



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2021

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 8 September 2021

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) took the chair at 12 noon, acknowledged country and read prayers.

BILLS

Notice of Motion to Introduce

1. Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021.
2. Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021.

Notices of motion given by **Mr M. McGowan (Treasurer)**.

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — CLEAN HYDROGEN INDUSTRY

Notice of Motion

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party) [12.04 pm]: I give notice that at the next sitting of the house I will move —

That this house condemns the WA Labor government for failing to properly support the development of clean hydrogen industries, including a failure to construct stage 2 of the 330-kilovolt Mid West Energy Project and develop Oakajee industrial estate.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Dr D.J. HONEY: Further —

The SPEAKER: Do you have a further notice of motion?

Dr D.J. HONEY: I do, thank you very much; I have three more.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Other members, can we just hear the member for Cottesloe's notices of motion.

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — CRITICAL MINERALS SECTOR

Notice of Motion

Dr D.J. Honey (Leader of the Liberal Party) gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house condemns the WA Labor government for failing to properly support the development of the critical minerals sector, including a failure to put in place common-user power, water, road and other infrastructure in the midwest.

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — ENERGY SECTOR

Notice of Motion

Dr D.J. Honey (Leader of the Liberal Party) gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house condemns the WA Labor government for failing to provide a long-term plan for the Western Australian upstream and downstream energy sectors and at a time they need clear direction to manage a rapid technology transition.

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — VIOLENT CRIME

Notice of Motion

Dr D.J. Honey (Leader of the Liberal Party) gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house condemns the WA Labor government for failing to address record violent crime in Western Australia.

VISITORS — NORTH LAKE SENIOR CAMPUS

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [12.05 pm]: Members, I acknowledge the students and teachers from North Lake Senior Campus who are in the public gallery. I understand that the member for Carine taught at North Lake Senior Campus as an economics and geography teacher, so I welcome them on his behalf.

**GREATER BUNBURY REGION SCHEME AMENDMENT 0060/41 —
WATERLOO INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION AREA**

Statement by Minister for Planning

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Planning) [12.06 pm]: I present today for tabling the *Greater Bunbury region scheme amendment 0060/41: Waterloo industrial expansion area*, which will facilitate the rezoning of 1 350 hectares of rural zoned land to industrial deferred zone. This amendment will facilitate the Waterloo industrial park district structure plan located east of Eaton town site and positioned wholly within the Shire of Dardanup. Waterloo industrial park is seen as the major employment-generating area for the future. Its land uses will include light industry, general industry, service commercial, a special-use area designated for rail-related activities, an agricultural food processing precinct and public purpose infrastructure services. The district structure plan was developed in partnership between the Shire of Dardanup and the Western Australian Planning Commission and incorporates feedback from the community and stakeholders after a thorough consultation period.

Waterloo industrial park has been identified as the eastern boundary of industrial development for the greater Bunbury area, given its proximity to the Bunbury port and the major rail and road transport links. The primacy of the Bunbury port has been paramount in Western Australian Planning Commission planning for the last 30 years, and this is reflected in the decision to promote the development of Waterloo to service the port and the greater south west and provide opportunities for industry to have quick, easy access to Perth. The proposed Waterloo industrial park will be linked to the proposed new community of Wanju, which is to be located immediately to the north of Waterloo. The economic development and new jobs arising from the development of Waterloo will enhance the rate that Wanju is likely to be developed.

Waterloo industrial park will provide for a diversity of industrial space to give future industries the opportunity to develop and grow. The area is intended to complement existing industrial and business parks in the rest of the subregion, while bringing additional development opportunities. The close proximity and good accessibility to the urban expansion area of Wanju will also help provide a wide variety of skilled employees in the local area. It will also encourage a high degree of employment self-containment in the combined Wanju and Waterloo development areas.

Major future regional growth centres must reflect the highest standards of contemporary land-use planning and execution to advance regional Western Australia's social and economic strengths, which this amendment will facilitate. In accordance with the statutory provisions for region scheme amendments, this amendment was advertised for three months, ending on 14 December 2020. Of the 10 submissions received, all either supported or did not object to the rezoning proposal. Copies of the submissions and the Western Australian Planning Commission's report on submissions are also tabled today.

I am pleased to now table the documentation for greater Bunbury region scheme amendment 0060/41 and I commend it to the house.

[See papers [464](#) and [465](#).]

SEAFOOD INDUSTRY AWARDS

Statement by Minister for Fisheries

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries) [12.09 pm]: I rise to brief the house on the Western Australian Seafood Industry Awards 2021. On Friday, 13 August, I had the pleasure of opening the annual Western Australian Seafood Industry Awards, hosted by the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council at Fremantle's Esplanade Hotel. The awards are a keystone event, showcasing excellence and innovation in the state's commercial seafood industry and highlighting the contribution the industry makes to WA's economy and local communities.

The achievements and value of the state's seafood industry has also been acknowledged in the Australian Institute of Marine Science's *Index of marine industry*, considering WA as the foremost fishing state in Australia. Western Australia is a world leader in sustainable fisheries management, and the individual operators, teams and families in our seafood industry ought to be congratulated for their stewardship of WA fisheries and seafood products.

This year's awards were especially important as we continue to work through the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, with everyone in the industry being congratulated for their continued professionalism, commitment and ingenuity throughout the last 18 months. Award winners were named in twelve categories, which were open to all sectors of WA's seafood and fishing industry, including fishers, processors, exporters, fish wholesalers, retailers, aquaculture producers, media, restaurants and deckhands, as well as individuals and businesses involved in research, development, safety and training. Eleven of the 12 category winners will go on to represent WA at the National Seafood Industry Awards, which will be held in conjunction with the 2022 Seafood Directions Conference. I congratulate all the award winners and, in particular, recognise the winner of the prestigious Seafood Industry Leadership Award, Dr George Kailis. The contribution by George and the Kailis family to the WA seafood industry and their leadership over many years is truly something to be proud of.

BARRAMUNDI RESTOCKING — LAKE KUNUNURRA*Statement by Minister for Fisheries*

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries) [12.11 pm]: I rise to brief the house on barramundi restocking passing one million at Lake Kununurra, a special milestone of the Lake Kununurra barramundi restocking project. I was fortunate to join the local community as we recently released our one millionth juvenile fish. Barramundi is Australia's most recognisable estuarine sportfish, with many recreational fishers travelling to northern Western Australia to try to catch one. Local recreational fishing and Indigenous communities have long pressed for the restocking of barramundi into Lake Kununurra, and eight years ago their dream became a reality when the first fingerlings were released. North Regional TAFE in Broome has managed the broodstock collection, breeding and restocking program on behalf of the state government. This work has been undertaken in collaboration with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development; the Lake Kununurra Barramundi Stocking Group; the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions; the Miriuwung Gajerrong Rangers; and Recfishwest. This is a community-driven project that I am proud to support as minister, and the local restocking group should be particularly commended for its efforts.

The McGowan government's \$6 million recreational fishing COVID-19 stimulus package announced last year has supported enhancement projects such as this one around Western Australia, as well as a statewide recreational fishing tourism campaign. Our government has committed to fund a further three years of this exciting program, supporting the fishing mecca in the East Kimberley, and we are likely to hit the two millionth barramundi stocked during this time. Recreational fishing helps boost regional economies and local tourism, with 750 000 Western Australians going fishing every year.

The project has transformed Kununurra into a world-class fishing destination, enticing recfishers to head up north to stay and spend on local job-creating fishing trips in the Kimberley. It is a unique experience, with the lake winding through a series of cliffs, waterfalls and tropical bushland and one not to be missed.

GOVERNMENT RAILWAYS AMENDMENT BILL 2021*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Ms R. Saffioti (Minister for Transport)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [12.14 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to increase the maximum fine for trespass on the rail network from \$200 to \$5 000, to introduce a modified penalty provision and to delete the provision referencing a ticketing regime and classes of travel that were abolished in 2003. A bill to increase the fine for trespass was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2019 following a train-surfing incident in which a man jumped off the top of a train crossing Fremantle Railway Bridge. The bill was introduced into the Legislative Council but was unable to be passed before the end of the fortieth Parliament.

Trespass on the rail network is a serious offence that impacts on the safety of the trespasser, the public and railway workers. The current maximum penalty under the Government Railways Act 1904 for trespass is a fine of \$200. An increase in the penalty for the offence of trespass reflects the seriousness of that offence. The increase in penalty is intended to discourage premeditated and deliberate acts of trespass and to reduce the risk of serious injury. The Public Transport Authority has implemented a range of initiatives to discourage and deter trespassing on railway land, including a targeted social media campaign highlighting to the public the dangers of trespassing; a media campaign to stop photographers taking pictures of wedding parties on the railway; deploying transit officers to build valuable relationships with high-risk youths through social activities to promote rail safety and the dangers of trespassing; providing ongoing support and delivery of the Right Track education program to encourage young people to become more responsible for their own safety while using the rail network and to alert young people to the dangers and consequences of trespassing in the rail corridor; and Transperth train operations working with the Western Australia Police Force to prevent graffiti-related trespass incidents at railcar depots at Nowergup, Claisebrook and Mandurah and at stations and sidings on the PTA rail network. Nevertheless, the number of trespass incidents on the rail network has continued to rise.

Under the Rail Safety National Law (WA) Act 2014, specific railway incidents must be reported to the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator. These notifiable occurrences are defined in the Rail Safety National Law (WA) Regulations 2015 as either category A, which includes death, serious injury or significant property damage, or category B, which includes incidents that may have the potential to cause a serious accident. The number of notifiable occurrences of trespass has increased in recent years. In 2016–17, there were 328 category B notifiable occurrences of trespass, and in 2017–18, that number increased to 510. In 2018–19, the number of category B notifiable

occurrences of trespass increased further to 885 incidents. In 2019–20, there was one category A notifiable occurrence of trespass and 742 category B notifiable occurrences of trespass. In 2020–21, there were no category A notifiable occurrences of trespass and 992 category B notifiable occurrences. Although this increase in the number of notifiable occurrences of trespass can be attributed to changes in the national rail safety reporting guidelines, it nevertheless demonstrates that the increase in the occurrence of this offence has corresponding adverse impacts on rail safety, railway operations, railway workers and the community as a whole.

Prosecutions for the offence of trespass under the act are conducted through the court system. The average cost to the PTA to prosecute trespass offences is between \$2 000 and \$3 000. This bill will increase the maximum fine to \$5 000, which reflects the actual cost of prosecuting an offence of trespass and ensures that the increased penalty is commensurate with the gravity of the offence. This bill will also introduce a modified penalty that may be prescribed for the offence of trespass that must not exceed 20 per cent of the maximum penalty that could be imposed for that offence by a court. The modified penalty provision is consistent with the modified penalty provision in the Public Transport Authority Act 2003.

Rail safety is a shared responsibility. This bill is one measure to manage a risk to the safety of the public associated with railway operations. By increasing the penalty for the offence of trespass, the bill will discourage the public from accessing parts of the railway where access by the public is not allowed by law.

I commend the bill to the house.

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

FINANCE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (EMERGENCY RELIEF) BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from 12 August.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [12.20 pm]: I rise today to speak to the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. In doing so, my understanding is that the alliance opposition will support this measure, but there are some matters that we would like to discuss as we go through, particularly around transparency and the fact that the declarations that will be made by the Treasurer will not be disallowable instruments for Parliament. Therefore, there will be no further oversight by Parliament for any of the measures that are brought in, which is quite concerning for us as a matter of process. We would like to know exactly why that particular path has been chosen for this legislation.

I understand that in normal circumstances we need to allow Parliament the opportunity to view the subsidiary legislation. Making such a declaration disallowable would give the opposition the time to at least debate and consider the merit of that proposal. As far as I can see, once this legislation is passed, it will not involve any agreement or any discussion with the opposition whatsoever. It would seem to me that that is quite a step away from the processes that we are used to for properly safeguarding the functions of executive government and ensuring that it is accountable to the people and to Parliament. We will seek some understanding of the need for that particular provision, and why there is not a corresponding provision that requires some level of consultation with the Leader of the Opposition, as occurred in some of the other COVID legislation that was in this house.

If we go back to the emergency standing orders that this chamber adopted last year, we see that there was an understanding that there would be consultation or discussion with the opposition about bills that would be declared urgent and, after that, there would be an accelerated process for those bills to go through. In this case, it is a different matter, but we are being asked to allow the executive government to have the power to make changes to tax measures that are not in any way subject to parliamentary scrutiny. I would have thought that there should have been a mechanism in the legislation for consultation with the opposition if that power is to be used. It is not necessarily to seek to limit it or make it more of a protracted type of arrangement for the Treasurer to make that declaration, but simply to ensure that there is bipartisan support for such a measure. I think there has been a demonstration over the past year in the operation of this house—those members who are new to this place would not have experienced Parliament in the past year—of a genuine understanding of cooperation and a spirit of bipartisanship insofar as ensuring that the levers that the government needed to respond to the COVID situation and the state of emergency were there to be used. Those powers were never given without some discussion and consideration.

I know the extension of some of the information-gathering powers under the Emergency Management Act led to some questioning and an understanding of why they were needed. Also, the length of time that the powers under the Emergency Management Act could remain for the current state of emergency was a matter of some debate in this chamber at the end of the previous Parliament, because the opposition is keen to ensure that there is still a place for parliamentary scrutiny of legislation and oversight of the actions of executive government. This measure seems to be aimed at taking that away. This bill seeks to make it possible for the government to provide some relief when required in response to an emergency, which is highly supportable. The whole state is aware of the situation that we have been in with COVID and we know that some relief measures have been required to assist businesses and citizens throughout that period. That is well known to everyone. But from the experience of a member of Parliament

who represents an area that has been impacted, quite recently, by the forces of nature with tropical cyclone Seroja, I can see that other circumstances and emergencies also need this reaction from government. It is appropriate for government to make some measure of relief for its citizens when they are faced with that situation.

As I say, we are not opposed to the power being used. We are concerned that once it is granted, the opposition will not have any continual oversight or involvement in ensuring that the government is not involving itself in some measure of overreach in its decision-making. We do not really understand why, when it controls both houses of Parliament, the government would be frightened about putting in a measure that allowed the instrument to be disallowed. It seems a bit absurd, in a way, that the government would be so concerned to maintain that power for itself that it would not allow for disallowance. There may be a good reason for it. Perhaps it is around the need to maintain certainty. Once the government has made a decision, it wants to ensure that it can get that decision on the ground as possible, rather than wait for the time within which a matter can be disallowed. I am interested to hear from the Minister for Finance exactly why that is the case. Are there actual reasons for it, other than the fact that the bill is silent on that matter? In a briefing with the minister's officers and Treasury officials, at which Hon Dr Steve Thomas was present, the question was asked about why the decision has been made to not make the subsidiary legislation disallowable. The answer was simply that the legislation is silent, so it will not be disallowable. That is not an answer about why. It is an answer to say that it is. We would like to know why and whether there is a reason other than the fact that the government just does not like to have scrutiny of its decisions. If there is a very good reason, let us hear it. As I said, I could imagine that it may well be that the government wants to provide that relief and then not backtrack or make changes after it has enacted the measures. If that is the case, please let us know and explain exactly how that will work.

There were other interesting questions. One of those being what particular charges this will apply to. Are any taxes exempt—for example, royalties? The answer we got back was that taxes in this sense do not include royalties. They do, however, include duties such as those for on-demand transport and betting taxes et cetera. I imagine that we are not going to use emergency powers to relieve betting taxes, but the minister may be able to provide some information on other taxes, because at that briefing a request was made for the provision of a list of taxes, duties and grants that could be amended under this legislation. I am not aware that that has been provided; if it has, my apologies, but I am not aware of it having been provided. I would appreciate it if the minister could provide that during consideration in detail, which I am sure we will go into at some stage this afternoon.

With regard to timing, I would be interested to know exactly why the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 has been brought on now and whether there is a particular reason for that. Are there measures that the government wishes to introduce? Is it something to do with the budget process or is it simply coincidental that it has been brought in in the same week that the budget is brought down? That is a question on which I would be interested to hear the minister's comments.

I believe this legislation will also address the first home owner grant scheme, and that there will be an increase in the grant to alleviate the financial and economic impacts of a declared emergency. Unlike a tax relief measure, a grant relief measure cannot apply to a retrospective period that ended before the emergency was declared. Obviously, most of the emergencies we are now considering are still running, so is there any likelihood that this may well lead to an increase in the first home owner grant scheme in certain areas of the state? That is a matter of some interest to me, seeing as the area I represent has been heavily impacted on by such a declared emergency. I would like to know whether that is something the government might contemplate down the track.

As I said, the opposition will not oppose this bill, but we would certainly like to know exactly why the government has chosen to not make these declarations disallowable. We would also like to understand what effect not allowing these matters to be discussed further will have, in terms of the ability to provide effective relief. If it has a positive effect on that, we may be in a position to support it; but, as a matter of principle, the opposition does not support the Parliament being unable to disallow subsidiary legislation unless there is a very good reason. If there is one, we would like to know what it is. It is also disappointing that there was no discussion with the opposition on the introduction of any of these measures, seeing as the government is taking away the power of disallowance.

With that, I will wrap up my contribution. I hope we see some relief to the areas that have been heavily impacted upon in places like my electorate, Wooroloo and other places. I am sure that there is a good reason for the declarations that will be made. We support making sure that citizens are well supported in emergencies; we are just concerned about that particular aspect of this legislation. I will wind up my contribution at that point.

MR H.T. JONES (Darling Range) [12.33 pm]: I rise to make a contribution in support of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. I thank the member for Moore for his contribution and qualified support for the passage of the bill; I am sure the minister will respond to the queries he has raised.

The bill seeks to amend the Taxation Administration Act 2003 and the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000, to allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to declare tax or grant relief measures considered necessary to alleviate the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. The government announced payroll tax relief measures for small businesses in response to the COVID-19 pandemic last year, but the measures could not be administered until new legislation had been passed.

Such tax relief measures will include relief from land tax, which is particularly pertinent to the experience of the owners of the 72 properties destroyed and 39 properties damaged in the Roleystone and Kelmscott fires in 2011. I ask members to cast their minds back 10 years to 6 February 2011 and the devastating fire events in Kelmscott and Roleystone in my electorate of Darling Range. The previous night there had been a significant fire event in Red Hill, an area situated 30 kilometres to the north of the Kelmscott and Roleystone fires. It attracted significant incident management and firefighting resources. However, although 6 February was not exceptionally hot, a fire weather warning was issued because of significant easterly winds by the then Fire and Emergency Services Authority—now the Department of Fire and Emergency Services—advising that if a fire were to start and take hold, it would be unpredictable, move very fast and be difficult for firefighters to bring under control. This was supported by the fire danger advice disseminated by FESA, with a total fire ban declared.

Unfortunately, that warning proved correct. In the late morning of Sunday 6 February 2011, a fire was ignited in the front yard of a property at 405 Brookton Highway in Roleystone. This property was approximately 500 metres to the east—upwind, that day—of my sister's then house on Buckingham Road, and my parents then lived two houses further downwind on the same section of Buckingham Road. For context, my house is located further down Brookton Highway, towards Albany Highway, approximately three kilometres from the origin of the fire. I proudly live in the flats!

During summer, it is not unusual to see smoke emanating from the valley and beyond. These fires are usually either some distance away and are of no immediate concern to my family or they are prescribed burns that are being suitably managed. If they are closer, they are always extinguished quickly. My mother would call me often to report smoke sightings from her vantage point on top of the hill. Whether I was at home or at work, I would dutifully check the FESA or DFES website and put her mind at rest by informing her that the fire was a prescribed burn or otherwise.

On the day of that fire, I was at home with my family and I recall looking out the window and seeing smoke coming from beyond the hill. I was not too alarmed, but I was unable to ascertain how far away it was. However, I went out the front of my house at some point to have another look, likely at the prompting of the emergency vehicles that were proceeding up Brookton Highway. The initial response was provided by the Armadale career Fire and Rescue Service; the Roleystone Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service; and the Roleystone and Bedforddale Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades.

Not long after that, my sister's car came screaming into my driveway, containing her, her family and their dog. My sister was in a state of panic and shock screaming, "The"—expletive—"valley is on fire!" She had been to my parents' house to urge them to leave quickly, but in their usual nonchalant fashion they had taken their time. They soon arrived at my house as well, with the clothes on their back and their dog. We watched as more and more fire assets, including air support, were directed to the fire. We began to speculate on what was happening, catastrophising on the outcome.

We were then evacuated from our house via SMS messages, even though we felt safe where we were. We decamped to the house of our friends, Frank and Shona Edwards, who lived on Albany Highway, just outside the evacuation zone. Shona was a beautifully kind lady, but she tragically passed away some years later from breast cancer. Frank is now the proud owner of Hidden Specialty Coffee, a cafe in Kelmscott, which he runs with his daughter Suzie. The cafe is just the other side of the river, so it is just outside my electorate. It is a fine and very popular cafe. Frank's daughter, Suzie, was my daughter Grace's best friend at Kelmscott Primary School.

As the day drew on, the extent of the fire and the enormous resources being thrown at it were evident for all to see, particularly from our vantage point on Albany Highway. There was a constant stream of air assets, which was testament to the seriousness of the fire and the desire to knock it out as quickly as possible. It was like watching a disaster movie unfolding in front of our eyes, except it was our neighbourhood that was being destroyed. A total of 37.5 hours were flown by the helitaks, with 261 total drops and 437 000 litres of water delivered to the fire zone for suppression. At 6.30 pm, when we were watching from Albany Highway, fire resources at the incident peaked at 56 appliances.

As night fell, we made our way back to my house at the edge of the roadblocks. We were lucky that we could re-enter our house. My parents stayed at my house for the next few days. They used the master bedroom, while my wife and the kids used the single beds. My sister had recently bought a property in the city that was unoccupied, so luckily for them, they were able to move to the city while we waited for the aftermath of the fire.

The shock of the event, combined with the lack of accurate and timely information over the next few days, exacerbated the anguish and upset of my family, and all those impacted by the fire. Rumours were circulating about which houses were razed, with apparent eyewitness, firsthand claims that they had seen particular houses burning, which subsequently proved to be incorrect. Due to the loss of the Buckingham Bridge on Brookton Highway, the fallen powerlines, and the risk posed by lingering fires and unstable trees, residents were not able to go home to check for themselves. There was also the fear of looting, so the police kept a tight perimeter to prevent unauthorised entry. Back then, only 10 years ago, there was no proliferation of drones, so we were unable to look for ourselves and it was left to our imagination.

My mother was particularly distressed as she was convinced that her house had gone up in flames. It was an old Tudor-style house with a lot of timber. With the false reports and a pessimistic viewpoint, she thought that she had lost everything—all of her keepsakes, her photographs and her memories of her own mother and father. My parents had complied with local firebreak laws but they did not have a fire plan or a list of items to retrieve quickly upon evacuation. As I said earlier, they arrived at my house in their own car with just the clothes on their back and their dog. As the days dragged on, so did the stress and trauma of trying to come to terms with the fire whilst not knowing how they stood in terms of their property. It was quite a period of anguish for my family and, I dare say, all residents affected by the fires. Eventually, we were permitted to return to Buckingham Road, and for my own family, we were relieved to see that both the house of my parents and my sister were structurally intact. The free-standing garages and carports, along with the fencing, gardens and all the trees on the properties, were burnt.

Tragically, the house between that of my parents and my sister, which was owned by the Usher family, was destroyed beyond recognition. The only remnants on their property of any human habitation were their two cars, which had been totally burnt out; they were just black shells. I understand that their son was a volunteer firefighter. However, he had been deployed elsewhere on the fireground during the fire so he was unable to save his own property. The house on the other side of my sister was also razed, and it seemed that alternate houses on that street were burnt and destroyed.

The fire had devastating impacts on the residents. There was the shock of losing their sense of safety. Some of them had lived a long time in the area without any fire or fires that had been dealt with quickly and put out by local fire brigades, and there was a sense that fire would not affect them. There was the shock of not knowing whether the properties or the animals left behind had survived. There was the uncertainty of dealing with insurance companies and second-guessing whether their insurance cover was adequate. Where were they going to live? Would they rebuild in the same area in which a massive fire had just gone through or would they move elsewhere? So many more impacts were felt, as the people impacted by cyclone Seroja are now feeling themselves.

My parents and the Usher family have moved from their properties in Buckingham Road and, coincidentally, have both moved to Busselton for a sea change. My sister has also left her property and moved to the inner city, and I know that others have moved away. The impacts of the losses continue to be felt by many families in the area.

With those lessons, I suppose I can talk about what people can do to prepare for bushfires. They should go to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services website and look under the bushfire tab or download the My Bushfire Plan app on their phones. People should talk to their local brigades and get to know them. They will give advice and recommendations. We often see volunteer firefighters at local markets such as the Bedfordale markets and the Serpentine–Jarrahdale markets in Mundijong, and at shopping centres, where they try to get their message to have a fire plan across to as many residents as they can. People should not think that a fire plan is not appropriate. For people who live in the electorate of Darling Range, a fire plan is definitely appropriate, and they should take the time—about 15 minutes—to complete one. Residents can talk to the brigades and learn from their experience and training. They may ask people: “How fireproof is your plan? Have you decided when you will leave, what you will take and where you will go?”

There is a preparation checklist on the DFES website, which people should consult. Bushfire protective clothing is not just for firefighters. People who live in these areas should have protective clothing. If they choose to stay and fight a fire, they need to have the proper protective equipment. If people find themselves leaving their exit too late, they still need protective equipment so that they do not perish on the way out. People need to know what the bushfire risks and dangers are. Flames are not the only risk people will face in a bushfire. They need to be aware of ember attacks, radiant heat and smoke. They need to become familiar with the bushfire warning system and the fire danger ratings in WA. One of the takeaways from the bushfires in Roleystone–Kelmescott was that there was little understanding of the bushfire warnings. If people decide to stay and fight a fire, they should make sure they have the correct equipment. People living in a rental property should talk to their landlord to see what their landlord expects them to do in the event of bushfire. I imagine most people who rent properties will be concerned about their own family and valuables. How can people keep informed during a bushfire? There are obviously good communications available in normal circumstances, but when a fire goes through, it knocks it out—the power goes down and mobile phone coverage can cease, so people need to have a redundancy plan. People should think about where to shelter in the event of a fire. If it is too late, where will they shelter on their property? How will people prepare their property for a bushfire? People should find a list of what to pack before a disaster occurs and pack a bushfire survival kit so that they know what to pack when they have to leave. They should also have something packed for their animals. Fire is a real risk. If residents travel during a bushfire, they need to pack an emergency kit and be prepared for roads to be blocked and bridges to be burnt.

To assist the preparation of Darling Range for the upcoming bushfire season, I have invited the Minister for Emergency Services and the Fire and Emergency Services Commissioner, Darren Klemm, AFSM, to visit the electorate in late October to provide a bushfire information session. Residents will be able to receive valuable information and advice on what to do to prepare for a bushfire in the event that one occurs. I will announce details of that shortly.

I cannot talk about bushfires without briefly mentioning the Roleystone bush fire brigade and the volunteer fire and rescue service whose committee has requested that the services’ combined management be transferred from the

City of Armadale to the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. This is entirely a matter for the City of Armadale officers and councillors. However, I urge all parties to resolve this issue with urgency, as it is a source of significant angst in the Roleystone community.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr H.T. JONES: I want to thank the women and men of the volunteer fire and rescue services and the bush fire brigades in Keysbrook, Serpentine, Mundijong, Jarrahdale, Oakford, Byford, Bedfordale and Roleystone, and the Serpentine–Jarrahdale State Emergency Service, located in Mundijong. I thank them for all the preparatory work they do such as training, bushfire mitigation, equipment maintenance, ordering equipment and making sure it is ready, and exercising their plans in preparation for a fire. I also thank them for their efforts to educate members of the community, who are often reluctant or otherwise disinterested in preparing their properties for fire.

Finally, I want to commend the Minister for Finance, the member for Armadale, for introducing this bill, which will give relief from land tax for up to two years following an emergency declaration. The minister knows Kelmscott and Roleystone very well. At the time of the Kelmscott and Roleystone fire he had been elected to this place for less than four months and had to come to terms with the devastating impact the fire had on the community, which occurred inside and outside his electorate. I know that he provided a great deal of support to the families who were impacted at the time, and he continues to do so. Recently, I attended a 10-year anniversary event of the fire with the families and the minister at Avocados restaurant. They continue to meet and share stories and reminisce. They are still coming to terms with the impact of the fire. Tony's impact is noticeable in those discussions. The contents of this bill will really help the people who are hardest hit in major disaster events, and I commend it to the house.

MS C.M. TONKIN (Churchlands) [12.53 pm]: I rise in support of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 because my family and I have had the lived experience of knowing its necessity. The bill seeks to amend the Taxation Administration Act 2003 and the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 to allow the Treasurer to declare tax or grant relief measures considered necessary to relieve the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. Unfortunately, the need for these amendments became apparent based on the experience of the state in providing payroll and other forms of financial relief in response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

In early 2020, when the dreadful implications of the emerging pandemic were becoming apparent, I was working in Port Moresby and trying to understand from a long distance the implications of COVID, particularly for my family in Perth. Apart from the uncertainty of my own circumstances, I was most concerned about the implications for my sons. Both my sons derive their livelihoods from small business—my younger son in the building industry and my older son in his wholesale bread manufacturing business. My younger son has not been greatly affected because the building industry has scarcely skipped a beat thanks to the prudent approach the McGowan government has taken to managing the COVID pandemic in this state. In fact, the building industry is flourishing. However, things have been very different for my older son. In March 2020, almost overnight his successful and profitable business lost about 80 per cent of its turnover, including from hotel, restaurant and cafe customers, as well as from a major airline and a health food chain. The speed of the impact on the business left the family in shock and scrambling to deal with the fallout, especially around the employment of the business's staff who faced enormous uncertainty. The McGowan government's commitment to a range of measures to support the state's businesses, along with the commonwealth's JobKeeper, enabled my son's business to limp through the initial hit from COVID until restrictions were reduced to a point at which the turnover returned to a level that made the business viable. However, every time we have a lockdown, even for only a few days, the stress of the uncertainty about the ongoing viability of the business is palpable for my son, and it reverberates through the whole family.

When COVID hits and quick lockdowns are necessary, the impact on many businesses is immediate and drastic. It is the same when a cyclone destroys communities or bushfires rage out of control, destroying everything in their path. In these emergencies, people can lose everything. When emergencies occur, the speed with which the state government can act to provide grant and relief measures can make all the difference to the wellbeing of thousands of businesses, communities and individuals. Relief measures give some certainty. I note that our friend from the opposition has raised the issue of certainty. Certainty is critical in these circumstances because when everything else is falling apart, we need to be certain about the government's commitment.

Relief measures provide hope and often cover life's necessities. They may be truly life sustaining. We are fortunate here in WA to have a government that has acted consistently, rationally and effectually in keeping out COVID. This has allowed us to live our lives relatively normally and for the economy to thrive, but we are certainly not out of the woods with COVID. Many others and I sweat on the daily news updates. We know that circumstances can change rapidly. That is why we need to help ourselves by getting vaccinated. That is a little plug for vaccinations. It is very important that we get vaccinated because it is our only way out of this.

We are also experiencing the inescapable reality of global warming that leaves us exposed to the effects of extreme weather events, including high winds, rising sea levels, tidal surges, droughts, cyclones, flooding and out-of-control bushfires. Just like with COVID-19, these may change people's circumstances very quickly, and the government needs to respond with relief measures with commensurate speed. Speed helps give people certainty and helps them cope when things are falling apart around them.

The amendments to the Taxation Administration Act will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to declare tax relief measures considered necessary to provide relief from the financial and economic impacts of a declared emergency. They may take various forms and these are outlined in the bill. The provisions will allow the Commissioner of State Revenue to administer the measures as part of the state's tax laws without passing legislation. This is crucial because acting quickly provides certainty in uncertain times. This is a critical aspect that will shorten the response time, which is very important when people's lives and livelihoods are in jeopardy.

The amendments include safeguards to ensure that declarations can be used only in limited circumstances. Tax relief measures will be declared only in connection with a state of emergency or an emergency situation declared under the Emergency Management Act 2005 or a public health state of emergency declared under the Public Health Act 2016. The Treasurer's declaration must specify which emergency the relief measures relate to, describe each tax relief measure and the period for which they will apply, and specify the persons to whom the measures will apply. These requirements will promote transparency and accountability. The declaration can contain relief measures for a period that occurred before the emergency was declared or before the tax relief declaration came into effect; however, relief measures cannot be declared for an emergency more than 12 months after the emergency ended. The measures also cannot be declared for a period longer than two years. Longer term relief measures would be supported by specific legislation. This is very important. These measures are to deal with the immediacy of emergency situations.

A tax relief declaration is subsidiary legislation and must be published in the *Government Gazette*. It can be amended by publishing a further instrument in the *Government Gazette*, which could include changes required to a tax relief measure to facilitate proper administration or to prevent it from being misused or improperly applied. These requirements address the integrity of the management of the relief measures. Corresponding amendments could be made to the First Home Owner Grant Act to allow the Treasurer to declare an increase to the grant or cap an amount to alleviate the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. This is also a very, very important tool to provide people with certainty and to help them deal with the economic impact of emergency situations. Unlike a tax relief measure, a grant relief measure cannot apply to a retrospective period that ended before the emergency was declared.

Passing this bill will ensure that the government can provide further COVID relief as it considers it necessary, or tax or grant relief in response to any other emergencies in the state. These are important amendments and very necessary amendments to allow the government to respond to emergency circumstances that are not hypothetical but potentially imminent and real. For this reason, I commend the bill to the house.

MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka) [1.05 pm]: I rise to speak in support of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 that is before the house today. I thank the minister for bringing this bill before us today for consideration. We have heard a number of contributions from other speakers that have highlighted some of the important reasons this legislation is necessary and important. In framing my contribution, I guess I want to start by recalling the situation that we found ourselves in about 18 months ago in late March 2020. I think it is easy to forget the circumstances that we confronted at the time, because we have been fortunate in WA to live relatively normal lives. But those of us who can stretch our memories back 18 months will remember that in the first few months of 2020, COVID-19 was moving very rapidly across the world and we had seen China have a period of lockdown. It seemed so foreign and unusual to us that there could be a virus that would require people to stay in their homes and not go about their normal business. It was almost unbelievable stuff. We saw it move from China into Europe and in March 2020, COVID arrived in Australia. These were very scary and challenging times, I think, for all of us. We can probably turn our minds back to our own personal circumstances and reflect on how we felt at the time, when we really did not know what was going to happen next. We did not know how this would play out at all and we had seen the loss of life around the world. We had seen hospitals become overwhelmed in Italy and had seen extensive sickness and death with really quite frightening daily tallies of infections climbing steeply every day in the United States and also China.

As those first cases were reported in Australia, we all started to realise that the pandemic would affect our lives too, that we would not escape unscathed from this global pandemic. We did not know what that would look like. I think most people would recall that at the time there was a high degree of anxiety and uncertainty, about not only their own and their family's health and wellbeing, but also what it would mean for our economy. During those times we recognised that there needed to be extraordinary responses to those circumstances, and there were. Through the early days of the pandemic we indeed saw extraordinary and unusual responses from government, business, the union movement and all walks of life. I think the member for Moore commented in his contribution about the very collaborative approach taken in this Parliament for dealing with legislation and other things that would ensure that our community would be able to withstand the uncertainty that the pandemic introduced, in the best way that we possibly could.

During those times, as I have already touched on, people were obviously concerned about what it would mean for their own health, that of their families and loved ones and, for myself, with elderly parents, I was very concerned about what it would mean for them and what it would mean for people's financial wellbeing. We heard the member for Churchlands relate the concern that she and her family feels about the financial wellbeing of their family members in the industries that have been particularly affected.

If we turn our minds back to the early part of 2020, we will recall that as the federal government made announcements about shuttering particular industries, a large number of workers, mostly casual workers in the first instance, were either laid off or had their hours cut, or struggled to adjust to working remotely. I think we all recognised at that time, with industries closed down and a large number of people unemployed, that we had not seen anything like that since the Great Depression in the 1930s.

It was in this context, and in the face of significant challenges that we had not seen for more than 100 years, that we understood that we needed governments to act for our collective good—not only what would be good for the economy, but also what would be good for society and for people’s health and wellbeing. We have learnt a number of things from the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the most important things that we have learnt is that governments need to be able to respond very quickly to what were at the time, and continue to be, rapidly changing circumstances.

It is easy for us to forget those days, because Western Australia has been very fortunate. Through the leadership of the McGowan government, we have a wide range of tools available to us to ensure that we can stay safe. That includes border controls, lockdowns and social distancing. We have also been able to use financial stimulus to ensure that our economy is able to get through what are incredibly challenging times all around the world. This state has been very fortunate. We should never forget that we have by and large been able to carry on a relatively normal life, when all around the world that has not been the case.

We have learnt a lot from the pandemic. It has been made very clear to us that governments need to act quickly to ensure that they are able to apply a range of policy solutions to the problems that we have been encountering since early 2020. Those circumstances have been unfolding rapidly. Members might recall—I certainly do, and I will never forget—the large queues that formed at Centrelink offices after the first wave of industry restrictions. I had never seen anything like that in my lifetime. It was shocking to reflect on the large number of people who had lost their source of income and were seeking government support. History tells us that the union movement called on the federal government to provide the wage subsidy that became known as JobKeeper to ensure that we would not continue to see massive lines of unemployed people.

It was in that context that the state government first acted to provide much-needed stimulus to the Western Australian economy. A number of things were done. The bill before the house seeks to ensure that in the event the government needs to act again to provide stimulus, either in the form of tax relief or through the provision of the first home owner grant, it will be able to use this legislation as a precondition to making those changes quickly. This bill, in short, will ensure that the government has the tools to be able to provide targeted and specific economic stimulus in the event that it is needed for circumstances that arise in the future. It is worth remembering, of course, that we are not yet out of the pandemic. We only have to look at New South Wales and Victoria to see very clearly that COVID remains a real risk to our economy and to our health and wellbeing. We still do not know how those events will unfold and what they will mean for us in Western Australia. We need to be mindful of the fact that even though we have now been living with COVID for some 18 months, the situation is continuing to change and evolve. We need to do our best to ensure that we are equipped to respond. This bill will equip the government with the necessary tools to enable it to provide economic stimulus in the event that it is required in the future. The bill also envisages other economic shocks that might occur in the future. The bill is drafted to ensure that certain preconditions must be met before its provisions can be relied upon. It will provide flexibility for the government to enable it to turn to these kinds of relief measures when that is deemed necessary. I commend the member for Darling Range for his very personal account of what those circumstances might look like in the future.

Others members have commented on the specific provisions of the bill. It is important to note that the bill seeks to amend both the Taxation Administration Act 2003 and the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000. The proposed amendments to the Taxation Administration Act will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to identify tax relief measures that are considered necessary to provide relief from a declared emergency. After a tax declaration is made, the Commissioner of State Revenue will be able to administer those measures as part of the state’s taxation laws without the need to pass specific legislation, as was the case, as the member for Moore outlined, when these matters were dealt with last year. The bill includes safeguards to ensure that declarations can be used only in certain circumstances. Tax relief measures, for example, can be declared only in connection with a state of emergency, an emergency situation declared under the Emergency Management Act 2005, or a public health state of emergency as declared under the Public Health Act 2016. The Treasurer’s declaration must specify which emergency the tax relief measure relates to and describe the relief measure, the period for which the measure will apply, and the persons to whom it will apply. The declaration must be specific and address what it is intended to do. The declaration may also contain relief measures for a period that occurred before the emergency was declared. However, relief measures cannot be declared for an emergency more than 12 months after the emergency has ended.

The second piece of legislation to be amended by this bill is the First Home Owner Grant Act. The bill will enable the Treasurer to declare an increase in the grant or cap amount to alleviate the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. Unlike a tax relief measure, a grant relief measure cannot apply to a retrospective period that has ended before the emergency was declared. This bill will equip us with the necessary tools to ensure that we are able to respond quickly to both this pandemic and any emergency situation that this state might face in the future.

I now want to concentrate more closely on one of the stimulus measures contained in this bill—that is, the first home owner grant. First home owner grant schemes have been used by both state and federal governments in a variety of different formats over the years. In essence, the first home owner grant scheme has two primary goals. The first is to assist with housing affordability. The second is to provide a direct stimulus for the construction industry, and through the construction industry into the broader economy. It is worth bearing in mind these two objectives of the first home owner grant. This is particularly relevant in Western Australia, because the construction industry is one of the biggest employers in this state, along with health and community services, and retail. At the time of the 2016 census, about 113 000 people, or 9.8 per cent of the WA workforce, were employed in the construction industry. One feature of the construction industry is that much of the work is insecure. The construction industry is extremely susceptible to economic shocks and downturns. As construction work dries up, people lose their jobs. Therefore, stimulus packages such as the first home owner grant are one way of minimising the risk of large-scale unemployment that might arise from economic shocks and downturns. Again, when we think about the circumstances in the first half of 2020, the construction industry was very concerned that it was approaching what I think it described as a cliff, and that work would dry up and there would be extensive job losses throughout one of WA's largest employment industries. Keeping people employed is good for not only those people and their families, but also other businesses, because they spend their money in the local economy and support our shops, cafes and other retail outlets.

I want to reflect on the work that has been done by the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre. It has produced an excellent report looking at the question of home affordability, which is the other objective of first home owner grant schemes. The report, titled *Housing affordability in WA: A tale of two tenures*, was released in June of this year. It looks at a number of things associated with housing affordability in WA and in my view makes some interesting conclusions about the housing stimulus that was offered by both the federal and state governments during the COVID period. I want to share some of that today, because it is worth reflecting on the impact of these stimulus measures.

The Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre has conducted a housing affordability survey every two years since 2015, so it has survey data from 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2021. It undertakes survey work in WA, New South Wales and Queensland, and its work gives us a pretty solid insight into housing affordability and how it is changing over time. Of course, it is a matter of record that the commonwealth and state governments were very quick to respond to the COVID pandemic by introducing first home buyer assistance packages, which meant that, through a combination of grants and stamp duty relief, WA home owners could access a significant amount of money to help them buy their first home during the last year. It is perhaps unsurprising to see that first home buyers responded to that considerable incentive by doing exactly that. Nearly 22 000 new housing loans for first home buyers were approved in just the 10 months between July 2020 and April 2021, which is nearly double the rate compared with the same period last year. More housing loans were committed to first home buyers than to non-first home buyers in WA for each month from August 2020 until January 2021.

The BCEC asked its survey respondents about a range of things, and 48 per cent of its survey respondents said that government incentives allowed them to bring forward their decision to purchase a new home. This compares with about 26 per cent of respondents who purchased a home more than five years ago, so we can see a very clear and demonstrable impact of the stimulus measure that was introduced. Of the survey respondents, 43 per cent said that they would not have been able to purchase their new home without the government assistance that was available at that time. The research also tells us that 70 per cent of respondents identify the main barrier to home ownership as the deposit. It is little surprise that first home owner grants have helped to alleviate this significant barrier for people to purchase their own home, and people have responded in considerable numbers to access these incentive schemes while they are available.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms M.J. HAMMAT: In my final comments, I want to reflect a little on my electorate of Mirrabooka, where housing is a very important issue. My electorate office deals with a number of inquiries every week related in one way or another to housing. Looking at the profile of the Mirrabooka electorate from the WA Parliamentary Library report based on the 2016 census, we can see the reasons that housing will always be an important issue for people who live in my electorate. Fewer people in my electorate are classed as high-income earners. It is an area with more low-income households than the greater Perth area, with 21 per cent of households in Mirrabooka classed as low-income households compared with 15.7 per cent of households in the greater Perth area. Obviously, home ownership is harder for people on lower incomes. It is harder to save a deposit and harder to make the repayments, so it is no surprise to find that people living in Mirrabooka are more likely to be renting. Thirty per cent of households in Mirrabooka are renting compared with 25 per cent in the greater Perth area. Also, a significantly higher number of people rely on social housing.

Compared with other suburbs, Mirrabooka is an area based on rentals. It is an area with lower income earners, and the housing stock in that area has really been typified by a larger proportion of medium density housing. Old houses on what was probably almost a quarter-acre block in the day are ageing and being demolished to make way for duplexes, triplexes and other affordable housing. I think that Mirrabooka is very much a place in which singles and young couples rent or purchase their first home. It is an obvious choice because of its affordability and proximity

to the city. These are often the same people who will take advantage of government incentives to purchase a new home if they have not already done so, and, in purchasing a new home, move into a larger dwelling, probably in an outer suburb as the circumstances allow. They will purchase a bigger home with a larger yard. Although there are a number of established houses and people who live in the Mirrabooka area, there is no doubt that the first home owner grant will have greatly assisted a large number of people who previously lived in a Mirrabooka home to be able to access government assistance to buy houses in more outer suburbs and establish themselves in a family home for the very first time. As they have generally lower incomes, this grant will have greatly assisted them to access the necessary deposit so that they can enter the housing market, exactly as the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre tells us. I am very sorry that they have left the Mirrabooka electorate but I am very glad that they have found the means to enter the housing market and hopefully establish some security for their and their families' futures.

It is the great Australian dream to be able to purchase a home of one's own. Many people in my electorate of Mirrabooka have perhaps come to the area as refugees and migrants, and they no doubt share our aspiration to purchase a home of their own and set up their families for a good life and lifelong security. Although the focus of this bill is on providing stimulus to the construction industry and, through tax measures, some relief for small businesses during the economic uncertainty of the COVID pandemic, these grants are one of the measures that has provided great benefit to our economy. In respect of the performance of the WA economy, the figures speak very much for themselves in not only the growth of our economy, but also the fact that WA has an unemployment rate of 4.9 per cent, which is a significant achievement, particularly when we contemplate what we thought the future would look like 18 months ago. I think that the economic stimulus that these grants have provided is clear and the benefits of that are clear for everyone to see in our economic data and in the performance of the WA economy.

It is also important to remember that these assistance packages and particularly the first home owner grants are not just about providing economic stimulus, which has perhaps benefited all. They have assisted many people in a real and practical way, not just in the electorate of Mirrabooka, but also, indeed, all around Western Australia and the greater Perth area, to access home ownership in numbers that we have not seen in recent history.

This is a sensible piece of legislation. It is a bill that will help to provide economic support to businesses and workers at a time that they need it most. It is not just about economic support; the additional benefits that come from home ownership cannot be understated.

With that, I will conclude my comments. I finish by congratulating the minister and the government more broadly for all the economic stimulus measures that have so far protected our economy and our society so well during these COVID times. I think it is particularly important to recognise that the economic stimulus has supported our economy, but the public health measures that we have put in place have well protected the health of our community, which has also contributed greatly to the economic recovery and the economic circumstances that we have enjoyed in Western Australia. I again remind members that we have an economy that is among the best in the world, which is indeed something to be very proud of. I acknowledge that important economic work and the fact that that has great benefits for us all. I particularly congratulate the government for the first home owner grant, which has assisted so many people into homes of their own, enabling them to access the great Australian dream. With that, I commend the bill to the house and conclude my comments. Thank you.

Visitors — Mother Teresa Catholic College

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): Before I give the member for Collie–Preston the call, I acknowledge those from Mother Teresa Catholic College in the gallery, and the Minister for Emergency Services, who is, of course, your local member.

Debate Resumed

MS J.L. HANNS (Collie–Preston) [1.30 pm]: I begin by acknowledging the contributions of the members for Mirrabooka and Churchlands who spoke about the very comprehensive economic provisions in this legislation. I rise in the house today to speak in support of the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. As outlined by members who have already spoken, the bill will position the government to urgently respond to emergencies, be they a state of emergency or an emergency situation declared under the Emergency Management Act 2005 or a public health state of emergency declared under the Public Health Act 2016. These amendments will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to declare tax relief or grant relief measures to provide relief for the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. The legislation is framed in such a way that these measures will provide almost immediate support for both businesses and individuals at times of crisis. The bill will allow the government to proactively better assist individuals and businesses when emergency relief is required immediately, rather than waiting for the enactment of appropriate legislation in Parliament on a case-by-case basis. Waiting for appropriate legislation to be passed can cause delays that adversely affect or impact communities that require support in their most critical times of need.

I take this opportunity to recognise the impact that the Wooroloo bushfires and cyclone Seroja have had on communities and acknowledge the significant support the McGowan Labor government has given those communities, most recently with the relief package given to communities affected by cyclone Seroja.

I grew up in, and have been a community member for many years of, the south west region. Many members would know that I grew up in Yarloop. The Yarloop shop that my grandparents ran was a community hub within the area. When we talk about Yarloop, what immediately springs to mind are the fires in Yarloop. My grandparents lost the very first shop that they owned in Yarloop through a fire caused by an electrical fault in a refrigerator. They lost their house, business and livelihood overnight. My nanna and her children, including my father, were away on holidays, and my grandfather and nanna's mother were in the shop when the fire broke out. The only thing rescued from that shop fire was a Singer sewing machine that my ageing great-great-grandmother single-handedly pulled out of a window of the burning shop.

While my grandparents rebuilt that shop, they lived with family. In those circumstances back in the 1950s, there was very little government support for businesses that were impacted by emergencies like fires. I want to put into context the fact that the loss of that particular business in Yarloop in a very small town—not so small in the 1950s—meant the loss of many jobs for local people at the time. My grandparents' business revolved around providing things like lunches for the timber mill workers. They provided the newsagency outlet and delivered the daily newspapers. This included the *Daily News*, which arrived by plane and was dropped off in the middle of the paddock behind my grandparents' shop, collected and bundled up and delivered during the day. Hopefully, there are some members in the chamber who recall the *Daily News*.

Mr M.J. Folkard interjected.

Ms J.L. HANNS: That is very good.

I have lived most of my life in the south west, but I also experienced several cyclone seasons in the Pilbara when I was a teacher in Tom Price. During my time in the north west, I experienced severe weather events, but nothing as terrifying as living through cyclone Alby when I was a child in Yarloop. Cyclone Alby tore through the south west in 1978, killing seven people and causing unprecedented damage to the south west. I remember watching the news and seeing Rick Ardon and Susannah Carr reporting on the aftermath of the cyclone that had wreaked havoc on local communities across the south west. Cyclone Alby left a trail of destruction categorised by subsequent bushfires, extensive property damage, storm surges and significant coastal damage. At the time, the damage was estimated to be worth \$US45 million in 1978 terms. Today, based on an estimate in 2011, that is about \$284 million in real-term money.

Although I was not living in the Collie–Preston electorate at the time, cyclone Alby caused an estimated 80 per cent loss of apple crops in the Donnybrook and Manjimup areas. According to sources, the gale-force winds, without precipitation, exacerbated 92 bushfires in the region. Those fires erupted into fully-fledged wildfires and expanded at a rate of five to 10 kilometres an hour. A total of 114 000 hectares was burned through Western Australia as a result of the fires. More than 10 000 sheep and 500 cattle and horses were killed within the area. Over 100 structures, 1 300 kilometres of fencing and tens of thousands of hay bales were destroyed. According to newspaper reports, two towns were levelled by those wildfires. At least 50 individual fires were fanned by the storm across the region, prompting more than 1 000 firefighters to assist in the efforts to put them out. Two of the seven fatalities of cyclone Alby were attributed to those fires. Storm surges from cyclone Alby also partially damaged Busselton jetty. Assistance for businesses and individuals came largely from the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund. Cyclone Alby in 1978 certainly had an impact on my childhood memories.

Fast-forward to 7 January 2016 and the Waroona bushfire that was heading south towards Yarloop. On the night of 7 January, I went to bed knowing that several of my family members were fighting a very real threat to their homes. I had not heard any news since late that afternoon and was quite concerned about my family members. I was on holiday in Busselton, but I lay awake much of the night worrying about whether they were safe. I woke to the news the following morning, reported by a local on Facebook, that Yarloop was gone. People asked on Facebook, "Which bits are gone?" and the person who posted on Facebook replied, "All of it." I remember lying in bed allowing that information to sink in. The pictures that came out of Yarloop confirmed the worst. It is devastating to know that all the markers of your childhood are gone, and with it so much heritage and history—gone within 25 minutes. That is the time the fire took to raze the town. The Yarloop Hotel where my brother and I sat patiently in our car with our shared lemonade and bag of chips waiting for my dad to see a man about a dog was gone. The Yarloop hospital where three generations of my family were born—my grandfather, my father and me—was gone. Every house I had ever called home in Yarloop was gone. The Yarloop steam workshops, home to so much rail heritage, were also gone, and gone with them was my favourite part of the workshops, the handcrafted wood patents for the parts manufactured onsite locally to maintain the equipment so that they did not have to wait for parts to arrive from the United Kingdom to repair the machinery. The Cabin Restaurant, which hosted so many friends and family for my Nanna's momentous ninetieth birthday celebrations, was also gone. The Country Women's Association Hall, where I would go during school holidays to help Mrs Jackson package up and deliver Meals on Wheels for the local senior citizens, was gone. The Yarloop Town Hall, about which my grandparents told of arriving on horseback to dances and concerts in the interwar years, was gone. The Yarloop Fire Station was gone. These were memories for me, but the stark reality is that the cost was far greater for the people who were still living in Yarloop. The fires caused much heartache; two lives, 180 homes and 69 000 hectares of land were lost. It took career and volunteer firefighters, emergency services

and local residents 17 days to bring the blaze under control. The town was changed forever and the aftermath of the fires was long-lasting. I acknowledge the people who lived in Waroona and Yarloop at the time, the firefighters and the families of the two men who lost their lives.

The delay by the government at the time in providing support needs to be acknowledged. Support for local residents came well down the track. Many locals felt they were left to their own devices at a time when the community was most in need. Julie-Ann McMiles was the manager at the Yarloop Community Resource Centre at the time. She speaks highly of the support she and local residents received from the Lions Club, the CWA and business owners. They all pitched in to provide generators, food vouchers, food and moral support to residents. Local farmers, so used to being resilient and self-sufficient, found it really challenging to ask for help. The Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund and federal government assistance arrived to provide support to the people of Yarloop. A recovery committee was formed, with the Shire of Harvey, Anglicare, the Red Cross and Julie-Ann working alongside the Department of Communities. Having lost the community resource centre in the fire, Julie-Ann and one staff member continued to provide support from Julie-Ann's home. They later moved to the Yarloop Masonic Lodge and then the Yarloop Sports Pavilion, before finally relocating to the current rebuilt premises at the site of the Yarloop Town Hall, which had been burnt in the fires.

The McGowan Labor government demonstrated its support for the community of Yarloop with the rebuilding of the Yarloop hall and, more recently, by awarding a heritage grant for the Yarloop Workshops redevelopment project. The McGowan Labor government's response to emergency situations like those I have detailed and to public health emergencies, like our response to the COVID-19 pandemic, stands in stark contrast to that of previous governments. The greatest lesson, for me, from the Waroona–Yarloop bushfires is demonstrated in this government's response. A recommendation of the inquiry into the bushfires was for a Bushfire Centre of Excellence to be built. The McGowan Labor government has delivered on that promise, and the Karla Katitjin Bushfire Centre of Excellence at Nambeelup has been funded to the tune of \$33 million. The Koolinup Emergency Services Centre has been established in Collie. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services facility includes the state's first regionally based level 3 incident control centre that can be activated during major emergency incidents in the south west, including bushfires. The Koolinup Emergency Services Centre will support career and volunteer emergency services personnel, including firefighters and State Emergency Service staff. The centre will also include an emergency driver training school for DFES as well as other volunteers and staff, and will provide a regional fleet management capability that will support the relocation of up to 70 of DFES's high fire season fleet to Collie. The contractor building the centre, Perkins Builders, has also committed to ensuring that 70 per cent or more of the building materials, contractors and supply chains for the centre will be sourced from Collie and south west–based businesses. This is incredible support from the McGowan Labor government.

This government has drafted this very important legislation to allow governments to move quickly in times of emergency and crisis. The government will have legislation on hand to provide timely support to communities impacted by devastating future events like cyclone Alby, the Waroona–Yarloop bushfires, the Wooroloo bushfires, cyclone Seroja and the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, it is inevitable that there will be emergencies in the future.

In closing, I wish to share with members some of the most profound words I have ever read. They are the words of a long retired mill worker inscribed on the walls of the Yarloop Workshops. I wonder when he wrote these words; perhaps it was while he was on his lunchbreak or on his last day at work. He wrote, "It is a far, far greater thing I do now, than I have done before." In supporting this legislation, I reflect on these words. I reflect on the McGowan Labor government's proven ability to do far, far greater things to support Western Australians in their times of greatest need. I commend this bill to the house.

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [1.45 pm]: I rise to speak to the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. This is a good bill that is long overdue. Members may not be aware that the most recent pandemic scare was in my electorate, based around the Mindarie marina. The businesses there were absolutely destroyed for a short period. I met with a majority of the businesses owners a couple of weeks after the COVID scare and took the time to listen to their concerns going forward. I suppose fear would be the best way to describe how they felt about long-term shutdowns without financial support for their businesses. I am talking about the Indian Ocean Brewing Co specifically, my favourite coffee shop Union Kitchen and others. A couple of businesses over the back had some scares, including a fitness place. Even one of my volunteers had to do 14 days of self-quarantine because he just happened to have been in proximity to one of the carriers when he was there. He tested negative and it was all good in that space.

This bill will allow the Treasurer to declare and grant tax relief or measures considered necessary to relieve the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. That is a good thing. I will reflect on this later. Businesses over east are deadset battling from week to week, so any ability to help out businesses in that space is a good thing. The bill will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the minister, to declare tax relief and other measures considered necessary to provide relief from the financial and economic impacts of a declared emergency. Later, I am going to unpack what a declared emergency is. The amendments include safeguards to ensure that declarations can be

used only in limited circumstances. Tax relief measures will be used in a state of emergency as set out in the Emergency Management Act or a public health state of emergency declared under the Public Health Act. That space is interesting because we are currently running this emergency under the Emergency Management Act, which is a good thing. The second reading speech states that it can occur only on the declaration of an emergency. The definition of “emergency” is not found in the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill; it is in section 3 of the Emergency Management Act, which states—

... the occurrence or imminent occurrence of a hazard which is of such a nature or magnitude that it requires a significant and coordinated response;

It is not just small; it requires something more. The act says that there are 27 specific types of emergency. In my past life, I probably attended most of them. An air crash is one. Yes, I attended a single-engine plane crash when I was the officer in charge at Wagin Police Station. A road crash is a type of emergency. I do not care to think about how many of those I have attended. A land search for a missing person is another. I have conducted numerous land searches for young and old. People being lost in water is also a type of emergency. I have done at least half a dozen of those cases, and for one inquiry I received a commendation. Another one is “radiation escape from nuclear ... warship”. We might think: here, in Western Australia? But if we think back, we will realise that a while ago we used to have American aircraft carriers anchor at Gage Roads quite frequently, so it is a significant risk. Another hazard is “space re-entry debris”. Members are going to have a giggle at that, but no-one can forget Skylab. When I was a copper, every couple of years we would get a warning for one of those. I know that a Chinese satellite came down only in the last 12 or 18 months. It does happen; it happens quite regularly. A terrorist act is also seen as a type of emergency, and quite rightly. Luckily—touch wood—we have avoided that in Western Australia and I hope that with good and determined preventive actions by our police and intelligence agencies, we will not see that here. A building collapse with trapped persons inside is seen as an emergency and qualifies under the act. We would think that would be something firemen have carriage on. In actual fact, the police do. I reckon there is bit of a demarcation line —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): Sorry, member, did you say “firefighter”?

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: The Department of Fire and Emergency Services—collapsed buildings —

The ACTING SPEAKER: You said “firefighter”, I gather.

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: Firefighter, yes. I shall continue.

Hazards include chemical spills, biological spills and radiological spills. Members may think: radiological? I remember when I was at Eucla as a young constable, going along the train lines looking for a radioactive receptacle that was used to carry medicines. Another hazard is animal pests. Why is that a risk? Some members may not remember, but some years back equine flu almost destroyed our horse industry. Plant pests are another hazard, quite regularly. I know that the owners of banana plantations in Carnarvon are deadset terrified of black spot coming across, and our apple industry in the south west is terrified of codling moth or black spot—one of those funguses. Animal disease is another hazard. I mentioned animal pests. The fire ant is a significant risk to us, and animal pests are listed as a type of emergency. I spoke of plant disease. Vessel collision is another hazard. Imagine if our oil carriers hit each other up in the north west. It is a significant issue.

Another hazard is oil spills, both on water and on land. Fuel shortages are a significant threat and a significant worry to us here in the west. We have only 14 days of diesel left in this country. If we had anything that interfered with the fuel flow, it would be a significant risk to us. Electricity failure is also a type of emergency. Members will go, “What?” We saw our south-eastern neighbours Victoria and South Australia lose interconnectors during the recent storms. That crippled South Australia, so it ended up designing a battery to help fix that. A heatwave is a risk under the Emergency Management Regulations. Members will go, “What?” That risk is managed by our Department of Health. Cyclones are another emergency. We get to see those every summer. For earthquakes we go, “Oh, yeah?”, but who here can remember Meckering? The Meckering earthquake was significant. Floods are another hazard. Do we get them? Yes. When I was the officer in charge of Kalbarri, a once-in-a-thousand-year flood went through the town. It went 15 or 20 metres above the previous —

Ms M.J. Davies: All we’re hearing is we don’t necessarily want you to turn up in our local town! It is following you around.

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: I hear the Leader of the Opposition. I will come back to these, but I hear what she is saying.

Storms, tsunamis and rail crashes are also emergencies set out in the Emergency Management Act. The funny thing is that there is not one mention of financial help in the Emergency Management Act. It does not mention financial relief for businesses. It does not mention grant relief for first home buyers. It does not mention tax relief for businesses. It does not mention anything about that. When we come back to emergency management and what “emergency management” means, there are significant inputs about what it refers to. The Emergency Management Act, which was instigated in this house by the Speaker at another time, was arguably one of the finest pieces of legislation we have seen. It has protected our state in the current predicament that we are in, and if we did not have

it, I think we would be far worse off than we are. The best example is that New South Wales does not have emergency legislation that resembles our Emergency Management Act. Be mindful of that. The Emergency Management Act defines the meaning of “emergency management” and sets out four categories. The first is prevention, which means —

the mitigation or prevention of the probability of the occurrence of, and the potential adverse effects of, an emergency;

At that preventive stage, should we give financial relief to businesses? There is an argument for yes and no, particularly if the mitigation is done knowing an event is imminent. Personally, I would rather see it the way we have it currently; we allow things to roll out and good financial management and decision-making processes reflect that. The next category is —

(b) preparedness — preparation for response to an emergency;

Should we consider helping businesses prepare to respond to an emergency? That is an interesting question. Should we help businesses, for want of a better term, stockpile food and resources? Should we give Bunnings access to extra sandbags or timber in preparation for the likely event of an emergency? That is something to ask and consider. Should we make it tax-deductible? I do not know.

The third part is the response to the incident, which is —

... the combating of the effects of an emergency, provision of emergency assistance for casualties, reduction of further damage, and help to speed recovery;

The ACTING SPEAKER: Attorney General! Excellent.

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: That is a significant area in which I think financial assistance should be made available to businesses. The Department of Communities has a role in emergency management to look after the short term. We saw that with the Minister for Emergency Services’ fine efforts after the recent cyclone at Kalbarri and through the midwest. Have we set up financial assistance for businesses? Absolutely. The Minister for Tourism recently put out some grants to help out the local businesses within Kalbarri; they were taken up within a week. I must admit I knew a lot of the owners of those businesses because I used to be the officer in charge, so I get that area. The final category is recovery. Should we bring in financial assistance during the recovery phase after a specific incident? Absolutely. This fantastic effort that the McGowan government made with the first home buyers’ scheme is commendable, and we should always be mindful of that. Should we help out businesses with payroll tax? Absolutely, if we can do that. If it is linked back to a specific emergency and time frame, absolutely we must. If people do not have a gainful job, they will not have employment and that will impact on our economy and small, medium and large businesses.

The Emergency Management Act also defines a whole heap of time durations set out in that space. I am very mindful of what that looks like. The act is set out in such a way. There are local responses—do we need financial management in that space for a traffic crash? Probably not. With regard to district responses, I can tell members that major incidents are generally dealt with at a district level. Floods are generally dealt with at a district level. Do we need financial support for small businesses in that space? If they lose their power, which has happened up there, should we be in a position to help them out in that space? I would suggest yes. I believe the minister who deals with that has done a sterling job in that space and needs to be commended. With regard to state emergencies, we are looking at one right now, the pandemic. Some of the bigger cyclones that have hit Western Australia have been state emergencies at a state level. Terrorism acts are at the same level. Chemical spills—probably not. It is set out for where they are, and the type of emergency will dictate the response. I would suggest that financial assistance will generally occur for state emergencies but not necessarily for district emergencies, which are at a lesser level, but that is what it is. I think this is a fine piece of legislation.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3597.]

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

AMBULANCE RAMPING

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

I refer to the litany of excuses the government has made for excessive ambulance ramping, including COVID cleaning, heightened demand, mental health presentations and National Disability Insurance Scheme patients creating bed block. Can the minister confirm the latest excuse for his woeful underperformance in addressing record ambulance ramping, which reached over 6 000 hours last month?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I do not accept the premise of the question. We have a complex health system, dealing with a complex set of social circumstances in a global pandemic. The reasons for our health system being under pressure are complex, so I am sorry if that does not meet the member’s narrative around one thing being wrong. The fact of the matter is that our hospitals are facing unprecedented demand as a result of our post-COVID experience, which has seen a number of people presenting to hospitals. There is a range of reasons why people say our hospitals are facing demand at the moment.

The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners has confirmed that, in its view, a lot of people are now presenting with higher acuity in relation to their issues because they did not take the opportunity to get themselves to a GP last year. Sean Stevens, the chair of the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners WA, has actually confirmed that. That is also borne out by the figures for our emergency department presentations. For instance, in July 2021 compared with July 2018, in category 2 and 3 triage we have had an 18 per cent and 13 per cent increase respectively. That gives an indication that we have a large number of people presenting with more complex and acute issues. That is further supported by evidence that shows that in that time the length of episode of care has grown by an average of 90 minutes for each presentation. If we multiply that over the million people who go to our EDs each year, we see that that is having a significant impact.

Of course, as many people know, the key for good patient flow is getting people out of beds. At the moment, we have over 100 patients who have been in hospital for more than 150 days. These are patients who are waiting for either an aged care assessment team assessment or a National Disability Insurance Scheme assessment. Unfortunately, we are really struggling to find them places to go, and struggling under the NDIS system. Those are just two examples of why our hospital system is under pressure. Another issue is the workforce shortages that we are experiencing at the moment. I have gone into some detail in this place about the efforts we are going to overcome this workforce shortage.

The key thing we are doing, and the one thing we are proud of, is the significant investment in our health services of \$1.9 billion for mental health, COVID-19 and hospital staffing support services. We can do that because we have done the hard work to protect the state's finances. Now, under the leadership of Premier McGowan, we are in a position to invest heavily.

AMBULANCE RAMPING

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

I have a supplementary question. Given that the minister has had 18 months to fix ambulance ramping and has failed his own benchmarks, with the lowest number of public available beds in the country, how can Western Australians have any confidence that our health system will be able to respond if there is a COVID outbreak in WA?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

The member is wrong once again, but that is pretty much true to form at the moment. The 18 months she refers to covers, of course, a period known as the global COVID-19 pandemic—a significant disruptor and shock to our system. It is the same shock that all the hospitals in this country are experiencing at the moment. However, in Western Australia we fund our hospitals, on a per capita basis, 18 per cent higher than other states. That is an indication of the investment that is going into them, and we will continue to make sure that we have strong investment because we know that the McGowan government puts patients first.

Visitors — Tambellup Primary School and The Southern River Band

The SPEAKER: Before I give the call to the member for South Perth, on behalf of the member for Roe, I welcome the staff and students of Tambellup Primary School. Welcome to Parliament House.

I also acknowledge in my gallery members of the infamous Southern River Band! I welcome them on behalf of the members for Thornlie and Southern River.

[Applause.]

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

482. Mr G. BAKER to the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record of strong and responsible financial management. Can the Premier outline to the house how the government is using its success in restoring the state's finances to invest in WA's future, to support the economy and to tackle the challenges confronting our state?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. I also acknowledge the students from Tambellup, who I met outside in the corridor. On behalf of the member for Thornlie, I acknowledge the members of The Southern River Band, who are in the back of the chamber. Upon walking in, I thought they were a group of 1970s escapees! But it turns out that they are in the running to play at the AFL grand final, which will be just wonderful.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The government has worked extremely hard over our four and a half years in office to repair the budget and put it back onto a sustainable pathway. We have to remember that when we arrived in office, debt had climbed from \$5 billion when the previous government arrived in office, to \$44 billion because of the shocking financial management of the last Liberal–National government, with record deficits, record debt and out-of-control spending. We put in place strong financial management and have arrested that climb. Indeed, we have paid down debt, and we are the only government in Australia that is doing that.

That has allowed us to do a range of things that will benefit Western Australia forever. Today I was able to announce, with the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Forestry, a historic move to protect all our native forests from large-scale logging. Large-scale logging will end at the end of the current forest management plan, in 2024. This will ensure that 400 000 hectares of karri, jarrah and wandoo forests will be preserved forever. It builds on the decision of the Gallop Labor government 20 years ago to save the old-growth forests. It means we will have a legacy for our children, our grandchildren and their grandchildren forevermore, to preserve important conservation areas across the state.

Obviously, over the last two centuries we have logged way too much, so we are now doing our best to repair what was a terrible historical mistake. As part of this, we are also going to invest \$350 million of new money to expand the softwood estate. Over the long term, this will save plantation timber jobs, create new jobs in that area and also save thousands of jobs in the construction industry in Western Australia that require those sorts of timber products. It is a \$350 million investment, or \$35 million a year.

On top of all that, we have announced that in total at this point we have budgeted \$9 billion for recovery and other measures to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic. We have announced \$1.9 billion in recurrent spending in the health and mental health systems, which means more beds, nurses and doctors, and more mental health services across Western Australia. We also announced \$3.1 billion in capital works for the health system, including \$1.8 billion for a new women's and babies' hospital in the electorate of Nedlands. On Sunday, we announced the single-largest investment in social housing, a record \$875 million, which will ensure that over the next four years, 3 300 social houses will be constructed or acquired across Western Australia. That will ensure a pipeline of work for the housing industry, particularly as the heat comes out of the industry now.

It is disappointing that the Leader of the Opposition has opposed some of these measures. I note that the Leader of the Opposition was out there this morning attacking our efforts to preserve forests in Western Australia. I am more than happy to point out that over the last 25 years, the opposition's record—both Nationals WA and Liberal—has been to continue to want to the destroy the natural heritage of this state.

CORONAVIRUS — POLICE — G2G PASS

483. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the minister's response in question time yesterday to a question I asked about Emma Potter and other distressed G2G applicants who raised their concerns with the process through the media and who the minister described as "talkback radio whingers".

Has the minister asked the Commissioner of Police to detail how many G2G PASS applications are made and rejected, how many multiple times they have been rejected and what would assist in improving the system, or does the minister prefer to remain wilfully ignorant on this issue?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for her question. That question has been asked by her colleagues in the upper house and responded to via my office. The question about the number of applications and the number of rejections was asked some time ago.

The process that is in place, which has served well to protect the state against the incursion of COVID into the state, is that the Chief Health Officer defines the criteria by which an applicant can make an application for a G2G PASS. The police assess that application and apply the criteria as dictated by the Chief Health Officer. That has worked to keep the state safe. I continue to support the work done by police officers. The suggestion by the opposition on a regular basis that the police are somehow acting inappropriately in doing this incredibly hard and challenging work is just appalling. I will defend the police. They do a great job. They are doing a fantastic job on behalf of the state.

CORONAVIRUS — POLICE — G2G PASS

484. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Police:

I have a supplementary question. Given that there are multiple public examples of people who have had their G2G applications rejected, is this just a case of the minister's laziness or his willingness to admit that the system might have room for improvement, and is that the impediment to enhancing our G2G system in Western Australia?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I am confident that the police are applying the criteria set by the Chief Health Officer to protect the state of Western Australia against COVID. What I am concerned about is the constant undermining by the opposition of the defence of the state against a COVID incursion. That is witnessed by the Leader of the Opposition's behaviour here today and on other days, and by the shadow spokesperson for police, who was reported in *The West Australian* of 3 September as having questioned what the government's priorities are for the allocation of officers. Hon Peter Collier said that the government has got its priorities wrong in terms of the allocation of officers. We have increased police numbers by 513 since we took office. He also said that some 440 of those were assigned to the state's pandemic response through Operation Tide and that another 100 had been diverted to the meth border force. That indicates

that our priorities for the allocation of police officers are protecting the state against a pandemic and defending the state against drug dealers who bring meth into the state, and the opposition questions that priority. I do not know where the opposition is coming from. I know that it does not like protecting the state and the border against people like Clive Palmer. The opposition is on his side and would prefer us to open the border and drop our fight against meth, by the look of it. It is extraordinary that the opposition continues to do this, because when it does, it undermines the police. It is attacking the police, who are doing a wonderful job defending our state.

NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING

485. Ms J.J. SHAW to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the historic announcement this morning that the McGowan Labor government will end the commercial logging of Western Australia's native forests by 2024. Can the minister outline to the house what this landmark policy will mean for the environment and Western Australia's efforts in responding to climate change?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for her question. I am very pleased and proud to be part of a Labor government that is ending the large-scale logging and clearing of native forest. This builds on the work that was started nearly 20 years ago by the Gallop government by ending the logging of old-growth forest. We are moving in a very considered and careful way to look at how we can be more sustainable and manage our forests in a more sustainable way. I was in Mundaring this morning with the Minister for Forestry and the Premier to make this historic announcement. This is a fundamental shift in how we manage and view our forests. It is a shift away from clearing and deforestation, which is a significant contributor to climate change. The 2019 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report clearly outlined that deforestation and clearing was a contributor to climate change and that one of the best things we can do to halt climate change is to stop deforestation, and that is what we will do. All large-scale native logging will be stopped.

We will move very quickly to secure the two-tier karri forests into national park and look at how we can bring other areas of the state forest into either a national park or a conservation reserve to protect them for future industries. This is about shifting from an unsustainable economic activity in the timber industry to a more sustainable timber industry, which is the softwood industry. That is the future of the timber industry, and the state government is protecting those jobs.

This is a really, really important announcement for our state. Many people have fought for this for a number of years. It will preserve the incredible biodiversity and natural environment that we have in the south west for future generations to come. It will also support emerging industries like tourism and beekeeping that are much more sympathetic with biodiversity and the natural environment. I am very proud to be part of this government, which has moved to secure our south west forests. Essentially, it will mean that two million hectares of the south west forest out of the 2.5 million hectares will be protected from logging. This is an incredible outcome for our state.

POLICE — CRIME STATISTICS

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

I refer to the minister's response to my question asked on 19 August when the minister blamed domestic violence for the worst violent crime figures in Western Australia's history. Can the minister confirm that once domestic violence crime categories are completely excluded from the statistics that Western Australia still has the worst violent crime rate in the state's history, and why is this the case?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

No, member, I cannot confirm that. What I do know is that in 2016 the state experienced the highest crime rates in the history of the state, and that has not changed. That was under the Liberal-National government. At that time, we saw headlines indicating that the state was being flooded with meth and that crime was out of control. That was largely attributed to a change in policing methodology, particularly in the metropolitan area, that was overseen by the Liberal-National government. The current commissioner reversed that practice. He changed it back to a more conventional policing district model and reaped the benefits. I have travelled the state, from Denmark to Derby, visiting police stations and police districts, and I have not yet encountered one police officer asking us to go back to that system.

POLICE — CRIME STATISTICS

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

I have a supplementary question. Why is the minister completely unaware of his own violent crime statistics that are published and available; and, why, in answer to that same question, does he refuse to provide the public with a clear picture of how quickly police are attending violent crimes by publishing police response times?

The SPEAKER: Member, I caution you that you have effectively asked two questions in your supplementary, and the latter of those two questions has nothing to do with the original question. I ask the minister whether he would like to respond.

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

Thanks, Madam Speaker. I can say that I am deeply concerned that the member is appearing to not place much importance on the challenge that we confront with family and domestic violence and is also failing to acknowledge the benefit of a lot of work that has gone into encouraging particularly women—because they are the vast majority of the victims of family and domestic violence—to report it. In recent times we have seen the benefit of a change in culture, both within the police force and also in the wider community. People now understand that if they report it to police, it will be treated as a serious offence, a serious incident and a serious matter and it will be treated appropriately by police. That has encouraged people to, in greater numbers, report the fact that they are suffering from family and domestic violence. That is a good thing. It is sad that it is occurring. It is a major challenge that we confront, but the member should be supporting that outcome because it is a positive thing.

FORESTRY — SOFTWOOD PLANTATIONS

488. Ms E.J. KELSBIE to the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to today's announcement that the McGowan Labor government will invest a record \$350 million to expand WA's softwood timber plantations. Can the minister outline to the house how this investment will support the future of the forest industry as well as secure Western Australian jobs?

Mr D.J. KELLY replied:

I thank the member for the question and for the passionate work she has done in her community since she has come into this house. I was very pleased to be part of the announcement this morning. As part of the announcement with the Premier we announced a \$350 million expansion of WA's softwood timber estate. This is a massive investment. It is the biggest investment in WA's history in plantation timber, and probably the biggest investment of its type in Australia. That is the scale of it. We all know that pine is an essential critical resource for WA's construction industry. Sadly, the plantation estate has been allowed to run down over many years. At its peak we had about 90 000 hectares. If something was not done, we would have ended up at around 40 000 hectares over the next 20 years. That would have created a critical shortage of timber in Western Australia. One of the reasons that we are in this position is because the previous government did not invest in this area.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.J. KELLY: The Leader of the Opposition says that is not true. The figures speak for themselves. We will invest \$350 million over 10 years, which will plant over 30 000 hectares of pine. In the eight years of the previous Liberal government, on average, it planted 175 hectares a year. When we look at the year-by-year figures, in 2010 and 2011, it planted five hectares of pine; and in 2012, it planted zero hectares of pine! The Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Forestry during a period of the previous government along with the former member for Warren–Blackwood, Terry Redman. The Nationals WA let this estate run down. On this side of the house we are investing \$350 million in the softwood estate to give security to the thousands of workers who work directly in the mills that process that pine, places like Wesbeam, Wespine Industries and Laminex, and the thousands of workers who process that pine, plus the thousands of workers who work in the construction industry. That is what we announced today.

We also announced a \$50 million transition package for workers who currently work in the native forestry industry. I note that members opposite have been out complaining this morning about the decision. The impacts of climate change are real. There has been a 20 per cent reduction in rainfall in the south west of WA since the 1970s. The science says business as usual for native forestry is just not sustainable. That is what the science says; that is why there needs to be change in this industry. The trouble is that members opposite do not support the science and they do not understand the impacts of climate change. That is why they have their head in the sand on this issue. We are putting together \$50 million as part of the transition package. We will get industry, unions and the community together to work on a transition package for workers and businesses impacted by this change. It may be retraining or transitioning to other industries and it could be businesses pivoting to deal with the limited volume that will still be available. We will sit down with those communities, those businesses and those workers with this transition package and ensure that those communities have a future. Whether it be in softwood or in native forestry, the key is that it has to be sustainable in the long run. That is the only way that we will protect Western Australian jobs.

POLICE — RESPONSE TIMES

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

Why have police response times, much like ambulance response times, deteriorated so much under WA Labor, including priority response times in Northbridge and Perth, increasing from 2.9 minutes in 2017 to 13.6 minutes now, a dangerous and unacceptable blowout of 370 per cent?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

With regard to the comparisons that the member makes, it has always been normal practice for response times to be done over the entire metropolitan area and the average response time is the measure that is employed. But that aside, something has happened since 2017 that would have no doubt impacted on police in the same way as it

impacted on every part of Western Australia and every part of the community, and that is a pandemic. There are significant resources, as I indicated earlier, dedicated to responding to the challenges associated with the pandemic and I would not be surprised if there were slight changes to responses as a consequence of that. The truth is that our police are doing an incredible job in extraordinary circumstances doing two things: fulfilling all the normal practices that they did prior to the pandemic, and keeping the state safe. More than 400 police officers are dedicated to Operation Tide. They do all sorts of things. They are not just sitting in one location monitoring where people are. They visit people to confirm that they are in locations and they are protecting some of the sites where people are housed. They are at the airports and the ports. They are all over the state and they are at the borders. They are doing an extraordinarily demanding task all over the state in an incredible, unusual and challenging time, and they are doing a good job. The more the member comes into this place or into the media and questions what they are doing and the degree to which they are providing that service, the more he shames himself. It is embarrassing.

POLICE — RESPONSE TIMES

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

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister confirm that a blowout in police response times in Northbridge and Perth of 370 per cent may mean the difference between the life or death of a victim of violent crime, especially given that the rate of violent crime is now the worst on record under WA Labor?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

The member is misleading the house. He should apologise. The worst crime statistics in the history of Western Australia occurred in 2016 under the previous Liberal–National government. That is a fact.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The more you attack the police, at a time when they are doing an incredible job under extraordinary and challenging circumstances, the worse you look.

Dr D.J. Honey: What’s changed?

Mr P. PAPALIA: They watch this. Do not worry. They know who cares about police. They know who cares about community safety. They know who is doing the best job they can under the circumstances. It is our Western Australia Police Force. I would defend the police against your really shallow and disgraceful attacks.

TONKIN GAP PROJECT

491. Ms L.L. BAKER to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government’s record investment in road infrastructure in Western Australia, including the Tonkin Highway Gap project. Can the minister outline to the house how that project will reduce congestion and improve safety in the area, which includes my area, as well as support local jobs and local businesses; and, while the minister is there, can she tell us how this government’s unprecedented infrastructure investment compares with the record of the Nationals WA and the Liberals?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

Thank you, member for Maylands. While I am here, I will provide those answers. I thank the member for her ongoing work in the community. Projects like this are very complex. They are challenging to deliver. I know the member for Maylands has been working very hard with the local community to make sure we get the best outcome.

I was joined recently by the member for Maylands, and of course the member for Belmont, the federal member for Swan, and the Premier, to see the work that is being undertaken, known as the Tonkin Gap project, members. The Tonkin Gap project is all about widening and expanding Tonkin Highway around the Bayswater area to increase the number of lanes and improve pedestrian and cyclist access, and also to build new noise walls to protect the local residents. Again, that is something that all the local members are working together to advocate for, including the members for Belmont and Bassendean.

Mr R.R. Whitby: I thought the “Gap” was the margin in Churchlands at the last election!

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is quite good! I wish I had thought of that! Next time, I will seek the minister’s advice before I stand up!

Tonkin Gap is a very, very good project, of course. As I said, it is all about reducing congestion, improving safety and improving local amenity. Importantly, this project includes a key part of the Ellenbrook rail line, members. Remember, this was a rail line that the previous government committed to twice and failed to deliver. It lied to the people of Ellenbrook and the entire corridor on a number of occasions. Of course this project includes the dive structures under both the southbound and northbound lanes of Tonkin Highway for the rail line to enter and exit the median, the enabling works of the entire median, and also the new Broun Avenue bridge, which is under construction at the moment. It is a massive, massive project.

I think there is no better example of how the previous government failed Western Australians than the Ellenbrook rail line. I will of course turn to the report, *Road to reform: Review of the WA Liberal Party 2021*. That review highlighted —

The ‘pandemic excuse’ is just an excuse for the magnitude of the loss.

...

The staggering laziness of the Opposition and lack of action by the Party in creating and ‘selling’ acceptable policies much earlier than the advent of the pandemic were contributing factors.

Again today we have seen, since the March election, more laziness and more division, and the inability of the leadership of the alliance—the Leader of the National Party and the Leader of the Liberal Party—to stand up to the puppeteers in the other place —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: — to call it out, to actually draw a line in the sand and say what they did was unacceptable.

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: Point of order.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: There is a point of order. Just wait for silence. Thank you.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. This has absolutely nothing whatsoever to do with the question that was asked by her own member.

The SPEAKER: I do not accept the point of order, but, minister, I will ask you to draw your answer to a close. Thank you.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sure. I will just quote another section of the review —

We were told that many senior parliamentary members did little, if anything, to develop policies in anticipation of the election.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, Leader of the Liberal Party. This is a serious matter. You come in here and you criticise us, and you call us all the names under the sun. Now the pressure is on you, Leader of the Liberal Party. The pressure is on you.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: Point of order. She is treating your direction with contempt.

The SPEAKER: Sorry. Who are you referring to?

Dr D.J. HONEY: The Minister for Transport.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, and I will caution you to refer to members by their seat name. Minister, can I just draw you back to the question you were asked and your response to that, and I will again ask you to draw your answer to a close.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sure. I do want to reflect, as I seriously do believe the Ellenbrook rail line was a demonstration of the failure of the previous government. The Liberals and the Nationals WA lied to the people at a number of elections. They did no work when they won government. They did not challenge the assumptions. As a result, they failed the people of the whole north-east corridor.

Members, I am really proud of being able to deliver this project. But I want to highlight yet again that the Leader of the Opposition has been silent on the review into the Liberal Party—key people in the other place who are creating divisive and sexist language and who basically are trying to undermine democracy within the opposition. Nothing has been heard from the Leader of the Opposition. I think it is up to the Leader of the Opposition to stand up to that sort of behaviour.

CORONAVIRUS — SKILLED AGRICULTURAL WORKERS —
BLADIN VILLAGE, NORTHERN TERRITORY

492. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Premier:

I refer to the massive skill shortage impacting the grain sector’s ability to manage a record harvest, and the multiple approaches to the government by concerned stakeholders across the agricultural sector in Western Australia. Why has the Premier failed to lodge a formal proposal for the use of Bladin Village to the Prime Minister, as backed by his Chief Medical Officer and industry, as is the process agreed to by national cabinet?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I explained to the member yesterday that international borders are a matter for the federal government. Apparently the member for Roe has got to 60 years of age and he does not understand that the international borders are controlled by the commonwealth, not the state. The state does not control them. Honestly, no wonder there are only six of you! You do not even understand that international borders are controlled by the federal government. I do not control who comes into Australia from outside; the commonwealth government does. The Leader of the Liberal Party sits there sniping away whenever I explain the most basic of things to him, because he does not understand it either. We do not control the international borders. The Minister for Agriculture and Food has put a proposition to the commonwealth government that perhaps it could use these facilities to bring in workers for the grains harvest, in particular people skilled at operating farm equipment. It is a matter for the commonwealth as to whether or not it wants to allow that. Why is it that opposition members cannot understand that? Why do they try to blame the state government for that? Are they next going to blame the state government for what is going on in the Middle East? Is that something the state government should do something about? Will they be asking why I am not doing something about that? Seriously, they need to actually understand what each level of government is responsible for. We have put a proposition to the commonwealth. It has not taken it up. We do what we can to assist the commonwealth when required. For instance, we had 100 people come in from Afghanistan last night. That is because we work with the commonwealth, and we met its requests in relation to these sorts of things.

Perhaps the member for Roe could go to his National Party colleagues federally and take up the case. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition could go and see Barnaby Joyce and take up the case. Mr Joyce is the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia. The National Party has made Barnaby Joyce the Deputy Prime Minister of Australia! Think about that! Barnaby Joyce will act as Prime Minister when Scott Morrison is away. He will act as Prime Minister. That is your choice. That is who you promoted. If you have something to add on these matters, you should take it up with your good friends in Canberra.

CORONAVIRUS — SKILLED AGRICULTURAL WORKERS —
BLADIN VILLAGE, NORTHERN TERRITORY

493. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Is it the Premier or his Minister for Agriculture and Food who refuses to support the Bladin Village quarantine proposal?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I repeat to the member: we have put a proposition to the commonwealth. It is up to the commonwealth what it does. We have tried for 18 months to help the farming industry. As I said yesterday, we brought in people from Vanuatu and Tonga to quarantine in hotels here and help in horticulture. Obviously, when people are coming from countries with COVID, it is a different matter, and how we bring them in is a different matter, so that is a matter for the commonwealth. We put it to the commonwealth. What I have noticed over the course of the last 18 months, again, as I said yesterday, the commonwealth is very reluctant to use its facilities; in fact, it will not. It has done it once. It will not. Even when it is a humanitarian mission like Afghanistan, the commonwealth turns to the states. We go out and help when required; the commonwealth slopes its shoulders. It is unfortunate that the National Party federally will not help the farming community of Australia; it is unfortunate that it will not do anything to assist. It is unfortunate that Barnaby Joyce will not lift his finger. It is unfortunate that Mr Littleproud will not lift his finger.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is unfortunate that the Leader of the Liberal Party will not stand up to Peter Collier and Nick Goiran, it is unfortunate that he has no leadership ability, but there it is. They are the facts. We have two Liberals in this house who interject on me, and there is one issue raging in the Liberal Party, which is the misogyny of people in the Liberal Party who run the organisation, who refer to women as “sandwich makers”, and we do not have the Leader of Liberal Party say boo about it. Does that not show the state of the Liberal Party? Whilst Mr Goiran and Mr Collier are in this Parliament, the Liberal Party is not fit for office.

POLICE — RESOURCES

494. Mr P. LILBURNE to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government’s unprecedented investment in ensuring that our frontline police have the resources they need to keep Western Australians safe. Can the minister outline to the house how this investment will support the capability of our police to respond to both emergency situations and crime in the community?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for his question and his support for the Western Australia Police Force, as opposed to some on the other side of the chamber.

In the last term of office, our government invested more in resourcing and equipping our police than I think at any time in a four-year period in the history of the state, with body armour; body-worn cameras; OneForce, with mobile

phones, delivering digital technology to every single police officer and the ability to access databases and other resources from remote locations; and, of course, RPAS, the remotely piloted aircraft systems, otherwise known in English as drones. Every police district has two of those and at least four operators—an extraordinary increase in capability.

Most recently, I was very pleased to join the Premier and announce only last week an additional \$27.5 million in the forthcoming budget towards a second new helicopter. We had already announced late last year, I think, the purchase of an Airbus H145 aircraft. This is a step change in technology available to the Western Australia Police Force. That announcement was a huge uplift in capability. What we currently have is two disparate aircraft. We have difficulties associated with training, equipping and maintaining. Just changing equipment inside the aircraft or fit-outs so that we can get different mission types achieved is a difficult, challenging thing, and it is different for each air frame. What we have done now is commit to having identical aircraft—state-of-the-art, absolute cutting-edge technology. We are the first jurisdiction in the country operating these aircraft, and they will both be the same. The first one will be delivered late next year and will be operational by April the year after, and the second one will be operational by about September that year, as well. By the end of the year after next, we will have two cutting-edge, state-of-the-art aircraft that can link all of our technology to police on the ground and provide efficiencies in terms of response and capability that we have never seen before. I am very proud of the way the Western Australia Police Force has been supported by the McGowan government.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition with the last question.

NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING

495. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Environment:

Thank you, Madam Speaker. I refer to today's announcement to end the logging of native forest. Can the minister explain why her office saw fit to spend \$56 500 on surveying the public about its views on forestry, but failed to engage with the Forest Industries Federation of Western Australia, the body that represents the businesses and people who will lose their livelihood because of the minister's decision?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

The public consultation that occurred was an important mechanism to understand the community's priorities and the way it views our forests, because they are a statewide asset and they are an important carbon store in our battle with climate change. We had an overwhelming response to that survey, and the regional areas were significantly represented. The areas that we are protecting now from logging were significantly represented. We had over 17 000 respondents, including people who work in the current timber industry. I met with industry representatives. Industry representatives meet regularly with the Minister for Forestry. It is absolutely not the case that no-one is talking to them. I have met with them and I heard their concerns around the survey. I am not afraid to meet with anyone at all.

Mr R.S. Love: Then why were they blindsided by your announcement?

Ms A. SANDERSON: They were given the same notice as everyone else with the announcement. There was no blindsiding at all. This is a carefully considered policy announcement about the future of our forest. This is the reality. The member can bury his head in the sand about climate change; that is a hallmark of the previous government. Ignore the science! We see that at the Nationals level in the federal government, who are taking us backwards. Our children are saying to us, "Do something. Do something with the planet that we have. Do something with what we inherit." The reality is that there was a 20 per cent reduction in rainfall over the last 20 to 30 years in those forests. A 20 per cent reduction—they are not growing back at the rate that they need to to sustain a yield. That is a fact. That survey was conducted by —

Ms M.J. Davies: It was polling out of your office!

Ms A. SANDERSON: No, it was a survey, conducted by the Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute. Those are independent scientists, member. I have every faith in that survey, and it was well designed. There were no pro formas.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Ms A. SANDERSON: Where is your leadership over the last few weeks?

Ms M.J. Davies: Did you have a conversation with the community of the south west before the election? No, you did not.

Ms A. SANDERSON: That is not true! The member for Warren–Blackwood —

Several members interjected.

Ms A. SANDERSON: Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER: To the members interjecting, the minister is answering the question. She does not require your help.

Ms A. SANDERSON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I know that the member for Warren–Blackwood has been visiting those communities in her electorate; I know that the Minister for Forestry is in constant conversation with those communities. This is about protecting an important asset for our entire state. That is what this is. The reality is we are actually protecting jobs in the timber industry and creating more. We are actually protecting the 2 000 jobs in the softwood estate and ensuring that they have work into the future, which members opposite failed to do. Where is your leadership, Leader of the Opposition? Where is your leadership when it comes to your own party? You have not called it out. You have not called out the disgusting behaviour of those members. The only other Liberal woman in this place took five days to call it out. Five days! I will not be lectured by the Leader of the Opposition about how we move into the future. This is about sustainable jobs in the future. It is about climate resilience. It is about protecting the biodiversity that is under threat from climate change.

NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING

496. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Environment:

I have a supplementary question.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The SPEAKER: The supplementary question is to be heard in silence, thanks, member for Wanneroo.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Does the minister or the government have any plans to shut down any other industries in regional Western Australia without recourse for the people who will be affected?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I am waiting for silence before I give the minister the call.

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

This government has done a pretty good job of shutting down the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA. There is an endangered species in this chamber. Yesterday was Threatened Species Day and we have some threatened species on the opposite side. I ask the member a question: will you reverse the decision if you are re-elected? I ask you that question.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! That concludes question time.

SENATE VACANCY

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [2.50 pm]: Members, I have an important announcement. I have to report a communication from His Excellency the Governor in the following terms —

The Governor transmits to the Legislative Assembly a copy of a despatch which he has received today from the Honourable the President of the Senate of the Commonwealth of Australia, notifying that a vacancy has happened in the representation of the state of Western Australia in the said Senate.

Government House
Perth, 7 September 2021

The dispatch from the President of the Senate reads —

The Honourable Kim Beazley AC
Governor of Western Australia

Your Excellency

Pursuant to the provisions of section 21 of the Commonwealth of Australia Constitution, I notify Your Excellency there is a vacancy in the representation of the state of Western Australia caused by the resignation of Senator Rachel Siewert on Monday, 6 September 2021.

Yours sincerely

Scott Ryan
7 September 2021

Motion

On motion by **Mr M. McGowan (Premier)**, resolved —

That Madam Speaker be requested to confer with the President of the Legislative Council, in order to fix a day and place whereupon and whereat the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council, sitting and voting together, shall choose a person to hold the place of the Senator whose place has become vacant.

FINANCE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (EMERGENCY RELIEF) BILL 2021*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [2.52 pm]: That was an interesting question time. Firstly, I wish to apologise for my “chi-chua” incident in which I mentioned “firemen” not “firefighters”. I apologise for that from the outset. I hope that I do not replicate that again.

I come back to this fine piece of legislation that we were discussing earlier. I was summarising and said that when a state of emergency or emergency situation is declared under the Emergency Management Act, it will trigger certain time frames to be put in place. I took time to explain the 27-odd circumstances that befit an emergency. In the current climate, the way the act will work in this space is that an emergency will be declared. In this case, we are in a pandemic. There has been a prolonged state of emergency, probably the longest emergency incident in my lifetime, and I hope it is the last that any of us experience going forward. An emergency will be declared under the act and the state emergency agencies and a whole heap of infrastructure committees will be set up in that space, which is what has been done. When this Parliament first began, I said that this government has been well led by the Premier and ably assisted by the Deputy Premier; Minister for Health, and the Commissioner of Police, Chris Dawson. Individually, they are very good operators, but together they are the finest emergency management team I have ever seen, and I have seen a few. I was in East Timor during the troubles and witnessed some very good operators in this space. I suggest that this team is the finest that Australia has ever seen. I am sure that will be argued by others out there, but the fact is that they have to be commended and recognised for where we are now.

I will explain what will happen in an emergency situation and use the COVID-19 pandemic as an example. The Emergency Management Act will be triggered and that will enable the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to introduce financial relief measures for businesses including the deferral of the requirement to lodge payroll tax returns. The first home owner grant was mentioned earlier. In the past, we have come back into this house to introduce and pass legislation to extend help for businesses and other people. That wastes time so we need good, concise, fast and direct action to counter this stuff. A good example is what happened in my electorate. I spoke earlier about the impact of COVID-19 on businesses in the commercial hubs of Mindarie marina and Ocean Keys Shopping Centre. Businesses were decimated but we were able to put in immediate and effective help by making grants available to those businesses. They were small grants—I would have loved them to have been bigger—but when there is not a lot out there, every little bit helps. When the shutdowns happened, owners of two coffee shops approached me and we were able to access grants to help them pay for all the food they had lost. May I have a small extension?

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: Not that I will use it.

The SPEAKER: We will see about that!

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: It is those small things that count. Running a small business puts a great deal of pressure on people. It takes a great deal of courage to step up and run a small business, because people are idealistic in that space. When we were forced to close businesses in local areas, it was deadset good government to do everything we could to help.

This government is about looking after people and not worrying about power and profit. That is a good example of looking after people and we will end up more profitable and more powerful in that space. The government is reluctant to shut down businesses despite the arguments from our interstate counterparts. We have done a brilliant job. Every day I speak to seniors in my community about how well we have protected our community during the pandemic. They speak in unison about how very proud they are of the way that this government has dealt with the COVID crisis. Some of them say to me, “Drag a chain across the border and let’s secede.” I definitely discourage those comments, but they are the sorts of colloquialisms that I hear within my electorate. Seniors in my electorate deadset think that we are going down the right track. Any help from the Treasurer and Minister for Finance to assist small businesses, which employ kids in my community, is a good thing. The flexibility that this legislation will bring and the ability to manoeuvre in the financial space during an emergency crisis will be brilliant.

I am certain that not only coming out of this pandemic, but also going forward—we saw it with the fires last summer and the cyclones—this legislation will help us to help our community to be safer and stronger in that space. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

MS L. DALTON (Geraldton) [2.59 pm]: I rise today to support the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 and thank the minister for bringing it to the house. A bill that will allow the Treasurer to declare tax relief or grant relief measures considered necessary to relieve the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency is a good, commonsense bill in my mind, especially as the devastating impacts of cyclone Seroja are still being felt in my community, and will be for a very long time.

We understand that with climate change we can expect to see these kinds of natural disasters more frequently. Still fresh in my mind is the memory of cyclone Seroja. The days before it made landfall were quite stressful and uncertain.

There was lots of preparation and, I have to say, excellent communication from the emergency services. We were given a long list of things to do to prepare for the cyclone heading towards us. It included things like getting batteries for torches, filling up the car with fuel and getting batteries for a transistor radio—who has one of those? We had to go out and buy a transistor radio! People had to have gas in the barbecue if they relied on electricity. We had just moved into a small rental, so we had to go out and buy a small gas cooker, ice for the eskies, water and plenty of tinned food. People had to have an emergency plan and make sure that they knew the safest room in their house to go to when the cyclone hit if they were going to stay at home. My sister was in Geraldton at the time, as my dad had just come out of hospital. She was taking care of the cyclone prep for my ageing parents. My dad was just not fit enough to be taken to the evacuation centre in Dongara, so we decided it would be best for him to stay in their home and weather it out, hoping that it would withstand the 170-kilometre-an-hour winds it had been predicted would hit us.

This was all very worrying and, I have to say, quite an expensive exercise. It was something I could afford to do, for which I am grateful, but whilst down at the emergency relief centre in the days that followed and during the recovery I met a lot of people who just were not prepared and did not have the means to buy extra food, batteries and radios et cetera. It was really quite devastating for them. The emergency relief funds that arrived a couple of days later were very much welcomed.

After Seroja made landfall, around 4 350 people in the midwest lost electricity, as the storm's high winds had downed powerlines. The number of power outages soon increased to over 25 000 people as Seroja accelerated further inland. During the storm, we sat in darkness listening to the ABC on our radio. We heard devastating accounts of the cyclone hitting Kalbarri. Buildings and homes were completely flattened and roofs were torn off, flying into other people's homes. I have to admit that during those moments I was very worried for myself, my family and, more broadly, my community. Thankfully for most of Geraldton, the direction of the cyclone changed and we did not bear the full brunt of it, unlike many of our neighbouring shires. The next morning, we woke to reports of total devastation. Our own communications were limited to basically none, and access to and communication with towns impacted by the cyclone were completely cut, leaving the scale of the damage largely unknown. It took weeks and weeks to really get a full understanding of the damage.

In Geraldton, we get plenty of wind. Every year, we see our friends and relatives in the Pilbara and Kimberley dealing with cyclones. I do not think any of us thought that we would ever see a category 2 cyclone smash through our region and destroy our towns to the magnitude that it did. Our communities are not built like those in the north; our homes are not cyclone rated and our infrastructure was not intended to withstand that kind of destructive force. The reality was bleak; Kalbarri and Northampton took the hardest hits. In Kalbarri, 70 per cent of buildings were damaged and 40 per cent were totally destroyed or, in many cases, damaged beyond repair. In Northampton, the famous "Bottom Pub" was de-roofed and badly damaged, and entire farm infrastructure—homesteads, sheds and silos—was wiped out. I do not know whether anyone in the chamber who has not been out to the regions can fully understand the impact that this has had on my community. Family homes were lost in the Chapman Valley, Mingenew, Morawa and Perenjori shires.

The electricity supply was slow to return, but that was not due to lack of hard work. In May, Western Power stated that over 20 per cent of its network had been impacted by Seroja. It was, and is, a huge task, and the works were done as quickly as they could be. I thank the power crews and repair teams for their tireless work and huge contribution to the recovery.

All this trauma is still being felt today in communities that had never before seen anything like this in living memory. Victims of the cyclone's destruction are still waiting to get repairs underway. Although taxation relief may seem a long way from cyclone relief, this bill offers real, practical support to people impacted by natural disasters like cyclone Seroja and the massive and destructive Wooroloo bushfire. The Treasurer will use the new powers to continue land tax exemptions in 2021–22 and 2022–23 for eligible properties destroyed by the Wooroloo bushfire and cyclone Seroja disasters. These exemptions will be included in the McGowan government's 2021–22 budget. This is an example of how carefully considered reforms can have effects greater than their portfolio may indicate. The WA government, in partnership with the federal government, has announced a historic relief package for people impacted by Seroja, but that is not the end of it. The McGowan government will continue to support and stand by the people of the midwest and the victims of cyclone Seroja for years to come during the recovery and rebuild.

Climate change remains a challenge. Often even getting broad agreement that it is real is a struggle. I understand that one event cannot be used in isolation to demonstrate long-term change, but it can be an example of what lies ahead for us. If we are to face a reality of more unpredictable and highly destructive events like the Wooroloo fire and cyclone Seroja, we need legislation that is practical, allows for a meaningful response and provides support from every possible department and portfolio. My office and the office of my colleague Hon Sandra Carr have been contacted by scores of people seeking support, advice and assistance. I admire their resilience and their stoic nature, but they are exhausted and need help in navigating their way through claims and financial uncertainty. As politicians, we do not physically rebuild homes or supply materials but we do work in a place that can help in many ways, and this is one of them.

Government should always support the resilience of our people. I recently witnessed firsthand the resilience of midwest citizens. The Chapman Valley Agricultural Show was on last weekend and nearly 10 000 people attended on one day. It was a day that they had been denied in 2020 due to COVID but they were not going to let the aftermath of Seroja stop a wonderful event in 2021. In fact, the bringing together of people on Saturday was joyous. Spring was in the air and the hope of a bumper crop was all around us. I have to congratulate the organisers and committee of the Chapman Valley show. The crowd that attended was enormous and the vibe was positive and uplifting. Both Minister Whitby and Minister MacTiernan attended the show, demonstrating great support to that community, which I appreciate very much.

Like so many places impacted by natural disasters, our strength is our people. Our will to rebuild and carry on remains unbroken, but every little bit of assistance that can be provided should be provided. In the *Midwest Times* today, more changes were announced to financial assistance for people who have had their properties destroyed or damaged, with disaster relief funding available for the impacts of flooding in the Gascoyne and Murchison regions. The recovery from this natural disaster will take years. There is no way we can rebuild any faster than that. While the recovery continues, we will stand by the people of the midwest and wheatbelt. Today, I speak in support of this emergency relief bill as one that makes sense, and one that will have a material impact for people under stress due to circumstances well beyond their control. I hope that all members in this place will see this bill as one that is worthy of support and will vote accordingly.

While we are charged with representing and fostering the best interests of our constituents, we cannot allow change to be the adversary of progress. If we can use taxation as an incentive for investment, we should also be able to use taxation for assistance. My belief is that this bill before us is good for the state. The bill is here to provide practical support and relief. I support the passage of this bill wholeheartedly and urge everyone in this place to do the same.

I commend the bill to the house.

MS A.E. KENT (Kalgoorlie) [3.11 pm]: I rise today to talk to the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. It is wonderful to see this bill being discussed in Parliament to provide a flexible mechanism for the state government to urgently respond to emergencies. We live in Western Australia and, as we know, this state is prone to emergencies, specifically bushfires that are unpredictable and happen every year.

My electorate of Kalgoorlie is vast—over 555 square kilometres—and every year we are at risk of bushfires. One of the worst in my area was in 2015. Although not specifically in the Kalgoorlie electorate—it was in the Esperance region—it had an impact on the road from Norseman. Tragically, a number of people lost their lives, and livestock and property were destroyed. Gusts of wind reached over 100 kilometres an hour while temperatures exceeded 40 degrees. This was a major emergency with devastating results. Then again, in December 2019, a fire started by lightning near Norseman tore through more than 550 000 hectares of the goldfields region. The 1 660-kilometre Eyre Highway was closed for almost two weeks, and we can imagine the impact that had. The fires were classified as a level 3 emergency, which is the highest category for the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. More than 300 emergency personnel from across WA were deployed, including a mobile command centre stationed at Kalgoorlie–Boulder’s State Emergency Service headquarters.

In addition to this important legislation, it is wonderful to see that the McGowan Labor government will spend \$38.4 million to boost frontline firefighting services, which includes \$17.8 million as part of the 2021–22 state budget for additional firefighters based in regional Western Australia. I was in Kalgoorlie–Boulder this morning with Hon Reece Whitby, Minister for Emergency Services, to announce this significant election commitment. This funding will strengthen the state’s defence against natural disasters for the placement of 36 additional career firefighters in Geraldton, Albany and Kalgoorlie–Boulder. The Kalgoorlie Career Fire and Rescue Station will also be upgraded to accommodate additional personnel at a cost of \$1.2 million.

During my campaign, I was lobbied very hard by the soon-to-be ex-firefighter Jimmy McIntosh. I have known Jimmy for over 20 years, and he is the ultimate career firefighter. He will be retiring soon and will leave a huge gap after being in the job for 44 years. What a tremendous effort. The minister and I spoke to Jimmy this morning and he was so thrilled that this important commitment had come to reality. Additionally, this funding package will include \$4.9 million to replace personal protective clothing for both career and volunteer firefighters. Together, these investments demonstrate the McGowan government’s commitment to enhancing emergency services for all Western Australians. This funding package will help keep the local community safe for years to come and demonstrates the state government’s commitment to enhancing emergency services in Kalgoorlie and beyond.

I have also used the Kalgoorlie electorate’s small commitments to provide funding to the junior volunteer fire brigades. These are such an important group in the community. Coolgardie, Kalgoorlie and Kambalda have all received funding to purchase uniforms and equipment to help them train and compete in zone and state championships. In this country, we are at risk of disasters and we need to do as much as possible to mitigate these risks; but emergencies happen, and that is why it is so important that this legislation will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to declare tax relief measures considered necessary to provide relief from the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. I commend the bill to the house.

MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn) [3.17 pm]: It is a privilege to rise to speak on the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. In opening, I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the member for Geraldton, who has done an outstanding job on behalf of the many communities in the midwest that have been affected by cyclone Seroja and the devastation that it left. I know she has been very busy, together with Hon Sandra Carr, tending to the needs of community members in a responsive and compassionate way. I think it is only fitting that the member for Geraldton is not only in this place contributing on this bill, but also out and about in her community. I want to acknowledge that the member for Geraldton is not only out and about in her community on the issue of cyclone Seroja; I also acknowledge the excellent work that she has been doing in relation to the suburb of Spalding in her electorate. She has been really leading the charge in her electorate to highlight the need to value that community and make the necessary improvements for all members of the community. I am sure that she was very pleased to see that her advocacy really paid off. She has clearly been twisting the arms of ministers, and I am sure her community is well aware of that. She has been twisting their arms and getting in their ears, and that has paid off with a significant commitment in the government's budget. I think it is \$9 million.

Ms L. Dalton: Up to 10.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Up to \$10 million has been committed by this government to ensure that the member for Geraldton can deliver for her community. My contribution, as the member for Cockburn, does not come with as much experience as the member for Geraldton has in responding to disasters and disaster management. In this place, a bit of chortling goes on when some electorates are referred to as peri-urban, so I probably would not get away with calling the electorate of Cockburn a peri-urban electorate. The member for Belmont and Dawesville are both agreeing with me. I can say that we had a really worrying trend over the summer months. Just across from my house in Yangebup, across Beeliar Drive, is quite a lot of vacant land. There is a transition between residential areas and the industrial areas around the Australian Marine Complex and Latitude 32. Someone or some persons appeared to be deliberately lighting fires around the area over the summer months. A string of fires cropped up in that southern corridor around areas such as Anketell and Oakford, and Cockburn. For me, this goes back to what the member for Darling Range had to say in his contribution. He impressed upon everybody the importance of having a bushfire response plan—being prepared. That, of course, reminds me of my days in Cubs and Scouts—“be prepared”—and we should all be prepared, because that experience over the summer months reminded me that even those of us who live in relatively urban areas should be prepared for natural disasters. Fires can creep up. In fact, we were given—I cannot remember the exact language—a watch warning from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services during one of the fires that was lit near our house. That took us by surprise. My wife and I, as people who live in the suburb of Yangebup, did not expect to be on alert for what was essentially a bushfire in the land between the industrial and residential areas of our suburb. I know the current Minister for Emergency Services, the member for Baldvis, has had to contend with bushfires in and around some of the less-developed parts of his electorate also.

The lesson for all of us is to be prepared for bushfire events and, indeed, any natural disasters. One thing that has been touched on by members that should also reinforce the importance of being prepared, for all members and their constituents, is climate change. Climate change is one of the pressing challenges of our time. It is a pressing environmental, economic and political challenge, and one that I am very pleased to see this Labor government rising to. Climate change is obviously relevant to a bill like this because the science is clear that it has worsened the effects of natural disasters, whether because of the drying climate causing areas to be more bushfire-prone, or because, as was experienced by Kalbarri and surrounding townships, we are seeing more extreme weather events like cyclone Seroja. Such events are becoming more extreme in their nature, and are also affecting areas that previously have not been affected by natural disasters like cyclones. As the member for Geraldton said, the town of Kalbarri and surrounding communities are not built in such a way as to withstand cyclones. That is because, historically, they have not been exposed to any significant risk of those types of events, so when cyclone Seroja came through those areas, they were perhaps not as well prepared as areas in the Pilbara and Kimberley would be.

The Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 is an important part of the government's agenda for supporting communities that have been affected by natural disasters and for supporting our climate change preparedness. If there are going to be more extreme weather events going forward and more people suffering from the effects of natural disasters, the government needs to be nimble enough to be able to respond and provide financial support to the people affected. The bill is firmly focused on that objective. After a natural disaster, the initial recovery phase is critical, so it is important to be able to respond quickly to the needs of the community, to assess the damage and to put in place short-term economic measures that will support the community, the residents and the businesses. That will then enable the government to put in place more medium and long-term support for affected communities.

In the past, the government has had to pass dedicated legislation through the Parliament to provide relief to communities affected by natural disasters. For example, the government could not provide land tax relief or payroll tax relief without having first passed a bill dedicated to those purposes for the communities affected by natural disasters. That is simply too cumbersome a process. Natural disasters can happen with very little warning, and in many cases, no warning. Obviously, they may occur when Parliament is not sitting, and it may take time, even if Parliament is recalled, for debate to take place. As a result of that, the need to pass dedicated legislation clearly

constrains a government's ability to provide support in an effective and timely manner. I welcome the mechanisms in this bill that will allow the Treasurer to declare the tax relief measures that he considers necessary to provide relief from the financial or economic effects of a declared emergency.

I have drilled deeper into this issue, and members might be interested to hear what has been said about this issue in some of the relevant literature. I found a paper written by Carolyn Palmer titled, "Flood and fire and famine: Tax policy lessons from the Australian responses to natural disasters", from October 2014. The author talks about the importance of tax policies for ensuring that communities can deal with natural disasters. I quote from a paragraph on page 6 of the report, headed "The immediate response phase". It states —

Tax policy's role in the response phase is to fund immediate relief. Governments must make decisions regarding the tax treatment of emergency support payments and may also allow individuals or firms to defer (or disregard) tax payments... Tax policy settings also play a role in charitable relief, for example tax incentives for donations and tax exemptions for charitable entities. There are unique challenges arising from delivering policies and programmes in the aftermath of a natural disaster. Similar challenges are likely to apply to delivery of tax responses, and are discussed below.

As I have outlined, the government's focus following a natural disaster must be to fund immediate relief for those communities. As the author of this paper notes, that is often done by deferring or disregarding tax payments. Those are obviously options that would be available to the Treasurer as one of the tax relief measures that could be granted under this legislation, if passed through this Parliament. At appendix 2 of the report, the authors talk about the different priorities of the stakeholders involved in a natural disaster during the various phases of what the authors refer to as the disaster management cycle. The report looks at the interests of firms and individuals versus the interests of governments. In the immediate response phase of the disaster cycle, the authors note, having reviewed the literature, that the interests of the firms and individuals can be described as follows —

The response phase begins immediately after a disaster happens and includes both immediate relief and responses to re-establish systems and infrastructure ... For firms and households, the focus is fast effective relief—to help those affected to recover from the immediate effects of the disaster by providing food, shelter and medical care ...

The authors then note that in relation to government —

... Government relief in this phase often takes the form of transfers in cash or in kind. Short-term measures like income support and wage subsidies are used to help workers who have been displaced by temporary firm closures, and to provide for support for firms to preserve jobs ... Medium-term government responses can also include public works programmes to employ displaced workers and financing for firms affected by a disaster ...

Although measures like payroll tax relief are not direct wage subsidies, they have the same effect. If providing payroll tax relief to a business is one way of essentially lowering a business's wages bill and therefore ensuring that that business has more cash flow available to it to pay its workers, it is the type of immediate relief that makes a difference for workers and employers. Before I was elected to this place, I operated a small business called Eureka Lawyers. It was opened in September 2016. My colleague Alex Illich and I were directors of the firm. We built up that firm over the next four or five years. Running a small business is a hard slog. We were very fortunate with the support we had from our clients and our networks and we were able to build up that business beginning with the two of us and one administrative officer to a firm of about 12 employees by the time I was elected to this place.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Operating a small business brought home to me that cash flow really is king. Small businesses need a predictable source of revenue to be able to meet the ongoing outgoings that the business needs to deal with. The principal one of those outgoings for many businesses, and certainly for professional services firms like the business that I operated, is wages. We are very fortunate in Australia and in Western Australia to have a high-wage economy, but the result of that is that businesses have high labour costs. As one of the directors, it was my responsibility to pay the wages every fortnight and to process the pay for all the employees. I would have to look very closely at what was in the bank account and what was going out of the bank account. We were very fortunate. Although at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic we were very concerned, it turned out that we did not need to be. We were fortunate to be spared the worst effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the pandemic really has brought home to all of us, and certainly to me in my experience as a small business operator, that natural disasters are not just something that happen out in the bush or to someone else; they really can affect many people, and can affect basically the global economy in the case of the pandemic.

We have been very fortunate here in Western Australia because of two things. Firstly, the excellent handling of the public health side of the pandemic by the McGowan government has meant that we have remained basically COVID-free and therefore have avoided the worst effects of the pandemic as a natural disaster. Secondly, we have been successful in Western Australia because of the McGowan government's prudent financial management. That prudent financial management has meant that the government has been able to provide an economic stimulus to the economy. That has included infrastructure programs and spending on related projects. For example, in my electorate

of Cockburn, the state government, as part of its COVID recovery plan, has funded the \$9.69 million redevelopment of Woodman Point Ammo jetty. That jetty is a very significant piece of fishing and recreational infrastructure in my electorate that is used by people throughout the southern corridor, but it is getting past its use-by date and will become a hazard in the very near future if nothing is done about it. Fortunately, the government has managed the finances in a way whereby the economy is in a position for the government to make investments in infrastructure and capital projects that support not only the redevelopment of great community facilities like Ammo jetty, but also provide jobs. The options for the redevelopment of Ammo jetty are currently available online for consultation through the Department of Transport. I would very much encourage any of my constituents who are interested in that project to have their say on it.

Investment in infrastructure is obviously one way that the government can support the economy through a pandemic, an emergency or a natural disaster. Another way it can do that is through what this bill seeks to achieve, which is the granting of quick and effective tax relief for communities that have been affected by an emergency.

In addition, we also heard from the member for Collie–Preston about some of the other initiatives that the government has been introducing in this space. Earlier, I spoke about the importance of being generally prepared for the challenges of climate change and the increasing number of natural disasters and more extreme weather events that we are seeing as a result of climate change. I would like to note that it was a great achievement of this government to deliver the Bushfire Centre of Excellence in the member for Murray–Wellington’s electorate. The electorate of Murray–Wellington has a special place in my heart. It is my ancestral home. I grew up in Australind and even ran for the electorate of Murray–Wellington in 2013 as the candidate for the Labor Party. Four years later, I had the great fortune to be the campaign manager for the current member for Murray–Wellington, who has done an outstanding job delivering infrastructure and facilities for the people of her electorate, including facilities that ensure that her electorate is prepared for bushfires. The Bushfire Centre of Excellence is a brand new facility and the first centre of excellence for bushfires in the nation. As we heard from the member for Collie–Preston, it is obviously much-needed in that region, given the devastating impact of the bushfires in and around the area of Yarloop several years back.

As I said at the outset, I do not claim to have great experience in dealing with natural disasters, but I am very fortunate to be in an electorate where there are many great volunteers in the emergency services space. In fact, the Minister for Emergency Services was in my electorate just a month or so ago. Reece Whitby visited my electorate office because I put on an afternoon tea in my office to say thank you to all the emergency service volunteers in my electorate. I want to take the opportunity today to put on the record in the context of this bill my great thanks to the volunteers in all the organisations that ensure that the community of Cockburn is kept safe and is supported throughout periods of natural disasters. I say to them, “The McGowan government has got your back. It has got your back in not only supporting volunteers on the ground, but also ensuring that effective relief can be provided to communities that are affected by natural disasters.” I would like to particularly acknowledge the following organisations: the South Coogee Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade, the Jandakot Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade, the Coogee Beach Surf Life Saving Club, the Cockburn State Emergency Service and the Cockburn Volunteer Sea Search and Rescue Group. All those organisations and their volunteers do an absolutely outstanding job in supporting my local community. I was very pleased to be able to thank all the volunteers from those organisations with the minister just over a month ago, but I again put on the record my great thanks for the work that they do.

Not long after I held the afternoon tea, the City of Cockburn held its annual City of Cockburn emergency services volunteers dinner. I was fortunate to go to that together with the Minister for Emergency Services. Several pins for service within the volunteering community were handed out at that dinner. I pay tribute to all the volunteers there, but one of the great moments on the night that I particularly want to acknowledge is May Bowser receiving a pin in recognition of 30 years of service with the Cockburn State Emergency Service. That is 30 years! I thought it was fantastic for May to be recognised for that very significant history of volunteering for 30 years. What a great legacy to provide to our community! I was also very pleased to see a woman receiving recognition for all those years of service, because I think too often we think of emergency services as a blokey sort of space, but it is a place where, as in many parts of our society, women are out the front doing the hard work. That is also acknowledged by the fact that Allison Lamb is the director of the Cockburn State Emergency Service. Women are up front, leading the charge in state emergency services in Cockburn generally.

I congratulate the government and the minister on introducing this bill into the house. This bill makes sense in allowing the government to be responsive to communities that have been impacted by natural disasters. It also makes sense coming from a government that is focused on being responsive to the challenges of climate change. The bill is also very much consistent with what the literature says about what is needed from government in communities that have been affected by a natural disaster. Indeed, the fact that this bill will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to act in a nimble and agile way in response to a natural disaster is a very good thing. Also, the fact that it will provide for a range of tax relief measures to be introduced—like a waiver or a partial waiver of tax, or a reduction in a tax rate or an exemption—and having all those options on the table is very important in being flexible and responsive to the needs of a community. I would very much like to congratulate the minister for introducing a bill that is comprehensive and modern. I hope this bill will attract the support of all members of this place. On that note, I commend the bill.

DR J. KRISHNAN (Riverton) [3.46 pm]: I rise to make a short contribution to the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021 and I commend this bill. What is an emergency? The world is going through a pandemic at the moment. How is it affecting people and businesses and their economic status? There are four active cases of COVID-19 in Western Australia as of today, compared with 26 907 active cases in New South Wales. Does that mean that there is no emergency in Western Australia?

Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to share my experience. Prior to my political journey, as a general practitioner I was managing practices. It is a usual practise to order flu vaccines, anticipating that there will be an uptake during the flu season. We stock vaccines for people who pay privately to get the vaccine when they are not eligible for the free government program. Last year when the pandemic broke, we thought that the uptake of the flu vaccine would be really high. We went ahead and ordered close to 10 000 flu vaccines. As a result, we had a huge stock. With the pandemic kicking in, there was absolutely very little flu in the community and the uptake of the flu vaccine was very low. We ended up with a huge stock of about 7 000 vaccines not being used, in spite of me offering it for free to people towards the end. As a business owner I incurred the loss of paying for those 7 000 vaccines. The pandemic had an effect on small business. That is what I would like to share here.

A good friend of mine, Brett Smith, owns a personal training studio called Mind Body and Soul Fitness Studio. He does a fantastic job. He not only runs a small business, but also looks after families to make sure that the people who participate in his personal studio and programs get healthier and better. For him, every time there is a lockdown or there are restrictions on people using his business or his studio, Brett has to struggle. Is it not fair that the government steps up and offers the support such business owners need? Do we need red tape in providing such support? This bill is about making amendments to allow the Treasurer to act swiftly and provide timely support that is very essential for mum-and-dad-run small businesses.

Take the food industry. Every time there is a disruption, those businesses lose a huge amount of stock that they have in their freezers. These are times when a responsible government will step up and act swiftly to provide assistance for those businesses. This bill is about making amendments that will make that process easy and smooth.

In my electorate of Riverton, the mum-and-dad businesses are going through a lot of uncertainty. They are not able to plan in advance. They are met with many surprises and challenges. They have to adapt to many changes, at very short notice. Taking this into consideration, it is only fair that they receive tax relief or grant support from a responsible government. These amendments will make this process better for the people of Western Australia.

I turn now to natural disasters. I should admit that it has been a very long time since I have been exposed to any natural disaster myself. When I was about six years old, we had flooding in our place. I was not old enough to realise the trouble that my parents went through in that disaster. But I have been fortunate to have shared a few experiences. At one of my medical practices, the neighbouring tenant was a young mother with a small child. There was some bad weather, and the fence fell over. Obviously, the fence was shared by both tenants. After I had my clinic that evening, I walked across to talk to the young mother to negotiate a process and get insurance involved in repairing the fence. I had tears in my eyes when that young mother expressed her difficulty. She had a dog, but she could not let the dog out because there was no fence, and because the dog was very frustrated at not being let out, she now had two kids to manage in the house instead of one. That makes me think that if little things can matter so much in a person's life, how much do people have to go through when there is a major natural disaster. At a time of disaster, providing assistance by means of tax relief and grants is the responsibility of a responsible government. That is what this McGowan Labor government is trying to do by bringing about amendments to make the process easier to support the people of Western Australia.

These amendments to the Taxation Administration Act will allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to declare tax relief measures considered necessary to provide relief from the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. How will that support be provided? The possibilities are that there could be a waiver of tax, a reduction in the tax rate, or an exemption from tax, and a different way of filing a tax return. These measures will definitely help in a state of emergency, and that is what this bill is about. It will bring about amendments to make things smoother and easier. The tax relief measures can be declared only in connection with a state of emergency declared under the Emergency Management Act 2005 or a public health emergency declared under the Public Health Act 2016. They cannot be declared for an emergency more than 12 months after the emergency has ended, or for a period of longer than two years.

These are all measures that the Minister for Finance will have to take into consideration to make sure that the bill has good, strong regulations attached to it. The subsidiary legislation must be published in the *Government Gazette*. The tax relief that is being offered has to be published in the *Government Gazette*. This is to facilitate its proper administration and to prevent it being misused or improperly applied.

I turn now to the first home owner grant. When I commenced my political journey, I was introduced to a young girl who ended up being my campaign manager and running a very successful campaign. Her name is Cassandra Maney. The thing that impressed me when I met her for the first time was that she owned her own house at the age of 23. That is how responsible she is. I could see the pride in her expression and the happiness in her face when she told

me that she owned her house. It means a lot for young people who are trying to have a roof above their head. It is a matter of pride. It is a matter of commitment. It is a matter of discipline. It is a matter of being willing to work hard. When there is uncertainty in an emergency situation, such as the one we are going through now with the global pandemic, do we want to deny a young person the opportunity to get into their own home? A responsible government would be willing to support them by increasing the first home owner grant, and by offering tax relief measures. This is what this bill is about. For those reasons, I commend this bill to the house, and I thank members for the opportunity to speak today.

MR P. LILBURNE (Carine) [3.56 pm]: I rise to support the Finance Legislation Amendment (Emergency Relief) Bill 2021. This bill seeks to amend the Taxation Administration Act 2003 and the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 to allow the Treasurer, in consultation with the Minister for Finance, to declare tax or grant relief measures considered necessary to relieve the financial or economic impacts of a declared emergency. I wish to acknowledge this bill, which was introduced by the Minister for Finance, Dr Tony Buti, as an important piece of legislation that will allow a faster response to a state of emergency or an emergency situation in the future.

My own experiences of emergency circumstances include when I was teaching students at a regional school in Western Australia. I remember the extraordinary events of 11 September 2001 in the United States of America. The events of 9/11 were a series of four coordinated attacks by the militant Islamist terrorist group al-Qaeda against the United States on the morning of Tuesday, September 11. This recollection begins on that Tuesday, when in Western Australia I had woken to the news that an aircraft had crashed into the World Trade Center in New York, known as the Twin Towers. Almost 20 years ago to the day, I watched on live television as the second aircraft crashed into the World Trade Center. That image and the location I was in at the time will live with me all of my life. It was horrendous to see people throw themselves from 40 floors above the ground to escape the fire. It was a clear Tuesday morning, and an American Airlines Boeing 767 loaded with 20 000 gallons of jet fuel crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. The impact left a gaping, burning hole near the eightieth floor of the 110-storey building. On 11 September 2001, 19 militants associated with the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda hijacked four aeroplanes and carried out suicide attacks against targets in the United States. Two of the planes were flown into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, a third plane hit the Pentagon just outside Washington DC and a fourth plane crashed in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Almost 3 000 people were killed during those 9/11 terrorist attacks, which triggered major US initiatives to combat terrorism and defined the presidency of President George Bush.

As the evacuation of the tower and its twin got underway, television cameras broadcast live images of what people initially thought to be a freak accident. Then, 18 minutes after the first plane had hit, a second Boeing 767, United Airlines flight 175, appeared out of the sky, turned sharply toward the World Trade Center and sliced into the south tower near the sixtieth floor.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Council Membership

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had appointed Hon Ayor Makur Chuot to fill the vacancy on the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People following the resignation of Hon Klara Andric.

TREASURER — PERFORMANCE

Motion

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition) [4.02 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Treasurer and his government's inability to address the multiple crises of their own making after four years of underinvestment and bandaied budget solutions.

Before I start on my contribution, it was quite chilling to listen to the member talk about 9/11 and his recollections of that day. I think everybody has a memory of where they were at that time. It is one of those moments in time. It brought back to me in sharp relief where I was. I was in the United Kingdom at the time, in a small village just outside of London, in the kitchen of the house that I was housekeeping, watching the TV as I was preparing lunch for the family. I was a long way from home and for the first time in my life I felt completely lost and very at sea. I am sure that is something that connected people right around the world. It was something that changed the world for our generation. It was a remarkable reflection; I got goosebumps when I was listening to the member talk. I am sure that it was visceral for many and for those people who were directly impacted.

We are talking about something a little closer to home at this time, on a Wednesday afternoon in Parliament, the day before the handing down of the state budget. Obviously, the opposition will be talking to the state budget. I think that, predominantly, all the announcements have been made. It will be interesting to see what the Treasurer has left to talk about tomorrow, but there have been a number of announcements made in the preceding weeks and

even months to this point. Of course, the budget has been delayed because of the state election this year. Ordinarily, it would have been handed down in May. Here we are in September, still considering the budget, and what a budget and revenue source this government has at its disposal.

One would think, with that enormous revenue and income that the government has been gifted by the success of our mining industry, with those royalties that it has collected and the GST that has been secured and delivered into our state's coffers, that we would see announcements from the state government about securing industries and businesses and diversification of our state's economy in both metropolitan and regional areas for future generations, because much of it has been driven by a one-off windfall from a mining sector that has enjoyed very rude health over the last 18 months to two years. Instead, what we have seen and anticipate seeing is a budget that is made up of announcements papering over the cracks that have been created by this government over the last four and a half years as a result of under-resourcing and underspending in critical areas. I think that the Premier and Treasurer—one and the same—is expecting accolades for the announcements that the government has made on its investment in housing and health, but the reason it has been forced to make those investments is that we have multiple crises across these sectors. It does not stop there, and my colleagues will talk about various portfolio areas in which there has been a lack of attention and investment that means that this government is now bringing out the bandaids to try to patch up the mess that it has made over the last four and a half years. To me, that is an opportunity cost for the people of Western Australia. Instead of using that surplus to really set up our future for future generations, we see this government dipping into that pile of money to make sure that it can repair the damage that it has done in the health sector.

Not only have we been persistent and consistent in raising these health issues over a long period, well before the pandemic arrived on our doorstep, but also others who are involved in the sector are saying that this government has under-resourced and underinvested and is responsible for the crisis that we now see it struggling to try to correct. When I see announcements like the one that has been made today in relation to our native forestry industry, I am gobsmacked that we will have another crisis that is of the government's own making, because that is exactly what will happen down in the south west when the businesses and communities that rely on this sustainable industry come to terms with the fact that this government did not have the courtesy to take such a significant decision to the election. I am sure that, before the election, not one of the government's candidates wanted to knock on doors in the south west and talk to businesses that were supportive of its local candidates to tell them that it was about to close down those business and that industry. The government held no consultation. It certainly did not have the guts to take this decision to an election and actually debate the merits of it with anyone from the opposition or the community. It has simply used this massive majority—this arrogance that seems to be permeating every government minister—to push things through. This is clearly coming from an ideological bent.

I really feel for those communities that have been impacted today. They will be reeling for some time. They are about to become accustomed with what everybody in the health and housing sectors is feeling. For the last four and a half years, people in those sectors have had to deal with a government that has not listened and not invested, and left all those people trying to do the very best they can without the support of a state government. Now we see the government dipping into the coffers to try to fix up the mess of its own making. I again put on record my disappointment and the disappointment of the opposition with the decision that was made and announced this morning in relation to the forestry industry.

Mr V.A. Catania: Anger! Not disappointment—anger!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am gobsmacked, member for North West Central. When I saw it, I thought someone had commandeered or created a post on social media that could not possibly be true, because surely the government would not make announcements like that without actually consulting with the key and peak body that represents the businesses and communities, and I am talking about the Forest Industries Federation of WA. Surely it would have had a conversation with that body before talking about changing the fortunes of everybody involved in those industries.

Surely we should expect that from a government that has been gifted such a huge majority. Time and again it has fallen short of the mark. No doubt the spin doctors are still working overtime in the Premier's office and government cabinet offices to make sure that when the Premier stands up tomorrow and announces the budget, the government looks as though it is benevolent, and has been using its power appropriately and investing in the community so that our health system, housing sector and all those areas that my colleagues will talk about will have the support that they need. But it will be too little too late. This government has learnt nothing from the fact that we have reached crisis point in health and housing. It has carried on and created another crisis that will have long-term ramifications.

I have had the privilege of being a Minister for Forestry and working very closely with people involved in that industry. My colleague the member for North West Central was my parliamentary secretary. He was directly responsible for the portfolio when we were in government and dealt with people within all organisations involved in the sector. Those people take great pride in the work that they do. They take pride in the fact that science sits behind everything that they do in that industry. This government chooses to perpetuate many myths associated with native forestry rather than doing the hard yards to explain to and convince people why it is important that the industry continue. Fifty million dollars will be grossly inadequate to transition the communities, businesses and individuals

currently in that sector. I put that on the record right now. The businesses and people in that sector make long-term decisions. That was the purpose of forest management plans—to allow people to plan sensibly within the framework of a scientifically based document to ensure the best environmental management of our native forests. What we will see now is timber coming increasingly from countries that have lower environmental standards than we have here in Australia. I think that will be a very poor outcome.

This is a poorly thought out policy. I note the response from the Minister for Climate Action today to the question posed by the member for Moore, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, about why the government thought it was appropriate to use \$57 000 of taxpayers' money to essentially run a poll to see whether the broader public supported a position that the government already knew it was going to introduce. It is a gross misuse of taxpayers' dollars. The government should have sat down and gone through the forest management plan process that allows everyone involved in the sector to have a say. It should have consulted the environmental people, the community and every stakeholder.

Mr R.S. Love: And foresters.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Yes, and the foresters. That process has been laid out. That has been the process since 2001. While I am on the topic, let me say that anybody who says that old-growth forest logging is continuing in Western Australia is wrong. There has been no old-growth tree logging in Western Australia since 2001.

Ms C.M. Rowe: Excuse me! It depends on how you define "old growth".

Ms M.J. DAVIES: "Old growth" is defined by the fact that in 2001, the Labor government ripped the guts out of the industry and said, "You will no longer be able to log in a forest that has remained untouched." If it had not been touched, it was excluded from logging in the future. Since 2001, only coupes or areas of forest that have been logged previously are logged. Guess what! They are replanted and they are thinned out. It is actually a sustainable industry—who would have thought! I absolutely disagree. If somebody comes across a log or a tree within one of those coupes, there is a process to identify whether a habitat is important or should be excluded from the coupe. Do not perpetuate the myth, because we are talking about wiping out the livelihoods of a thousand people without any consultation. They have woken up to the news that their businesses and their communities will not look anything like what they do today. That is all down to the Labor Party. The government did not have the guts to take this issue to the election, just as it did not take to the election the fact that it was going to reduce regional representation either. This government does not use the money that it has been gifted by the mining industry to manage the budget financially appropriately. This government does not use the power that it has been afforded by the people of Western Australia. The shine will come off the Premier and his ministers if they continue to behave like this.

I suspect that what we will see tomorrow when the Premier stands up to deliver the final details of the budget is a papering over of the cracks that have emerged because the government has failed to deal with the business of the state. The bread and butter of state government is health, housing, resourcing our police officers, making sure that there is investment in regional communities and looking after those who look after our most vulnerable, like those working in the Department of Communities. The government has failed on many fronts. From the opposition's perspective, all we are going to see tomorrow is the Premier, unfortunately, taking credit for something for which no credit is due. The revenue that is sitting in the state coffers is a result of the GST deal with the federal government and royalties collected from the iron ore sector predominantly and the gold industry.

The government is sitting on a pile of money while we face what I consider the worst crisis in the health system in Western Australia. Ordinary, everyday Western Australians and businesses rely on the government to keep an eye on making sure that we get what we deserve—that is, a first-class health system that looks after the people who work in that system. The government should be encouraging more people to work in that system and to make sure that we are prepared for any potential outbreak of COVID in our community. That is what this government should be focused on. That is what we expect the government to be paying attention to. It is quite clear that the significant amount that the government has announced before we got to this point today shows that it has underinvested in and under-resourced that critical sector. That is incredibly disappointing and the shine is going to come off the government very, very quickly. These eleventh-hour investments just go to show that the opposition has been on the right track. It has asked the Minister for Health to explain why ambulance ramping in the health system is now the highest it has ever been in this state's history. I think it is something like 530 per cent higher than it was when he was in opposition and was calling it a crisis. Why are there regular code yellows in our hospitals? That is no longer rare; it is happening on a weekly basis. Why are 17 000 people waiting for a safe house—any kind of house—right across regional Western Australia? Why did the government sell off 1 300 houses when it knew the waiting list was only going to get worse? This government has dropped the ball on every front. When the budget comes down tomorrow, I am not sure that there should be any credit given to the Premier; Treasurer for the job that has been done over the last four and a half years.

It is undeniable from our perspective that the state government has failed the people of Western Australia. It has failed to manage what we expect the state government to have full control over—that is, the state's health system. Today in question time the Leader of the Liberal Party raised the crime statistics, and again and again the government refused to share information so the public can see where the money is going and where improvements are needed

right across the board. I have no doubt that the shadow Minister for Commerce; Tourism is going to talk about the impacts on some businesses right across the state as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and the challenges that they are facing. I have no doubt that the shadow Minister for Health will stand once again and raise the issues that she has raised again and again, because we know the real impacts that this is having on the lives and livelihoods of the people of Western Australia.

The member for Roe has been dogged in his pursuit of the Premier for the role that he has played, or not played, in securing workers for the agriculture sector. The Premier's performance today was astounding. The commonwealth government has put forward Bladin Village in the Northern Territory for the state government to utilise to bring in essential workers for the harvest, which we are about to start any day. I think the Premier refuses to engage, despite his Minister for Agriculture and Food wanting to secure a deal, because he does not want to concede one bit to the commonwealth. He is in a battle with the feds and prefers to have a political game of ping-pong, leaving our agriculture sector blowing in the breeze. It is absolutely appalling. The Premier prefers to play politics instead of knuckling down and putting a proposal to the federal government, which he knows needs to be done, because on some ideological or political front he does not want to accept that it has a role to play in bringing people into the state to help our agriculture sector. It was an absolutely appalling display from the Premier in question time today. I have no doubt that the member for Roe will be having further conversations on the lack of support for the agriculture sector.

The opposition will be looking at a number of other issues in detail when the budget is released tomorrow, but I have a feeling we have already seen the majority of the budget announcements that will be rolled out. I will leave members with one last thought: the very first thing that this government announced about the upcoming budget was an increase to household fees and charges. I think that announcement was made probably two or three months ago. The state has rivers of gold—a \$5 billion surplus—yet this government will increase fees and charges by \$100. That announcement was made some time ago. I suspect that the Treasurer will not touch on that increase tomorrow; in government members' minds, it will be a celebration of the things that the government is investing in. But bear in mind that the things the state government is investing in are to mop up and bandaid over the mess that it made in its first four and a half years. This Labor government has caused the crises in housing, health and the agriculture sector. From the opposition's perspective, it is simply unacceptable that funding that should be used to set up our state for the next two, three, four or five generations will instead go into fixing the mess that this government has made.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party) [4.22 pm]: I rise to enthusiastically support the excellent motion put forward by the Leader of the Opposition. If we really look at and analyse this budget, as was outlined by the Leader of the Opposition, we see that it has absolutely no economic plan for Western Australia and no vision. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out in the press conference today, this government has received \$20 billion cumulatively above forecast over the last four and a bit years. What has happened to a large amount of that money? We have seen a panic spending spree to try to make up for the fact that this government has done nothing over the past four and a half years in the key areas that a government should manage. Think about a traditional election—a non-COVID election. During a non-COVID election, the focus is normally on health, education and law and order. Housing may come into it. Although housing has never been an issue in any budget I have ever known, it has to be now.

What we see is a government boasting about spending, and, due to its inactivity, squandering a large portion of the surplus because it has simply failed to do its job for the last four and a half years. The government was facing an electoral rout going back two Februarys because it had destroyed the domestic economy and done nothing in the state. The government was so chuffed with the iron ore royalties pouring in, it had no knowledge whatsoever of what was happening in the rest of the domestic economy. COVID saved this government. That is what happened and the government has hidden behind it ever since. The government has simply done nothing at all about the major problems facing this state. When I came to Parliament about three and a half years ago, we were telling the government that there was a housing and homelessness crisis in this state, and it did absolutely nothing. Then we saw a panic in December last year when the government thought, "Hang on; we are going to an election and we'll face public scrutiny", and announced \$800 million in funding. What has been done between then and now? Essentially, nothing. I will go into a bit of detail on that, members. Government members need to get out of the dazed state they are in and saying, "We've got all the money in and we had such a big win", and actually look at what the government has not done. It has been a shameful performance by this government. The opposition recognises that the only thing the government has done is to manage the COVID pandemic; meanwhile, it has stopped managing the rest of the state.

This budget is a panic spend to try to paper over the government's complete inaction for the last four and a half years. Government members should really take stock of themselves on that. The tragedy of this budget is that because the government is panicking about what it has not done for the last four and a half years about homelessness and the housing crisis, there has been no meaningful action to deal with those issues. It is nothing but spin. If spin were action, we would be in good shape. Now we have a crisis and the government is spending money on it, but we have not seen any meaningful action from this government to develop a future for Western Australia. The government assumes that the iron ore price will stay up at \$US150 to \$US200 a tonne and that the rivers of gold from the GST fix will get it through, but it has done nothing whatsoever to manage those major issues.

As I say, we talk about health, education and law and order. Law and order, Minister for Police—we have the worst violent crime statistics in the history of the state. I was interested in the debate in this chamber today in which the police minister was trying to spin his way out of the government owning the worst violent crime statistics in this state's history. The first time I asked the minister about this he said it is because of domestic violence due to people being locked down because of COVID. There is no doubt whatsoever that domestic violence has increased due to COVID—that is unarguable. Members on this side of the chamber know that domestic violence is the scourge facing our nation and understand that it has increased with COVID. The minister is trying to spin his way out of it, but if we take domestic violence out of the equation, what do we have? When we take out all the domestic violence figures, the underlying number of violent crimes is still the worst in the history of the state of Western Australia.

Furthermore, we have seen a quadrupling—or just shy of that—of police response times in Perth and Northbridge. How quickly the police can get to an incident is literally the difference between life and death. What did we see? The minister was saying, “You’re attacking the police.” No; we are attacking the minister and his government because they have not stayed on top of violent crime in this state.

This government has a shameful record in housing, and I will go through that in detail. But first I want to talk about the future of the state of Western Australia. Western Australia currently enjoys enormous wealth primarily due to mineral wealth and mining. That is the primary source of wealth in our economy. It is one of the reasons that Western Australia has been able to take such a hard stance on border closures. It is why the other states, in particular New South Wales, have had a more difficult time in terms of how they have dealt with that. In Western Australia, our economy is overwhelmingly dominated by income from mining. We currently account for something like 68 per cent of Australia's export income. That is due in large part to iron ore and other mineral exports. Agriculture is an important part of that, but that has, essentially, been constant, other than this year, when we are going to have a bumper crop. As we have pointed out, because of this government's arrogant inaction—playing games and trying to blame the federal government—there is a huge risk that that bumper crop, or part of it, will stay in the field. What a disgrace! The Premier's performance in question time was a disgrace. He simply refused to take ownership of the matter. In September last year, this Premier sat on national cabinet and agreed to a plan that each state would take responsibility for bringing into Western Australia some of those 25 000 visa-ready workers from Pacific nations with low or no COVID cases to deal with that workforce problem. Western Australia is the only state in Australia not participating in that plan because of this nonsense about who controls the borders. Every other state has done it. Every other Labor state has done it and Victoria did it in March this year. Every other state is bringing in those workers, but not Western Australia. This Premier is holding the farmers of Western Australia hostage because of his inaction.

Mr P.J. Rundle: And his politicking.

Dr D.J. HONEY: It is just politics. Let us go to the future of the state of Western Australia. As I said, mining is a massive part of our economy and it is very important, but we all know that that is ephemeral. A while ago, just after the election, the member for Willagee gave an excellent speech in this place about the prospects for the price of iron ore going forward. I have spoken with all the major iron ore companies as well as some international experts on iron ore pricing. They all say that in the next five to seven years, we will see a substantial reduction in the iron ore price. I refer members back to the member for Willagee's speech because he outlined the causes for that in great detail. We know that the price of iron ore will come down. In fact, in that sort of time frame, the price of iron ore is likely to come down to \$40 to \$50 a tonne. That is the greater likelihood in the future.

We know that all the other resources that we rely on such as natural gas, and even the business that I worked in before I came into Parliament—Alcoa—have a 30-year time frame on them, after which Western Australia will suddenly not have rivers of gold coming into it. Mining will continue and some of that wealth will still come in, but it will not sustain the lifestyle that we have now or our projected population. The critical role for government is to do something about it now. It should use the surplus that we have now not to paper over its failures, but to create a future for the state of Western Australia. There is no greater opportunity for the future of Western Australia than in green energy, making hydrogen, ammonia and other hydrogen-related products such as urea and ammonium nitrate. This is the time we need to do it. We are not alone in this. All over the world, everyone has identified green hydrogen from renewables as the future for not only energy, but also industrial manufacturing. Every nation in the world is working on this. We know that those nations who develop this first will benefit the most. As I have pointed out outside this place and in here, there is no place in the world with a greater capacity for making the lowest cost green energy, and, hence, the lowest cost hydrogen, than the midwest of Western Australia from Geraldton to Karratha. It is the best place in the world because it has an almost unique combination of reliable wind and solar energy. That gives that area what they call the highest capacity factor of anywhere in the world. It means that we get the effective energy output from the installed capital. What do we see in this budget? Do we see any serious effort on the part of this government to generate a hydrogen industry in this state? What is in this budget is a joke. I will contextualise it. This government is spending \$7 billion on a rail line to Ellenbrook or the Metronet project.

Mr V.A. Catania: It will cost \$10 billion.

Dr D.J. HONEY: It will cost \$10 billion, as the member for North West Central has pointed out. He is prescient in this regard, as I have said several times. It will cost \$10 billion and the Minister for Transport is desperately hiding

costs in every little hidey-hole that she can find to make this enormous cost blowout look smaller. As I have said, it is the largest capital cost blowout in the history of Western Australia, and this government says that it is managing the finances. That project will create jobs while it is under construction, but, in effect, it will create only a handful of jobs into the future. It will not create the hundreds of thousands of jobs that young people will need in the future.

If an equivalent sum of money were to be invested in the central midwest region, it would transform the future of this state. This state would be an economic powerhouse for longer than the next 20 or 30 years while our mineral resources hold up. We could be an industrial powerhouse. The simple reason is that cheap green hydrogen could be made in the midwest. However, exporting hydrogen and its products is expensive. The best thing we can do with hydrogen is to use it for manufacturing in Western Australia. As I said, this budget shows us that the government has made a token effort and it has not committed to the hydrogen industry.

I will go to the nub of it. The ideal places to focus a lot of that industry are Karratha and Oakajee, but Oakajee, which is near Geraldton, is probably the best place. The government has said that it has identified Oakajee as the place to develop a hydrogen precinct. What is this government doing to encourage that? It is going to spend money. Here we go! It has really lashed out on this project because it is concerned about the future of young people in Western Australia who will need jobs. In the budget, this government has identified \$7.5 million for an access road into the site. We know what roads cost. We know what simple intersections in Perth cost. Basically, this money will build some sort of minor road into the site. That will do absolutely nothing whatsoever to inspire industry to develop in that area.

The Minister for Mines and Petroleum has just come in here. BP Australia recently reported on its study into green hydrogen and ammonia. It carried out a definitive study because it wants to develop that green industry in the Geraldton area. What has BP said in the report? It has said that yes, it is viable, but that it cannot go ahead because there is no port, no water and no electricity network into that site. That is what BP has said. I have spoken to a good number of companies that have said that they want to develop in that area. All of them have said exactly the same thing—that the government is playing this nonsense game. The government is saying to people who are possibly going to develop in that area, “Yes, you can come here and develop here. We want this area to be the hydrogen precinct, but we are not going to put any infrastructure in. Either you’ve got to put the infrastructure in or you’ve got to work with all the potential developers to put the infrastructure in.” Nowhere else in the world does this. This is why this development will not go ahead. I have heard all the announcements. I have read them in the paper and I have spoken to those proponents face-to-face and they all tell me the same thing: they will not get ultimate investment approval for those projects. They want to invest because of the quality of the renewable energy asset, but they will not do it because the basic enabling infrastructure is not being put in by this government. I have seen the studies and we have the cooperative research centres—all of those things are fine. The CRCs are important to train the potential workforce, but until this government is serious about investing in major infrastructure in that area, such as a port or proper road infrastructure that will enable heavy equipment to be transported to that site—not some roundabout or a little driveway that comes off the road and runs into the existing dirt road that goes into an overgrown paddock—that area will not be developed. That is why BP recently announced that it will use its old refinery site in Kwinana for potentially developing a renewable energy hub, because all that infrastructure is there. That is the critical point. In the term of this government, nothing of any significance will happen at Oakajee because this government will not make the critical investment in the future of Western Australia.

The Minister for Energy loves to have a bit of fun about the 330-kilovolt line. Again, all the major proponents I have spoken to have told me that they need the 330-kilovolt line tied to the south west interconnected system for two reasons. First, they need a stable, reliable emergency power backup for major industrial facilities if their own power generation is not available. Second, when they are using renewable energy, they need the option of putting excess energy back into the SWIS. Again, we have a minister who, for whatever reason, refuses to recognise that or to invest in that line. I am sure the minister will get up and make merry and so on, but this is serious. It is about the future of Western Australia, and this government is not making the investment it needs to make. We have seen this across every area—that is, lots of spin from the Minister for Energy and lots of token projects in the area of hydrogen, but nothing that will enable the development of that industry in this state.

We have seen it in housing and in emergency accommodation—lots of notices about emergency accommodation in this state. However, we actually see a tiny amount of general accommodation and short-term accommodation for people who are homeless on the street. Our member for Vasse will talk about the health crisis, but, again, a government failed to invest in housing but boasted in 2018 how it cut health expenditure. Now it is in a panic, spending a vast amount of money to try to catch up to where it should have been and that money is not available for the future development of Western Australia. This is a budget the government should be ashamed of. It is a budget that speaks of the failure of the government over the last four years and its panic to paper over the cracks it has caused through its own inaction and its own ignorance of what is going on in this state. The Minister for Police does not understand his statistics. The Premier wants to point fingers and play games, pointing at the federal government instead of dealing with the major issues such as lack of workforce in not just the agricultural areas, but also all industries in Western Australia. I went to the mines conference and the major issue for the mining industry is lack of workforce.

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) [4.42 pm]: I rise to support this worthy motion put by the Leader of the Opposition in this place, and what a worthy motion it is. As the shadow Minister for Health, I will speak in particular to one of the most challenging areas that we face across the state at this time, and that is obviously the health crisis our state is facing.

If we speak to anyone in the street, and certainly constituents who have come into my office, or listen to talkback radio, we hear the feedback in the community, in hospitals and outside the walls of Parliament where there is great concern about the preparedness of our health system and our hospitals for any COVID outbreak. There is real concern about to what extent our Premier has delivered on the promise to keep Western Australia safe and strong. It is a state that has no COVID in the community and no influx of the flu and has missed the mark on so many health measures, which has left patients waiting outside hospitals and in the corridors of hospitals or waiting longer for ambulances in the community than ever before because of the failures in the health system.

It has not happened overnight. We heard in this place today during question time countless excuses, whether it is about the support our frontline police officers should be receiving or whether it is about our health workers, and the excuse is always “COVID-19”. This has been highlighted not just by the opposition, but also by key stakeholders. The reality is that this has been years in the making, because in the first term of the McGowan Labor government, it ran down the health system. It did not invest in the health system or keep investment in health up with growth. There were high fives about it at the time. I remember being in this place and hearing the self-congratulations at that time about the reduction in spend on health. If the spend on health has to be reduced, it has to come with good reform and that has not happened. We are not seeing that happen. We have seen the implementation of health boards across the state, but, as we saw following the tragic situation of Aishwarya Aswath at Perth Children’s Hospital, we are increasingly seeing health boards propped up as vehicles to deflect blame and answer the tough questions when things go wrong in the health system, and they certainly have.

One of the real issues in the health system has been the fact that this government has not taken the crisis seriously. I asked questions in Parliament yesterday about 327 shifts that were not covered at Royal Perth Hospital and we heard our Minister for Health state that that was an outstanding result. Little did I know it at that time, but just after question time we heard that hospitals, including Royal Perth Hospital, had experienced a triple bypass that day. Our Australian Medical Association president, Mark Duncan-Smith, stated —

... the mismanagement of the health system, with insufficient funding to achieve the hospital capacity needed to manage the call for services, was putting Western Australians at increasing risk of a catastrophic outcome.

A triple bypass is a frightening situation. Three hospitals were unable to accept patients when there is no COVID-19 in the community and no influx of the flu but every other excuse from the McGowan Labor government about why this is happening. Ambulance response times is an obvious area in which this government has failed. It failed last month more than ever in this state’s recorded history. The crisis in our emergency departments is now having a broader flow-on effect in the community. St John Ambulance is trapped at the front of emergency departments, which is leading to it being challenged when responding to emergencies in the community. We know that about one in four priority 1 cases were not responded to within the 15-minute response time target last month. Effectively, that is the flow-on effect from bed block in our hospital system. The government will be considering a report into the St John Ambulance service, which is trying to grapple with a hospital system under pressure with the lowest number of available public beds in the country and is challenged also by critical staffing issues. The government’s response to all this is to consider a report into St John Ambulance and taking over that service. People in my community and people in the street have raised this concern: why is this area of health under investigation by this government when we are seeing many other failings right across the health system?

The tragedy at Perth Children’s Hospital highlighted what many people had been stating for some time, and that is the critical under-resourcing of our hospitals. It was raised in October 2020 by senior clinicians and it was raised in December 2020 by senior clinicians. The Australian Nursing Federation and the Australian Medical Association also raised issues of chronic understaffing and the impact it could have on patient safety before that tragedy. It is concerning that in April this year the minister stated that the health system was operating magnificently. He rejected the suggestion that there were critical staff shortages in our health system, which is quite obviously not the case.

The canary in the coalmine is ambulance ramping. This illustrates that our hospital system is unable to cope—unable to accept patients. It is damning that this government is seeing record levels of ambulance ramping that are over five times what our now Minister for Health described as a horror story when he was in opposition.

I turn to code yellows. Over the last 12 months we have seen 111 code yellows in our health system due to capacity issues and the fact that lack of investment has led to the lowest number of available public beds in the country.

I turn to elective surgery. I hear the Minister for Health talking about the acuity that we are now seeing in our emergency departments. It is fair to say that the numbers in our emergency departments have been predictable and on trend, as with mental health presentations. The increase in acuity in those numbers is predictable, given the restrictions and measures this government has made to turn people away from our emergency departments or restrict

elective surgery. The tap of support for these patients cannot be turned off without seeing further implications down the line. That is not just a statement from the opposition; that is what we are also hearing from our health workers. The reality is in the fact that we have seen the elective surgery waitlist increase by 50 per cent under this government's watch since 2017. It leads not only to more patients waiting for these important surgeries, but also to a greater level of acuity. Other people would like to speak, but the outcome of this is that we have a health system on its knees.

The Your Voice in Health survey stated that fewer than half of the respondents felt their organisation cared about their health and wellbeing or that they felt valued in the workplace. Only one in three health workers felt they had the ability to speak up and challenge what was happening in the workplace. That again reflects the issue of patient safety. It has a flow-on effect on patient safety. When these issues are raised in this place, the response from the government is that it is wonderful that it introduced this survey. The reality is that these are damning statistics. Over half of the measures were below the national standard. They reflect a workforce that does not feel supported or comfortable speaking up and challenging the safety of the environment for patients and other healthcare workers. This also reflects a situation that is damning of this government and its lack of investment right across the board.

I turn to the investment in the health system. There was a recent announcement about the Joondalup Health Campus expansion. The government recently re-announced some progress on that important expansion of the Joondalup Health Campus in the north. However, it also illustrated the cutbacks we have seen from this government. It is extraordinary that at this time, when the state is experiencing a health crisis and there are pressures on our healthcare system, we hear a re-announcement of an election commitment that reflects a cut in spending on this important health campus. It is a cut in spending on Joondalup Health Campus that will reduce the number of operating theatres from eight to one and will reduce the overall scope of this extension. Not only was the announcement almost identical to the statement from the Premier in 2017, which illustrates that very little has been done, but also the government has ruthlessly cut the scope of this project.

There is little mention after four years of this government of what progress has been undertaken on the promise for medihotels that we heard so much about. This is an illustration of where we are now as a state. It illustrates the cuts this government has ruthlessly made to the health system and the implications they are now having. It has meant that although there is no COVID in the community at this time, there is the extraordinary situation of a health system on its knees. We are also challenged by the lowest vaccination rates in the country, making this state particularly vulnerable to COVID.

I briefly touched on staffing issues at Royal Perth Hospital. Regarding yesterday's front page story in the newspaper, the health minister said that there had been an outstanding result, but the reality is that we are 327 nurse shifts short. A code yellow was called later that day. I should say that the 327 shifts were over two weeks, for a 1 541 shift deficit. It illustrates the desperate need in the intensive care unit. That equates to roughly 23 dropped shifts a day at the hospital, which is a shortage of nine staff each morning, afternoon and night shift. I am constantly getting messages from parents of healthcare workers and from healthcare workers themselves about the vulnerable situation they feel they are in in our hospital system. On the back of the front-page news story, I heard from the parent of one healthcare worker yesterday, who highlighted their concern for their daughter working in ICU alongside physiotherapists who are temporarily undertaking nursing roles and others. They are feeling the pressure of being so desperately understaffed. The AMA has warned that there are similar shortages as those picked up yesterday across the entire health system. It is predicted that WA's health system will be short some 500 to 600 nurses. The AMA says that another 150 junior doctors are needed in our tertiary hospitals. There are extraordinary waiting lists for specialists as well. It takes over a year to see a psychologist in the south west region after getting a referral for an appointment. Perth Children's Hospital is experiencing a significant challenge. Because of the lack of investment in the mental health space, not only in early intervention, but also in support services, PCH is expecting an extraordinary increase in the number of presentations relating to child and adolescent health. The revolving door of hospitalisations across our health system because of the lack of investment in the mental health space and early intervention is also having a significant effect. Nathan Gibson, our Chief Psychiatrist, said in his report on Kate Savage late last year that this is not because of a lack of business cases being presented to government by the child and adolescent mental health service. We have seen a countless number of reviews into our struggling health system in the areas of child and adolescent mental health and it is now time to act. There is certainly a significant issue in that area as well.

We have seen an 86 per cent increase in eating disorder referrals at Perth Children's Hospital. The government made a \$33 million commitment for a new eating disorders unit. We hope that that is brought forward in tomorrow's budget because it is quite obvious that there is also a desperate need to address those issues for adolescents. The experiences of those adolescents and the stress on the families surrounding them are very real. It is one of the most preventable areas of mental health but it can also be the most fatal if it is not addressed within a certain period. That is why we need investment in early intervention mental health support services in the community, along with backing up investment in our hospitals. The eating disorders unit is critically important, together with this government taking the health crisis seriously and ensuring that there is real investment beyond the 1.25 per cent increases referred to by the Australian Medical Association that have been committed so far. In effect, that is a \$1 billion investment in our health system that is struggling and under unprecedented pressure. It is literally on its knees. It is not keeping Western Australians safe and it does not have the confidence of our health workers.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.02 pm]: I, too, would like to speak to the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition condemning the Treasurer and his government's inability to address the multiple crises of its own making after four years of underinvestment and bandaid budget solutions.

If we want to see evidence of the multiple crises, we need only look at the multiple times we have addressed issues in question time in this place, and again today. We need to look at the questions asked by the opposition about ambulance ramping; the unpredictable nature of the G2G PASS system, which makes it very difficult to get people into the state to fill necessary roles of employment; the problems of agriculture and being able to secure workers; and the problem that the government made for itself today by its unheard of and uncalled for announcement that it will be suspending logging in native forests without consultation with the industry and affected communities and without going to those people affected at the last election and indicating that it had any intention whatsoever to do that to that industry. I will talk about that in a little more detail later.

I first want to turn to the most damning thing about this budget as a regional member of Parliament—that is, the spin against the reality of what has happened to royalties for regions under this government. It is predicted that this government will be sitting on a surplus of around \$5 billion, yet we see that the royalties for regions program has been absolutely gutted by this government. In fact, it stopped using the name “royalties for regions” on many projects. I noted recently that nothing has been done about the hospital redevelopment project in Mullewa, which is something like five years overdue. A sign has suddenly appeared in front of the hospital that has sat derelict for five years, which says, “This will be a royalties for regions project”. Someone in the government has woken up to the fact that royalties for regions is a program and the government is going to use that name, but it will not fund it in the appropriate manner. It will take 70 per cent of the money from royalties for regions and put that into cross-subsidisation to support expenditures that should be part of the normal business of government. I am talking about things like running school buses, keeping water coming out of taps in country communities and TAFEs. Things that governments have always done off their own bat suddenly come under royalties for regions. Up to 70 per cent of that \$1 billion a year is being spent in that way and a very small amount in comparison is being used to support communities to enable them to take a comparative advantage in their local areas to grow industries, to grow economies, to grow towns and to give confidence to the communities that exist in regional WA. In order to give confidence to communities, the government should not strip away their prime industries without indicating at any point that it had any intention of doing so.

A series of questions have been asked of the Minister for Environment since she started a faux consultation process earlier this year. She put out a public survey at a cost of \$56 500, from memory. We have not been able to see what that \$56 500 of public money has achieved. She has not tabled the results of that survey. She said that it had overwhelming support. If a survey is conducted by phrasing the questions in a certain way so that people answer in a certain way, it will get support. The government did not go to the industries, the forest workers, the mill owners or the towns in those communities where those people live and work, as they have done for a century or more, and say, “This is what we're going to do.” In fact, back in March, the government did not go to those people and say what it would do.

I see the member for Warren–Blackwood in the chamber. I am not denigrating the member personally in any way, but I did not see anything in the campaign that was mounted in the electorate of Warren–Blackwood that announced that one of the major industries in that area would be shut down. If the Labor government made such an announcement before the last election, I would really like to see it. Given the narrow margin that that seat was lost by, the former member for Warren–Blackwood would justifiably feel duded that the government had not been up-front and put its true agenda to the community. Had it done so, there is every chance that Hon Terry Redman would be sitting in this chamber right now. The government did not go there because it knew what the result would be. That was just as deceitful as when it said prior to the election that reform of the upper house was not on the agenda. As soon as it won a majority in the upper house and it knew it could do what it needed to do to push that agenda through, suddenly it was on the agenda within weeks. Within weeks, the government formed a committee that had an eight-week program to carry out the consultation and drop a report on the government's desk so it could get on before Christmas and get the job done.

Mr V.A. Catania: The member for Albany was standing right behind the Premier when he said, “It's not on the agenda.”

Mr R.S. LOVE: “It's not on the agenda”, member for Albany! In fact, one of the journalists down in Albany interrogated the Premier at great length. Over and again, the Premier said, “It's not on our agenda.” Will all the regional members who heard the member say that it is not on the agenda be voting to cut away the regional representation that the Premier said was not on the agenda? We have heard from the Premier that they will be or they will be out of the party. So much for democracy! Labor members have the gall to carry on about who is the Deputy Prime Minister and who is in another political party, yet their own party does not allow them to vote with their conscience and for the good of their communities. The Labor Party is an undemocratic institution in itself. I am absolutely appalled that the government thought that it was fit and proper to not go to the communities concerned to make its announcement about ending the logging of native forests. Where did the government go to make its announcement—was it Mundaring or Mundijong? Where was it?

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It was Mundaring, which is just on the outskirts of Perth. The government did not go to the industry heartland or the karri country to make its announcement; it was too gutless to do that. The government stayed up here: “We’re not going to go down there until we’ve let a bit of time pass.” I do not think the Minister for Forestry will be going down south any time soon. No doubt, if he does, he will not visit the mills and he will not talk to the people who will be out of work. We have heard that workers in that industry will be redeployed into the softwood industry. We have also heard that there is a plan to grow more trees to fill the gap in the availability of wood. I have got news for you. It is not an annual crop; it takes decades to grow trees. What is the government going to do for wood in the meantime? Will it import it from, where—Malaysia or Indonesia? The industry in Western Australia is fully and scientifically managed. We have a forest management program in place to ensure that the industry is sustainable into the future, but the government has decided to shut that down. When people want hardwood, they will look overseas to source it and they will not necessarily get it from responsibly sourced places. That is a perverse outcome, and that decision has been made for political self-advantage and nothing else.

I do not understand how the government could be so dishonest with the community. I am looking at a question that was asked of the minister representing the Minister for Environment by Hon Tjorn Sibma on 5 August. At the very end of Hon Stephen Dawson’s reply on behalf of the minister, he said —

As the honourable member will be aware, further consultation with stakeholders, including industry, will occur throughout the formal drafting process of the upcoming forest management plan.

There is going to be a forest management plan without a forestry industry, and without a forestry industry, there will be increased demand for public funds to manage the forest—to thin it out where necessary and do controlled burns. The government will expose the local community to greater not less risk because the forest is not in its natural state when it is part of a forest management program. If the government stops the logging of forestry without doing the thinning and other things, it will put the community at increased risk of fire, which will increase the cost to the community in fire prevention. All that will happen when the livelihoods of hundreds of people have been put aside. Yes, there might be jobs for them elsewhere, but not in the towns they live in because there are no other industries in those towns at the moment. These things take time. When the Liberal Party went to Collie and said that it was going to shut down the coal industry in the same time frame that the government has to stop the logging of forests, the people of Collie were outraged. The Labor Party said that that was unachievable in that time frame and that it would take longer, yet it is shutting down the forestry industry using the same time line. That is apparently okay. It is not okay when a community mines coal, but it is all right when the community’s industry involves cutting trees into viable products to provide furniture and other essentials for the community and avoids the use of unsustainable forest products from other countries.

What is the next industry in regional Western Australia that will feel the wrath of this government in its hunger for popularity in the city? Will it be the fishing industry? Will the government stop professional fishing in Western Australia? That would give it a few votes from the recreational fishers who are based in Perth. Will the government target that industry? At least give it a little bit of time and not just drop the news on the day it plans to shut it down. Let the industry and the community know about the plan. Perhaps the government could even go to the next election and say, “These are our plans. We’re going to shut down fishing, pastoralism and a range of other things.”

Mr V.A. Catania: Shut down Parliament.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It has shut down Parliament already insofar as democracy goes. We know what it is doing with the standing orders and representation in the other place. This government is out of control. It has actually lost any sense of proportion, fair play and convention. It does not care about consultation and it does not care about the communities that its members represent. Its members are silent when the industries in their communities are shut down. I can tell members that if somebody told the member for Roe, “We’re going to shut down sheep farming in your electorate”, he would not sit there silently. He would not accept it. But government members are accepting it; they are saying nothing. I wonder what all those Labor members who represent the south west are saying—nothing.

Mr P.J. Rundle: They’re following the party line.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Yes, they are following the party line.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The electorate should be taking good note of everything that has happened today. It is a disgrace.

We know that the government is intent on keeping this state locked away from the rest of the world because it does not have a viable health system. It has not done the hard yards to ensure that people are getting the vaccines that they need to feel some measure of security against COVID in the future. Recently, I read that one of the local governments in my electorate, the Shire of Chapman Valley, has the lowest vaccination rate of any local government area in regional Western Australia. It is situated on the outskirts of Geraldton, a major city with a population of 40 000 people, but the government cannot get people there vaccinated. What is wrong with you people? A vaccination rate of 14 per cent is terrible. No wonder the government is so keen on keeping workers out of this state.

The government has made it very hard for people to come into this state when we desperately need labour. The mining industry has forecast that it will need around 40 000 more employees. It will probably get those 40 000 people. Where will it get those workers from? The mining industry will get them from other industries in the state because it can afford to pay a bit more than farmers, small business owners and the government. Someone will have to find tens of thousands of people to come into this state to fill the job vacancies that exist now and in the future. We need a pathway for people to come into the state. The Minister for Police thinks it is okay that there is not a transparent G2G PASS system. I am told that at the moment, people who want to come into Western Australia across the border at Eucla have to isolate within 200 kilometres of the border in bricks and mortar. I do not know whether anybody in this chamber has been to the Nullarbor, but there is not much bricks and mortar 200 kilometres from Eucla. There are no towns to speak of. The only border at which people can viably isolate 200 kilometres from the border is Kununurra, and we know that accommodation there is already very stretched.

Mr P.J. Rundle: The police minister hasn't been out to the border.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I doubt whether he has been to the border. He certainly has not been out to see what the situation is in that respect. The member for Roe knows that area pretty well because his electorate extends across there and I think he will have some things to say about that later. The member for Roe will talk about the shortage of farm workers. An officer in Dongara is spending most of her time dealing with people who are trying to get labour for farms in my electorate. My electorate is at the northern end of the agricultural region. We are looking at September as the start date for harvest. I have a few case studies of people who are desperately trying to get labour in. Experienced header drivers from New Zealand want to come. They have had their COVID vax, and a local regional health centre can make sure that they are tested et cetera. Time is critical. Staff are needed by the end of September so they can quarantine. Crops will be ready to harvest from 10 October. The machines they will be driving will harvest 7 900 hectares of grain, worth about \$7 million. It needs to be harvested in a timely manner to get it to the bin. Another case study is the same deal; this time there is 17 500 hectares to harvest but no-one to help do it. The farmers expect the harvest to take about 10 weeks. On their own, it will take about 10 months, not 10 weeks. Another farm comprising 6 500 hectares requires a couple of drivers, a chaser bin driver, two truck drivers and someone else to help with running around doing odd jobs. That is a tall order given the situation. We know there is no clear pathway to get people in. We heard the Premier say today that he had put a proposition to the federal government, but we understand that he has not put such a proposition—not in the proper way anyway. It is not a proposition to announce in the media that the government wants to do something; it has to go through the government channels to achieve it. We know that nothing is being done in that regard. We understand that, in fact, no such formal request has been made by the Premier and that the workers required for the farming industry are not there.

It is not just the farming industry; transport is in the same sort of situation. The transport industry is desperate. The average age of truck drivers keeps going up and up because the only people they can get to come back to work are retirees or people who want to work only part time. There has been an explosion in demand. There are huge crops in the agricultural region. Many mine projects that are trying to get the ore to port from small mines all around the state do not have rail facilities, so they are using massive trucks. Quads are being used on roads in and around Geraldton, a city of 40 000 people. Quads—that is four trailers on a semitrailer—are operating in that area, bringing in well over a hundred tonnes. Someone who has had a licence for a couple of weeks cannot drive a truck like that. It takes years of experience to safely drive a truck like that. We need to be able to access drivers who can do that. They cannot be trained overnight. People with skills have to be brought in.

This government has a tin ear and turns a blind eye to anybody who points out the reality of what is going on outside this place and outside the little circle of safety that exists around the inner suburbs of Perth, where most government members live. Outside of that, things are getting a bit gnarly.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [5.22 pm]: I, too, rise to support the Leader of the Opposition's excellent motion today that this house condemns the Treasurer; Premier and his government's inability to recognise and address the multiple crises of its own making, especially in health and housing, after four years of underinvestment and bandaid budget solutions. This is a budget fail. I think we have heard most of the announcements pursuant to the state budget, so we pretty well know what will be in it tomorrow.

The housing side of it is something that we have continually brought up. I welcome that announcement from the housing minister, but what I do not welcome is the fact that once again this is based around Labor electorates. It is all about the electorates of Bunbury, Albany and Geraldton. There will be some housing announcements in the Labor electorates, but, funnily enough, we have not heard one word about Nationals WA and Liberal Party electorates. Once again, it is like the Collie slush fund. The Collie slush fund from the last four years was well known: \$80-odd million was put aside for Hon Mick Murray's pet projects. We named it the Collie slush fund. We saw things like builders of emergency service vehicles in Narrogin going out of business. A company in Narrogin was doing a fantastic job, but it was in the wrong electorate. What was done? Some company from Perth was paid millions of dollars to move its operation to Collie, in opposition to another business in Collie and in opposition to the one in Narrogin. The government has managed to wipe out that business in Narrogin. Well done! But this is the pattern that has developed over the last four and a half years. We have heard the announcement, and we heard it again from the Minister for

Emergency Services: we will have more firefighters and fire buildings in the Labor electorates of Kalgoorlie, Geraldton and Albany. We have seen it again. All we ask for is some equity in some of our inland areas that are doing a fantastic job. It is not about the National Party, the Liberal Party and the Labor Party; it is about equity for all those communities. There are homeless people in Esperance. I would love the Minister for Housing to recognise that and stop talking about just Bunbury, Geraldton, Albany and those types of places. I digress.

I am really worried about the health crisis. Back in 2016–17, the now Minister for Health said that ambulance ramping was a massive crisis, it was no good and that everything was falling apart at the seams. Now, ambulance ramping is 500 per cent worse than it was when he called it a crisis. During question time this week, the minister said that things are running really well. But hospitals have called code yellows left, right and centre. The member for Vasse has pointed it out time after time. All of us in this chamber—it does not matter which party we belong to—are worried about what will happen if there is a COVID crisis because, with the current state of affairs, people cannot get a hospital bed. That is without the Delta variant or anything else coming in. That is what worries me.

What worries me just as much is the ag industry. The agricultural industry is the second-biggest industry in this state. As I said yesterday, we are being treated like second-class citizens. I will run briefly through some of the attempts that we have made to try to bring this to the attention of the McGowan government. We have moved various motions. In August 2020, we debated a matter of public interest on worker shortages. In September 2020, a motion was moved in the Legislative Council about the failure of the Minister for Agriculture and Food to support the ag industry. In September 2020, a motion moved in the Legislative Assembly called on the state government to provide a plan for businesses suffering because of an inability to get staff. In September 2020, another motion was moved in the Legislative Assembly raising concerns about the inability of the McGowan government to handle the impending issues of ambulance ramping and social housing. In October 2020, a motion was moved about seasonal worker shortages. In November 2020, a motion was debated in the Legislative Assembly about keeping key industries operating. In May 2021, there was a motion in the Legislative Council about chronic staff shortages on farms throughout WA. The list goes on.

This shows that we are desperately trying to bring the plight of our agricultural industries especially to the attention of the McGowan government. Over the past two days, the Premier has provided arrogant responses to the questions that I have asked him. The Premier's arrogant response was played on the *Country Hour* to everyone in agricultural Western Australia. I have had a massive response. People have contacted me to say, "Thank you for bringing this up. Thank you for defending agriculture and the grain growers and the broadacre people of Western Australia", because the people of regional Western Australia are starting to wake up to this arrogance. It is unbecoming of the Premier. It is not necessary. I know he has a high popularity rating. We know all that —

Mr V.A. Catania: They don't know him like we know him.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: That is absolutely right.

When farmers are out for 20 hours a day trying to get their crop off, they are not interested in the Premier's popularity rating. All they want to do is maximise their returns. The thing that really frustrates me is that, as the member for Cottesloe and the Leader of the Opposition pointed out in their contributions, in September 2020, national cabinet came to an agreement that all states would participate in getting overseas workers into our agricultural regions. Every state has done the right thing. Every state has made it work, but not Western Australia. The Premier is leveraging his own popularity and thinking about the federal election, pitting Western Australia against the rest of Australia to try to benefit federal Labor politicians. In the meantime, he has forgotten about his job, which is to get workers in to help out Western Australian farmers.

I believe the Minister for Agriculture and Food has probably tried pretty hard to make this work, but I suspect the Premier is fending this off, saying, "No. We need to keep this at bay because I need to keep the rhetoric going about the federal government letting down the side for our success in next year's federal election." The grain growers of Western Australia are waking up to that. After the Premier's arrogant replies in question time over the last two days, the responses I have had from farmers today have really consolidated the fact that our farmers are awake to it. As I said yesterday, as I go around my electorate, there is no doubt about it. The Leader of the Opposition and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition were at the Newdegate machinery field days last week. It was the number one subject that came up when people passed through our Nationals WA stand. I am sure the same thing happened at the Dowerin field days the week before that.

For the information of some members in the chamber, I would like to explain that harvest is coming up in October, November, December and January. There is also hay cutting leading up to that, so the pressure starts from September onwards. Farmers are under pressure from September onwards trying to get their hay cut, baled and delivered. It then flows on to the harvest, which starts in October. It is absolutely essential for the harvest to come in as soon as possible because there is quality drop-off the longer the crop stays out in the paddock. Hon Colin de Grussa, our shadow Minister for Agriculture and Food, has calculated that we could potentially lose up to \$500 million of our \$7 billion grain crop by not having the labour to get the crop off. So many people have said, for example, "I've got a worker from Canada who comes over every year to help us with harvest. She's fantastic. She knows the

farm and she knows the machinery. We need to get her in. She is vaccinated and ready to come but there's no way, under this Premier, Minister for Health and agricultural minister's current regime, that we can get her in." I have countless examples of other people who have workers in Queensland and Victoria. We need to find a way for them to come in. On most of these farms, there are cottages and other houses where people can quarantine properly. As the member for Moore said, at the moment, people who fly into Perth have to quarantine within 200 kilometres of the city. I can fly into Perth from Victoria or the like and I have to quarantine within 200 kilometres of Perth. Why is a farmhouse in Wandering, which is within 200 kilometres of Perth, safer than a farmhouse in Gnowangerup or Albany, which are 300 kilometres and 500 kilometres from Perth? I cannot understand the logic of that and I do not think the Minister for Police can explain it either, member for Moore.

Mr R.S. Love: No.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: If people cross into Western Australia by car, they also have to quarantine within 200 kilometres of the border. I am not sure there are many places within 200 kilometres of the border between Western Australia and South Australia where people can quarantine for 14 days. Our Minister for Police needs to explain that. While I am on that topic, it is unfortunate that the police minister has left the chamber. I understand that it has been announced today on the Healthy WA website that truck drivers who have still had no response to their COVID tests are, as of 12 noon today, being directed across to either Esperance or Kalgoorlie to wait for their results. Those communities have not been consulted and they are quite concerned about it. The directive from 12 noon today reads —

If drivers have not received their test result, they are required to undertake a rapid antigen test ... at the WA border ... and wait for a negative result before being granted entry.

If drivers receive a non-negative RAT result, they will be directed to travel immediately to either Kununurra, Kalgoorlie or Esperance to undertake a PCR test and isolate until they receive a result.

Those communities are potentially being exposed to these truck drivers who do not have their test results. My understanding is that they have only just been told about it today and that they are still finding out about it. This is a concern for me. I would love for the Minister for Police to be able to explain it.

With the Leader of the Opposition's constant questioning about the inconsistencies of the G2G PASS results and inconsistencies in why people have been knocked back many times for many reasons, the minister does not seem to give anything other than a robotic response. For some people, the only way they can get into Western Australia for their mother's funeral or whatever else it might be, is to ring Liam Bartlett and put some pressure on the government. Funnily enough, that seems to get a response. That is what has happened. Liam Bartlett said this morning that the minister has been asleep at the wheel. It is a real concern when people have to go to the media to state their case for compassionate grounds to get into Western Australia. There is another example today with the parents of the unfortunate young guy who is in hospital suffering from a king hit on the weekend with the increasing violence that is going on around the place.

I will now move on to some of the social media we are being swamped with by our farmers. The member for Moore mentioned it. There are so many jobs advertisements for truck drivers, header drivers and chaser bin drivers. Last year, a farmer rang my office to ask what he should do. He said he could put his children on the header to drive it but, at the ages of nine and 12 years old, they were too light on the seat to start the header. That is the sort of thing that farmers are contemplating. I am asking the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture and Food whether they want children of that age responsible for a million-dollar machine and the safety concerns that go with it, because the sorts of issues that worry me are fatigue and needing an extra person to go on. That example highlights the workplace safety issues that will compromise some of our farming families this harvest. We know that Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd is struggling to get employees. It is advertising positions that are normally well and truly filled by now. It is not only our grain farmers; it is also the dairy sector. Our cows need to be milked twice a day and farmers are struggling to get staff. Our shearing teams are losing staff. As I said yesterday, we have three shearing teams in the locality close to my farm in Katanning that have just sold their runs because they cannot find staff. They have shearers waiting in New Zealand but they cannot get them in. That is typical of what is happening.

I mentioned yesterday that we have a breathtaking double standard with grain and iron ore. The Premier will bend over backwards to make sure an iron ore ship is loaded and taken out of the port—it is all great. But as soon as there is a whiff of someone having a case of COVID or symptoms on a grain ship from Indonesia wanting to load up with our barley or wheat, he says, "Sorry; send it back." He does not even want to look at the alternatives. Our farmers in our grain sector are getting very disappointed about this and they are getting to the end of their tether. When the Premier's arrogant responses to my questions in Parliament are played back to people from Geraldton to Esperance, they get a taste of what is going on in Parliament and an understanding of the way their industry is being treated. We have a \$7 billion harvest coming up and I do not see why that is not important. I know that the royalties from the iron ore sector are very important to the Premier and we will hear all about it in the budget speech tomorrow; the government will make up for all the deficiencies in housing and hospitals that have happened over the last four and a half years. I understand why iron ore is important but a \$7 billion grain crop is just as important. The Premier and the Minister for Agriculture and Food need to stop making excuses and taking veiled swipes at the federal government and start taking responsibility for looking after our grain sector.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [5.42 pm]: I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition and spoken to extremely well by my opposition colleagues who have highlighted the spin and headlines that the Labor government likes to get. We have called it the “mean Mark McGowan government” over the last four years, and I can tell members that that rings true.

After saying “We’re keeping you safe” during the election campaign, we have discovered that we are anything but safe when it comes to the health system. I have travelled around some of the top 20 places with the poorest vaccination rates in the country. Meekatharra happens to be one of those places. I have been to Meekatharra and asked people whether they have been vaccinated or why they have not been vaccinated. Places like Meekatharra and Carnarvon have large Indigenous populations and some of the lowest vaccination rates in the country. Just under 60 kilometres up the road from Meekatharra is Karalundi College. The school has been told that nobody is coming to give the students a jab and they have to travel down to Mt Magnet for their first jab, which is 210 kilometres away, and then drive back. We hear a lot about Aboriginal communities. A lot of our towns have a large number of Aboriginal people. I talked to the principal of Carnarvon Community College. The college has 75 per cent Aboriginal kids yet the vaccination rate is non-existent.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Member, you must concede that there are some outsiders who are peddling misinformation in some Aboriginal communities.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: That is interesting and I am glad that the member for Landsdale brought it up. I went to Karalundi, which is a Seventh-day Adventist school and community. People there have no problem whatsoever with getting a jab. I spoke to Aboriginal people. I am talking about towns like Meekatharra that have a large Aboriginal population. Aboriginal people find it very, very difficult and scary to go to a hospital to get a jab. That is pretty much it. I think that is human nature. Having to go through a two-step process to get something is very difficult, especially when we do not have COVID in our community. What is needed? Much like we have our BreastScreen and skin cancer check clinics that travel around regional Western Australia, we need to have a mobile vaccination clinic. It can be in the street so that everyone can see it and they can see people go in and come out of it.

Mr R.S. Love: You need a dozen or two.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: We do; we need a lot more. They need to stay in places like Meekatharra for a week. People need to knock on doors and give everyone a jab. There needs to be effort put into this. There is no effort and no advertising. In fact, I think members will find that many of our hospitals and clinics have thrown out vaccines because they cannot —

Ms M.M. Quirk: Member, I was talking about third parties spreading misinformation.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I have not come across any of that.

Ms M.M. Quirk: I have firsthand knowledge of that at Halls Creek, for example, not in your electorate.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Halls Creek is one area in the state. This is a vast state. To the idea that it is all about religious groups peddling misinformation, I say BS. That may be the case in some small communities but it is not in the majority. The main reason we have low vaccination rates is that it is too bloody difficult to get a jab. I do not want to hear that it is the federal government’s fault, because we have heard how the Premier wants to blame everyone. The issue is that it is run by the state. It is run by the WA Country Health Service in regional Western Australia and it is not promoting or advocating getting a jab because it is not resourced. The Royal Flying Doctor Service is at its absolute limit of capacity transferring patients across this state. It is the taxi of the skies for our regional hospitals. It does an amazing job but it is inundated without COVID. I suppose that is the point: without COVID, our health system is inundated.

Last night I drove from Carnarvon to be here. An old chap who is a volunteer with St John Ambulance stood up at a business after hours where there were about 90 people and said, “For the first time in the history of St John’s in Carnarvon, we were unable to go to a job. The police had to attend.” Why? It was because people simply do not want to volunteer anymore. Why do people not want to volunteer anymore? It is because they are shop, cafe, pub and small business owners and tourism operators who are at their wits end because there are no staff, so they cannot volunteer for St John’s to protect the community. The pressure of not having workers in small businesses in the tourism and hospitality sectors—we hear a lot about agriculture—means that people are doing it tough across Western Australia. They cannot get workers. It is impacting our health system because they cannot volunteer. I cannot remember how many years St John in Carnarvon has been running for, but it is quite a few, and this is the first time in its history that it has not been able to go to a job. It is concerning. For someone who constantly drives around the electorate, it is concerning to think that we may not have the volunteers to attend an accident if something goes wrong. The situation is dire. It has also affected the health system in Perth. The son of a friend of mine broke his arm, but it was not diagnosed and they actually missed the fracture. He then had to be operated on several weeks later to fix the fracture. This happened because the staff were tired. Everyone is tired and it is causing accidents and incidents that could have been avoided if the investment into the health system had been made four and a half years ago.

If the government wants to lay blame, it should look back to 2017 when the foot was put on the hose to try to balance the budget, which resulted in a pay freeze. In 2001, we used to have a parliamentary superannuation scheme.

It was very lucrative. It would have helped the member for Wanneroo at some point in the future—probably in 2025. It was designed for members of Parliament prior to 2001. In 2000, the Parliament voted to get rid of the parliamentary superannuation scheme, led by Alan Carpenter, a former Premier, and who was standing right beside him? It was the now Premier. They both said that they would give away the parliamentary super scheme—give it away! I remember the now Premier standing on the steps of Parliament House right behind Alan Carpenter saying that they were going to give away the parliamentary super scheme. But today, some members of Parliament are still under that parliamentary super scheme. Today, when we have a public sector wage freeze and a members of Parliament wage freeze, a few members of Parliament left in this place still have wages that keep going up. The Premier is one of those members, the Speaker is another and so is the Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, in the other place. They do not have a pay freeze. We get hypocrisy and spin about having to save the finances, yet the person who is making those statements, the Treasurer, is getting a pay increase.

While we are talking about what has happened in the past and the spin, I remember when the current Minister for Transport was sitting on this side pretty much in this seat, or that seat, and constantly on the then government's back about how bad the stadium was. She asked question after question and said how terrible the stadium was and how it should have stayed at Subiaco. Look at it now, everyone! I will bet that a few ministers and government backbenchers will be going to the grand final! It will be interesting to see whether they all declare who they are going with and in what box they will be sitting. I bet they will be there waving their flags and saying, "How good is this stadium?" It was not so good prior to 2017.

When members opposite were elected to government in 2017, the Schools of the Air was chopped and Moora Residential College was chopped. The community fought hard and put pressure on the Premier, who has a glass jaw. He was silent for two weeks. We used to call him "glass jaw McGowan"—we had to hit him, and they did. He changed his decision due to public pressure. In 2016, in the lead-up to the 2017 election, he said that he would introduce legislation to protect subcontractors. Where has that legislation gone? It was watered down and it does not protect subcontractors. Two major building companies have gone into receivership this year. That legislation that the then Leader of the Opposition, Mark McGowan, said he would introduce but never did in his last term of government, and rushed it in in this term, would have protected those subcontractors. A lot of people have lost a lot of money.

I cannot wait to talk to the Minister for Housing, who says, "Thank God we didn't just tear up the Pindan contract." Do members know what? The Pindan Group is going to get something in the order of 39¢ to 79¢ in the dollar. How many months ago did the government announce that? Not one of those subcontractors has got one cent or been contacted by Programmed or the government—not one, Minister for Housing, and we have had all this spin and announcements.

The Minister for Emergency Services has made an announcement about all this money, but where is the workers' accommodation for Kalbarri so that people can get their houses fixed? It is a safety issue, with people constantly driving, day in and day out, from Geraldton to Kalbarri. The workers have not been able to get accommodation in Kalbarri, but I suppose the member for Geraldton likes that. Perhaps the Minister for Emergency Services has his foot on the hose in that regard because it would take away from those businesses in Geraldton. Is that probably right?

Mr R.S. Love: He'll probably send up some unworthy caravans for you.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Yes; I am not even going to bother with those five unlicensed caravans. In 2021 we have had to talk about electoral reform. I remember the former member for Albany standing right there and saying that it is not on the agenda. We have heard it is not on the agenda, but now it is on the agenda. I think that Hon Alan Swinbourn—I cannot remember his name—says that it is now on the agenda. A member for South West Region then said, "We didn't know we were going to win."

Mr R.S. Love: It was Hon Dr Sally Talbot.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It was Hon Dr Sally Talbot. A person has to say, "Gosh!"

Mr R.S. Love: I have not heard her say anything about forestry either.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: No, they will be silent on forestry. The changes and damage to regional representation from electoral reform is going to be huge. I do not think that many of the members in this house know of the vast distances that a lot of regional members have to cover. I know that the member for Kimberley will understand it. The member for Pilbara will understand it somewhat. The member for Kalgoorlie is not here, but she will understand some of those distances—oh, there you are, Madam Acting Speaker (Ms A.E. Kent), in the chair! I have not slept because there are not a lot of flights between many of our towns. To get here on time means that I have to drive through the night. I apologise, Madam Acting Speaker. A few members understand the distances and that we have to drive at night to do our work as an elected member, which puts us and our family at risk. If we take away more members of Parliament from the bush, it will just get harder. It is hard to cover a million square kilometres. In the last three months, I think I slept in the swag about 10 times because there is no accommodation; it is all booked out.

Our health system is not keeping WA safe—far from it! Now we hear about what is happening with forestry—oh my gosh! What is the detail? We need detail about what is a native forest? We need detail on the plan? We need detail

about softwood estates? Jeez! Anyone knows that it takes at least 25 years to grow a bit of pine. Everyone knows that there is a shortage of pine. Everyone knows that there is a lot of pine over in New South Wales; that is what we were trying to negotiate for when we were in government. Clearly, nothing has happened over the last five years. To do that to a community through a press release—oh my gosh! People are starting to wake up and see the arrogance of this government. This is what happens when a government has so much control. It breeds these types of decisions, and the community will revolt, member for Warren–Blackwood.

On the vaccination debate, I say to the Premier and all our leaders that they should grow up and set a target that everyone can agree on. If it is 90 per cent, it is 90 per cent. Set a target so that people will get vaccinated. I say this to the Premier: do not say it has to be 90 per cent of the population. It has to be 90 per cent of every city and town because regional WA is the area that misses out. Where do people travel? They travel to regional WA. Tourism is going gangbusters and there is the resource centre. We need people in our regional communities to be vaccinated. If it is 90 per cent of them, let us make it 90 per cent. It is all about providing certainty, especially for people over east. A man 90 years of age came into my office yesterday morning and said that he is resigned to the fact that he will never see his daughter who is in the east, yet the Minister for Police is labelling these people as whingers, another arrogant minister in the mean McGowan arrogant government here in Western Australia.

However, tourism is booming in regional WA but to a point where places are closing because there are no workers. If they can get workers, there is no accommodation. We have a massive problem with infrastructure, telecommunication, sewerage, water and power. They are all the issues regional WA is facing, as is the city. When our hotels have an occupancy rate of 10 per cent during the week, we have a problem. We need to work out how we can get people to stay in our hotels and visit pubs and cafes. However, it can all be undone because we have a health system that cannot cater for an impact let alone one case, 10, 20 or 100 cases as is occurring in Victoria. I want to make this point before I end. The Premier has been constantly criticising the Premier of New South Wales and said that she had to lock down. Victoria did it but look at what is happening there.

It is easy to blame everyone and say we are perfect over here but we are anything but perfect when we have a health system in crisis and a housing crisis that cannot be fixed. If we have a COVID outbreak, our regional communities will be the most vulnerable due to overcrowding because there are no houses. It is a tinderbox waiting to happen if COVID-19 happens. Hopefully, it will not but if it does, it will be a tinderbox in regional WA. Members on the other side, do not be arrogant, as the member for Roe said. I am telling everyone to watch question time and to watch Parliament. They are saying, “Oh, my God, is that McGowan?” I said that I have been telling people for years what he is like. Some old members here know what the Premier was like before he became famous and a “state daddy”. We all know what he is like and he shows his true colours in this house. It is disgraceful; it is arrogant and it is mean and do you know what? Western Australia is suffering and we hope we do not get COVID.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A.E. Scaife): I note that I think the member for Landsdale is an experienced member of this place, not an older member of this place, but I acknowledge the member for Wanneroo.

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Parliamentary Secretary) [6.07 pm]: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

I say to the opposition: Is that it; is that the extent of it?

Several members interjected.

Ms S.E. WINTON: I rise to make a contribution to this motion and strongly oppose it. I want to talk about some of the multiple crises that have existed in the four years I have been in the Parliament as they relate to the opposition and to spend a few minutes, if I can, outlining the last four years of over-investment and achievement of this government in the fortieth Parliament, rewarded by being re-elected in, historically, the most emphatic way possible.

Perhaps the opposition is going home early to have a bit of a sleep. I noticed that the budget was mentioned quite a lot today in anticipation of the budget being delivered in this place tomorrow. I hope members keep alive the enthusiasm they had during this debate for tomorrow. I remember last year, new members, that budget day was quite exciting. Many of us will go to briefings early tomorrow morning. Hopefully, we will have a different situation than we had last year when the opposition did not even turn up to briefings offered by Treasury. I remember lunch being served early during budget day and the dining room being full of members of the opposition when they should have been studying the budget papers that were to be released the next day. Instead they were getting stuck into what was in the dining room. It will be interesting to see whether they have learnt from the March election result that, as an opposition, they need to bring something to the table by working hard, grunting it out and going into detail rather than just repeating day in, day out, the same questions and the same arguments on the motions they put up.

In the last four years of the McGowan government that I am very proud to be part of, we have had many achievements. Of course, one crisis hit us by way of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to COVID-19 arriving on our shores, at the beginning of 2020, as I have done previously in this place, but will do so again, I will list very quickly some of the significant achievements of the McGowan government in the fortieth Parliament. We put our platform to the people prior to the 2017 election and won, which was a historic win that we did not think we would be able to improve on.

After 2017, we worked hard and these are some of the achievements. We tore up the skilled migration list and created more than 76 000 jobs—I believe it is over 100 000 jobs now. We passed the WA jobs act. We are bringing railcar manufacturing back to WA. We built the Matagarup Bridge here after the stuff-up and bugging up in Malaysia by the previous government. We stopped Roe 8. We delivered the \$600 household electricity credit. We froze WA household fees and charges in response to the COVID pandemic. We finally got our fair share of the GST back for WA. I note that previously some in opposition went on about the GST and somehow it was a windfall to us and this government played no part in getting its share for Western Australia.

We spent a record \$28.8 billion in infrastructure to create thousands of local jobs. We put hundreds of education assistants back into the classrooms, after their number had been gutted by the opposition. I know from personal experience as a teacher the impact that decision had had in the previous coalition government. We converted 200 primary school classrooms into science labs. We invested an extra \$200 million across every WA public school. We froze and slashed TAFE fees. We fixed Perth Children's Hospital and opened it. Remember what a muck-up that was that we inherited from the previous government, but we sorted it. We passed the historic voluntary assisted dying legislation. We established the GP urgent care clinic network. We made record investment in mental health services. We recruited an extra 1 100 police officers. We cracked down on dangerous methamphetamine use and trafficking. We introduced life sentences for meth traffickers. We expunged historical LGBTIQ offences. We established the first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. We removed the statute of limitations for historical child sexual abuse. We delivered on the first 10-year homelessness strategy. Metronet is under construction, building roads and busting congestion throughout Perth and we have built a record number of major road projects around regional WA. We banned single-use plastic bags. We introduced the container deposit scheme. We created five million hectares of new national and marine parks. We invested in, and expanded, the Aboriginal ranger program. We passed industrial manslaughter laws. We doubled compensation payments to families of people killed on WA worksites. We brought jobs back into public hands with the Water Corporation, Wandoo Rehabilitation Prison, Melaleuca Women's Prison, Fiona Stanley Hospital and of course, Peel Health Campus.

We are the only party that can guarantee the future of royalties for regions. There is no doubt about that. We were rewarded for that in 2021. We have more regional members than any other party. That cannot possibly be due just to COVID. I have been saying this for a while in the speeches I have been making, so I was delighted to have read about it in a fantastic review report. I have been trying repeatedly to make that point in response to the opposition—both the Nationals WA, which thinks it is the champion of the regions, and the Liberal Party—that thinks the only reason we formed government was COVID-19. The member for Cottesloe, in his enthusiastic contribution to this motion, actually said the words “We”—that is, the Labor Party—“were facing an electoral rout.” That is what he thought and that is what he said today. He still says that and is completely delusional by wanting to excuse the absolutely pathetic performance of the Liberal Party on COVID. While he stands in this place and keeps defending that and the actions of “The Clan” upstairs, the Liberal Party will, as the review says, probably be a party due for extinction. They are not my words, but the words of the review. The Liberal Party is facing extinction. It is no wonder. When the Leader of the Liberal Party spoke on this motion, he suggested that just prior to COVID, the Labor government was facing an electoral wipe-out. It is quite extraordinary.

The list I just referred to did not include COVID. A very, very important part of the four years of the Labor government from 2017 to 2021 was that we faced the pandemic. Not only did Western Australians support us in the election in 2021 because of those important reforms and initiatives, some of which I outlined just a moment ago, they supported us because of our response to COVID-19. We kept the state safe and we kept our economy going. In fact, we kept our economy going better than most economies in any country around the world. We have the lowest unemployment rate in Australia. This is the place where people want to live during these difficult times. We have done it all while being financially responsible, taking the opportunity through our strong economy and the mining boom to stay disciplined so we are able to respond to what the future holds. Members on both sides of the chamber will agree that this pandemic is not over. We do not know what it will look like next year or the year after. I do not understand why on the one hand the opposition bleats that we should just throw the surplus away because we have it, but on the other hand, it says that we need a plan for the future after the iron ore price goes down. The opposition says on the one hand that the iron ore price will go down and it is all gloom for the Western Australian economy, but on the other hand, it does not applaud this McGowan Labor government for its strong, disciplined financial management to make sure we can react to the future.

I think it was Johnny Howard who said, “You can't fatten the pig on market day”, and I suggest that going into the March 2021 election the Labor government was not fattening the pig on market day. As I said, we faced the election after four years of incredibly hard work, delivering on that platform that we put to the people prior to the 2017 election. We delivered on it in spades during the pandemic. That is why the people of Western Australia have now given us the most historic of victories in this Parliament.

The Minister for Transport mentioned the Liberal Party review report before, and I want to take the opportunity to highlight it as well. This motion talks about crises, and it seems to me that the two biggest crises, which the opposition does not want to talk about, are the crises of its own making. I like the words in the motion “multiple crises of their own making”. Opposition members had a crisis of their own making in the last four years. I do not think we need

to argue that. It is not only about the last four years. The report brought out by the Liberal Party clearly states that the problem existed way before 2013. In fact, the report suggests that the Liberal Party's high point was back in 2013. It all went downhill after that, and it was not because of the pandemic.

I want to quickly quote some of that review about the 2021 election result for the Liberal Party. I want to talk about crises, because it is a real crisis. It is a real crisis for this state if we do not have a viable, operating opposition. Nobody wants that. We joke a little bit about it, but not one member of Parliament sitting here thinks that it is healthy for democracy that we do not have a functioning, talented, hardworking opposition, because it is through that the government can be even better. The opposition needs to lift its game, because we are good, but we could be so much better if we were challenged a little bit by the opposition. It is a bit like playing sport, is it not? When we play a good opposition, we lift our game a bit, and we do not quite know how good we can become. Although I have made a little bit of a joke of it, in all sincerity, the biggest crisis facing —

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Moore!

Ms S.E. WINTON: The biggest crisis faced by Western Australia is the pathetic performance of the opposition over many, many years. That is the biggest problem. The opposition needs to own it, rebuild its parties and offer itself as an alternative government to the people of Western Australia.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Emergency Services!

Ms S.E. WINTON: Until the opposition offers itself as an alternative, and until it offers policies, it will not get anywhere.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The opposition's incessant bullying of this member is unreasonable and should be stopped. It is not in accordance with standing orders.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Mr Acting Speaker —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A.E. Scaife): No, I will rule on the point of order first. Take your seat, member for Moore. There is no point of order, but I will make the following observation: most of the members in the chamber this evening have been very respectful of the contributions that have been made by members of the opposition. That seems to me to be quite distinct from the way things have been done in the past. I suggest to all members that we continue to try to elevate the debate in that respect. I will go back to the member for Wanneroo, unless the member for Moore feels the need to press a further point of order. No. Member for Wanneroo.

Debate Resumed

Ms S.E. WINTON: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. It is really nice of you to note that I have been rather well-behaved this afternoon. It has been difficult. I had to sit on my hands quite often, but I have tried very hard to sit in this chamber and listen to the drivel from the other side. I will continue, because there is a crisis in this state right now, and the crisis is of the opposition's own making. I am not making this up. It is in black and white in the Liberal Party's review of its own performance in the last few years. I am not making it up. The review states —

The extent of the disastrous result of the 2021 ... Election should not be explained away or minimised by blaming the result entirely on the impact of ... COVID-19 ... when there were other critical factors also in play, and had been for some time.

Those facts cannot be ignored.

Interestingly, the Liberal Party did some polling after the election to analyse its bad result. The report states —

The staggering laziness of the Opposition and lack of action by the Party in creating and 'selling' acceptable policies much earlier than the advent of the pandemic were contributing factors.

As I said, the Liberal Party conducted a poll after the election to drill down into the critical features. Nineteen per cent of people surveyed after the election told the Liberal Party that they did not vote for it because they were not impressed by the performance of the Liberal Party over the last four years. It had nothing to do with the pandemic. Three per cent said that they did not vote for the Liberal Party because of the unchecked influence of party powerbrokers in the Liberal Party. I wonder who they are. Would that be Hon Nick Goiran or Hon Peter Collier, who are part of "The Clan" that we all know about because its little chat group was leaked to the media?

Mr M. Hughes: They said, "It's clan-destine."

Ms S.E. WINTON: Yes, it was clandestine. I have already mentioned Hon Nick Goiran in this Parliament. My frustration with him up to this point is what I see as his abuse of democracy, given the amount of time he has filibustered on legislation in the upper house. His performance as part of "The Clan" takes my view of him to a different level. The totally sexist and misogynist remarks made by those key powerbrokers in the upper house is quite breathtaking.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms S.E. WINTON: It is quite interesting that the member for Moore was lecturing us earlier about the member for Warren–Blackwood and some other regional members. He did not say anything about Labor Party policy. I say to the member for Moore, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition; the Leader of the Opposition; the Leader of the Liberal Party, who is not here but I would have liked to ask him in person; and the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, who made a comment today or yesterday: what is your response to this obvious treatment or attitude towards women by key players who decide the futures or careers of the kinds of people who come into this place to represent us? There is absolute silence. It is gobsmacking. As we know, the WhatsApp messages reveal that Hon Peter Collier used sexist language towards women. He referred to members of the Liberal Women’s Council as “sandwich makers” and other women as “toxic cow” and “prize bitch”. Of course, we know that Hon Peter Collier has form. Back in 2012, he referred to our first-ever female Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, as a cane toad. That is on the record. Hon Nick Goiran spoke about Hon Alannah MacTiernan and Hon Alannah Clohesy in the chamber where he sat in such awful terms. Members of the Liberal Party were quiet about that; they had nothing to say. The 39 women who are part of this McGowan Labor government think it is outrageous that people like that are members of Parliament without any accountability or any responsibility taken for their attitudes or the things that they say.

Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: I question the relevance of this discussion about the matter that we put forward. Mr Acting Speaker, I take the point you made earlier about not interjecting, but it is very difficult if we are being directly attacked and analysed. In my view, our character is being insulted by the member for Wanneroo. I seek your direction as to whether this is acceptable.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A.E. Scaife): There is no point of order. I did not say that there would be no interjections. That is not the word I used. I just encouraged members to keep the debate elevated. I am sure that the member for Wanneroo is wrapping up her comments. I am satisfied that the wording of the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition referring to crises is sufficiently broad to allow this, but I am sure the member is bringing things to a close, and I encourage her to do so.

Debate Resumed

Ms S.E. WINTON: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I am glad about your ruling on that matter. I am sorry that the member for Moore feels insulted. He has no idea what being insulted feels like. He should try being a woman when people like that are in the upper house, and then he might know what he is talking about.

When we are talking about a crisis, members of the opposition might sit in this place and say, “But it’s not us.” Members should not forget that the member for North West Central has form. The Nationals WA have form in their own party, in the way that they treat women in their party. That is the crisis.

Mr R.S. Love: I think that’s very unfair.

Ms S.E. WINTON: No, it is a crisis that you actually need to attend to. That might say a lot about why you are losing your votes in the bush.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, I remind you to direct your comments through the chair and not to other members.

Ms S.E. WINTON: The National Party is a party that fosters this kind of stuff. Let me remind the other members. It is a crisis because it happened in the last four years. It was a crisis within the National Party, within the opposition. I am talking about the former Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA, Hon Jacqui Boydell, who revealed that she was subjected to bullying, threats and intimidation during her time in the party. It was reported —

Jacqui Boydell served as deputy for three years before stepping down in March, announcing she would not contest the next election.

...

“Indeed, there have been situations in which I have found myself subject to bullying, threats and intimidation.

It is those kinds of actions within the National Party that its members need to talk to the grassroots people in the bush about. That is what they do not like about the National Party and the Liberal Party.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Moore, I want to hear from the member for Wanneroo.

Ms S.E. WINTON: I welcome the opportunity for the member for Moore to get to his feet and tell members of this place and the people of Western Australia how his party has cleaned up its act. I can see the member for North West Central sitting behind the current Leader of the Nationals WA, and I do not think it is all kosher. I am telling you now. You guys know it and everyone else knows it. For you to pretend that there is nothing to see here and the only reason that you have lost your support in the bush and the regions is COVID-19 is outrageous. You need to start looking internally to see that your problems are of your own making, not someone else’s. Like your motion said, your crises are of your own making.

The McGowan Labor government has not had to deal with a crisis like that because we are a party for women and of women. The only crisis that we have had to deal with is COVID-19. The McGowan government has handled that extremely well. Tomorrow, members will see a budget that will show that we have been responsible in our management of the economy in the last four years. Although we have a pandemic, we have kept people safe, we have kept the economy going, we have been able to diversify the economy and we have more people in jobs than ever before. We have had great financial success, despite the pandemic. It is not because we have had a gift from the feds or because there has been a mining boom. The Liberal Party can never understand because it thinks that when we win elections, it is because of COVID, and when we have financial success, as the budget will show tomorrow, it is because we have been given some gift by somebody else. It is inconceivable by those in opposition that a Labor government can not only be strong financial managers of the state, but we can be strong financial managers given the \$43 billion-plus debt that we inherited and given that we have a pandemic and still keep this state going strong and safe. Opposition members find it inconceivable that the Labor Party has been successful because of its own actions, and I have highlighted some of what we achieved in our first four years in office. It is totally arrogant of the opposition to not give credit where credit is due. The McGowan Labor government did an incredibly good job in its first four years and it will continue to do so—I have no doubt about that—particularly while we have an opposition that is so pathetic and incapable of looking at itself. This government will continue to strongly manage the state.

MS J.L. HANNS (Collie–Preston) [6.30 pm]: I rise to speak vehemently against the motion before the chamber this evening. I thank the member for Wanneroo for her contribution and reiterate the point she made about the record debt the McGowan Labor government inherited in 2017 when the Liberal–National government was resoundingly rejected by the Western Australian public, but not so resoundingly as the Liberal and National Parties were at the 2021 election. We did not foresee that being possible. We are very happy that it has happened and, more importantly, we are happy that Western Australians are pleased with the way that the McGowan Labor government has handled both the financial situation it inherited and the COVID-19 pandemic.

When I was doorknocking in Treendale in the lead-up to the election, a man told me that he had the utmost respect for the government and the Premier. He said, “Your government has managed to sort out the mess that my lot left you with.” He identified himself as a Liberal voter at that point. He continued, “But because of the way that you cleaned up my lot’s mess, I will be voting for you, and I cannot guarantee it won’t be the last time I vote for you.” He was particularly glowing about the way the Labor government had managed the pandemic and the finances that it inherited in 2017. This makes me think about kids in a candy shop. People say that we should spend the surplus on health, housing and so on, and although all those things are really important, I am concerned that the level of spending that the opposition and the Liberal Party are talking about would put us back in deficit to the tune of tens of billions of dollars. Western Australians do not want to be in that position. The resounding message from Western Australians at the last election was that they do not want the state to be in that position; they want us to be good financial managers. They want us to keep them safe and the economy strong going forward. I think we have proven that we can do that.

When I was a candidate in the lead-up to the last election—as members know, I represent the electorate of Collie–Preston—the Liberal Party came up with its visionary plan to take WA forward with the biggest jobs and renewable energy projects in the nation, otherwise referred to by the member for Roe today as the Collie slush fund. The Liberal Party’s name for this slush fund was the Collie training and transition fund. The Labor government already had its \$100 million *Collie’s just transition plan*. The Minister for Energy has been working very hard on the whole-of-system plan and what our energy system will look like in 20 years. In addition, he has been working with the affected communities in Collie and the greater south west region to determine what the changes in the energy sector will look like.

I refer to the member for Moore’s comment today that it takes a long time to train people to become truckies; they do not become truckies overnight. I refer to a media statement released by Hon Sue Ellery, Minister for Education and Training, and Hon Rita Saffioti, Minister for Transport, who have a plan to train people to be truckies. A very successful pilot program in heavy vehicle driving operations that ran in the metropolitan region has now been expanded to the south west. One hundred people commenced that 10-week program in the metropolitan region. It has now been taken to the south west in recognition of the fact that projects such as the Bunbury Outer Ring Road will require a significant number of truck drivers in the future. That 10-week driver training program is run in conjunction with Keens Truck Driver Training Bunbury and is free for eligible students. It is geared towards unemployed people who are looking for work. It is a massive contribution to training and education by the McGowan Labor government.

I remind opposition members that in my previous life before coming to Parliament, I was a teacher and vocational education and training coordinator. Having been a teacher in schools, I can honestly, hand on my heart, distinguish between a Liberal–National government spend on schools and training and a Labor government spend on schools and training. I was particularly outraged, as were lots of parents of children at my school in Collie, when it was reported that the Barnett government had increased TAFE fees by up to 500 per cent for some courses. That meant that young people who relied on training to get a foothold in the employment market were locked out of some opportunities because they and their parents could not afford the TAFE fees associated with that further training after high school. What did the Labor government do in the area of training? It slashed some TAFE fees by up

to 72 per cent. Courses such as certificate III in education support, electrotechnology, nursing, early childhood education, training and assessment, and surface extraction operations have all benefited from the McGowan Labor government's massive reduction in fees.

I do not agree with the opposition members who said that we underinvest in very important areas, such as jobs, health and education. I do not view the government's strategies for these important areas as bandaid solutions. I will leave members with the thought of the single biggest example of a bandaid solution that I can recall in the last 10 years—I am sure that the Minister for Energy will probably back me up on this—which was Muja A and B. After the Varanus Island gas explosion, the Liberal–National government decided to restore Muja A and B. Initially, they were to be restored at no cost to taxpayers, but in the end it cost taxpayers \$280 million, and that was without the project firing up at all. Let us not talk about the bandaid solutions of the Labor government; let us focus on the excellent job that the government has done and will continue to do. I look forward to the handing down of the budget tomorrow.

MS C.M. COLLINS (Hillarys) [6.38 pm]: I, too, rise to make a contribution to the absurd motion that states that somehow our government is mismanaging the economy. Firstly, as other members have done tonight, I will point out the hypocrisy of opposition members and some of the inaccuracies in the motion.

The Barnett government was in power during the biggest sustained boom in the resources industry, yet from February 2017, WA operated at a deficit of \$3 billion and was heading towards a debt of more than \$43 billion. That was a direct result of the former Liberal–National government not campaigning for WA's fair share of the GST, its unsustainable spending and its failure to look beyond the price of iron ore. I was not in this place back in 2017, but I can only imagine how challenging it must have been for members to inherit such a mess. The McGowan government, back in 2017 and over the next four years, not only steadied the ship, but also put us on a strong footing, and indeed made us the envy of many states and countries around the world.

The member for Wanneroo eloquently pointed out many of the achievements over the past four years pre the COVID-19 pandemic. Let us look at the situation now. The latest economic forecasts from Treasury show that we can expect more than two per cent growth in gross state product and perhaps even reach 2.75 per cent growth. The unemployment rate is expected to fall from eight per cent to 5.5 per cent by 2020 and we are sitting on a \$5 billion surplus. We have achieved these fantastic targets while being hit by a global pandemic and it is ultimately an incredible display of cautious planning and good governance.

Regarding our mission towards economic diversification, the member for Cottesloe earlier pointed out and tried to lecture us that we were not doing enough around green energy. That was astonishing, given the green energy plan that the Liberal Party put forth before the election would have cost taxpayers more than \$15 billion. This government introduced a Minister for Hydrogen Industry. We are leading the way in this space. We are expecting more growth in this industry and from the export market. A lot of comments have already been made about the incredible initiatives that the McGowan government has recently told the state about. We have heard about the homes that will help vulnerable Western Australians—3 300 houses will be built to deal with some pressures that the state currently faces. The idea that it is just a bandaid solution somehow suggests that it is a temporary solution and that these homes will disappear. Those homes will be used well into the future to help these people. The idea that it is too little too late is quite a childish and somewhat irresponsible way to look at this government's economic management. It suggests that the opposition would rather us do nothing now. We are dealing with these pressures in a responsible way.

I would rather use my few minutes that I have to talk about this motion in the context of my electorate. The electorate of Hillarys, without a doubt, has been neglected and ignored by successive Liberal governments and members for many, many years. I imagine the notion that the government has underinvested or has come up with bandaid solutions would be contested by just about every single constituent. I will take this opportunity to outline some of the incredible investments that are going into projects in the electorate of Hillarys. Bricks and mortar is not everything. I recognise as a former teacher that part of a good education is in the teaching and learning, but we cannot underestimate that modern facilities are needed to help achieve this. In Hillarys alone during the last election campaign, the Labor Party committed to rebuild Hillarys Primary School, which is the only primary school in that suburb. It committed \$18.7 million to help that school, which was built in 1973, come into the twenty-first century. We are rebuilding Springfield Primary School in Kallaroo—again, the only school in that suburb. The sum of \$32.3 million is going towards Duncraig Senior High School, which is in the electorate of my colleague the member for Carine, and that will also create 140 new jobs. I do not understand how in any sense of the word this could be deemed an “underinvestment” or a “bandaid” solution. These are clear examples of how our state government is proactively providing for the demands of families in the northern suburbs. These schools will be utilised for many years to come. Also back in 2017, the member for Joondalup committed to a new performing arts centre at Belridge Secondary Education Support Centre. It will now receive \$1.5 million, which many other schools around the state will receive, to implement better STEM facilities.

In Hillarys as well, outside of the schools, we are catering for students by upgrading Ern Halliday Recreation Camp, which is creating a huge number of jobs. We are upgrading surf clubs, cycling networks and Craigie Leisure Centre.

We are listening to people's concerns about their safety and about dangerous drivers on the roads. I have committed \$150 000 for mobile CCTV cameras to capture hooners. Again, I am not sure how this could be seen as an underinvestment. This is the most funding that my electorate has ever received and I am very pleased that that is so.

The idea of labelling this government's economic management and its announcements in recent weeks around the budget as a "bandaid" is simply inaccurate. The member for Vasse mentioned funding going towards Joondalup Health Campus. This is, ultimately, the hospital that is utilised by people across the northern suburbs. Constituents have reached out to me to discuss how important that hospital is for their family. We all see the demand at the moment, particularly on emergency departments. The state government has just announced \$256.7 million for this fantastic facility. Last week, I toured the emergency department at Joondalup Health Campus and spoke to some of its dedicated staff. Those workers are deserving of our support. There are challenges, but to simply label every announcement that we will be discussing tomorrow in the budget as a "bandaid solution" is very problematic. It is quite tiresome, it is a negative refrain, and it creates a very negative perception that our state is not helping to support the people who need it.

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Housing) [6.47 pm]: It is my pleasure to speak on this motion and, of course, to reject the proposition put forward. We should be very clear, as we have already heard on the record, that our government has navigated the COVID-19 pandemic extremely well. Whilst we are always very cognisant of the threat of the pandemic, it is because of our management that we have been able to drive an economic recovery that is the best in the nation. We responded to the pandemic with a multibillion-dollar WA COVID recovery plan, which, at its very basis, set foundations to drive economic growth and jobs. All Western Australians should be proud of the current state of our economy, including the fact that we have the lowest unemployment rate of all states in Australia. That strong result was driven by an increase of 7 000 full-time workers in July. Youth employment has surged. We have created very strong economic foundations for our state. We have also seen strong retail growth. We acknowledge that this booming economy has created pressures as more Western Australians have returned. We have seen, as reported in *The West Australian*, the largest interstate migration back to Western Australia since 2013. Of course, we will continue to respond to those pressures in the budget.

I am deeply proud of the investments we are making in health and housing. I have heard some bizarre commentary, particularly from the member for Roe. We announced an \$875 million social housing investment package, the largest in the state's history, and \$2.1 billion over the next four years to deliver 3 300 new homes. The member for Roe had a go because we announced a regional renewal program for Albany, Bunbury and Geraldton. I found it extraordinary. The Nationals WA, which claims to represent the bush, is actually attacking communities for receiving those funds for renewal projects. There are good plans for increasing the liveability of those towns, which also deal with social housing refurbishment, and the member for Roe criticised that in this chamber! At the next election, when the National Party candidates are out in those seats, we will remind people that the National Party criticised those investments directly. Apparently, Collie gets a slush fund. I will be really interested at the next election when the National Party is out in Collie attacking Labor for investing in that great regional community. That was the message from the member for Roe. He has provided some really delightful commentary that will make great election material to be used against their candidates because he has criticised investment in regional communities. I find it extraordinary that he would criticise investment in those communities, particularly social housing projects. Of course, as part of the \$875 million investment, we will also invest in regional homes. In particular, we will accelerate social housing delivery by allocating \$80 million for a modular program specifically targeting the regions. We understand the constraints of 27 000 building approvals, which has been facilitated by the state and federal governments.

Today in this chamber we heard attacks on the conduct of ministers. There were some quite nasty personal attacks, particularly from the Liberal opposition. As an openly gay member of Parliament, I am deeply concerned about the direction of politics in Western Australia when we see the state and the shape of the way the Liberal Party is heading. We should be deeply concerned. If we want an open, tolerant and inclusive society and community, we should be deeply concerned about the very narrow ideological position being taken by the Liberal Party, as referred to in the report on the Liberal Party. This is a Liberal Party that wants to dictate to people about every component of their lives; that wants to dictate to women about their bodies and their choices; that wants to dictate to gay couples in same-sex relationships that they should not be able to get married. It is very clear, in reading the report, that an ideological faction is taking over the Liberal Party. I quote —

Every State Division of the Liberal Party has seen religious conservative factions increase their influence ...

There is a push by churches of many denominations who are disillusioned with their political representatives to join the Liberal Party to counter such issues as abortion, voluntary euthanasia and whatever they regard as radical social policies.

The review also said —

... It increasingly failed to project a consistency and predictability of core Liberal Party beliefs and values.

The only conclusion that can be made is that the Liberal Party lost most of its voter base, who deserted it, because of its leadership squabbles, factional activities and loss of principles.

I think most Western Australians fundamentally believe in an inclusive society, where you are free, and I absolutely believe in everyone having the right to practise their beliefs and their religions—but we also respect the rights of the individual.

This report also makes some great commentary about the performance wing of the Liberal Party, and I have to say the bit I liked—having doorknocked most weekends in my first term, and consistently doorknocking now as a minister in my second term; I still do it on Saturday mornings—was the absolutely diabolical performance of the Liberal Party, which shows MPs who had no connection and made little to no attempts to engage with their local communities. I find it incredible that the other side makes calls that we are arrogant. I do not think arrogance is me going out to doorknock my communities every week to engage with them and hear their views. It is not arrogant for other members to do the same. We can see it in our Labor backbenchers, who are out there engaging with their local communities every weekend—not just before an election, but in a range of different ways. That is not arrogance. But I can tell members that this is arrogance when many Liberal MPs did so little to engage with their communities. They took them for granted, and that is why they lost their seats. Let us be very clear on this. If the Liberal Party had some connection with its local community, that would make it easier, regardless of election cycles.

Of course, we are now seeing repeat behaviour. The other element was the laziness of the opposition. The report states —

We were told that many senior parliamentary members did little, if anything, to develop policies in anticipation of the election. Those that did, found it difficult to receive feedback.

...

It seemed that the office of the Leader of the Opposition ... for the three years prior to the start of the election campaign in 2021 was deciding policy with little, if any, participation by senior members of the Opposition ...

The Liberal Party was not even developing policy for most of the time that it was in opposition. It is interesting that we are still seeing that now. It is repeating the faults outlined in this report when we see the Leader of the Liberal Party being more interested in making consistent personal attacks via social media than putting out any policy positions whatsoever. He must be spending a lot of time on the social media side, but nothing on any policy positions.

I think the most disappointing element, as the member for Wanneroo discussed, is the sexist and misogynist language and behaviour used in “The Clan”, which has been met with silence by the Leader of the Liberal Party. Commentary was made about Hon Sue Ellery, the Minister for Education and Training, who is a good personal friend of mine. They called her “the respirator”. They said —

“She lacks the vibe and doesn’t exactly ooze inspiration after walking the distance from her table to the platform and up the stairs. She sounded like she needed a respirator.”

Mr Goiran said —

... “if I provided you a photo of my view right now it would make you all unwell. I sit opposite (Labor MPs) ... Clohessy & ... MacTiernan.”

That is extraordinary. Can you imagine if a Labor minister did that—the calls for resignation from the opposition? Yet the Leader of the Liberal Party says nothing. He does not call it out. He does not say, “This is unacceptable.” It is silence; it is absolute silence. We are seeing that there is one rule for conservatives and one rule for progressive Labor politicians and ministers. We are held accountable to higher standards, but when they do it and it is made public, we do not hear anything from the Leader of the Liberal Party.

We should be concerned; we should absolutely be concerned, because that is part of the process of democracy, yet we have a Leader of the Liberal Party who has said nothing about it. I just cannot believe that this silence is viewed as acceptable.

I also note that, unless I am wrong, we have not heard any commentary from the National Party, either. I would have expected the Leader of the Opposition to at least stamp down and say that this language was unacceptable, but again: silence. I do not know why there is silence. Why is it that the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the National Party, has said nothing about that language? Leadership is about setting values and about saying, when we come across matters like this, “That is not good enough.”

I acknowledge the member for Vasse, who at least had the guts to say that it was not acceptable. To date, the member for Vasse is the only member opposite who has actually spoken out on this. I would have thought better of the Leader of the Opposition and the National Party, and expected her to actually call this misogyny and sexism out and say, “This is unacceptable in politics”, because it is. We want to create a culture in which everyone feels included to run for office and to be involved in political parties, whether they are gay or lesbian or whether they come from a multicultural background. They should not have fear.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

House adjourned at 7.00 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

MINISTER FOR POLICE — PORTFOLIOS — STAFF

55. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Police; Road Safety; Defence Industry; Veterans Issues:

For the date 13 March 2021, please provide the following staffing arrangements for each of the Minister's departments and agencies:

- (a) Total number of staff in each department or agency;
- (b) Total number of staff who were based regionally per department or agency;
- (c) Position title of each staff member based regionally;
- (d) Full time equivalent hours of each staff member based regionally;
- (e) Employment level of each staff member based regionally; and
- (f) For each regionally based employee, please provide the geographic location of the office?

Mr P. Papalia replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 49.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — STAFF

57. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

For the date 13 March 2021, please provide the following staffing arrangements for each of the Minister's departments and agencies:

- (a) Total number of staff in each department or agency;
- (b) Total number of staff who were based regionally per department or agency;
- (c) Position title of each staff member based regionally;
- (d) Full time equivalent hours of each staff member based regionally;
- (e) Employment level of each staff member based regionally; and
- (f) For each regionally based employee, please provide the geographic location of the office?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 49.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — STAFF

61. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Commerce:

For the date 13 March 2021, please provide the following staffing arrangements for each of the Minister's departments and agencies:

- (a) Total number of staff in each department or agency;
- (b) Total number of staff who were based regionally per department or agency;
- (c) Position title of each staff member based regionally;
- (d) Full time equivalent hours of each staff member based regionally;
- (e) Employment level of each staff member based regionally; and
- (f) For each regionally based employee, please provide the geographic location of the office?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 49.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS

76. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

I refer to the engagement of “not for profit” groups in the delivery of government services in the State and ask:

- (a) For each of the portfolios under the Minister's responsibility can the Minister outline the following:
 - (i) List the name of, and funding given to, regional “not for profit” groups in 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years;
 - (ii) List the total resources paid for “not for profit” groups delivering government services for each of the 2019–20 and 2020–21 years, broken down into regional and metropolitan areas;

- (iii) List those “not for profit” groups who have been dropped from providing services in the 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years; and
 - (iv) For each of the “not for profit” groups who have been dropped from providing government funded services, list the basis for the decision to no longer fund them; and
- (b) Of the “not for profit” groups that have been dropped from government funding for the 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years, can the Minister outline whether the service has been brought “in house”, is no longer provided, or is provided by another “not for profit” provider?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

Refer to Question on Notice 68.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — NOT-FOR-PROFIT GROUPS

80. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Commerce:

I refer to the engagement of “not for profit” groups in the delivery of government services in the State and ask:

- (a) For each of the portfolios under the Minister’s responsibility can the Minister outline the following:
 - (i) List the name of, and funding given to, regional “not for profit” groups in 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years;
 - (ii) List the total resources paid for “not for profit” groups delivering government services for each of the 2019–20 and 2020–21 years, broken down into regional and metropolitan areas;
 - (iii) List those “not for profit” groups who have been dropped from providing services in the 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years; and
 - (iv) For each of the “not for profit” groups who have been dropped from providing government funded services, list the basis for the decision to no longer fund them; and
- (b) Of the “not for profit” groups that have been dropped from government funding for the 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years, can the Minister outline whether the service has been brought “in house”, is no longer provided, or is provided by another “not for profit” provider?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 68.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — REPORTS

95. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

I refer to all departments or agencies under your responsibility as a Minister of the Crown and ask:

- (a) What reports, if any, have your departments or agencies stopped making publicly available since 2017:
 - (i) What were the topic(s) of those reports;
 - (ii) What financial year did the departments or agencies stop releasing those reports publicly;
 - (iii) What justification has been made to stop publishing those reports publicly; and
 - (iv) Are you likely to return to publishing those reports publicly in the foreseeable future?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

Refer to Question on Notice 87.

MINISTER FOR FINANCE — PORTFOLIOS — REPORTS

96. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Finance; Lands; Sport and Recreation; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests:

I refer to all departments or agencies under your responsibility as a Minister of the Crown and ask:

- (a) What reports, if any, have your departments or agencies stopped making publicly available since 2017:
 - (i) What were the topic(s) of those reports;
 - (ii) What financial year did the departments or agencies stop releasing those reports publicly;
 - (iii) What justification has been made to stop publishing those reports publicly; and
 - (iv) Are you likely to return to publishing those reports publicly in the foreseeable future?

Dr A.D. Buti replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 87.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — REPORTS

99. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Commerce:

I refer to all departments or agencies under your responsibility as a Minister of the Crown and ask:

- (a) What reports, if any, have your departments or agencies stopped making publicly available since 2017:
 - (i) What were the topic(s) of those reports;
 - (ii) What financial year did the departments or agencies stop releasing those reports publicly;
 - (iii) What justification has been made to stop publishing those reports publicly; and
 - (iv) Are you likely to return to publishing those reports publicly in the foreseeable future?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 87.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

114. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

I refer to all departments or agencies under your responsibility as a Minister of the Crown and ask:

- (a) For the 2020–21 financial year to date, have any departments or agencies under your portfolios failed to meet internal key performance indicators (KPIs):
 - (i) If yes to (a), please indicate which KPIs were missed and the reason why?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

Refer to Question on Notice 106.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

118. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Commerce:

I refer to all departments or agencies under your responsibility as a Minister of the Crown and ask:

- (a) For the 2020–21 financial year to date, have any departments or agencies under your portfolios failed to meet internal key performance indicators (KPIs):
 - (i) If yes to (a), please indicate which KPIs were missed and the reason why?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 106.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — TEAM-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

133. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

I refer to machinery of government changes which have impacted staff and all departments or agencies under your portfolios and I ask, to please detail the date, type and time any of the following took place since 2017:

- (a) Team building activities;
- (b) Team building activities without executive managers or directors;
- (c) Team building activities specifically targeted at achieving the goals of machinery of government;
- (d) Team building activities across directorates;
- (e) Social or casual within departments or agencies, including events such as Christmas parties; and
- (f) Professional development activities?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

Refer to Question on Notice 125.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — TEAM-BUILDING ACTIVITIES

137. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Commerce:

I refer to machinery of government changes which have impacted staff and all departments or agencies under your portfolios and I ask, to please detail the date, type and time any of the following took place since 2017:

- (a) Team building activities;
- (b) Team building activities without executive managers or directors;
- (c) Team building activities specifically targeted at achieving the goals of machinery of government;
- (d) Team building activities across directorates;

- (e) Social or casual within departments or agencies, including events such as Christmas parties; and
- (f) Professional development activities?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 125.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — STAFF SURVEYS

152. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

I refer to department and agency surveys and ask:

- (a) For all departments or agencies, please detail the opening date, form of delivery and closing dates of the following:
 - (i) Staff health and wellbeing surveys, excluding mental health specific surveys;
 - (ii) Staff health and wellbeing surveys, focusing exclusively on mental health; and
 - (iii) Staff satisfaction surveys;
- (b) For all surveys in (a)(i)–(iii), please detail how many responses were received;
- (c) For all surveys in (a)(i)–(iii), please indicate whether these surveys were published publicly or not;
- (d) For all surveys in (a)(i)–(iii), please detail whether any issues raised were flagged for immediate action and what those issues were; and
- (e) What actions were taken to address those issues?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 144.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — STAFF SURVEYS

156. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Commerce:

I refer to department and agency surveys and ask:

- (a) For all departments or agencies, please detail the opening date, form of delivery and closing dates of the following:
 - (i) Staff health and wellbeing surveys, excluding mental health specific surveys;
 - (ii) Staff health and wellbeing surveys, focusing exclusively on mental health; and
 - (iii) Staff satisfaction surveys;
- (b) For all surveys in (a)(i)–(iii), please detail how many responses were received;
- (c) For all surveys in (a)(i)–(iii), please indicate whether these surveys were published publicly or not;
- (d) For all surveys in (a)(i)–(iii), please detail whether any issues raised were flagged for immediate action and what those issues were; and
- (e) What actions were taken to address those issues?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

Please refer to Question on Notice 144.

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — DEBT COLLECTION AGENCIES

175. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

As at 31 May 2021, for all agencies or departments under the Minister's responsibility, please identify:

- (a) The debt collection agencies which currently have contractual agreements; and
- (b) If there are active debt recovery actions and what are the total values of debt sought per agency or department?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

- (a) Veda Advantage (previously Baycorp Advantage)
- (b) There were six active debt recovery actions, with a total value of \$115,561.73.

Department of Transport

- (a) National Credit Management Limited, Illion Australia Pty Ltd
- (b) \$482,887.52

Main Roads Western Australia

- (a) National Credit Management Limited
- (b) \$131,911.06

Public Transport Authority

- (a) Baycorp
- (b) Nil.

Fremantle Port Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) N/A.

Kimberley Ports Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) N/A.

Mid West Ports Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) N/A.

Pilbara Ports Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) N/A.

Southern Ports Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) N/A.

MINISTER FOR HEALTH — PORTFOLIOS — TRAFFIC INFRINGEMENTS

187. Ms M.J. Davies to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Medical Research; State Development, Jobs and Trade; Science:

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

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

Mr R.H. Cook replied:

The Department of Health and health service providers advise:

Where a driver can be identified, all infringement notices issued are redirected to the driver who incurs the fine.

(a)–(c) [See tabled paper no [462](#).]

The Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation advises:

- (a) 38. [See tabled paper no [462](#).]
- (b) (i)–(ii) [See tabled paper no [462](#).]
- (iii)–(vi) Nil.

(c)

Financial Year	Total Value
2017–18	\$400.00
2018–19	\$3,000.00
2019–20	\$3,746.90
2020–21	\$3,145.00

Animal Resources Authority advises:

(a) Three.

(b)–(c)

Financial Year	Infringement Cost	Damage to Vehicle	Did Vehicle Need Replacement or Repairs	Injuries	Identified Driver	Vehicle Seized
2017–18	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
2017–18	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
Total 2017–18	\$400	–	–	–	–	–
2018–19	\$122	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
Total 2018–19	\$122	–	–	–	–	–
Total 2019–20	Nil	–	–	–	–	–
Total 2020–21	Nil	–	–	–	–	–

ChemCentre advises:

(a) Seven.

(b)–(c)

Financial Year	Infringement Cost	Damage to Vehicle	Did Vehicle Need Replacement or Repairs	Injuries	Identified Driver	Vehicle Seized
2017–18	\$400	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
2017–18	\$400	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
Total 2017–18	\$800	–	–	–	–	–
2018–19	\$400	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
2018–19	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
Total 2018–19	\$600	–	–	–	–	–
Total 2019–20	Nil	–	–	–	–	–
2020–21 to Date	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
2020–21 to Date	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
2020–21 to Date	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
Total 2020–21	\$600	–	–	–	–	–

Health & Disability Services Complaints Office advises:

- (a) One.
(b)–(c)

Financial Year	Infringement Cost	Damage to Vehicle	Did Vehicle Need Replacement or Repairs	Injuries	Identified Driver	Vehicle Seized
Total 2017–18	Nil	–	–	–	–	–
Total 2018–19	Nil	–	–	–	–	–
2019–20	\$400	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Yes	Not applicable
Total 2019–20	\$400	–	–	–	–	–
Total 2020–21	Nil	–	–	–	–	–

Healthway advises:

- (a) Four.
(b)–(c)

Year	Infringement Cost	Damage to Vehicle	Did Vehicle Need Replacement or Repairs	Injuries	Identified Driver	Vehicle Seized
2017	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Total 2017	\$200	–	–	–	–	–
2018	\$400	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
2018	\$200	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Total 2018	\$600	–	–	–	–	–
Total 2019	Nil	–	–	–	–	–
Total 2020	Nil	–	–	–	–	–
2021	\$400	Nil	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable
Total 2020–21	\$400	–	–	–	–	–

MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT — PORTFOLIOS — TRAFFIC INFRINGEMENTS

194. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Transport; Planning; Ports:

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

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

Ms R. Saffioti replied:Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

- (a) Total number of traffic infringements: 52
 (b) 2017–18

Number of infringements	(i) Cost of each infringement	(ii)–(iii) Vehicle damage and repair	(iv) Injuries	(v) Driver could not be identified	(vi) Vehicle seized by WA Police?
1	\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
10	\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
3	\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

2018–19

Number of infringements	(i) Cost of each infringement	(ii)–(iii) Vehicle damage and repair	(iv) Injuries	(v) Driver could not be identified	(vi) Vehicle seized by WA Police?
1	\$100	Nil	Nil	N/A	Nil
10	\$200	Nil	Nil	N/A	Nil
7	\$400	Nil	Nil	N/A	Nil

2019–20

Number of infringements	(i) Cost of each infringement	(ii)–(iii) Vehicle damage and repair	(iv) Injuries	(v) Driver could not be identified	(vi) Vehicle seized by WA Police?
1	\$52	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
7	\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

2020–21

Number of infringements	(i) Cost of each infringement	(ii)–(iii) Vehicle damage and repair	(iv) Injuries	(v) Driver could not be identified	(vi) Vehicle seized by WA Police?
1	\$100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
6	\$200	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
3	\$400	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
1	\$600	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
1	\$800	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

1 July – 3 August 2021

Number of infringements	(i) Cost of each infringement	(ii)–(iii) Vehicle damage and repair	(iv) Injuries	(v) Driver could not be identified	(vi) Vehicle seized by WA Police?
Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

- (c) All infringement costs were incurred directly by the driver and not the Department.

Department of Transport

- (a) 2017–18 – 27
 2018–19 – 15
 2019–20 – 16
 2020–21 – 12
 2021–22 (YTD) – 2

(b)

Financial Year	(i) Cost of Infringement?	(ii) Damage to the vehicle?	(iii) Replacement or repairs required?	(iv) Injuries occurred, and what type?	(v) Driver identified?	(vi) Vehicle seized?
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2018–19	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No

2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2019–20	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$600	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2020–21	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2021–22	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2021–22	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No

(c) All infringement costs were incurred directly by the driver and not the Department.

2017–18: \$6,000

2018–19: \$4,400

2019–20: \$4,460

2020–21: \$3,200

1 July – 3 August 2021: \$400

Main Roads

(a) 2017–18 – 50

2018–19 – 46

2019–20 – 55

2020–21 – 50

2021–22 (YTD) – nil.

(b)

Financial Year	(i) Cost of Infringement?	(ii) Damage to the vehicle?	(iii) Replacement or repairs required?	(iv) Injuries occurred, and what type?	(v) Driver identified?	(vi) Vehicle seized?
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$800	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$600	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$400	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No
2017–18	\$200	Nil	N/A	Nil	Yes	No

Mid West Ports Authority

- (a) No.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Not applicable.

Pilbara Ports Authority

- (a) No.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Not applicable.

Southern Ports Authority

- (a) No.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR FINANCE — PORTFOLIOS — TRAFFIC INFRINGEMENTS

195. Ms M.J. Davies to the Minister for Finance; Lands; Sport and Recreation; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests:

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

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

Dr A.D. Buti replied:Department of Finance

The Department of Finance advises:

- (a) Fifty-three infringements received.
- (b)
 - (i) [See tabled paper no [463](#).]
 - (ii) None.
 - (iii) None.
 - (iv) None.
 - (v) All drivers identified.
 - (vi) None.
- (c)
 - 2017–18 – \$2,400
 - 2018–19 – \$4,800
 - 2019–20 – \$3,200
 - 2020–21 – \$3,200

In all instances the fines were paid by the driver.

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage

Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 194.

- (b)
 - (i) \$10,000
 - (ii) Nil.
 - (iii) N/A.
 - (iv) N/A.
 - (v) N/A.
 - (vi) N/A.
- (c)

2017–2018	\$1,800
2018–2019	\$3,200
2019–2020	\$3,000
2020–2021	\$2,000

100% of infringements were paid directly by the employee who received the infringement.

Landgate

- (a) [See tabled paper no [463](#).]
- (b)
 - (i) [See tabled paper no [463](#).]
 - (ii) Nil.
 - (iii) Nil.
 - (iv) Nil.
 - (v) Nil.
 - (vi) Nil.
- (c) [See tabled paper no [463](#).]

The employee driving pays the infringement.

Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries

Please refer to Legislative Assembly question on notice 190.

VenuesWest

In the period specified, VenuesWest incurred 43 traffic infringements. These are detailed in Attachment A. [See tabled paper no [463](#).]

There were no injuries, all drivers could be identified, and no vehicles were seized.

The infringements by each financial year are as follows:

2016/2017	– \$293.25
2017/2018	– \$3,318.50
2018/2019	– \$3,520.00
2019/2020	– \$6,250.21
2020/2021	– \$1,440.00

The cost of the infringements were passed on to the drivers.
