notes —

“With the most used oval in the district, we hope that after our 3rd attempt of funding, that CSRFF will allow the sporting clubs to have facilities at the legal standards for playing sport, for too long we have had 24 junior football players per team lining up to use one toilet, or having no closed in showers, or the clubs sporting memorabilia history sitting on the floor due to lack of clubroom space, or the girls teams needing to wedge cushions into holes so no one can look into the changerooms as they get ready.”

I seek the minister's support to rectify the urgent need for change rooms and facility upgrades at Wells Recreation Reserve, Dardanup, and the Muchea Oval sportsground. Both are well-used facilities with substandard change rooms and clubrooms, and both are very much in need of improvement, especially with the growth of female participation in sports such as football, soccer and cricket.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [9.27 am]: I thank the member for the grievance and for giving me some forewarning of it so that I could chase it up. I find it quite amazing to think that I have had two grievances from the Nationals WA in my four years as a minister and that both have been about my electorate. What I can say to you is this: don't try to put your foot into something you know nothing about. I agree that those facilities are very poor, but I also have a wish list from the Shire of Dardanup that adds up to \$52 million, but it has not prioritised it. I know the shire pushed very hard for the cricket facilities at Pratt Road. It is up to the community to go back to the shire and ask it to prioritise what it wants and to then put in a grant application, which has not been done. The member has a wish list, like any of us. We all have a wish list, and it is good to see that it has been pulled out, but there is a process that people have to go through. I do not have a bag of money that I can drop. The National Party might have done that under royalties for regions, but we have a process that people have to go through. I have been down there. I have that document in my office and I have read it time and again as we come towards election time to try to see what can be done during the election process. That is no different from what the member is doing now. I respect that the issue has been brought up, but to pick out one project out of \$52 million worth is a very difficult issue. I again say that it has to go through a process, and the process is that the shire will allocate money for whichever project it decides on.

In saying that, this gives me an opportunity to say what I have already done down there. One facility is the Eaton Bowling Club, which is a \$4 million facility that has been turned into a hub. I thank the member for Moore for the opportunity to espouse what I have already done in my electorate. The member did not say anything about that. There are also the boat ramps.

Mr R.S. Love: I'm sure you've done many things.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Does the member want me to read the whole list? Thank you very much for that!

We have also provided funds for road and parking area upgrades at Gnomesville and for the Ferguson Valley, which is in the Dardanup area. All those things have been asked for by the shire. The member cannot come in and say, “I want”, but I agree that he can highlight the problems. I have been there and I have stood in those change rooms. It is also where they hold the Bull and Barrel Festival. There is a complete new plan for that area, but it will cost a lot more than \$2 million because the shire wants to revitalise the whole facility. I am aware of that. Coming into the chamber to play cheap politics and to pull one out does a disservice —

Mr D.T. Redman: It's not cheap politics.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: It is because it is one of many things on the list and the shire has not identified where it sits as a priority. Yes, we are all allowed to lobby. I thank the member for the opportunity to say that I am doing that work. I have done previous work and, as I said, Eaton Bowling Club is one example. We will get on with that when it comes through the system, but until then, we cannot just pull one out.

The Muchea sporting ground issue is a bit more concerning. That is a community problem. Different shire councillors have a different opinion. I believe that the community was not consulted strongly enough about where the facilities should go. I have to be very careful about this because an application grant is going through the independent process. What the member said about the Muchea sporting ground is more of what a grievance should be. The community is saying, “This is what should have happened.” The previous local government did not go down the right lines and it then lost funding from the federal government, which disappoints me immensely. But as I have said, a process is being worked through and a result is not far away. I do not know what the answer will be because an independent

body is working through the issues to make sure that the money is spread around and everyone gets their share. Over the last couple of years, the government has provided \$2.5 million for sporting facilities in the member's electorate. I think the amount might be greater than that. It is not as though the area has been starved to death of funding. I stress that it must go through the system, and that means the local member—it is great that the member for Moore has made this grievance—getting into the same bucket as the shire and working with the community to bring that forward. Time and again we are lobbied by interest groups, but that is the name of the game. Sometimes interest group members become members of a council to try to influence it with all the games that are played about what goes where.

I hear the member loud and clear that the decision did not quite fit in with community expectations. It is disappointing to hear about the number of kids who want to play sport there but cannot because they do not have the facilities. It is certainly disappointing. The member must remember that it is one-third, one-third and one-third, with one-third of the funding coming from the community sporting and recreation facilities fund. It is my understanding that the community has a little pot of money that would be very helpful to the shire and government, and it would assist in bringing that money forward.

Mr R.S. Love: It is a third, a third, a third arrangement.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Yes. Again, it is provided as a stimulant. The grant system is very welcome in country areas because without government help, those areas would not get a lot of those facilities. Here we are with a chance. The member has brought it up, but the process is well down the road. The member cannot lobby anyone and I cannot speak about it; otherwise, someone will talk about me in the same way that they talked about the National Party sports awards, which happened federally. I am not going down that road. The member can check anywhere along the line and he will see that the process is fair and equitable. I think 68 per cent of the funding that has occurred during my time as minister has gone to non-Labor held seats. The member should not think that I am pointing the finger and playing political games. It is about the community. The member has raised his point. He needs to get the shire and the community onside and make sure they push that forward.

NITROUS OXIDE — REGULATION

Grievance

MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley) [9.34 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Health and it is about the lack of regulation around the sale and supply of nitrous oxide or nangs, particularly to the youth in our community.

Nitrous oxide, which is commonly known as laughing gas, nangs, bulbs or whippets, is colourless and tasteless. It is used in medical and dental settings for anaesthesia in combination with oxygen, and it is also used as a high-performance vehicle fuel and generally added to sulphur dioxide. However, it is most commonly sold in the community in small bulbs that are used for making whipped cream. When taken, nitrous oxide acts to depress the central nervous system by slowing down brain activity, resulting in the temporary loss of motor control and a dissociative psychological effect, whereby sensations and perceptions become disconnected. People who use nitrous oxide in this manner report a dreamy mental state and may experience mild auditory and, occasionally, visual hallucinations.

Recently, Kingsley locals Karin and Andy reached out to me to share their story about a family member who had become addicted to this substance. Having seen the side effects of nang addiction firsthand, they are keen to make sure that this does not happen to another family. I was shocked to find out that there is little to no regulation around the sale and supply of nitrous oxide bulbs or nangs in our community. They can be purchased by anyone, even children, and they can be delivered to any residence, no matter the time, day or night. Although I acknowledge that nitrous oxide has legitimate uses, children and young people in our community are sometimes using them to achieve a high, often at the expense of their health.

It is well known that nitrous oxide is associated with a range of potential harmful effects, including reduced blood pressure, fainting, heart attack, hypoxia, memory loss, a significant reduction in vitamin B12 stores, damage to the spine, anaemia, incontinence, numbness to the extremities, limb spasms and a weakened immune system. It can also cause birth defects if taken during pregnancy. In addition to the health impacts, nitrous oxide has a negative impact on our environment with users discarding the empty bulbs anywhere they see fit, and I know from the many posts on my local Facebook groups that this has been seen by people in my community and other communities. This has an adverse effect on our waterways, local parks and playgrounds, not to mention the effect it has on the young children in our community who find great piles of discarded bulbs.

This issue is not unique to Western Australia. In February this year, the news program *A Current Affair* ran a story highlighting the problem in the eastern states, particularly in Melbourne. I note that the South Australian Parliament passed legislation that introduced regulations that took effect from 1 April this year to regulate the sale of nitrous oxide and impose new penalties for bricks-and-mortar and online businesses. Under the South Australian Controlled Substances (Poisons) (Nitrous Oxide) Variation Regulations 2019, it is now an offence to sell or supply to people under the age of 18 years, sell between the hours of 10.00 pm and 5.00 am, make nitrous oxide visible or accessible to the public in retail stores and fail to display a notice on a premises that details the offence of selling

to those aged under 18 years. From 1 April 2020, sellers of nitrous oxide in South Australia have faced harsher penalties when they have failed to follow the new regulations. If nitrous oxide is sold between 10.00 pm and 5.00 am, the seller can be fined up to \$5 000. If a retailer fails to store nitrous oxide out of sight and inaccessible to the public, they can be fined up to \$5 000. If a retailer fails to display a notice on the premises detailing that it is an offence to sell or supply to under 18s, they can receive an on-the-spot fine of \$315 or be fined up to \$2 500. My understanding is that the current legislative framework does not prevent the sale of nitrous oxide for legitimate uses, such as cake decorating; however, this is problematic because it has to be proven that the seller knew that the buyer intended to use the nangs for non-legitimate use.

By highlighting this important issue in our community and sharing Karin and Andy's experience, I hope to prevent any further harm to any other families in my electorate of Kingsley and across the broader community of Western Australia. Having spoken about this issue with members of Parliament, including the members for Belmont, Southern River and Joondalup, I know that this issue is evident across our communities. I ask the minister to consider what options we can explore to limit the sale and supply of nitrous oxide, or nangs, to our community for non-legitimate uses. What is the best response for a Western Australian context and how can we best protect children and young people, and vulnerable people, in our community?

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [9.40 am]: I thank the member for Kingsley for bringing this grievance to this place today. I want to acknowledge her, as well as the members for Belmont and Southern River, for talking about these issues with me. It is an absolutely appropriate issue to bring before the chamber. As the member observed, nitrous oxide is a colourless, nonflammable gas that is inhaled by some, largely young people, for the purpose of intoxication. I am advised that the effects, which include perception distortions, occur quickly and dissipate in minutes. The gas is inhaled typically by discharging nitrous oxide gas cartridges or bulbs into another object or directly into the mouth. As the member observed, nitrous oxide is referred to by a number of colloquial names, including nangs, which I was familiar with, whippets, which was a learning experience for me, and, of course, laughing gas. These names refer to not only the substance itself but also the container it is in. I acknowledge the member for Thornlie in the chamber, who will attest to the experience of confronting these containers on the road—they are actually quite dangerous for cyclists.

The member for Kingsley is absolutely right: there is increased concern about the level of use of nitrous oxide. These concerns about its use are supported by the most recent findings of the Ecstasy and Related Drugs Reporting System that were published in September this year. The reports suggest that this increase may be related to growing availability via both retail outlets and online businesses, which will deliver bulk units of nitrous oxide to residential dwellings 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The sale and supply is often made under the guise of selling catering supplies. An increasing number of people are presenting to hospital emergency departments as a result of the use of nitrous oxide. One major Perth hospital has advised that there have been seven nitrous oxide-related ED presentations in the past six months, compared with just two in the previous 12 months. I think the member for Kingsley and her constituents are right—there has certainly been an increase in the level of use. Some patients have presented to EDs following prolonged heavy use of nitrous oxide. For example, one patient reported consuming 200 to 300 bulbs per day over three months, while another reported consuming 1 000 over a 72-hour period. These are obviously extreme levels of use, but they really provide a picture of just how bad usage is in some cases. The member mentioned a range of potential harms from the deliberate inhalation of nitrous oxide, including reduced blood pressure, fainting, heart attack and hypoxia. Prolonged use can lead to other extreme responses, such as subacute spinal degeneration, the loss of the ability to walk and numbness in the extremities. Some people may require prolonged rehabilitation to walk again. Although the number of emergency department presentations is relatively small, the associated harms are serious and require a deliberate, targeted and proportionate response.

In WA, nitrous oxide is not currently considered to be a prohibited drug. As the member observed, it is legitimately used in a number of contexts. It is important that regulations introduced to restrict the sale of nitrous oxide for recreational use do not have unintended consequences. However, measures must be considered to reduce the ease of access of this product to people for the purpose of intoxication, and I absolutely support the member's sentiments as far as that is concerned. The Mental Health Commission is continuing to work to reduce the harms to the Western Australian community that are caused by the use of volatile substances such as nitrous oxide, including by providing support to regional stakeholders in areas in which addressing volatile substances has been identified as a priority, maintaining a website to provide information to frontline workers and service providers, and producing a retailers' information kit and code of conduct to inform retailers of their legal responsibilities and guide them in the responsible sale and display of volatile substances. In light of the reported instances and the members for Kingsley and Belmont raising this issue with me, I have asked the Mental Health Commission to provide advice on the ways in which the government could respond. To develop that advice, the commission is working with representatives of the Department of Health and the Western Australia Police Force, as well as hospital medical officers and academic experts. The group is considering a range of potential responses, including reviewing regulatory options, developing industry codes and introducing targeted education for retailers and customers. The group is mindful of the need for a response that is proportionate to the level of harm, as well as the need to avoid unintended consequences and unnecessary impacts on the sale and supply of nitrous oxide for legitimate uses.

I thank the member very much for bringing this issue to the government's attention. The member is working well with her constituents to bring this issue to our attention, help us understand the concerns and bring about an appropriate response. I will use the rest of my time to observe that, in opposition, I once brought a bill to this place to ban the sale of butane gas, which is used in various solvents and spray paints, to minors. The government of the day resisted the temptation to support my bill. In those days, people were essentially accessing these products through high street retail outlets and it was easy for the industry to respond. My concern in this case is that the capacity for the industry to respond is limited by the fact that so many sales are online. I think the member is absolutely right and that regulation will be necessary. The Mental Health Commission will dig into these issues over the coming weeks and months to provide the government with advice on how it should proceed.

SCHOOLS — SEXUAL ABUSE — MANDATORY REPORTING

Grievance

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie — Parliamentary Secretary) [9.46 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Child Protection, and I begin by acknowledging the minister's strong leadership in her portfolio areas. I am concerned that there seem to be some in the teaching profession and others with responsibility for children who are unsure of their reporting obligations for sexual assault offences. I was relieved to hear that two former Trinity College teachers were found guilty of failing to report sexual offences that occurred on a school rugby trip to Japan in 2017. My heart goes out to the victim of those offences and I offer him and his family my deepest sympathies.

As a former student of Trinity College—I left there 40 years ago, in 1980—I am appalled that some aspects of the school's culture seem to have changed little in 40 years. The cultural pattern that seems to have endured for more than 40 years can be characterised as turning a blind eye to unacceptable and demeaning behaviour. As the 2016 Australian of the Year, David Morrison, said, the standards you walk past are the standards you accept. Sexual assault should never be accepted. Although the 2017 case at Trinity did eventually come before the public eye and receive public scrutiny, I fear that the governance arrangements at private schools could mean that similar cases do not benefit from transparency or receive exposure. The minister might like to comment on this risk.

How can we ensure that teachers and others in positions of responsibility for children do not become desensitised to any form of abusive behaviour amongst students and do not come to accept abusive behaviour as a normal part of growing up? They need training to recognise abusive behaviour and the skills and knowledge to deal with it. Although sexual assault must be one of the worst forms of abusive behaviour, I am concerned about the need for all schools, especially private schools, to be held accountable for other forms of abusive behaviour, including racial slurs, bullying and bullying that leads to sexual assault. It is very sad to learn that the victim of the Trinity Japan trip sexual assault subsequently suffered from online bullying for months.

For the record, I should say that my nine years at Trinity were happy and that the school's focus on sport actually suited me. I was very fond of being part of the school's sporting tradition. Academically, I was an average student, so my greatest achievements came from modest success in athletics, cricket and hockey. I must also say that I mostly enjoyed the positive way that the school encouraged discussion of ideas and gave students a sense of the right to question all manner of moral and ethical issues. That was a mostly positive experience. But I was always uneasy with the cliquishness that enabled groups of bullies to exist without reproach. We would like to think that standards have changed in the last 40 years, but evidence suggests otherwise. I am concerned that there is a connection with the school's excessive focus on sporting success and a culture of "What happens on the sports field stays on the sports field." It is a culture that is readily expanded to "What happens on a school trip stays on a school trip", which is the mindset that caused the events of Trinity's 2017 Japan trip.

Many people hold positions of power over children. What action is the government taking to ensure that there is no abuse of this power or the turning of a blind eye to such offences?

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection) [9.50 am]: I thank the member very much for raising this important issue. Of course, as he has highlighted, sexual abuse is simply never acceptable. As the Minister for Child Protection, I have seen firsthand the devastating impact and tragic consequences this can have on the children involved and their families, as well as the broader community. As the member alluded to in his remarks, turning a blind eye is not a standard to accept. I would like to make clear our government's commitment to work to ensure that we have the right legislation, policies and implementation of practices in place to protect children from child sexual abuse, because the community has the right to expect that our children are safe, especially within institutions that we all trust to protect them. We want our children to be safe and we want them to grow up confident and strong. I want to assure the member and all members of this house that the McGowan government is committed to creating a safer state for children and young people, and we will not ignore instances of child sexual abuse.

I share the member's concerns about ensuring that when abuse is uncovered, we have the right measures in place to respond appropriately and quickly. Mandatory reporting, and the specific case the member refers to, is a good example of one of the levers we have to do that. The successful prosecution of the two former teachers from Trinity College has sent a very clear message about the expectations on mandatory reporters. We have already seen a healthy

public commentary surrounding the prosecution, which I think has helped to raise awareness amongst the public as well as mandatory reporters. Those two teachers were found to have been aware of the serious nature of the incident, but failed to report the abuse as is required of them under law under the provisions of the Children and Community Services Act 2004. It is a legal requirement in this state for doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers, police officers and boarding house supervisors to report all reasonable beliefs of child sexual abuse to the Department of Communities.

The member might also be interested to know that we are not only enforcing and continuing to monitor the successful operation of current legislation, but also looking to expand it. In its 409 recommendations, the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse outlined changes to ensure that history does not repeat itself. The recommendations of the royal commission were developed over five years, with the input of nearly 17 000 people coming forward and telling their stories. There were 8 000 private sessions, 57 individual case studies and scores of independently commissioned research reports. One of the changes the royal commission recommended was the expansion of mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse to include people in additional professions—namely, people in religious ministry, out-of-home care workers, youth justice workers, early childhood workers, registered psychologists and school counsellors. The Children and Community Services Amendment Bill 2019 seeks to expand the mandatory reporter professions. It passed this house unanimously and is currently before the Legislative Council, which I hope will pass this important legislation before it rises. The McGowan government is committed to implementing all the categories of mandatory reporters recommended by the royal commission in a phased approach to ensure the effectiveness of the implementation of the recommendations. I think one of the points the member raised well in his grievance is that having the legislation is one thing, but making sure that people who are required to mandatorily report understand their obligations and the institutions they operate within understand their obligations is also an important part of its successful implementation.

Further to these changes to mandatory reporting, the government is also progressing significant reforms as recommended by the royal commission to ensure that the institutions trusted with supporting our children have independent oversight. This means ensuring that they are complying with the legislation, policies and practices, such as mandatory reporting, that government sets. The work to progress independent oversight of child-safe principles, out-of-home care services and youth justice services will help to ensure that all institutions working with children are aware of the risks, have protective measures in place to mitigate those risks and are accountable to an independent authority.

In addition to this reform, I recently tabled the Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Bill 2020 as a green bill in this place for public consultation. The draft bill seeks to establish a reportable conduct scheme to provide independent oversight of how organisations handle allegations and convictions of child abuse. The bill will compel heads of organisations to notify the Ombudsman of misconduct within their organisations so that the Ombudsman can then review investigation findings or undertake investigations on their own motion. An estimated 4 000 organisations in this state will be covered by the reportable conduct scheme, including education services such as schools, as well as a wide range of others.

Some important research findings, recommendations and lessons have emerged from our landmark royal commission in this country. Frankly, they are relevant for all of us, as this sort of work requires not only vigilance but also buy-in from the whole community. The member can rest assured that we are doing all we can to respond to historical abuse in the distant and not-so-distant past, to prevent further abuse from happening and to ensure a swift response to abuse should it happen again.

FREMANTLE TRAFFIC BRIDGE — REPLACEMENT

Grievance

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [9.57 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Transport, and I thank the minister for taking it. My grievance relates to the considerable concern in North Fremantle about changes to the planned location of the old Fremantle Traffic Bridge crossing at Queen Victoria Street. The concerns of residents fall into three parts: the pending demise of the old wooden bridge, the increasing difficulty people are experiencing crossing Queen Victoria Street due to increased traffic volumes and the relocation of the new bridge from the west side of the current bridge to the east side of the current bridge. As I have said before in this place, I empathise with the concerns that residents have expressed about the loss of the old wooden bridge. As I understand it, this is one of the largest and oldest wooden bridges in Western Australia. Many residents and people in Fremantle would like to see the bridge retained and used for another purpose, such as a pedestrian crossing or a market precinct; however, I understand the government's position that maintenance of the existing wooden bridge is unaffordable and that a replacement bridge is required.

I believe that the proposal to maintain the ends of the bridge on both sides of the river to maintain part of the historic structure is a good initiative that will help to maintain some of the history of the original structure. Whatever the outcome, I hope that this plan is part of the final project. Up until quite recently, all plans around a replacement project for Queen Victoria Street showed the new bridge located to the west of the current bridge. When the announcement was made in April 2019 about the commencement of the replacement bridge, the Minister for Planning and the federal member for Fremantle, Mr Josh Wilson, were holding up a schematic showing the replacement bridge located to the west of the existing bridge. I think it is fair to say that there are mixed views about the need for a new bridge

versus maintaining the old bridge. I am not sure of the split, but there are a fair number of people in each camp. However, there is universal support in the local North Fremantle community for locating any replacement bridge to the west of the existing bridge. Members of the Fremantle History Society and residents are concerned that any replacement bridge located to the east of the existing bridge will interfere with the remaining foundations of the previous convict-built bridge across the river. These foundations are observable on the northern bank of the river where there will be greatest impact from the new bridge.

The growing traffic volumes along Queen Victoria Street are making it much more difficult for residents to cross the street in the main shopping area. Like many community shopping areas, the shops are seeing quite a dramatic resurgence in patronage as people choose to support their local businesses. Fremantle council has placed some traffic calming measures in the area; however, residents, especially parents with younger children and people with mobility difficulties, are very concerned that crossing the busy street is becoming too dangerous. The road is becoming a barrier, separating the local community. I strongly encourage the minister to ask her department to work with the local community to understand how an improved connection for cyclists and pedestrians across Queen Victoria Street can be incorporated into the new bridge project.

Local residents in the area adjacent to the currently proposed bridge route are extremely concerned that this choice will bring a major highway within a few metres of residents living in apartments along Kwong Alley in North Fremantle. I believe that these residents are fully justified in their concerns about the proximity of the relocated highway alignment to their homes and the impact that it will have on their lives. These are people who, in good faith, purchased quite expensive apartments, knowing that they were near Queen Victoria Street, but now find that the road will be brought to within a few metres of their houses. They will be unfairly impacted by noise and vibration from heavy traffic crossing the bridge. This will have a significantly negative impact on their quality of life, especially given the increasing level of traffic movements through this area. The relocation of the bridge to the east of the existing bridge was apparently required because the government decided to duplicate the existing rail crossing to cope with an anticipated increase in container freight to the North Mole. It will duplicate the rail crossing to the east of the existing bridge, which will then prevent the replacement traffic bridge being located to the west of the existing traffic bridge. As I mentioned before, I was surprised by why we would need to spend something like \$100 million on a new rail bridge when the government's stated intention is to transition container freight to the outer harbour in a few years.

The minister was kind enough to provide a briefing on the bridge project in her office with her department and at that meeting I was informed by the Department of Transport representative that it was planning for the continuation of container freight at Fremantle harbour until at least 2037. I understand that relocating the rail bridge to the west of the existing rail bridge is not trivial, but I believe the government should re-examine this option to determine whether innovative solutions can make this achievable. I strongly encourage the minister to work with her department to see whether it is possible to stick with the original plans to locate the replacement Queen Victoria Street Bridge to the west of the existing bridge. Bringing a busy freight and commuter road so close to existing residences is an unfair outcome.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [10.02 am]: I thank the member for Cottesloe for his grievance. Of course, the debate and discussion on the Fremantle Traffic Bridge has a bit of a chequered history with many differing views of the project. I remember, I think, under the previous government, some substantial funds were committed —

Ms S.F. McGurk: It was \$80 million.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I think that is correct, member for Fremantle.

Substantial funds were committed for a replacement bridge at one point in time. It was then ripped away about a year later, as I recall. At that time, the previous government recognised that there were ongoing safety concerns and the ability to maintain the Fremantle Traffic Bridge into the future was a primary concern for its replacement. As the member noted, it is an old bridge, built in 1938 as a temporary structure. Over the past 10 years, significant maintenance expenditure has been required to keep it safe for motorists, pedestrians and the whole community. Continual works have been needed. There has been a need for a new Fremantle Traffic Bridge and for probably over 10 years there has been an absolute need to replace it. That is why we partnered with the commonwealth to secure in both the state and federal budget over \$200 million for the replacement of that bridge. This is not about more traffic; it is about creating a safer bridge for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists too. I think it is an absolute necessity. It is not a like-to-have; to me, this is a much-needed project to make sure that we continue to have a safe crossing at that point.

I want to talk about pedestrian and cycling access too, because there has been a bit of discussion about this in the community. As Minister for Transport, our commitment to cycling infrastructure in Western Australia cannot be questioned. Over \$220 million has been allocated over the next four years. This will form a big part of improvements of access for cyclists and pedestrians. A number of claims have been made about this, which quite bother me, because a government that is getting on with it to improve access is being criticised for this type of bridge, which will improve access for pedestrians and cyclists. I know the member has been a big supporter of the improved cycling connectivity along Curtin Avenue to Queen Victoria Street and we are about to embark on stage 2. There

will be improved connections on the new Fremantle Traffic Bridge, and we will have a dedicated principal shared path from Fremantle to Perth, which I think will be an absolutely incredible achievement. As part of that, too, there have been some discussions about how the PSP will connect, in a sense, on the southern side, and we continue to engage to make sure that we will get good connectivity. Again, this is all about improving connectivity. I would like people to recognise that this government is building the PSP from Fremantle to Perth and has dedicated the funds. I want to put that to rest, first of all.

The member mentioned three key issues. One was about the demise of the old wooden bridge. It is clear that we will not be able to maintain and keep the entire wooden bridge because of not only the maintenance costs, but also its impact on navigation on the water. Regarding the complexity of projects, this one has it all. We have to make sure that we have great connectivity for cyclists and pedestrians; we are working with an operating freight line, passenger rail line and major traffic bridge; and of course, there is the river. We basically have every potential constraint in one area. Working around that is very difficult. The reason we cannot keep the entire bridge not only relates to the maintenance costs, but also the impact it has on the boating community as it navigates its way through a number of different piers. Continued discussions will be held with the community about how much we can retain, and how that provides community asset, whether it is for fishing or whether it can be facilitated to even have some bars, restaurants, cafes and that type of thing, which we are very keen to do.

Another issue is the difficulty that people experience crossing Queen Victoria Street. I agree with the member that North Fremantle is an excellent precinct. When I am in that area, I stop by some of the coffee shops. It has a vibrant high street feeling and it is a really exciting little precinct. Of course, the other key point is the relocation of the new bridge. On the issue of pedestrian connectivity, I want to say that we will continue to work and see how we can get connectivity in that area because, as we said, it is a well-frequented area and continues to grow. Of course, there is the issue of the relocation of the new bridge from the west side of the current bridge to the east side of the current bridge. I understand there are some concerns. We are listening to the concerns from North Fremantle, and in particular that apartment building, regarding the proximity of the new bridge. The only point I would make is that we are operating within an existing Main Roads reserve and will do whatever we can to mitigate any impact. I also want to outline that we will go into an alliance contract on this, which means that it is not a design and construct. We will not sit there and say, “This is how you will build the bridge.” This is when we engage with a company, a contractor, and look at how we can provide the best bridge we can in that area.

I thank the member and I also thank the members for Fremantle and Bicton for their positive engagement on this, because they are constantly feeding back community views and making sure that we take the views of the community into account, in particular, some of the views about pedestrian and cycling access. This is not an easy project; I would say it is one of the hardest—it is up there—but we will do what we can to deliver an excellent project.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Eighteenth Report — “Curtin University Statute No. 5 — Election of Council Members and Curtin University Statute No. 12 — Admission and Enrolment” — Tabling

MS E. HAMILTON (Joondalup) [10.09 am]: I present for tabling the eighteenth report of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation titled “Curtin University Statute No. 5 — Election of Council Members and Curtin University Statute No. 12 — Admission and Enrolment”.

[See paper [4011](#).]

Ms E. HAMILTON: The report I have just tabled serves two purposes. Firstly, it advises the house of the committee’s recommendation that Curtin University Statute No. 5, “Election of Council Members”, be disallowed. Secondly, it provides information to the house about the committee’s concerns about Curtin University’s interpretation of the Curtin University Act 1966.

In relation to the disallowance, the Curtin act creates a hierarchy of regulation. Firstly, the university council may make statutes about certain matters set out in the act. Statutes must be approved by the Governor, published in the *Government Gazette* and laid before Parliament. Statutes are subject to disallowance. Secondly, the university council may make rules under statutes. Rules do not require the approval of the Governor and are not subject to disallowance. In the committee’s view, rules are subsidiary to statutes and are intended to contain administrative or auxiliary matters to statutes. The act requires the manner of election of council members to be prescribed by statute. Curtin statute 5 fails to prescribe the manner of electing members of council and instead provides that the manner of election will be set out in the rules. In the committee’s view, by electing to prescribe such matters in rules rather than statutes, Curtin is in effect avoiding the scrutiny of Parliament. The committee recommends that statute 5 be disallowed.

I turn to the Curtin University Act in general. The information in the report sets out the committee’s and Curtin’s competing interpretations of the Curtin act. The committee is very concerned about Curtin’s interpretation of the Curtin act, which results in Curtin rather than Parliament deciding which material will be scrutinised by Parliament. The issue for further consideration is whether the act intends to provide Curtin with a discretion to determine whether subject matters set out in section 34 of the act should be subject to disallowance. I commend the report to the house.

Nineteenth Report — “Annual Report 2020” — Tabling

MS E. HAMILTON (Joondalup) [10.11 am]: I present for tabling the nineteenth report of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation, titled “Annual Report 2020”.

[See paper [4012](#).]

Ms E. HAMILTON: The report that I have just tabled advises the house of the key activities of the committee for the 2020 calendar year. The committee scrutinises instruments made under statutory delegation and determines whether the instruments are beyond the scope of the delegated power or are otherwise in breach of the committee’s terms of reference. The committee continues to scrutinise large volumes of delegated legislation. This year, the committee scrutinised 330 instruments, including 181 regulations and 18 local laws. Motions for the disallowance of delegated legislation usually do not proceed if satisfactory undertakings are given to the committee. The committee recommends disallowance only as a last resort. During 2020, the committee received two ministerial and 17 local government undertakings. The committee requested undertakings from two local governments to repeal local laws in their entirety due to the large volume of issues contained within them. These undertakings were provided to the committee.

The committee tabled three reports this year. In one of those reports, the committee recommended that an instrument be disallowed, that instrument being Curtin University Statute No. 5, “Election of Council Members”. That disallowance is set to be debated in the other place on its last day of sitting. The committee also drew Parliament’s attention to its concerns about Curtin University’s interpretation of the Curtin University Act 1966, which results in Curtin University rather than the Parliament deciding which of its regulatory material will be scrutinised by the Parliament.

The committee trusts that the matters noted in this report will assist persons and bodies making delegated legislation to understand the committee’s processes. I commend the report to the house.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [10.13 am]: I want to make a brief contribution. First of all, I want to recognise the effort of the Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation, the member for Joondalup, for the excellent work that she does. One of the pleasures of this place—I think this is true for all members—is the participation in committees. We get to know members outside the political sphere, if you like, and we get to know them as people and for the work that they do. The member for Joondalup does an excellent job chairing this committee. I want to recognise my other committee members: Hon Martin Pritchard; Hon Kyle McGinn, who has now been replaced; the member for Murray–Wellington; and the member for Kalgoorlie. I wanted to especially recognise Hon Robin Chapple, who has been a member of Parliament for almost 20 years in the other place. He is an outstanding parliamentarian. He has had to leave for personal health reasons, which is very tragic and sad, but in his normal way, he is very stoic and upbeat about all that. He really is an outstanding parliamentarian. I particularly acknowledge the importance of corporate memory. I think it is probably fair to say that Hon Robin Chapple and Hon Martin Pritchard are at the heart and soul of the delegated legislation committee, because they have been on it for some time and they remember those things.

Delegated legislation is not a sexy committee. It is not necessarily one of those committees that everyone is championing at the bit to get on, but it plays a critical role, and that was exemplified in the original statement that the member for Joondalup gave about the Curtin University council. It is very important that we do not let our processes degrade. I do not wish to conflate this in any way, but today we heard an announcement about military behaviour overseas. At the root core of that was the breakdown of proper process and procedure. In this place, I think it is really important that we always make sure that proper processes and procedures are followed.

I also want to recognise the staff. As always in this place, we are superbly served by our staff. I am on two committees and it is true for both of these committees. I recognise Denise Wong, our legal advisory officer; Laura Hutchinson and Shoshanna Mc Nerney, who are also legal advisory officers; and Clair Siva, the committee clerk. As everyone knows, the people in those administrative roles make the rest of us look organised. I am very grateful for that, and I certainly commend the report to the house. Thank you.

ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE

Tenth Report — “Turning to India: Investing in our Future” — Tabling

MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills) [10.17 am]: I present for tabling the tenth report of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee, titled “Turning to India: Investing in our Future”, and the associated submissions.

[See papers [4013](#) and [4014](#).]

Ms J.J. SHAW: This report, “Turning to India: Investing in our Future”, has been tabled at a particularly challenging time. Nations continue to grapple with the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, an event that has interrupted trade flows, supply chains and the free movement of people and it continues to adversely affect population health and economic development around the globe. China has announced a range of restrictions on Australian exports, many of which are significant to the Western Australia economy. At a time when it is essential to keep our trading relationships strong, our state—the most trade oriented in the nation—finds itself affected by the strained relationship

between Beijing and Canberra. There has never been a more important time to consider the steps that Western Australia can take to fortify its existing trade relationships and develop pathways to new markets. This inquiry was initiated at a time when Western Australia's disproportionate reliance on a single partner and a handful of commodities was acknowledged but considered relatively uncontentious, obviously prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the increased global awareness of the transformation and growth of India's economy over recent years, the committee considered it worthwhile to examine whether our state was effectively pursuing economic opportunities in that market.

Western Australia was an early mover in recognising the export potential of the Indian market. In 1996, we were the first Australian state to open an office in India, establishing the government of Western Australia's India office in Mumbai. Other states soon followed suit, dedicating significant resources and opening their own trade offices. Over time, other Australian states, particularly Victoria and New South Wales, have achieved far greater trade and investment engagement with India. Although the Australia-India economic relationship is seeing significant growth, with India now Australia's fifth-largest partner, WA has not seen a commensurate increase in our bilateral trade flows with India.

India is widely recognised as one of the fastest growing economies in the world. By 2035, it is predicted to be the third largest national economy behind China and the United States. A rapidly developing India will need many goods and services that Western Australia can provide, including those from the education, mining, energy, agriculture and tourism sectors. This inquiry originally intended to examine how we might regain momentum in our trading relationship with India and broadly coincided with the release of two key state government policies: "Western Australia's Asian Engagement Strategy 2019-2030: Our Future with Asia" and "Diversify WA: Strong Economy, Creating Jobs, Diverse Industries". At the outbreak of the pandemic, the Economics and Industry Standing Committee questioned whether we should proceed with this inquiry. After all, with such uncertainty, lack of information and a limited ability to predict our neighbours' responses to such an unprecedented global shock, what useful observations or recommendations could be made? Over the past eight months, however, it has become apparent that there has never been a more important time to consider where WA's economic future could lie and the steps we can take to leverage the unique position we now find ourselves in.

On account of the McGowan government's decisive action in response to the outbreak of COVID-19, WA is currently one of the safest and strongest jurisdictions in the world. We have thus far avoided the worst of the health and economic impacts that have so devastated other nations. Western Australia is extremely well positioned for recovery, and trade has never assumed a more important role in our statewide recovery conversation. It is now vital that WA seeks to diversify its trade base with new partners, in new markets and across new goods and services. Whilst significant efforts are focused on internal recovery, WA needs to also build new industries and markets, industries that will harness our innovation and existing capacities and chart new courses to new markets. India is one such destination for our joint endeavours, and amongst all of our potential trading partners, it should receive our prime focus.

A range of factors complicate the pathway to increased trade with India. India's system of government is remarkably complex. The national government has a limited capacity to direct the economy and the policies of its 36 sub-national governments, all of which are significant economic actors in their own right. Indian markets are complex. They have difficult tariff regimes, particularly in agriculture, and they contain other regulatory and non-tariff barriers. Australians also generally lack an awareness of Indian business opportunities and do not understand India's business culture well. India is also able to meet much of its own demand for Western Australia's traditional major exports. Where we trade, WA often supplements an internal supply rather than being the main source for key commodities such as iron ore and LNG. A far wider variety of products and services are likely to underpin our future relationship, with demand for international education and tourism in particular likely to be significant. To be successful, Western Australia must apply a different, more nuanced, layered and proactive engagement strategy than we have traditionally adopted for other commodities, products, services and markets. Evidence to this inquiry has demonstrated that state-level trade policy requires long-term planning and commitment, and should ideally enjoy broad-based political support. A nonpartisan approach to trade policy would enable successive administrations to take strategic and ambitious approaches to policy and program development and deliver stronger, long-term trading ties and relationships. This will be vital to success in India. The evidence also shows that collaboration with Australian national, state and territory governments is imperative. Both the Australian and Indian national governments have signalled their intent to enhance the bilateral relationship through the Varghese and Wadhwa reports respectively. We have recommended that our own initiatives complement nationwide efforts. No Australian state has the capacity to penetrate the Indian market alone. A combined effort is likely to yield better outcomes for all.

The state government's economic framework Diversify WA and Western Australia's Asian engagement strategy adopt a sectoral approach to economic development. The "Western Australia Investment and Trade Plan 2019-20" identifies priority subsectors in India that fall within Western Australia's six priority sectors. Our report considers the consistency and intersections between these documents and the opportunities and challenges in international education, tourism, mining and minerals, energy and agribusiness. We observe that the state government's commitment

to India should be based on a well-resourced and long-term approach. Sustained, deep relationships between people, businesses and institutions matter in India. They need time and support to develop. We note the importance of adequately resourcing an in-country presence and support a review of the location of the Western Australian government office in India and the viability of establishing a second office. People-to-people links matter. This report finds that regular and sustained ministerial visits between our jurisdictions build high-level connections and facilitate trade and investment. Trade missions also provide opportunities to build international connections, foster business relationships and identify partnering and investment opportunities.

It is also important to identify local champions to promote WA and to increase cultural ties and India literacy in government and the business community. The large and growing Western Australian Indian diaspora is an underutilised resource and could greatly assist to strengthen our trading relationship, particularly when the capacity to travel is constrained in the COVID-19 environment. The diaspora's established ties are a vital link to India, providing a bridge when other methods to deepen relationships and obtain market intelligence are limited. There has never been a more important time to engage the Indian diaspora, to reinforce relationships between our nations, to maintain informal and formal pathways to market, to gain an understanding of opportunities for re-engagement and to gather market intelligence. Research and development relationships can and will also continue. It will be vital to tap into and develop the networks and partnerships between universities, research institutions and academic communities. Research teams are used to collaborating across borders and can reinforce international links.

Despite the large volume of suggestions made to the committee, the evidence gathered and the range of findings and recommendations contained in this report, one finding is inescapable: the COVID-19 pandemic has wrought significant damage to the global economy and creates unprecedented uncertainty. The pandemic struck in the very early stages of this inquiry, affecting our capacity to gather and interrogate much of the evidence presented. Hearings were delayed or cancelled, and programs of work associated with specific terms of reference were not undertaken. The committee was unable to travel and meet with many of the organisations and individuals who could have provided significant insight and expertise. Moreover, there were understandable and entirely legitimate constraints on the capacity of state and commonwealth agencies to engage, given their immediate and intense focus on the COVID response. This, again, has affected the committee's capacity to test a range of potential findings and recommendations we might otherwise have made. The COVID-19 pandemic is also ever-evolving. Whilst the committee gathered information on trade dynamics prior to the pandemic, the limited resources available to us rendered it impossible to reach firm conclusions on the impacts of COVID-19 on the bilateral relationship, or make detailed recommendations on appropriate policy responses. The pandemic and associated restrictions have undoubtedly had significant effects on the bilateral relationship. However, these effects have not been uniform and even within individual sectors, demand and supply dynamics vary between services and commodities.

The committee received evidence underscoring the need for the state to remain export focused and trade oriented. Throughout this report, the committee notes the importance of long-term, consistent and sustained engagement to foster opportunities and enhance the WA–India economic relationship. This is evermore important in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Asian engagement strategy committed the state government to developing a 10-year economic outlook to assess priority Asian markets and identify trade and investment opportunities, key infrastructure developments, supply and value chain creation, and trade and investment barriers. Currently, it is virtually impossible to develop a 10-year outlook on regional trade dynamics, given the extraordinary impacts of COVID-19 and the general level of global uncertainty. Nonetheless, it remains important to adopt a long-term approach to building relationships and markets. India is not the type of market in which sporadic government-to-government, business-to-business, and people-to-people contact will result in high rates of growth. Instead, broadening and deepening the relationship will rely on sustained and consistent engagement. It may be necessary for the state government to adopt a more focused program of activity.

“Western Australia's Asian Engagement Strategy 2019–2030: Our Future with Asia” lists a number of nations for which market plans will be developed. Given the extraordinary strain that the COVID-19 response will place on the state's resources, it may be appropriate for the government to prioritise markets. The content and complexion of the market plans will no doubt also evolve as the dynamics of the pandemic unfold. The committee believes the India market plan should clearly indicate India's importance to WA; signal the state government's long-term commitment to promoting trade; set out the state's government's vision for the relationship and strategic objectives; outline actions to achieve the vision; ensure a nuanced and tailored approach to the Indian market, reflecting WA's competitive strengths and the unique trade dynamic of the WA–India economic relationship; and include measures of success and targets.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also highlighted the need for WA to alter its traditional approach to trade, essentially requiring that it now undertake an international charm offensive. We cannot rely on the approach that we adopted with Japan, Korea and China. Success in those markets was underpinned by their demand for, and our supply of, mineral and energy resources. Going forward, we cannot expect international trade partners to come to us with the same requirements. The growing interest in self-reliance and recognition of international supply chain weaknesses

will likely cause other nations to look to invest much closer to home. To succeed, Western Australia needs to adjust its model. We need to elevate trade as a portfolio and proactively sell our goods and services to our trade partners, including India. We should position ourselves so that we are viewed internationally as a dependable partner in an increasingly challenging economic and geopolitical environment.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Diversify WA and the Asian engagement strategy signalled the state government's intent to broaden the state's economic base, markets and trading partners. In its response to the pandemic, the government has acknowledged the centrality of trade to its COVID-19 recovery plan. The path forward is uncertain, many factors affecting recovery will be beyond the state government's control. However, recovery will require a sustained and elevated focus on trade. It is crucial that the state government continues to emphasise WA's role in global supply lines and status as a dependable partner. It will require broad-based political consensus. As COVID-19's impact on global and regional trade dynamics becomes clearer, Western Australia's trade-related initiatives are more likely to meet with success if they enjoy broad-based political support. A long-term view is required. The WA-India economic relationship in particular will require consistent and sustained engagement. It will require the formation of strategic partnerships. Evidence to the inquiry suggested that the future prosperity of WA's manufacturing sector in particular may hinge on our ability to integrate into international manufacturing supply lines and processes with trusted partners. A charm offensive is needed. WA cannot rely on its historical approach to trade relationships based on meeting our neighbours' demand for minerals and energy. Our relationships with new partners will be conducted on different terms. We will need to work harder and smarter to attract new markets and opportunities.

This report makes 124 findings and 37 recommendations that we hope will contribute towards the public discussion on how to strengthen our trading relationship with India, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. Given our safe, strong economy, we are presented with a fantastic opportunity to chart an ambitious course in trade policy. Success with India will be essential to achieving our broader economic goals.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to extend our sincere thanks to the many organisations and individuals who engaged so productively with us on this inquiry. We received 49 submissions and held 18 hearings with more than 35 witnesses and 15 deposition sessions. We appreciate the effort so many people went to, to provide us with the best possible information and assistance in very challenging circumstances.

I would also like to acknowledge the amazing support provided by the committee office staff—our principal research officer Suzanne Veletta and research officer Franchesca Walker. The inquiry presented a wide range of logistical challenges throughout COVID-19, all of which were met with absolute professionalism. Suffice to say, this is not the report the committee intended to table when we commenced this inquiry. The fact that we have managed to produce a report containing such a wealth of information is testament to the extraordinary lengths that Suzanne and Franchesca went to. Their assistance in getting us to the finish line before the fortieth Parliament rises has been truly remarkable.

Finally, and on a personal note, I would like to thank my colleagues on the committee. This will be the last report we produce together in the fortieth Parliament. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with each of you. Although the recent addition of David Honey to our committee has been very welcome and valuable, I want to express my sincere and particular gratitude to deputy chair Terry Redman and members Stephen Price and Yaz Mubarakai, all of whom have served on the committee for the duration of the fortieth Parliament. We have been remarkably collegiate and collaborative and I think we have produced a body of work that we can be genuinely proud of. We have approached significant and complex public policy issues with open minds and have managed to avoid the pitfalls of partisanship that so often unnecessarily afflict many aspects of political life. I have gained much through the experience and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to learn from you all. Thank you for your friendship, comradery and support. It has been a genuine privilege to serve with you.

MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren-Blackwood) [10.35 am]: I would like to make some quick comments following on from the Chair of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee on the committee's final report for the fortieth Parliament. I loosely shared in a text this morning that the report is a nice doorstop—she is a hell of a piece of work considering that we were not able to travel! Nevertheless, I believe we have delivered a report that will massively value add to discussion in Western Australia on our engagement with India. The report has 124 findings and 37 recommendations. I am sure it will be good reading for those who have an interest in, and want to engage with, the very valuable discussion of where India fits in Western Australia's future.

At a very high level, the report provides a bit of an understanding of what India represents for Western Australia. A couple of pages early in the report give a quick snapshot of the Indian economy, population et cetera and the current engagement as far as trade with WA is concerned. India had a population of 1.37 billion in 2019. It will be the world's largest population by 2027. It is not insignificant. India has a \$3 trillion economy. It is presently the fifth-largest economy and is moving up the ranks. The report highlights that India has an aspirational middle class 12 times larger than the Australian population. As a market, it is substantial. If we do not get an understanding of how to better engage with India, we will be doing our state a disservice. This report is one of the pieces of the jigsaw that will help put that strategy together.

To give members an appreciation of where the current trade relationship with Western Australia sits, it is currently less than \$2 billion—\$1.7 billion or something like that. What does that mean in the scheme of our other trade relationships? We have a trade relationship with China that is worth just under \$100 billion. Of course, that is mainly minerals and petroleum. Our trade relationship with Japan is worth \$23 billion and with South Korea, \$10 billion. It is a fair way down the ranks before India gets in the mix. On those very raw numbers of the scale of the Indian economy, population growth and its needs over the next couple of decades, and with our existing relationship coming from a very, very low point, one can understand why India needs to be in the mix. We have—I say “we” because it is a genuine position we had in the previous government and that the current government has—a mantra of trying to diversify our economy. As the chair mentioned in her response, our strong engagement with China underpins one of the challenges we have in that Western Australia is so reliant on that market. Trying to diversify our economy is smart. The very high numbers mean approaching India makes a bit of sense. There is an opportunity for us.

This report is about how we can sharp point those opportunities and engage with the very unique aspects that India presents and where those opportunities sit. I have mentioned in this chamber before, and I think it is important to mention again, I had up until recently a view that India was just simply a second China and we should go and engage with it. It is not. It is massively different. Therefore, it needs a very bespoke strategy in response. We have to be very strategic in terms of how we engage, where we engage and that we make connections in order to develop the competitive opportunities that Western Australia has in engaging with India.

As the report has highlighted, a lot of the opportunities sit in things like education, tourism and a whole range of export service opportunities, particularly in the mining equipment, technology and services—described as METS—and petroleum equipment, technology services—PETS—as well as renewable energy, agricultural services and the broader research and development world. There are a number of opportunities. India is very different from China. This report gives us a sharp point of how we might better engage to achieve that outcome.

There is a really good quote on page 285 of the report from Ambassador Anil Wadhwa, which states —

[In India] you cannot really make headway until you are actually talking to the right people.

That is significant. The report gives an insight into enhancing networks, whether it is through business or government circles or through the Indian diaspora in Western Australia so that people can talk to the right people to make sure that opportunities can be developed. The chair made the point in her presentation that central to this is the relationship between people, businesses and institutions. Government can help facilitate those links and sharpen the point of that engagement. A big proportion of the recommendations go to enhancing the opportunities to get that engagement in the first instance in such a way that we can get business opportunities to come from it.

It is good having the member for Jandakot here, who is obviously engaged with the Indian diaspora here in Western Australia. One of the big learnings for me in the report was that I had not realised how strong that was or how much of an underutilised opportunity it was. The report found that the connections we already have here in Western Australia can be leveraged to get better outcomes. The member for Jandakot has been valuable in giving us those connections in the committee’s deliberations so that it could come up with relevant recommendations so we can move forward.

I will not go into more detail beyond that other than to say that I have enjoyed this as our final report. I think that the Economics and Industry Standing Committee has done a wealth of work over the last four years. The public has certainly got value for money. This, of course, is the last report that we will produce in this Parliament. Like the chair, I would like to thank my parliamentary colleagues, the member for Swan Hills; the most recent member of the committee, Dr David Honey, member for Cottesloe; the members for Jandakot and Forrestfield; and even the member for Churchlands still gets a mention in the report because he was there at the start. He has got his tail in on the last couple of reports, despite bailing early! As has been highlighted by the chair, fantastic work and effort was done by Suzanne Veletta and Franchesca Walker to deliver this report under very challenging circumstances in a COVID world that made it all the more difficult. They have contributed massively to support us in delivering something that will value add to the people of Western Australia. For those who want to engage in this space, this report is a good read and it has a lot of value.

I have really enjoyed the Economics and Industry Standing Committee over this term of Parliament. It works with my head in that economic space, so it is an easy fit for me. I do not know what will happen after the election. I have to get re-elected in the first instance. Hopefully, if the people of Warren–Blackwood support me, I will be back here, maybe as a minister—you never know—so I might not even have the opportunity to get on a committee! I am certainly looking forward to going to the election and asking our communities to vote for us once again and give us the support to come in here and try to be a productive member for the people of this great state.

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield) [10.45 am]: It gives me pleasure to contribute to the tabling of this report of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee titled “Turning to India: Investing in Our Future”. As we have already heard, this inquiry has been quite challenging with the impact of COVID-19. The pandemic was declared very early on once we had started to undertake the hearings. India is a very interesting and challenging country. As we have heard, it is difficult at times to appreciate the size of the population in such a small place and the opportunities that

are contained within it. Its population is currently nearly 1.4 billion and is predicted to be 1.6 billion in 2035 and 1.7 billion by 2050. It creates a lot of opportunities for countries around the world and also a lot of challenges for the Indian government to provide for its people. It is quite hard to appreciate those numbers; they are extraordinarily large. When we think that 300 million people do not have access to power, it is phenomenal how big an opportunity it is. Everyone says that India is an obvious opportunity to diversify our investment around different parts of the world. Everyone says we have to get into India and do this and that, but it is not easy to do that. What we heard from the evidence during the inquiry was that there are a number of key elements to it. We can certainly do better in the future. India has a challenging and complex government system. There is a Prime Minister and 36 individual states, essentially, that run their own race. It is a federation similar to ours, but the federal government does not have a huge amount of influence on the state governments and their economic policies, so we have to work specifically with the right people in the right areas, as we have heard.

Providing for those 1.5 billion people is a significant challenge for any government. That opens opportunities for other countries and for Australia and Western Australia in particular. It was very clear throughout the inquiry that a key element of that is the development of relationships. The Indian diaspora in Western Australia is close to 100 000, and we do not leverage our relationships with them enough. That certainly is a wasted opportunity. It was quite evident throughout the inquiry that there is a lot of opportunity and willingness from the diaspora to engage with us to help make those connections and develop those relationships in India. The flip side of that is we have to make sure that we have the right resources in India to take advantage of those relationships. It became quite evident to us—members who have had anything to do with the Indian diaspora locally will know this—that Indians appreciate personal relationships and rate them very highly, and that takes time to develop. The opportunity is there but we have to put in place the right processes and develop the right relationships over time to achieve the benefit that we are looking for to get the outcomes we want to achieve. A lot of work has to be done.

As was stated, India is an obvious choice for the diversification of our economy, but that comes with its challenges. Another of those challenges, of course, is that, historically, iron ore and LNG have been our major exports. They are the resources that other countries want and they come to us, whereas India does not need iron ore and LNG. India has its own iron ore and LNG so, as a trading partner, Western Australia has to look at what other services India requires that it can provide. We need to take a slightly different approach because, historically, big trading partners have been quite easy because they just want what we have. India represents a challenge in that regard. There are opportunities to export different services and goods to India, but, once again, we need to develop the relationships and opportunities through a commitment of time and resources, which has been identified and is a constant theme in the report. It will create opportunities for different services to be exported to major customers and trading partners in other parts of the world. As we have heard, international education and tourism are certainly two services that could be exported. The member for Warren–Blackwood spoke about the METS and the PETS—the mining equipment, technology and services and the petroleum equipment, technology services—and there are other opportunities, such as agricultural opportunities. There is a lot of opportunity, but we need to develop that opportunity and we need to develop the relationships to benefit from that opportunity.

I will conclude with a quote from the chair's foreword, which she mentioned earlier. It sums up the outcome of the inquiry, and it goes like this —

It may be necessary for the State Government to adopt a more focused program of activity. The Asian Engagement Strategy lists a number of nations for which Market Plans will be developed.

...

The India Market Plan should: clearly indicate India's importance to WA; signal the State Government's long-term commitment to promoting trade; set out the State Government's vision for the relationship and strategic objectives; outline actions to achieve the vision; ensure a nuanced and tailored approach to the Indian market, reflecting WA's competitive strengths and the unique trade dynamic of the WA–India economic relationship; and include measures of success and targets.

That sums up the report. That outlines a very clear path forward for what we need to do to enhance our relationship and trading relationship with India.

I finish by thanking the support provided by Suzanne Veletta and research officer Franchesca Walker; you guys have done a power of work. It has been very challenging and it was an extremely big effort to get this report finished, published and tabled prior to the conclusion of the fortieth Parliament. I also thank the committee members. To the chair, the member for Swan Hills: Jess, you have done an outstanding job. All the work that we have done during the fortieth Parliament has been incredibly interesting and certainly a lot of it will be reference documents for people in the future. It has been extremely productive, thorough and well done work. I thank the deputy chair, the member for Warren–Blackwood: Terry, cheers mate! You have done a great job as well. I thank Yaz Mubarakai, the member for Jandakot; Dr David Honey, the member for Cottesloe; and, of course, former member, Sean L'Estrange, the member for Churchlands, who was a very important part of the group before he decided to leave us.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: I miss you, too, mate!

Mr S.J. PRICE: It has been an absolute privilege to be a part of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee during the fortieth Parliament. I look forward to most of us returning, hopefully, in the forty-first Parliament. If I do not happen to get there, I thank everyone. It has certainly been a privilege and I have enjoyed it very much.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [10.53 am]: I rise to make a brief contribution. My colleagues have done a very good job covering this debate. First of all, I will talk about the members of the committee. I understand the chair's—the member for Swan Hills—passion for politics, but my involvement on the committee has indicated that she has a greater future running a big think-tank somewhere with people with lots of energy! The member for Swan Hills has an impressive energy level and I thank her very much. I also refer to Yaz Mubarakai. The engagement with the local diaspora was critically important, and the member for Jandakot certainly contributed to that significantly in the committee's engagement with the Indian diaspora, which has been really important for this report. I recognise the other members of the committee; the member for Warren–Blackwood and the member for Forrestfield, who were great contributors. I also recognise Hon Sean L'Estrange; I should say the honourable member for Churchlands, who was on the committee before I became a member. He was there when this report was initiated. During debate on a previous report, I said that we simply could not do our job without the committee staff. The calibre of our staff is outstanding. Suzanne Veletta's focus and efforts were outstanding. I also thank Franchesca Walker. The focus and passion they put into this report was key to being able to deliver it.

I will dwell for a bit on some functional things. The impact of COVID-19 on this committee was clearly profound. The report makes many references to face-to-face communication but, unfortunately, outside of communicating with the immediate community and government agencies locally, we could not go to India, and that really took something away from our collective ability to understand the issues more deeply. The job that was done despite that was superb, but that mitigated us from getting into some of the nuances of the opportunities. For me it highlighted that we need better investment in equipment in our offices to cope with teleconferencing. There was barely a time when that process went smoothly. I am not being critical of any of the people who were involved. There was a good effort on everyone's part, but we spent a lot of time trying to get connections and reconnections. There were often poor connections and that made it very hard to hear people. Remote connection is a reality for us and this Parliament needs to invest in better communication facilities so that we can hold more seamless teleconferences and the like with people outside the state. Related to that is IT support. I have only praise for our staff but clearly they were under pressure trying to provide those services. Along with that, I recognise Hansard, especially because of those remote communications. Sometimes it was extremely difficult for Hansard to hear but, again, as they always do, they did an outstanding job and I am extremely grateful for what they put in to make this a successful exercise and for faithfully recording what was said.

I got two messages out of this committee inquiry. I will go over a bit of old ground, but the first message—it is one of the critical themes in the report—is that although we recognise the opportunities with India, they cannot be realised unless we maintain a strong long-term relationship. It is an investment that this state will have to make because the future opportunities are immense, but they will not happen unless we invest and invest and invest. It is one of those areas in which we will not get a quick reward; it will not involve someone standing there in 12 months with a fluoro vest and a hard hat. But if we do not make that investment, there are plenty of other people in the world who are willing to make it. We are not unique in recognising this opportunity. There are plenty of other people in the world who want to avail themselves of this opportunity and plenty of other countries that have the resources and services that we have that can do this. We need to strongly send that message. As was indicated, in terms of international trade, typically there is very strong bipartisan support. We need to make sure that we make this investment. I will champion it; members will never hear me in this place criticise ministers for travelling overseas per se, but in particular travelling to India to establish those relationships and make investments in offices there. As part of that, we must recognise that as one state, it is perhaps hard for us to do that, so we must work, not competitively, but cooperatively with the other states. It is a big pie and we will not realise it if we simply try to go it alone. Again, that was one of the themes of the report—that is, we need to cooperate strongly with our sister states and the commonwealth government to make sure we maximise our net benefit.

The other message that has already been delivered is that India is not China. If we look at the history of our large-scale trading relationships around iron ore and natural gas, Western Australia was pivotal to the reconstruction of the Japanese economy after the Second World War. The iron ore exports from Western Australia and the coking coal exports from Queensland and New South Wales were critical to the reconstruction of the Japanese economy. That also happened with South Korea. We also had the relationship with Taiwan. China then came to us because it had exactly the same needs. What is patently clear in this report and from the presentations we received is that India does not need those large-scale commodities, and certainly not yet. For me, one of the really stark examples that came out of the evidence we received was that India will not buy natural gas for more than \$2 a gigajoule delivered. It is getting that price from Qatar, whose potential dwarfs Australia's natural gas potential. For the operations at the North West Shelf, LNG is probably \$4 or more per gigajoule free on board before the ship sails, so it will be some time before we are competitive in that space. We were told that that market will grow and there will be a need for it, but that was certainly a wake-up call for me in terms of the potential competitiveness of our LNG. Of course, India has its own iron ore and bauxite resources and will use them. It is going to be another opportunity and those opportunities will potentially grow into the future.

As all members have said, the Economics and Industry Standing Committee is a great committee to be on. Its inquiries are really interesting. This is obviously an area that I am passionate about. One of the reasons I came into Parliament was to see what we could do to create new industries, new businesses and new jobs. I think this committee has done some excellent work leading up to this. Certainly in this report, it has really laid out an excellent map for government on how to maximise our potential opportunities both now and into the future to improve trade with India.

MR Y. MUBARAKAI (Jandakot) [11.01 am]: I rise today to give a brief statement as a member of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee on the inquiry into Western Australia's economic relationship with the Republic of India. The report has a very fitting title, "Turning to India: Investing in Our Future". I want to share a comment from the chair, the member for Swan Hills, who said in the foreword to the report —

As the title of this report suggests, it is only by investing time, effort and appropriate resources into WA's economic and cultural relationship with India that WA will be in a position to realise the great potential of India for the future benefit of all Western Australians.

I must say that the member for Swan Hills has been an absolute inspiration, with her wisdom, expertise and knowledge as chair of this committee over the last four years, along with the deputy chair, Terry Redman, member for Warren-Blackwood; my good friend Stephen Price, member for Forrestfield; Dr David Honey, member for Cottesloe; and a fellow member who was with us for most of our inquiries, Sean L'Estrange, member for Churchlands. Our research officers, Suzanne Veletta, David Worth and, obviously, Franchesca, have been sensational in keeping up with us during these difficult times, especially as the inquiry progressed and we were hit with the COVID-19 pandemic. I would also like to thank the various participants and stakeholders for their keen interest in this inquiry and for making submissions and taking time to address this committee and its questions. Their input has been critical in providing background information, which allowed the committee to put together substantially integrated intel and information on not just our current relationship with India but also the prospect of what could potentially be a game changer in an emerging market by building future economic relationships between Western Australia and India.

Most members of this house know that I was born and brought up in India. I have the heritage and cultural expertise to understand the values and culture of that country. I understand the diversities and complexities of India, which other members referred to in their contributions. Collectively, the Indian people are very aspirational and they look forward to a new India as a result of new growth. During this time, I have been very privileged and honoured to share my experience of how I came to this country as a 21-year-old international student from India to further my education. I went to one of Western Australia's most prestigious universities, Edith Cowan University. I am a migrant who came as an international student to this beautiful state of Western Australia. I am truly blessed. My family and I have an extremely lucky life. I have to say that the quality education I got here was my attraction, as a migrant, to this state. I am proud to be able to make contributions to better not just my community and my people, but my state as well.

I have taken a keen interest in this inquiry regarding Western Australia's economic future, especially looking at India as an emerging market to basically value-add to our state's future. My background is that of a migrant who lives here and who understands the rules and responsibilities of a parliamentarian and what it means for our economy for us to lead post-COVID-19. I have to say that this inquiry has given us some very important and clear market signals for any successive government of this state to investigate. We need to fully understand the importance to trade of this state's geographic location near countries like India, Indonesia, Vietnam and many others that are in close proximity.

This inquiry has given us a 12-chapter report with about 124 findings and 37 very important recommendations. I will leave those for everyone to refer to later. I would like to share my views on what I feel was my undertaking during this inquiry. I again have to say that the collaborative, collective and bipartisan approach taken by my fellow committee members truly supported my journey through this inquiry. We looked at the background of Western Australia and compared it with India, since the early 1990s to now and where we intend to go post-2020. It was made very clear to the committee that India presents a promising future for Western Australia. These were not just random suggestions; economic pundits provided evidence to the committee. The intel and information that was coming from them quite clearly indicated Western Australia's past relationships with India, our current challenges and also how rapidly India is changing its international policies around bilateral international trade. That brings me to this point: it is very important that Western Australia understands that in economic bilateral relationships, it is almost as though the first one gets to choose the chair they sit on, whereas the one that comes in last is left standing. For Western Australia, it will be very important to look at the market signals and how we diversify our economy to respond to the growth countries that surround and are in close proximity to us.

I had to include in my speech the other similarities between Western Australia and India. We are both young states or countries with potential for growth. In the bilateral relationship, there is a distinct love for cricket. Everybody knows that I am a cricket tragic, but I am not very good at playing cricket. We also share a love for beer. The member for Mount Lawley pointed out to me when I was writing this speech: "Do you realise that both the Western Australian Swan Draught and the Indian Kingfisher beer have their native birds as their symbols?" I thought that was phenomenal, so I put it in my speech! I thank the member for Mount Lawley for his contribution.

Mr S.A. Millman: It is such a good report.

Mr Y. MUBARAKAI: It is. Culturally, Western Australia and India are both very engaged in terms of our understanding of each other. In terms of enhancing these relationships, it is important for us to look at how to work collaboratively. The most important aspect to come out of this inquiry was the importance of people-to-people relationships. That is the most critical stage of building new relationships. Recommendation 33 sums it up perfectly. I will not go into it, but it sort of covers it. That recommendation will be the perfect starting point to build those strong conduits and relationships for Western Australia and how it can look to this massive, huge market of 1.4 billion people and growing as an economy of consumption, trade and opportunities. There is a lot of collaborative work to be done. The departments in this state have done a great job in working on recovery plans and opportunities post-COVID, but they need to collaborate between themselves. I believe that the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation plays a very important role in how this will be orchestrated in the next 10 years. I quite optimistically believe that that is a very high possibility, providing government puts in the resources. Understand that a state of 2.5 million people literally has been supplying global needs for the last two and a half decades in Japan, South Korea and the United States, but if we look at the next two and a half decades, things will be very different. China is also a very important trading partner. It has showed us how to engage and understand the importance of relationships not just between government and government, but also university and university and among different sectors, with industry participation and from people to people. These are all important aspects for the future of this state's economic growth and adversity. Value-adding emerging markets is a smart way to go—a great way to go—because we are futureproofing Western Australia's economy for the next generations to come through. We know and have seen how technology keeps on evolving quickly and rapidly.

Just to sum up again, in 20 years, Western Australian governments have made 18 visits to India of which 12 were to Mumbai. Interestingly, in the last three years, this government has made seven visits, and that is astronomical to where we are and where we want to go. In conclusion, if it is not them, then who? If it is not now, then when?

JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON PALLIATIVE CARE IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Final Report — “Palliative Care in Western Australia — Progress Report” — Tabling

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie — Parliamentary Secretary) [11.11 am]: I rise as Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Palliative Care in Western Australia to table our final report titled “Palliative Care in Western Australia — Progress Report”.

[See paper [4015](#).]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: It has been a privilege to chair this committee into the progress of palliative care in Western Australia. Indeed, a compassionate caring society must ensure that it allows citizens to die with dignity and with minimal pain. In a great many cases, good quality palliative care can provide this. Western Australians should be confident that even in the latter stages of our lives, we can access the highest quality service and care.

The committee spent useful time understanding what palliative care is and its scope. We heard evidence of a misconception amongst the general public and health professionals that palliative care is solely for the elderly and imminently dying. Associate Professor Alison Parr, clinical lead and member of Palliative Care WA and the WA Cancer and Palliative Care Network of the Department of Health, advised the committee —

Palliative care is about supporting people with progressive incurable illness. It is about a multidisciplinary approach. It focuses on quality of life. The prognosis for some of these people that receive palliative care may actually be years—and that is a common misconception; it is not all about end of life. They may still be receiving disease-modifying treatments alongside palliative care interventions; for example, chemotherapy, or radiotherapy, for those with cancer. It is about keeping people as well as possible for as long as possible, despite incurable illness, and it is about keeping them functioning and also supporting psychological wellbeing and practical support for those people as their illness progresses.

That explanation of palliative care by Associate Professor Parr is extremely valuable and needs to be properly understood by the whole of our Western Australian community. Only a year ago we were in this place debating the voluntary assisted dying legislation. A feature of the passage of that legislation through this place was the broader community discussion around end of life. At times it was apparent that many mistakenly felt some form of voluntary assisted dying would be their only end-of-life option. It is important to note that a guiding principle of the Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019 is —

a person approaching the end of life should be provided with high quality care and treatment, including palliative care and treatment, to minimise the person's suffering and maximise the person's quality of life.

Through this inquiry I hope we have contributed to advancing community appreciation that palliative care is about maximising a person's quality of life when they have a life-limiting or terminal condition. The professionalism and commitment of those who work in palliative care in a paid, and sometimes unpaid, capacity does our society great credit. For many of the witnesses to the inquiry, their professional lives involve helping people going through the final stages of their lives. No doubt this can be emotionally draining work, but I was struck by the impressive blend of professionalism and compassion evident in all our witnesses.

I now turn to some of the findings and recommendations we made through the report process. One of the findings is for a system of navigators. Navigators would be a welcome and valuable addition to WA's palliative care services. The president of Palliative Care WA, Dr Elissa Campbell, told the inquiry that within WA Health cancer streams, there is a specialist nurse who helps patients navigate between their different appointments with the different specialties and different services they can access. She went on to say —

Having that one-stop shop for palliative care would be very helpful ... I know that I, as a health professional with a high level of health literacy, find it very difficult to navigate all of these things. I can only imagine how difficult it is for someone who is very unwell or is caring for a loved one who is very unwell. I think a care navigator service would be really useful in helping to access palliative care services.

I turn to the issue of telehealth. In this year of COVID-19 this is very much to the fore. I heard members of the previous committee express some concerns about the use of various video linkages and what have you. I think we used Zoom exclusively and found it excellent. We found most of our witnesses as well were very at ease with this medium. We looked at telehealth as a means of communicating with people receiving palliative care. We found, and witnesses told us this, that it was a useful means of enhancing the service provision that the health sector is already able to provide. However, there were some words of caution, especially from Silver Chain. It said —

Overall, we see telehealth or other technologies as an adjunct, but not a replacement of face-to-face visits in the provision of community-based palliative care service.

One of the big issues we dealt with was the need to meet need, not just demand, for palliative care. In fact, we came up with the following recommendation. It states —

WA Health further refine the methodology for determining the unmet need for palliative care, and ensure the measure of unmet need includes:

- a) the number of those accessing palliative care for the first time very late in the trajectory of their illness and therefore not receiving timely referrals
- b) general practitioner and primary care data
- c) patients who received palliative care in the community and did not have any hospital admissions in the year prior to death.

It is very important to ensure that we understand how big the need is and not just satisfy ourselves with meeting demand.

I turn to regional communities and how their needs are being met. We came up with the following recommendation. It states —

The Department of Health undertake a detailed assessment of demand and/or need for palliative care services in regional and remote areas of Western Australia.

I turn to palliative care for Aboriginal people. We determined that palliative care units need to be designed in consultation with local Aboriginal community members and elders. When we visited the palliative care unit at Busselton Health Campus, it was very interesting to hear that for an Aboriginal person to die in a building raised above the ground is not a natural circumstance at all. That could have perhaps been considered and avoided had the proper design process been gone through. As satisfactory and pleasant a setting as it can be, the health campus is not suitable for all members of our community.

Another very important issue was about advance care planning. Palliative Care WA encouraged the committee to consider the critical importance of advance care planning as an integral part of palliative care. The Department of Health advised us —

Advance Care Planning is a voluntary **person-led** process that outlines a future plan for health and personal care. The process enables the person to describe to family, carers and health professionals the treatment and care that they would want for themselves in the event they are unable to make or communicate decisions. Advance Care Planning occurs on a continuum from an Advance Care Plan recognised in common law to an Advance Health Directive/or appointment of an Enduring Power of Guardian which is supported by West Australian legislation. These only come into effect if the person lacks capacity to contribute to decision-making at the time a decision is required. Few West Australians have any form of Advance Care Planning.

Another important area is the contribution of volunteers. Palliative care, like so many spheres of our society, benefits from volunteer effort. It was a privilege to meet volunteers, and I mentioned our visit to Busselton Hospice Care and the conversation we had with the volunteers. Finding 7 states —

Volunteers play a valuable but unquantified role in the provision of palliative care services in Western Australia.

We received evidence that volunteers provide essential community connection and a very personalised service to clients, who stated that if there were no volunteers, paid staff levels would have to be increased. Finding 19 states —

The funding of volunteer services to support, train and guarantee the sustainable involvement of volunteers in the delivery of palliative care in Western Australia remains under-prioritised.

I move on to the paid workforce. A major issue for any sector is the size of its workforce relative to the task before it. The WA Primary Health Alliance noted —

Knowledge about end-of-life care and specialist palliative care across the GP workforce is variable and there is significant scope to improve capability.

It was noted that some general practitioners have concerns about the medico–legal implications of palliative care, which the WA Primary Health Alliance noted “may potentially be limiting their engagement with education and training.” The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners noted —

... that a key issue in increasing GP knowledge and capacity in palliative care was the creation of GP registrar positions in palliative care. GP registrar positions do currently exist, but in the RACGP’s view there are not enough.

Recommendation 10 states —

The Minister for Health prepare a plan to:

- a) increase the palliative care workforce
- b) increase the availability of further education in palliative care and general practitioner registrar positions in palliative care.

A strong focus of our report was on the implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices. Progress was noted to varying degrees on the implementation of the recommendations of the end-of-life choices committee, noting that its report was tabled in August 2018. In our inquiry, we members of the Joint Select Committee on Palliative Care in Western Australia found that implementation of the following recommendations had significantly progressed. Recommendation 7 of the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices states —

The Minister for Health should facilitate the establishment of an inpatient specialist palliative care hospice ... in the northern suburbs of Perth.

Recommendation 9 of that same committee states —

WA Health should conduct an independent review, from a patient’s perspective, of the three models of palliative care in Western Australia ...

Recommendation 11 states that WA Health undertake specified measures to improve understanding of palliative care. Recommendation 12 states —

The Minister for Health should prioritise policy development and improved governance structures for the delivery of palliative care by WA Country Health Services.

Recommendation 18 states —

WA Health should provide specific guidelines on the use of terminal sedation by health professionals for patients at the end of life.

We found that some progress had been made on recommendation 10, which states —

WA Health should implement a process to determine the unmet demand for palliative care and establish an ongoing process to measure the delivery of palliative care services ...

Progress had also been made on recommendations 15 to 17 regarding ongoing professional development for health professionals about end-of-life treatment and decision-making. We found that limited progress had been made in relation to recommendation 8, which states —

The Minister for Health should ensure that community palliative care providers ... are adequately funded to provide for growing demand.

The progress and implementation of recommendation 13 of the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices states —

The Minister for Health should ensure regional palliative care be adequately funded to meet demand.

This recommendation cannot be evaluated until a more detailed assessment of demand and/or need for palliative care services in regional or remote areas has been undertaken.

The committee received evidence that the end-of-life choices committee recommendation 14, that the Minister for Health appoint an independent reviewer to audit palliative care activity and spending by WA Health, will not be

progressed. That is in relation to one of our findings on the need for us to ensure that the processes be about meeting unmet need rather than unmet demand. That is the explanation for that recommendation not advancing further. We made recommendation 14, which states —

The WA Country Health Service and the Department of Health report on the progress of implementation of recommendation 13 of the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices —

This relates to funding for palliative care in regional areas —

in their next Annual Reports.

As I said, much of the committee's work was done via Zoom meetings, which enabled us to take evidence from across the state. We heard evidence in person or by videoconference from witnesses based in the following regional locations: Albany, Newman, Busselton, Chittering, Northam, Kununurra, Derby, Broome, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie. I believe people adapted well to this process and, indeed, seemed quite familiar with it. To my recollection, there were virtually no technical hitches with the process. Very rare were the occasions that we were waiting for a connection to be established. I only recall once when there was an unfortunate cut-off midway through a conversation, and we had to terminate our hearing a little quicker than we would have liked. Overall, it seems the capacity for our community to work with various videoconferencing options worked well.

I move on to some very important thank-yous, especially to all the witnesses who generously gave their time to improve palliative care in WA. As I said earlier, their professionalism and compassion shone through at all times. Their desire to invest time with us and to help us provide recommendations and make findings so that we can continue to improve palliative care in Western Australia absolutely stood out. A big thank-you to my deputy chair, Hon Nick Goiran; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Kyle McGinn; and to my fellow Legislative Assembly colleagues, Shane Love, the member for Moore; and Zak Kirkup, the member for Dawesville. My sincere thanks for their efforts in putting this inquiry together in a fairly compacted time frame. That was something that we had to deal with throughout the inquiry. My thanks especially go to the wonderful advisory officer, Kimberley Ould, who did an outstanding job. She was assisted by advisory officer Andrew Hawkes and our ever IT savvy committee clerk, David Graham.

I want to give a note of caution to readers of the report, especially about the findings and recommendations, that it is rather early to be assessing the delivery of commitments that were made through the voluntary assisted dying legislative process. It needs to be kept in mind that the proposal to establish a joint select committee into palliative care arose during debate on the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill 2019 in December 2019. Here we are, less than 12 months later, tabling a report after a fairly extensive inquiry. It is early and it must be appreciated that the primary delivery agent, the WA government's Department of Health, has been rightly focused on keeping our state safe through the COVID-19 pandemic. Much work remains to be done to further improve palliative care in WA. I hope the work contained in this report will assist in making those improvements.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA) [11.29 am]: I would like to make a brief contribution as a member of the Joint Select Committee on Palliative Care in Western Australia. I start by thanking the chair, Chris Tallentire, member for Thornlie; Zak Kirkup, member for Dawesville; the upper house members, Hon Kyle McGinn and Hon Alison Xamon; and the deputy chair, Hon Nick Goiran. It was the first time I have been involved in a joint select committee of any sort and the first time I have been involved in a committee operating under the Legislative Council's standing orders. It was quite a learning experience to find that process can take up so much time, but the upper house members are very diligent and do their work very well. I think that seeing the upper house members in action and the forensic ability that they have developed over the years at that house of review shows us just how important the functions of the Legislative Council are to this place in working through the nitty-gritty of detail and making sure that parliamentary processes are kept to.

I would also like to thank all the witnesses and participants. We had some hosts in Busselton when we did a brief visit there. I would like to thank the members of Busselton Hospice Care Inc for their hospitality at the centre and their explanation of the important work that they do as volunteers in an environment where they are working largely on a WA Country Health Service campus—that is, Busselton Health Campus. Many people do not appreciate that the Busselton hospice workers are actually volunteers. Their work has relied on donations from the community over the years. Now the community in Busselton thinks that the hospice is funded by the government and so the community does not have to contribute. In fact, the hospice is not government funded. The workers are still volunteers and there is still a need for some help there. One of the committee's findings was that the work of volunteers needs to be recognised.

We also found that there is a tremendous difference between country areas. In areas where there are established services, mainly in the south in places like Busselton, Bunbury and Albany, there are mature organisations and a mature level of services to provide that very important palliative care to the community. As we go further away from those areas, it becomes more difficult. I think it was quite noticeable and it was noted in the report that there are very few palliative care services available in the Pilbara, and we could not really get to the bottom of why that was, other than that there appears to be a general lack of services in that area. Then we looked at the Kimberley, where there is a high degree of Aboriginality. There is great diversity in the level of service available in different

communities between Broome and the more remote places. We found that some of those places actually source a lot of advice and services from Darwin and the Northern Territory. I think that in our isolated existence in Perth, we forget that there are border communities in this state that visit other places to get some of their services, and the Kimberley is one such border community. That community has been particularly hard-hit by the current pandemic, for instance, whereby it has been difficult for some of those patients to get access to the tertiary hospitals in Darwin. Instead, they have had to come to Perth, and the extra time and distance has meant a lot of disruption.

Another matter is that many Aboriginal communities have different cultural beliefs and practices. There is not one standard Aboriginal point of view. Whether a person wants to spend their last days on country or in a facility away from country will depend on the community they come from and obviously the patient's own wishes. There is a tremendous degree of complexity in delivering high quality palliative care to some of those areas.

In the report we have tabled today, I think the relevant sections that really piqued my interest from a regional point of view were terms of reference (c), the delivery of palliative care into regional and remote areas, and (d), the progress of ensuring greater equity of access to palliative care services between metropolitan and regional areas. I have spoken a little about some of the difficulties of delivery into regional and remote areas.

Another matter I would like to highlight that has been raised as an issue in the past in my own electorate is the difficulty when someone is in a palliative state but wants to stay in their home and therefore has a need for palliative care and help in the home. There used to be HACC services throughout the state; a Home and Community Care service was located in a hospital or a nearby community where care could be sought for people in that situation quite seamlessly. The development of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and the change to consumer-directed care in the aged-care sector has led to an assessment process and criteria that people with palliative conditions sometimes fall through, meaning they are unable to get the home care that they desperately need. One of the most important portions of expenditure that we examined was the allocation of money to the Western Australian Country Health Service to provide that domiciliary home care. That is very, very important. It has been very well received. Members can read the relevant areas of this report and get a very good understanding of just how important that is to people, and how people at their most vulnerable moments have been let down in the past by that service not being available. It is now available. It is an allocation of only \$2 million and I am sure it will go very quickly. We need to ensure that that money keeps being reallocated in future budgets, because that need will not diminish. We might be able to say, "We've built a centre, we've expended capital, tick, we don't have to do that again", but this is a vitally needed service and it needs to continue.

It is quite clear that one does not have to be that remote from Perth to be remote from the provision of a palliative care service. I think that was highlighted in evidence by the Chattering Health Advisory Group from my electorate and also the WA Country Health Service Wheatbelt Palliative Care Service, which highlighted the time taken to travel to coastal locations. For instance, from Northam, it is a three-hour trip to get to those locations and then three hours to return, so six hours of the day are spent travelling. That does not leave a lot of time to actually deliver the service. In the past, a lot of people in my electorate who are just on the outskirts of Perth have not been receiving high quality palliative care. Those people and their families have come to tell me their stories, some of which have been quite harrowing. It is good to see that there is now a focus on providing services wherever people are situated.

As I say, a home care service is very important. Also important is the flexible delivery of a lot of health services through telehealth, and incorporating palliative care into that telehealth service is very important. That important work needs to continue.

This is only a progress report. It is the final report of this committee, but it is a progress report. The monitoring of this progress needs to continue. We need to ensure that allocations made as a result of the end-of-life choices discussion are not a one-off. We need to ensure that palliative care continues to be appropriately funded into the future because the need for that service will not diminish.

I would like to quickly round off by thanking the committee staff. The chair has already done that, but I learnt quite a bit being on this committee, and I greatly appreciate the efforts of all the staff. Thank you very much.

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [11.39 am]: I, too, rise to speak on the Joint Select Committee on Palliative Care in Western Australia's final report, "Palliative Care in Western Australia — Progress Report", and reflect on some of the remarks made by both the chair and the member for Moore. The report before us is absolutely a progress report and understandably so because the requirement for this joint select committee to be established was largely formed as a result of debate during the passage of the voluntary assisted dying legislation. It is a good report and it reflects that the state of Western Australia is largely in the early stages when it comes to the provision of palliative care. The obvious need to make sure that we pay more attention to the issue of palliative care came about as a result of some of the conversations and debates we had during the passage of the voluntary assisted dying legislation. We made it very clear that we wanted a well-resourced palliative care option for people to pursue at the end of their life.

The committee's 56 findings and 25 recommendations have made sure that, as part of the Department of Health's ongoing progress of implementing and investing in a more enhanced palliative care service, there is more structure around how that investment is pursued and where these services are better rolled out. Some areas of Western Australia

are still very far off the mark when it comes to the adequacy of palliative care services. In some of our public hearings, one thing that stood out was the inconsistency in palliative care services in nearly all of south metropolitan Perth compared with north metropolitan Perth. In the Peel and Rockingham districts in particular, there is a massive shortfall in appropriate palliative care services, particularly in an inpatient environment in hospitals. As the member for Moore rightly pointed out, in most circumstances, the further we get away from Perth, the more desperate the palliative care situation becomes. Pockets of investment have already been rolled out by this government. Again, that largely came about during commitments made ahead of the voluntary assisted dying debate. Those commitments are welcome, but we need to ensure that more adequate and equitable funding is available no matter where people live. I do not think it is appropriate that some people who live in a particular electoral district in Western Australia, for example, have better access to palliative care because of commitments made by the government during the VAD debate, and people in other electoral districts have a massive shortfall in those services. We find ourselves in that situation in Western Australia, which means that more work needs to be done to ensure better investment.

Members have spoken about the areas of the report that they are particularly interested in. The area of most interest for me was the findings and recommendations on palliative care services in an aged-care setting. They are increasingly important, particularly as we expect people to age in place for longer and become more attached to where they live. We want to make sure that those end-of-life services in an aged-care setting are better delivered to those residents who choose that option. We know that in those aged-care settings, investment in those services is not as much as would otherwise be required now and for future demand.

Another area of interest is regional and remote palliative care services. Members have already spoken about that. Of particular interest to me and a passion of mine is the services for the Aboriginal communities and Aboriginal people. I am very proud of the committee's attention to that area in particular. A number of findings and recommendations are attached to this area to ensure better investment in palliative care services for Aboriginal people. I raised this issue during my contribution on the voluntary assisted dying debate. It is an area of particular interest for me to ensure greater levels of investment in a more culturally appropriate sense.

I am reminded of a visit that we made to Busselton Hospice Care. One of the volunteers there spoke to us about an Aboriginal elder who decided that he wanted to spend his remaining days under a peppermint tree that was situated on the Busselton hospice grounds and near the beach. That was a really nice and endearing option that was available as part of the old palliative care services that were offered in Busselton. In contrast, Busselton Health Campus has now invested in and delivered a really good hospice service, but it is on the second floor and in a confined space with a bit of a balcony that overlooks a car park. Although it is a relatively relaxing environment, it certainly did not have the same natural aspect to it that Aboriginal people and elders from that area would opt to pursue at their end of life. We need to keep that in mind. I felt a sense of almost honour to have been imparted with that knowledge about that situation, and we should try to pursue that as much as possible, particularly for those from the Aboriginal community who have spent much of their time on the land, so that people do not have to find themselves in a clinical setting at the end of their life. They should be able to avoid a clinical setting, but still be in a safe and supported surrounding in the lead-up to their passing if they choose that. As the chair and the member for Moore said, the Busselton hospice was delivering a service that was largely run by volunteers in a really beautiful setting. I would like to see more of that, if possible, for our Aboriginal communities, particularly those people who do not live in the metropolitan area. The report speaks to the importance of ensuring that we provide culturally appropriate palliative care. If I have the privilege to serve in the forty-first Parliament, I will continue to pay attention to that area, as I am sure all members will. We all know the importance of continuing to deliver as much as we can in what are already very difficult scenarios for the health and wellbeing of the Aboriginal community in Western Australia.

This was the first joint select committee that I participated in under the standing orders of the Legislative Council. I thought there might be more investment in better food or something like that as a committee under the standing orders of the Legislative Council, but in my experience, the Legislative Council is similarly as frugal as the Legislative Assembly.

Ms R. Saffioti: I am not sure about that. Maybe it was because you are a Legislative Assembly member.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Perhaps they do not want us to see behind the curtain.

Ms R. Saffioti: You don't get to go to the special room.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: That is right. That is why all the Legislative Council members were filing in and out—no. As part of that, I would like to recognise Hon Kyle McGinn, Hon Alison Xamon and Hon Nick Goiran as the deputy chair. I greatly appreciated their ongoing interest and the diversity of their views that helped inform what I think is a really good report. Ultimately, there is a sense of richness in information provided in this report because we have many different perspectives, including a regional perspective from a number of members, perspectives from old and young members and perspectives from those who had varying positions when it came to the voluntary assisted dying debate. It makes for a more enriched report that we have been able to offer to the Legislative Assembly.

Ultimately, as members have touched on, we must keep in mind that this is a progress report that outlines the very early stages of what we hope will become an increased level of investment in and attention paid to palliative care.

I appreciate that now there is much more awareness of this issue in a parliamentary and a government sense, and perhaps awareness across our community of the quality of life at the end of someone's life. This is a very good report that can help guide our journey to give all Western Australians richer options at the end of their time on earth.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

Seventeenth Report — “Meaningful Reform Overdue: The Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003” — Tabling

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [11.48 am]: I present for tabling the seventeenth report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission titled “Meaningful Reform Overdue: The Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003”.

[See paper [4017](#).]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: It seems apt, at the conclusion of the fortieth Parliament, to table a report that will provide guidance and an overview for the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission of the forty-first Parliament. In the seventeenth report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, unambiguously entitled “Meaningful Reform Overdue”, members will find a compilation of matters either deficient, obsolete or unclear in the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003. These were identified by either stakeholders, the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission, the committee of the thirty-ninth Parliament, the current committee or the CCC itself. There is a growing consensus that tinkering with incremental and piecemeal changes to the existing act is no longer satisfactory. It is time for a replacement act that clarifies ambiguity and resolves aspects of the existing laws that have proved unworkable or ineffectual.

It should be noted that the committee does not express any opinion on the appropriateness or otherwise of recommended changes. That is a matter for government policy to address. We would, however, say that given the last statutory review by Gail Archer, SC, occurred in 2008, it is timely, if not overdue, to address the issues set out in this report. Optimally, there should be a total overhaul of the legislative regime by the introduction of a new act. Without much-needed change, the seamless operation of the peak anti-corruption body in the state cannot be achieved. For example, as the legislative scheme now operates, serious misconduct is dealt with by the Corruption and Crime Commission and, on the other hand, allegations of minor misconduct are addressed by the Public Sector Commission. On its face, that appears to be a straightforward demarcation. In some cases, whether it is the CCC or the Public Sector Commission that handles an allegation is a matter of negotiation and triage between the two agencies. In evidence the committee heard less than a month ago, it seems that the threshold has been lowered by the CCC, and it is now prepared to look at some cases that previously it would have defined as minor misconduct and consigned to the Public Sector Commission. It is not clear why this has occurred. Whilst it might seem to be a pedantic quibble, it illustrates that legislative definitions are fluid and require attention.

Likewise, in a recent committee report, we queried why so few allegations of excessive use of force by police have been investigated by the CCC. That report reminds us that the rationale for establishing the CCC arose out of the Kennedy royal commission into police. Unlike other jurisdictions, in WA, the CCC is charged with investigating both public sector corruption and the oversight of police in order to maintain police integrity and, as a corollary to that, give the public confidence in our police. The committee's inquiry found that there is little appetite on the part of the CCC to look at allegations of excessive use of force even when police internal investigation processes have failed or been demonstrably deficient. It may well be that police internal investigations are now sufficiently professional, thorough and robust for it to take the lead, but that does not change the legislative role allocated to the CCC. This is a case in which, as a matter of practice, the legislative intent is no longer reflected in how the CCC allocates its priority work. Although a matter of government policy, it begs the question of whether a new act should reflect this change in priorities.

Likewise, the so-called organised crime function to be undertaken in concert with police is rarely used. The only area that it could be argued touches upon organised crime investigations is the relatively recently conferred power to look at unexplained wealth. Such powers are fundamental to any focus on organised crime and corruption. The original legislative regime contemplated as an adjunct for organised crime investigations is not, in fact, used. We have also heard evidence during the fortieth Parliament of the many technical flaws in the current act that practically hamper the CCC from optimally performing its important role.

All of this begs the question: what do we want to focus upon in any new legislative regime for the CCC? The kinds of issues we must address in any new incarnation of the CCC, or more specifically its legislative framework, are similar to those currently facing the federal government. The commonwealth is moving at glacial speed to establish an integrity commission. Earlier this month, it released a mind-boggling 390 pages of draft laws. Under these, the integrity commission would be split into two divisions. One would investigate enforcement agencies, the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Home Affairs and the other would look at the public sector and members of Parliament. The first division will have the power to hold public hearings, but that will not extend to those that investigate politicians. This somewhat artificial distinction is controversial and has left its proponent, no doubt grateful for any distraction, federal Attorney-General Christian Porter asserting —

... that ultimately a court should be making a public determination of guilt or innocence.”

Independent MP Helen Haines has introduced her own bill. Impatient at the lack of progress, she proposes —

... public hearings when in the public interest, with ethical safeguards to prevent “the unfair trashing of reputations”.

Leading academic Professor A.J. Brown in an article published on The Conversation website on 2 November considers that there are three elements to establishing a successful anti-corruption body—that is, resources, scope and powers. The proposal for the new federal body is that it be allocated \$42 million annually. This compares with the \$27 million allocated in Western Australia alone for the CCC. Brown asserts that the \$42 million is not enough to fix all the gaps in the federal government’s accountability framework but it is a move in the right direction.

Of more concern is the scope of the new body. It will extend to only 20 per cent of the public sector. Law enforcement and regulatory bodies like the Australian Securities and Investments Commission and the Australian Taxation Office will be covered by the existing Australian Commission for Law Enforcement Integrity. The powers of the new body will be exercised in private but only when there is a reasonable suspicion of a criminal offence. Although broad powers like phone taps, compelling evidence and search and seizure under warrant will be conferred, the grey area of corruption, such as undisclosed conflicts of interest, will not be examined unless a criminal offence, such as theft or fraud, is already evident. Likewise, the obligation for agency heads to report suspected corruption offences will be limited in the same way; namely, there must be a reasonable suspicion of criminal activity at the outset.

Even more alarming according to Professor Brown is the fate of public sector whistleblowers who approach the integrity commission. Not only will they be turned away if there is no actual evidence of a criminal offence; they even risk prosecution for an unwarranted allegation. We know from the Western Australian experience that the role of whistleblowers is vital and they should not be deterred from acting. In most, if not all, of the high-profile cases in WA, investigations were initiated by virtue of information from whistleblowers.

Madam Acting Speaker, it is also argued that the federal integrity commission will not be able to act on anonymous tip-offs, only on referrals from other government agencies. A power will also be conferred on the federal Attorney-General to declare that certain information should not be disclosed to the integrity commission on the broad grounds that it would harm Australia’s defence, prejudice relations between the commonwealth and the states, harm national security, interfere with a trial or reveal deliberations or decisions of cabinet or one of its committees. This will provide generous wriggle room to avoid scrutiny.

It is worth noting that polls have consistently shown that the public overwhelmingly supports the creation of a federal integrity commission. A recent Guardian Essential poll shows that 81 per cent of the public support the establishment of an anti-corruption watchdog. No doubt respondents based their views on experience of the good work of state bodies. The underlying question remains: if official corruption exists and is disclosed at a state level, why is it that the commonwealth is so reluctant to concede corruption must also occur at a federal level? I doubt that the public would support the model currently proposed, which I have briefly outlined, which contains exceptions and exclusions minimising its scope and transparency.

I have used the example of the current deliberations in the federal sphere to illustrate that we would be ill-advised to completely discard the current CCC model and start from scratch. It is a long and tortuous process. However, a new act should be drafted that draws on experience, more clearly sets out legislative intent on the way forward and resolves technical issues that hamper the efficient and seamless operation of the commission.

From the committee’s perspective, robust parliamentary oversight of the operations of the commission is a given in any new act. A recent paper published by the Westminster Foundation for Democracy earlier this month titled “Combating Corruption Capably” sets out five components for the relationship between Parliament and an anticorruption agency. These are: first, Parliament’s role in establishing the legal framework and mandate of the anticorruption agency; second, Parliament’s role in the selection, appointment and removal of the leadership of the anticorruption agency; third, Parliament’s role regarding resources allocated to the anticorruption agency; fourth, Parliament’s consideration of and follow up to annual and other reports of the anticorruption agency; and, finally, Parliament’s policy and awareness-raising cooperation with the anticorruption agency. It goes without saying that any reiteration or redrafting of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act must incorporate all those elements.

Throughout the term of this Parliament, the committee has been afforded excellent cooperation and assistance by the Corruption and Crime Commission. Our requests for information, and background on occasions, were comprehensive and may have required the diversion of resources. The committee was mindful of this, but appreciated the thoroughness and compliance that effectively informed our deliberations. I wish the CCC well in its future endeavours. The work it does is important. Likewise, the ready assistance from the Office of the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission, the Public Sector Commissioner and the Auditor General was valuable.

It goes without saying that I thank members of the committee who diligently and conscientiously wrestled with a wide range of issues: deputy chair, Hon Jim Chown, MLC; Mr Matthew Hughes, MLA, member for Kalamunda; and Hon Alison Xamon, MLC. We were ably and assiduously supported by committee research officers Vanessa Beckingham, Sylvia Wolf and Lucy Roberts. Clerk Assistant, Liz Kerr, was also readily at hand if required, and I thank them all.

In conclusion, I remind members that combating corruption goes to the very heart of our democracy and, if not eliminated, disproportionately impacts on those most in need of government attention and support. Nowhere is this more cogently expressed than by the man of the moment and then Vice President, Joe Biden, in 2014 when he said —

Corruption is a cancer, a cancer that eats away at a citizen's faith in democracy, diminishes the instinct for innovation and creativity; already-tight national budgets, crowding out important national investments. It wastes the talent of entire generations. It scares away investments and jobs.

MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda) [12.02 pm]: The seventeenth report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission titled "Meaningful Reform Overdue: The Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003", as outlined by the chair of the committee, provides a useful summation of the observations made over three successive Parliaments for why the act is in much need of review, if not a complete rewrite. I would urge all members of the fortieth Parliament, in anticipation of the forty-first Parliament, to give it a good read over the summer.

I would also like to acknowledge the work of the chair and my fellow committee members, Hon Alison Xamon, MLC, and Hon Jim Chown, MLC. I note that Hon Jim Chown will not be contesting the election next year and I wish him all the best in whatever future endeavours he has beyond his career in Parliament.

I have a particular matter that I want to refer to in relation to the deficiencies of the current act. In my contribution to the Assembly in May on the matter of the deficiencies of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003, I enumerated the revealed shortcomings of the act regarding the appointment of the Corruption and Crime Commissioner or, in the case of the fortieth Parliament, the reappointment of a serving commissioner. In the short time that I have available to me to speak on the report, I want to return to the deficiencies of the act as they pertain to the reappointment of a serving commissioner. It became abundantly clear when I brought this matter to the attention of the Parliament earlier in the year that there is no guidance on the appointment process that is to be followed. If bipartisan and majority support is not provided by the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, as happened, what happens then? We know what happens. We are now in the position that we have yet to appoint a commissioner to the position. It is also clear that the committee or dissenting members are not required to provide reasons for not supporting the recommended candidate and there is no provision in the act to resolve deadlocks. The act is silent on the process to follow if the commissioner seeks reappointment. Because of the unsatisfactory nature of the current process, this matter alone points to the fact that the act needs to be amended. My comments on the deadlock in the joint standing committee about the reappointment of Hon John McKechnie became public following the government's decision to bring in a bill to amend the 2003 act to facilitate his reappointment. The fact that that act has not progressed through Parliament is a matter for the opposition to explain. The opposition was provided opportunities to negotiate a positive outcome on the amendments to the bill that were brought before this house, but the opposition was unable to do anything about that.

There is a difference in the act between the appointment and reappointment of a commissioner, but, procedurally under the act, there is not a difference. I remain steadfastly of the view that in the circumstances of a known candidate who is the incumbent, serving commissioner seeking reappointment, written justification needs to be provided when there is either bipartisan dissent or a failure to achieve bipartisan concurrence. It bothers me, as an elected member of the Assembly to this fortieth Parliament, that the act does not require this and that the incumbent, who has the right to seek reappointment, has no right to know why the reappointment has been denied or to challenge those grounds. Members of the Parliament and the Assembly, where is the natural justice in that? There is no natural justice at all. If an action were taken to dismiss a serving commissioner, the act is quite clear about what has to happen. The matter would be brought before each house of Parliament and aired publicly and transparently. More importantly, the incumbent would have, I trust, the opportunity of a right of reply. My commentary on this matter has always been directed towards what I believe to be the significant deficiency of the operation of the act in the case of a deadlock. As I said, the act is silent on this matter and it should be amended to secure a clear pathway out of a deadlock. That is unfinished business of the fortieth Parliament and it needs to be on the agenda of the forty-first Parliament. I hope to be a member of the Assembly when that bill comes before us.

I again note the comments of Hon Nick Goiran in the Council regarding his experience as Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission under the previous government. I do not believe they were particularly helpful. None of the previous commissioners served the full term and none therefore sought reappointment. I understand that in a previous Parliament the joint standing committee agreed not to support the Premier's nominee from a list of three equally suitably qualified candidates, for reasons known to the committee, but suggested to the Premier that he consider the appointment of one of the other candidates. That was quite a different set of circumstances from the one that we faced in this Parliament, which recommended the reappointment of an incumbent commissioner for a second allowable five-year term. Everyone recognises that Hon John McKechnie has been the most effective Corruption and Crime Commissioner that this state has had. I reiterate that the remedied lines in the act being amended will ensure that the situation faced by Hon John McKechnie will not be faced by successive commissioners.

These are the facts at the end of the fortieth Parliament: Mr McKechnie's term as head of the Corruption and Crime Commission expired on 28 April 2020. Mr McKechnie was the only commissioner to serve a full term and the

first to seek reappointment. Mr McKechnie was the outstanding candidate of three eligible nominees identified by the nominating committee, which was chaired by the Chief Justice of Western Australia, Hon Peter Quinlan, SC, and a recommendation to that effect was made to the Premier. However, for reasons unknown to this Parliament and the people of Western Australia, the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission was unable to concur with that recommendation. That is a condemnation of the ineffectual nature of the opposition to join an open invitation to engage with this government to remedy the failings of the act and to overcome what was a palpable misuse of the power of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission. Members of this house, I will do all that I can to ensure that the public of Western Australia, certainly the people in my electorate, realise what has happened in this place with the reappointment of Hon John McKechnie. I will drive that home in the election campaign, and opposition members will be answerable for their inability to adopt a bipartisan approach to the invitation offered to them by the Premier of this state to overcome a deadlock, which was a patent misuse of that committee. Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker, for your indulgence.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND JUSTICE STANDING COMMITTEE

Tenth Report — “Response to Attorney General’s Request to Conduct an Inquiry” — Tabling

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [12.11 pm]: I present for tabling the tenth report of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee titled “Response to Attorney General’s Request to Conduct an Inquiry”.

[See paper [4018](#).]

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: On 27 October 2020, the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee received a letter from Hon John Quigley, MLA, Attorney General, which forms appendix two of the report I just tabled. As reported by several media outlets, the letter was with regard to Mr Aaron Cockman’s request that the Attorney General direct the State Coroner to hold a public inquest into the death of Mr Cockman’s family members on 11 May 2018 in Osmington. The Attorney General advised the committee that he had received advice from the Solicitor-General of Western Australia, Mr Joshua Thomson SC, that the Attorney General was unable to make such a direction. The Attorney General considered that the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee was best placed to conduct a formal inquiry into the matters raised by Mr Cockman and was hopeful that the committee would agree to undertake an inquiry. As the Attorney General’s request was made publicly, the committee thought it appropriate to respond publicly and explain why it is unable to undertake an inquiry at this time.

A committee inquiry typically includes the following stages: scoping and determination of the terms of reference; announcing the terms of reference; advertising and calling for submissions; writing to stakeholders; receiving, reviewing and analysing submissions; researching; holding hearings; seeking expert advice; planning and travelling for future hearings or investigations; writing and adopting a report; reporting to the Legislative Assembly; and, eventually, receiving a government response. Depending on the nature of an inquiry, not all stages may be necessary. The length of each stage will vary depending on, for example, the number of submissions received or hearings held, whether and to where the committee travels, and the length of the report. However, it would not be unreasonable to expect a scoping period of between one and two months, a submissions period of six to eight weeks, and the holding of hearings over the course of several months, as well as two to three months to write, finalise and adopt a report. Some stages must occur in order. For example, scoping an inquiry should occur before the terms of reference are determined, and a government response can be prepared only once the report is tabled.

Other stages often overlap and run concurrently and, in some cases, some stages need to be revisited. For example, a committee may hear from a major stakeholder during the scoping stage, at an initial hearing, and at a hearing towards the end of the inquiry, to test potential findings and recommendations. In some inquiries, a committee may decide to issue an interim report, as this committee did during its inquiry into the protection of crowded places from terrorist acts, to clarify and define issues under active consideration and seek further submissions from stakeholders. A smaller inquiry with specific and narrow terms of reference and few stakeholders may be able to report within a few months. A larger inquiry with broad terms of reference and many stakeholders can take significantly longer—in some cases, several years.

At the time of receiving the Attorney General’s letter, the Legislative Assembly had three sitting weeks, and the committee only two meetings, scheduled for the remainder of the fortieth Parliament. A standing committee can continue to meet when the Legislative Assembly is not sitting; however, when the Legislative Assembly is prorogued, a standing committee’s activities are suspended and, upon dissolution, the committee is terminated. The date of prorogation and dissolution are at the discretion of the Governor upon advice from the government. However, if not dissolved earlier, the Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1899 provides that the Legislative Assembly will be dissolved on 31 January 2021. This set deadline would provide the committee with, at most, three months to conduct an inquiry.

Although the terms of reference for the potential inquiry have not been determined, the committee anticipates that it would be a sensitive and significant inquiry into a horrific and tragic event, with considerable legal complexities associated with inquiring into the operations of, and potentially the law governing, the Family Court of Western Australia. Clearly, the committee does not have enough time to tackle such a difficult inquiry in the comprehensive fashion that the situation demands and that the Cockman family and other families affected by this tragedy deserve.

In conclusion, although the committee considers an inquiry into these matters to be worthy of further investigation, it is not in a position to undertake the inquiry itself during what remains of this term of Parliament. The committee is also not able to bind the activities of a future committee in a future Parliament. Therefore, whether the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee of the forty-first Parliament decides to consider this matter further is a matter for it, once established, after the forty-first Parliament commences following the March 2021 state general election. However, in making the letter of the Attorney General public through the tabling of it in this report, the committee is making it available to that future committee for its consideration.

Although I am the chair of the committee, personally I think that the Cockman family and the other families who have been affected by this tragedy have a right to demand answers and they deserve an opportunity to at least seek some of those answers. I hope that the issue is looked at during the forty-first Parliament by a committee, whether it is the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee or some other committee, to enable those families to, at the very least, have an opportunity to put their views into the public sphere and demand the answers that they so far have not got from our system.

Eleventh Report — “Hearings Held with Agencies Responsible for COVID-19 Response” — Tabling

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [12.18 pm]: I present for tabling the eleventh report of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee titled “Hearings Held with Agencies Responsible for COVID-19 Response”.

[See paper [4019](#).]

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: On 11 March 2020, the human coronavirus known as COVID-19 was declared a worldwide pandemic by the World Health Organization. Shortly afterwards, on 15 March, the Minister for Emergency Services made a declaration of a state of emergency in Western Australia. On 16 March, the Minister for Health declared a public health state of emergency. The declaration of the state of emergency, the first since the Emergency Management Act 2005 was enacted, triggered the operation of the State Emergency Coordinator and the establishment of the State Disaster Council. The State Emergency Coordinator, the Commissioner of Police, is responsible for coordinating the emergency response during a state of emergency. Chaired by the Premier and including relevant ministers and the State Emergency Coordinator, the State Disaster Council is the mechanism through which government is kept informed of developments in response to a state of emergency. Various other bodies and officers also manage and participate in the state government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The declaration of the state of emergency has been extended approximately every 14 days and remains in place. It has now been more than eight months since that initial declaration. During a state of emergency, the State Emergency Coordinator and other authorised officers are granted emergency powers to make directions regarding the movement of people, the closure of places and quarantine conditions, amongst other things. In consultation with the Chief Health Officer and various others involved in the state government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the State Emergency Coordinator has made directions that have affected all Western Australians. Since March 2020, to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, all Western Australians have been subject to restrictions on movement, varying in severity, based on evolving health advice over time. Many businesses were forced to close for a short time; thankfully, it was a short time. People who could began working from home. At one point, travel between intrastate regions was not allowed unless certain exemption criteria were met, and Western Australia’s border was closed to everyone, subject to specific exemptions.

The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee oversees emergency services, community services, police and 18 other portfolio areas. Given this role, the committee thought it important to gain an understanding of how the state’s emergency framework operated and the role of each of the emergency response bodies or officers and their activities. We also wanted to know how lessons being learnt during the management of the state’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic were being captured so that they could be leveraged off in the event of a future state of emergency or if things during the current state of emergency become more urgent and more immediate than they are at this point in time in Western Australia. Unfortunately, the onset of COVID-19 contributed to the committee extending the duration of an earlier inquiry, leaving insufficient time before the conclusion of the fortieth Parliament for the committee to conduct a formal inquiry into how the Western Australian government was responding and had responded to the COVID-19 pandemic. Also very importantly, the committee recognised the need for lead government agencies to focus on service provision and their response to the rapidly evolving pandemic whilst also ensuring the health and safety of staff and the public. The committee took a very bipartisan view on this; we wanted our lead agencies to be out in the field doing the work that needed to be done, rather than being brought into inquiry after inquiry. We were very cognisant of treading lightly in this space whilst our wonderful first responders and emergency services workers across all agencies were doing the work, which they continue to do, out in the field.

On 9 September, the committee resolved to conduct a series of hearings into the Western Australian government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee decided to invite agencies or officers to discuss aspects of emergency management, including preparedness, response, recovery and support for those most affected. These

hearings were held in public to enable media attendance and the publication of transcripts, which then became available to the public. The committee held hearings with the State Emergency Management Committee, which is ably chaired by Hon Dr Ron Edwards; the State Emergency Coordinator, police commissioner Chris Dawson, and his senior staff; the State Recovery Controller, Sharyn O'Neill, who is also the Public Sector Commissioner, along with the acting director general and deputy director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet; and the State Welfare Coordinator, Michelle Andrews, who is also the director general of the Department of Communities, and many of her senior staff. We thank all those people and the agencies behind them for making themselves available for those hearings.

If the committee had had more time before the end of the fortieth Parliament, we might have embarked on a formal inquiry into the state government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ideally, such an inquiry would be conducted after the state of emergency ceases to have effect. Such an inquiry would have allowed the committee to consult more broadly and consider evidence from a range of other stakeholders. It might be that this or another committee of the forty-first Parliament will decide to embark on a COVID-19-related inquiry.

I think I speak for every Western Australian in hoping that the current declaration of a state of emergency and the ongoing declarations cease to have effect sooner rather than later. I think that is an expectation on a global basis, but we will have to wait and see what happens in the future. The committee would sincerely like to thank the State Emergency Management Committee, the State Emergency Coordinator, the State Recovery Controller and the State Welfare Coordinator for meeting with the committee to discuss their roles and activities during a time of great uncertainty and when they have significant demands on their time, as I outlined earlier. The committee also extends its thanks to all the government and non-government workers who have been involved in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. In some cases, they have been separated from family and risked their own health to care for others, to ensure that essential services are maintained and the state continues to function.

Of course, we also thank the public of Western Australia. It is really because of the public's compliance with the necessary restrictions on movement and other things that has reduced the spread of COVID-19 and saved lives. With no community transmission of COVID-19 since April 2020, our state has been able to ease restrictions and we have returned to a state of near normality. It is a new normal. I think most people have been using that term because it is likely to be with us for a significant time. We have seen what has happened on almost a weekly basis, including this week in our neighbouring state of South Australia. We wish South Australia all the best in its endeavours to bring the recent outbreak and community spread under control as soon as possible. Our state finds itself in a very strong position to respond to the ongoing risks of the COVID-19 pandemic, including anything that resembles what has happened in South Australia over the past few days. Of course, we cannot be complacent. I think that, right at this stage, complacency remains one of our biggest threats in the COVID-19 space.

This report will be the last report of this committee to be tabled in this Parliament. It has been a wonderful ride. It was the first opportunity I have had to chair a committee. Being a non-government member of the Parliament, I wondered how it would work, what sort of direction the committee would take and what sort of direction the relationship between the committee and the government would take. Right from the outset, I sought to make this a truly bipartisan committee. As I have said in here before, I am a true believer in the ability of the parliamentary committee process to effect great work on behalf of Western Australians in a bipartisan manner, to gather evidence and to guide future reforms that benefit our state. I like to think that we have achieved that in this committee, in no small part because of the members of the committee. The deputy chair, the member for Burns Beach, and the member for Bunbury have been with me for the entirety of the journey of the committee. The two previous members from the Liberal Party, my colleagues the member for Carine and the member for Dawesville, were of great assistance. They have been more recently replaced by the honourable member for Churchlands and the honourable member for Vasse. They too have contributed in their way to the functioning of the committee. As I said, I hope that those who had not served on a parliamentary committee before recognised the value of the process. I trust that some of them may become advocates for a strong and well-resourced parliamentary committee system that works in a bipartisan multiparty manner to continue to effect good recommendations for good reform in this state.

No committee can operate without staff. It is as simple as that. They make us look good—everyone says that—they work diligently and they work tirelessly. They are a font and wealth of knowledge. I would like to acknowledge all the staff of the committee: the previous staff, Franchesca Walker, Dr Amy Lampard and Michele Chiasson; and especially the current staff of the committee, Alison Sharpe, Catherine Parsons and Alice Jones. As I said, they work tirelessly and they work so efficiently. They not only produce quality work, but they do so to tight time frames, sometimes under significant pressure. As members, it is important for us to pause and reflect on that and thank those people for the contribution that they make. It is not just a contribution to the committee; it is a contribution made by people who are not elected members of Parliament, just laypeople. This is a contribution that they make to bettering the state of Western Australia for all our citizens, and I sincerely thank them for the work they do and wish them very well in their future. Obviously, the support from the clerks; the Clerk Assistant (Committees), Liz Kerr; and all the staff has been wonderful as well.

As I said, I am a passionate believer that one of the great benefits of having a Parliament is having a well-run and well-functioning parliamentary committee process. Earlier in its term, the committee made a recommendation when we looked into the state election conducted in 2017 in Western Australia that there could be a joint committee tasked specifically with looking at electoral affairs. I know there is such a committee operating in the federal Parliament and in most other state Parliaments.

Ms M.M. Quirk: That was raised in the previous iteration.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I look over at my colleague, the member for Girrawheen, who was previously a chair of the same committee and also made that recommendation. I dare say that the member for Girrawheen may not necessarily be the first to have made the recommendation either.

Ms M.M. Quirk: No. We were the first to call the Electoral Commission in for a hearing, though.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Yes, there we are, and we followed in the previous committee's footsteps. We had the commission in again recently, and that transcript is on the record.

As I said, I hope that future Parliaments continue to resource committees in a manner that allows them to do their work properly, efficiently and for the benefit of Western Australians, and that a future Parliament considers the creation of other very, very appropriate parliamentary committees that can continue to serve Parliament and the democracy of Western Australia in the future. I have really welcomed the opportunity to be the chair of this very important committee.

MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [12.33 pm]: I would just like to pick up on some of the remarks made by the member for Hillarys, the chair of this fantastic committee, the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, which had an opportunity to look into how the government has been responding to the pandemic and is responsible for the COVID-19 response. Some of the key aspects of what has gone on this year have never been seen before. The declaration of a state of emergency was the first time since the Emergency Management Act 2005 was enacted. For the great part, government has been managing the COVID-19 pandemic with a piece of legislation that had never been used before, so there will always be lessons learnt, there will always be areas for improvement and there will always be things that can be done differently. That is why it was important for this committee to have an opportunity before the fortieth Parliament rose to get some feedback from some of the key players in the space, such as the State Emergency Coordinator and the State Disaster Council. Of course, the State Emergency Coordinator is the Commissioner of Police. How did they go about responding to this emergency? The people of Western Australia in good faith have followed the directions of the professionals who have been telling them what they need to do. That has been impacting on the movement of people, with the closure of places and the quarantining conditions that people have had to abide by. Many businesses have been forced to close, travel between intrastate regions was not allowed for a time and there has been a hard border in Western Australia, subject to specific exemptions. I agree with the chair of the committee that all this requires a deep parliamentary committee dive to see how it went, and it is unfortunate that we have run out of time in that regard. I encourage the next Community Development and Justice Standing Committee to maybe look at this moving forward.

One of the people we were able to have hearings with was the chair of the State Emergency Management Committee, Dr Ron Edwards. Listening to Dr Edwards in that hearing showed me that we have a very, very experienced, measured leader who understands government, has a background in politics and government, and is able to genuinely oversee that committee with a fair degree of experience. It was good to see the calibre of leadership of that committee. We got to hear from the State Emergency Coordinator, police commissioner Chris Dawson, who has two hats. He is the police commissioner on the one hand and State Emergency Coordinator on the other. He is a very professional police officer, another person with enormous experience. As members of Parliament and citizens of Western Australia, we should be very pleased to know we have somebody of that calibre in that position. When the commissioner was giving evidence to us in his role as State Emergency Coordinator, we asked a number of questions about how the border management was going, with the G2G PASS system and quarantining arrangements. We were keen to look into a breakdown of the number of people entering Western Australia on a weekly basis since restrictions commenced and how exemptions to standard quarantining arrangements took place. We received some information about that. As is evidenced in this report tabled today, the commissioner said that he did not support a lot of those responses being made public, because he was of the view that they were coming from different areas and could not yet be verified to provide a sufficient level of confidence in their accuracy for the purposes of statistical reporting.

The committee agrees that during the state of emergency the last thing we want is for the Western Australia Police Force's efforts to be concentrated on data management. We recognise that it needs to respond to COVID-19 and make sure that staffing and resources are in the right place at the right time. However, I agree with the chair that the collation of information post-pandemic would provide a useful summary of the actual activity undertaken during the pandemic response. I think that is important, but I will go one step further. I believe there is a need for accurate record-keeping and collection of information now, including decisions made. I say that because we should always have ongoing review of our systems, processes, data and information. That is necessary for ongoing governance of the COVID-19 management. It is important for ongoing assessment of the lessons learnt, including strengths, weaknesses and areas to improve, so those improvements can occur quickly. It is also very important for procedural and legislative change down the track. It could be procedural by adjusting to changes possibly now and there could

be legislative change if needed very quickly, as well. It is an important aspect. I ask that the government consider looking very carefully at improving its data management of the information that is coming through on a daily basis. It is also an important aspect of leadership and management so that decisions made and the culture of how the organisations are run can evolve with proper oversight. Data and information are important to that objective.

It was great to hear from Ms Michelle Andrews, the State Welfare Coordinator. I was particularly interested in how the homeless in Western Australia, and those specifically in the central business district of Perth, were being looked after and managed during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was of some concern to me that an accurate record or register of homeless people was not at the government's fingertips. I think there should be an accurate register of homeless people who are moving through the CBD. Even when a reason might be given that they do not have any identification or we do not know who they are by birth certificate or whatever, we should still be able to, for want of a better term, categorise and understand them. We should understand who they are, where they are and what their movements are. The reasons for that are obvious, because we need to have a really solid understanding of another aspect of government—the human terrain. We need to understand the human terrain of the City of Perth for example, to know the people moving in and out of it, so that if there were a COVID outbreak in the City of Perth, we would know who the homeless people are and where they are. We should be doing more, obviously, to look after them and give them appropriate housing or shelter, but, in any case, we need to know who they are and where they are so that we can very quickly respond if there is a COVID-19 breakout.

On behalf of this side of the chamber, and everybody in this chamber no doubt, I thank all state emergency management frontline personnel—health, police, Defence Force and all the public servants and contractors—who are involved in helping to make and keep Western Australia safe, and to follow the directions of the leaders. Thank you so much for your energy and effort to do so to date. We are not through the COVID-19 pandemic yet, as we have seen with the recent outbreak of COVID-19 in South Australia. We still have a way to go, but I thank all those frontline personnel for their efforts in keeping us safe. I also thank the community of Western Australia for doing its bit to follow directions, follow instructions and do the right thing during these difficult times.

Finally, thanks to the committee. Thanks to our chair, the member for Hillarys, for his leadership on this committee. For me, it has been a fantastic year of committee work, which has been really enjoyable, from looking at some difficult problems with the Magistrates Court situation around Australia through to dealing with COVID-19 in this report today. I thank the members for Burns Beach, Vasse and Bunbury for their collegiate and friendly approach to committee work. It has really been a pleasure. I wish all of us the best of luck in the upcoming election on the second Saturday of March. I know that we are all very keen to get out there with our communities and get re-elected so that we can continue the good committee work that this Parliament does for Western Australia.

APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2017–18) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2018
APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2017–18) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2018

Second Reading — Cognate Debate

Resumed from 18 November.

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [12.43 pm]: I rise to continue the contribution that I commenced yesterday. I would like to begin by again thanking the people of Bunbury who elected me to this place. It has been a real pleasure to represent Bunbury and Dalyellup over the past three and a half—nearly four—years and to realise how much of a difference we can make in this place to the everyday lives of people who go about their business in the community, with not only the major projects that we deliver, but also the social reform that can be achieved through legislation as we continue.

I was part of a team that went to the 2017 election with an agenda that was clearly about fixing the state's finances; an ambitious range of legislative reform and programs, particularly in relation to jobs, health, education and public infrastructure; and a clear agenda not to sell Western Power. I also went to the election with a commitment to be accessible and available to the community. I have thoroughly enjoyed, over this period, all the mobile offices, the town hall meetings, the Zoom meetings over the last six months, the events I have attended and the individual meetings I have had with constituents. I have learnt from every one of those processes and I think it makes me a better person to have had that experience. I have also been part of a very strong Labor team in the south west, with Mick Murray and his wealth of experience, and Robyn Clarke. Mick is about to leave us, but, hopefully, he will be replaced by an outstanding candidate in Jodie Hanns representing the seat of Collie–Preston. It will be great to have another strong and talented woman in this place.

Members would recall that back at the time of the March 2017 election, we faced some real challenges, not the least of which were issues around revenue and the GST, controlling expenses and managing the transition to fiscal discipline that could take the state forward. That was very important for my region because Bunbury sits at the top of a regional economy that is worth around \$15 billion in gross state product annually, which has grown each year. It makes a terrific contribution in the diversity of its economic base, whether that is in mineral processing, mining, tourism, hospitality, agriculture or small business. It is an incredibly vibrant region and the electorate of Bunbury is an incredibly vibrant part of that.

The plan for Bunbury that we went to the election with set out an agenda for the future growth of the city. It was really looking at taking forward a process that started in the mid-1980s with a Labor government, about what the future of Bunbury should be as a second capital of Western Australia. We had an agenda that looked at transport. I am very pleased to see things such as the Bunbury Outer Ring Road about to commence after many years of planning, and the dualling of Bussell Highway. I think both those projects will really put a backbone into the future road infrastructure for the south west as a whole, and cater for both its passenger and freight needs well into the future. They are very important projects. I am very pleased that we are replacing the *Australind*. The *Australind* was built in Bassendean by Western Australians and the replacement trains—not just a train—will be built in Western Australia by Western Australians. I think there is a bit of a wait to get to it, but it will be well worth the wait, because it will be a purpose-built train for the intercity journey between Bunbury and Perth. That particular piece of work will be accompanied by a lot of work around how we can improve journey times and the journey experience. I think that is a great step forward.

In health, we have had the construction of the step-up, step-down facility and the commitment to expand our hospital and to really look at its role as a teaching hospital for regional and remote area medicine. Very shortly, we will be seeing work commence on improvements to the emergency department, the mental health area, theatre space, general medical units and car parks, which is a major issue. The step-up, step-down facility is an amazing contribution to meet the needs of people who may be about to have an acute mental health experience or may be transitioning back out of hospital into the community.

The transformation of the Bunbury waterfront has been absolutely outstanding in not only reconnecting Bunbury to its waterfront, but also how people and locals view our city and its connection from the CBD to the waterfront—at the end of the day, Bunbury is a peninsula city—and how to engage in that and improve the quality of life for all locals.

In education, I worked very closely within Ian Harvey to see South Bunbury Primary School get its new preprimary and grade 1 classrooms, and what a delight it was to accompany the Premier to see the kids and teachers enjoying those new spaces. It was the same with Newton Moore Senior High School, which has embraced the science, technology, engineering and maths agenda with a new STEM facility that will take Newton Moore forward. Of course, Bunbury Senior High School is getting new facilities, particularly around the canteen, which I think was last addressed around 1940 or so.

I refer to sport and recreation, and the fantastic contribution by the Minister for Sport and Recreation, finally resolving the open drainage ditch in front of the Bunbury United Soccer Club. I commend local resident Marina Quain for her work in that area. Dalyellup Beach Surf Life Saving Club is a community organisation that had been living out of sea containers. We have been able to support the club in obtaining new facilities to store all its equipment, and the Forrest Park facility with new cricket nets, which is a great contribution on the sporting agenda. Then, of course, we have the private sector. Albemarle has made a significant investment in the Bunbury area, driving the jobs agenda that we on this side of the house hold so important. The actions under the plan are either completed, under contract or are funded. I am very pleased to be part of a government that does exactly what it says it is going to do, roll up its sleeves and get into it.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 8137.]

HILLARYS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Statement by Member for Hillarys

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [12.50 pm]: I am so glad to stand today and confirm that strong advocacy by a local member and local community can get real results. Finally, the state government has listened to the people of Hillarys and has answered our call for a new school to replace the tired old buildings at Hillarys Primary School.

This school has been ignored for far too long. When I became the member for Hillarys in 2017, I called for the rebuilding of local schools like Hillarys Primary School that were old, tired, and well past their use-by date. Hillarys Primary School is the largest primary school in my electorate. It has almost 600 students and is facing growth pressures. It is bursting at the seams and is coping with dilapidated and unsafe buildings. It took some time for the government to listen. Even after a ceiling at the school collapsed and fell on three students in September this year, no money was found in the October state budget to rebuild the school, but the amazing school community and the people of Hillarys would not take no for an answer. Hundreds of people signed my petition to rebuild the school and backed my calls for the government to listen. The people of Hillarys are grateful that there is now bipartisan support to rebuild the school so that local students and teachers can enjoy the modern state-of-the-art facilities they need and deserve by the start of the 2023 school year.

So much more needs to be done in my area. Old schools like Springfield Primary School also need to be rebuilt. I assure all residents in the electorate of Hillarys that I will continue to fight for the needs of our local community because our locals deserve to be treated with the respect that every other Western Australian gets.

GREAT SOUTHERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION — BRUCE MANNING*Statement by Member for Roe*

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [12.52 pm]: Today I take this opportunity to acknowledge the achievements of the CEO of the Great Southern Development Commission, Mr Bruce Manning, and celebrate his contributions to regional development.

Based in Albany, Bruce was appointed as CEO of GSDC in 2000, and is an ex officio member of the board. For 20 years, Bruce has upheld the guiding principles of the GSDC, has led with integrity, built lasting partnerships and maintained a strong regional focus. Bruce came to the role of CEO with an extensive background in regional development, natural resource management, business and strategic development, marketing, tourism and risk management experience and a passion for the environment. This year marks 20 years of Bruce's role as CEO. I thank him for his contribution to regional development and for striving to promote the economic and social growth of the great southern region. I had the honour of working closely with Bruce when I was chairman of the GSDC between 2009 and 2016 and had the pleasure of working with him on many great projects, including the University of Western Australia's Albany Centre, the Albany Entertainment Centre, the Centre of Excellence in Natural Resource Management, the SuperTowns program, the new Katanning saleyards, the Yongergnow Australian Malleefowl Centre and The Kodja Place in Kojonup. I always knew Bruce was on the case with his early morning phone calls and his advocacy for the whole of the great southern region from Woodanilling through to Jerramungup and Denmark. Bruce is a regional champion.

LADY LAWLEY COTTAGE*Statement by Member for Cottesloe*

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [12.53 pm]: This is an important matter about which I have previously written to both the Minister for Child Protection and the Minister for Lands, and I take the opportunity to raise the matter again. The Australian Red Cross has made the decision to cease operating Lady Lawley Cottage in Cottesloe as a respite care centre for children with special support needs. It will be a great shame for families with children with special needs to no longer be able to obtain respite care at Lady Lawley Cottage. Hundreds of families have used the facility and it is very clear from the many that I have spoken to that no other provider delivers completely duplicate services.

Lady Lawley Cottage provides intimate and high quality care in an ideal physical environment. The close proximity of the beach provides unique recreational opportunities for the children staying there. Lady Lawley Cottage enjoys very strong support from the local community. Everyone in Cottesloe sees the cottage staff, especially the children, as important members of our community.

When discussing changes to the strata title laws, I have spoken about the importance of the comfort and security that comes from living and being in a place that one knows well. The availability of quality and familiar respite care is critical for the mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and extended families of the affected children. The availability of quality respite care gives them the freedom to enjoy a break in their own homes. Equally, the availability of quality respite care at Lady Lawley Cottage is important for the very gradual adjustment to future care arrangements for special-needs children once their parents or grandparents are no longer able to support them.

I know that this is a complex issue, but I strongly urge the government to continue supporting Lady Lawley Cottage.

ELECTORATE STAFF*Statement by Member for Belmont*

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [12.55 am]: Today I rise to acknowledge the tireless efforts of my staff. To Marinomoana Ward and Helen Ladhams, who work for me in my capacity as the state Parliamentary Labor Party caucus secretary, I thank them for their constant support and hard work. M's knowledge is second to none and Helen's work ethic is nothing short of outstanding; she always goes over and above.

I truly love working with Emily Doherty in my electorate office. She is such a calm head, quiet, clever, brilliantly organised, thoroughly compassionate and so hard working. I so look forward to her coming back from maternity leave in her own time. Big love to the beautiful little Lucia.

I feel so lucky to have someone so capable as Ryan Harte in my corner. He is incredibly intelligent, unquestionably and 100 per cent dedicated and seems to take everything in his stride. Even when he is drowning in emails, he never quibbles about the often long hours, the monsoonal workload and, no doubt, the annoying ideas thrown his way by his boss. Thank you.

Justine's talent truly shines through and her work ethic is outstanding. Her capacity never ceases to astound me and was evident from the moment she interned with me. Her keen eye for detail, fastidious organisational skills, exceptional writing ability and dedication is something for which I am immensely grateful.

Working for a member is often intense. The workload is fulsome and relentless and the demands are many, but my staff are absolutely incredible and I am truly grateful to each and every one of them. I owe them a debt of gratitude from the bottom of my heart. Thank you.

BROTHERS OF MINE — BALDIVIS*Statement by Member for Baldivis*

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Parliamentary Secretary) [12.56 pm]: The Baldivis electorate is home to many great small businesses that provide high quality goods and services and today, I speak of one of them. Brother of Mine cafe is on Phar Lap Parade, and just like the mighty thoroughbred, it is fast becoming legendary. Brother of Mine, or BOM to Baldivians, is a family-run hospitality powerhouse founded by two brothers, Brits, Ben and Jos Whettingsteel—think Jamie Oliver times two—with similar accents, cheeky smiles and a passion for hospitality. They opened the cafe three years ago and the customers have not stopped coming. From tradies grabbing early breakfast, to Makybe Rise Primary School mums enjoying a post-drop-off coffee, it is hipster meets homely, fashionista meets cas-u-al. Locals have always known how good BOM is, and now Western Australia does, too.

This year, Brother of Mine was named Western Australia's cafe of the year at the Restaurant and Catering Australia's Awards for Excellence. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they kept the cafe running. Now it employs 40 local people, which is more than before. This is an inspirational small business that typifies the local entrepreneurial spirit that exists across our electorate. As well as Jos and Ben running the cafe, there is Jessica Ririuni, the general manager; Lachlan Boyd, the head chef; Gene Plummer, the graphic designer; Charlee McKenzie in administration and culture; and a long list of other key members. It is true to say the BOM is the bomb!

CHRISTMAS CHARITIES — BUNBURY*Statement by Member for Bunbury*

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [12.58 pm]: There are a number of organisations that provide extra services and support at Christmas time and I want to acknowledge the Salvation Army, with Zoe and Mark Schatz; Foodbank, with Carol Hearn; the Intown Centre, which provides Christmas lunches; the South West Refuge, which supports families; Foster Carers, South West, which supports toy drives; the Bunbury soup van, with Denise and Sasha who will be out with the van providing a hot meal on every public holiday; and Doors Wide Open, with Jane, Lina and Anne who are collecting food items and gifts for children to support individuals and families dealing with the impacts of addiction.

There are many other organisations, but these particular organisations will be out collecting for Christmas this year. I encourage everybody to get behind them and help those people who have done it a little bit tougher than everybody else and might need a little extra support. The Salvation Army will be running a toy drive. Donations of toys that kids can play with are always very welcome, as is food for people who are sometimes fairly desperate. I support all those organisations. If anybody would like further information about how to contact them, they are welcome to contact my office and we will link up people.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm***QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE**

The SPEAKER: It is a full house! Members, it is question time. Be nice to me today, thank you. I am old.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Take the wig off!

The SPEAKER: Order! I gave it to Mr Murray because I thought he needed it more than I did.

WESTPORT — AUTOMATED OUTER HARBOUR

953. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

Given that this is the last scheduled question time, will the Premier finally come clean and outline to the house what is the true impact of the automated outer harbour on the important marine habitat of Cockburn Sound?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

We will have Christmas speeches later on, and can I wish all members all the best. No doubt, we will say that at that point in time.

It is interesting and, I suppose, sad in a way that this is the last scheduled sitting day of Parliament, so I do appreciate all members' questions. I especially appreciate that question, Leader of the Opposition. It has come to my attention that today she tabled a petition with more than 10 000 signatures on it and then she pushed that petition to elements of the media, advocating on behalf of what was in the petition. The petition has 10 000 signatures. It is signed at the bottom by the Leader of the Opposition. It calls for the construction —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: No, it's not! It's not signed by me!

Mr M. McGOWAN: It has your name on the bottom. The Leader of the Opposition presented it.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: As the presenter.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Okay; it has her name as the presenter. As she admits, it has her name on it as the presenter. I can see her name on it!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. It has the Leader of the Opposition's name on it and it calls for a commitment to Westport and the construction of a new harbour in Kwinana. The petition has 10 000 signatures. The Leader of the Opposition tables it and then circulates it to the media saying, "Why is the government not delivering on all these things, including this?" I suggest to the Leader of the Opposition that maybe before she tables these documents, she might want to read them first. Before she tables it and then circulates it to press outlets and says, "Put pressure on the government; they need to deliver all these things that are contained within this petition"—I notice that it is on an online news service—maybe she should think about it.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The facts are there for all to see.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The facts are there for all to see.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: What a stupid thing to say?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Did the Leader of the Opposition push it to the media?

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I accepted the petition on behalf of a constituent, as I am supposed to do.

Mr M. McGOWAN: So the Leader of the Opposition comes in here —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: She comes in here and attacks me over a project that we took to the last state election and we are progressing with full Environmental Protection Authority assessment processes, which we are funding, on the day that she tables, circulates and pushes a petition calling for the same project! Does she wonder why the people of Western Australia have absolutely no faith in the Liberal Party in this state?

Point of Order

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker, I would just like, before I ask my supplementary —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker, I will proudly stand in this Parliament any day of the week and table a petition on behalf of any constituent.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you may have just a supplementary question and that is all you are allowed; otherwise, I will sit you down.

Questions without Notice Resumed

A government member: Throw her out!

The SPEAKER: I will throw you out!

WESTPORT — AUTOMATED OUTER HARBOUR

954. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. I just want to be clear. The Premier is refusing to provide the detail. Is that because he does not know the impact of the outer harbour on Cockburn Sound or he does know and he does not want to advise the public?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I said before that the Leader of the Opposition's name is on the petition and she denied having signed it, yet here at the top is the Leader of the Opposition's signature. She denied having signed it. Her signature is on the document.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is on the document!

The SPEAKER: Premier! There is a point or order.

Mr D.C. Nalder: Premier! Premier, sit down! Sit down!

The SPEAKER: Excuse me! You do not tell the Premier to sit down; I do!

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The Premier is clearly impugning the motives of the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: No; that is not a point of order. Sit down!

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The Premier is asserting that the Leader of the Opposition signed the petition. She has to sign it to endorse it in the first place.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville, I call you to order for the first time because I gave a decision and you kept going. Minister for Emergency Services, I call you to order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: Mr Speaker, the petition itself that the Leader of the Opposition tabled—she signed her name at the top—calls for the construction of Westport and the construction of a new harbour. That is what it does. It has 10 000 signatures. The Leader of the Opposition said that she did that only as a formality, yet I have a photograph of her with the petition, pushing it to the media outside Parliament and calling for the media to take up this case. There she is with the member for Darling Range and the proponent of the petition. There she is! Therefore, if it was just a formality —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Members on my right, your Premier is on his feet!

Mr M. McGOWAN: If it was just a formality, why did she go outside Parliament and push it to the media and have her photograph taken while holding the petition? Why did the Leader of the Opposition do that?

Mrs A.K. Hayden interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Mr Speaker, I think this explains a lot. In four years —

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Transport! Do you two want to go outside and have a little chat and then come back and feel better?

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale!

Mrs A.K. Hayden interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range, I call you to order for the second time. Member for Armadale, I know you are leaving early, but I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I read the online story in which the Leader of the Opposition pushed the petition committing to Westport, signed it and had her photo taken. I read the article and I note that the member for Armadale—a very good member of Parliament—was able to point out some of the great things that we are doing down in his community, such as the rebuild of the TAFE in the heart of town, which we committed to as part of the recovery project; the Denny Avenue project that was talked about for actually 100 years and that we are doing as we speak; the nearby industrial estate that we committed funds to to allow for major industrial activity to take place; and, of course, the Byford rail line, which I note is also mentioned in the petition. I note that the Byford rail line has been called for in the petition and I note that on the weekend the Liberal Party was out there protesting against it. What are we to think? I was doing my press conference on Sunday, because I do weekend press conferences, and one of the journalists—I think it was Geof Parry—asked me —

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The question from the Leader of the Opposition was clearly about Cockburn Sound and nothing to do with the Byford rail line and this government's continual inaction in listening to the residents of Darling Range.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. It was a good try, though, but it is not a point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: Mr Speaker, he asked me about the Liberal Party protest against the Byford rail and, in particular, the Thomas Road overpass. I know Thomas Road quite well because I have driven it many times. I nearly had an accident there once. This project is much needed and it is an integral part of the Byford rail line. One group is out there protesting against it: the Liberal Party. It is in the petition, like Westport is. Members opposite claim they do not support either of them, yet they are outside Parliament promoting it. It is very odd.

In terms of environmental assessments, obviously, that is an important part of any such project. That will be undertaken fully and thoroughly via Environmental Protection Authority processes, as we have committed to and outlined on numerous occasions.

CORONAVIRUS — ECONOMIC RECOVERY — JOBS

955. Ms S.E. WINTON to the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to supporting local jobs and ensuring that the Western Australian economy is kept safe and strong. Can the Premier update the house on how the unprecedented efforts of the McGowan Labor government during the past three years and eight months have delivered more local jobs and helped get more Western Australians back into work?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The figures that came out today are incredibly encouraging and very strong for Western Australia. In the month of October, 15 300 jobs were created. That was the second strongest employment growth of all the states. Our unemployment rate is down again to 6.6 per cent, which is the second lowest unemployment rate in the country. We have the highest participation rate of anywhere in Australia by a number of points. Had we had the national average for the participation rate, we would easily have the lowest unemployment rate in the country. The figures today show that 89 300 jobs have been recovered since May, since COVID hit. That means around 87 per cent of all jobs lost have been recovered. Of course, as part of our WA recovery plan, investment is taking place all over Western Australia to get jobs back. We were the first government in Australia to launch a recovery plan.

We have done numerous things across the state, but this morning I was able to address a major industry forum and outline the fact that we are going to have a \$27 billion look-forward for our pipeline of work. For the first time ever, all over the state industry will be able to see, for years ahead, a pipeline of work that government agencies and instrumentalities will have tenders for. It will be terrific for business all over Western Australia, including in the city and the regions.

We will deliver over this term and, hopefully, if we are re-elected, over next term Metronet, railcar manufacturing and nearly \$1 billion of social and affordable housing. We have cut TAFE fees. We have undertaken economic reform, planning reform, environmental law reform and liquor reform. We have slashed payroll tax, taken up the defence industry and made the biggest investment in roads ever seen, especially in the regions. We have created greater job security for Western Australian workers, Infrastructure WA, Invest and Trade WA, and the LNG jobs taskforce. We brought Matagarup Bridge back from Malaysia, where the last government was having it built. We secured the Perth City Deal and the GST deal, which we are defending very, very vigorously.

But I want to talk about one thing. As part of the recovery plan, we have launched a \$492 million investment in school infrastructure across Western Australia. It is very, very significant. Today we announced that we are adding to that. We are going to spend \$16.7 million to rebuild Hillarys Primary School.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It will be a magnificent project for the people of Hillarys. It will have 16 new general learning classrooms and two kindergarten classrooms. Obviously, it will require a re-elected Labor government to do this. The school has been there for 50 years, untouched by successive conservative governments over all that time.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Hillarys! It is good news for you; be quiet.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I knew I would get that reaction, Mr Speaker. I would like to thank the community of Hillarys. I would like to thank the Labor candidate for Hillarys, Caitlin Collins.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I would like to thank her. She has met with parents and staff. I knew the member for Hillarys would get upset, but I say to him —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Perth!

Mr M. McGOWAN: If I can just have a bit of silence, member for Hillarys. Member for Hillarys, my office is just down the corridor. If the member cared so much about it, he could have come and knocked on my door. He could have said, “Premier, Hillarys Primary School needs rebuilding.” Do you know what, Mr Speaker? The member for Hillarys never did that. He never raised the issue in here with me.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Hillarys, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: He never asked a question. He never showed any interest. It took Caitlin Collins, working with the school community and the people of Hillarys, to ensure that that project comes to fruition. Under a McGowan government, it will.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Everyone take a deep breath.

RETAIL ELECTRICITY MARKET — COMPETITION

956. Mr D.C. NALDER to the Premier:

I refer to the Liberal Party’s plan for cheaper power bills.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr D.C. NALDER: I refer to the Liberal Party’s plan for cheaper power bills.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, please! Start again, member.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Premier, I refer to the Liberal Party’s plan for cheaper power bills. Can the Premier confirm his refusal to allow retail competition, when Synergy’s monopoly is preventing more than 300 000 households from selling more energy from their solar panels to innovative, clean electricity retailers?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

No, I cannot confirm that. What I find about the member for Bateman is that his knowledge of these matters is not strong; it is very shaky. As I have pointed out on numerous occasions, members opposite had eight and a half years to do something about this if they wanted to. The reason they did not is that they knew, when they were in government, that in order to do what the member is saying, prices had to be put up. That is the advice every government has always received about these matters. Prices have to be put up. Then, of course, what members opposite will do is allow for cherrypicking of customers, especially in the regions. That is exactly what will happen. Regional power prices will go through the roof, if you excuse the pun, Mr Speaker, if the Liberal Party’s plan comes to fruition.

As we know, obviously, Liberal Party members—it is in their DNA—want to privatise all these electricity assets. It is part of that as well. Do not worry; we are more than happy to debate this. I note that the Leader of the Opposition was out there the other day calling for trading from eight o’clock on a Sunday morning, which would devastate small businesses across the state and devastate the lifestyles of families all over the state. Do not worry; we are happy to tell small business that Labor is the party for small business in this state. We are the party for the regions because we are standing up for regional people against these plans that will put up their prices. We are ensuring that major utilities remain in public ownership. We can see what happened to our good friends in New South Wales who sold it all off. What has happened to their debt? It is skyrocketing! Of course, it was meant to cauterise the debt increases in New South Wales, but what has happened? It was the opposite. That is exactly what happens under the Liberal Party in both New South Wales and Western Australia. We look forward to reminding everyone of that fact every single day for the next four months.

RETAIL ELECTRICITY MARKET — COMPETITION

957. Mr D.C. NALDER to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. To confirm, is the Premier refusing to provide Western Australian households —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! I will hear the supplementary question in silence.

Mr D.C. NALDER: To confirm, is the Premier refusing to provide Western Australian households with access to a cheaper, cleaner and more innovative electricity source?

Mr W.J. Johnston: Why don’t you ask me a question? Are you too scared?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

That is a very good point. Why does the member for Bateman not ask the Minister for Energy a question?

Let us think about this. The Liberal Party is now the friend of renewables. That is the substance of the member's question. The Liberal Party is now the friend of renewables. I do not know whether the member has watched what has happened across this country over the last 10 years, but the Liberal Party is not the friend of renewables.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Have a look at what has happened. Have a look at some of the commentary from Angus Taylor and some of those characters. Have a look at some of the commentary of Liberal Party members across Australia.

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warren–Blackwood!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The idea that the Liberal Party is a friend of renewables is frankly wrong and goes against all —

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warren–Blackwood!

Mr M. McGOWAN: — the available evidence across this country.

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for Warren–Blackwood, three times I have called you. I call you to order.

Mr M. McGOWAN: This government, as the member for Collie–Preston well knows, has done more for Collie than ever before.

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warren–Blackwood, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have ensured the sustainability of Collie. We have also supported investment in renewable energy across this state, something that the Liberal Party was incapable of.

STATE ECONOMY

958. Ms C.M. ROWE to the Treasurer:

I refer to the McGowan government's commitment to keeping WA's economy safe and strong. Can the Treasurer update the house on the work undertaken by the McGowan government during this term to drive economic growth, create local jobs and support local businesses and how this compares with the economic disasters left by the previous Liberal–National government?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

I thank the member for Belmont for that very good question.

The Premier just made the point that Labor is the party for regional WA. It is the party for small business. I think it is beyond doubt now that WA Labor is the party for strong financial management, economic growth and job creation. The last 20 years, in particular the last four years, has absolutely confirmed that point. When I became Treasurer—I have made this point many times in this place, member for Belmont—I said that by the time I had finished, I wanted to ensure that the balance sheet was better able to respond to the circumstances that we had found ourselves in. I am pleased to say that that has certainly been delivered by the McGowan government and the McGowan cabinet.

Nine billion dollars is the change in debt that has been achieved over the last four budgets delivered by this government. As a result, there has been a saving of \$1 billion in interest over that time. When we think about it, that is an amazing figure, bearing in mind the global shutdown of our economy. Compared with March 2017, there are now another 63 000 Western Australians in work, on the back of a much larger participation rate now than there was in March 2017. That highlights the resilience of the economy compared with when I became Treasurer. After four years of domestic recession, we now have economic growth, and I suspect that tomorrow's accounts will continue to show that good story.

As a result, we have been able to do many things, and every minister in the government has been able to do so many things in their portfolio areas. The Minister for Culture and the Arts will shortly be opening the wonderful new WA Museum Boola Bardip this weekend. It is quite spectacular. The Minister for Transport, sitting next to him, has had charge of the multibillion dollar Metronet program, plus what seems to be a new road wherever we go around regional Western Australia. The Minister for Sport and Recreation is giving somebody a football wherever he goes. It is quite extraordinary. The Minister for Housing has seen nearly \$2 billion go into the property sector. The Minister for Corrective Services has not only built an entire prison within the prisons footprint, but also delivered drug and alcohol rehabilitation prisons that are being incredibly successful. That is why we do not have 110 per cent capacity in our prisons anymore.

Then there is the Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Energy. Someone called out a minute ago, “What happened to Warradarge?” The minister opened it just the other week. That is how successful that minister has been. The Minister for Child Protection—perhaps the toughest area in government—has done an incredible effort for Aboriginal kids in care. I want to acknowledge the Wungening Aboriginal Corporation and the efforts that we have gone to to reduce and redirect kids coming into care and making sure that families take them on. The Minister for Tourism, up until the point he shut down the cruise sector, was doing a tremendous job. Record numbers of international tourists were coming into Western Australia under that minister. Under the Minister for Water, sitting behind me, the investment that has been going into our water infrastructure has been causing disruptions in some places it has been so successful. The Attorney General has managed to appoint every lawyer in the state a judge! I think that is an outstanding outcome. And, of course, the Minister for Police has provided an extra 950 police officers, issued police with stab-proof vests and invested in infrastructure in a way the police have not seen before in the last 20 or 30 years.

I want to thank all these ministers who have done a tremendous job. The only reason we have been able to do that is the strong financial management of the Labor government. Strong financial management is not the end. Strong financial management is about creating jobs for Western Australians and ensuring that we deliver services for Western Australians that are sustainable for the future. I want to thank all my colleagues.

The SPEAKER: I thought you were retiring, Treasurer. Did you need to get more votes in caucus?

TOURISM — FAMILIARISATION TOURS

959. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to a recent decision by Tourism WA to cancel a Helloworld familiarisation tour to Western Australia by six travel agents from Queensland, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory—a market connection that is very important to tourism operators here in WA.

- (1) What is the basis for the cancelling a familiarisation tour to WA for travel agents from states where there are currently no travel restrictions?
- (2) Do you support familiarisation tours by travel agents from COVID-19-safe states as a strategy to build our interstate travel market?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

Thank you, member, for the question.

- (1)–(2) The member is talking about an operational matter right down in the weeds with respect to a familiarisation tour by Helloworld representatives from—where did the member say they were from?

Mr D.T. Redman: From Queensland, ACT and Tasmania.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Without awareness of what date the cancellation was made, I would not be able to enlighten the member on the reasoning behind the cancellation. Until very recently we had a hard border. We then went to a controlled border only a matter of a week and a bit ago—two weeks ago. The consequence of having the hard border would have been that we were preparing for a future opportunity to market to interstate markets when they became available. In Tourism WA for some time now—in fact, right throughout the COVID-19 pandemic response, we have had in-market buy right across the eastern seaboard. We have just been rolling it over. For a lot of measures that we would normally have undertaken to grow business numbers we have either paused or had to cancel. For instance, there has been no point in seeking out big events that draw people when we could not bring people here.

Similarly, familiarisations for travel agents are the sort of thing that are done when there is the capacity to market to a market. There is not much point in spending taxpayers’ dollars on an activity that would not result in a return. I would have assumed that. Had the member given me some notice, I might have been able to find out exactly why it was cancelled and why the visit was postponed, no doubt, rather than completely ended forever. There will be an opportunity for these types of activities to return. When it is appropriate, we will spend valuable taxpayers’ money on things that get a return. We do not risk that investment at a time when we might not be able to exploit it. If the member wanted to know the answer, he might have given me a little bit of notice.

TOURISM — FAMILIARISATION TOURS

960. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Minister for Tourism:

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister confirm whether we are open to tourism from Queensland, Tasmania and the ACT or not, because it would appear his agency does not seem to think so?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

That is a bit of a leap from a three-person delegation coming for a familiarisation with tourism attractions in Western Australia to not being open. Obviously, we are in a pandemic. Things are a little unpredictable. As recently as a few days ago, a state that we were having a controlled border with and we were welcoming visitors from has gone into complete lockdown—the toughest lockdown in the country, in excess of what Victoria had. Therefore,

I would commend Tourism WA for being a little prudent about the use of taxpayers' money that is focused on attracting visitors in the event that there may not be much of a market right now because people may be inclined to be a little reserved about travelling in this environment. They may be a little bit cautious about leaving their own state in the event that a border arrangement may change at short notice. I would commend Tourism WA.

I will finish in not really giving much credence to the member's question by saying that Tourism Western Australia is demonstrably the best tourism agency in the country. In 2018, we went from inheriting a disaster in tourism from your lot, in an absolutely depressed environment in which no thought was being given to what would happen at the end of the business travel boom that was happening in the mining sector, to us implementing a two-year action. It started in 2018 when we had the biggest out-of-state visitor numbers in history, only exceeded in 2019 when we got even bigger numbers. We were on track for even bigger numbers in 2020 and then, of course, the pandemic intervened. Nevertheless, the Wander Out Yonder campaign is the best and most successful intrastate campaign in history. We have the best tourism market in the country. We have more people travelling in Western Australia's regions than any other state has, and that is a big part of what the Treasurer just referred to. The hospitality, accommodation and tourism sectors have been the big contributors to the growth in jobs since we got back into operation.

METRONET — JOBS

961. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts to keep the WA economy strong through its record investment in transport infrastructure.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on this government's investment in Metronet and how the delivery of the single biggest rail expansion in Perth's history is supporting local jobs?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house whether she is aware of anyone who does not support this investment in Metronet and other job-creating transport projects?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

(1)–(2) I thank the member for that question and for his commitment to Metronet, local jobs, local companies and local work. Of course, we are delivering a record amount of rail infrastructure in Western Australia that has never been seen before. We have eight projects underway and there are more to come. Let us go through those projects and see who opposes those projects in Western Australia.

First of all, let us start in the member for Thornlie's area. The Thornlie–Cockburn Link is a much-needed project that the other side could never deliver. In 2008, the former member for Southern River —

... told *The West Australian* he had unsuccessfully lobbied the Government's leadership to commit to the line in the lead-up to the 2013 State election. "I think they figured that the polling showed I was doing extremely well," he said.

In 2015, he said —

"I'm hoping that within five years we'll either get a commitment to it or even construction starting ...

I say to the former member that construction has started under this government.

The Yanchep rail extension is underway. The member for Butler and I have been out there a few times.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Yanchep rail extension was opposed by the Liberal Party. In 2018, the Leader of the Opposition said —

I am curious to hear the minister's explanation of why Yanchep was progressed ... There is plenty of land up there, but not many houses, and not many people living there at the moment ...

Again, the Liberal Party opposed the Yanchep rail line.

I turn to Bayswater train station. What did the Liberal Party commit to the Bayswater train station? It committed a new ramp and a toilet!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: As part of its \$1.8 billion Forrestfield commitment, the opposition committed \$4 million to a new ramp and a toilet! We have committed over \$200 million to rebuild a brand-new Bayswater station, a whole new precinct.

Shall we go through the Morley–Ellenbrook line again? The Liberal Party failed to deliver its election commitments.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Liberal Party failed to deliver twice. It broke a promise to the people of Ellenbrook and that entire corridor. Even after the last election, the member for Riverton said —

“It is out there prioritising a rail line to Ellenbrook, which isn’t needed for 10 years ...

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the second time. You’ll miss out on the crayfish, the way you’re going!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Bateman said —

“If you look at the population, it just isn’t there to sustain a capital investment at this point in time ...

The Liberal Party was opposed to the Ellenbrook rail line.

The Denny Avenue level crossing is underway—another massive project for Kelmscott and Armadale. The car park at Mandurah station is underway.

The Byford rail extension was opposed by the Liberal Party. It does not want us to deliver the Byford rail extension. That is an incredible position taken by the Liberal Party. It is running a campaign against the extension of the Byford rail line. Today, it presented a petition calling for us to get on with it. It went out there to do a media event and then opposes the rail line. I do not understand that. Can members opposite not match what they are doing on a Sunday with what they are doing on a Thursday?

Of course, then we have the Forrestfield–Airport Link, which is being delivered by this government. It started under this government. Over four kilometres of track has been laid.

Yes, member, there are people in WA who do not support Metronet. They are members of the Liberal Party! They are fighting, opposing and criticising while we have thousands of Western Australian workers out there delivering a record program of investment.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse! Wow, you are on three! Just let me get my book so I can get ready to send you home.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have seen a few meetings of Liberal Party members today, not involving the Leader of the Opposition. I think they have seen the polling results, members! I have seen a few groupings out there, all very, very hushed.

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Mr Speaker —

Mr D.A. Templeman: Where’s your manila folder?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The point of order is specifically in relation to the relevance of the question that was asked of the minister.

The SPEAKER: No, I think it is okay—just. The member for Vasse is enjoying it.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: They are very nervous on the other side. As the Minister for Culture and the Arts said, I think they have all been given the manila folder with the polling results. I have seen them all having meetings. The minister asked which group the member for Dawesville is in. From what I can see, I do not think it is the Leader of the Opposition’s group.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: My point of order, again, relates to the relevance of the question that was asked.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Hang on. I will hear the point of order in silence.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The minister was specifically asked a question about Metronet projects. I do not believe her statements are very relevant.

The SPEAKER: I think you are drifting away, minister. Just drift back to the question.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will pivot back!

Mr D.J. Kelly: Metronet was mentioned in the polling!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I think the minister is right.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Water, I know you like to have a say, but I want to hear it. I call you to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will pivot again.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call you to order for the second time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The minister was right; it was asked about in the Liberal Party polling.

Only one party can be trusted to deliver Metronet, jobs and rail lines for our future, and that is Labor.

HEALTH — WOMEN AND CHILDREN

962. **Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP to the Premier:**

Mr Speaker —

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you to order for the second time. You've got no taste in clothes either.

Mr P.C. Tinley: Is that jacket knitted? It's crocheted, isn't it?

The SPEAKER: Minister for Housing, you're not what I'd call a fashion icon either. I call you to order for the first time. Are there any other people who think they are funny or want to say something? I think you look great, mate.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Considering you wore a powdered wig this morning, Mr Speaker, I am not sure that is a compliment!

I refer to the Liberals' exceptional announcement to rebuild King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women and establish a \$60 million maternal and child health research fund. Is the government committed to women and children's health; and, if so, will it match our commitments?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, please!

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Mr Speaker, you might recall that the government made an important announcement about a new women's and babies' hospital—I think it was last year—when we settled the BHP matter. We committed the vast bulk of the settlement towards the women's and babies' hospital. We retained planning money for the women's and babies' hospital, but obviously withdrew some of the effort on the basis that we had to deal with COVID back in March and April this year, when we did not really understand—no-one did—how serious the matter would be. We have retained money in the budget for work on a new women's and babies' hospital. We understand the importance of a new facility there. The government, as I said on numerous occasions over the last couple of years, remains committed to that project. It is a very, very important project. We announced it last year. Obviously, we will have more to say about that in the future. I note that the \$500 million commitment by the Liberal Party goes absolutely nowhere near meeting the costs of a new women's and babies' hospital. It is not in the ballpark. That is a very, very small commitment towards women and babies made by the Liberal Party, just so they understand. It is a very, very tiny commitment that they made.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse!

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Rely on your budget papers!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Obviously, the Liberal Party is not good at costings. We remember the experience with lead in the pipes at Perth Children's Hospital. We are still involved in ongoing matters with the builders because of the performance of the last government. This morning, I addressed a group of 1 000 contractors. It was great. They are very interested in our pipeline of work. I was able to hold up the new thermostatic mixing valve that the new Western Australian government was able to put through the hospital, 1 800 of them, and fix the lead in the pipes that the former government left us. What I can say to the people of Western Australia when it comes to these projects is: there is one party and one government people can have faith in. Under the former government, lead in the pipes; under us, we fixed the problem that it struggled with for years.

HEALTH — WOMEN AND CHILDREN

963. **Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. If the government is committed to women and children's health, why has it not funded the rebuild of King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women in the last four years, or with the billions of dollars of its surplus?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

If the Liberal Party's policy is a rebuild, we understand—that is its policy; a rebuild. Obviously, our view is that a new hospital is required, not a rebuild. I have been to King Eddy's a number of times recently. Parts of it are at least 100 years old. As we announced recently, obviously we will be retaining part of it for mothers and fathers whose deceased babies are in a little commemoration park there. That will be a very important part going forward and I have had lots of positive feedback from parents about that. I want members opposite and the public to understand: \$500 million is a minuscule commitment towards a new women's and babies' hospital.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: It was in your budget! You have no commitment for it. You have doughnuts!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I just want everyone to understand that that is the Liberal Party's commitment towards this project.

BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT

964. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Emergency Services:

Before I ask my question to the Minister for Emergency Services, I want to thank him for his service to the emergency services, and in particular to the emergency services in Murray–Wellington.

The SPEAKER: That is a preamble. Get to the question. We do not want to pump him up too much!

Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE: I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts in keeping WA safe and strong. Can the minister update the house on this government's record investment in bushfire mitigation across Western Australia and its unprecedented reforms to rural bush fire fighting across the state?

Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:

Thank you.

Mr W.J. Johnston: That is a good question.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: It is a very good question, because the bushfire season is nearly upon us. Can I acknowledge the member for Murray–Wellington's relationship with all the bushfire volunteers in her seat, and what a fantastic relationship she has with them, having visited virtually most of them with her over the last couple of years.

If members remember back to March or April 2017 and what the incoming McGowan government was left with in the area of emergency services, we were left with the Ferguson report and all the recommendations from the Ferguson report, none of which had been addressed by the previous government. It was left to the McGowan Labor government to sort those out, and we did. April 2017 marked the beginning of the new bushfire management reform, with record mitigation; the commitment to, and now the completion of, Australia's first Bushfire Centre of Excellence; better funding and support for local governments; and improved relationships with, and training for, all volunteers in Western Australia.

Members will remember that I had to kick it all off. I held the inaugural bushfire mitigation summit in Mandurah back on 23 June 2017, and that set the direction and the objectives for the reform program going forward. Over the last nearly four years, the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner and I have travelled over 100 000 kilometres in Western Australia, and we have met thousands of volunteers. We have established a ministerial volunteer advisory forum with the bodies that represent all the volunteers in Western Australia, and we have met four times. We have established volunteer liaison officers in the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner's office. We have created 11 volunteer management officer positions in the regions to assist the volunteers with their increasing administrative duties. We have expanded the State Bushfire Advisory Council, and that has since met three times, and we are currently working on the state bushfire policy for emergency services going forward. We have transformed the approach to rural fire management in Western Australia, and no more than in the area of bushfire mitigation. We have put a record \$50 million into keeping our state safe from the threat of bushfire. We have done more here than any other state in Australia has done.

The Treasurer referred earlier to Labor being the friend and being the party of rural people, and we are. We are the party of rural Western Australia. Think about the amount of money that we have put into rural Western Australia for meaningful projects to improve the lives and safety of country people. In the area of mitigation, just in the member for Moore's electorate, between 2017 and this year we will have put \$3.93 million into the areas of Toodyay, Carnamah, Chittering, Gingin, Irwin and Northampton. That has never been done by previous governments, and particularly previous Liberal–National Party governments. In the member for Roe's electorate, over that period of time we will have invested \$2.83 million in Woodanilling, Cuballing, Narrogin, Wagin, Ravensthorpe, West Arthur, Williams and York. National MPs have never done that before in those areas.

In the area of the member for Warren–Blackwood—who has disappeared—in Nannup, Boyup Brook, Bridgetown, Greenbushes, Denmark and Manjimup, we have invested \$4 million in bushfire mitigation, working with local governments, to make those towns safer and to make those people feel that the threat of bushfire will not consume them. We have done things that the National Party, which supposedly represents people in country Western Australia, did not even dream about. It has only been Labor that has protected the people of country Western Australia and reformed the approach to bushfire management in Western Australia.

WORKER ACCOMMODATION — REGIONS

965. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the dire shortage of worker accommodation across towns in regional WA, which mainly rely on tourism as their economic driver. Given the minister publicly confirmed in *The Albany Advertiser* last Tuesday that there is a shortage of worker accommodation in every regional centre that he has visited, what has the minister and his government done to urgently address this issue?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for her confirmation that the “Wander out Yonder” campaign has worked far more than anyone could possibly have hoped for. That is the most successful regional tourism campaign in the history of this state. When small businesses across Australia, outside of our state, are struggling under the burden of lack of demand and lack of confidence in the community, and when those businesses are wondering what they are going to do when JobKeeper ends and a cliff approaches, the businesses in Western Australia are confronted with the challenge of having to get more workers to meet the demand. That is a challenge that I would prefer to have. I have travelled the regions since we lifted the restrictions. I have been right across this state, conducting roundtables with tourism businesses in every single region of the state, and including in the member’s seat. I met with people in York and Northam, who told me their numbers were undreamed of. It is inconceivable that they would be confronting the challenge of how to meet the demand and how to accommodate it. That is a challenge. Part of it is directly attributable to the fact that, rightly—it is an instruction that I applaud and agree with—the Prime Minister told working holiday-makers to go home at the start of the pandemic. He told them to go home and many did. That is what has caused a significant challenge with respect to workers in the regions. Working holiday-makers, colloquially termed backpackers, are a big part of our tourism sector, but they are also a big part of the workforce for the tourism sector and the regional workforce. They often do hospitality work and jobs like cleaning in hotels and other accommodation, they work behind bars and as baristas—they do all those sorts of jobs. They frequently do it at the peak of the season. They save up, live on the smell of an oily rag and then splurge in the market, so that is all a good part of the sector. But the truth is that tens of thousands of those people were sent home and they went. That is a workforce that we no longer have. Beyond that, there are demands in every sector, in not only accommodation or hospitality but also resources and manufacturing. I know that in the defence issues portfolio, we have done such a good job of supporting the industry in Western Australia that there is lots of opportunity in that sector. Every sector is seeking skilled labourers and unskilled labourers so that they can train people. It is a competitive market.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Sit him down!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am sorry for answering the question, Mr Speaker. Apparently, the opposition does not want me to answer its question. It would prefer that I ignore the question the member has asked. But the truth is we have launched the Work and Wander Out Yonder campaign.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr P. PAPALIA: That has been very successful, has had thousands of responses and has demonstrated interest to attract people from the metropolitan area. But, ultimately, in Western Australia, we confront the challenge of getting more workers for more jobs —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, there is only one person I want to hear.

Mr P. PAPALIA: — because there is lots of opportunity in WA. I would rather have that problem than the one people are confronting in South Australia right now.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Tell us all again!

WORKER ACCOMMODATION — REGIONS

966. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Tourism:

He will get the chance, because I am seeking clarification as part of my supplementary question. Just so I am absolutely clear, can the minister confirm that all he has done is hold a series of talkfests and blamed the federal government for worker shortages? In effect, he has done nothing.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

Member, honestly, as I said, I have spoken personally to hundreds of small businesses across regional Western Australia. The last meeting to which the member refers was in Albany with I think some 20 or so local businesses. Sitting across the table from me was a farmstay operator. What he said to me was exactly what the member said—that our biggest challenge is getting people to work. But do members know what he said to me after that? His very next sentence was “I’d rather have this problem than the problem they’re having elsewhere in the world.” That is the truth.

WEST AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL COMMISSION — STATE FUNDING

967. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

I would first like to acknowledge the president of East Fremantle Football Club and guests in the Speaker's gallery.

I refer to the Public Accounts Committee's recent report into the use of state funding by the West Australian Football Commission. Can the minister update the house on his response to the report and its findings?

Mr S.A. Millman: Great question!

The SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Mount Lawley.

Mr M.P. Murray: Will you give me the call?

The SPEAKER: Yes; I will give you the call for the last time. My mate Mick.

Mr M.P. MURRAY replied:

I promise not to cry. Thank you very much for that question. It is a very important question on where we go with football into the future. Although the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries has not had the time to prepare a formal response to the report and its findings since it was released just recently, it would be remiss of me not to provide some comment because I will not be here in the future, and also Parliament will rise.

The committee itself identified the complexity, breadth and importance of football and the significant changes that have occurred since the creation of the West Australian Football Commission in 1989. I make the comment that in 1990, there was another press release that sounded very similar to the problem that we have had in recent times. Sometimes we see the full circle go around, and we are back there again. As we know, Aussie Rules has a strong brand recognition and loyalty, which benefited football in WA through revenue from the Eagles and the Dockers, but this has come at the cost of the identity and recognition of the West Australian Football League as the pre-eminent competition in Western Australia. A lot of clubs have struggled with not being the number one entity in the state, and many people recognise that. But it has a challenge. The challenge for the West Australian Football League is how it remains sustainable, how it creates a following, and, as outlined in the committee's report, whether this could be through things such as a return to the Colts—there is movement in the station on that area already—or be totally responsible for junior football so that it has an identity on the way through.

The report also shows that the government's process with the WAFC is about as complicated as it gets. Even today, I shake my head that it was able to be put into place. It is something that the WAFC has expressed a desire to change. However, as it is an incorporated body, the only way it can change is if those with the existing power—the AFL clubs, the WAFL clubs and the commissioners—agree to relinquish the power and redistribute it to others. As we know, that will be a very difficult task for anyone in that area. It would be very strange to say, "We're going to give away our power." If we have a look at the voting rights in there, something has to change. It is the same for the Eagles and Dockers. They were not created as clubs, as some VFL clubs were; they were formed as businesses. The Eagles and Dockers are wholly owned by the WAFC. The general public are not in fact members but season ticket holders because they are businesses. Again, as the report shows, this can change, but there needs to be a willingness to implement change to give up that power.

When young players make it through the AFL draft but do not make the team and are essentially discarded, as we have seen over the last couple of weeks in the draft system, the committee points out: who is responsible? We have heard some tragic stories of kids who have been drafted, do not quite get there and then fail when they go back into their communities as well. That is something that really has to be looked at hard.

The added challenge is: how does an organisation balance the diversity of the sport with the challenges of the mental wellbeing of elite players who do not make it to provide participation opportunities for young kids in not only communities, but also remote communities? It is not simply a matter of funding. As the report shows, WAFC receives more funds than any other sport, whether through grants or agreeing to provide content at Optus Stadium. We all know that many smaller sports would love to get the \$11 million a year that comes from the stadium agreement. I have been there when we have given cheques of \$5 000 to some of those smaller sports and they get down on their knees with gratitude, yet here we have the big boys of town whingeing about how much they get. Those smaller clubs do a lot more with far less in their time, something that the football commission and the elite clubs must recognise. It becomes a matter of choice through informed decision-making.

The report shows that the WAFC is doing many good things for the community. The arguments in the report more relate to whether the choices that the WA Football Commission is making are ones that the community feels it should be making. It has lost touch with its community. It must work hard to get back and gain that respect from many of those areas.

On female grassroots participation, the report makes a number of observations, which I will take on board, particularly the development of appropriate facilities to accommodate the rapidly growing female participation numbers. But I should point out that this increase in female participation has not been reflected at the executive and board level of football in WA and I believe it is incumbent on the WA Football Commission to lead by example.

Passion in sport is one of its greatest strengths and at times its greatest weakness when passion overrides or clouds more logical judgement and process. Again, this is highlighted throughout the report. Sport is not simple. The report confirms that, but there are crystal-clear areas for improvement in transparency and representation decision-making.

The issues and challenges outlined in this report also apply to many other larger sports in Australia, and the pursuit to commercialise is a topic that has led to many robust conversations nationally as to the future management of sport. I look forward to continuing to monitor how the report progresses and the way the West Australian Football League and the West Australian Football Commission use this opportunity to reach common ground and reset Australian Rules football in Western Australia.

As many would be aware, most major sports have had a major rethink and restructure due to COVID. This, along with the parliamentary report, is a great opportunity for the WAFC to consider and implement changes that will ensure a robust future for football in WA.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I appreciate —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! I will hear the point of order.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I appreciate that this is the minister's last response to a question, but it is a very long answer. I ask that you ask him to tighten his response to the relevancy of the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: He was asked about the football commission.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: It is a very long answer, Mr Speaker.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: That is good, even with a threat. I have to think of the Clerk's ears when I use this all the time. I think the member has had a pretty good whack there. Minister, are you ready to finish?

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Mr Speaker, with due respect, may I finish my report —

The SPEAKER: Last one, yes.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: — by saying thank you to everyone in the chamber. I wish you all a Merry Christmas.

The SPEAKER: And bah humbug to you, member for Dawesville. I give the call to the member for Hillarys.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I am glad that was not directed at me, Mr Speaker.

CLADDING — FIRE RISK

968. Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS to the Minister for Commerce:

I refer to the issue of cladding on public and private buildings of the same style that led to the tragic Grenfell Tower fire in London. Can the minister update the house on how many high-risk public and private buildings still require remedial action; how much money the government has allocated to address this important public safety issue; and when we can expect that all public and/or private buildings in Western Australia comply with cladding requirements so that we do not risk having a tragic fire such as happened at Grenfell Tower?

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:

I thank the member for his question. Of course the government is responsible for public buildings, and the public buildings that have fallen within the dangerous category have had remediation effected. In relation to private buildings, the government is not responsible for those, nor does it have power over them. The Building Commission, however, has been working with local government authorities and remediation notices have been served by local government authorities upon private owners, but the extent of that report is coming back from local government authorities to the Building Commission. All of those buildings have not been remediated because the private owners have to effect those remediations and comply with notices served upon them by a local government authority. I will take on notice the member's request for the number of those buildings that remain outstanding once I get those figures from local government.

Point of Order

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: The minister said that he will take the question on notice. What procedure do we have for the question on notice to be responded to?

The SPEAKER: He was taking note of it. That is the way he meant it.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: All right. I will take him at his word that he will get back to me on it.

CLADDING — FIRE RISK

969. Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS to the Minister for Commerce:

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister tell me whether any financial assistance from the state government is available for struggling strata title owners in some of these towers who may not have the financial capacity to pay a levy that has been levied upon them to fix this dangerous, high-risk cladding?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:

No, there is none. The state government is not funding the remediation of private buildings. The remediation of private buildings is the responsibility of the owners of those buildings that has that cladding on it. They may in turn, however, have claims back upon architects and building surveyors who incorrectly certified the buildings as complying with the regulations. Might I stress that the regulations against flammable cladding have been around for decades, but some surveyors started to stretch the definition. Flammable cladding was allowed, as the member knows, for decorative purposes and for awnings, but some surveyors started to stretch this definition and started to allow it to be applied as cladding. The private owners will have claims against those architects and building surveyors who incorrectly certified their buildings as complying with the building regulations, which they are clearly not. It is not for the government to step in and pay for that aberrant behaviour.

The SPEAKER: That is the end of question time.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 6499, 6500, 6502, 6509, 6512 AND 6513*Answer Advice*

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [3.05 pm]: I rise under standing order 80(2) to ask the Minister for Water when I may receive the answers to questions on notice 6499, 6500, 6502, 6509, 6512 and 6513 that were due on 15 November?

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Water) [3.06 pm]: I will get the member for Cottesloe the answers to those questions as soon as I can.

PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

CORONAVIRUS — GOVERNMENT RESPONSE*Matter of Public Interest*

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the National Party, the member for Central Wheatbelt seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Nationals WA) [3.07 pm]: Thank you, Mr Speaker. My sincere apologies for not including the appropriate salutation on that letter, through no lack of respect.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Try it again!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: It is the Deputy Speaker now! How are you? I move —

That this house calls on the McGowan government to reassure Western Australians of its preparedness to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks appropriately while keeping key industry and businesses operating.

This is a very important issue that we raise today.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! Can you please take your conversations outside, particularly those of you who are leaving.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. This is our last chance to raise this matter before the Parliament is prorogued and our last chance to determine whether we have the capability within the state government systems to match the rhetoric that we hear from the Premier and the ministers every day. It is our last chance to really raise the concern about two key matters that are raised with us on a regular basis in particularly regional Western Australia: the preparedness of the state government to respond to a COVID-19 outbreak and how that will be managed in a regional context, particularly given what we have seen happen over the course of last weekend, and the impact of ongoing labour shortages on key regional sectors. We asked a question in question time today of the Minister for Tourism about one of those sectors that we have grave concerns about. The answer I got fell short.

There was a great deal of talk about talk, about how the government understands and how it can define the issue, but I did not hear a solution. I did not hear about the efforts of this government to address the concerns of those key sectors that are keeping our state moving: tourism, agriculture, horticulture and the pastoral industry. Those sectors sit alongside the mining sector and are made up of good, honest, working people who are very concerned that they will not be able to meet their obligations. We will raise a couple of examples today. This government needs to make sure that it has done everything it can to address those two matters and that it has a plan, because, once we leave this place, we will not have the chance to provide further scrutiny. The people in this state need to be reassured that if what has happened in South Australia happens in Western Australia, those living in regional WA will not be adversely impacted. We raised this two weeks ago, specifically with regard to the health issues we are concerned about. If we have a COVID outbreak in regional Western Australia, how are we going to cope when the health system is already under pressure? How are we going to cope when people come across the border? South Australia had an incident, the border closed again and we kicked into gear to respond. There has been an enormous amount of luck in how this has been managed. I do not for one moment say that the Minister for Health has not worked incredibly hard, but I think there has been a healthy dose of luck for Western Australia not to have had to deal with a serious COVID incident up to this point.

We all want our state to continue to operate without the restrictions we see over the border, and this is a chance for the government to provide us with a reassurance about contact tracers. I heard the minister on ABC radio this morning being asked how many contact tracers we have. I am not sure that he could actually answer that question specifically. We know that the number the government is aiming for is 1 000, but we have not quite got there yet. Will we have enough if we are faced with an outbreak over the next few days, weeks or months? I do not know. Why has it taken so long for us to get to this point when we have had plenty of time in the run-up to relaxing the border to put this in place? We can add that to the concerns we have raised about the record numbers of people with mental ill health appearing in emergency departments, the ramping of ambulances at our hospitals and the Royal Flying Doctor Service having the highest transfer rate it has ever experienced. We can see the stress that our emergency services volunteers are experiencing in regional Western Australia. We have seen Auditor General reports that reveal that the government does not have a plan for dealing with elderly patients in aged-care facilities should there be a COVID-19 outbreak. This is, rightly, an issue for us to raise in this place and expect a response to.

We are also justified in walking in here and saying that we are in regional Western Australia, talking to the businesses that the tourism minister tells us he is having discussions with. We are also talking to the businesses that the Minister for Agriculture and Food continually tells us she is talking to, but we see no action. I talked to the owners of an abattoir in the member for Roe's electorate the other day, and they have tried to take advantage of the government's failed Wander Out Yonder program. They tried to employ up to 40 people, and not one of those people have stayed for more than two days; they paid them over the odds, provided accommodation and actually transported them out of Perth to the region. That program is an absolute failure, but the government continues to point to it and say, "Here's what we're doing." It is not working. We need something done to address the cliff face that is looming or is already present in the key industries of agriculture, horticulture, pastoralism and tourism. These are very, very important issues, and my colleagues have specific issues relating to their electorates.

I will let them flesh those out a little further as we raise this issue on the last day we have available before we prorogue this Parliament.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA) [3.12 pm]: I would like to contribute to this excellent matter of public interest. It is very important, as this Parliament comes to an end, that we again raise the importance of preparedness for the COVID-19 situation throughout Western Australia. It is apparent in the country areas of Western Australia that our communities are greatly concerned about their health and safety.

As the Leader of the Nationals WA has outlined, the Minister for Health today spoke on ABC radio about the need to increase the number of people who are trained as contact tracers to follow up on the COVID-19 outbreak and to find out who might have been in contact with people who may potentially be a carrier of the disease. The government is pushing to put 1 000 contact tracers in place. Apparently, 640 contact tracers have been trained, or offered training. How many have actually been trained? There is a big difference between being offered training and being trained. This is the same answer that was recorded in the Auditor General's report that was released back in September; the same numbers were quoted there. Apparently, there has been no progress since the Auditor General's report, which I think was cited in debate as being a vindication of the government's actions. However, the Auditor General was very careful to say that it was not an audit; it was simply a response report, carried out at a lesser level than an audit would be—a quick look, a desktop study, of what the Department of Health has done after taking its assurances at face value. Back then we were told the same thing that the minister is saying today. For the last six weeks, there has been no progress reported in the developing situation of the contact tracing workforce. The situation in Victoria highlights just how important it is to have good contact tracing in place.

There was an excellent report over the weekend on the ABC's *Background Briefing* by Rachael Brown titled "Victoria's coronavirus restrictions lifting could be the first test of revamped contact tracing system". The report illustrates just how much more difficult it is to do contact tracing in a free-moving society. Victoria has been in

lockdown and it has had trouble catching up with these cases after weeks and weeks of lockdown. These systems will not necessarily cope in a situation in which people are moving around freely. We have just opened up our borders; six weeks ago, we had the same number of contact tracers as we have now. The borders are open and people are moving around in our electorates. We do not have any assurances that the government has actually trained even the 640 people who have been quoted; they have been “offered” training.

We know from the Victorian experience that when people start moving around, the job of contact tracing becomes much more difficult. To do it properly, it is now going to three rings of certainty: known contacts, people who have been in contact with a known contact, and people who may have been in contact with those people. That is how to get on top of the disease, and we can do that only in a lockdown. That is very difficult when we have people moving around. Do we have any assurance that 1 000 is the right number? Do we have any assurance that these people are being trained in the appropriate way? We do not, because we are getting the same answer now that we got six weeks ago.

The government has become complacent. It has been patting itself on the back about what has happened in Victoria and other places and saying, “We’re better than them.” But we have been better than them because we are the most isolated community in the world. We are very isolated, so for us it has been relatively simple to shut the borders and control the small outbreaks we had. That has been our answer thus far. Now we are open to the rest of the country and have people wandering out yonder from Perth and from all over the country, and there are no assurances that we have in place the contact tracing systems necessary to quickly get on top of any potential outbreak. The answer in South Australia has been to lock the state down again. It is going to be hard to lock this state down when the country areas are full of tourists who do not actually live there. If we shut down in that situation, we will have all sorts of social welfare problems and people not being able to get services, food or medical treatment because they are in isolated areas. We need to get on top of this now.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [3.17 pm]: I back up the comments made by the Leader of the Nationals WA and the member for Moore. I am worried on two fronts. The government should have been preparing since March. The only tool the government has in the toolbox is to shut the border, and we have seen that developing over the last few days. It has had six months to adapt and plan. We had smoke and mirrors from the Minister for Health between 2 May and 7 May when he introduced figures from April to say that we had the highest number of tests in Australia; it was actually the lowest. After six months, he has finally ensured that wastewater testing is carried out. He has now finally recognised that we need to train more people in COVID-19 tracing. These are all things that the Chief Scientist, Dr Alan Finkel, pointed out as being essential in his federal government review. Finally, the Minister for Health and the government are recognising that people in our regional areas are the most susceptible. They need good communication, good aged care, and care for our frontline workers. That is my first worry.

My other worry is about the shires and towns on the front line. Over the last week, we have seen the Shire of Dundas, the Shire of Norseman and the Shire of Esperance on the news. They are on the front line because when people come along the highway from South Australia, they are the towns that have to deal with it and adapt to it. What we need from the minister, our police and the like is more communication and better quarantine facilities, if you like. The Shire of Esperance was trying to set up the Newtown–Condingup football oval for a quarantine centre, but was told, “No; that’s not what we need; we’ll take over and do something else.” This is why better communication is required.

Another thing I worry about is our workers in tourism, especially in Esperance. Every time I go to Esperance, I hear on ABC radio questions such as, “What is the government doing about worker accommodation? We’re really worried we’re not going to have enough workers in the tourism industry over this big summer coming up for Esperance.” That is a real concern for me. We are not getting any direction from the Minister for Tourism or from this government about accommodating workers and how we will deal with those shortages. To me, that is a real concern.

The other issue the Leader of the Nationals WA mentioned is our agriculture sector. Hillside Meat Processors, Narrogin, and Beaufort River Meats, just south of Beaufort River, are in my electorate of Roe. They are really vital employment sources for my electorate. They have tried to do everything they can. In fact, I have spent quite a bit of time trying to help them out with personal protective equipment, minister. I must admit that I have had some assistance from the Department of Health, so it is very much appreciated. However, those organisations are now having trouble sourcing workers. This is the sort of field our state government can really come to the fore on.

There have been issues, obviously, with harvesting, shearing and the like. Our farmers are just getting on with their harvest. The Work and Wander Out Yonder campaign has not produced anyone of any substance, but as usual, our farmers have adapted. They are out there getting stuck into harvesting the crop. They are running way behind with shearing. A couple of shearing schools have helped to a small extent, but learner shearers take a long time to come up to speed. These are the issues developing in my electorate of Roe. I am looking for support.

Minister, we can do better. One of the doctors in my region was sent a sandwich box with two masks in it. That will not address PPE shortages. These are the types of issues we face. I am worried about our aged-care and healthcare systems and about our frontline workers.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [3.22 pm]: Rolled-gold transparency—that is what the Labor Party said when it came to government. It said it would have rolled-gold transparency, yet there is no transparency whatsoever from this McGowan government, not Labor government, because that is the way it is campaigning now—the Labor Party has been taken out of the campaign! There is no oversight and no inquiry is being held. Every other state is inquiring into COVID-19 to make sure they have best practice—rolled-gold transparency. No risk analysis has been undertaken of the government’s Wander Out Yonder campaign. Of course people from Perth will wander out yonder, because they cannot wander anywhere else! Of course it will be a successful campaign—something that regional WA has been advocating for forever and a day.

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is a success because the borders have been closed and because no-one can go overseas. It is not a success when no risk analysis has been done when deaths are occurring in regional WA. Three people died on Mt Augustus because no risk analysis has been done. In the health system, the volunteer ambulance service is stretched because the small business operator or their workers are normally ambulance volunteers. They are struggling to fill the role of an ambulance service, whether it is in Coral Bay, Exmouth, Shark Bay or Kalbarri. Here we go: there is not even a nurse at the Cue Nursing Post for people who live in Cue, for passing traffic, for people from the resource sector or for tourists. The government has not put a nurse there to protect the residents or visitors in the case of an emergency. Absolutely no risk analysis has occurred.

The Minister for Tourism; Small Business says that he has been to every regional town, but only a select few people were invited to sit down and talk to the minister. He selected the people he wanted to see and what he heard from them was, “We need workers, but if we could get workers, we have nowhere to house them. What are you doing about it?” He has acknowledged that there is a problem. The test of the Labor government—no, sorry, the McGowan government—is to address the issues that are arising in regional WA. The government calls itself a regional party! Let me tell members opposite, the north west knows that the Labor Party has left the north west well and truly out of its budget. It is well and truly not supporting the volunteer ambulance services and well and truly not supporting the health system. God forbid! God help us if an outbreak of COVID-19 occurs in regional WA, because, given the government has not done a risk analysis, there is clearly a gap in regional WA—a gap that will cost lives. We are seeing that because the government has not done a risk analysis of the impact on people going to regional WA. In a week and a half, three people died at Mt Augustus, but there have not been any changes to government practices. No-one is based at Mt Augustus, such as a ranger, to ensure that people are well prepared when walking up the largest monolith in the southern hemisphere.

The government needs to wake up. There is no oversight. Let me tell the government that after the March election, during the four years to the 2025 election, there will be a hell of a lot of undoing because people will wake up.

Ms S.E. Winton: You can see it already.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The member for Wanneroo should be bottling COVID-19 because, if it were not for that, the member would probably not be here after the March election.

We know about scaremongering with the rhetoric around the controlled border. It should be a smart border to ensure that people can come to work in regional WA and people can see their families, which is something the government has put to the side. Shame on the McGowan government because it has let down regional WA, and shame on the minister.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [3.27 pm]: Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak on this, the most hapless of motions. It is an important issue that covers our preparedness to deal with COVID-19. I am sorry it petered out after just a few minutes of debate but maybe others will leap to the opposition’s defence in trying to provide a little bit of commentary.

First, in response to a couple of points that were made, it is not surprising to hear the opposition once again running down the efforts of the Western Australian people to keep Western Australians safe—to do all those things that have made us all so proud of the people of Western Australia to make sure we stay on top of this insidious disease. The member for Central Wheatbelt called it luck. The member for Moore said it is because WA is isolated. We make our luck, and we do that by having good, sound policies that look after the health of Western Australians and keep them safe so that we can make sure we have the opportunities to continue to expand our economy. As the motion says, we need to keep key industries and businesses operating, which is what the government has done.

The member for Moore said that it was simply because we are the most isolated state, yet Western Australia has received the largest number per capita of international people coming back to this country than any state in Australia.

We bring more people back than Queensland and South Australia. Of course, Victoria does not bring anyone back. A few are trickling into the Northern Territory through Darwin. Of course, New South Wales takes the lion’s share. We take over 1 000 people a week and we are bringing more people back to Australia per capita than any other state, so we are not isolated. On the contrary, we are in the thick of the action to make sure that we can bring Australians back to Australia while at the same time keeping Western Australians safe. To say that we are isolated given that

our biggest risk is from international arrivals is, quite frankly, false, misleading and unsurprising coming from the mob opposite. Members opposite have taken every opportunity to run down the government and create negativity and fear in the community through their continued carping and criticism of what is a great achievement by the Western Australian people.

It is now over seven months since the state has had community spread of this disease and the government has continued to keep people safe and has addressed the risk elements associated with our airports and the maritime industry. Over eight ships have come in with COVID-19 on board and there has not been any spread of the disease in the community. At some point those opposite will have to concede that people working in the community are doing a great job to keep Western Australians safe. But no—every day they come back in here and say that it is simply a matter of luck; it is a matter of time; we are not ready; and the Department of Health is not doing well enough. Why do members opposite not concede just for a moment the amazing work that has been done on behalf of the community by the Department of Health and the police and all the other emergency services that are doing an amazing job to keep Western Australians safe? Everyone in Western Australia is thanking them for their efforts. Everyone in Western Australia is saying, “Thank you; we are really pleased with the situation we are in in Western Australia”, except for one group in the community, and that is members opposite, the Liberals and the Nationals, who continue to detract.

Because the government kept on top of the health issues and made sure that it kept Western Australians safe, it has been able to keep our key industries going. Our oil and gas and mining industries have continued to operate throughout this entire experience. Indeed, even though we relied heavily on FIFO workers, the McGowan government sat down with the mining industry and asked: How can we make this work? How can we keep that industry going? How can we make sure that the wealth, prosperity and income it brings to this state continues, even though we face the threat of a global pandemic? We worked through those issues, making sure that we put in place DETECT FIFO, a program of asymptomatic testing of all FIFO workers to ensure that those industries kept operating. Tens upon tens of thousands of workers have been tested on a regular basis to make sure that those industries kept moving; to make sure that we continued to enjoy the wealth that brings. That has enabled our manufacturing industry to continue to operate as well, whereas across the world and even in Australia, economies have been decimated as a result of COVID-19. In Western Australia, jobs are back, families are reunited and communities once again are enjoying the quality of life that cohesive communities enjoy. That is something that societies right across the globe have been denied. Just for once we would like to see a vote of thanks from those opposite to the great people in the Department of Health and the police and for the great work that has been done by the people in Tourism to ensure our economy keeps moving.

The government has introduced a range of activities focused on agriculture workers. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and Western Australia’s closed borders, the access to backpackers, particularly international backpackers, has not been the same. The government has worked closely with industry since March to deal with this issue. We launched our \$1.6 million Work and Wander Out Yonder campaign and the regional travel and accommodation support scheme, a \$3.1 million program, to encourage Western Australians to fill those labour shortages, and we have had success. In phase 1 of the campaign, more than 50 000 people visited the campaign website and Work and Wander advertisements on Seek have had more than 90 000 views. We have connected more than 500 jobseekers to employers through the online portal for agriculture workers, Studium. There have been almost 600 pre-registrations for our travel and accommodation incentive scheme. Between 5 October and 18 November, 126 applications totalling \$153 500 have been paid out of the regional travel and accommodation support scheme and a further 162 applications are being assessed. We hoped the federal government would respond to our calls for further incentives for people on JobSeeker to work in agriculture. Although the federal budget did include some relocation assistance, which we welcome, we would not have seen any real action to incentivise those on JobSeeker into harvest jobs.

The McGowan government has continued to work with the commonwealth government to bring other international workers into Australia from places such as Vanuatu. We have a program of 300 seasonal workers from Vanuatu currently quarantining in the Northern Territory and taking up working opportunities there. We look forward to seeing them join our agriculture labour force and accessing those workers. However, at the end of the day safety is our number one priority.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: We have heard from the member for Moore. He calls it luck; we call it hard work. We call it a strong commitment to keeping people safe, and we have done just that. We have kept people safe and we have energised our economy.

Three important elements are associated with the fight against COVID-19: test, trace and isolate. We continue to test between 13 000 and 15 000 people every week. We continue to make sure that we get as many symptomatic people as possible to go to the COVID clinics and to remain vigilant to any outbreak of the disease. This week, as many people have attended our COVID clinics as occurred in March. People have heeded our call and understand the importance of continuing to go to the COVID clinics. In addition, as part of the new controlled border arrangements, people fill out a G2G PASS. Following the recent outbreak in South Australia, we were able to

contact all those who had come from South Australia to get tested. They have not done that in Queensland because they do not know who those people are. Our controlled border arrangements have allowed us to reach out to those South Australians and say, “Get yourself tested, quick smart, because there has been an outbreak in the state from which you have come.” That has enabled the WA government to keep on top of the situation. We will continue to support improvements in testing. As I announced recently, the government has committed half a million dollars to systems piloting new technology that will allow rapid response, high-scale testing of people in the future so that potentially people can be tested upon approval and then tested over the next few days so that we can continue to live and open up the borders, as the member for North West Central said we should do, but that we have already done. He has not been here for quite a while, so he probably has not caught up.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Sorry, member for Dawesville?

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Usually we do not reflect on when members are on urgent parliamentary business.

Mr V.A. Catania: I was working in my electorate.

Mr R.H. COOK: So the member was not in Parliament; he was actually just in his electorate?

Mr V.A. Catania: I was working in my electorate, absolutely.

Mr R.H. COOK: Anyway, it is good to see him in the same room as the Leader of the Nationals. I hope things work out for him.

The new ways of testing will guide us into the future and ensure that we can continue to have vigilance. Our wastewater testing regime is on track. That will be an important element, an extra part of our armoury, to make sure that we maintain that level of vigilance.

A number of members referred to the government’s COVID-19 contact tracing. I am very pleased to say that, recently, Alan Finkel, as part of a national panel, said that overwhelmingly, the impression he had was that wherever he looked he saw excellence and commitment and that each jurisdiction runs its pandemic health response in its own way but we are willing to share and to learn. A number of members drew attention to the great work of our contact tracers and that they doing contact tracing for South Australia as we speak. We have 50 full-time contact tracers at any point in time. We have approximately another 640 staff who are on our surge register and we plan to have 750 FTE, or around about 1 000 staff, as part of our surge capacity. That will enable us to contact trace, essentially, 440 cases a day. Therefore, our capacity to contact trace is more than our need. As I said, we are doing some of the heavy lifting now, helping out South Australia with contact tracing.

Regarding isolation, not only has Alan Finkel given us the big tick on our contact tracing, but Jane Halton, former secretary to the commonwealth Department of Health, has said that our hotels are up to scratch. The only criticism she had about the hotels is that the rules were perhaps a bit harsh because we do not let people out to have a smoke or get some air. Our hotels are airtight and are an important element of making sure that we can stay on top of the COVID-19 risks. As the Premier has often said, our international arrivals are our biggest risk factor at the moment and our hotels, despite the fact that they have been operating since March this year, have not had any adverse outcomes with the disease escaping. We continue to learn from other states and to review our processes, which is the reason why this week we are bringing in mandatory testing for our high-risk employees at our hotels to make sure that our hotels can continue the work that they do.

I would like to impart two other important pieces of information to the chamber. One piece of information is about personal protection equipment. The doctor that the member for Roe referred to is what is known as a general practitioner. General practitioners come under the jurisdiction of the commonwealth government. It is the commonwealth government’s responsibility to provide extra support to the GPs in relation to PPE, but we continue to work with WA Primary Health Alliance to make sure that it has the supplies it needs. We have supplies in Western Australia now to make sure that we can protect our frontline workers and that they can protect their patients. In addition to that, we will soon begin fit testing, which is a request from the health unions to make sure that their members have the support that they need. Not one healthcare worker in Western Australia has caught COVID-19 in a clinical environment and that includes all those people who were in the Joondalup Health Campus during the *Artania* crisis. That is how good we are. That is how good our doctors and nurses are, and our infection control is second to none. But we have not seen any acknowledgement from the other side about that.

We will soon be introducing new contact registers for all our venues, including the opportunity for them to access a digital version. That software is being worked up and we will continue to make sure that venues have an easy-to-access way of ensuring that we can properly trace people who have been to the venue in the event we get an outbreak. It is obviously a real possibility that there may be an outbreak. People experience that everywhere. What is important is not so much the outbreak, but how we respond to it, and I am really pleased that the Minister for Small Business is holding a consultation session this afternoon to work with the industry on the introduction of the mandatory arrangements on 28 November, to ensure that we are ready to go.

Everywhere we look we see members of this government working with industry, stakeholders and the community to make sure that we continue to be vigilant and ready in relation to COVID-19. This is great work. We have continued to keep our key industries open, such as our resources, transport and logistics, and agriculture industries. Our tourism industry is now enjoying times never seen before and that is because the McGowan government has looked after everyone's health and as a result of that everyone is looking after each other and bringing the economy back to life.

The member for North West Central said that we are not being transparent enough. We have put all our processes up for national review, whether it is the Halton review, Finkel review or our own analysis by the Auditor General or by our panel, which looks at our preparedness. We are ready to go and we continue to improve our processes. People recognise that. People all around the community recognise what a great job we have done as a community to get this under control, and everyone recognises that—everyone except a very small group in the community and that is all those members opposite. For once, we wish opposition members would take a leaf out of the book of the Leader of the Opposition in South Australia and actually come on board and help us continue to play a constructive role, not this carping, undermining and criticising that we see from them all the time.

Western Australia is the envy of the world for how it has COVID-19 under control and how it has brought jobs back into the workplace and how it has brought communities back. We continue to work with industry and I should add that we will soon have a forum with church groups and other cultural groups about how we continue to improve their capacity, again, using the contact tracing principles. I think we have lots to be proud of as a community. I wish members on the other side would be equally proud.

Amendment to Motion

Mr R.H. COOK: In the spirit of that pride, I move —

To delete all words after “house” and substitute —

acknowledges the McGowan government's efforts in responding to COVID-19 to keep Western Australia safe and strong.

Amendment (deletion of words) put and passed.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question now is that the words to be substituted be substituted.

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [3.47 pm]: I appreciate the contributions that have been made by the Nationals WA members here today in moving the original motion, which was to call on the McGowan government to reassure Western Australians of its preparedness to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks appropriately while keeping key industry and businesses operating. I think the motion that was moved is important and reflects the growing concern in the community, which is nervous about what the future holds. Certainly, in the case of my district, I conducted a survey some weeks ago. Hundreds of people responded and more than half indicated that they were more concerned now about what the future held than they were prior to COVID-19.

We know that this is a concern right throughout our community and it is no wonder with the Premier yesterday or the day before during question time urging people not to panic buy. I saw on Twitter that people were once again struck with the fear of what was happening in South Australia and were panic buying at some suburban Coles outlets. If people in our state were feeling confident, I do not know whether we would see that same level of panic buying. I join with the Premier in making sure that people feel calm and safe here in Western Australia and in saying that people do not need to undertake that level activity in our state's shops any more. It is not a necessary to make sure that they have months' worth of toilet paper and the like, but the reality is we have to understand that there is a need for the community to be reassured and that is all that this motion is calling for. A level of reassurance is required in our community because in this ever-changing environment people are genuinely quite worried about what their future holds.

The Minister for Health has said in this place a number of times that the opposition has never congratulated the government. I will do that now. Congratulations to the state government for making sure that we, together with the national cabinet, have kept Western Australia safe from COVID-19. I think that is worth repeating time and again because, of course, everyone in this chamber is on “Team Western Australia”. Had the government not been successful, people would have died at an alarming rate. That is what we have seen in other jurisdictions. Everyone here wanted to make sure that we could continue to work with the government. That is why we have supported urgent legislation—more than a dozen bills through this place in an expeditious fashion to make sure that new laws could be introduced to help protect Western Australians. That was done so in a matter of days with a unity ticket from the Liberal and National Parties.

Mr P.J. Rundle interjected.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: One of many, I am sure, member for Roe, that might come up in the next 114 days.

We saw yesterday in the report of the Procedure and Privileges Committee tabled by the Speaker that the Parliament of Western Australia was the only Parliament that continued to operate without an alteration to its scheduled sitting. That was because members of both the Liberal and National Parties continued to support the government in the legislative agenda that it was trying to pursue to protect Western Australians.

We stand absolutely ready to support the government however we can; we have done so and will continue to do so. The reality is, if members listen to doctors, nurses and people in the community, there is a need for reassurance. For example, doctors and nurses want to know when fit-testing for N95 and P2 masks will commence. We are still some time away from that happening, although it has been undertaken in every other state and territory in the country. There is a need to understand when QR codes will be implemented for venue check-ins. That has operated in New South Wales for a number of months, if not in other jurisdictions as well. There is a need to undertake sewer testing to get a better understanding of whether COVID-19 is running through towns or parts of Perth. That has occurred in every other jurisdiction, yet not in Western Australia. We need to make sure our hotel quarantine system has been reviewed—a review that is welcome, but there is still a level of concern in the community. That is not a reflection of anything other than people’s fears. They need to be reassured that the government is in control and the health department is ready. People out there—most recently, doctors and nurses—are worried about the lack of personal protective equipment and the processes for fit-testing their masks, for example.

When people look to other jurisdictions in our country, they see measures have been undertaken to protect citizens there, which are not being undertaken here. When the government seeks to do that, we will support it and back the health advice every single day of the week to help keep Western Australians safe. The Liberal Party will support any measure the government wants to undertake to make sure that we keep Western Australia COVID-free because the Liberal Party and the National Party are part of “Team Western Australia”. We want to make sure that Western Australians are kept safe today, tomorrow and in the future. The government’s continual politicisation of this issue seeks only to try to divide the community at a time when it needs unity most. We stand united with the government to keep Western Australians safe.

MRS A.K. HAYDEN (Darling Range) [3.52 pm]: I would like to back up the comments made by my good colleague the member for Dawesville, and the motion moved by the National Party. I congratulate the National Party for this motion. I am perplexed about why the government would want to amend the motion, which reads —

That this house calls on the McGowan government to reassure Western Australians of its preparedness to respond to COVID-19 outbreaks appropriately while keeping key industry and businesses operating.

Why would the government be against that? Why would the government be against this motion? It makes no sense whatsoever.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Politicising.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Exactly, member for Dawesville. Members opposite are politicising COVID-19, which they keep saying they are not doing. Instead of standing up and saying, “National Party, you are right; opposition, you are right. This is what we are doing and this is our plan”, members opposite stand up and amend the motion. Why did they amend the motion? It is because they do not have a plan. They are not prepared. They have sat on their laurels and all they have done is expect handouts and fix-ups from the federal Liberal government every single time. The Deputy Premier, even in his response to this motion, said he was disappointed because they asked for more help from the federal government but it did not deliver it. How much more do members opposite want from the federal government? They are getting handouts left, right and centre, yet they have no plan.

Right now, the heavy lifting is being done by the federal Liberal government and our small business community because this government is absent—absolutely absent—in supporting it. There are two ways to fight a pandemic. One is health and two is economics. Members opposite have just shut the borders, put their heads in the sand and thought: if we just do not look up and look out to see what is going on, everything will be dandy. It is not going to be dandy if they do not have a plan to back up their biggest employers.

Regarding unemployment, members opposite have stood in here for the last two days, pleased as Punch, pounding their chests saying that they are proud about their unemployment figures. They should tell Western Australians that they are proud that 96 200 people in Western Australia right now are without jobs. We have 29 900 unemployed youth. Go and tell the mums and dads that their kids do not have a job, but you are proud of it. Members opposite are proud that 123 300 people right now in Western Australia are underemployed. Why are they underemployed? It is because members opposite have done nothing to support small business. They have done nothing to help the sector that is the biggest employer in Western Australia. They have sat on their laurels while they collected GST income of \$3.8 billion this year and an iron ore royalty of \$7.4 billion for the year. The Bell Group settlement meant \$665 million this year. What have members opposite done? They have sat there with all that money in their pockets, with their surplus of \$1.2 billion, pleased as Punch, smiling away, saying, “Aren’t we clever?” while over 96 000 people are looking for work. We have people who cannot pay their bills because of the government’s increases in the cost of power, water and car registration. People are in mortgage stress but members opposite sit there with their pile of money, like the king in his counting house counting all his money, looking down at the poor people in Western Australia who cannot afford their power bills. They cannot afford their water bills. They cannot afford their car registration.

Members opposite sit there saying, “Haven’t we done a great job?” The Premier has not done a good job of making sure that those 96 000 people have a chance of getting a job. He has not done a good job of making sure our youth

have a chance of getting a job. Please, start making a plan. The federal government has tried to put it at bay. It has put in the JobKeeper and JobSeeker allowances but where is the government's plan to keep businesses open when JobKeeper falls away in March? Those businesses have put everything on the line. They have propped themselves up to the hilt to make sure they can keep open their doors. What have members opposite done to support them? Nothing. Every other state has supported their small business sectors, except this state. Members opposite should all hang their heads in shame. Do not go out there beating your chests, saying you have done a great job in creating jobs because you have not. They have failed the Western Australian people in creating jobs. They have failed our small business community. They have failed on being prepared for what we are going to do with COVID-19. Members opposite need to come in here and simply be bipartisan, saying, "We agree. We are going to have a plan and we will reassure Western Australians that we will get them out of this."

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the words to be inserted be inserted. I have to move that. All those in favour —

Ms R. Saffioti: Can I speak on this?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is fine; I will move the motion then you can speak to it in a minute. All those in favour say aye —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hang on. At the beginning of this, I said "the words to be deleted be deleted". I then have to get this bit inserted, then we move that we —

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: You can speak on it if you want to, then I will move it all at the end, minister. I was just trying to clarify things. Go ahead.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [3.57 pm]: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. What are we seeking to insert? It is that we acknowledge the McGowan government's efforts in responding to COVID-19 to keep Western Australia safe and strong. That is what we are asking—that we take a bipartisan approach to acknowledge the efforts undertaken by the McGowan government to keep the state safe and strong. I know it is beyond the Liberal and National Parties to look at this COVID pandemic in a non-party political way because every time we sit in this place, the opposition wants to play politics with a pandemic. That was again demonstrated today—again and again and again. The comments made by the member for Darling Range were that we pocketed the Bell money and have not done anything for electricity users. Well, we gave \$600 to every household from that Bell litigation money.

Mrs A.K. Hayden interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I did not interject, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Quite so, minister; go ahead.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We have cut training course fees. We have more training courses than ever before targeted at young people to get them in jobs. The Nationals WA asked what we were doing? We want to train Western Australians. That is what we are trying to do—train Western Australians to work in our small businesses and throughout Western Australia. If there was an easy solution for workers in Western Australia and across the nation, someone would have thought of it already. It is a challenge to grow an economy during a pandemic. We are doing all that we can to support businesses. The Minister for Agriculture and Food is looking at the agricultural worker situation. We are undertaking new training courses that are targeted at young people so they can get jobs in our industries—that is more than in any other state.

The comments of the opposition—the Liberal Party and National Party—show that all it wants to do is to attack the government all along the way. I note what the member for Dawesville, who is currently not in the chamber, said just a few months ago —

"The Premier needs to harden up. I didn't realise we elected a princess in 2017 ...

He went on and commented in relation to the Premier being "slimy". That was replayed on the TV that night. I tell members what: I have never —

Mr V.A. Catania: You're rich saying that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I think you are a bit rich being in this place, mate!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for North West Central and member for Wanneroo, that is not helpful. The minister is on her feet.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Dawesville made those comments. It was one of those things when, unprompted, people came up to me and said, "I can't believe what that person called the Premier."

Point of Order

Mr M. McGOWAN: I note the member for North West Central continues to bully and abuse the Minister for Transport. Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! Thank you, Premier. Please take your seat. Member for North West Central, you will not interject. It has been asked several times.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I note the minister did not interject on any members opposite and I ask the member for North West Central to desist.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Premier, that is exactly what I have just asked for.

Would you like to raise a point of order, member for North West Central?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The minister is casting aspersions on the member for Dawesville —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No. I am sorry.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you want to stay in this house, take your seat.

Mrs A.K. Hayden interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range, what would you like to add to this?

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: The Premier accused the member for North West Central of bullying, which is totally inaccurate. In this house we have robust conversation and I ask him to withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, the Premier raised a point of order and I have said that it is not a point of order. We are going ahead with this discussion, please.

Debate Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: They want to avoid what they have said in the past. That is the issue with the Liberal and National Parties. Of course, they opposed the hard border again and again and again. As a result, again and again on TV, when asked by Jacob Kagi whether she would reopen the interstate border if she were Premier, the Leader of the Opposition said, “I would.” She then said, “There doesn’t appear to be a valid reason to keep the interstate borders closed.” Then she said, “The Premier needs to show us the advice that there’s a constitutional issue because there clearly isn’t.” She also said, “It’s politically expedient to maintain the hard borders.” The Leader of the Opposition and the Liberal Party were supporting Clive Palmer every step of the way on this issue. The Liberal Party was together with Clive Palmer. The Leader of the Opposition said, “I think the Premier is blocking Clive Palmer and it is political” —

Mrs A.K. Hayden: You’re a liar.

Withdrawal of Remark

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range, I call you for the first time, and you will take that back.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I take back that she is lying, but she is misleading Parliament.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Madam Deputy Speaker, the request is for a withdrawal. The member is simply to withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is quite correct, Leader of the House. Member for Darling Range, I call you for a second time—no, a third time, I am sorry.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you were already on three calls. Member, I think you need to take a break for rest of the day.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Enough! Stop pointing fingers. It is not primary school. Member for Darling Range, you are on your way out. Thank you. Minister for Transport continue.

Debate Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will keep quoting the Leader of the Opposition’s comments in relation to Clive Palmer.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Just to clarify, are you ejecting the member for Darling Range?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: She has been called four times. I am ejecting her.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Usually there is a procedure that the Speaker would read out to eject her.

A member interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am waiting to get the correct words, if you would like me to use the correct words. But I think the member for Darling Range understands.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, you will be out too in a minute. Please, enough!

Suspension of Member

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I think I have said this once before. The member for Darling Range does understand what has happened. She has been on four calls—actually five—and I have suspended her from the house for the rest of the day.

[The member for Darling Range left the chamber.]

Debate Resumed

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, you will be close on her heels, crayfish or not.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I know the Liberal Party does not like to remember just how close it was with Clive Palmer. Members of the Liberal Party do not want to be reminded that they were there standing next to Clive Palmer all the way. They wanted to bring down the hard border again and again and again. The opposition was with Clive Palmer and it is still with Clive Palmer. The Leader of the Opposition said, “I’ll let Clive Palmer do what Clive Palmer does best. He’s got very deep pockets. He’s probably one of the few people that can fund the challenge that he’s funding.” There we had the Liberal Party siding with Clive Palmer against WA.

I do not know what parallel universe opposition members are living in and I do not know who they are talking to, but we get feedback from around the state. Yes, people are always cautious. Of course, handling a pandemic is a challenge. It is constant and thousands of people—the police, those working in the health system and across the public service—are doing their best to keep Western Australians safe. The opposition comes in here all the time and tries to play cheap politics with it. It is angry that the government is getting the credit. Our job has been to protect Western Australians. We will continue to do that. The opposition’s cheap political pointscoring, its attempts to score cheap political points, has won it no favours. We would think that members opposite would learn, but, again, they have learnt nothing. I know the opposition has seen the polling. I know that that polling is completely disastrous.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [4.07 pm]: I want to conclude the debate. I want to pass on my thanks and regards to all those people who have accepted the rules and advice across Western Australia over the course of this year and done the right thing—that is, the vast, vast, vast majority of Western Australians who have behaved with dignity and understanding during a difficult time. We obviously have been through a stressful period. We have seen what has happened in other countries around the world and what has happened in other states. We have been a beacon, I think, of understanding and acceptance of the rules and restrictions that other places could have learnt from.

I would also like to pass on my thanks to all the people who made it work—that is, the police on the borders, the officers of other government departments on the borders, the police at the airports, the other officers at the airports, the staff in the hospitals, the nurses and other health, medical and ancillary staff. I also thank the Australian Defence Force officers who assisted us along the way and all those people over the course of this period.

I also thank the senior management in the public sector who made sure that issues were dealt with very expeditiously. I want to particularly thank our legal officers, both the Solicitor-General and the State Solicitor and their staff, who drafted directions and laws very quickly and very effectively, which made sure that the entire system worked very well. That was often at extremely short notice. I would like to thank the Parliamentary Counsel’s Office for that as well. Overnight, it drafted laws that we needed to pass through this house. The staff have all been absolutely terrific over the course of this year.

The Solicitor-General and the State Solicitor had to manage some pretty serious court cases during this time. They had to go east and then come back and quarantine, in the service of the state. I would like to thank them for that. The COVID coordinator, Sharyn O’Neill; the Commissioner of Police; the director general of Health; the Chief Health Officer; and the acting head of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet have all done a marvellous job on behalf of Western Australia. It just shows me—Western Australia is my adopted state—that people here are very committed to the service of the state. I would like to thank them all for their work this year.

We do not know what the future holds but we will certainly do our absolute best to keep the virus out of Western Australia, to keep our people healthy and safe and to keep the state safe and strong. As long as we continue on our current trajectory and pathway, our state will continue to do extremely well.

I would certainly like to thank my ministers, the government and the caucus for being understanding and supportive over this period and for working incredibly hard. It has been a period of turmoil, but ministers, in particular the Minister for Health, did a marvellous job every single day over an extremely stressful period. On behalf of everyone across the state, I would like to thank everyone who has made the entire system work.

Question (insertion of words) put and passed.

Motion, as Amended

Question put and passed.

APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2017–18) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2018
APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2017–18) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2018

Second Reading — Cognate Debate

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [4.11 pm]: This is episode three of my contribution. It is very appropriate that we have been talking about COVID-19 because up-front I want to acknowledge the community of Bunbury and Dalyellup for the way that they have responded to the pandemic right through this year. They have done everything that has been asked of them. I especially thank the volunteers who supported those who are most vulnerable and the many businesses that supported their workers when they had to close, adapt and reopen, and right through that period when they did their best to maintain people in work.

I acknowledge that the member for Dawesville thanked the government for keeping the state safe, but he neglected to mention that we are also keeping the state strong and that we have a very strong commitment based on the work of the best Treasurer in Australia, who has put us in a great financial position to give us the power to make sure that we can keep the economy strong, keep people in jobs for the future and provide the certainty and stability that this state needs so much during the most challenging period that we have ever faced.

Certainly in my community, we have a strong approach to economic recovery and supporting our community into the future. It is about a safe community and a strong community. I want to go through a list for the benefit of members. In the south west region alone, if we take into account the efforts of the McGowan Labor government right across Western Australia, we have a mammoth \$5.5 billion economic recovery plan. Once again, I say that it is down to the fantastic work of the Treasurer and his team in Treasury, and the discipline of the cabinet that has put us in that position. A total of \$252.3 million will be invested as part of the south west recovery plan. That is on top of the enormous contribution that this government has made as a legacy to the south west in its core infrastructure, such as the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, Bussell Highway and the redevelopment of many schools in my electorate.

I want to talk about projects outside my electorate—across the whole of the south west. On top of that \$252 million, residents will also benefit from \$32 million to expand the lower fees, local skills program, which will significantly reduce TAFE fees across 39 high priority courses. That is about the future. That is about training young people and training people who need to change their jobs and providing new career opportunities. That is the sort of investment that this government makes for the future. In addition, \$15 million will go to Australind Senior High School for new classrooms and \$6.27 million will go to Margaret River Senior High School. How many times have I sat in this chamber and listened to members opposite saying that we only look after our own electorates? These are not our electorates. These funds are for people in the south west. Also, \$3.1 million will go to Bunbury Senior High School for upgrades to performing arts areas, specialist classrooms and the indoor sports hall, along with \$2.5 million to Kingston Primary School. The great member for Murray–Wellington sits in this chamber week after week looking after her electorate. A total of \$1.2 million will go to Harvey Senior High School, again in the electorate of Murray–Wellington; with \$25 million allocated for free TAFE short courses right across our region; and \$4.8 million for the apprenticeship and traineeship re-engagement incentive program that provides employers with a one-off payment of \$6 000 for hiring a trainee whose training contract was terminated on or after 1 March 2020.

The government has revamped the Buy Local policy, which is what businesses in my electorate have been looking for—an absolute commitment to our Western Australian participation plans to local contracting. Also, \$38 million of additional funding will go to the Bunbury Hospital redevelopment, long neglected under the previous government, making it a \$60.8 million total investment, with priority on clinical areas. In addition, \$8 million will go towards building the new Dalyellup multipurpose community youth centre and \$5 million to rebuild Hands Oval—thank you very much, Minister for Sport and Recreation, that is a great contribution—and \$6 million will go to the Donnybrook and districts sporting and recreation precinct. Donnybrook was long overlooked by the previous government.

Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski: Shame!

Mr D.T. PUNCH: Yes; shame! The government has committed \$11.9 million towards the Bunbury water resource recovery scheme—a great project, bringing recycled water in to green the Bunbury and Dalyellup areas. Also, \$7 million has been allocated to upgrade level crossings on the south west train line in Cookernup, Coolup and Waroona, helping to ensure the efficiency of the train line into the future and providing a much-needed safety upgrade for locals. I know that the member for Murray–Wellington has been working hard on that.

The government has fast-tracked the \$852 million Bunbury Outer Ring Road, with construction expected to begin three months early. How many times have members opposite said that we do not get projects off the ground? We have the hardworking Minister for Transport on the job day in and day out. I have seen her come into this place with her safety boots on. We know exactly what this government is about. A total of \$15 million will go to the regional road safety program to upgrade 240 kilometres of south west roads. The list goes on. It includes \$1.5 million for upgrades and maintenance at Collie Police Station; \$1 million for upgrades and maintenance at Donnybrook Police Station; \$690 000 for upgrades at Augusta volunteer fire and rescue; \$230 000 for upgrades at Boyup Brook volunteer fire and rescue; \$15 000 for upgrades to the Allanson bush fire brigade, which is a very hardworking group; \$44 000 for upgrades at Wellington Mills bush fire brigade station; \$2 million to provide water tanks to volunteer bush fire brigades across WA; \$80 million for targeted maintenance programs for regional social and government workers' housing, including approximately 200 homes in the south west region; \$141.7 million to refurbish social housing across WA's ageing housing stock, with houses in the south west set to benefit; and \$6 million for installation of rooftop solar photovoltaic panels on social housing, including properties in the south west region. These are significant investments.

Then we have \$1.19 million for the Bibbulmun Track and Munda Biddi Trail upgrades; and \$1.5 million for the Wellington Dam mural—I have seen the cars lining up to see it. Also, \$3.08 million has been allocated to fast-track the third and final stage of the Margaret River main street development project, which includes a festival precinct, safer intersections and outdoor seating, helping Margaret River become the true tourism destination that it is. In addition, there is \$775 000 to expand and upgrade the car park and provide new facilities at Redgate Beach, another Labor electorate, I might add, but we are right there for the people of Western Australia; and \$411 000 for the development of the Blackwood River foreshore. I am starting to get a sore throat reading out all these projects. There is also \$231 000 for the Bridgetown hall and civic centre; \$50 000 to replace the jetty on the Donnelly River in Manjimup; \$450 000 for Pemberton attraction projects; \$40 000 for mountain bike trails; \$15.5 million for the Bunbury port inner harbour access road and bridge; \$3 million for upgrades at Bunbury port; \$3.8 million for a feasibility study to look at new infrastructure at the port of Bunbury and Kwinana, which includes planning; \$7.5 million towards the Kemerton strategic industrial area for waterworks; \$600 000 towards a business case for new industry at Collie; and \$6 million towards continuation of the food industry innovation program, including programs through the Premium Food Centre in Manjimup.

That is about a strong economy. That is about jobs. That is about training. More importantly, it is about diversity for the economy. The south west has one of the most diverse regional economies in Australia, and, internationally, it would be right up there also. It has strong export links. It has a great future. That is thanks to the investment of the McGowan Labor government.

I want to acknowledge Mick Murray, who is leaving this Parliament. He has been a great member for Collie–Preston. He has also been a great support for me and the member for Murray–Wellington. Well done, Mick. You have left a real legacy. I thank all the people who have supported us as “Team Labor” in the south west. I certainly thank the Premier and all the cabinet ministers for not only their commitment to the safety, strength and future of Western Australia, but also their absolute commitment to regional Western Australia and to making sure that Western Australia as a state prospers in this new world of dealing with COVID-19. Thank you, Treasurer. Thank you, Premier. Thank you, ministers.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Treasurer) [4.20 pm] — in reply: I never thought that the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Supplementary Bill 2018 would make it through its passage in the lower house, just to have to come back again next year, because no doubt the prorogation of the Parliament will mean that we will have to deal with this all over again. There is a range of appropriation and supplementary bills to deal with. There is a bit of a backlog, actually. Hopefully, in due course the amendments to the Financial Management Act will provide us with an alternative way of dealing with these bills so that they do not clog up the parliamentary system. Nonetheless, I thank all my colleagues for their contributions. I am delighted that this will be my last bill to be passed in the Parliament. It is a very significant bill. I think everyone appreciates the significance of this bill, which acknowledges money spent in the financial year 2017–18.

Because this is a cognate debate with the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Supplementary Bill 2018, I have to deal with a couple of things. I am reading from my notes—obviously, as I referred to last night, the parliamentary staff are the only people who know the arcane rules in this place. I thank all my colleagues for their very important contributions to this bill.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Inspirational. Thank you.

Question put and passed.

Bill (Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Supplementary Bill 2018) read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, and transmitted to the Council.

APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2017–18) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2018

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

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 **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, and transmitted to the Council.

PREMIER'S STATEMENT*Consideration*

Resumed from 20 August on the following question —

That the Premier's Statement be noted.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE*Special*

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House) [4.25 pm] — without notice: I move —

That this house at its rising adjourn until a date and time to be fixed by the Speaker.

What an interesting year. The year started quite normally, with the sitting weeks outlined and detailed, and then Western Australia and Australia, and indeed the world, were struck down by a virus that is still causing devastation throughout the world. However, thankfully, Western Australia and Australia have been fortunate. We have had deaths, and we acknowledge and mourn those people who have been victims of the coronavirus, and acknowledge their families and loved ones. However, we also congratulate the people of Western Australia and Australia for the way in which they have responded to this serious challenge.

I want to go through the year in review. In doing so, I want to highlight some important successes and achievements. I also want to thank and acknowledge some people who have played a very important role in the functioning of the Parliament of Western Australia and this chamber, the government, and our community. I first want to acknowledge our retiring members. We were all very impressed and warmed by the valedictory speeches that were given by the members for Cockburn, Riverton and Collie–Preston on Tuesday evening. They were colourful speeches indeed, with language that may be of note and memorable, but I am sure it was all taken in the appropriate tone.

Last evening, the member for South Perth gave his valedictory. The member for South Perth, although a member of the other side, is a very warmly respected and warmly acknowledged member. We wish him and the members for Cockburn, Riverton and Collie–Preston the very best. The member for Kimberley gave a magnificent speech last night. It was a very special touch with the didgeridoo being played in the gallery, and her speaking in Gidja, her language. That was a unique touch. The contribution that was made by the member for Kimberley was deeply heartwarming, and we wish her well in her retirement.

That was followed by the member for Victoria Park, who made one of the finest speeches I have heard in this place in the 20 years I have been here. He will be a big loss to the Labor government. We pass on to you our very sincere thanks, and particularly acknowledge the contribution that you have made as Treasurer of this state over the last four years, at a time when we needed strong and steady stewardship of the Treasury bench. You have done a tremendous job. I think we all agree with that.

Mr Speaker, then it was you. You added a beautiful touch this morning when you arrived here and spoke dressed in the gown and the wig. You also gave a speech last night that again was remarkable. I am going to read something that was given to me by the education staff of this Parliament, written for you, Mr Speaker. It is a poem by one of the education unit staff, and it goes a little like this —

He's known as Mr Speaker, or Watto, or just Pete
 And all will miss him greatly when he vacates his seat
 He's held his seat of Albany for nigh-on twenty years
 And when he takes his shingle down, there'll be so many tears.

Running's been a constant theme, defining all he's done
 It began with running telegrams, and they say he was a gun
 Athletics was to beckon him, captaining the state
 He then ran for Australia, in 1968

Returning to the mighty West, the state he loved the most
 He built upon his first career, at Australia Post
 But perhaps his finest moment was 2001
 When he ran for Parliament, surprising many when he won
 A passionate local member in the house on either side
 In opposition or in government, he took it in his stride
 As the finish line draws nearer and his marathon's complete
 We thank the Honourable Speaker, Watto, or just Pete
 And it's not a case of win or lose, it's how you run the race
 And our MLA from Albany has done this with such grace
 I should end this with a compliment, it's befitting that I should
 But how can such a decent man barrack for Collingwood?
 He is humble and is honest and a heart just like a whale
 But to barrack for the Magpies is beyond the bloody pale
 We will miss your calls for order and your warnings from the Chair
 Your self-deprecating humour and commitment to be fair
 But one thing still confounds us about this Honourable Member
 How this one-eyed Magpie fan can still smile in September

That is from the education staff to you, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Thank you! Can I have a copy?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Of course, Mr Speaker. I am happy to table it!

The SPEAKER: I do not want anyone else to see it!

[See paper [4025](#).]

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: In moving the adjournment today, I can formally bring an end to the fortieth Parliament, and there are important moments to reflect on. Opening date for this year was Tuesday, 11 February, and today marks the sixty-first sitting day of the year, excluding the three days of budget estimates hearings. This equates to about 20 sitting weeks, plus one week of budget estimates, which is approximately 505 sitting hours.

The house sat for a total of 232 days during the fortieth Parliament. A big elephant stamp goes to the only two members with a 100 per cent attendance record for this Parliament: the member for Balcatta and the member for Forrestfield.

This year, 2020, has been a groundbreaking year. In late January, the first reports of a new virus began circulating, as we know, and none of us could have suspected how quickly and immensely this virus would affect our nation and the rest of the world. Here in Parliament we swiftly implemented changes to protect members, staff and visitors. We saw the introduction of hot seats in the chamber and other physical distancing measures, new procedures for the conduct of divisions and bipartisan agreement for a temporary order to be put in place to enable the house to deal expeditiously with business considered urgent to the state's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The house sat additional days to deal with this business, including during the April school holidays and on a Monday; I am not sure whether this has happened before in the history of the Parliament. The temporary order was used to pass 17 bills in this place this year. A number of other bills not debated under the temporary order but containing COVID-19 response or recovery provisions were passed.

Before I move on to legislation that has come before this place during the fortieth Parliament, I would like to touch on other business transacted this year. Around 40 petitions were tabled, bringing the total to 207. About 822 papers have been tabled this year, making a total of 4 024 papers tabled since the start of 2017. Around 16 matters of public interest were debated this year, including one today, bringing the total number for this Parliament to 69. There have also been around 23 non-procedural suspensions of standing orders this year, making a total of some 69 during the fortieth Parliament. There were around 80 divisions this year and some 262 brief ministerial statements—some of them not so brief! It is no surprise that the Minister for Health leads in the BMS count for this year, and he wins! There were 573 questions on notice asked this year, bringing the total for the fortieth Parliament to 6 517. Excluding today's question time, there were 965 questions without notice asked and answered this year, for a total during this Parliament of 3 911. Lastly, around 26 committee reports were tabled this year, taking the total number of committee reports tabled during the fortieth Parliament to 102.

We now turn to legislation. We all know that it is not about the number of bills introduced and passed, but about the positive impacts that these reforms have on the Western Australian community. Having said that, in its first term, the McGowan government had an ambitious agenda and has delivered some outstanding outcomes, despite the impact of coronavirus, which interrupted normal transmission, particularly during the months of March, April and May this year. Around 51 government bills were introduced this year, bringing the total for this Parliament to 183. Excluding the 2017–18 supplementary appropriation bills, around 55 government bills have passed this house this year alone.

Of course, we do not need to question who has been the most prolific minister in this regard. It is, of course, the Attorney General, the member for Butler. He is responsible for introducing 58 bills into this house during the fortieth Parliament. Congratulations, Attorney General.

[Applause.]

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I would like to provide a handful of highlights of these and other bills of importance. There was the fines enforcement reform under the Fines, Penalties and Infringement Notices Enforcement Amendment Bill 2019. Imprisonment for non-payment of fines has been restricted so that it can be ordered only by a magistrate, and even then, only as a sanction of last resort. There was a recommendation of the coronial inquiry into the death of Ms Dhu, who died in 2014 while in custody on a warrant of commitment for unpaid fines. That bill also ended the practice of suspending the drivers' licences of people with unpaid fines in remote and regional areas, where public transport is non-existent and a driver's licence is often essential for accessing work and basic services.

The Family Violence Legislation Reform Bill 2019, introduced by the Attorney General, implemented a cross-government commitment to tackling the scourge of family and domestic violence by amending nine separate pieces of legislation across six ministerial portfolios. These new laws, which put Western Australia at the forefront of the fight against family and domestic violence, have been described by the Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services as encompassing reforms that the council had been seeking for 40 years.

The removal of the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse civil claims was another well overdue reform, after the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that it took an average of 22 years for victims to disclose such abuse. The Civil Liability Legislation Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse Actions) Bill 2017 has paved the way for scores of successful claims for damages arising from historical child sexual abuse—most notably the \$1 million awarded in August 2018 to terminally ill victim of the Christian Brothers, Mr Paul Bradshaw, who had waited 70 years for justice.

The passage of the High Risk Offenders Bill 2019 means that in Western Australia, for the first time, serious violent offenders can be detained in prison or strictly supervised in the community after their sentence has been served. The legislation builds on Labor's Dangerous Sexual Offenders Act 2006, so that now both serious violent offenders and dangerous sexual offenders can be subject to post-sentence restriction for the safety and benefit of the community.

On the environmental front, the most significant improvements to Western Australia's Environmental Protection Act in more than three decades completed their passage last week, and are awaiting assent. These amendments ensure the protection of our precious environment through legislation that also works to support a sustainable economy, which is particularly important as part of the state's COVID-19 recovery.

We have all heard the horror stories of wheel clamping. It is a disgraceful scam, it is un-Australian, and it has to stop! That is thanks to another great reformer, my good friend who I have sat next to for 14 of the last 20 years of my time here. We still have the most productive seats on the other side of the chamber. While we were on that side of the chamber, we produced seven children between us!

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Not together!

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Let me clarify for those watching: it was separately. They are beautiful children and it has been a pleasure.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Moving right along! I have gone right off track.

Let us not forget the McGowan government's historic planning reforms that bring about a once-in-a-lifetime change to the current planning system. The reforms contained in the Planning and Development Amendment Act 2020 support cutting red tape, creating and protecting jobs and supporting business.

Last but not least, even though it seems like a long time ago, this time last year, the other place was passing the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill. Work is continuing apace in anticipation of its commencement in mid-2021. It represents a compassionate and safe legal framework that the community has sought for many years. To quote the Minister for Health —

It is voluntary at all stages. It is a choice at the end of life—a choice only for those who decide they no longer wish to endure their unbearable suffering.

Many thanks to the Parliamentary Counsel's Office for not only drafting these bills and more, but also achieving the impossible when it was most needed earlier this year by producing crucial legislation to respond to the impacts of COVID-19 within express time frames while somehow managing to carry on business as usual. As a member of the State Disaster Council, I highlight that during those very tense moments, particularly during the COVID-19

pandemic, the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, the Attorney General's office and the State Solicitor's Office were working into the early hours and on weekends to ensure that bills were drafted in time for this Parliament to deal with them. We wish those drafters a very well earned rest over the festive season.

Finally, Mr Speaker, a few thankyou's. I thank you, Mr Speaker, and again congratulate you on your stewardship of this chamber over the last four years. I also acknowledge the Deputy Speaker, the member for Maylands, for her continued excellence in the chair. I will acknowledge the Acting Speakers in alphabetical order of their electorates. We thank the members for Forrestfield, Geraldton, Girrawheen, Mirrabooka, Southern River, Vasse and Wanneroo. We thank the Speaker's executive assistant Ms Jackie Berry and his attendant Anna Murphy. Of course, I will go through our staff in the Legislative Assembly chamber. To our Clerk, Kirsten Robinson: thank you, Kirsten. We thank her leadership team of Liz Kerr; Mat Bates; Scott Nalder; Sergeant-at-Arms, Isla Macphail; and the magnificent staff in the Legislative Assembly Office including Denis Hippolyte, Lachlan Gregory, Rachel Wells, Alison O'Shaughnessy, Nikolas Carbone, Marie Martin and Darren Seet. We thank the incredible committee staff of Pam Clarke, Trish Woodcock, Renee Gould, Michele Chiasson, Sarah Palmer, Jovita Hogan, Alan Charlton, Sam Hutchinson, Suzanne Veletta, Franchesca Walker, Vanessa Beckingham, Sylvia Wolf, Lucy Roberts, Alice Jones, Catie Parsons and Alison Sharpe.

The Parliamentary Services team, headed by Rob Hunter, is working behind the scenes to provide us with all the services we take for granted. Thank you, Laurie Mansell and all the Hansard team for a magnificent performance once again this year. It is good to see reporters in front of us in the chamber, because for most of the year they have been up in press gallery where we cannot see them very well. We thank the Building Services and cleaning team led by Hugh McCaffrey, the Security and Reception Services team led by Tony Paterson and the wonderful gardeners led by David Boag. We thank Judy Ballantyne and the Library team. Many members in their valedictory speeches highlighted the wonderful team in the Library. We thank Dave Embry and the audiovisual team and Catering Services headed up by Enno Schijf, dining room manager Mark Gabrielli and executive chef Brett Barrett. All staff in the lounges and the dining rooms, we thank you very much. For many of us who have let ourselves go during the COVID-19 experience —

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Thank you very much.

We are all very appreciative of the Parliamentary Education Office, as are the schools and educational groups that come through Parliament. Cherie Toovey and the Parliamentary Education Office, we thank you again for a magnificent effort. You do a tremendous job for the Parliament of Western Australia. We thank John Buchanan and all in IT, Elma Ozich and the Finance team, and Human Resources and Payroll led by Tina Hunter.

There is a remarkable young man who I am very pleased to have worked with during my time as Leader of the House, and that is the member for Balcatta. He is a terrific bloke; he really is. He has been ably assisted by the assistant Whip, the member for Joondalup. I want to thank the Whips. I also acknowledge members who have served as Whips for the opposition for their support for the functioning of this chamber. I thank our Whips assistant Ben Coates. I used to be a Whip, as did the member for Girrawheen. I was a Whip in the Dark Ages.

The SPEAKER: A very average one!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I was just about to say that. I used to use faxes—that is all I used because I did not know how to send emails and things, and our Whip modernised it. He took us out of the carrier pigeon years to the modern, agile way to do things.

As Leader of the House, particularly can I acknowledge Rebecca Neilson, who is in the gallery. Thank you, Rebecca. Rebecca Neilson is a wonderful woman. I hope that Parliament and, indeed, the department in which you serve understand how important and skilled you are. I thank you sincerely.

I acknowledge the member for Dawesville and the member for Churchlands before him who served as managers of opposition business. I thank them for their support; we did not have too many fights over the last four years. There was a lot of cooperation and that is appreciated, and also with the opposition Whips.

I also acknowledge and thank the staff in the Premier's office and the magnificent staff in all our electorate offices. I am going to mention mine. I am sorry, but I am; I have a right to. I want to mention my electorate office staff. Larissa Wigmore had a little bub about eight months ago and it is wonderful to see a young mum enjoying motherhood. I thank Larissa Wigmore, Krystal Phillips, Jock Baines and Michael Peck. To my illustrious Fran Harman: Fran, thank you. She has been with me since I got here.

I thank the departmental staff for my ministries and Duncan Ord, OAM. I thank Gail McGowan for the heritage portfolio. I thank the ministerial and public servants.

I thank the drivers in the garage. We do not mention them that often, but those of us who have been driven by the drivers in the garage, know they are very skilled. They are wonderful characters. Of course, I travel the furthest to my regional city of Mandurah. On the way there, I quite often fall asleep, and I snort as I fall asleep. My driver puts up with me and "Smooth FM" plays softly in the background. Sometimes with one of them I play Rodney Rude, but that is not appropriate anymore; you cannot play that sort of stuff anymore, it is not PC.

I acknowledge my chief of staff, Gary Hamley, who has given 50 years of service to the public service of Western Australia. I think that is remarkable service. He has served both sides of politics and he has done that with distinction.

I thank my principal policy adviser, Kelly McManus. Again, she is a magnificent asset to the Labor Party and to Parliament through her role in my ministerial portfolios. To my wonderful media advisers Kim Coolhaas, Tarnia Widdicombe, Leesa Markussen, Caroline O'Neill, Marty Cunningham, Danielle McKenzie, Megan MacLean, Kelly Howat, Georgia McGovern, Jayd Baker and Demi-May Renfree, I thank them sincerely for their wonderful support of me as minister; I have appreciated that so much. Thank you, thank you, thank you. I think I have got most of the bits out.

I am going to finish with this: the arts community has been affected very strongly by COVID-19. When things closed down in the second week of March, it affected lots of businesses, but for the creative industries people it affected them particularly and many are still recovering. When you go out and are thinking about what you will buy for a Christmas present this year, can you think about choosing something from our creative people? Think about buying a ticket to a show for your local community theatre. Think about buying tickets for family and friends to some of our other events that might take place. Think about buying possibly a piece of visual art from a local artist and support them. Think about supporting our musicians, be it going to a venue and supporting live music or, indeed, our orchestra or some of our concert bands and those people who play instruments or play in bands and things for us. Essentially, for me, it is our artistic people, our creatives, who are our storytellers, and we will see that when we open the Museum on Saturday. We have a great story to tell in Western Australia; it is a magnificent story and we want to share it with the world. The people who help us share that are our creative industries people. They are the ones who help tell those stories of Western Australia. So I ask you to support our writers, our storytellers, in any way you can because they deserve our support.

I remember when it got rowdy in here a few years ago and I was not going to sing a song —

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: No; it got rowdy, but I am going to today. I am going to finish today. I hope you take this song in the right gist.

Mr M. McGowan: That is the only reason I am here!

The SPEAKER: Leader of the House, the last time you did this, you got over a million “Likes” on Facebook, but my face was not in it at all, so I want you to come and sit next to me up here so I can get in it.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I would love to but I do not think the standing orders will allow me do that. Anyway, I will start. This is an ode to 2020, “Isolation 2020: The Year That Was” —

The year started out like most before
We did Highway to Hell with crowds galore
But you don't care for ACDC do ya?
It went off well, without a hitch
But within two weeks the world would switch
And we faced a foe we couldn't even see'a

You wandered out to the supermart
And grabbed a lonely shopping cart
But the hoarders had cleaned the shelves before ya
Down aisle three and aisle four
There was no dunny roll at all
The world had gone mad you were sure, Hallelujah
We were in isolation, isolation, isolation, isolation

The sewerage bollards out front are gone
We can Wander out Yonder but not beyond
And get 10 cents for all our bottles and cans yeah
Our border's been hard but it's kept us safe
Under Labor it's cheaper to go to TAFE
The people all cry out their Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah

But you can still run and eat a kebab
I can still visit my mum and dad
But things may not quite be what they once were
The months went by the fourth, the fifth
With Clive we had a massive rift
And when his High Court Challenge failed we all sang Hallelujah
Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah

We say goodbye to John McGrath
 To Josie Farrer and Mike Nahan
 To Mick, Fran, Ben and Watto we say see ya
 And although the world is in a frazzle
 We've got a new Lord Mayor named Basil
 And the ratepayers they all sing Hallelujah
 Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah, Hallelujah
 So Merry Christmas everyone
 The election campaign has begun
 From Parliament we wish everyone the best, yeah
 But no matter what others may say
 Thank God we live in WA
 For we can all sing Hallelujah
 So, Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas!

[Applause.]

The SPEAKER: My biggest wonder, Leader of the House, is that if you happen to be Speaker, who will be the singer next year!

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [4.56 pm]: There is very little point in trying to come close to that. My contribution will be very clinical in comparison, let me tell you.

Mr Speaker, in speaking to the adjournment, I want to congratulate you on your valedictory speech last night and the members who are leaving this place voluntarily: the members for South Perth, Riverton, Kimberley, Victoria Park, Cockburn and Collie–Preston, and Mr Speaker, the member for Albany.

From my perspective as the youngest member of this place, it is a very humbling experience to listen to those who have served for such a long time in this place.

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: That is right. They have served an extensive period in this place, and we will lose, I have to say, a very significant collective knowledge, particularly shared between the members for Collie–Preston and Albany. I genuinely valued listening to the stories you have told in this place, and certainly your ongoing contributions while I have served alongside you here.

The nature of the Assembly chamber is, of course, that we attract a very diverse set of characters; some of them are very strong and some are a bit more humble in how they contribute to this chamber. However, we all, I think, make for a much richer contribution to our state's democracy. No-one has a linear background for how they arrived at this place. The member for Collie–Preston told us about growing up in a shack, effectively, and finding his way here. He and the member for Cockburn are two members who lived in indentured poverty. That we serve alongside lawyers and people from very diverse backgrounds shows the strength and resilience of this place, and that is something we have thought about a lot during the COVID-19 pandemic. I personally feel very lucky that no matter our experiences—wealth, gender, race or background—all of us here are elected by districts as equals. Now is the time to recognise how lucky we are, and it is important to honour that.

With that in mind, obviously, Mr Speaker, it is inevitable that in less than 114 days, we will find ourselves at the next state election and electing members to the forty-first Parliament. As the member for Bassendean has reminded me many times, some of us may not return to this place voluntarily.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: That is right. The idea that this might signal the end of someone's first term, or perhaps multiple terms, is obviously something that is an important part of the nature of democracy here in Western Australia.

As I look back on my time here, obviously it is punctuated by the contribution of COVID-19 and what has happened since. It is almost as though there were two histories—something that was pre-COVID and something that was subsequent to it. The Parliament has responded to it very, very comprehensively. The virus has disrupted nearly every facet of our world. In addition to making us realise that we need to reconnect with friends and family, the virus has resulted in a reversal of the growing mistrust in governments and Parliaments and, instead, people have looked to these institutions for guidance, comfort and direction in a time of crisis and need. Many of us look across the globe to see what is happening in various democracies. More recently, many of us have been watching politics in the United States of America and the unfolding saga of the President, who has lost his mandate, but more than that, we have seen the thousands of Americans who have lost their lives, and it is a sorry tale about a nation that should be far greater than that. We are lucky to have the leadership that we have nationally and in all state and territory governments and their Parliaments, which have responded adequately to the virus.

As a very brief aside, the Premier has spoken about the American example a number of times. We have seen that the layers of government in America have been completely unable to work together collectively for the common

good to protect their citizens. If members are interested, there is a profile piece on New York state Governor Cuomo in *The New Yorker*. The article looks extensively at the number of bureaucratic inefficiencies that have contributed to people dying en masse in the state of New York. It is completely unfathomable.

It is a credit to all members in our democracy here in Australia and the structure that we have inherited over time that we have not let that happen and that we have put the priority on protecting Australian citizens first at a time when they have needed us most. Here in the Western Australian Parliament, it has been a collective effort, and I am proud of the contributions of the members of the Liberal Party, who have worked hand in glove with the government in a legislative capacity to debate 17 pieces of legislation that were declared urgent under the COVID standing orders and many more that have passed that have related to COVID-19. The fact that Parliament did not alter its sitting days and continued with the highest duty to serve and protect our citizens is a credit to every member of this place and their staff, who helped to support us in getting to this place. That demonstrates the strength of our parliamentary democracy and all the players within it. I am very grateful for the Parliamentary Liberal Party team because at the time, none of us was certain about our roles as members of Parliament locally, and certainly when we were called upon in opposition and not necessarily guided by the machinery of government. We are at times in the hands of the government, in the hands of Parliament and in the hands of our districts to make sure that we represent them to the best of our abilities at a time when our citizens have needed us the most.

From the moment it became obvious that there were threats to the way government could operate and from the moment that we realised there might be an issue in passing supply, the Leader of the House, together with the Leader of the Opposition, the Speaker, the clerks and the Leader of the Nationals WA got together to make sure that no matter what, the state would continue to function. It was an extraordinary time, having realised that the state may run out of money, but that was the reality that we faced. I know that government members, particularly those in cabinet, know that more than anyone, but that was the reality. The Parliament was faced with the possibility that it could not grant supply. But, again, we worked as collaboratively and expeditiously as possible to introduce the bill to provide an amount to the house and get that legislation passed. From that time on, it has been an immense honour to work with the same sense of shared responsibility and collegiality, together with our friends in the National Party and with the Labor government, to protect Western Australians. It reinforced the enduring relationship between the Leader of the House and the manager of opposition business.

I am grateful to the member for Mandurah for his guidance and his wisdom at times, but not necessarily his singing ability! He has always been very supportive of me personally and in a professional capacity, given that I am his opposite number in this place. I am grateful for the ongoing collegiate nature of our relationship, which has genuinely allowed us to steward this house through difficult times. We were able to sort out arrangements very quickly and that meant members could still meet, debate and stand up for their citizens at a time when other Parliaments globally had shut down.

I am incredibly grateful to the Leader of the Opposition for allowing me to serve as the manager of opposition business. I am mindful of the fact that in 114 days I may not return to this place. The election will be difficult. It has been an immense honour to serve you, Leader of the Opposition, as the manager of opposition business and, indeed, the party more broadly. I cherish the role and it is an experience for which I am very grateful. Thank you, Liza, and the team for all that you have invested in me to help me serve you as the Leader of the Opposition and the party in Parliament.

As part of that role, I reflect on your contribution to this house, Mr Speaker, supported by the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and the leadership team in Liz, Mr Bates and Isla. I am very grateful for your ongoing support, particularly given the prospect that at any one point in time, the whole playbook could have been thrown out of the window and we would have found ourselves trying to come up with new arrangements and new ways to continue to, as I said, serve our democracy. You have all served valiantly during the crisis when, again, none of us knew what would be around the corner. I am thankful to you as well, Mr Speaker, because one of the hallmarks of your leadership in this place is that you care greatly about the staff who serve in this building. One of the things that will forever be imparted on me is that you never stop representing their concerns and you always stand up for them first and foremost. I am grateful for that because making sure that we have a strong staff means that we have a strong democracy as well.

The Leader of the House has thanked everybody who I would seek to thank. I do not want to go down that line because I do not wish to draw out my contribution longer than 10 minutes and also because, inevitably, I will miss somebody. Undoubtedly, the fortieth Parliament has been a remarkable session, not just because of COVID-19 and historic pieces of legislation that were quite trying for our Parliament, such as the voluntary assisted dying legislation, but because of the issues involving the former member for Darling Range and by-elections that meant that new members—the members for Cottesloe and Darling Range—came to this place subsequent to the start of the fortieth Parliament. Of course, all this happened, whereas a global pandemic has shut down other nations. We should be grateful for our place here.

Whilst not wanting to thank everybody, I would like to make a couple of personal thanks. My first is to the Minister for Health. When the Leader of the Opposition gave me the shadow portfolio of health, I did not think that the voluntary assisted dying legislation would be my first bill in that capacity, certainly not subsequently with a pandemic

to boot. I have to say, outside of the perhaps robust nature of our relationship on the floor of the chamber, I have been able to communicate with the minister in a free, frank and trusted way during the COVID-19 pandemic, and that has been to the benefit of our parties, generally speaking. It has also allowed us to inform the communities we represent because we had a direct line to the minister and his office. I am very grateful for our friendship here and outside this place.

My opposite number was previously the member for Cockburn, who is not here. I recognise his retirement. When I first achieved the position of shadow Minister for Corrective Services, I sent the member for Cockburn, through Amazon, an hourglass because I was confident when I first came to this place that I would see him removed from office. When I lost that portfolio and was given health, he sent it back with a note that said, “Not this time”! I will miss his forthright contributions to this place.

I will also miss the member for Collie–Preston. I remember loading him and his office up with questions and he simply said during a division, “Are you going to stop this bullshit sometime?” I have subsequently never been spoken to like that in this place. We will miss his colour and life, the result of which culminated in his speech to this place on Tuesday.

I will also miss the member for South Perth, who is a wise head in this place and who all of us see as the voice of reason.

I thank the member for Riverton for his ongoing stewardship of our party at a difficult time.

Parliament would be worse off without the respective contributions of the members for Kimberley and Victoria Park, whose absence will be a loss to this place. We are very grateful for your ongoing contributions in an individual capacity—certainly in the member for Victoria Park’s capacity as Treasurer—and because of your backgrounds and heritage in your representation as the voice of Aboriginal people in this Parliament. Your contributions have been very important and we are very lucky to have had you both here. I am grateful to have shared the floor of this house with you both, and on behalf of the Liberal Party, I thank you for your service to the state of Western Australia.

Mr Speaker, I have touched on your contribution, but during some difficult times in this place, I was able to speak with you very frankly and freely, and I thank you for your support.

Before I wrap up, I reflect on the fact that we are all supported by our electorate staff. I have thankfully managed to keep on the same team that served Hon Dr Kim Hames in Mandy Burton and Gaynar Sanders. We have been helped by a massive flock of volunteers, whom I would also like to thank.

With respect to the media that is still here, it is just Peter Law so he should get a shout-out. It is unfortunate that we do not have the media Christmas party here because more often than not when we make these speeches, not only does the member for Mandurah get a bit bigger audience, but it is always good to see more people celebrate the collective journey that we have all been on as we finalise the end of the parliamentary session.

I would like to thank the ministers in the government and the members of the backbench for their continuing stewardship of our state over the last four years. I reiterate my thanks to the members of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and our friends in the Nationals WA, whom I am very, very pleased to call my friends, particularly the member for Central Wheatbelt. I think she is a remarkable leader. There have been times, certainly in the last couple of weeks, when she has continued to stand and represent not only her constituency, but also her party with fervour, and at a time when people might otherwise have broken. She has done so with strength and dignity, and I thank her for her continued support, together with the Liberal Party, in representing those who are not on the treasury bench.

This session of Parliament has at times been very difficult personally, and I thank those who have given me their support, care, counsel or friendship during this time. It is extraordinary that sometimes we suffer through our own personal hardships in silence, because, ultimately, we are not here for ourselves; we are here to serve our districts and that is all that comes through. That is the most important thing. Through that spirit of service to our districts, I think we have seen COVID-19 make every single one of these good members—all 49 members—better. We have served during a time that has been unlike any other, and I am grateful to share the floor with you all.

I am mindful that we will all go to the election and, in that spirit, not only do I wish members a good Christmas, but also I wish the Liberal Party in particular very well in 114 days. To all other members of the National Party and Labor Party, I wish you best wishes, a safe Christmas and a happy new year.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [5.11 pm]: Firstly, four years goes by very quickly. I am sure that for all of us, it feels like only yesterday that we were here at the start of this Parliament. For 23 members, it was the first time that they had ever walked into this Parliament, so the last four years has been an interesting ride.

The Parliament has served the state well over that period. I think it is very instructive and very informative, as I think the Leader of the House indicated, that we were the only Parliament in Australia that did not stop sitting or did not truncate its schedule. In fact, we managed to add extra sitting days. I was just saying to the Minister for Health that I cannot actually remember sitting on Mondays or whenever it was, but apparently we did earlier this year.

The Parliament itself rose to the occasion over the course of this year, with the intention of passing legislation to support our agencies and to keep the state as safe as possible. Therefore, I think that in coming decades, the members of this Parliament, and certainly their children and grandchildren, will be able to look back with pride at what was done over the term of this Parliament.

I want to list the legislation, because it is the final speech of this Parliament. Ordinarily, we would not do so, but it has been an extraordinary four years. We managed to pass laws to support the victims of child sexual abuse to seek compensation and redress, and, naturally, we are also following on from the royal commission recommendations and further laws from that. We apologised to the LGBTIQ community and passed laws in relation to past prosecutions that should not have occurred. We put in place safety measures for the community, such as no body, no parole reforms; new terrorism laws; unexplained wealth laws; revenge porn laws; and family and domestic violence laws. Laws for the way we treat high-risk offenders, people who commit multiple murders and dangerous sex offenders were all passed by the Parliament.

We reformed the courts and child support systems, electricity markets, environmental laws, and gender laws. We reformed our liquor laws, and our on-demand transport reforms are very, very comprehensive. Our heritage laws and three rounds of local government reforms were passed by the Minister for Local Government. We reformed our gambling laws and the way we treat overseas bookmakers and the TAB. We introduced Infrastructure WA. We established the first container deposit scheme in Western Australia. That was quite a reform and is working extremely well.

We reformed and reduced the payroll tax burden. We put in place fines enforcement laws to dramatically reduce the number of people imprisoned for the failure to pay fines. We supported higher rates of immunisation. We passed the Western Australian Jobs Bill. We established a pathway for honourable medical retirement for police officers. We made our roads safer. We passed once-in-a-generation reforms to planning and strata laws to make the face of Western Australia better and to reduce red tape. We created the legal framework that we needed to build Metronet across Perth. We even showed how quickly we can work and how quickly we can move by passing extraordinary legislation to protect the state from the nefarious and dastardly acts and schemes of Clive Palmer, which was quite a week!

We have overhauled our workplace safety laws. We brought in emergency legislation to deal with the pandemic. We passed seven new state agreement bills. It was a conscience vote, but we gave Western Australians choice and dignity in the face of death with our voluntary assisted dying laws, which at the end of last year I thought would be the biggest and most controversial issue that we would deal with in this term, but in March this year I was proven wrong.

It is a very long list and depending on what happens in the Legislative Council in coming days, the list may well get longer. In light of that list and far more—the Attorney General’s commandeering of the drafting process meant that we passed 60 or so pieces of his legislation, which I cannot list now in the interests of time—reform and improvement are what we should be about. That is what Parliament should be about and that is what we should all aim for. The list that I just outlined is just a part of the things that we have done over this term of Parliament. It is something that I think we should all be very proud of, because it was all about making the lives of Western Australians better.

Christmas speeches are always a chance to thank people and I want to list a few. Firstly, I thank the cabinet, which I meet with on a weekly basis, so over the course of four years, that is about 200 or so meetings we have had. I thank the cabinet for all our deliberations. It has been an interesting process. We started in Hale House and we are now in Dumas House, as a consequence of COVID. I thank the cabinet for all its hard work. It is a hard job being a cabinet minister, with lots of work and lots of stress, so I would like to thank all of them for that.

I especially thank the Leader of the House. He is an extraordinary person, as we just saw. The only time I ever see people running towards the chamber is when the Leader of the House is making his final speech of the year. The humour with which he does it is unbelievable and I think unprecedented around the country. I do not think anyone else can do that like the Leader of the House can and at least make it work. I have seen some very embarrassing efforts at singing in Parliaments before. In the Leader of the House’s case, it is always genuinely funny and meaningful, so thank you to the Leader of the House.

I think this will be the first time this has ever been done in a Christmas speech: I thank the members of the national cabinet and congratulate the Prime Minister on coming up with the concept of the national cabinet. It has been a very effective process. We have had 35 meetings now. Perhaps we are not as close as we were in the first half of the meetings, but certainly the process itself and the resolution of issues—even if they are not resolved, the near-resolution of issues—has been unprecedented in the history of the country. It is so much better than COAG—I cannot begin to describe how much better than COAG this process is. Therefore, I thank the members of the national cabinet across the country. We have had 35 meetings that usually go for two, three or four hours. We get to know each other pretty well, even though we do not meet face to face, so I know them all pretty well these days and I thank them for their work.

I thank both elements of the opposition for their work over the course of this year. As opposition leader for nearly five and a half years, I understand what it is like, so I understand the pressures and the stresses in opposition. I thank you for your work as part of our democracy.

I thank the Parliamentary Counsel’s Office for its tireless work on producing laws, directions, regulations and whatever it might have been in record time, especially this year. It was amazing. They worked very hard over the course of this year and they are often under-recognised. Sometimes, for some reason, the public looks down at people who do this work. If they do not do this work, we do not implement policies. I thank parliamentary counsel and our lawyers across government for all their work.

I thank all my parliamentary colleagues, in particular the members of caucus. For probably about 20 of you, it has been an extraordinary learning experience over the course of the last four years. As members know, before they arrived in Parliament, they had no idea what it would actually be like. Then when they got here and sat in this room and all these processes were going on around them, they felt sort of like a cork in a river. It is an interesting experience, for which there is very little training or practice or anything even remotely similar to it in the real world, so to speak. I thank all government members for their work and, indeed, I also thank members of the opposition.

I acknowledge those MPs who are retiring—the members for Collie, Albany, Cockburn, South Perth, Kimberley, Riverton and Victoria Park. I thank all those members for their contributions. If I were to add up the time they all have been here, it would be the best part of 100 years. I thank you all for your contributions. The speeches over the course of this week have been memorable—yes, member for Collie! As I told caucus the other day—I will breach caucus confidentiality—the valedictory speech is what people read when they prepare for a member’s condolence motion. They read the member’s valedictory speech to see what they did as a parliamentarian. In the case of the member for Collie, they will be very —

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Maybe they will say that the Parliament has changed since those days and they do not do that anymore! Member for Collie, I understand the police are coming to see you shortly!

Can I thank the other members, in particular the member for Cockburn—we have all been friends for so long. To the member for Kimberley, thank you, Josie, for everything. Mr Speaker, thank you so much. We have been friends for so long. It actually makes me sad to see people go like this, because we are all here together and we go through these experiences and the stresses, strains, arguments and fights. We see the most amazing things and watch the most amazing events. There is the most extraordinary laughter and humour as part of it all. Some of the caucus and other meetings are just so incredibly funny and memorable. When someone leaves, a little bit of that memory is gone. I always find it sad on these occasions, in particular because I have served with some of these members for so long and we have been through so many experiences together. Thank you all.

Member for Victoria Park, I left you off. You and I have been through a lot over the last 15 or so years since you have been here. I always expected I would be going before you. I am so sad to see you go. Thank you so much, member for Victoria Park.

I want to thank my staff—Guy, Jo and Daniel in the Premier’s office in particular, and everyone else. There are a lot of them, so I will not thank them all. But Guy, Jo and Daniel, thank you so much; you are just outstanding people. To Karina and the staff in my electorate office, thank you so much for all the work you do. I am not perhaps as present as I once was in my electorate office, so I thank you for dealing with my wonderful electorate of Rockingham and helping people in the way that you do.

To all parliamentary staff across the entire building who make the whole place run, thank you so much. I do not know whether the Leader of the House did this, but I especially want to acknowledge the garden and dining staff. We always walk through those magnificent gardens and see the people there with their hats and blue outfits—they do a marvellous job, so thank you to all of them. Also thank you so much to the dining and bar staff; I always enjoy my interactions with you.

I thank all my agencies. Again, I will not list them all, but I thank all the public servants and especially the senior public servants for all their work. They work incredibly hard. I do not think it is appreciated how hard they work and the stresses and strains on them. I thank them.

The Leader of the House did this as well. I want to particularly thank the drivers, whom all the ministers and the opposition leader will know. I also thank my police officers who take care of me. I spend a lot of time with drivers and police officers—I mean a lot of time, every day, for hours and hours. I think they both know that I like them a great deal. I would like to thank them for their comradery and their work.

Can I thank my family—my wife, Sarah, and my kids, Samuel, Alexander and Amelia—for all their forbearance and understanding of my role in this place. They have been outstanding. I could not ask for better and I love them very much.

I thank the media. There is no-one there! Right. They missed their moment.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: There is the media! There he is! I thank the media for their important role in covering our democracy and our proceedings. It is a difficult job being in the media today. They have to be multiskilled. When I first got here 24 years ago, they had one role. These days, they are online, they take photographs, they film, they report, they tweet and they Facebook all at once. There are fewer of our media friends to undertake that role. It is a very important role in a democracy, as we see in the United States. Where would we be without the media in the United States?

Finally, can I thank all Western Australians for all their sacrifice and work over the course of the last four years, but in particular over the course of this year. I appreciate all your sacrifices and cooperation.

To everyone, have a great break. To all of us going into the election campaign, best wishes. It is a trying process, but it is an important part of the democracy that we have in Western Australia.

[Applause.]

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Leader of the Opposition) [5.27 pm]: I, too, rise to put my remarks on the record for this adjournment motion for the fortieth Parliament. I can only characterise the year 2020 as being a year of incredible ups and downs. Members will recall that we started the year with catastrophic bushfires on the east coast and bushfires on the goldfields that blocked off the Eyre Highway. People were stranded at the border because of a bushfire event at the start of the year. Then March came along and we started to hear rumours of an emerging, new threat—a much smaller threat in size than any fire could ever be—that became known as COVID-19. We then started to have problems with our border of a different nature.

This year, Western Australians have been able to see the very best in their community. It made me incredibly proud to see the way in which the people of Western Australia stepped up. They stepped up by showing that they have very big hearts and a lot of compassion. They had the ability to put aside and shelve their own personal plans for travel or whatever they thought was important to them, because suddenly other people became more important—seniors in our community and other vulnerable people. When we look at the sacrifices our community has made to protect the people who are most vulnerable, it makes me very, very proud to be a fifth generation Western Australian and to be part of that community.

During that time, we saw all our staff around us really step up to the mark. Mr Speaker, I would like to congratulate you and all the staff of Parliament House on the approach you have taken to the Parliament during this incredibly difficult time for us. I temper my comments by saying a difficult time here is far removed from the difficult time the first responders, health workers and medical staff are having in many parts of the globe as we speak and stand here in the best place in the world. Mr Speaker, what I found very inspiring here in Parliament was that you and your staff immediately went to work to look after the vulnerable people in this chamber and on your staff, by ensuring that people who were at significant risk of dying of COVID-19 were given the opportunity to self-isolate and work from home. We put in place social distancing and cleaning protection measures. Everybody learnt very quickly how to work in a very different regime for the operation of this Parliament. I think we should all be proud of the way our team here at Parliament and the administrative staff who support us rose to the challenge, kept us all safe and looked after all our needs during this period.

During this last year, we lost a number of former members in the most difficult of circumstances. We have had condolence motions that have really backed up on each other. We have had to deal with those condolence motions across a very short time. It is very sad to have your friends and colleagues pass away during COVID-19 measures, when only five or 10 people can attend their funeral. Everybody else has to Zoom in. Those former members would ordinarily have attracted 500 or maybe a thousand people to their funerals to pay tribute and respects to family members as a result of the lives they led as leaders in our community. We were unable to show that respect to them. I think we did ourselves very proud in this chamber by putting on the record with those condolence motions our memories and our appreciation for the efforts of all those former members who lost their lives—unexpectedly, in the case of Andrea Mitchell. It included two former Speakers—Hon George Strickland and Hon Jim Clarko. It was a very sad time for people in this chamber to be farewelling members who they had previously served with—and friends and mentors. That is what we have done this year.

One of the highlights of this week has been listening to the valedictory speeches of members who are retiring. I would like to thank my members, including Hon Dr Mike Nahan. Mike Nahan, as the member for Riverton, took on what we thought was the worst job in the world at the time, the Leader of the Opposition, after we received an absolute electoral drubbing. He did a tremendous job and we are all extremely proud of the effort and work ethic he displayed, and the way that he pulled together our team. We won two by-elections, in the seats of Darling Range and Cottesloe. He really did a tremendous job and left this place with incredible dignity with his valedictory speech. To the honourable John McGrath, my dear friend, I shall miss seeing you here every day. Although I was not here in person to listen to your valedictory speech, I have watched it, as I watched all the members' valedictory speeches for the period I was not present. I thank you very much, John, for your years of service to this place—years of service that have been recognised by your community. I do not think there are too many pavilions left to name in South Perth for the member who might succeed you, but, well done. I know your community have appreciated every effort that you have put in. Thank you.

I thank the retiring Labor members, the member for Cockburn and the member for Collie–Preston. I do not care what anyone says, member for Collie–Preston; I think people will look back on your valedictory speech and know that you are a man of great heart and a man of great emotion. You are a true leader in every sense of the word, in the way you have conducted yourself in this place and led your community over the past few years through very, very difficult times with the many changes that they are facing. I know that you will be well respected for a long time as a result of the effort that you put into your community. I will miss seeing you around this place, as well as all the members who are retiring. To the member for Kimberley, Josie Farrer—Josie, I feel so privileged to have been in this place to have heard your inaugural and valedictory speeches, which included your native Gidja language.

It was truly a beautiful thing that I will carry with me forever, and I thank you for that. I can hand-on-heart say that you have made a massive contribution to the people of Western Australia by bringing forward your private member's bill to recognise Aboriginal people as the first people of this country that we call our own. You should feel proud of that achievement. Many members in this place would like to be able to point to an achievement like that on behalf of the people in the community that we represent. To the first Aboriginal Treasurer, Hon Ben Wyatt, the member for Victoria Park, my congratulations to you. You are in the very unique position to have served as the first Aboriginal person to be a Treasurer in any Parliament in Australia, at the same time as your uncle is serving in the commonwealth Parliament on behalf of the people of Hasluck as the first Indigenous man to be minister for Indigenous Australians. It is a unique collection of firsts that I am sure you and your family will feel proud of for a long time to come.

Mr Speaker, for the wonderful job you have done as Speaker in trying to keep control of behaviour in this chamber, I thank you. I will apologise for our behaviour in the very early days in this place, in the first part of our parliamentary session. Adjusting to opposition is a very difficult thing. Our members have risen to the task and we have done our best to hold the government to account in the most difficult circumstances that an opposition can serve in. Mr Speaker, once again, I thank you for your service to your community. I have visited the seat of Albany many times and we have tried to win it back for the Liberal Party many times! The impediment to winning that seat, Mr Speaker, is that you are the quintessential local member. Everyone in your community has loved the effort you have put in. I cannot tell you the number of times that I have been to Albany and heard people say, "We'll vote Liberal when Watto goes." I hope they do in March! However, your community will not be voting Liberal because they were upset with your representation. You can rest easy knowing that you have done a tremendous job in representing your community and in keeping carriage of the standing orders in this place. Thank you.

To all the parliamentary staff who support us, thank you. I will not go through and name everyone but you are all very important to all of us. We do see the very small things that you do that make a tremendous difference to the way that we can get about doing our jobs. Thank you, all of you. All of us appreciate the effort that goes into looking after us. I would like to particularly single out the education staff and the education presenters. After one of my classes has come to this place—I know everyone will have the same experience—students will often write me letters to tell me about the experience they had here at Parliament. For the educators out there, I think they will find the learning experience the children have is very worthwhile because they remember so many bits of information about their visit to Parliament House. It is always a highlight of their primary school years and, for some, their high school years. To the education staff, thank you.

I would like to thank the staff in my office: my chief of staff, Colin Edwardes, Blair, Dale, Tony, Anton, Steve, Stephen, Craig, and Simon, who has left. The support that you have provided to all of us is tremendous. Members on this side who were ministers once will remember what it was like to have a staff of 14 to 16 people to look after their needs. To move into opposition and share five staff between 23 people is a very dramatic shift in our ability to do our job. To the staff in the LOOP office, you are amazing. You do a lot under tremendous pressure and we all really appreciate you. I particularly thank Cheryl and Kymberly, who run my diary. Kymberly and Cheryl do a fantastic job. Obviously, as Leader of the Opposition and leader of a very small team, there are a lot of events to try to get to. I appreciate very much the effort that goes in, including the after-hours effort that all my LOOP staff put in. The support that they provide me as the Leader of the Liberal Party is very gratefully received.

I would also like to thank the Premier. We had a very sick staff member who has been through a very difficult year, and the Premier's office was fantastic in helping us ensure that we could support that individual through a very difficult time that is still continuing. Thank you for assisting us in looking after a person who very much needed some assistance at the time.

I will say this about electorate office staff on behalf of members who do not have an opportunity to speak. This year has been particularly challenging for all our electorate office staff. They have been through a lot. The voluntary assisted dying legislation came at the end of last year, and it was really very traumatising for electorate office staff to receive all the emails from people about their particular circumstances. It was very traumatising. We have now come into this period of COVID, in which families are separated and there are significant mental health issues out there. People are stranded in foreign countries; family members are stuck on the east coast. There are all sorts of circumstances that have caused tremendous grief to families. It is our electorate officers who take that on. They are the first responders on our behalf to all those calls for assistance that come into our offices. To my staff, Jonathon and Kathryn, I want to place on the record that I have really noticed what you have done and I appreciate all the additional effort that you have put in. I also see the toll it has taken. I thank you very much for supporting me and for supporting all those people in our community through these very difficult times.

Mr Speaker, I do not want to keep people here for too long. I think there are usually some drinks and crayfish to follow at some point.

The SPEAKER: Sometimes!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: In closing, I would like to thank two other people. I thank our Whip, Tony Krsticevic, the member for Carine. Thank you for keeping us all corralled and making sure everybody is lining up at the right

time to speak and that we understand the order of things. I also thank the leader of opposition business. As a first time member in this place, member for Dawesville, you have done a tremendous job as leader of opposition business. It is a thankless job. One does not get any extra money for it but one gets a bucketload of headaches and a tremendous amount of additional workload. The leader of opposition business gets to do all the negotiating with the government with a usually affable leader of government business, but sometimes those trips to Mandurah, I think, may have gotten the better of some of those intemperate conversations that I know have occurred. I thank the leader of government business for accommodating our requests, but also the leader of opposition business for the effort that you have put in.

To the Leader of the Nationals WA and our partners in opposition, the National Party, thank you for working so well with us, for sharing very scarce resources, and also for sharing time in this place, which is also somewhat scarce when we are trying to cover the great state of Western Australia with only three hours of time allocated to us each week. Thank you very much for everything that you have put in. Also, to my deputy, the member for Nedlands, thank you for everything that you have done to support our team through this particularly difficult year.

In closing, once again, I want to say to the entire Western Australian community that we can hold our heads high and be proud of the effort that we have put in. It has been a collaborative effort. From our side of politics, in getting through those 17 pieces of legislation expeditiously to ensure that the government would not run out of money so that we could keep our services going and keep our nurses and police officers paid, I think that we have done a very good job on behalf of our community.

I thank all our first responders out there—the nurses, medical staff and police officers who are dealing with difficult circumstances. Heaven forbid, if we get an outbreak of COVID-19, those circumstances will become ever more difficult. I thank all those people working on the front line. I come from a nursing family; I understand the sacrifices nurses make and the workload they have. I did not want to sit down without the opportunity of thanking all those people working on the front line, doing such a tremendous job keeping our people safe and healthy.

With that, I wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy new year. I wish for an election campaign that is fought on the issues and the policies that matter to people. Hopefully, we will see all our members return, and hopefully with a few more members on this side of the house, after 13 March 2021.

[Applause.]

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Nationals WA) [5.46 pm]: I am very conscious that we have been here for a while and there are obviously a few things that people want to get on and do, but I would also like to take the opportunity to thank a few people on behalf of the Nationals WA.

I would like to start by thanking you, Mr Speaker, the Deputy Speaker and the Acting Speakers for your guidance and contribution towards keeping order in this place. I thank the Legislative Assembly staff, Kirsten Robinson and her team, always the consummate professionals, for providing accurate and timely advice and gently guiding us in the acquittal of our duties in this place. I thank Hansard, who are absolute magicians who make us sound competent, capable and eloquent, even after 10 o'clock at night. I thank the dining room staff; the hospitality, security and maintenance staff; the welcoming faces at the entry of Parliament; the members of the gardening team, who make the grounds look spectacular; the members of the Library and information services team, who share the corridor with the Nationals and put up with us trekking through their office every day; Parliamentary Services; and the Parliamentary Education Office. I thank the members of the media, who also stalk the same corridors as the Nationals WA and with whom we all in this game share a symbiotic relationship, especially those who work the parliamentary beat and the hardworking regional journalists with whom our team deal on a very regular basis. We thank those who take an interest in what happens in our vast and beautiful state beyond these four walls. There are fewer and fewer of those people to shine a light on the stories of our state, both the good and the bad, and I think we are growing the poorer for it, so I like to acknowledge the hard work of the journalists we all deal with.

To the government and its members of Parliament, I wish you all the best as we head to the next election. It has been a truly remarkable experience over the last four years. In the nearly 20 years that I have been involved behind the scenes and in this place, I have never seen quite the majority that we have experienced over the last four years. It has been quite a unique experience and I genuinely wish you well as you hit the campaign trail and head back to your communities and your families.

To the opposition, it is a tough job. To the Leader of the Opposition and the leader of opposition business, it is, as you say, a difficult task with limited resources, but we are part of the cogs that keep this Parliament going and we play an important role. I think that we have done an exceptional job in trying circumstances. I also wish you the very best as you head back to your electorates to support not only your colleagues that are already here, but also your candidates and the team that you are bringing to the next election.

To the retiring members, I wish you all the very best as you move on to your civilian life. I get asked regularly, and I am sure everyone does, what politicians or members of Parliament are like in “real life”—the parenthesis are for the benefit of *Hansard*. I can genuinely say hand on heart that I do not know one person in this place over the course of my time here who has not come to acquit their duties with a desire to do better for their community. No

matter what side of the house we are on, how we approach it or how we get there to serve those communities, we all do it with the same purpose, which is to leave a legacy, contribute and make people's lives better. To those members who have made the decision to move on of their own volition, that is an amazing thing to do. I will single out a couple of people. To the Treasurer, who I think has the admiration of everyone in this place, and in the community, I wish you the very best as you spend more time with your family. As everyone has reflected upon, you have left a legacy of which you should be incredibly proud. It has been a privilege to serve in this place with you.

To the two rowdy country MPs who are retiring, a little piece of parliamentary culture and history will be leaving with you, too. You are the old school, who know how to stand up and bang the table and get what you need for your community. You are held in high regard. I know you do not need us to tell you this, because I am sure that you see it every day and get this reflected back to you, but it is nice to be able to acknowledge that in this place. For 20 years, both of you have served your communities vigorously and fiercely. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, we have been trying to knock both of you off those seats for a long time, and we have not succeeded. It is absolutely the Mick Murray seat of Collie and the Peter Watson seat of Albany. It has also been a great privilege to watch how you acquit yourselves in your electorates. During my time in politics, I have been in the electorates of both of you, and I know that you are held in great esteem. Your constituents will genuinely be sad not to have that door to go to and knock on and know that you will be able to resolve their issues. I really hope that whoever takes over that role will be someone from the National Party, but to fill those shoes will be a big task.

To the member for Albany in your Speaker's role, may I personally thank you for the hand of friendship that you have offered me over the last four years. I have no hesitation in saying that you have been a rock for your electorate. Urgent parliamentary business prevented me from being present for your valedictory and for the valedictories of other members over the last day, but I look forward to watching those reflections of your 20 years in the Parliament. I have had the great pleasure of spending a bit of time with you in non-parliamentary terms. The leader of government business talked the other day during Andrea Mitchell's condolence about the importance of travel with our colleagues across the borders of parliamentary parties. In my 12 years as a member of Parliament, I had not travelled once, either internationally or interstate as a member of Parliament. That was until the Speaker invited me to attend a delegation with him, the members for Forrestfield and Hillarys, and the Clerk. We went to the United Arab Emirates and Oman last year. That was an incredible opportunity that I would not ordinarily have had. I feel very privileged on that front, but I also feel very privileged to have spent some time with you, and I appreciate that you offered me that opportunity. I need to find time to cook you that dinner that I owe you. It will come! It may be after we have won the seat of Albany with our excellent candidate Delma Baesjou.

The SPEAKER: You had to get that in, didn't you!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I do wish you the very best. I know that you are looking forward to spending more time with your family, and particularly your gorgeous grandkids. From me to you, thank you very much for your guidance in this place as the Speaker. It is a tough job.

Thank you to my deputy leader of the Nationals WA, the member for Moore, who stepped into the role mid-term. He has provided great support to me in this chamber and in our parliamentary team. We are small team. We lean very heavily on each other to pull our weight. Member for Moore, you have acquitted your role admirably and I really appreciate your contribution and guidance at all times.

I also say thank you to the rest of my parliamentary team. The member for Roe is here, who is our Whip. I know there are not very many of us, but it is still an important job. We are like herding cats sometimes. Thank you very much, member for Roe, for your contribution. You have all worked incredibly hard over the course of the last four years. We have travelled to all corners of the state as a team and have tried to remain engaged with all those communities. I am very proud of the little team that I lead.

I want to make special mention of Hon Colin Holt and Hon Jacqui Boydell, who are retiring members at this election. They have made the decision to move on. Both of them have left a significant legacy in our organisation and in the communities that they represent. Hon Jacqui Boydell has been our leader in the Legislative Council for the National Party over the last four years. That has been a formidable task because of the constitution of that house and the numbers in that house. It requires constant collaboration with all parties to make sure that that house can continue to operate. Prior to that, Jacqui was my deputy leader. She has also held the role of state director in our organisation, which is perhaps the most thankless task in any of our political parties. She has also worked very closely with the Young Nationals. I wish her and her family, who have had a long and enduring commitment to our organisation, the very best as she steps away from politics to pursue new opportunities.

To Hon Colin Holt, I have never travelled to a corner of this state in which someone does not know this member and his good reputation. He has served the people of the South West Region in the Legislative Council since 2008. I came into the Legislative Council in the same class. He brings a very different perspective to our party. Members in this place who have worked with him on really contentious legislation know how he approaches matters such as that. That is what he does in all elements of his life. There will be many things to say about his legacy when we reflect on that when he and Jacq both leave. He was involved from the very beginning in the legacy that we have all been a part of with the voluntary assisted dying legislation, of which we can all be rightly proud. It is wonderful

to reflect on how he was able to use the skills that he brought to this Parliament to work with government and opposition members to shepherd that legislation through this Parliament. He has my ongoing gratitude for the contribution that he has made. I know that he is highly regarded wherever he goes in his community.

The leader of government business talked about the importance of our electorate officers. Our National Party members are spread across the state, from Esperance to Karratha. I want to give you all a sincere and genuine thankyou from all our MPs for the work that you do. As country MPs, our members are more often than not out in their electorate and not in their offices. Our electorate staff are highly valued by us and also by the communities that we serve. We are indebted to them for the work that they do behind the scenes. As the leader of our party, I am rarely in my electorate office. To Rhonda Lawrence, Cec McConnell, Kath Brown and Michelle Alvaro in my offices in Northam and Merredin, they are an amazing little team. They keep everything on track for me. I would be lost without them. They look after the people of the electorate of Central Wheatbelt incredibly well. To my leader's office staff, led by Josh Nyman, who is my chief of staff, and to Ross Lewis, Anthea Wesley, Cale Hill, Tay Allers, Theresa Middis and, more recently, Connor Meerwald, you will not find a more loyal or hardworking group of people. Josh has created a really positive working environment for our team. He has earned the admiration of our parliamentary team and the stakeholders that we work with. I thank him for the commitment and dedication that he brings to that role every day. To the remainder of the team, thank you. To Ross and his family, we are thinking of you all.

I want to make special mention of Theresa Middis, our parliamentary executive officer. She has worked with me for over 10 years and has made the decision to step down at this next election and move on. She started in my electorate office, and she then came into my ministerial office. She has served as our parliamentary executive officer for the last four years. She is a consummate professional. She came from working in very senior roles in Centrelink. She brings an empathetic and compassionate, but always efficient and firm—which many people have appreciated over that time—approach to the myriad challenges that come with this role. She has been a mentor and role model for many of my staff and people in our organisation and has become a dear friend of mine. I will miss her good humour and presence in my office. Thank you very much. It was wonderful to have someone of your calibre in our office.

To Lachlan Hunter, Jack Mallick and Steve Blyth and the team who will be leading our team to the next election from the state secretariat, we wish you all the best, along with the candidates.

I want to finish by saying that it has been an enormous privilege to hold the position of Leader of the National Party in an organisation that has existed in this state for more than 110 years. I truly believe in what we do. It is important to have a party that is dedicated to regional Western Australia.

I will echo the comments that have been made by everyone about giving congratulations and commendations to the people who responded during COVID-19: our health workers, teachers, police, aged-care workers, emergency services workers and volunteers, transport workers, supermarket supply chains, and those on the borders. It has been an incredibly difficult year. We will always acknowledge your contribution and remain deeply appreciative. I want to thank particularly the Commissioner of Police and the Chief Health Officer. Everyone who been working in that team has done a marvellous job. Again, I extend my congratulations to the government, which has been very much a part of leading that process. We appreciate that.

I wish everyone a healthy and safe Christmas and New Year, surrounded by family and friends. For those of you who cannot do that because of the circumstances we find ourselves in, I hope you will find some joy in these very difficult times. I wish you all the very best as we head to the next state election.

[Applause.]

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [5.59 pm]: I know you have all been sitting around waiting for my speech. I have the phone directory here, which lists the 180 people who work in Parliament, but I think the Leader of the House mentioned most of them. But there are some people I really have to thank. My Clerk, Kirsten Robinson—there she is—the pocket rocket. She is the one who has stopped me using the gavel ever since I have been in because she said, “Every time you hit it, my ears go numb!” The knowledge of law of my Deputy Clerk, Scott Nalder, has been tremendous. He is my in-house lawyer. Liz Kerr is another Collingwood tragic but we will get there, Liz, do not worry, but I do not think it will be in my lifetime! Mathew Bates, the bionic man, has had a big operation and he has been under a bit of pressure during the year but has come back looking better than ever. Isla Macphail, my Sergeant-at-Arms, is supposed to protect me when she brings in the Mace. When we went to Hobart, she could not protect me when a pothole jumped out and I put my foot in it, so I finished up wearing a moon boot! She said that it was not too bad, so we walked two kilometres back to the hotel. That is the job of the Sergeant-at-Arms! There is also the Executive Assistant to the Clerk, Anne Day, and the bubbly Jaclyn Berry, who tells me what I have to do and where I have to go, and my attendant, Anna Murphy.

We have had some really difficult decisions to make in Parliament, especially over the last 12 months; it has been a great team effort. I would like to mention Rob Hunter again. Rob loves to be liked, so I will put something on Facebook so that all those people who do not like him can say that they “Like” Rob Hunter! He cops a lot of flak, but if you knew the work he does to keep this place going on a limited budget, Ben Wyatt, you would think he is a tremendous man. Sorry, Ben!

I also acknowledge in my Assembly office, Denis—I have to say this correctly—Hippolyte, Rachel Wells, Lachlan Gregory, Alison O’Shaughnessy and Nikolas Carbone. Poor old Nik. We went to a conference in Tasmania and he was late one morning for a meeting, so he snuck in, but he did not realise I was observing from the back corner and I nailed him and I have not let him forget it, but I promised I would not say it, Nik! I acknowledge Darren Seet and Marie Martin, who is a little runner, but she has to watch what she is doing because she gets crook knees!

There is also Building Services and everyone else in this place. So much goes on behind the scenes that no-one knows about. There is Security, which dealt with 79 or 80 incidents in the last 12 months. People come in here and everything is fine. There are some tremendous people here, such as Hugh McCaffrey and his team; Tony and his security team. Elma Ozich, the Chief Finance Officer, has been helping us retiring members to see what we do with our money. There is also the education department and I will find out who wrote the poem, which I thought was great.

I want to let everyone know that although I have been here for 20 years, I have never been thrown out due to my behaviour despite what a lot of people think. The closest I got to being thrown out was when I was calling out to poor old John Castrilli, the former member for Bunbury. I was trying to get an inquiry going into the City of Albany. I kept asking for one, but he would not do it, so I did a grievance. He absolutely hammered me in the first half of my speech. When he got up to reply, I did not let him speak; I said, “You’re a disgrace.” Speaker Grant Woodhams called me for the first time, and when I kept going, he called me for the second time. When it got to the third time, he said, “Three and a quarter, three and a half, three and three quarters,” and I shut up. It is a tremendous job being the Speaker. When you look down from the Speaker’s chair, you see lots of things. You get sung to by someone. I am going to have nightmares once again.

The drivers have been tremendous; they love me because I live closer than anyone else, so they all line up to take me home! I hear a lot about the ministers from the drivers, so I have a bit of dirt that I can call on later.

To the retiring members, it has been just great—20 years, member for Collie—Preston. People do not realise how tough this bloke is. He comes over as a tough bloke, but he has a heart of gold. You saw his emotion during the week, but if you knew what he has done for the people in his electorate over a long period, you would see a different side. To my mate, Ben, the world’s second-best Treasurer behind Eric Ripper—that is an in-joke—you have been a tremendous leader not only for your community but you have been a great member and a good friend over a long period. I acknowledge the member for Cockburn and also the member for South Perth, the one who wears a red T-shirt under his shirt and one day will rip it open to say, “I was Labor anyway!”

It is funny when we talk about our electorate offices. My electorate officer is Guy Wroth. For 20 years, he has been saying that I did not check the first *Hansard*, which had “Roth”. I had written everything out and handed it to Hansard. He rang me this morning because I said, “It’s Guy W-R-O-T-H.” When I got *Hansard* this morning, his name was spelt “Wrath”. His nickname is “Bomber” and they put “Boomer”! Luckily, this time I fixed it up so that I will not get hassled for another 20 years.

I would like to thank everyone. Being the Speaker is a bit of a difficult job, but my staff have been tremendous. As I say, a lot of things happen behind the scenes. Oops! I have forgotten someone. I missed Josie. Josie calls me “son” and I call her “mother” because one of her grandsons is a Watson. He is a very good young footballer and Josie said that the Speaker was a Watson, so he is a really lovely kid and he could even play AFL football, but only if he plays for Collingwood, Josie! I apologise; you have been a wonderful member of Parliament, a wonderful member for your community and a wonderful friend over the last eight years. I am very proud to have served with you. I think that is it. Actually, no; I think I can go a bit longer!

I remember Geoff Gallop saying to me when we were heading up to the first election, “Some people who think they’re going to get in at the next election won’t; some who don’t think they’re going to get in will. It’s about the amount of work you put in.” I am sure everyone here has put in a lot of work. It will be a very trying time for those doing it for the first time. You have to have support around you. Do not be frightened to talk to people. No-one is too big. Some members here who are sitting for the third or fourth time will say the same thing: you never know what can happen in politics.

I wish all members the best of luck; members to my right and members to my left. Do your best and just remember what you are here for. You are here for your community and if you look after your community, as Mick and I have found over 20 years, they will look after you. Thank you for the nice words from the people in the chamber today. I wish they had told me those things years ago, but it was great. Leader of the House, thank you once again for your great contribution. Look after your families and have a great Christmas and happy new year.

[Applause.]

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 6.08 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

POLICE — CRIME STOPPERS**6441. Mr P.A. Katsambanis to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:**

I refer to Crimestoppers and ask for each of the past four years:

- (a) how many reports were received;
- (b) how many multiple reports were received related to the same information report;
- (c) how many reports received later led to arrests; and
- (d) how many times has a member of the public received a financial reward for information that led to an arrest?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

The Western Australia Police Force advise:

(a)

2017	2018	2019	2020*
52 360	54 498	57 657	43 549

* 1 January to 30 September 2020.

- (b) This figure is not easily extracted and involves a manual search based upon the subject of each report, requiring a large commitment of research time. Police have determined it is not an effective use of police resources to source this information.

(c)

2020*	2019	2018	2017
2 568	5 586	7 377	5 493

* 1 January to 30 September 2020.

- (d) A reward relates to a legal outcome.

2017	2018	2019	2020*
10	3	4	4

* 1 January to 30 September 2020.

POLICE — DRUG SEIZURES**6442. Mr P.A. Katsambanis to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:**

I refer to WA Police drug seizures and ask for each of the past four years:

- (a) how many Methylenedioxyamphetamine search warrants were executed per Police district using non-organised crime squad resources;
- (b) how many Methylenedioxyamphetamine search warrants were executed multiple times per Police district using non-organised crime squad resources;
- (c) how many drug seizures from vehicles (non-warrant) per Police district using non-organised crime squad resources took place; and
- (d) how many drug seizures from the person (non-warrant/non-vehicle) per Police district using non-organised crime squad resources took place?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

The Western Australia Police Force advise:

- (a)–(b) Methylenedioxyamphetamine search warrants cannot be separated from all other executed search warrants.
- (c)–(d) Whether drugs are seized from a person or a vehicle cannot be identified without significant manual effort and diversion of police resources.

POLICE — SEARCH WARRANTS**6443. Mr P.A. Katsambanis to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:**

I refer to WA Police search warrants and ask:

- (a) for each of the past four years how many search warrants did WA Police apply for;

- (b) for each of the past four years how many search warrants were executed by WA Police;
- (c) for each of the past four years how many search warrants were executed on more than one occasion; and
- (d) for each of the past four years how many search warrants were not executed at all?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

The Western Australia Police Force advise:

- (a) Applications for search warrants are in both electronic and paper formats. As a result of the variety in application methods used, the total number of search warrants applied for by the WA Police Force cannot be determined without significant manual effort.
- (b) In 2017, 5114; in 2018, 5225; in 2019, 5176; and in 2020 to 8 October, 4037.
- (c) In 2017, seven; in 2018, one; in 2019, four, and in 2020 to 8 October, zero.
- (d) Please refer to (a).

Notes:

- (1) *Statistics are provisional and subject to revision.*
- (2) *Statistics are a count of incidents with an incident sub-type of 'Execution of Search Warrant' which either commenced or concluded between 1 January 2016 and 31 December 2019, as recorded in the WA Police Force Incident Management System.*
- (3) *It is the practice of the WA Police Force to create an incident in the Incident Management System for each search warrant executed. Where a search warrant has been re-executed, a new incident is created. Executed search warrants are captured against the incident, rather than against the warrant. As a result, the figures provided in part (b) reflect the number of executions of search warrants, rather than the number of search warrants executed.*
- (5) *Search warrants executed on more than one occasion were identified through a key word search of the free text narrative of executed search warrant incidents in the Incident Management System for the term "re-execut" and similar terms with different punctuation. Care should be taken when interpreting these figures due to the limitations of free text searches and the reliance on the recording officer narratives including the key words searched for. Incidents where the searched term wasn't entered into the incident narrative or a significant misspelling will result in the search warrant re-execution not being counted.*

POLICE — WELFARE CHECKS

6462. Mr P.A. Katsambanis to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:

I refer to Police welfare checks and ask:

- (a) how many Police welfare checks were conducted in 2019 and year to date 2020 (non-COVID related);
- (b) which Police district in the Perth metropolitan region recorded the most number of welfare checks; and
- (c) which Police district in regional Western Australia recorded the most number of welfare checks?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

The Western Australia Police Force advise:

- (a) In 2019 there were 53,120; and in 2020 [as at 15 October 2020] there have been 41,390.
- (b) Mandurah Police District.
- (c) South West Police district.

Notes

- (1) *Statistics are provisional and subject to revision.*
- (2) *Statistics of welfare checks conducted by police are a distinct count of events where at least one unit was dispatched to the job, and where the job was transmitted for action within the period of 01 January 2019 and 15 October 2020, inclusive.*
- (3) *Statistics exclude welfare check tasks where a unit was not dispatched after triage of the task, separate task types such as mental health escorts and absconders that could relate to a person's welfare, and tasks relating to COVID-19 quarantine and isolation checks.*
- (4) *Police district is determined using the recorded suburb where the welfare check occurred*

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6471. Mr W.R. Marmion to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Supreme Court judgement by Justice Tottle in which he concluded that the Minister did not have a material basis to make an order to suspend the Town of Cambridge Council under section 8.15C(2) of the Local Government Act and that the consequence of suspending the Council would have been legally unreasonable, and ask:

- (a) what advice did you receive, and from whom did you receive that advice, which lead you to serve a “show cause notice” on the Town of Cambridge;
- (b) will the Minister table that advice in Parliament;
- (c) did the Minister seek legal advice before instigating the “show cause notice”; and
- (d) what advice has the Minister since received from the department, subsequent to Justice Tottle’s judgement, in regard to the continuation of the current two year Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge and the outcome of the Supreme Court action by the Town of Cambridge?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) The Department of Local Government Sport and Cultural Industries provided advice that supported the issue of the Show Cause Notice.
- (b) No, the show cause is separate from a Report into the Town of Cambridge. The Report has been tabled in Parliament. [See tabled paper no [4001](#).]
- (c) Yes.
- (d) See part (b).

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6477. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “1. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that Council members have an understanding of and observe their respective roles, such that the Town’s employees rather than Council members undertake administrative and operational functions. In particular b) at a meeting held on 9 April 2020, Council passed a motion authorising Councillor Timmermanis, on behalf of the Council, to “assist the CEO in relation to the Employee Arrangements in response to COVID-19”, including but not limited to: i. attending all meetings with unions and staff unable to be redeployed; and ii. attending all meetings of the COVID taskforce;”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
 - (i) (1)(b)(i) above; and
 - (ii) (1)(b)(ii) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
 - (i) (1)(b)(i) above; and
 - (ii) (1)(b)(ii) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
 - (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
 - (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge Findings 04 and 6 and paragraphs 91–94.

Finding 04: By authorising elected members to undertake administrative tasks, council has created a situation where employees are not able to properly perform their functions.

Finding 06: By authorising Councillor Timmermanis to undertake administrative tasks related to employment of staff, council is interfering with the CEO's role to manage the day to day operations of the local government and the employment or dismissal of staff under section 5.41(g).

91. At the same Council meeting on 9 April 2020, council passed a motion authorising Councillor Timmermanis, on behalf of the council, to “*assist the CEO in relation to the Employee Arrangements in response to COVID-19*”, including but not limited to attending all meetings with unions and staff unable to be redeployed and attending meetings of the COVID Taskforce.
 92. At an Ordinary Council Meeting on 23 June 2020, council revoked the decision made at its Special Council Meeting on 9 April 2020 authorising the Mayor (pursuant to Regulation 9) to provide instructions directly to lawyers and authorising Councillor Timmermanis to assist the CEO in relation to employment arrangements.
 93. At the same council meeting council resolved to establish a COVID-19 committee, comprising of council members and employees.
 94. The motion stated that council approved by absolute majority to appoint four named Councillors, the CEO, the Director Infrastructure and Works, the Manager Regulatory Services, the Co-ordinator Governance and the Office of the CEO and ‘*other Town of Cambridge Officers, as nominated by the Chief Executive Officer*’.
- (b) No.
- (c)–(d) No.
- (d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.
- (e) As per the *Local Government Act 1995* (WA) the Town was provided 21 days to respond to the Show Cause Notice. This period was extended due to the initiation of Court proceedings and the Town responded on 19 June 2020.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6478. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “1. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that Council members have an understanding of and observe their respective roles, such that the Town’s employees rather than Council members undertake administrative and operational functions. In particular a) At meetings held on 7 February 2018, 15 May 2018, 28 August 2018 and 9 April 2020, Council: i. passed motions appointing specific lawyers or law firms to act for or provide advice to the Town ii. did not observe any procurement processes or purchasing policy when engaging legal services; and iii. authorised the Mayor to provide instructions directly to Lawyers;”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
 - (i) (1)(a)(i) above;
 - (ii) (1)(a)(ii) above; and
 - (iii) (1)(a)(iii) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
 - (i) (1)(a)(i) above;
 - (ii) (1)(a)(ii) above; and
 - (iii) (1)(a)(iii) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
 - (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
 - (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

(a) I refer to the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge Finding 5 and paragraphs 87–90 and 108–116.

Finding 05: By authorising the Mayor to undertake administrative tasks, council have failed to ensure good governance processes with respect to procuring law firms and the appropriate allocation of the Town’s finances.

87. At a Special Council Meeting on 7 February 2018, council:
- a. passed motions appointing specific lawyers or law firms to act for or provide advice to the Town;
 - b. authorised the Mayor to provide instructions directly to lawyers; and
 - c. did not observe any procurement processes or purchasing policy when
 - d. engaging legal services.
88. At a Special Council Meeting on 15 May 2018, council:
- a. passed motions appointing specific lawyers or law firms to act for or provide advice to the Town;
 - b. authorised the Mayor to provide instructions directly to lawyers; and
 - c. did not observe any procurement processes or purchasing policy when engaging legal services.
89. At an Ordinary Council Meeting on 28 August 2018, council:
- a. passed motions appointing specific lawyers or law firms to act for or provide advice to the Town;
 - b. authorised the Mayor to provide instructions directly to lawyers; and
 - c. did not observe any procurement processes or purchasing policy when engaging legal services.
90. At an Ordinary Council Meeting on 9 April 2020, council:
- a. passed motions appointing specific lawyers or law firms to act for or provide advice to the Town;
 - b. authorised the Mayor to provide instructions directly to lawyers; and
 - c. did not observe any procurement processes or purchasing policy when engaging legal services.
108. At a council Meeting on 7 February 2018, council resolved to engage a law firm and a barrister with fees associated being approved as unbudgeted expenditure. Emails identify that Mayor Shannon had been in discussions with the law firm involved prior to the motion being debated at the council meeting.
109. The motion did not provide a quote for the cost of works to be provided by the law firm and the amount of unbudgeted expenditure was left open.
110. On 8 February 2018, an elected member sent an email to all Councillors and the CEO stating (in part):
- “it appears Council has approved an unbudgeted blank cheque for an ill-defined scope of works with no clear timeframes and no clear understanding of how the work is to be managed or the accountability mechanisms...”*
111. The email sought clarification from Mayor Shannon in relation to a number of issues concerning the motion passed by council, in particular:
- a. What measures will be put in place to ensure transparency with regard to the instruction and the conduct of the investigations?
 - b. Why that particular law firm?
 - c. Why the lawyers/counsel requested?
 - d. Will council be provided with a copy of correspondence between the Mayor and the law firm?
 - e. Is it good governance to approve unbudgeted expenditure without any indication as to cost of the commitment?

- f. Can a cost estimate be provided so initial provision can be made for the unbudgeted item?
- g. Will an update be provided at each council meeting regarding the costs incurred?
112. On 9 February 2018, Mayor Shannon responded to the above email stating *‘I note that you did have an opportunity to speak at the meeting, however you chose to ask a question without speaking to the motion. As the motion has passed and is a decision of council, I do not intend to descend into further discussion about the merits and detail behind the motion’*.
113. During an interview with Authorised Persons on 6 September 2018, Mayor Shannon was asked whether she had any prior relationship with any person at the law firm engaged.
114. Mayor Shannon replied *“I had met [name] before, I obviously worked at Browns in the past and [name] worked for a partner that worked there – well, she worked for us. So yeah, they were just an employment law firm that had sufficient resources and the size to undertake an investigation. We could have picked any number of firms. But usually you go on people that you think are quite good.”*
115. Mayor Shannon was asked *“Did you obtain any quotes of any other law firm to engage?”* to which Mayor Shannon replied *“No”*.
116. In the interview, Mayor Shannon stated *‘the tendering policy is something for the Administration’* and as an Elected Member she was not provided with policies that apply to the Town’s employees, therefore, she was not required to abide by the Town’s procurement policy.

(b) No.

(c)–(d) No.

(d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.

(e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6479. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “2. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the working environment and relationship between Council, the CEO and the employees of the Town enables the CEO and employees to carry out their functions without inappropriate involvement or interference by councillors. In particular: a) employees of the Town have reported that the volume of requests for information from Council members to the Town’s employees has impeded the capacity of those employees to properly perform their functions;”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
- (i) (2)(a) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
- (i) (2)(a) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
- (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
- (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge Findings 10 and 11 and paragraphs 131–134, 137 and 141.

Finding 10: By not consistently following the Town’s policy for Elected Member Requests and communicating directly with employees, the Mayor has impeded the CEO from effectively managing the day to day operations of the local government.

Finding 11: By emailing administration staff directly without including the CEO and requiring the employee to act, the Mayor has failed to comply with Regulation 10 of the Local Government (Code of Conduct) Regulations 2007.

131. The Town calculated the number of emails sent to the EMR mailbox which showed between July 2018 and June 2019, 937 emails were received by the EMR mailbox, and 560 (58%) of those emails were from the Mayor. This number does not take into account the emails sent by Mayor Shannon to staff that did not include the EMR email address.
132. The remaining 377 emails were somewhat evenly split between the other eight elected members.
133. Between July 2019 and mid-March 2020, 300 emails were received by the EMR mailbox, and 153 of those emails were from the Mayor. The remaining 147 emails were split between the eight other elected members. This number again does not take into account the emails sent by Mayor Shannon to staff that did not include the EMR email address.
134. The content of the emails sent by Mayor Shannon to administrative staff shows Mayor Shannon directly requests information from, and asks for tasks to be undertaken by, administration staff without advising the CEO (through the EMR) of matters raised.
137. Mayor Shannon unilaterally directs administration staff to undertake tasks without following the above process and informing the CEO of her requests.
141. Statements made by the staff included:
- a. *So we live in this world where we can't really function. I can't really do my job.*
 - b. *And you'll see from that the level of pressure. Even regardless of what the content of all her correspondence is. Without even opening it, you will see the level of pressure that she puts on everyone, because of the amount of emails.*
 - c. *So we get all this ad hoc piecemeal work that we've not scheduled for, and we could spend days running about doing stuff.*
 - d. *We're basically running about for the Mayor. We're not doing what we're supposed to do.*
 - e. *It's the fear that if you say no – John has already said “She's a strong character, so you just say yes to her. You don't say no.”*
 - f. *It really is a toxic environment. It's absolutely – it's a horrible place to work...*

(b) No.

(c)–(d) No.

(d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.

(e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6480. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “2. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the working environment and relationship between Council, the CEO and the employees of the Town enables the CEO and employees to carry out their functions without inappropriate involvement or interference by Councillors. In particular b) employees of the Town have reported that pressure has been placed on employees not to discuss potential or current applications for planning approval with proponents;”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
- (i) (2)(b) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
- (i) (2)(b) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
- (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and

- (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to Finding 2 of the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge and paragraphs 54, 56, 59 and 64.

Finding 02: The Town’s employees’ have been unable to properly perform their functions because of undue pressure and fear of consequences.

- 54. The Town’s employees have expressed fear about providing frank advice to the Town, and in particular the Mayor around planning matters.
- 56. On 13 February 2020, Councillor Rod Bradley attended the Town’s offices and asked CEO John Giorgi how to ‘get rid of’ the two of the Town’s employees that attended the JDAP meeting.
- 59. The Town’s employees paint a different picture, alleging that one particular employee ‘was called into John’s office and she was walked out that night’ because she had provided advice to the Mayor that she was not happy with.
- 64. In summary, they gave the following evidence:
 - a. The Mayor requires staff to keep a log of contact between planning staff and developers, then uses that log to criticise staff and accuse staff of collusion if they discuss proposals with developers
 - b. The Mayor and Councillor Timmermanis criticise staff members in public and are always trying to find fault with staff members.
 - c. Council gets involved in tender matters, such as changing tender criteria and directing staff to contact particular contractors, hindering staff from following appropriate processes.
 - d. Legal advice obtained by the Mayor is not always provided to other elected members.
 - e. The working environment has negatively affected the ability of the Town to recruit staff and backfill acting positions.

(b) No.

(c)–(d) No.

(d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.

(e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6481. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “3. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the workplace culture at the Town is free from intimidation of employees and undue pressure on employees. In particular a) Employees of the Town have reported criticism and belittling of employees by the Mayor;”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(a) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(a) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
 - (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
 - (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and

- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to Finding 2 of the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge and paragraphs 69–73.

Finding 02: The Town’s employees’ have been unable to properly perform their functions because of undue pressure and fear of consequences.

69. For example, a recent Facebook exchange between Mayor Shannon, Councillor Timmermanis and a Town employee raised questions about the appropriateness of the interaction between the elected members and the employee.

70. The exchange commenced after Mayor Shannon posted a link to a consultation on the design of new change rooms for Alderbury Sports Ground and made the following comment:

“The Town has been paying \$1.2M in salaries per month for 90% of its staff who have been working from home but have had limited access to email so work from home is difficult – with about \$400k paid to staff who are employed at closed facilities – in my humble opinion stone cladding and a Hamptons façade would make a bigger contribution to ratepayers over a longer time for a modest increase in price.”

71. An employee posted a comment detailing the work staff had been doing during the period when facilities were closed as a result of COVID pandemic restrictions.

72. Cr Timmermanis then posted a question as to whether there were statistics to support the employee’s statements about the work being undertaken. Cr Timmermanis then posted the following comment:

“I get the Facebook feeds...they always become noticeably more active following queries about the need to look at making appropriate resource adjustments. Would be nice to get some information about the actual engagement with the activity rather than the usual and very predictable platitudes”.

73. When the employee advised Cr Timmermanis that staff were keeping statistics, Cr Timmermanis stated *“Good.... I’ll ask for them”.*

I table copies of this exchange. [See tabled paper no [4016](#).]

I also refer to the Record of Interview of Mr John Giorgi and Authorised Persons, Wednesday 4 March 2020 and the following statements:

MR GIORGI: I think Rob Bradley – Councillor Bradley is an eccentric sort of person and I think he came in to my office and flippantly, and I took it to be flippantly. How do we get rid of planning officers,” or, “those planning officers,” or words to that effect and I said, “Rob, it doesn’t work like that.” I said, “You can’t shoot the messenger.” Now, I think he was – I think he made a flippant comment. Okay.

- (b) No.
 (c)–(d) No.
 (d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.
 (e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6482. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “2. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the working environment and relationship between Council, the CEO and the employees of the Town enables the CEO and employees to carry out their functions without inappropriate involvement or interference by councillors. In particular c) employees of the Town have reported that they are not able to properly perform their functions and provide professional advice in relation to the assessment of planning applications because of interference by the Mayor.”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
 (i) (2)(c) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
 (i) (2)(c) above;

- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
 - (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
 - (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge paragraphs 54 and 55.
 - 54. The Town’s employees have expressed fear about providing frank advice to the Town, and in particular the Mayor around planning matters.
 - 55. For example, on 6 February 2020, several employees and the Mayor attended a Joint Development Assessment Panel (JDAP) meeting. One of the Town’s employees was asked to provide information at the meeting that Mayor Shannon became unhappy with, and the Mayor told another employee to ‘shut her up’.
- (b) No.
- (c)–(d) No.
- (d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.
- (e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6483. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “3. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the workplace culture at the Town is free from intimidation of employees and undue pressure on employees. In particular b) The conduct of the Mayor towards the Town’s employees led to the CEO telling the Mayor that if her conduct continued, he would report it to WorkSafe;”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(b) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(b) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
 - (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
 - (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to paragraph 67 of the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge:
 - 67. In relation to the Mayor’s relationship with the administration staff, CEO John Giorgi reported:
 - a. There is a perception that you don’t cross the Mayor because she is very quick to criticise.
 - b. He has told staff to be careful and not give the Mayor an opportunity to find fault.
 - c. He has told the Mayor to back off, or he will report the situation to Worksafe.

I also refer to the Record of Interview of Mr John Giorgi and Authorised Persons, Wednesday 4 March 2020 and the following statements:

MR GIORGI: It's a difficult one to answer. I don't like working in an adversarial environment and I've said on more than one occasion, "Keri, the staff don't come in to do," excuse my language, "a shit job. If they make a mistake, they're human nature. If they make a mistake then e look at it and try and learn from it." Unfortunately, the mayor has got this personality if she doesn't like you, she denigrates the person and whether it's community development or the quarry amphitheatre – there's a person there who's in her eighties (indistinct) has complained about every staff member, to which just recently I sent this person a letter saying, "You're bullying and harassing my staff," and I said, you know, and I know she goes to the mayor and the mayor comes in and berates me or whatever and tries to make an issue of it.

And I said, "The last time that came up," I said, "Keri, if you continue with this, I will not only report it to WorkSafe, I'll do it myself. You've got to back off."

- (b) No.
- (c)–(d) No.
- (d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.
- (e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6484. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write “3. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the workplace culture at the Town is free from intimidation of employees and undue pressure on employees. In particular c) directors and managers of the Town have reported that the CEO told them that if they provided information to the inquiry authorised by the CEO of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries under Division 1 of Part 8 of the Act ‘for the wrong reasons’ then these people may ‘suffer the consequences’;”, and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(c) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(c) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the CEO and the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the CEO, the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
 - (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
 - (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to Finding 3 and paragraphs 50 and 80–85 of the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge:

Finding 03: The CEO’s comments could be construed as intimidating to any employees that provided or wanted to provide information to the Inquiry.

50. Employees stated:

- a. the Mayor acts as if the she is the CEO and that CEO John Giorgi reacts to all the Mayor’s requests;
- b. the poor culture was in part due to the ongoing Authorised Inquiry, expressing a deep fear of losing their jobs if they provided any information to the Authorised Persons. The employees felt this is what had happened to previous staff
- c. the culture at the town had become increasingly worse since the appointment of CEO John Giorgi, in part because he does not stand up to the Mayor.

80. On 6 March 2020, CEO John Giorgi held a management meeting with the Town's Directors and Managers stating if he finds out anyone from the Town has provided information to the department 'for the wrong reasons', there would be serious consequences.
81. Authorised Persons asked the employees if the CEO stated what those consequences would be. CEO John Giorgi did not say what the consequences would be, however the staff took it to mean their employment would be at risk. Staff reported the meeting as 'threatening'.
82. Draft meeting minutes stated: *It appears that information from within the Town is being provided to the AI [Authorised Inquiry] and so long as this is being done for the right reasons, the CEO is comfortable with this. If information is being provided for the wrong reasons, then these people will suffer the consequences.*
83. The draft meeting minutes were slightly amended on request of the CEO John Giorgi to state: *CEO advised that it appears that information from within the Town is being provided to the AI and so long as this is being done for the 'right reasons', the CEO is comfortable with this. If information is being provided for the 'wrong reasons', then these people may suffer the consequences.*
84. On 7 March 2020, CEO John Giorgi summonsed various staff to his office and questioned them about whether they had been interviewed by the department.
85. Warning staff not to provide information to the department for the 'wrong reasons' could have intimidated employees and may have hindered Authorised Persons from undertaking their inquiry functions.

(b) No.

(c)–(d) No.

(d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.

(e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6485. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write "3. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the workplace culture at the Town is free from intimidation of employees and undue pressure on employees. In particular e) Employees of the Town have reported a perception that their employment will be jeopardised if they make mistakes, provide advice to the Council which does not accord with the views of Council members, or make decisions that Council members disagree with.", and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
- (i) (3)(e) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
- (i) (3)(e) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;
- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
- (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
- (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge Finding 2 and paragraphs 59–66:

Finding 02: The Town's employees' have been unable to properly perform their functions because of undue pressure and fear of consequences.

59. The Town's employees paint a different picture, alleging that one particular employee 'was called into John's office and she was walked out that night' because she had provided advice to the Mayor that she was not happy with.

60. The employees also stated that the employment contracts of particular employees were regularly mentioned. The Mayor had asked to view the contract of one particular employee with a view to ending the contract, and the CEO regularly made comments that gave the employees the impression their employment was in jeopardy.
61. Comments allegedly made by the CEO included:
- a. *You're in the bad books this week, you better watch your back.*
 - b. *She's on to you.*
 - c. *Be careful, make sure you do your job properly.*
62. Information was also provided by the Town's employees regarding their lack of confidence and capacity to undertake their functions because of undue pressure and fear of consequences.
63. During their interviews, the Town's employees gave general observations of the working relationship between the Mayor, elected members and administration staff.
64. In summary, they gave the following evidence:
- a. The Mayor requires staff to keep a log of contact between planning staff and developers, then uses that log to criticise staff and accuse staff of collusion if they discuss proposals with developers
 - b. The Mayor and Councillor Timmermanis criticise staff members in public and are always trying to find fault with staff members.
 - c. Council gets involved in tender matters, such as changing tender criteria and directing staff to contact particular contractors, hindering staff from following appropriate processes.
 - d. Legal advice obtained by the Mayor is not always provided to other elected members.
 - e. The working environment has negatively affected the ability of the Town to recruit staff and backfill acting positions.
65. All the employees stated they did not feel supported by the CEO and that they had not, or would not, make complaints about anything because they felt they would be targeted and lose their jobs.
66. Specific comments included:
- a. *"So it's just a horrible environment. Nobody feels safe in there. Everyone feels as if their job could be taken away from them at any minute."*
 - b. *"..working with the Mayor can be very stressful, very demanding. I feel there is too much interference in the role... and some of the behaviour is inappropriate."*

(b) No.

(c)–(d) No.

(d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.

(e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6486. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, in which you write "3. I suspect that the Council has failed to ensure that the workplace culture at the Town is free from intimidation of employees and undue pressure on employees. In particular d) the working environment at the Town has negatively affected the Town's ability to recruit employees, including employees to fill senior executive positions and backfill positions when employees are on leave or acting opportunities are available;", and I ask:

- (a) Without disclosing the author of any evidence you received, how many witnesses provided evidence to you, and on what date(s), in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(d) above;
- (b) Was any evidence received which was provided on behalf of an organisation(s)? If yes, what organisation and on what dates(s) in relation to:
 - (i) (3)(d) above;
- (c) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you notify the Town of Cambridge Council that you had received this evidence, and if yes, when did you notify them;

- (d) Prior to issuing the Show Cause Notice on 26 May 2020, did you provide an opportunity for the Mayor and/or Councillors of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received:
- (i) If yes, who did you receive responses from and on what date(s); and
- (ii) If you are unable to provide names for (i) above, how many Councillors did you receive a response from which directly related to the evidence you received; and
- (e) If no to (d), how was procedural fairness provided to the Mayor and Council of the Town of Cambridge to respond to the evidence you received?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge part 6.1 and paragraphs 230–239.
230. On commencement of the Inquiry in April 2018, senior administration staff was as follows:
- a. Mr Jason Buckley, CEO
 - b. Mr Chris Colyer, Director of Infrastructure
 - c. Ms Marlaine Lavery, Director of Planning and Development
 - d. Mr Jason Lyons, Director Corporate and Strategic
 - e. Mr Cam Robbins, Director Community Development
 - f. Mr Brett Jackson, Director of Projects
231. On 9 April 2018, CEO Mr Jason Buckley’s employment was suspended and on 10 April 2018 Mr Jason Lyon was appointed the acting CEO.
232. On 8 June 2018, council appointed Mr John Giorgi as Acting Chief Executive Officer, and appointed him permanently to the role on 15 May 2019.
233. On 30 June 2018, Mr Brett Jackson resigned from his position at the Town.
234. On 27 July 2018, Mr Jason Lyon resigned from his position at the Town.
235. On 30 November 2018, Mr Chris Colyer resigned and Mr Michael Hayward was employed into the role on 21 January 2019.
236. On 12 February 2019, a new administrative organisational structure was adopted at a Special Council Meeting, abolishing the Director of Projects position and amalgamating or restructuring other roles.
237. On 10 June 2019, Mr Michael Hayward resigned from the Town and Mr Peter Maloney acted in the role of Director of Infrastructure and Works and until the employment of Mr Kelton Hincks on 4 February 2020.
238. In the council minutes for the 30 April 2019 council meeting, it was reported that from the time John Giorgi was appointed Acting CEO to the time of the meeting, 27 staff had voluntarily resigned, and nine administration staff had been made redundant.
239. During his voluntary record of interview, CEO John Giorgi said the turnover of staff at the Town of Cambridge was much more than he had experienced in his executive career to date.

I also refer to the Record of Interview of Mr John Giorgi and Authorised Persons, Wednesday 4 March 2020 and the following statements:

MR GIORGI: When it went to council, it was a nine/nil vote, but the mayor spoke against him because she wanted to clean everyone out. That was what she wanted. Now, unfortunately, [name] – he’s a sensitive sort of a guy and I said, “[name],” as I said to you before, “I could have picked anyone else, easy for me, come in, move on.” The mayor probably wouldn’t be happy after they muck up or something, I don’t know, but she was not happy that I stood up to her and I said, “Keri, I pick the staff,” and I picked him for a whole range of reasons; (1) is the corporate knowledge; and (2) his work ethic and so forth. I said, “I tried him out for 12 months.”

Now, with the planning director, I don’t believe that at times they read the politics. They take this approach that, “I’m the professional planner and that’s my recommendation. Take it or leave it.” Now – to which I’ve said to them, “You’ve got to administer your planning requirements and make your reports to your professional ability, but if you’re going that way and the council is going that way, we are going to have problems,” and that’s where we’re at at the moment with the planning, you know, a la the SAT matters and so forth. Now, the planning situation is a mess. A lot of it is interpretation.

- (b) No.
- (c)–(d) No.
- (d) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.
- (e) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6477.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY

6487. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Minister's answer to Question on Notice 6287 in which he advised that the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries does not record specific costs for individual inquiries, and I ask:

- (a) Can the Minister explain this answer given s8.15A of the *Local Government Act 1995* provides that a local government may have to meet inquiry costs which would make it a necessity for the Department to keep a record of the resources spent on any inquiry?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) There are 2 separate types of Inquiries allowed under the Act:

Authorised Inquiry:

Authorised by the Director General and undertaken by Authorised Officers from within the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. These are considered core activities for the Department and as such they are not costed.

There are extraordinary situations where the Department may contract an external technical expert and the cost of this engagement will be recovered.

Panel Inquiry:

These are conducted through the contracted engagement of external personnel. The Act allows for the Minister to order the recovery of costs where there are adverse findings.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY

6488. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Department of Local Government's Authorised Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge, and I ask:

- (a) When will the Minister table the report of the Inquiry?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) The Town of Cambridge Authorised Inquiry report was tabled on 18 November 2020. [See tabled paper no [4001](#).]

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY

6489. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Department of Local Government's Authorised Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge, and I ask:

- (a) As at 13 October 2020, how much has the Inquiry cost; and
- (b) Will the Minister seek to recover the cost of the Inquiry from the Town?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a)–(b) Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 6287.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6490. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the injunction in the Supreme Court issued by the Town of Cambridge Council against the Minister's Show Cause Notice of suspension, and I ask:

- (a) What was the total cost to the government of the Supreme Court action between the government and the Town of Cambridge; and
- (b) Will the government repay the Town of Cambridge for the costs the Town incurred through the Supreme Court action:
 - (i) If yes to (b), how much will the Town of Cambridge be repaid; and
 - (ii) If no to (b), why not?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) Undertaking Authorised Inquiries and providing requested legal advice is core business for both the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries and the State Solicitors Office respectively, as such total costs are not tracked.

- (b) Yes – The Supreme Court has ordered the Attorney General (as Intervener) to pay the Town of Cambridge’s legal costs.
- (i) \$180,000 (excl. GST) for legal costs and disbursements of \$3,667 (excl. GST).
- (ii) Not applicable.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6491. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Minister’s comments that he maintains his “concerns in regard to the Town of Cambridge,” and I ask:

- (a) How does the Minister justify his comments given the Supreme Court Justice’s comment that the Minister’s “substantive concerns arise out of the alleged conduct of the Mayor and Mr Giorgi, with no identified connection to any failure by the Council in its capacity as the governing body of the Town”;
- (b) What are the Minister’s concerns for the community and employees of the Town of Cambridge; and
- (c) Is the Minister willing to meet with the Town’s Mayor and Councillors to discuss his concerns with them?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) I refer to part 5.1 of the Report of the Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge.
- (b) In accordance with section 5.40(e) of the Act, the Town has a duty to provide the staff with safe and healthy working conditions. The town has failed to do so and the Authorised Persons have referred these matters to WorkSafe and the Public Sector Commission for independent investigation.

I draw the Members attention to paragraph 52 of the Report which illustrates these concerns:

“During a voluntary interview, CEO John Giorgi stated he believes staff need to toughen up, and if they ‘can’t take the heat, they should look elsewhere’.”

I also draw the Members attention to part 6.1 of the Report and paragraphs 230–239 and the high rate of staff turnover. I am also aware the Director of Planning and Development has ceased employment with the Town following the conclusion of the Authorised Inquiry.

230. On commencement of the Inquiry in April 2018, senior administration staff was as follows:
- a. Mr Jason Buckley, CEO
 - b. Mr Chris Colyer, Director of Infrastructure
 - c. Ms Marlaine Lavery, Director of Planning and Development
 - d. Mr Jason Lyons, Director Corporate and Strategic
 - e. Mr Cam Robbins, Director Community Development
 - f. Mr Brett Jackson, Director of Projects
231. On 9 April 2018, CEO Mr Jason Buckley’s employment was suspended and on 10 April 2018 Mr Jason Lyon was appointed the acting CEO.
232. On 8 June 2018, council appointed Mr John Giorgi as Acting Chief Executive Officer, and appointed him permanently to the role on 15 May 2019.
233. On 30 June 2018, Mr Brett Jackson resigned from his position at the Town.
234. On 27 July 2018, Mr Jason Lyon resigned from his position at the Town.
235. On 30 November 2018, Mr Chris Colyer resigned and Mr Michael Hayward was employed into the role on 21 January 2019.
236. On 12 February 2019, a new administrative organisational structure was adopted at a Special Council Meeting, abolishing the Director of Projects position and amalgamating or restructuring other roles.
237. On 10 June 2019, Mr Michael Hayward resigned from the Town and Mr Peter Maloney acted in the role of Director of Infrastructure and Works and until the employment of Mr Kelton Hincks on 4 February 2020.
238. In the council minutes for the 30 April 2019 council meeting, it was reported that from the time John Giorgi was appointed Acting CEO to the time of the meeting, 27 staff had voluntarily resigned, and nine administration staff had been made redundant.
239. During his voluntary record of interview, CEO John Giorgi said the turnover of staff at the Town of Cambridge was much more than he had experienced in his executive career to date.
- (c) The Minister has met with the Town. The Town has 35 days to provide written advice to the Minister setting out the things it has done or proposes to do to give effect to the recommendations of the Authorised person.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6492. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Show Cause Notice delivered to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020 and I ask:

- (a) Has the Minister and his Department received emails and correspondence from ratepayers and staff regarding the council since 26 May 2020:
 - (i) If yes to (a), how many emails and correspondence were in support of the Council and/or council members;
 - (ii) If yes to (a), how many emails and correspondence complained about the council and/or council members; and
 - (iii) If yes to (a), how many complaints were received from different persons?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) Yes.
 - (i) 146
 - (ii) 41
 - (iii) 34 (7 duplicate complainants)

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — INQUIRY — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6493. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the report of the Authorised Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge being prepared by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, and I ask:

- (a) Who is preparing the Authorised Inquiry report;
- (b) Is the person preparing the report the same officer who recommended the issuance of the Show Cause Notice; and
- (c) If yes to (b), will the Minister be seeking an independent review of the preparation of the report:
 - (i) If no to (c), why not?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' (Department) Authorised Officers have prepared and reviewed the report.
- (b) A number of officers have been authorised for the Town of Cambridge Inquiry and those officers have completed and reviewed the report.
- (c) No. Part 8, division 1 of the *Local Government Act 1995* (WA) does not empower the Minister to seek an independent review of the preparation of a Report.

MENTAL HEALTH — SUICIDES — SOUTH WEST

6495. Ms L. Mettam to the Attorney General:

- (1) How many suicide deaths were confirmed in the South-West health region by a Western Australian coroner in:
 - (a) 2017;
 - (b) 2018;
 - (c) 2019; and
 - (d) 2020 to date?
- (2) Of the suicide deaths recorded how many were:
 - (a) Male;
 - (b) Female;
 - (c) aged less than 18 years of age;
 - (d) 18 to 25 years of age;
 - (e) 26 to 35 years of age;
 - (f) 36 to 45 years of age;
 - (g) 46 to 55 years of age;
 - (h) 56 to 65 years of age; and
 - (i) 66 years or older?

Mr J.R. Quigley replied:

- (1) Finalised suicide cases from Bunbury Coroners as follows.
- (a) 2017: 22
 - (b) 2018: 34
 - (c) 2019: 18
 - (d) 2020 to September 2020: 7
- (2) (a) Male: 55
- (b) Female: 26
 - (c)–(i) The Coroners Act 1996 does not allow for identifying information to be released in the public domain other than as prescribed for where inquests are conducted. As the age information requested within the Parliamentary Question includes ‘single death’ data, where the number of records is 5 or less within the age categories, coupled with the gender and location can risk identifying the individual and risk distress to family members; it is therefore unable to be provided.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6496. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the conclusion by Supreme Court Justice Tottle in *Town of Cambridge v The Hon David Templeman* that the “immediate suspension of the Council is so disproportionate to the limited nature of the Council’s suspected failure that it is not a form of intervention that a Minister acting reasonably would order,” and I ask:

- (a) What steps has the Minister taken to ensure that all future actions taken with regard to the Town of Cambridge will be both reasonable and proportionate?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) The Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries is undertaking a review of the Supreme Court decision and the Town of Cambridge Inquiry.

TOWN OF CAMBRIDGE — MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SHOW-CAUSE NOTICE

6497. Mr S.K. L’Estrange to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the Minister’s comments that he “acted on the best departmental and legal advice that was available” to him when delivering the Show Cause Notice to the Town of Cambridge on 26 May 2020, and I ask:

- (a) Will the Minister be taking action against the Departmental officers who recommended a show cause notice;
- (b) What steps will the Minister take to ensure other local governments are adequately protected from the use of this power; and
- (c) Would the Minister support an independent investigation by the Ombudsman into the Department’s handling of the Show Cause Notice and continuing Authorised Inquiry into the Town of Cambridge?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) No, that would be inappropriate and I refer the Member to section 105 and section 106 of the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* (WA).
 - (b) The premise of this question is incorrect.
I disagree with the Members assertion that a show-cause notice is a misuse of the Ministers powers under the *Local Government Act 1995* (WA).
 - (c) The Ombudsman may initiate an investigation of its own volition and it is not at the Ministers discretion.
-

