

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION COMPUTER GROUP

Statement by Member for Mandurah

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [12.50 pm]: I rise to inform the Parliament about the Royal Australian Air Force Association computer group, formed towards the end of 1999 by RAAFA village resident John Perry. In early 2000 the first cohort of students from the RAAFA village commenced computer classes. These classes target older people who have little or no computer experience. In those days the group only had two ancient computers, but in 2001 the group received a Lotterywest grant to purchase six new computers. Classes were then extended to people outside the RAAFA village. Over time, more computers were added and a waiting list developed because the classes became so popular, and classes were expanded to morning and afternoon sessions four days a week. The third course for this year will commence next month and the 2 000th student will be taught basic computer use and competency through these classes. These computer courses have been so successful and attracted such demand because of the quality of instruction that is tailored to the needs of the students. People are made to feel comfortable with the technology and confidence is developed through Mr John Perry's approach to teaching. It is remarkable that 2 000 seniors from Mandurah have been taught basic computer skills through these classes. Many local constituents have come into my office and remarked on how successful these courses are. These people can now use computer technology in their lives. I pay tribute to Mr John Perry and his volunteers and supporters for the fantastic job they have done to help so many locals become computer literate. I am so proud to represent and live in a community that has people such as these who are willing to make a positive contribution to the lives of other people. I also pay tribute to Shirley, John Perry's wife, who has been a computer widow over the past 10 years. They are both wonderful people and should be very proud when the 2 000th student is inducted into the computer classes.