

APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2016–17) BILL 2016

Third Reading

Resumed from 15 June.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza): Before I give the call to the member for Armadale, I remind members that the rules pertaining to the scope of debate for the third reading of the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill 2016 are the same as those for other bills; namely, debate is to be confined only to those items found in the bill.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [10.29 am]: Thank you very much, Mr Acting Speaker. It is obvious that my comments will be within the confines of this debate. I refer to page 727 of volume 2 of the *Budget Statements* regarding widening Armadale Road. Yesterday I mentioned the state government’s position of not committing to the bridge and I mentioned the views of the current federal candidate for the seat of Burt, who said, “I’m waiting to hear from residents about whether they see that putting an extra lane on the freeway or building a bridge has priority.” Actually, we need both. We need a dual carriageway, which I believe the government committed to during the Canning by-election campaign. However, we cannot build just the dual carriageway and not develop the bridge because that would only increase congestion. He said he wanted to hear from the residents but he had not heard and that the matter had not come up in conversation with the residents. Let me tell the Treasurer and anyone else in the Liberal Party about residents’ concerns. I have here letters published in the *Armadale Examiner* of 9 June 2016. One letter states —

Re ‘O’Sullivan unconvinced bridge is necessary’... I have been watching the progress of this key piece of infrastructure closely and was delighted to hear the Labor Party recently announce funding for the bridge as part of its election campaign.

I believe the North Lake Road Bridge is the other major piece to the puzzle that Cockburn Central and Armadale Road freeway entry and exits.

As outlined in your article it was disappointing to read that Liberal candidate Matt O’Sullivan would not commit funding to the project based on little feedback received from the community.

Based on that point alone I thought it was imperative that I write to you and voice my support behind the North Lake Road Bridge project as this is a concern of the local community and Mr O’Sullivan should be made aware of this fact given he is requesting to seek evidence from residents.

That is from a resident in Harrisdale.

The Minister for Corrective Services stated in an interjection to me previously that this bridge is incredibly important to his electorate and to “watch this space”. We are watching this space and nothing is happening. Another letter from Graeme Hill, the owner of the Dôme cafes in Armadale and Kelmcott, states —

Re ‘O’Sullivan unconvinced bridge is necessary’, ... has Matt driven that road between 6.30am and 9am and 3.30pm and 6pm?

If he has then I wouldn’t need to explain the disaster that this road is during these peak hours.

I travel this road every day and will always try to avoid these times to travel.

Heading east during these time it is not usual to be stopped as far back as Tony Ale on Hammond Road.

Heading west it is usual to come to a stand still by Liddelow Road.

When Armadale Road gets widened to two lanes and the entry to the freeway is not done then all we are doing is giving everyone faster access to the car park that the freeway entries have become.

It is imperative that the North Lake Bridge go ahead as this will give thousands of commuters an alternative route and will go some way towards relieving the road planning disaster in the Cockburn Central area.

This congestion will only worsen when the Cockburn ARC opens early next year. businesses wishing to settle in the fast growing City of Armadale will largely depend on having reliable access to the freeway and train station at Cockburn.

Let’s not handcuff Armadale and let’s allow Armadale residents to enjoy better access to employment opportunities and lifestyle by having better access to the freeway.

In another letter, Elton Swarts, the owner of WA Business News, writes —

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Personally I have some respect for Matt O’Sullivan wanting to be assured that the bridge is necessary ...

Due process is good.

However, I’m concerned when he waits for residents to tell him they need it.

Progressive cities such as Singapore don’t wait for residents to say what they want in terms of infrastructure, they have multi-year plans.

I’m concerned that we seem to be moving more and more to poll based decision process and less to strategic planning.

On a strategic basis, what is the sense of ensuring Armadale Road connects well with Cockburn, dual lanes all the way, only to have a bottle neck at Cockburn Central.

It is already slow getting over the Kwinana Freeway bridge near Cockburn Central.

East–west links are really important for the south east corridor.

To me it feels that investing in a dual lane Armadale Road without the bridge is like a farmer buying a three legged sheep dog.

This is a strategic long-term issue for both Cockburn and Armadale.

It is incredibly disappointing that in its budget, this government committed only to assisting with the dual carriageway along Armadale Road and provided no commitment to the North Lake Road bridge, which is a necessary part of this project. It will probably be wasting money to commit to funding the dual carriageway and not the North Lake Road bridge. Due to the advocacy of the federal Labor candidate for Burt, Matt Keogh, the federal government has committed to both, but, unfortunately, this state government and the Liberal candidate for Burt do not feel it is necessary. It is incredibly disappointing and shows a complete lack of vision and long-term planning. It shows us that this government’s policies are in total disarray when it comes to properly funding major infrastructure projects in the metropolitan area. This dual carriageway and the North Lake Road bridge are necessary not just for the enjoyment of residents but also for business opportunities and the proper functioning of industry. It is absurd that the government is spending \$2 billion on a project that does not have support from any reputed town planner or transport expert—none.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Infrastructure Australia.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Does it support the Perth Freight Link in its current form? Is the Treasurer going to table that information?

Dr M.D. Nahan: It’s the highest-rated project by Infrastructure Australia.

Mr M. McGowan: It was the only project put in.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It was the only project put in.

Dr M.D. Nahan: It is the highest-rated project in Australia.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The point is that it is absurd that the government is spending so much money on a project that will not even go to the port and once again it will do the same thing on Armadale Road. The government wants to develop a dual carriageway on Armadale Road, which will come to a dead end, as Graeme Hill, the owner of Armadale and Kelmscott Dôme cafes stated. It will allow people to more quickly get to a car park. Why put funding into a dual carriageway when it will lead into a bottleneck? It is the government’s inability to properly fund the project. We know it is not committing to the project—because it has very badly mucked up the state’s finances. It does not matter what the Treasurer says; he cannot stand there with a straight face and say he has managed the economy well. He cannot do that. He may be able to do everything else and talk about meetings he has had or not had but he is unable —

Mr M. McGowan: He doesn’t give enough detail on those.

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is true. He is unable to stand here with any conviction and say that he has managed the economy well, because he has not. Despite that, he wants to put more money into the Perth Freight Link project, which is an absolute waste of time and is supporting the Liberal Party’s commitment to widening the Armadale Road, but will not commit funding —

Dr M.D. Nahan: Do you support that?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Federal Labor has already committed to the North Lake Road bridge.

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Dr M.D. Nahan: Will federal Labor fund it?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Of course. Did he not see the commitment?

Dr M.D. Nahan: Why are you talking about our issue? If federal Labor wants to fund it, we will receive the money from it.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Only if we win the election.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Fair enough. That's an issue for federal Labor.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I am not asking for an interjection.

Dr M.D. Nahan: You did.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, minister.

Dr A.D. BUTI: If he was making sense, I would, but he is not.

The issue is that federal Labor has committed to funding North Lake Road bridge. The state Liberal government has not committed to funding that at all, nor has the federal Liberal government. That is the issue. At the moment we have a federal Liberal government and a state Liberal government and neither of them have committed to funding the North Lake Road bridge. Also, unlike the Labor candidate for Burt, Matt Keogh, the federal Liberal candidate for Burt does not see it as a priority and he says that he does not have evidence of residents seeing it as a priority. I have just read a selection of letters in the *Armadale Examiner*. No letters in the *Armadale Examiner* supported the Liberal Party's position on this bridge. It is an incredibly important piece of infrastructure.

Closer to home in the Armadale region we have the issue of Denny Avenue. I refer to the following statement at page 728 of the budget papers, under "Significant Issues Impacting the Agency" —

Traffic congestion is an issue for Government, Main Roads and the broader community that needs to be appropriately managed to ensure that the transport network supports efficiency and productivity.

Obviously, the lack of funding for North Lake Road bridge will not help solve that problem. I have had a long saga with the Minister for Transport about the Denny Avenue project. This project goes back a long way. In 2001, the newly elected Labor government created the Armadale Redevelopment Authority and we had the development of the Kelmscott town centre. Denny Avenue became an important issue at that time. Alannah MacTiernan, the former Labor Minister for Transport, believed that proper planning needed to take place to address that issue. The solution that was agreed to at the time by Main Roads, the community reference group, the local government and the Armadale Redevelopment Authority was to construct a rail underpass at Davis Road, which is about 200 metres toward Armadale from Denny Avenue. That project was progressed over a number of years, with proper community consultation. However, with the change of government in 2008, that project went off the radar.

The late Don Randall, the former federal member for Canning, was very committed to this project. We both wrote to Dean Nalder, the Minister for Transport, a number of times, asking him to meet with us but the minister refused to meet with us. The minister said, in response to a grievance that I raised with him some time ago, that he did not want to meet us at Denny Road because he did not want to politicise the issue. However, the minister did meet with the then Liberal federal candidate for Canning, Andrew Hastie, during the Canning by-election. The minister would not meet with the representatives of federal Parliament and state Parliament, the late Don Randall and me, because he did not want to politicise the issue, but he was happy to have a photo opportunity with Andrew Hastie. I refer to an article in the *Armadale Examiner*, which states —

Transport Minister Dean Nalder said the state government should have some ideas about how to address traffic issues at Denny Avenue, Kelmscott, in the next few months but watered down the possibility of a grade separation.

What are those ideas? I have not heard of those ideas. We have heard nothing from the transport minister. No funding has been allocated in the budget to try to solve the issue at Denny Avenue. Don Randall was on this issue all the time. Both he and I wrote a number of letters to the Minister for Transport. The way this Minister for Transport operates is that he will get up in Parliament in response to Dorothy Dixers and talk about how he has visited the electorate of the member for Swan Hills or the electorate of the member for Forrestfield. The minister seems to go only to the electorates of sitting Liberal members. The Minister for Transport is one of the most political transport ministers we have ever had. He determines priorities according to whether they will be of political advantage to his party. Alannah MacTiernan as transport minister, and even Troy Buswell when he was transport minister, talked to me a number of times about the issues in Armadale. Hon Tuck Waldron, the former Minister for Sport and Recreation, came out and visited me in my electorate, along with some community

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groups. However, the Minister for Transport will not do that. The minister did come to Denny Avenue on one occasion—not during the election period—and he did not let me know until about one minute before he got there. That is an absolute disgrace.

Mr W.J. Johnston: He does not get there because he's in Shenton Park!

Dr A.D. BUTI: True! That might be the case.

Mr D.A. Templeman: All roads lead to Shenton Park!

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes. I am sure that if a grade separation was needed at Shenton Park, that would happen very quickly.

Ms R. Saffioti: Especially if the member for Forrestfield was there!

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes!

The point is that anyone with any commonsense would understand that Denny Avenue is a bottleneck. It is a major problem. There are now three sets of traffic lights in the space of 150 or 200 metres, there is a railway crossing, and there is a train station about 200 metres from the railway crossing. Members do not need to listen to what I have to say about the problems with Denny Avenue. They can listen to the residents. Mr O'Sullivan might also want to listen to the residents. I refer to another letter in the *Armadale Examiner*. The letter is headed "Worst in the world", and it states —

Re Denny Avenue ... we moved from Roleystone to Camillo in January after many wonderful years of driving quite freely and unhindered all around the Kelmscott and Armadale areas.

Since the move and the creation of what must be one of the worst road traffic controls I have ever come across in the world, and we have lived in many parts, we find our days in Kelmscott lessening and our money spent in the businesses of that side very rare.

The frustration that overcomes me when I head towards the lights on Railway Avenue, only for them to turn red, the barriers go down and you know your five-minute trip is now going to take nearly 20.

And every one of the powers that be that orchestrated this catastrophic road system knew this is what would happen, what fool wouldn't and they did it anyway. Really.

A waste of money, a lack of intelligence and ingenuity and a stressor that all of us residing in this area can do without.

When the accidents still flow due to road rage frustrations, who will claim responsibility for that?

It's madness.

Another letter, headed "What a mess", states —

I travel to Thornlie twice a week and will not use Denny Avenue.

I cross at Gosnells and find the Albany Highway lights quicker and safer.

Why on earth Spud Shed was allowed to build there without proper thought to traffic flow I don't understand.

It's a mess.

I must say that Spud Shed is very supportive of the need for a grade separation at Denny Avenue. The minister has said that he has been to Denny Avenue and he does not believe there is a problem. That is absurd. As the member for West Swan would know, Kelmscott High School is on the west side of the railway line. That is a very large school, with up to 1 600 students. A number of those students come from the Kelmscott hills, Roleystone and Karragullen et cetera. They have to cross Denny Avenue every day. It is a major bottleneck. I try my best not to have to cross that road. Denny Avenue is an absolute mess, and this government has refused time and again to put it on its list of priorities for infrastructure development. As I have said, the Minister for Transport refused to meet with both the federal member and the state member of Parliament. That is absolutely appalling. What is even more appalling is that the minister was prepared to meet with the Liberal candidate—not a member of Parliament, but the Liberal candidate—in the Canning by-election for a photo opportunity. The only commitment the minister has been prepared to make is to say that he has some ideas about how to address the traffic issues on Denny Avenue. I am not sure what those ideas are. We are still waiting to hear about that.

The state and federal Liberal governments have been an absolute disgrace when it comes to road and rail infrastructure in the Armadale region. The problem of North Lake bridge is not related just to the electorate of

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Armadale. As the Minister for Corrective Services has stated, it is having a major effect in his electorate. People are seeking to avoid Armadale Road by going along Nicholson Road. I am sure the member for Cannington has been affected by this, because it is causing increased traffic in his electorate.

Mr W.J. Johnston: On Nicholson Road, yes.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The Nicholson–Armadale Road intersection is one of the worst when it comes to the number of accidents. It is absolutely appalling that this government, in cahoots with the federal Liberal government and the Liberal candidate for Burt, failed to realise the importance of addressing these important issues. Thank goodness we have a federal Labor candidate for Burt and a federal Labor Party that is committed to addressing these priorities from a social and economic perspective for the residents in the south east corridor of Perth. No manner of interjections from the Treasurer will change the fact that this state government has failed the residents of the south east corridor and, in many respects, even further west because, of course, this affects all those suburbs leading towards the freeway and even those on the other side of the freeway. The Cockburn and Armadale councils are working together on this issue because it is a no-brainer that it is important to the proper functioning of the Cockburn and Armadale local government authorities. It is an important issue, but we have not received a commitment from the government on it. It is just burying its head in the sand about the importance of this issue.

I will now address the issue of hospital funding in my electorate. In the budget papers the government refers to a commitment in the forward estimates to funding the redevelopment of the Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital. Initially, the funding was for next year, but I think it is now put out to 2019–20 or 2020–21. I do not have the actual page in front of me. Once again, the project has been put out. Every year in the last two or three years, the time frame for redevelopment of the Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital has increased. This is the only public hospital in the south east corridor between Pinjarra and Bentley. We know what this government thinks about the Bentley Hospital—it keeps trying to close down services. We have Royal Perth Hospital, which the government does not have any real interest in anymore, and Bentley Hospital, from which it continues to try to cut services. Due to the advocacy of the members for Cannington and Victoria Park and the opposition health spokesperson, the government had to change its mind on doing that a few times. May I warn, if need be, or give some advice to the member for Cannington: keep a careful watch on Bentley Hospital, because I am sure the government will try to reduce services anytime it possibly can. It is appalling that this government has cut services at Bentley Hospital and that it continues to try to cut services.

When it comes to the Armadale hospital, which services a mammoth area, the government continues to delay redevelopment. The government may say people, “It’s okay, you can go to Fiona Stanley Hospital.” The problem is that people cannot get to Fiona Stanley Hospital, because the government has not committed to properly fund the arterial routes.

Dr M.D. Nahan: You need Roe 8.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Roe 8 will not help people coming from Armadale to get to Fiona Stanley. They are trying to come along Armadale Road over North Lake bridge—once Labor has built it. What has that got to do with Roe 8? Nothing! At the moment, Roe Highway goes over the freeway. What has that got to do with residents coming from Armadale along Armadale Road to try to get to Fiona Stanley Hospital? This Treasurer has no idea. He has no idea about which person he is backing. He has no idea about which version he should agree to. He has no idea about the state’s budget. He has no idea about his own professional history and the reputation that he built up, because he has come into this house and trashed his previous history. Whether members agree with him or not, when he was chief executive officer of the Institute of Public Affairs, they would have recognised his position. He is very dry on economics and Milton Friedman would have been his poster boy—I am sure he had a poster Milton Friedman in his room—and that is fine because everyone has different ideas and different ideologies, but he has come into this chamber and given up all that and he has not provided any philosophical rationale for that. The only rationale for that is that it gives him a ministerial office, a ministerial car and maybe a bit more gravitas in his dealings with the member for Forrestfield and the Minister for Transport on who will be the next Premier or Leader of the Liberal Party. The Treasurer has lost all credibility. The Treasurer’s credibility when it comes to economics is zero. The Treasurer has a PhD in economics, so he did know something about economics. The government’s position on committing to infrastructure in the Armadale region is a disgrace.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [10.54 am]: I wish to make a contribution to the third reading debate of the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill 2016 specifically in relation to policing and capital appropriations for the state closed-circuit television strategy infrastructure fund. I want to highlight to the house my increasing frustration about this government’s rhetoric on policing in Western Australia. On numerous occasions I have said in this place and indicated to the Minister for Police that the model that has been foisted upon Mandurah and the Peel region, which absorbed the then Peel police district into the south metropolitan police district to create

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the largest police district in the state that covers a huge number of people and a large number of local governments and, indeed, geographically a very large and diverse area of the state, is not working. It has not worked. It has been a failed process and a failed model and the minister now needs to ditch it. In relation to the Peel police area, we need to have our Peel police district returned as an entity in its own right, we need to have it resourced appropriately and we need to make sure that it is a government priority. The minister can no longer hide behind the model. We have had police and crime statistics showing massive problems in the Peel region with a variety of crimes. Also, only recently, we have seen domestic violence figures that show that the Peel region is in the top two. That is an appalling statistic.

On the weekend, on Saturday, we had another incident in the Smart Street Mall in Mandurah central, in the central business district, around one of our nightclubs. A fellow from Gwelup, with his mates and their girlfriends, was in Mandurah for a fiftieth birthday celebration and there was a situation in which he and his group, including some young women, was harassed and eventually set upon. He experienced appalling injuries, which included him having to receive treatment at Peel Health Campus. He had to have 15 staples in his head and knives pulled as a result. I want to table a photograph.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Member, you cannot table it, but you can lay it on the table.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I would like to lay on the table a photo of James Hobbs that appeared *The West Australian* showing the injuries he sustained.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: It is laid on the table until the end of the day.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Thank you. That experience and numerous others in the central business district highlight why this model is not working. I am not attacking the police in my district. I have absolute support for our new officer in charge, Steve Thompson. He and the men and women of the police service operating in Mandurah and the Peel region are remarkable and hardworking, and I have no complaint with them. But I do not believe that they are supported by a model that allows them to be as effective as they need to be and can be.

I want to highlight a letter that was received by the City of Mandurah from the Minister for Police, only as late as 31 May 2016, regarding the closed-circuit television capital project that is known as the state CCTV strategy infrastructure fund. The City of Mandurah applied under the \$5 million funding pool to the state CCTV strategy infrastructure fund for a project that was focused on providing updated and more effective CCTV camera surveillance equipment in the CBD of Mandurah, which of course includes Smart Street mall. I will quote from the City of Mandurah's letter to me received even as late as this morning, about this. The letter states —

The Project outline is;

6 x Replacement CCTV Cameras

8 x Additional CCTV Cameras (covering Smart Street Mall/Mandurah Terrace intersection through to Pinjarra Road as a priority area)

Optic Fibre, laid underground;

- **City of Mandurah to Smart Street Mall**
- **Smart Street Mall to Mewburn Centre**
- **Reading cinema to Ocean Marina**

Project officer costs

The optic fibre is key as the current system relies on wireless which has a high 'drop out' rate and has caused Police and the City frustrations. Optic fibre would remove this forever.

The City of Mandurah put in the application and this is the letter it got from the minister, with regard to this capital project. It states —

Dear Mr Newman —

Who is the CEO of the City of Mandurah —

I am writing to you regarding the Expression of Interest (EOI) submitted by the City of Mandurah in relation to the State CCTV Strategy Infrastructure Fund.

A considerable number of EOIs were received from local governments with over \$10 million in funding sought from the \$5 million funding pool. All EOI submissions were considered by an Assessment Panel in accordance with the criteria outlined in the State CCTV Strategy Infrastructure Fund Guidelines.

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Unfortunately, whilst your application was reviewed positively by the Assessment Panel, there is not currently sufficient funding available to immediately progress your application. As a result, your application has been 'Approved, pending available funding'.

The State CCTV Strategy Secretariat will now commence working with approved applicants to complete a formal Proposal of Works. It is expected that upon completion of the Proposal of Works phase some project costs may be materially lower than the indicative funding figures quoted in the original EOI submissions.

Should this be the case, then 'additional funding' will become available from the initial grant pool and will be redirected to projects on the standby list. The Secretariat will contact you should funding become available that will enable your project to proceed.

If you have any queries in relation to this grant, please contact the State CCTV Strategy Secretariat ...

That was signed by the Minister for Police, Liza Harvey. I do not know what more criteria the government needs than the experiences in central Mandurah over a long time regarding crime and safety and particularly the safety of people in our entertainment precinct. I do not know what else is required for this project to be seen as a priority and to receive funding from this capital investment fund. I am very concerned, and I would bet that all of the unsuccessful applications have been approved, pending available funding. I reckon that is what has happened, and I will ask that question to the minister, that of all those received, and all of the projects that were assessed, what is their status, and which were successful? I hope that we do not find in that list of those that were successful in those local government areas that they might correspond with Liberal-held seats. It would be very interesting if that were the case, and I will be checking that.

I want to tell members that this issue is important. It is important for the City of Mandurah's status as being seen as a safe place for people to come to and to enjoy the various facilities and activities in the central CBD. When we have front-page and high-profile media experiences, such as Mr Hobbs' on the weekend, it really puts into jeopardy the City of Mandurah's status as a safe place to visit and indeed to recreate and enjoy activities in the entertainment precinct. I want to applaud the City of Mandurah; I criticise the City of Mandurah when I believe it needs to be criticised, but I do not criticise it at this stage. The City of Mandurah is working and has been working for a long time on a whole range of projects including liquor accords and addressing the issue of safe taxi access for people leaving nightclubs, particularly in the early hours of the morning. It has done all of these things as a proactive effort, but now when it asks the Barnett government and puts a case forward, it is rejected, effectively because there are not enough funds. It demonstrates again that this government has not only the wrong priorities but also a total lack of understanding of what is required to ensure community safety throughout the state, and in my electorate of Mandurah.

I simply say this to the Minister for Police: given all the evidence, including the very savage attack in the central business district in Smart Street mall only last weekend and on top of a number of other ongoing issues in that central business district entertainment precinct over time, why was the City of Mandurah's application for upgrades and improvements to CCTV facilities in that area still overlooked? I hope it is not because politics has got in the way of this and it is not approved because it happens to be in my electorate. I hope the member for Dawesville will support me in the request for this money. I would like to see the Minister for Police reassess the City of Mandurah's application as a priority. I think it should be reassessed as a matter of priority, given this latest incident.

In the CBD we also have a whole range of other ongoing policing issues. The police superintendent for the south metropolitan area needs to be looking at a far greater and ongoing police presence in the CBD, particularly on weekends and during times when young people are out and about and need to be made to feel safe. It is not appropriate that people go to these entertainment precincts and they experience the stuff that Mr Hobbs and his group of people experienced last weekend, so I am pleading with the minister and the Treasurer to find, effectively, \$234 000. The federal Labor candidate Barry Winmar has already secured a \$100 000 commitment from the federal government towards the CCTV cameras, so \$100 000 is already committed federally. I hope that will be matched by the federal Liberal candidate and maybe it will, I do not know. However, this is a clear concern for the community in which I live for young people and families who want to ensure that the young people who go out at night to enjoy themselves, as they have a right to do, can come home safely and not end up at the Peel Health Campus with 16 staples in their head, like Mr Hobbs did on the weekend.

Mr R.F. Johnson: As a part-time resident of your honourable constituency, I wholeheartedly agree with what you are saying and what you are asking for. There is a prevalence of violence which is beginning to happen in Mandurah in the wrong places, and I support you 100 per cent in asking for more CCTV cameras.

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Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Thank you, member for Hillarys, because I know you have a place down there and you frequently visit there, and you, like me, want to see the place safe.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Absolutely.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is not just for people who live in Mandurah, or indeed in the region, but for people who come and visit.

Mr R.F. Johnson: Tourists.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, it is tourists. Mr Hobbs came down for a fiftieth birthday. He does not live in Mandurah, he is from Gwelup. He came down to celebrate a fiftieth birthday with his mates and girlfriends who were there. We would expect that when they go to a nightclub or any nightclub in that precinct, or any of the other facilities there—there is a couple of bars, a tavern and also some late-night eating places—that they would be safe. Why can we not do that? Minister for Police, I want to see this application reassessed immediately and urgently. I want to see the money that has been applied for by the City of Mandurah supported and indeed allocated, and, for goodness sake, get these things in place as soon as possible. Let us not have this elongated process that goes on.

The fact is that even if it were approved today, I wonder how quickly we could get them in. I would have thought that the surveillance cameras could be put in place relatively quickly. Why should people in Mandurah wait for such important infrastructure? The CBD is a policing hotspot. I honestly believe that if we still had the original Peel district policing model, autonomy within the region and the resources that those police men and women require, we would not see incidents like this, or if there was a sparking of incidents like this, the police would have the resources to immediately act. If the closed-circuit television resource that we are asking for were in place, we would know who these people are and we would have evidence. Understandably, the police probably have very little evidence apart from witness statements. They are appealing for witnesses on the night to come forward. If the CCTV camera infrastructure were in place, the police would probably be halfway towards solving the crime and locking up these mongrels who did this to Mr Hobbs and who terrorised his group who were visiting the nightclub for a birthday party. Do it minister! Get off your bum and look at this as a real issue because, I tell you what, the model is failing. The minister is failing the police men and women of this state because she is sitting on her hands.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro) [11.10 am]: I want to talk about capital expenditure that is actually absent from the budget inasmuch as there is an identified risk in budget paper No 3 of the daily average prison population in correctional facilities across the state. It is the third year in a row that budget paper No 3 has identified the extraordinary growth in the prison muster and the daily average prisoner population growth as a risk to the budget process to the extent that this year it confirms an additional recurrent expenditure totalling \$147 million provided to the budget. I know that that is recurrent and we are talking about the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill 2016, but it impacts on the capital. The question to be asked as a consequence of this warning that has been given every year for the last three years in budget paper No 3 is this: do we have enough accommodation within the correctional facilities across the state to house the incredible growth in the prison population that this government has created? Having lost control of law and order in Western Australia, we have seen nine consecutive months of double-digit growth in crime statistics across the metropolitan area. We have had nine consecutive months of growth in crime in Western Australia to April this year. It is clear confirmation that everything that the Barnett government has done in the field of law and order has failed. This is reinforced by the fact that we have record numbers of people in prison. One has to ask whether the right people are going into prison. One also has to ask whether our prisons are doing a good or a bad job of changing behaviour. According to the government, the whole idea behind incarcerating people is to send a message to change the behaviour of people and to warn them that the penalties have been extended and an increasing number of people are being put in prison. The argument is that if offenders are locked up, they will learn their lesson, they will come out and they will not reoffend. There is a problem with the theory in that practical experience on the ground confirms that it has failed. Something is wrong with the formula. My own theory is that the prisons have become crime universities.

Under the Barnett government, relatively minor offenders are being put in prison. To penalise them through the removal of their liberty has not been the last alternative or last option of law enforcement, and other interventions have not been tried, which might be more successful in changing their behaviour. The Barnett government, as a first priority, is putting people in prison. That sounds good and it sounds as though the government is being robust in its response to crime, but in reality someone at the early stages of their offending pathway, when they are most receptive and responsive to an intervention that would change their behaviour for the better, is being classified as a maximum-security prisoner. They are being stuck in a remand prison. Because they are at the start of their offending career and they have a short sentence—in all likelihood between six to 12 months—they get no intervention in prison. These offenders are receiving no rehabilitation in prison.

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A person with a sentence of between six and 12 months who is an addict or an abuser of substances or alcohol, or who has a mental illness or any other issue that has led them to offend, receives no rehabilitation while in prison to change their behaviour. They go to the back of the queue. In those circumstances, 64 per cent or 65 per cent of the people who go into prison come out having had no intervention in the prison system, with the exception of one: what they have received is an introduction to their next drug dealer, their next bikie gang member or a long-term criminal looking for someone to influence and take under their wing. We have taken someone who has otherwise been stupid, ignorant and selfish, and made an error and committed a relatively minor offence, and put them in close proximity with someone who is much better at being a criminal than they are.

Dr A.D. Buti: You need a PhD.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Within a short time they emerge from prison with the fastest PhD a person can get in Western Australia: a PhD in crime under the Barnett government. They will come out of the university of Hakea or the university of Bandyup and be more capable of reoffending than they were when they went in. The Barnett government has surrendered to the criminals having said there is nothing else that it can do than to lock them up in close proximity to serious criminals and make them more serious criminals themselves. The Barnett government has witnessed a growth in the prison muster and an increase in the rate of growth of the prison muster as a consequence, but it behoves the government to fund accommodation for those people. The university has to expand. It has more students so they must be accommodated. When we look back to determine whether there has been an adequate expansion of our prison system to accommodate these people, the answer is: I do not think so.

Having had the Department of Treasury warn us of the daily average prisoner population growth being a threat in the last three budgets, what has happened over the years? It is not as though the Barnett government has not wasted money on the prison system. As it has done in a number of other fields, it has done its best to waste capital expenditure in the prison system. When the Barnett government first took office, there was money to throw around at all manner of things. We did not have to worry about things according to the government because we were in the throes of the biggest revenue windfall from royalties in history. It was the biggest revenue bonanza in the history of Western Australia and probably any jurisdiction in Australia, and there was no thought for the future. The government threw hundreds of millions of dollars at things as wasteful as the prisons. I refer to the *Hansard* of 15 June 2010 when the Minister for Corrective Services, who also happened to be a bloke who had a bit to do with the budget, Hon Christian Porter, was trumpeting the planned capital works expenditure on prisons. He said —

... between May 2009 and June 2014 we intend to add 2 590 beds. That represents a capital infrastructure program of \$656 million.

An amount of \$656 million expenditure on more beds in prison was being trumpeted as a wonderful commitment and advance by the Barnett government way back in 2010. Later that year, on 19 October 2010, through a dorothy dixer in this place, the minister again took the opportunity to tell everyone how wonderfully accomplished the Barnett government is at wasting money in the prison system. Interestingly, the purveyor of the dorothy dixer, the person delivering the dorothy dixer, was the current Minister for Corrective Services. Hon Joe Francis was asked to present a question to the minister about how many additional facilities were being created in the prison system and Hon Christian Porter stood and said —

Obviously, when there is a shortfall between operational bed capacity and population, we have safety concerns, health concerns and management and administration concerns.

He then went on to say how wonderfully they had expanded the capacity of the prison system and that it now had an operational capacity of 5 107. He also went on to trumpet the fact that he was about to waste \$656 million of capital expenditure in the prison system.

We then leap forward a bit to 1 March 2012 when we had a new Minister for Corrective Services. Like so many portfolios under the Barnett government, this one tends to be handballed around quite regularly. At last count we have had four ministers over the years. This minister was Terry Redman. The then opposition spokesperson, Hon Fran Logan, asked a question about the amount of money being spent and the number of beds being created within the prison system. In response, Hon Terry Redman said —

We presently have 5 178 beds within our prison system, including work camps.

On 1 March 2012, we had 5 178 beds. The interesting thing is that there was a bit of a lull or a hiatus in the rate of growth of the prison muster; it went back to historical levels for a couple of years about a year and a half ago. The government must have been quite relieved because all its \$656 million worth of expenditure on expanding prison bed numbers may have looked like the number of beds would have crept just above the number of

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prisoners coming into the prison system; it might have just enough capacity. Sadly for the government, the crime university is far more effective than the government's ability to waste taxpayers' money on building more beds in the prison system. Remember that in March 2012, Hon Terry Redman said that there were 5 178 beds in the prison system. We could say that the government subsequently brought on the West Kimberley Regional Prison, but I think that may have been counted in those numbers. The government could anticipate that the Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison would come on and I think that accounts for net additional beds of 110. If we are being generous and we assume that West Kimberley and Eastern Goldfields were not in those numbers originally and we add them, we come to a rough figure of around 5 395 beds in our prison system, according to the government.

The problem, of course, is that the university is pumping out graduates far faster than the government can keep up with the creation of positions. Today the prison population is 6 289. It is close to 1 000 more than the capacity of the prison system, according to the ministers over the past few years. Having already spent \$656 million on a crime university, the government is now confronted with the challenge of where to find more accommodation for its new students. Part of the crime university system is that graduates regularly come back for further qualifications. The more we pump out of a system that is failing, the more they will reoffend at a higher rate and the more will come back into the prison system, the more victims of crime we will create and the more beds we will have to pay for. The question I am putting to the Treasurer today is: what is your plan, Treasurer? The last three years' budgets have all identified capacity within the prison system or the average daily prisoner population number as a risk to the budget. This year the government has already added \$147 million above and beyond the budget, but budget paper No 3 states —

Notwithstanding this substantial injection of additional funding, if prisoner growth continues to exceed forecasts, there is a risk that further funding may be required (including in 2015–16).

We may have to put in more than \$150 million recurrent above the budget. That would not be surprising because the recurrent budget in corrective services has blown out every year by 8.5 per cent on average. This year it was about 9.5 per cent. That is not the issue that I am talking about today. Today I am talking about what is being done with capital expenditure and planning for the next prison required under this government, because its only plan is to build prisons. Its only plan is to allow more and more Western Australians to suffer at the hands of criminals, because there will be more victims as a consequence of the crime university graduates that the government is pumping out. The government's only response is to house them subsequent to committing the crimes. What is the government doing about that? The government's own budget papers identify it as a serious risk.

As an indicator for the people of Western Australia when they are considering whether they want the government to waste more money on more and bigger crime universities, they have to consider that in the entire history of Western Australia, right until 2008, the state accumulated around \$3.6 billion of debt. In this single budget year, the deficit alone exceeds that amount. The Barnett government in one year has blown out the budget by more than all the debt accrued in the history of Western Australia prior to it coming to office. The debt has hit \$31 billion and it is projected to grow to \$40 billion in a couple of years. We still have to build hospitals and real schools and support real education and policing in the community. We still have to build public transport. That money has to come from somewhere. If the Barnett government's priority is instead to build crime universities and pump more and more criminals in the system, create more and more victims of crime, the money has to come from somewhere. We are talking serious money.

As an indication, if we want to build a metropolitan prison to house around 1 000 people—it was just done in Darwin; the new prison in Darwin has a capacity of 1 050—a modern prison of that capacity costs \$500 million. That is not small potatoes. That is not small money in the context of austerity. We are talking about every penny being pinched to fund teachers and the government is sacking education assistants and public servants. It is adding to the unemployment problems in the state. When the government sacks public servants, it cuts services. In that context people need to deliberate on whether this government is capable of managing the state's finances. If the government has no other response to crime than building bigger and bigger prisons that are pumping out more and more repeat offenders, we have no hope. We have no choice other than to build another prison. If the government is going to build another prison, it will cost another half a billion dollars. That is a half-billion dollars that we cannot use for those good things we would like to be doing.

The sad fact is, as evidenced by the statistics, if we build another prison, it will not reduce criminality or the number of victims of crime. It will add to it. It will increase the rate of offending; that is the evidence before us. If members want to know how urgent this matter is, they should look at the statistics for the last couple of years. I went back and looked at the six-monthly growth rates in the prison muster—the actual number of people in prison on the six month mark over the past few years. From 30 May 2014 to the start of January 2015, there was a growth rate of 2.1 per cent. Over the next six-month period, it rose to 2.6 per cent. In the six-month period after

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that, from the middle of 2015 to December 2015, the rate of growth in the prison muster escalated to 3.9 per cent. From the end of December to the start of June this year—that is when I had the last look—the rate had escalated to eight per cent. The rate of growth in the prison muster is doubling every six months at a time when we already have record numbers of people in the prison system, and the government has identified the prison population as a risk to the budget, although it is talking only about recurrent expenditure; it is not even talking about capital expenditure.

Another abject failure of this government with regard to law and order policy is the rate of re-entry to prison of people who have offended in the same way that they did when they previously entered the prison system. We can forget some of the spin that is delivered by the government when it talks about recidivism rates, which generally relates to whether offenders reoffend within two or five years after release. I went back to a more basic assessment, because we are not getting much in the way of information from the government nowadays. I sought out a more fundamental measure: how many people in one financial year returned to the prison system in Western Australia after having previously been released. I looked at total prison entries in a given financial year and asked how many of them had been in prison previously. That is a pretty raw and basic measurement. We would hope that if the prison system was working, that number would be getting smaller and there would be a reduction in the numbers of people returning to prison, having already experienced the Western Australian prison system under the Barnett government and having learnt their lesson. Sadly, that is not the case.

In 2012–13, 6 590 people entered the prison system, of which 4 493 had already been in prison before, which is 68.1 per cent. That is a very large percentage. In 2013–14 the percentage was 68.7 per cent. In 2014–15 we reached the plateau I referred to earlier and the rate went down slightly to 68.6 per cent. The next statistic is quite concerning because it reflects the recent rapid growth in the prison population. In 2015–16 to the end of December—which does not even include the current year, during which the prison population rate has increased more sharply—the rate of re-entries, the number of people who had returned to the prison system as a proportion of the overall prison entries in that year, was 70.9 per cent. That means that 70.9 per cent of people who came into the prison system in that six months had been in prison before. The percentage has grown over the course of four financial years from 68 per cent to more than 70 per cent. That is an abject failure, writ large, as evidenced by the statistics. There is no spin by which the government can talk its way out of this. We have had double-digit growth in crime statistics, month on month, for nine consecutive months.

Mr P.C. Tinley: A crime wave.

Mr P. PAPALIA: An unprecedented crime wave, according to the Minister for Police. The Minister for Police has said that we are in the grip of an unprecedented crime wave in the midst of the biggest growth in the prison population in the history of the state and the consequent demand for additional accommodation.

Dr A.D. Buti: The only area of the economy that's growing.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Well, debt is growing; that is another area of the economy. But beyond debt, this is the biggest growth industry under the Barnett government. It is a sad fact that even before the government lifted the public sector recruitment freeze, it exempted the Department of Corrective Services so it could go out and recruit a further 300 or so prison officers. It was one of the very few areas that were exempt from the recruitment cap, because the government has lost control of crime.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: That is a good point by the member for Cannington. A year ago, 350 education assistants were sacked by this government in a desperate bid to rein in growth in the public sector. However, this year, it is employing 300 prison officers. That tells us what has happened; there is a shift in priorities. This is a government that does not care about educating our young people and encouraging them on to a proper pathway. This is a government that has no response to law and order; it has lost control of law and order. This is a government that has overseen an incredible growth in crime in recent times—a crime wave of unprecedented proportions, according to the Minister for Police. This is a government whose only response is to sink hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars into a corrective services system that is doing nothing to reduce crime and is only adding to the problem. It is adding to the threat of more and more victims of crime within our society.

Before I conclude, I will refer to another set of statistics that I find interesting. It gives an insight into why our prisons are failing, apart from the fact that they are massively overwhelmed by numbers. I applaud and respect the prison officers and other staff who work in our prisons under these terrible conditions—massively overcrowded, very dangerous conditions. I do respect that, unlike the minister and unlike the Barnett government, who attack the workers and blame them for the problem. Having created a massively stressful environment, the government blames the workers, but I defend and respect them. However, they cannot perform to the level they would wish to, and I have talked to them about this. They want to do well and they

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want to do better. It is not only prison officers; it is also community corrections officers. People want to do better but they are being overwhelmed by numbers and are under-resourced, and as a consequence they are not delivering and the prison system is therefore turning out more and more criminals.

As I said before, it is just logical that the earlier on in their criminal pathway offenders are encountered, the more likely we are to be able to change their behaviour by providing them with appropriate interventions. These include rehabilitation programs, particularly for those with addictions; violent offender treatment programs; and cognitive skills programs. If those are the programs that they are deemed to be in need of and we deliver them at an early stage of their criminal pathway, we are much more likely to have a successful outcome. If we wait until they have reoffended to such an extent that they receive a really serious criminal sentence that extends beyond one year and well into multiple years, in all likelihood we are going to fail anyway. They will have already been set on their path and will not be open to or capable of responding to an intervention.

I looked at the statistics over the past two calendar years, 2014 and 2015, for offenders who had received sentences of between six and 12 months and were eligible for different programs and I tried to find out how many of them actually received those programs. In 2014, 127 individuals went to prison for addiction-related offences—alcohol and all other types of drug addictions and abuse are grouped together—and of those, only 67 had programs delivered to them before they left the prison system. In 2015, there were 140—note the growth—of whom only 75 received programs.

I turn now to the statistics for cognitive skills programs. Cognitive skills is just about trying to educate people on alternatives to punching people and giving them different pathways in their thought processes and thinking to respond to stressful environments. In 2014, 115 people were identified, in that bracket of six to 12-month sentences, as being in need of those programs; of those, only 65 of them got them. There were 121 in 2015, of whom only 79 got them.

The figures are quite alarming. Of the offenders serving a prison sentence between six and 12 months who were identified as needing a violent offender treatment program, not everyone received it, even though they had a short sentence. Out of 35 eligible offenders in 2014, only 28 got it, and out of 34 in 2015, only 26 got it. For sex offenders, similarly, not everyone gets it: three offenders were identified as needing it but did not get it in 2014, and were still released. In 2015, there were another three. There are small numbers, 24 and 26 offenders, in both categories. The point is that when I add up all the different eligibility criteria and the number of programs that they are eligible for, 305 were eligible in 2014 but only 184 got the totality of the programs. Of 339 eligible offenders in 2015, only 219 received them; but, most importantly, under “addictions”, in both years less than half of the eligible offenders received addiction intervention programs.

A crime university has been created. The question is: where is the capital to expand the university? The government has created the demand; it now has to accommodate it, unless it is going to do something else about it. It is clear that the government is not going to do that because it has failed on law and order. The Barnett government has lost control of law and order. There are more victims and more crime, and it is a direct consequence of the government’s failed policies. It is costing Western Australia hundreds and hundreds of millions of dollars and it is only getting worse. The government has no clue about how to fix it; it only has to accommodate the offenders. Where is the money for the new prisons?

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington) [11.40 am]: I rise to make some comments about the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill 2016. Interestingly, I would love to talk about what is happening at Western Power and its expenditure, but I cannot because it is not covered by the budget. It is not part of the legislation that we are dealing with here, through which the Parliament is authorising capital expenditure by the state of Western Australia.

Dr A.D. Buti: Really?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes. It is a government trading enterprise and GTEs are not part of the budget. They are part of the total public sector in Western Australia. Its operations do not contribute to the budget deficit in this state, except in payments from those organisations to the budget. People get confused. Because Western Power, Horizon Power and Synergy are part of the total public sector and contribute to net debt in Western Australia, people do not realise that they are not in fact covered by the appropriation bills that make up the budget that the Parliament itself authorises. I cannot talk about the capital operations of those organisations. I would love to have highlighted a matter regarding a battery that it was announced would be installed in Carnarvon on 24 November last year but has never been. I would love to be able to highlight to the Parliament all the details of that but I cannot because it is not covered by the capital appropriation of the state of Western Australia because it is a GTE—an off-budget agency—and the Parliament does not get to authorise its behaviour. GTEs are covered by the legislation of the Parliament and, so long as the GTEs operate within that legislation, they do not get authorisation for all their expenditure. They do of course get ministerial authorisation for their expenditure in

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accordance with the act that binds them, but not parliamentary authorisation. We cannot discuss Western Power. Whether Western Power is owned by the government or owned by a private organisation, it does not impact on the budget of Western Australia other than the money that flows back to the budget from those GTEs. I want to spend a minute on —

[Interruption.]

Mr J.E. McGrath: My apologies.

THE ACTING SPEAKER: Member for South Perth, I call you for the first time.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: What a rude interruption! None of us is ever going to give him too much of a hard time because I am sure it has happened to all of us at one stage or another.

Last Friday evening the parliamentary iftar dinner was held. I have had the honour to co-host that dinner with Hon Liz Behjat, MLC, Liberal member for North Metropolitan Region. I was not able to attend this year's dinner, so Hon Kate Doust, MLC, stood in my place. I believe both Hon Liz Behjat and Hon Kate Doust made good contributions at the dinner. The dinner is of course organised in cooperation with the Intercultural Harmony Society Inc, which has a large Turkish membership. My electorate has a large number of Turkish people in it, which is why I became involved. I have been very pleased to host that dinner with Hon Liz Behjat for the past few years. I note that it was the last time that Hon Liz Behjat will co-host the dinner with me because, of course, she has been dumped by the Liberal Party and will not be on the ticket at the next state election. I am sure there must be some reason that Hon Liz Behjat is not an acceptable candidate to the Liberal Party, having served two terms. I am sure somebody in the Liberal Party will explain to the community why she was dumped off the ticket. I look over at my colleague the member for Hillarys, who resigned from the Liberal Party. I understand the Liberal Party lost another member today in that Hon Nigel Hallett has also resigned from the Liberal Party.

Mr P.B. Watson: Something about the *Titanic*!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Yes. In the lead-up to the 1993 state election, which of course the Labor Party lost quite dramatically, there were a couple of resignations. It is interesting to watch an ex-minister and an ex-parliamentary secretary both leave the Liberal Party, and an active member in Hon Liz Behjat being dumped by the Liberal Party. It is quite interesting to see these things occurring.

Mr C.D. Hatton interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Why was Liz Behjat dumped, member?

Mr C.D. Hatton interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Sorry, what was that?

Mr C.D. Hatton interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Sorry, I cannot hear the member! Why was Liz Behjat dumped? I cannot quite hear what the member is saying about Liz Behjat. Liz Behjat was dumped by the Liberal Party and I cannot understand —

Mr C.D. Hatton interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Member for Balcatta, I cannot quite hear what you are saying about Liz Behjat. You've got to speak up! It is so far down the back of the chamber; it is often hard to hear what the member is saying. We are happy for some Liberal to stand and tell us why Hon Liz Behjat was dumped off the ticket of the Liberal Party. After all, she shares the member for Balcatta's electorate. Balcatta is part of North Metropolitan Region.

Mr C.D. Hatton: She is a very good colleague and a very hardworking colleague.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is why the party dumped her! The party dumped her because she is a great colleague! She has co-hosted the parliamentary iftar dinner five times and now she has been dumped by the Liberal Party. I wonder who the Liberal Party will use to co-host the dinner next year. That is quite interesting.

I look forward to the next couple of weeks. I live in a marginal Liberal-held electorate in Western Australia. In the lead-up to the 2010 federal election I enjoyed getting a postcard from the Premier urging me to vote for my local Liberal. I wonder whether that will happen again.

Point of Order

Mrs G.J. GODFREY: This is not relevant.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): With respect to that point of order, can I just remind the member for Cannington that this is the third reading of the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill. The member

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would be aware that the rules pertaining to the scope of the debate on this bill are the same as they are for other bills—the debate is to be confined to those items found in the bill. It needs to be about capital appropriations. The point of order is probably founded. The member needs to come back to the point of the debate.

Debate Resumed

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Thank you very much, Madam Acting Speaker. I am indebted to you for your kind guidance to make sure that I do not stray from the standing orders.

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It was very kind guidance. It was interesting —

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for South Perth, do you want me to call you again?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Member for South Perth, I just defended you in here, so do not worry about that.

I draw attention to the Perth Stadium project. It is interesting that during last year's estimates process, the member for West Swan and I sought information about the impact of the financing component of the stadium operations. I have the *Hansard* of the Estimates Committee B hearing of 10 June 2015. The member for West Swan asked about the obligations arising from the stadium, and at page 11 of the *Hansard* of the Estimates Committee B hearing of 10 June 2015, Mr Mann, who is an official at Treasury, is reported as saying —

I can certainly give the member the value of the state's 60 per cent capital contribution; it is \$489 million. As to the balance—the capitalised components of the finance lease valuation—that breakdown is confidential.

Members will remember that the government was trying to claim that the 40 per cent capital cost being raised by the private sector for the stadium construction was being paid for by the private sector when, of course, it was creating an obligation that would be paid for by the state of Western Australia. I went through last year's *Annual Report on State Finances* and I noted that on page 81 it detailed the obligation to calculate the interest rate implicit in a financing lease. I asked the Treasurer last year what the implied interest rate was. Let us understand that that lease obligation is made up of different components. The state simply pays the bill for the total of those amounts; it does not necessarily pay for each individual item separately. The government has to decide whether to allocate it as a capital component, which is included in the authorisation under this bill, or as an operational component, which is authorised obviously under the recurrent bill. It also has to decide on the effective interest rate that will be borne by the taxpayers, not the interest rate paid for by the private operator who has raised the lease, because that is up to that operator. It has to decide what the calculated effect of borrowing through that mechanism is, because it can just borrow the money itself, so it has to be able to compare the two costs. The Treasurer explained that the implied interest rate is 7.77 per cent. This year Treasury provided with the budget a fact sheet headed "Perth Stadium Financial Impact", which explains that the value of the financial lease is \$423 million, but the Treasurer has explained that the implied interest rate that is used for the calculation by the government is 7.77 per cent. That is a very interesting issue, because it is three times more than the WA Treasury Corporation can borrow the money for.

[Interruption.]

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Member for Swan Hills, was that you?

Mr F.A. Alban: Yes.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Given that we have just had one such occurrence in Parliament, members might want to have a quick look and check that that will not happen to anyone else. Member for Swan Hills, I call you for the first time, given that I called the member for South Perth.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: What a rude interruption! As I say, we all make similar mistakes now and again. The disciplinarian in the chair has acted appropriately, as I am sure would other Acting Speakers.

Treasury Corporation could have borrowed the money for one-third of the cost, but the government says that, over 28 years, it will save \$310 million by getting the private sector to do it. That is complete rubbish. It is just not true. We know it is not true because the government has never published the report that it says shows it. It must be so heavily qualified that the government is too embarrassed to release the information. Again, this is a disgrace. The government got out-negotiated on the stadium deal, and that is why the Labor Party will have an investigation into these disgraceful secret deals. We need to have it. At the time that the government made the announcement about the 60–40 funding split, it tried to imply that it was a public–private partnership and that the private sector would carry the risk of some part of the stadium. That is simply not true. There is no transfer of

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 16 June 2016]

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risk to the construction contractors for this project. There is no financing risk; there is no risk at all. If some construction risk is passed to the contractors, I am happy to have that looked at, but we do not need to have a PPP to transfer the construction risk. There are a lot of other ways to do that. Indeed, people in the engineering sector say that Main Roads Western Australia squeezes out the last little bit of construction risk in its existing contracting format. The idea that we need a PPP to do that is wrong, and the fact that the government will not publish the details shows that we are right. If we were wrong, it would publish it, and then we would not be able to make the claim. We can make the claim only because the government will not publish it, and it will not publish it because it knows that it is true. It claims that in current value terms, there will be a \$310 million saving over 28 years, but that is a net present value figure, which means that it is calculated after inflation.

The government might be saying that most of the benefit will occur in the last 10 years, but that is completely irrelevant. It is the same as the con job that has been done at Fiona Stanley Hospital, where the nonclinical services have been outsourced so that the only flexibility the government has at Fiona Stanley Hospital is with the clinical services. I will quote Treasury —

The financial impact of the Perth Stadium during its operating phase is multi-faceted and complex, ...

Absolutely it is, because the government has put itself in the centre of every risk involved with the stadium. It is carrying the risk of the usage of the stadium and it is carrying the risk of the financing of the stadium; it is carrying the risk of every single aspect of the stadium. No wonder the private sector wants to be involved; it has no downside. No matter what happens at the stadium, the private sector will make money. The only people on the hook for the stadium are the taxpayers, because the government is standing behind every single deal. It is part of every deal. Get a load of this; a stadium operator has been hired, but the stadium operator is not contracted to the Australian Football League or the West Australian Football Commission. The government is contracting to the AFL and the football commission. That is ridiculous. I know people who have operated Stadium Australia in Sydney and they have talked to me about how complex it is to get content. If a Bledisloe Cup rugby union match between Australia and New Zealand is to be held at Stadium Australia, it has to pay the Australian Rugby Union for the match to be held, the stadium has to be what it calls clean—there is no advertising in the stadium—and it does not get the gate takings. The gate takings go to the ARU, the proceeds from the sale of the advertising that gets picked up by the cameras during the match go to the ARU and the ARU gets paid for the teams to turn up. The only thing Stadium Australia gets is the food and beverage takings. I bet \$100 that the Socceroos, who are playing at nib Stadium later this year, will get the whole gate takings. The last time the Socceroos came to Perth, people bought their tickets through the Football Federation Australia website, not through Ticketek, which normally sells the tickets for nib Stadium. I have not looked, but I bet it is the same. The ticket take for nib Stadium for the Socceroos will go to soccer Australia. That might be a good deal but let us understand what is happening. Stadiums pay for content but we are including \$100 million in the budget to pay for content to go to a stadium where a private operator will get the profit from the stadium's operations and we are guaranteeing the private operator the income. We are guaranteeing the West Australian Football Commission the income from the new Perth Stadium. We have done a deal with the Western Australian Cricket Association to guarantee it income. We have guaranteed the maintenance contract for 28 years; that company will not bear any risk. We will be paying 7.7 per cent on the debt for the life of the stadium lease.

An opposition member: The government is an absolute patsy.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The problem is it has been out-negotiated. Whoever was responsible for this deal was not competent. That is the base position here. It is driven by ideology. I love it when the Treasurer says, “Oh, well, Eric Ripper had a policy about PPPs.” Yes, he did but part of that policy was the need to get value for money and that is why during the life of the Labor government there was one public private partnership, and that was the courts complex. All the other PPPs that people spruiked to us were rejected because they did not provide taxpayers value for money. Instead, we are the ones who are taking all the risk in the Perth Stadium deal. It all falls back on the government. Mr Mann, as a loyal public servant doing his job, was providing information on the stadium contract and said, “Oh well, all these future revenues will pay off the expenses.” But, actually, we still accept 100 per cent of those expenses and if there is a gap between the income and the cost, the taxpayer will bear those expenses, not the private sector. Let us remember that the government does not operate the existing stadium at Subiaco; it is operated by the WA Football Commission. The commission bears any losses it incurs, but in future, the new stadium will be owned by the government.

It is amusing. Coming from my house or somewhere the other day I was driving past the stadium with my 18-year-old son in the car. He looked at the construction works and asked, “Hey, dad, who's building that stadium; is it being built by the government?” I said that the government was building it. He asked, “How come we're selling the port to the private sector but we're not making the private people build the stadium?” What a good question.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Your chest swelled with pride.

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Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It did.

I recently had a briefing from some merchant bankers about some issues and they asked: was there anything the Labor Party might want to sell? I am not authorised to make any comment about that, but I jokingly asked, “Would you like to buy the stadium?” And they said no because nobody in their right mind would walk into the spot left by the government. The government has allowed the private sector to extract all the value out of the new stadium and be left with only the risks. Any profit out of it will go to the private sector first and only after they have made a profit will there be any return to the taxpayer. That is the structure of the deal. It is dopey. The government is allowing the private sector to use Western Australia’s balance sheet to build the damn stadium and they are not taking any of the risk. One journalist tweeted the day that the government made its 60–40 announcement and said that it was 60 per cent funded by the government and 40 per cent funded by the private sector. I tweeted straight back and said, “No, it’s 100 per cent funded by the state government; it’s 60 per cent through borrowings and 40 per cent through a 28-year obligation on the lease.” It is the same thing. We found out afterwards about an incredibly high effective interest rate. Let me make it clear: I am not saying it is the effective interest rate; the Treasurer of Western Australia says it is the effective interest rate—7.7 per cent. That is the effective interest rate paid on the lease obligations for the Perth Stadium.

I move now to Elizabeth Quay—another dumb deal by the Western Australian government. I looked at some of the comments made about that deal and I draw attention to *Hansard* of 9 August 2011, when I was a mere opposition backbencher, and outlined in some detail the risks involved in that project. I made the point to the then Minister for Planning, now the Minister for Health, about the incredible risks being taken on because the project was based on the idea that the private sector would develop buildings on the sites. The point I made to the minister five years ago was that there was no shortage of vacant land or land that could be developed in the Perth CBD. I pointed out to him that that included sites such as the old Emu Brewery site in the city. Indeed, the Woodside building is now underway there. We were competing with the Emu Brewery site for construction at Elizabeth Quay and the private sector could do a better deal on the brewery site than it could on any of the Elizabeth Quay sites. I warned the minister five years ago that we cannot develop three similar projects at the same time. No private sector developer would try to do that. It is unbelievable that the state government borrowed money to try to develop three competing projects at the same time. Of course, the government had private sector partners to do it. The private sector partner at Riverside East is Lendlease Corporation. I am sure Lendlease will make a lot of money from Riverside East. The government will not but I do not blame Lendlease for out-negotiating the state of Western Australia to do a good deal at Riverside East. Likewise, I do not have any problem with Mirvac Group walking away from the Northbridge project because it is a private developer, which is trying to make money. Of course, next to the project site Mirvac has walked away from, other private sector interests have developed Kings Square, which have competed with the government’s development of NorthLink, and those developers have all finished their projects. I went to the opening of the Shell building, which is a very fine piece of infrastructure. It will have a lot of spare space now because of the downsizing of the oil and gas sector; nevertheless, it is a nice building. I think there is a whole empty office building down there built by the private sector. Before any new buildings can be built by the government on NorthLink, the private sector will have to fully sell all the available space in Kings Square at the same time as the government is trying to develop Elizabeth Quay.

It is interesting that I pointed out that Elizabeth Quay would inevitably have problems with litter floating around on the water in the inlet. I understand that the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority pays some people to go out in a little tinny every day to scoop all the litter out of the corners of the inlet with one of the things we use to scoop leaves out of our swimming pool. That is exactly what I said would happen. I am no genius and plenty of people on the Liberal side are always happy to give me a character assessment. Let us think about this. If they are right, how dumb are they? If I was able to work that out and I am an idiot; what does it say about them? They thought it would not happen and it has. If I am stupid, what does it make them? Everyone who talked about this project and who was not on the payroll of the Liberal Party or the Western Australian government knew that it was a dumb idea, it would not work and it would not make any sense, and that is exactly what has happened. Even worse was the dolphin being killed by the polluted water down there. We know that it must have been seriously related to Elizabeth Quay because the government has not told us what happened. If the death of that dolphin was unrelated to Elizabeth Quay, the government would have held a press conference on the bridge. The government has not done that, because it knows that is what happened. If I am wrong, the government should release the details. The fact is that the government has covered up another issue. People cannot swim in the quay. The government told us that one of the reasons it wanted to build Elizabeth Quay is so that it could hold sporting events there. The first sporting event that was held at Elizabeth Quay had to be cancelled because the water in the quay is polluted and not safe for swimming.

I love the fact that the government used to criticise the people who are called the City Gatekeepers. The government called these people “The Grasskeepers” because they wanted to keep the grass on The Esplanade.

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I drive past Elizabeth Quay every day. Guess what? The grass is back! Did they get some pensioners from Nedlands to lay out the grass? Is that what happened? It is ridiculous. The government spent \$440 million not to build any buildings, and it has now put the grass back. I said once that there might be some dongas at Elizabeth Quay selling coffee. I was wrong; it was dongas selling whisky! How wrong could I be? The government says we should look at all the events that have been held at Elizabeth Quay. The reason the government is holding events at Elizabeth Quay is that it cannot sell any of the blocks of land. If the government had sold the blocks of land, it would not be able to hold events there.

Ms R. Saffioti: It's just moving them from somewhere else.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: That is right; it is moving them from the Perth Cultural Centre to Elizabeth Quay. If the plan to sell those blocks of land had worked, the government would have had to hold the *Fringe Festival* somewhere else. Five or six years ago, I said that the plan would not work, and I was right. Only two blocks of land at Elizabeth Quay have been sold. One is the block that will go under the apartments. I have always said that the apartments will go off; no problem. The other is the block that has a put option with Chevron. Chevron has the option to put that block back to the government. I bet London to a brick that after the election, the incoming Premier—whether it is Liz or Mark—will get a call from Chevron saying that they want to exercise their put option. No private sector operator will build a new office tower when there is a 24 per cent vacancy rate for offices in the Perth CBD. The government is planning to take 1 500 office workers from the city of Perth to Fremantle. That is a good plan. However, there will then be another empty office building in the city. Elizabeth Quay has 36 000 square metres of retail space. In this era of online shopping, that is a joke. The day Elizabeth Quay opened, none of the restaurants were open. It was a joke, and it continues to be a joke.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells) [12.12 pm]: I am pleased to speak on the third reading of the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill. I begin by noting that overnight we heard that the promise of a major piece of capital expenditure for the high schools in my electorate will not be fulfilled. The Liberal Party made a promise at the 2013 election to refurbish schools that were built prior to the 1980s. I woke this morning to hear the Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, say on ABC News that he would not be fulfilling that promise. At the 2013 election, many people imagined that if they voted Liberal, they would be voting for the refurbishment of schools such as Thornlie Senior High School and Southern River College. However, people now realise that they have been misled and that promise will not be fulfilled. I acknowledge the role that the shadow Minister for Education, Hon Sue Ellery, played in exposing this broken promise. The Minister for Education in the other place has now acknowledged that this is a broken promise. I think that will be a lesson to the people of this state. When they look at the Liberal Party's commitments for the next election, they will recall what the government said last time around —

The Liberals are committed to rebuilding our secondary schools in the next term of Government. A key focus will be on redeveloping those secondary schools built before the 1980s to make sure they can provide the best possible learning environments to cater for students' education and social development needs.

I think the people who read that would have thought that was a commitment to refurbish schools such as Thornlie Senior High School and Southern River College. However, that promise has now been broken. Let us be in no doubt about this. Those schools are badly in need of refurbishment, and I am sure there are many other examples across the metropolitan area.

The former federal Minister for Education, Christopher Pyne, has made the comment that good teaching outcomes are not necessarily dependent on small class sizes. I think he has been roundly condemned for that comment. There is a need for a good student–teacher ratio. Similarly, we need to provide a good environment in which our young people can learn. If kids at a school put off going to the toilets because they are unsanitary and smelly, that will impact on their ability to participate in lessons. Good facilities are critical to a good education.

Southern River College has a group of students who have an outstanding capacity in the performing arts. These young people have flair and confidence. They also have integrity when it comes to their performances. I understand that the student body made the decision to not go overboard with outlandish costumes. One event that they put on was *Concert on the Green*. When they perform, they like to be attired in the same way. They wear a simple costume, with black T-shirts and black trousers, and they look great. The emphasis is on their ability to sing, play a musical instrument or perform in some other way. I commend them for their commitment to the integrity of the performing arts. However, Southern River College does not have a performing arts centre. That is a great shame. We hear about the amazing facilities at other schools. The students at Southern River College desperately need a performing arts centre. They deserve to have a school that has contemporary conditions and facilities that are a pleasure to be in. We in this building all know that we work better when we have good conditions to work in. That is just the way it is. People perform better, are happier and have a better

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outlook if they are not in an office that is freeing cold because it has a broken down heating system, is dingy, or does not have a window.

On my way to Parliament today, I went past Rossmoyne Senior High School. That school is probably at the top of the pack when it comes to the facilities that are provided to students. I know that is a big school, with a big student population.

Dr M.D. Nahan: It has 2 100 students, member.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: That student population is not just from the immediate catchment area but is drawn from far afield. People are very keen to have their children go to that school because it has a very good academic record and great facilities.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Member, over 20 demountables are on Rossmoyne's site. It has that front building that you drive by that is brand new—it is beautiful. Adjacent to it is the performing arts building that was funded by the previous Labor government, and behind it there are quite a few demountables.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: The growth of that school is something that perhaps could have been better managed, but the facilities that I see as I ride by on my bike look outstanding compared with the facilities at Southern River College, which is a school that has had exceptional growth as well. It has gone from some 400 students to 1 400 students.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz): It is about 1 200, I think.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: It has 1 200 students—thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. That is dramatic growth. If we look at it in percentage terms, the growth rate at Southern River College probably exceeds the growth rate at Rossmoyne Senior High School. My point is, Treasurer, that capital investment in our schools needs to be shared across electorates and, most importantly, we need to acknowledge that good educational outcomes can be achieved by investing in schools to make sure that students have the best facilities possible and we do not have people having to contend with dingy, smelly toilet facilities, for example. I have heard stories about flooding at Thornlie Senior High School when it rains, and some of the rooms feel damp, cold and unpleasant. The facilities at that school really take me back to the 1970s when the school was built. An upgrade of facilities at that school is long overdue. It is high time that the Treasurer acknowledged that he has failed to meet that election promise. He actually did that overnight, when he acknowledged that he had broken a promise to build high-quality schools across Western Australia. "Building High Quality Schools across WA" is the heading of a Liberal Party policy document from 2013, but that has not happened.

I turn to another capital expenditure issue in my electorate. We have a major roundabout at the Yale Road–Garden Street–Nicholson Road intersection. I have written to the Minister for Transport about this intersection, which features on the RAC's risky roads list. The member for Southern River and I have made strong pleas for the phase 3 expenditure for that roundabout. The phase 3 expenditure is for the installation of metering with traffic lights to control the flow of traffic on to the roundabout, bearing in mind that slip roads were constructed in phase 1 and phase 2 so that traffic could avoid going on to the roundabout. That was necessary and it was done, but the important third phase to install metering has not been done. In fact, somehow, the City of Gosnells has been led to believe that things have improved to the point that they can now hand back the money. The City of Gosnells was given some \$486 000 for the traffic metering to be installed, but that funding has been clawed back. I have a letter from the Minister for Transport about this, which reads —

I am advised by Main Roads that the \$486,000 funding referred to in your correspondence was returned to the Metropolitan Road Project Grant pool for redistribution by the Metropolitan Regional Road Group. This was due to the City of Gosnells modifying the Regional Road Group funding request to reduce the scope of work they wanted to deliver for Stage 2 and also removing the Stage 3 works which reduced the funding required from \$2 million to \$1.4 million.

I am not aware of anyone in the City of Gosnells who says that that roundabout works safely without metering. Everyone tells me that they find the layout somewhat complex. This is because the roundabout was designed around the installation of metering, yet we do not have that and we have a heap of misses, sometimes not-so-near misses and crashes. A lot of people avoid the roundabout and cause congestion elsewhere. We have frustrated motorists trying to come home or go to work and getting stuck at the roundabout waiting on Yale Road because there is a flow of traffic coming down Nicholson Road in the evening that prevents them getting on to the roundabout. It makes life difficult for everyone, and having to contend with it causes a lot of frustration. The minister said to me that if the City of Gosnells considers that stage 3 of Yale Road–Garden Street–Nicholson Road project is now warranted, it can make a further submission to the metropolitan regional road group for funding. This is the sort of capital works that is desperately needed in the electorate to help deal with traffic congestion. Of course, there are far more substantial capital works that need to be done, such as extending the

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train line from Thornlie through to the Mandurah line and improving bus services, and making sure that people have other transport alternatives. The key thing that could be done in a matter of weeks would be capital works to install metering. That could be done in the next few weeks and it would make a huge difference to people's daily commutes.

I want to turn to another issue now, which I know members opposite have often championed—the installation of closed-circuit television in various areas around my electorate and in electorates across the state. Closed-circuit television is often held up as an answer to crime, but I think we have to question that. I am not sure whether CCTV really does increase the clear-up rate, the detection rate or the apprehension rate, but I am quite sure that it does not prevent crime—I do not think that it does. The Liberal Party talks a lot about CCTV installation, but it does not actually deliver it. I have an example of this. My constituent Ms Kirrin Lill, who lives in Thornlie, wrote to me, the Minister for Police, the Minister for Transport and the general manager of Transperth trains about a very unfortunate incident that occurred when her car was parked at the Thornlie train station. I will read her letter —

Three of my windows had been smashed with a heavy object, each one struck with a single blow—enough to cause major damage, but insufficient to gain entry.

Given that no obvious attempt was made to enter the vehicle, nor remove any of its contents, I can only conclude that this was a crime committed purely for 'fun'—and one that has cost me lost work time, as well as an insurance excess to pay.

When people have these annoying attacks on their property, even if nothing is stolen, they have all the inconvenience that goes with it. There is all the reporting people have to do and the time that they have to set aside while they take their vehicle to the smash repairers. It is just something that we could all do without. We were told that there is good CCTV coverage at the train station and the Park 'n' Ride system is in place to supposedly help control activities at the train station. People are paying their \$2 a day at the station—hundreds of dollars of revenue per day, as Ms Lill states—but it has not led to an upgrade in security. The capital expenditure here is for the CCTV. In her letter Ms Lill asks —

... is there CCTV throughout the carpark? Does the **PTA/Police** consider it adequate for identifying perpetrators?

No-one has been apprehended for this incident; in fact, we found out through correspondence that the CCTV was not even working properly when this event occurred. I have a copy of a letter that the Minister for Police sent back to Ms Lill about this, which states —

... I note you outline two concerns for the attention of Western Australia Police. These concerns relate to the adequacy of the CCTV in the car park of Thornlie Train Station for the purpose of identifying offenders and the strategies ...

That is, used by Canning Vale police. The minister continues —

The CCTV systems in place at Thornlie Train Station are owned and monitored by the Public Transport Authority (PTA).

Straightaway the minister removes herself from taking responsibility on the issue. She continues —

I understand you indicated your satisfaction with the actions taken by local police and re-emphasised your concerns regarding the adequacy of CCTV in the car park at Thornlie Train Station.

Why do I raise all this around CCTV? Again, it was a Liberal Party promise at the last state election. A commitment by the Liberal candidate for the Gosnells electorate was published in the local paper. It states that there was a commitment to —

- Additional CCTV cameras for train stations and bus depots, such as Gosnells and Thornlie Train Stations.

There it was. The commitment that was published on 26 February 2013 was a commitment towards CCTV, and it was stated that that would be part of the Liberals' law and order update. "The Liberals are tough on crime" goes the headline. It is a paid advertisement that was in the local paper. It goes on to state —

Colin Barnett, David Goode and the Liberals will make our community safer.

...

- Additional CCTV cameras for train stations and bus depots, such as Gosnells and Thornlie Train Stations.

What happened? We find that we still have these cases, such as the one that Kirrin Lill experienced, when clearly whatever funding was made available for closed-circuit television has failed us. It is just an example of chest beating on an issue, claiming that people are tough on crime, when they are simply just putting up adornments

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that do not work, whether they are adequate in the first instance. There is certainly no hint here of addressing the underlying causes of crime. That is what really should be done. We should be addressing why we have these problems; that is what it should be. Yes, tough on crime, but tough on the causes of crime. We should be headed that way with this problem and then we would see a significant reduction in the amount of petty crime, such as smashing the side windows of cars and breaking into those cars.

I want to turn to some other items of capital expenditure in my shadow portfolio area and note the government's very, very poor attempt to acquire land for conservation. I have heard the Minister for Environment talk about how the conservation estate is part of the state government's response to the problem of climate change. The theory—it is a valid one—is that if we have a comprehensive, adequate and representative conservation estate, we can allow for the movement of species and for the genetic flows of plants and animals so that they can, to some extent, cope with shifts in climatic bands—changes in rainfall, for example, or changes in temperature. Some shifting can go on. If we have a well-connected conservation estate, one that has all the connections, the corridors and the linkages, then, yes, there is something in that theory, but it is not being backed up by money at all. The minister has not provided any money of significance for conservation land acquisition. This would be one of the most important areas of capital expenditure when it comes to tackling the problem of climate change, yet when we look at page 540 of the budget, all we see is an indication of \$305 000 for conservation land acquisition in 2016–17, and it increases to \$360 000 through the forward estimates to 2019–20. If we are talking about \$305 000 and \$360 000, I do not think that is going to buy any land at all of any import for conservation purposes. That is just not taking this job seriously. There is no way that the government could buy land for addition to the national reserve system with that amount of money. It is totally unreasonable. In the Department of Parks and Wildlife, there is a very skilled officer—I think he might be close to retirement—who does his best to acquire land for conservation purposes, but the government has to give the guy a chance. The government has to give him some money to acquire land for conservation. With privately owned land, people are saying to the government, “Why are you not allowing us to do other things on this land?” The department has to be in a position to acquire that land and add it to the conservation estate. That is a very important part of our response to climate change, yet it is not being treated seriously at all.

Another issue that the government likes to talk about a lot is the Kimberley science and conservation strategy and all of that work, but let us look at where some of the money is going on that. An item of capital expenditure which we need and which could save us a lot of money is a Kimberley science and conservation centre in the Kimberley—perhaps in Broome. I hear about scientists who come in to do work on worthy projects, but they are spending \$150 a night at the Mangrove Hotel to stay in the Kimberley, so there goes some of the Kimberley's science and conservation strategy budget. It goes straight to the Mangrove Hotel for accommodation. Why not create a centre—a Kimberley science and conservation centre—where we could have accommodation and also facilities for people to do their necessary research? It could be an important location for people to come together rather than having them spread out at the various hotels, paying rather high amounts each night for their accommodation. That is another example of how the capital expenditure priorities of the government are just not tackling the problem.

I also want to look at the metropolitan region improvement special purpose account. By the end of 2016–17, this account will have a massive sum in it. It is anticipated that at the end of the next financial year the closing balance in this account will be \$354 million. My understanding is, and we had this confirmed in estimates, that that money is there for the acquisition of land, especially privately owned land that has been designated as a Bush Forever site through the Bush Forever scheme. Why are we not making those acquisitions? Why are we not doing it? It is land that is being negotiated perhaps, but this has been going on since Graham Kierath introduced the whole bush plan, the Bush Forever project, back in 2000. We have had years to negotiate with private landholders and acquire this land, add it to the conservation estate and work out whether it is the local government or the Department of Parks and Wildlife that is best suited to manage the land. All those sorts of details have to be tackled, but the point is that we have a large amount of money. At the end of the financial year that we are about to complete, 2015–16, it is estimated the account will have \$285 million in it. That is a very hefty sum, yet that money is just sitting there, not being spent. When many other challenges are facing government, why are we not investing that money by purchasing land that could then be looked after as part of the conservation estate? It just seems that, on the one hand, we have the poor old Department of Parks and Wildlife with its \$300 000 budget, and it is not in a position to buy anything at all, and, on the other hand, we have the Western Australian Planning Commission with millions of dollars—\$350 million—and it is not prepared to spend it. Just what is going on? Why are we not taking conservation expenditure—that is, capital expenditure for conservation purposes—seriously, when it is one of the best responses we could probably have to climate change and adapting to climate change? It would make a lot of sense to do that.

I note as well that when it comes to the asset investment program of the Department of Agriculture and Food that some money has been designated for the regional natural resource management program. In the current financial

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year it is down to \$3.5 million, and then \$2.5 million in the next financial year. This money could be spread right across private and public lands. It is in the asset investment program. It is money that I imagine would be useful to put towards protecting our natural assets. It is part of that concept of natural capital that we have to embrace when it comes to looking after the natural resources of the state. Why has that level of funding been dropped by over \$1 million from this financial year that we are about to enter into and the next? It suggests that the government is not serious about maintaining and looking after our natural capital.

I have outlined some of the areas of capital expenditure that the government has got wrong. I know that the Treasurer likes to say that the opposition, on the one hand, says that more should be spent and then, on the other hand, says, “What’s going on that we’ve got debt and deficit?” But when I see \$350 million sitting in the metropolitan region improvement fund account, I gasp at the poor management of things. When we consider some of the points I raised in the recurrent debate earlier this week about the government’s failure to bring in money promised to it from various resources sector interests in the north of the state, we see mismanagement going on. On the one hand, we are not bringing in money, and then when we have it we are not spending it properly. One has to wonder what is going on. This budget is riddled with examples of mismanagement.

I have great hope that in the next 12 months we will see a change of fortune for the state and that with a Labor government in power we will have a well-managed set of books, our budget will be properly managed and the errors of this government’s way, which I pointed out, will be a thing of the past.

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [12.42 pm]: I rise to speak on the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill 2016, accepting this budget’s capital appropriations. I particularly want to speak about the Public Transport Authority of Western Australia and its new works outlined on page 750 of budget paper No 2—namely, Metro Area Express light rail. I was somewhat bemused to find MAX light rail in the budget papers, given that this government and particularly the Minister for Transport have pretty much made it clear that it will not be delivered to the people of Mirrabooka, despite the promise in the lead-up to the 2013 election. It was announced well and truly by previous transport minister Troy Buswell in the last term of government. It was announced with much fanfare to the point that the Premier stood in Mirrabooka and said, “Buy properties now. This is the place to buy properties!” People did so and planning has been based on that promise. However, we are none the wiser on the delivery of MAX light rail. I understand that the government is proposing a substandard transport system of buses, despite that promise. That goes against the state government’s submission to Infrastructure Australia for federal funding in August 2012, which clearly states on page 8 —

Buses suffering from the effects of congestion, taking both a significant time to access the city as well as having highly variable travel times resulting in buses being unable to keep to timetable.

That is one reason that MAX light rail was necessary and important. I will refer quite extensively to this document, which was authored by the Department of Transport, Main Roads Western Australia and the Public Transport Authority, and was made available through the other house’s estimates process last year. This document clearly argues for a rapid transport system into that central northern corridor and eastern corridor that takes into account many other areas that members in this house represent. It takes into account the state seat of Mount Lawley, which the Speaker of this house represents, and the seats of Morley and Girrawheen. It impacts on the seat of Balcatta. It has a massive impact on the public transport capacity for the seat of Mirrabooka, and of course the seat of Perth is also impacted on by the light rail. It is somewhat surprising to find that even though the state Minister for Transport, Hon Dean Nalder, said on 9 March 2015 that the MAX light rail was to be deferred for 15 years in favour of a bus network, we still have in the out years—the forward estimates for 2017–18, 2018–19 and 2019–20—a line item for MAX light rail. I pondered over this last night. What is this about? Why would the government keep that in there? What sort of nasty, duplicitous, non-transparent or opaque process would keep something like that in the budget when the government is basically saying that it will provide a bus service? In an ABC online news article on March 2015, the minister stated —

“We believe for the next 15 to 20 years, as a minimum, we can provide the solution with a bus,” ...

However, in the other house, prior to the estimates, the question was asked: how much has been budgeted in 2016–17 for examining bus rapid transport along Alexander Drive, and how much in each year of the forward estimates has been budgeted for a bus rapid transport along Alexander Drive? The answer was: nothing; nil; nada. The minister says that the government will provide us with a rapid bus transport system and put off MAX light rail for 15 to 20 years, but this budget has a line item for MAX light rail. The minister has said something that is completely different from what is in the budget, yet no budget at all is provided to deliver on what he is saying is the alternative. The minister has defended his policy shift by saying, “We are not going back on the promise of a light rail. It’s not a broken promise. It’s just that we are doing it differently. We are now doing it with a rapid transport system for buses.” That is just not accurate. It is just not what is in this budget,

Dr Tony Buti; Mr David Templeman; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Bill Johnston; Mrs Glenys Godfrey; Acting Speaker;
Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Janine Freeman

which is still referring to light rail. It is not referring at all to the bus service that this government believes will deliver the same experience, and I quote —

Mr Nalder insisted it was the same project.

“Everything that we’re looking at is to see if we can’t deliver exactly the same experience for the community with a bus as with the light rail,” he said.

Hansard cannot report sarcasm, so for the benefit of Hansard I say that with absolute pure sarcasm on the basis that that is not the case. That is stated in the government’s own submission about the Perth light rail to Infrastructure Australia for federal funding of August 2012.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3625.]