

**FISHABILITY — MV *FISHABILITY***

*Statement by Minister for Fisheries*

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries)** [12.19 pm]: On Friday, 27 August, a new wheelchair-accessible vessel was launched by Fishability at the Mandurah Offshore Fishing and Sailing Club. The members for Mandurah and Dawesville, who are great supporters of the organisation, both attended the event. Fishability is a not-for-profit organisation that promotes inclusive and active participation by people of all abilities in recreational fishing opportunities. Since 2003, it has delivered fishing experiences for people requiring support and provided advice on universally accessible fishing locations and facilities to help make fishing an accessible pastime for all Western Australians.

The MV *Fishability* is the third vessel in the fleet, with two others based at the Royal Perth Yacht Club and the Princess Royal Sailing Club in Albany. The new vessel will provide estuary fishing trips to six participants and their carers once a week, and marks the next step in Fishability's capacity to provide quality accessible fishing experiences to members of the community of all abilities. Over the 2020–21 season, the Mandurah Fishability program catered for 1 020 participants and 776 carers, and involved 2 794 hours of volunteering, making this program a huge asset for the community. The new vessel was funded by contributions from the McGowan government as well as the commonwealth government, local governments and the local community. Putting fishing licence fees to work through the recreational fishing initiatives fund, the WA government contributed \$52 000 to this project. The WA government proudly provides regular funding to Fishability to ensure the continuation of its important work and contribution to the recreational fishing experience in Western Australia—all at no cost to participants.

The efforts of the dedicated volunteers and supporters in working together to allow many people who might not otherwise have the chance to experience the joy of a day out fishing have built a highly respected and valued organisation, and I commend their efforts.