



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 13 May 2021

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) took the chair at 9.00 am, acknowledged country and read prayers.

SUPPLY BILL 2021

Remaining Stages — Standing Orders Suspension — Notice of Motion

Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House) gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the Supply Bill 2021 to proceed through all remaining stages without delay between the stages.

PUBLIC SECTOR APPOINTMENTS

Statement by Minister for Public Sector Management

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Minister for Public Sector Management) [9.03 am]: I rise today to inform the house of new leadership in a number of government departments in the Western Australian public sector. With the impending retirement of a number of directors general, the Public Sector Commissioner has taken the opportunity to renew leadership across the public sector. This renewal will ensure that government has the leadership in place to continue our world-leading response to the pandemic, help drive prosperity for our state and concentrate on service delivery. Some appointments will be on an acting basis to enable the Public Sector Commissioner, as the employer of the director general group, to undertake recruitment processes when they are required. The Public Sector Commissioner will place the departing directors general on “other functions” through her powers under the Public Sector Management Act. To ensure that we make the most of their skills and experience, each will undertake strategic projects in their ministers’ portfolios. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the departing directors general for their many years of service to the government and the people of Western Australia. The Public Sector Commissioner’s changes will be effective from Monday, 31 May 2021.

WA is well served by its public sector, exemplified by its outstanding performance since the pandemic commenced in early 2020. Government departments and thousands of public sector employees responded to meet the rapidly evolving needs of the community across the state. The changes announced today are an invaluable opportunity for renewal and rejuvenation in our public sector.

I now table the new director general list.

[See paper [225](#).]

TREASURY REPORTS

Statement by Treasurer

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Treasurer) [9.05 am]: Four financial reports prescribed by the Government Financial Responsibility Act 2000 were released between the end of sitting of the fortieth Parliament and the opening of the forty-first Parliament. Section 9(2) of the act requires that these reports be tabled in the house as soon as practicable. Accordingly, I am today tabling the September and December 2020 *Quarterly financial results report*, the 2020–21 *Government mid-year financial projections statement* and the 2020–21 *Pre-election financial projections statement*.

The PFPS provides Treasury’s independent outlook for the state’s finances and economy. It provides the opportunity to compare the performance of the previous Liberal–National government with that of the McGowan Labor government. It shows that the McGowan Labor government has delivered on its promise to fix the financial mess left by the previous government. The 2020–21 PFPS shows that Treasury is projecting strong net operating surpluses over each of the next four years, totalling \$8.7 billion. This is in stark contrast to the 2016–17 PFPS under the previous Liberal–National government, when massive operating deficits totalling almost \$6 billion were projected. Under the previous government, net debt rose from \$5.6 billion when it came to government and was expected to reach around \$43.7 billion by June 2020. The McGowan government made the hard decisions to fix the budget and get expenditure growth under control.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, WA was the only state in which debt was expected to decline. Net debt was around \$9 billion lower prior to the COVID-19 pandemic compared with the projections for 2019–20 when the previous government left office. WA’s improved financial position provided the capacity to implement an unprecedented response to the COVID-19 pandemic from a position of strength.

The McGowan government has committed more than \$7 billion towards the WA recovery plan and further recovery initiatives, and committed a record \$28.9 billion towards infrastructure investment to support our economic recovery and create jobs. Despite these significant investments, net debt is forecast to rise to \$40.2 billion by 2023–24. This growth in debt is far less than in any other state and the commonwealth. The PFPS also provides Treasury’s outlook

for the Western Australian economy. Treasury forecasts that our economy will grow by two per cent in 2020–21, the strongest of all the states, based on recent projections. This is in contrast to the economic contraction of 1.3 per cent in 2016–17, the former Liberal–National government’s final year in office, which was the first contraction in annual gross state product on record. The unemployment rate was 6.3 per cent when the previous government left office in March 2017 and under the McGowan Labor government, unemployment was just 4.8 per cent in March 2021, the lowest of all states.

The McGowan government worked hard over its first term to fix the finances, provide the capacity to respond to crises, continue to improve key service delivery, and keep Western Australians safe and our economy strong.

Madam Speaker, I commend the reports to the house.

[See papers [226](#) to [229](#).]

ASIAN ENGAGEMENT

Statement by Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade) [9.09 am]: I would like to take this opportunity to inform the house about the important work the McGowan government is undertaking in the Asian engagement space. Members in the chamber will be aware that Asia is home to eight of our top 10 trading partners, and in 2019–20 Western Australia’s trade with Asia was worth more than \$174 billion.

In 2019, my friend the member for Willagee launched Western Australia’s Asian engagement strategy, which provided a framework for the state’s long-term engagement with key Asian markets. There is no doubt the past year has impeded the ability of nations worldwide to trade, maintain supply chains and work on key relationships, as the COVID-19 pandemic has ripped across the globe. However, increasing trade with and investment from Asia will always be a priority of this state government as we continue to strengthen and maintain those important trading and cultural relationships.

The McGowan government continues to help our industries maximise their international potential throughout the current global challenges. The WA government is running Asia capability workshops to equip local businesses with the skills to export to Asia and work more effectively with Asian markets. We are continuing with the Access Asia business grants program, which is in its third round and provides grants of up to \$25 000 to WA businesses seeking to build and maintain competitiveness in Asian markets. We are committed to enhancing our people-to-people links, which is one of the key themes of the strategy, and to building those long-term relationships that will enable Western Australia and Asian countries to develop a deeper understanding of each other and help deliver future trade and investment success.

To that end, I am looking forward to meeting with as many members of the various diplomatic, business and cultural communities as possible in my role as Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade. Next week, we are hosting an Asian engagement summit in partnership with the Australian Institute of Management, which will provide an invaluable forum for business, government and academia to come together and discuss how WA can be best prepared for the decades ahead in our region.

Although these are good initiatives, there is more to do. The WA government is working hard to maximise our trade and investment opportunities within the Asia–Pacific region through initiatives like our market plan developments and the progression of key agreements with emerging economies.

I look forward to building on the relationships between Western Australia and our friends across Asia as we peacefully work towards our mutual economic prosperity.

HERITAGE GRANTS PROGRAM

Statement by Minister for Heritage

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Heritage) [9.11 am]: I rise today to address the house about my recent announcement of funding allocations from the 2020–21 heritage grants program. In our last round of grants, we were able to assist 23 heritage places with conservation works, planning and documentation. In this round, we are offering 49 applicants funding assistance for a very diverse range of projects across the heritage sector. This is thanks to the new community heritage grants stream and lowered funding cap, allowing for a greater spread of funding across the metro area and the regions. The projects will either protect places on the state Register of Heritage Places or promote their stories throughout Western Australia. The funding this year totals more than \$1.15 million and will assist in delivering an estimated \$3.75 million in conservation works, interpretation and engagement projects. These projects will not only create jobs for heritage specialists overseeing the work, but also employ tradespeople, including carpenters, painters, stonemasons, hydrologists and builders with heritage skills.

Madam Speaker, the new community heritage grants stream has received an overwhelmingly positive response, with 18 successful projects in this inaugural year. This new grants stream will support small local history groups, local governments and businesses in undertaking interpretation projects and events, and employing graphic designers, local historians, artists and heritage interpretation specialists.

With over 72 per cent of community heritage grants projects being in the regions, the program will deliver positive benefits and expand heritage interpretation and tourism in regional communities. For example, I am pleased to

confirm a \$20 000 grant that will help the Shire of Kojonup, member for Roe—he is not very interested—develop a heritage trail and associated online engagement through QR codes, which will expand heritage tourism for travellers through the great southern region. Grants were also awarded for the development of heritage interpretation plans for the Busselton cultural precinct, Yarloop timber mill workshops and Coolgardie post office, providing new frameworks for future storytelling for each of these places.

I commend all applicants for participating in this year’s program and for their commitment to championing heritage values in their places and communities, and I congratulate the grant recipients and look forward to seeing the results of these projects.

DJINDOON DJENUNG — WADJEMUP (ROTTNEST ISLAND)

Statement by Minister for Tourism

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Tourism) [9.14 am]: I wish to inform the house about an exciting new opportunity to experience Aboriginal culture and astronomy at Wadjemup (Rottnest Island). The national award-winning Noongar guide Walter McGuire of Go Cultural Aboriginal Tours and Experiences will present a series of Dreamtime stories against the backdrop of the beautiful Wadjemup night sky as part of an increasing program of Aboriginal cultural events on Rottnest. The event, Djindoon Djenung, which is Noongar for “Look to the stars”, will encompass Dreamtime stories that tell of the moon, the stars and the heavens.

Starting at 5.15 pm at Thomson Bay with a welcome to country, the event will include a welcome statement in Noongar and traditional song sung to the kylie, or singing boomerang. This will be followed by a traditional sand or water ceremony at the ocean’s edge to honour and pay respect to the Noongar ancestors before the storytelling begins. Walter will then guide participants on their exploration of the night sky. The event will conclude with a smoking ceremony using native south west ingredients to bring blessings, healing and connection to the land and each other.

Djindoon Djenung at Wadjemup is a free event and will be held on 14 and 28 May, 11 June and 2 July. The 28 May event will coincide with Reconciliation Week and will feature a Wagyl rainbow serpent dance. This is a wonderful opportunity for people to have an Aboriginal tourism experience. It will be a relaxed, family-friendly gathering where people can bring their own blankets and chairs to make themselves comfortable on the beach while they enjoy local Dreamtime stories. There will be a late ferry service returning to the mainland at 7.15 pm. To ensure a COVID-safe event, tickets must be booked, as capacity is limited. Bookings can be made online at rotnestisland.com. I would encourage people to take an early ferry to the island and also visit the Wadjemup Museum, which has undergone a major refurbishment and was reopened by the former Minister for Tourism late last year. Other events of this nature are planned for Wadjemup. For example, NAIDOC Week, from 4 to 11 July, will be celebrated on Rottnest with a range of activities including a jazz performance in Noongar by magnificent performers Gina Williams and Guy Ghouse.

STATE SOLICITOR — NICHOLAS EGAN — PUBLIC SERVICE MEDAL

Statement by Attorney General

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [9.17 am]: I rise to inform the house of the immensely valuable contribution of Western Australia’s State Solicitor, Mr Nicholas Egan, which has been recognised nationally.

Earlier this year while the Parliament was in recess, the State Solicitor was one of the three Western Australian recipients of the Public Service Medal. This prestigious award recognises outstanding service by employees of federal, state or local governments who have displayed innovation, leadership or achievement. This perfectly describes the State Solicitor, whose career to date has reflected a longstanding dedication to legal advocacy, public service and civic responsibility.

The State Solicitor first joined the Western Australian State Solicitor’s Office in 2005, rising to lead what is effectively this jurisdiction’s biggest law firm. He achieved this after 12 years. Throughout his time as State Solicitor, he has provided outstanding legal assistance on a range of complex matters, with his advice consistently proving to be invaluable to the Western Australian government. The achievements and highlights of the State Solicitor’s professional career are too many to name. However, I do wish to make mention of his tireless work during the past year and pivotal role in providing advice on the various issues raised by the COVID-19 pandemic. This advice has been integral in the state government’s response to the pandemic, which has kept our community safe.

In addition, the State Solicitor has been crucial to both the successful defence of Clive Palmer’s High Court border challenge, which will come before the High Court again on 21 June, and the development of urgent legislation, which passed the Parliament last year, to defend Western Australia from Mr Palmer’s \$30 billion claim against the state. These achievements have protected our community and are ones that all Western Australians can be proud of.

It is my privilege to congratulate the State Solicitor on this well-deserved recognition, and I sincerely thank him for his years of service and dedication to the people of Western Australia.

If I could go off script for one moment, at a personal level, I want to extend my personal thanks to Mr Egan for the sage advice he has given over these last four years, which has enabled me in no small measure to discharge my functions as the Attorney General of Western Australia.

NATIONAL ROAD SAFETY WEEK

Statement by Minister for Road Safety

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Road Safety) [9.20 am]: Next week is National Road Safety Week. This annual initiative highlights the impact and ripple effect that road trauma has on our communities and remembers those who have tragically lost their lives or been injured in road crashes.

National Road Safety Week was developed by Mr Peter Frazer, the president and founder of Safer Australian Roads and Highways, which is also known as SARAH, in honour of his daughter Sarah and a tow truck driver, who were both killed in 2013 when a truck sideswiped Sarah's car, which was stationary in an emergency breakdown lane on Hume Highway in New South Wales. I had the privilege of meeting virtually with Mr Frazer earlier this week to discuss Western Australia's continued support of National Road Safety Week and the actions we are taking to reduce the road toll and road trauma in Western Australia.

Throughout National Road Safety Week, morning teas, memorials and other activities will provide opportunities for Western Australians to remember the 1 200 people who are killed and the nearly 44 000 who are seriously injured on Australian roads each year. Throughout our state, more than 30 places will be lit up in yellow, including buildings in Chinatown in Broome, Albany Town Hall and Square, Optus Stadium, the Matagarup Bridge, Western Australia Police Force Headquarters and Yagan Square. I also encourage members to wear a yellow ribbon throughout the week to show their support and commitment to road safety.

On Sunday, I will launch National Road Safety Week in Scarborough and take the pledge to "drive so others survive". To increase the awareness of road safety and the impact that road trauma has on individuals, families, friends and communities, each day will focus on a different road safety message. One day will be "Thank a Traffic Warden Day". Traffic wardens play an important role in our communities and often go unrecognised for the important work they do to ensure our kids get to and from school safely. Certificates have been developed to distribute to schools to recognise and thank these local heroes. Other days will remind us to slow down and move over to protect those who protect us roadside or to consider road safety on our regional roads, on which too many people continue to lose their lives.

With more Western Australians travelling on roads across our great state than ever before, I encourage members to engage with their local communities on road safety and join me in taking the pledge to "drive so others survive".

COMMUNITY CONNECT

Statement by Minister for Road Safety

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Road Safety) [9.22 am]: Last month, in my first official duty as Minister for Road Safety, I had the privilege of meeting with more than 40 road safety stakeholders at a networking event hosted by the Road Safety Commission to launch Community Connect. It was a pleasure to meet with key stakeholders, such as the Country Women's Association, the Western Australian Local Government Association, the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia, Clubs WA and the Clontarf Foundation. All the organisations that attended the event are delivering important projects or services in Western Australia that contribute towards building the capability, resilience and capacity of our community. Whether it involves educating our young drivers, supporting victims of road trauma, delivering grassroots community projects or making our roads safer, their dedication to road safety is helping to make a difference in Western Australia.

If we want our local communities to be active participants and champions for road safety into the future, we need to find innovative ways to engage with communities. Community Connect is the Road Safety Commission's new online engagement portal that encourages members of the community to have their say and be involved in important road safety initiatives. Road safety involves the community and Community Connect allows for more people to be involved in these important conversations.

Initial topics featured on Community Connect include an introduction to Community Connect and summaries of findings from the community consultation that informed the Driving Change strategy. With continuous changes to technologies, e-rideable device users are also welcomed to provide feedback on how they use these new and growing devices. Motorcyclists, who are among our most vulnerable road users, are invited to use Community Connect and be part of the Motorcycle Clothing Assessment Program—also known as MotoCAP—consultation.

With more Western Australians getting out and experiencing more of our state, it is important that we all have our say on road safety in our state. I encourage everyone to check out the Community Connect portal.

2023 FIFA WOMEN'S WORLD CUP

Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [9.24 am]: I rise to inform the house of Perth's selection as the host city for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup. The "world game" continues to grow significantly in Western Australia, with more than 160 000 registered and social participants across the state. Even the COVID-19 pandemic could not prevent the development of the game, with a 45 per cent increase in female participation in football in the last year alone.

I thank FIFA for its support of Western Australia's bid and acknowledge the hard work and advocacy from James and the team at Football West, Tourism WA and VenuesWest in making the Western Australian bid a reality. Hosting the World Cup in Perth, especially at a time when the sport is prospering from grassroots through to elite levels, will be a significant boost to football's future in WA. It is a huge reward to our continually successful Matildas team, which will have a massive platform to keep inspiring up-and-comers.

The McGowan government is serious about investing in the future of football in Western Australia. This is demonstrated by the \$16.25 million contribution towards a state football centre in Queens Park, which is due for completion in time for the event. This elite facility will have the capability to host visiting international teams as a training ground, as well as grassroots and representative football programs. The state government also provides funding support to Football West through the industry investment program.

As one of the biggest international events on the sporting calendar, the FIFA Women's World Cup will deliver economic, social and community benefits across Western Australia. While games will be played at HBF Park, the state government will work with FIFA and Football West to ensure that the tournament and its benefits reach kids across regional and metropolitan Western Australia. The tournament is expected to attract thousands of tourists and football fans to Western Australia, injecting millions into the local economy. With millions of viewers expected to tune in to coverage of the World Cup, the tournament will provide Western Australia with significant international exposure, providing a tremendous opportunity to showcase everything that Western Australia has to offer the rest of the world.

WA has produced some incredible football talent over the years, including Lydia Williams, Lisa De Vanna and, of course, the world's best player, Sam Kerr. The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup will no doubt inspire many young kids to lace up their football boots to try to emulate their heroes and become the superstars of the future. Who knows—maybe football's next superstar will be among them.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 12 May on the following motion moved by Ms L. Dalton —

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's speech be agreed to —

To His Excellency the Honourable Kim Beazley, AC, Governor of the State of Western Australia.
May it please Your Excellency —

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [9.27 am]: Madam Speaker, I rise in response to the Governor's speech, and like many other members, including our newer members, I would like to recognise your significant achievement of moving from the mother of the house to the Speaker of the house. It is fantastic to see you there. I will not replicate the fine words that just about everyone in this place has said about you in that space.

We have heard some fantastic speeches in this house, particularly from those who gave their first speeches. I will refer to the ones that stood out in my mind. The member for Riverton gave a polylingual speech; he spoke words in three languages. I struggle with the English language! I heard earlier this morning that he is fluent in seven languages. It is deadset impressive to see that in this house. The member for Churchlands, my dear colleague sitting beside me, spoke about her experiences of working all over the world with the United Nations. Again, that is very impressive. The member for Cockburn, who is not here at the moment, spoke about his pro bono work to help exploited employees. Again, that is impressive.

I still think that wage theft should be considered to be stealing and come under section 378 of the Criminal Code, but that is my opinion in that space; I am sure a few other people think the same. The comments of the member for Darling Range and his absolute courage in speaking about his son stood out for me as I reflect on his speech. I also note the fine words of the member for Dawesville, a paramedic who has joined us in this place, who commented on post-traumatic stress disorder. We have met and had quite a chat on that topic. Hopefully, over the next four years, we can develop that further, for want of better words.

I remember coming into this place after the election in 2017. I was very humbled then, and I still am, to be in this place. It is a deadset privilege to be here. We did well at the 2017 election. I think I took over 10 000 primary votes and won against a minister of the Barnett government. I came into this place pinching myself: "Jesus, is this real?" I had walked off the floor of a police station and into Parliament. I was still kicking myself—deadset. For the first 12 to 18 months I walked round and repeated to a few of the older members here, "I'm living the dream." I still think that, because I know what a bad day is, and I can tell members that even the worst day in this place is a good day; we forget that sometimes. Then we had this election. I got just over 10 000 primary votes in the 2017 election and this time I got 17 293 votes—why? It was over 70 per cent of the primary vote. My biggest issue at the moment is trying to find a constituent in the electorate who actually did not vote for me! It is a very humbling experience I can tell you, but I do not want to gloat because that is not my way. I still believe it is a very humbling experience.

On election day, I went to one of our booths and there was a lovely poster of my ugly mug hanging on one of the walls. Two lovely ladies dressed in blue shirts with the Liberal logo on the front were handing out how-to-vote cards. I thought that that was great; it is the challenge of our democracy and why I love it so much. One of the Liberal girls who was standing opposite me looked at the corflute poster and said, “That’s you isn’t it?” I said that it was and she said, “I voted for you!” I said, “But you’re wearing a blue Liberal T-shirt!” She said yes, and then her friend who was standing beside her said that she had voted for me too! I laughed and said to her, “How come you’re handing out those cards?” She said that she was just helping out a friend. I said, “Well that’s lovely, but how about next time you come and help us out?” She said, “You didn’t ask me.” I will have to find them again for the next election! That was one of the lovely things that occurred on election day.

I have heard members from the other side say that we got into this place because we had big union backing and all that sort of stuff, but that is not true. I got into this place because of the fantastic volunteers that helped us out. I will read out a small list of names, because this is probably the first and last time that I will have the opportunity to do that: Deidre Ahsing; Sally Allen; Nicola Badman; Douglas Bell; Leeanne and Paolo Biemmi; Marc Billington; Tadhg Blackman; Julie Bogle—a lovely lady, Julie; Terrence Brennan; Paul Brown; Walter Brown; Myra Browne; James Byrne; Sabine Carlin; Alexandra Carr; Stephen Chapman; Beverly Clark; Paul Clendenning—I hope I pronounced that right; Heather Cole—another lovely champion from up our way; Sean Cooper; Julie Cooper; Adam Cottrell; Derek Cottrell; Mary Crothers; Clarene Dal Busco; William Daniel; Frank and Kristen Dans; Abbie Dans-Schunselaar; Ollie Davis—a lovely young fellow who joined our campaign; Steven Ellis; Stephen Faulkner; Deborah Ferguson; Gordon Fitzsimmons; Maxwell Flanagan; Jillian, my daughter; Andrea, my wife; Robert Forster; Rebecca Freeman; Kuol Garang; Peter Garland—another champion in our electorate who does such fantastic work; Lauren Gill; David Greig; Helen Groves; Di Guise—what a champion she is; Carly Guise; Edward Harrington; Lynette Harris; Jacqueline Harrold; Sue Hearn; Robert Hindle; John Hollywood; William Hughes; Margaret and Peter Hunter; David Jansen; Joan Janssen; Michelle Jenkins; Robert Jenkinson; and Maxwell and Pauline Jones. That couple had a family member in the south west who was dying, but they still worked on our booths—fantastic people. The list continues: William Jordan; David Kavanagh; Jacqueline and John Kemp—another lovely couple; Zoe Konowalow; Mara Kozłowska-Rychle—I always get that wrong; Georgie Kraus; Graham and Rosemary Landwehr; Catherine Leach; Georgi Leader; Darryl Legg; Lucja Leszczynski; Tracey Lilburne—the partner of Paul; Peter Lofdahl; Ian Mackenzie—another fantastic community member; Debbie MacMurchie; Shaun MacNeeney; Margaret Marinovich—another lovely lady; Sheree Marshall; Roderick Martin; Robert McBride; Janice McCreery; Lisa McGrath; Karl McMahon-Winter; Neville McNeill; Linda Mitchell; Deborah Moylan—another fantastic person; John Musca; Mark Nelson—a bloke I worked with years ago in the police; Janette Nixon; Cristina Nutt; Wei Pang; Joanne Parker; Glenn Paulin; Doris Pengelly; Francis Petch; Sam Pirie—another great kid who joined our campaign; Liz Prime—another fantastic person; Emma and Walter Ramage—people who are very dear to me; Danny Ramsawmy; Colleen Randall; Hannah Randall; Brenda Regan; Miloslav Res; Sara Revet; Scotty Robinson—another fantastic person; Guillermo Rodas—jeez I have tortured that name; Nat Sangalli; Margaret Seez; Kevin Shepherd; Michael Simpson; Cane Spaseski—again, sorry for my poor English; Jason Squire; Andrew Steele; Patricia Stein; Belinda Storck; Maureen Stubbs-Mills; Denzil Talbot; Heike Thomson; Marilyn Thorp; Frank and Lisa Vidler; Jodi Walker; Lisa Wallis; Kerry Ward; Peter Weekes; Jaime Will; Kim Willett; Bianca Williams; John Williamson; Arthur Wilson; Wikitoria Wilson; Jana Woods; Fardin Yakubi; and Kim Young.

They were the real people who led me into this space. They are fantastic volunteers and they did everything, from putting a corflute poster out on their front lawn to helping us on election day to hand out how-to-vote cards or act as booth captains, which involved going to their polling place at four o’clock in the morning to help out. I am here because of those people. I am privileged that they took the time to help out because they believed in the message that we were trying to deliver; they believed in me and they believed in this McGowan government.

I am very humbled to be in this place, but I have not forgotten what the previous member for Churchlands said in this place in the last Parliament. After the by-election for Darling Range, which saw a swing of a bit over nine per cent away from the government, I remember him standing up in this place, pointing at the member for Joondalup and saying, “You’ll be gone.” I remember him saying the same to the member for Kingsley. I remember him pointing to the member for Pilbara, saying, “You’re gone; you’ll lose your seat. The member for Bicton is not in the chamber at the moment. He also pointed to me, sitting where the member for Carine is sitting now, and said, “Member for Burns Beach, you’re gone.” I thought, “Well, mate, when you take a feather duster to a bar-room brawl, it’s going to end in tears.” Just remember who is the last man standing in that space. I will leave it at that. That will probably be the last and only time I mention that.

In our first term of government, my government, the McGowan government, achieved some absolutely outstanding success. I remember standing in this place talking about the dying with dignity laws. I see the member for Morley sitting across the chamber. That was probably one of the government’s finest times in the last Parliament. I remember those laws. I remember going to my RSL the night after we passed that legislation. A couple of the older veterans came across and gave me a hug, saying, “We got it through.” We tidied up that stuff. We tidied up the dying with dignity laws; we got them through. I think they will be enacted in the very near future. I wait with bated breath to see their success.

We did not address the advance health directives. That is something that we need to tidy up in our next four years. A number of seniors are deadset terrified of going into that space. The dying with dignity laws only opened a small window. It is the greatest success when people have an advance health directive in place if they develop dementia and that sort of stuff. We need to do some more work in that space.

I remember that we passed the unfair dismissal laws for police. That was quite dear to me and close to my heart. We had been trying to change those laws for 30-plus years, longer than I spent in the job. When I reflect, they were some of the good things we did in this space.

We also brought finances back under control. There is a report out there known as the Langoulant report. I suggest all new members in this place go and find it and read it, even if they just read the summary. I battled. An investigation was carried out into underground power in Port Hedland. I cannot get over why it cost \$420 000 per household to put underground power in Port Hedland. I understand the need for it but that was wrong on every level. When we read the business case in the report about why it cost so much, it is because they found rock. I thought Port Hedland was built on a rock! Surely, a proper business case submission was made in that space. For it to cost \$420 000 per household, someone is pulling the piss! I am sorry about my language but I need to be frank about it.

We got our finances under control. If we had not done that, when the pandemic occurred—I will talk more about that later—we would have been in a very ugly space.

The other thing that we achieved was the biggest rail infrastructure build on record. The extension of the rail line to Byford is past the planning stage. It will start to be built in the very near future. The Morley–Ellenbrook line is happening.

Mr P.J. Rundle interjected.

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: I noticed that the member was making a smart remark. Who could forget Metro Area Express, the light rail project—fully costed, fully funded? Have we seen any of that? No. Let us look at the extension of the rail line to Yanchep. I do not know what a cluster of bulldozers is called but the Minister for Transport took us up there and I lost count of the number of bulldozers doing the earthworks up there. We have such pride in that. The Thornlie–Cockburn Link is under construction or planning.

The greatest success we had in the last term of government was our response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Over the last couple of months, a couple of reports have come out.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: The response from our government to COVID-19 was probably the best in the world, from both a health perspective and an economic perspective. That is not us saying that; that is the OECD saying that stuff. We had lockdowns. We have achieved something that everyone else in the world looks upon in awe.

My father and my father-in-law, who are both 80, are alive because of our response. I have to declare an interest. I am a type 2 diabetic. I am safer for that. I have had my first needle and I cannot wait to get my second on 1 July. I suggest that everyone in this place does the same.

When I look at members of the opposition, I hear them continually go on about our response. They are like fish, flip-flopping everywhere on the beach when speaking about whether to open the border or close the border. My daughter, who was an early childcare worker, lost her job and her home because of COVID. People forget about this. There is a personal consequence for us not getting this right. My daughter experienced those horrible things. I can certainly say that a significant number of my constituents had the same thing happen to them. If members stand in this place and say it is not about business, I am sorry, but it is about people, and they matter. When we forget about that, we should not be in this place.

Going forward, I listened to the Governor’s speech. He said that firearm reform is part of the agenda. That is long overdue. We need to tidy up that space. I am probably the only person in this house who has had a double-barrel shotgun pointed at them in anger. I am definitely in favour of any firearm law reform. We are in a good space with funding for an extra 1 100 more coppers to enforce those firearm laws. We are going to talk about police compensation. That is something that is very dear to me. I hope there will be some retrospectivity in that space because a lot of officers who have left the job are starting to succumb to post-traumatic stress disorder now. If we do not have retrospectivity, we are missing a point.

The other thing that we are going to introduce is the banning of gay conversion therapy. I find the term “gay conversion therapy” offensive to the core. If we introduce some laws in that space, that is so overdue. We are also going to look at elder abuse reform. Again, that is another area that we need to look at.

I remember dealing with elder abuse as a copper. I hope that when we look at elder abuse and domestic violence reform, we have a good look at coercive control because that is a deadset evil that we need to address. In the elder abuse space, coercive control and domestic control is something we need to address. We need to get into that space.

The other thing we are looking forward to is the freeway extending to Romeo Road. Up in my neck of the woods, it is going to take a heap of pressure off the freeway at Hester Avenue, which gets very choked in the morning. The sooner we can get on with that, minister, the better. I hope to see some good stuff in that space.

The rail extension up to Yanchep in my electorate is deadset gold, because that will create a commercial energy in the northern corridor that will generate jobs and further development. I hope it will bring stimulus and employment, in particular for youth, who face unemployment up my way. I think it is deadset good.

The member for Joondalup spoke the other day about the fantastic development in her area with the Ocean Reef Marina project. That is fantastic. What members may not know is that to build the marina, a piece of development known as Meridian Park is being opened at Neerabup. To me, that is a job engine. Most people in my electorate leave it to get to work. They have to drive down to the city, choking the freeways and overextending the rail lines. If we have a place where people can work that is close to where they live, absolutely everyone is a winner. Meridian Park is being made. The limestone for the Ocean Reef Marina will come from Meridian Park. There have been 3 500 hectares of land put aside there for that development. In the future, that will be a job engine for my electorate, and will particularly address the biggest problem in my electorate, which is youth unemployment. I think that is a good thing.

Reflecting on my first speech, I spoke about a couple of topics. One of them was mental health. This government has spent millions upon millions of dollars in that space. We announced a commitment of 100 extra beds in the mental health space, and 75 per cent of those are going into Joondalup Health Campus. My biggest issue is that we have to look at adolescent mental health beds. Why? It is because adolescent mental health cases are under-reported. We need to invest in that space. If we can get kids on the right track at the earliest, I reckon that is the best thing for us. To assist in that, I have done some work in the electorate with a couple of our curriculum and re-engagement and education schools, and one of those is the Comet CaRE School. I am really keen to see more investment in that. Comet schools deal with kids who are falling through the cracks in our system. I have one of those Comet schools in Clarkson and at the moment it has a waitlist of 40 kids, on top of the kids in that school, so we need more investment into those schools, because no child should ever be put on a waitlist for their education. I do not care what anyone says.

The other thing I spoke of passionately in my first speech was the reduction in our road toll. I stated that we needed to do three things to reduce that road toll: we needed better infrastructure, we needed more effective law enforcement and, finally, we needed better trained drivers. Coming back to better infrastructure, I have to congratulate the Minister for Transport. What we, as a government, have done in this state and regional WA is absolutely—I am stuck for words! There are the freeway extensions and the commitment to rail. Every person who jumps in a railcar is a person who is not on the road. It is a person who is going to get to work. I do not remember the last time someone was hurt in a railcar—can anyone here? Not in this state. Maybe in Victoria, but they are on the other side; they do not count! We are making our roads safer. Did we achieve a reduction in our road toll when we came in? No, we did not, but we have had an increase in the number of road users, so I have to say that we are putting a line in the sand. We have made some achievements.

I turn to enforcement of our road rules. There are 1 100 more police coming into the system. That means more police on the roads and more police out in regional WA. The former Minister for Police, now the Speaker, introduced a country road traffic enforcement group, which spends all its time in regional WA policing the roads. I would like to see those officers living in regional WA, because I know from personal experience that if a police officer resides in the region, they work hard there. When I was the officer in charge at Wagin, I spent my time catching unlicensed drivers, and they would ask me why I was not catching the drunken drivers. My road toll was made up of people who did not have a licence.

Mr P.J. Rundle: We need some more GROH housing in Wagin for our police officers.

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: I do not disagree, but that is all part of good management. I know this government is absolutely playing a part in that space and the Minister for Police would have his head around that far better than most.

We achieved two out of three things, so there were two good ticks in our last term of government. We did not get an improvement in the training of drivers. I remember listening to the Road Safety Commissioner say that youth representation in the road toll is slowly falling. I had a think about that. It is probably because most kids cannot get a licence. We need to have another look at that, and I will lobby the minister to make sure we improve our licensing for kids. I remember one of the inquiries we ran in the last Parliament during which some of the licence examiners were bragging that they were failing 98 per cent of the people who were getting to them. That is not a successful system. We need to have a look at that. We need to tidy up that space. If we can do that, I reckon we will have a real crack at reducing the road toll, which is a deadset passion of mine.

I hope the next four years in this place will see some lively debate. I hope the opposition will stand up. I will not say any more about that! The McGowan government is a strong government and it listens to the people. I saw it do that in the last four years and I know it will do it in the next four. We have an outstanding set of ministers and parliamentary secretaries. After listening to those first speeches here, I know we have an outstanding group of members in this house, and I hope they will take us forward. With that, Madam Speaker, I thank you for your time.

Debate interrupted.

[Continued on page 599.]

MINISTER FOR HEALTH — AISHWARYA ASWATH*Standing Orders Suspension — Motion*

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.58 am] — without notice: I move —

That so much of standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the following motion to be moved forthwith —

That this house condemns the Minister for Health, Roger Cook, for failing to take proper responsibility for the circumstances and events leading to the tragic death of Aishwarya Aswath, as expected of a minister under the Westminster system.

Standing Orders Suspension — Amendment to Motion

On motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

To insert after “forthwith” —

, subject to the debate being limited to 15 minutes for government members and 15 minutes for non-government members

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion, as Amended

The SPEAKER: Members, as this is a motion without notice to suspend standing orders, it will need the support of an absolute majority for it to succeed. If I hear a dissentient voice, I will be required to divide the Assembly.

Question put and passed with an absolute majority.

Motion

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party) [9.59 am]: I move the motion. This is obviously a very powerful motion. It reflects the views of many Western Australians, including those in the health system, who are very concerned about the response of the McGowan Labor government and the Minister for Health in particular to the tragedy that we are all aware took place at Perth Children’s Hospital. Ultimately, the buck stops with the Minister for Health. That is what this motion is about. This is about the government taking responsibility for the set of circumstances that led to tragedy when a seven-year-old child, Aishwarya Aswath, had to wait two hours to be seen at Perth Children’s Hospital, and it was too late. That situation has illustrated that we have an under-resourced health system, under which she was not triaged properly. For example, her temperature was not taken. There was a lack of clinical supervision and significant issues of staff under-resourcing.

As was announced yesterday, the chair of the Child and Adolescent Health Service, Debbie Karasinski, has resigned, which was the honourable thing to do in this situation. I understand that the CEO of the Child and Adolescent Health Service has also offered his resignation. However, as we heard yesterday in the press conference and in comments since, the minister who is ultimately responsible for the resourcing of our health system and our emergency departments has deflected the blame for the obvious and outstanding resourcing issues that we are seeing at Perth Children’s Hospital and across the health system. An article on today’s WAtoday site states —

Mr Cook said the accountable authority was ultimately the health provider and its board but deflected questions at a press conference on Wednesday over whether he thought Dr Anwar should step down.

“What we need to do is to continue to commit ourselves to a continuous improvement of health services, right across our ... system,” ...

In the minds of the WA public, he is simply not taking responsibility. He is not accepting that there have been calls since as early as October last year about the level of understaffing at Perth Children Hospital’s emergency department and concerns about the implications of that on patient care.

The Minister for Health stated on 6PR yesterday that the report made no findings about staff shortages. This is the real clincher. We can look at the recommendations in the report. If the minister is stating that there is nothing to see here and that there are no issues with staff shortages, it raises the question: what report was he actually reading? Under recommendation 10 of the *SAC 1 clinical incident investigation report*, it states —

Uncovered sick leave of medical staff resulted in a reduction in available medical staff during the evening, delays in medical assessments/prolonged waiting times and impeded the capacity for medical staff to provide a more comprehensive response to parental escalation.

Recommendation 2 refers to a lack of supervision because the senior nurses were filling service roles. Senior nurses filling other roles clearly relates to a significant under-resourcing issue. It also states under this recommendation —

A lack of clinical supervision resulted in ... missed opportunities to recognise a sick patient which contributed to a delay in clinical intervention.

I think recommendation 6 is the most damning. It states —

A culture has developed which saw escalation as futile and ineffective with subsequent failure to call for assistance at times of increased acuity & activity ... even when there was availability of senior CNS from outside ED.

That is, the emergency department. The findings under that recommendation point to the fact that there was a culture within Perth Children's Hospital and the health system that meant health staff did not feel they would be heard if they raised issues about the system being under extreme stress. That issue has been raised not only in relation to the tragedy surrounding Aishwarya, but also over several months by the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Nursing Federation, the opposition, patients and families across the state, and that is the crux of the issue here.

The Minister for Health has stated that we have a health system that is challenged. It is not a health system that is challenged; it is a health system that is in crisis. In a state that is enjoying a \$4 billion surplus, there is absolutely no reason a seven-year-old child should have to wait for two hours in an emergency department, not have her temperature checked properly, and have clinical staff ignore the four or five cries of her parents. It is outrageous. The emergency department did not have vital equipment and there was an issue of whether the equipment it did have was working. It is simply not good enough.

We certainly support the recommendation for an independent inquiry. On behalf of the family, we have also been supporting and calling for an inquiry. But, once again, it falls short. The scope of the independent inquiry is extremely narrow. It will not look at the 20 other cases involving severity assessment codes that have taken place at Perth Children's Hospital over the last 15 months in which the patient either died or became seriously ill for a reason other than the illness or condition of the patient when they presented to the hospital. This is a fair call by the family. It is vitally important that we have a transparent, independent inquiry that has clear terms of reference. There are significant cultural issues in the health system. I have pointed to recommendation 6, which is possibly the most damning. Recommendation 6 also refers to the fact that since October 2020, senior clinicians have escalated substantial concerns around patient safety to senior management. The question we have is: in this culture in the health system whereby senior clinicians felt they were not being heard, were these concerns escalated further, and was the minister aware of the fact that there were issues with a lack of clinical supervision and education?

There are obviously issues that sit with the Premier, as well. The Minister for Health has made efforts to address record levels of ambulance ramping that have led to code yellow internal emergencies and hospital blockages. He has acknowledged the fact that earlier this year we saw the most hours of ambulance ramping in the history of the state—triple the number of hours seen under the previous government, when the situation was apparently in crisis. That raises the question of whether the Minister for Health has been heard by the Premier. We have heard that submissions have been made to the Premier about investing further in our health system. That raises the question of whether the Premier is also responsible for responding to what is quite obviously a crisis in our health system. We support the family's call for an independent inquiry.

Mark Olson from the Australian Nursing Federation was on radio earlier today raising legitimate concerns about staff shortages. I appreciate there will be an investment in additional nurses. The questions are: Why is there a delay? Why is there a lack of urgency in this? There has been a significant lack of urgency over the last six weeks in this matter.

This is a health system in crisis. We need a minister who will acknowledge this, not someone who states that the system is only "challenged". If the minister is not willing to take responsibility for this crisis at not only Perth Children's Hospital but also across the health system, we have the wrong Minister for Health and the minister needs to step down. If the minister is not being heard by the Premier, if he does not have the support of the government and he continues to brush away the real issues that Western Australians care about, quite obviously, we have the wrong representative for the health system in this state.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.11 am]: This motion is very important because we have a systemic lack of staffing resources in our health system. I understand that as of yesterday there were 328 positions waiting to be filled in the health system. That is a symptom of catch-up in a department that is not being run properly. It is the largest government department. The most important job for government at the moment is to keep Western Australia safe.

The chair of the Child and Adolescent Health Service, Debbie Karasinski, took the right action yesterday and stepped down. The minister accepted her resignation, but did not put his position on the line. In the midst of this crisis in which we have seen mistake after mistake in the health system, last week the minister was apparently conversing with the Quarantine Advisory Panel, which had not yet been formed, and informing the house in great depth and detail about what he had been talking about with that august body that did not exist! This minister is clearly out of his depth. He looks tired; he looks like he is not able to handle this. Instead of allowing the minister to focus on this most important job at the moment, what did we see today? A brief ministerial statement was presented to the house by the Minister for Health. Instead of dealing with the health crisis, he drops in a brief ministerial statement about Asian engagement, talking about a forthcoming summit and a range of measures to improve Asian engagement and trade. That is very important work. This state relies upon trade with Asia; it does not rely on the health minister taking responsibility for areas outside his own remit.

We know very well that under the Westminster system, a minister is responsible for what happens in a department he heads up. The Minister for Health is refusing to take responsibility for his actions. The Premier needs to understand that this minister is under pressure. He is not handling the situation; he is floundering and he needs some assistance.

If the Premier is not going to come to his aid and relieve him of other responsibilities, the minister needs to do the honourable thing and, as the member for Vasse has said, step down. He needs to resign and let someone more capable come forward, someone who will take responsibility for the mess in the health system and ensure that we do not see ambulances ramped at all the hospitals so that we do not see families desperately calling for attention and there being no attention to give in the largest child health centre in our state. Where else would a family take their sick child but to that centre? They should have received decent attention. They failed to receive decent attention. The minister who failed to ensure that system was operating as it should, should take responsibility; he should resign.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [10.15 am]: Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important motion, which perhaps has been done no credit by the contribution of the member for Moore. Let me say at the outset that this is a horrible situation and it requires the appropriate respect paid to it in relation to a family that has suffered a parent's worst nightmare. Once again, on behalf of the government, I extend our sincere apologies, our sympathy and our empathy with respect to the issues involving their daughter, Aishwarya.

This is a tragic set of circumstances brought on by a multiplicity of issues. It is an issue that the root-cause analysis panel was designed to get to the bottom of. We now have some insights into that patient's journey and we continue to respond to and understand that to make sure that it never happens again. In the conversations I have had with Aishwarya's family, they are fundamentally gripped by the desire to understand what has gone on here and to make sure that this does not happen again. That is the commitment I made to them and I will not shirk that responsibility. Obviously, the government is responsible for the delivery of health services. We do so under difficult circumstances: a health system that is currently under a great deal of pressure because of the change in demand as a result of the global pandemic—one that we are responding to. Nothing will bring Aishwarya back and no words can replace the grief that those parents are feeling. But we owe them the honour and respect to make sure that as a government we respond to this report in a manner that ensures that we do honour to her memory.

One of the key recommendations from the root-cause analysis is that we undertake an independent review to ensure that we can implement all the recommendations that the root-cause analysis identified and make sure that we can work with the family to ensure this takes place. That is the commitment I made to Aishwarya's father yesterday; in setting up this inquiry, we will sit down with him and Aishwarya's mother to talk about what they want to see in relation to this particular inquiry to ensure that we get on top of the issues.

I am advised by the chief executive of the Child and Adolescent Health Service that the report says lack of staff was not a contributing factor on the evening that Aishwarya passed. At the time that Aishwarya came into the hospital, there were 19 doctors and 15 nurses on duty to treat the 41 patients in the emergency department.

I want to reflect on the comments of Mark Olson, secretary of the ANF, on the radio this morning because they bear some observance. He says he understands that staffing may not have been an issue on the evening, but certainly staffing is a concern right across the system. He is right. We are seeing a significant level of burnout from healthcare workers associated with the global pandemic and we are seeing a significant change in the way that people are consuming health services. A lot of work has been done recently by all health service providers to make sure that we can shift to meet this new demand. That work has been ongoing since late last year and, obviously, now there is an extra sense of urgency as a result of these issues.

I can inform the house that, tragically, a meeting with the emergency department doctors was held the weekend before Aishwarya came into the ED to talk about some of these measures, and I want to go through them with members so that they can see the extent to which the leadership at Perth Children's Hospital was moving to try to make sure we could address some of these issues. In the PCH emergency department, the strategies and implementation underway included a total increase of an extra 16.1 FTE nurses. That enables two additional registered nurses to be rostered for the emergency department across all shifts, for a total of 11.1 full-time equivalents, and an increased allocation for leave provisions across the nursing establishment, enabling permanent recruitment of an additional five FTEs. As I said, getting these staff to take leave in order for them to recharge their batteries is an important element of this. The increased number of FTEs also includes an additional nurse allocated to monitor patients in the ED waiting areas and an additional nurse allocated to work across the emergency department supporting areas with higher levels of activity. An administration officer has been assigned also to the triage desk; a designated ED resuscitation team will be on every shift, supported by senior medical and nursing staff from within the hospital attending every resuscitation in the ED; and there has been an increase in the allocation of staff development nurses in the emergency department, effectively doubling the allocation. A significant body of work has been done to make sure we can continue to support our staff better. We need to do more and we will do more. That work is ongoing.

One of the other observations made in relation to this is around triaging policy processes. One of the observances of the root-cause analysis team was that that policy needs to be put in place. I can inform the house that policies are in place. I think the emphasis from the team is that they want to see those policies made more robust and to make sure they continue to guide the triage teams as patients come in. We will continue to make sure that we take every opportunity—not just this opportunity, but every opportunity—to continue to see the improvement of health services right across our system. Sadly, these sorts of events provide an extra sense of urgency about this and an extra

determination to make sure we put these things in place quickly. We are moving very swiftly to put these things in place and many have already been put in place. We will continue to make sure that we provide the resources that the nurses and doctors at PCH and all our EDs need to carry out their work.

Can I just place on the record once again my respect, admiration and absolute thanks to all our doctors and nurses working in EDs to protect Western Australians. I was not there on the night; none of us were. We do not know what was happening in that ED from a personal set of circumstances. We cannot put ourselves in the place of the staff and the parents in the lead-up to this incident, so we should be careful not to judge quickly and we should be careful to make sure that we remember that it is not just the parents who are hurting today. There are 3 500 staff right across PCH who feel the impact and are heartbroken today in relation to this set of circumstances. We owe it to them and to the parents to ensure that once again, as a government, we commit to the resources, we commit to supporting and we commit to allowing these staff to do the best possible job that we know they are capable of doing.

As I said at the beginning, this has been a tragic, tragic set of circumstances. The incidents that led to Aishwarya's death I am sure will haunt many of us as we closely examine ourselves to make sure that we understand and learn from the incidents. Dr Anwar has been doing a tremendous job during the time he has spent at PCH. He is taking that hospital on a journey around culture, around learnings, around professionalism and around excellence in health care, and we want him to continue to do that work. Ultimately, the health service provider is the responsible and accountable authority, and I thank Debbie Karasinski for her service and thank her for the respect she has shown to everyone in this process by offering her resignation at this point in time. But let us make sure that Aishwarya's death is not in vain. Let us make sure that we learn from it. Let us make sure that we all join the government in the commitment that I made to her father that we will get the answers; we will learn from the experience and we will ensure that it does not happen again.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [10.25 am]: Firstly, I begin by once again passing on my deepest sympathies and the sympathies I am sure of all the people in Parliament to the family of Aishwarya for the tragic circumstances they face and, obviously, what they have gone through is unimaginable to us.

Secondly, as we know, the minister gave a long statement to the house yesterday. We have released the recommendations in the root cause analysis report of the inquiry that was conducted into the passing of Aishwarya and the recommendations are now public. As a government, we have committed to implementing the 11 recommendations, and I understand the hospital itself is in the process of implementing those recommendations. We provided the full report to the family for them to analyse. Obviously, there is private information about Aishwarya in that report, so the release of the full report is a matter for them, because we do not want to release private and confidential patient information, so the release is in their hands. I understand the family may well say something later today, so, in relation to these matters, we have left that to them.

The Attorney General, the health minister and I have regularly been discussing at length the prospect of a coronial inquiry to try to determine further matters around this, and I understand the family want further answers. We expect there will be a coronial inquiry and the coroner is working in that direction, but that is something she is working on with the family and seeking the family's advice on those things. We fully expect there will be a coronial inquiry, which, hopefully, will provide more answers to the family about the passing of Aishwarya and give them some support and, hopefully, further information and perhaps over time some closure in relation to these matters.

I just wanted to detail some facts about the matter, which I am sure are on the public record, but this is what I have learnt over the past couple of days from PCH. Aishwarya arrived at the emergency department at 5.32 in the afternoon. She was seen at the triage desk at 5.33 pm. At that point in time, there were 19 doctors and 15 nurses on duty, but between 5.30 and 6.00 in the afternoon, there is a handover process. The handover process meant that at six o'clock, 13 doctors and 14 nurses were on duty. The number of patients in the emergency department when Aishwarya arrived was 41, so there were 19 doctors and 15 nurses to deal with 41 patients when she arrived. As I said, she was triaged at 5.33 pm, a minute after arriving. She ended up being taken into what was described to me as a cubicle at 7.11 pm, an hour and 38 minutes or thereabouts—37 minutes perhaps—after she had arrived at the hospital. At that time—seven o'clock—the number of patients had declined to 36, down from 41 and, as I said, 13 doctors and 14 nurses were on duty. The ED obviously has a moving roster depending upon the hour of the day and the day in question. I am advised that ordinarily on a Saturday, 12 doctors are on duty at 6.00 pm, but on this Saturday evening in question, 13 doctors were on duty. Because it was a long weekend, additional staff were allocated to cover any staff who might have been absent or on leave, or whatever it might have been. That was the situation in the hospital on that occasion.

Amendment to Motion

Mr M. McGOWAN: I move —

That all words after “house” be deleted, and the following be inserted —

passes on its deepest sympathies to the family of Aishwarya Aswath Chavittupara and notes the government will be implementing all 11 recommendations of the root-cause analysis.

Division

Amendment (deletion of words) put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (44)

Mr S.N. Aubrey	Ms M.J. Hammat	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms A. Sanderson
Mr G. Baker	Ms J.L. Hanns	Mr D.R. Michael	Ms J.J. Shaw
Ms H.M. Beazley	Mr T.J. Healy	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr M. Hughes	Mr S.A. Millman	Dr K. Stratton
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr H.T. Jones	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Ms C.M. Collins	Mr D.J. Kelly	Ms L.A. Munday	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr R.H. Cook	Ms E.J. Kelsbie	Mrs L.M. O'Malley	Mr P.C. Tinley
Ms L. Dalton	Ms A.E. Kent	Mr P. Papalia	Ms C.M. Tonkin
Ms D.G. D'Anna	Dr J. Krishnan	Mr S.J. Price	Mr R.R. Whitby
Mr M.J. Folkard	Mr P. Lilburne	Mr J.R. Quigley	Ms S.E. Winton
Ms K.E. Giddens	Mr M. McGowan	Ms R. Saffioti	Ms E.L. Hamilton (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (5)

Mr V.A. Catania	Mr R.S. Love	Mr P.J. Rundle (<i>Teller</i>)
Dr D.J. Honey	Ms L. Mettam	

Amendment thus passed.

Amendment (insertion of words) put and passed.

Motion, as Amended

Question put and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [10.36 am]: I would firstly like to congratulate all the new members in this house and those who have been re-elected on the honour and privilege of serving their electorates in this place. I would also like to acknowledge and congratulate the first woman Speaker of the house, Hon Michelle Roberts, who I am sure will do a sterling job in that position.

I would like to acknowledge the former member for Warren–Blackwood, Hon Terry Redman, for his contributions to this place, his electorate and the Nationals WA. I also acknowledge the former member for Geraldton, Ian Blayney, who made the courageous decision to join the Nationals in 2019; I thank him for his service to the people of Geraldton. I would also like to congratulate James Hayward on his election to South West Region; he will take his seat in the other place in the next couple of weeks and become Hon James Hayward.

Many members of the previous Parliament lost their seats in this house, and that does not impact on their lives alone; it also impacts, of course, on the lives of their families. Family members often suffer in silence because of their partners' pursuit of public life in order to serve their electorate and do well in the public eye. Recognition needs to be given to members' families. If I can offer some advice to new members, it is that family needs to come first. To succeed as the member for your electorate, family is absolutely critical to doing the job you have been elected to do.

I would also like to congratulate the Labor Party, which obviously had resounding success in the 2021 state election. We will have to wait and see how that success ultimately plays out over the next four years in this place. I am sure it will be a test of whether the people's place can still operate with open and transparent checks and balances for the people of Western Australia. I would like to thank the people of the electorate of North West Central for electing me to my fourth term, with close to a five per cent swing on my primary vote.

Dr D.J. Honey: Congratulations.

Mr R.S. Love: Congratulations.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Thank you, members.

That is due to the long and hard road of travelling over 140 000 kilometres a year in the largest electorate in state Parliament, to ensure that I do the work that is needed.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Madam Acting Speaker, I would like to do this in silence, if that is possible.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: This cannot be done without family. I would like to thank my patient wife, Dani, and my five beautiful children who are teenagers, Jack, Tom, Nicholas, Isy and Rosie, for their understanding and support during this election campaign, which would have been much harder not having them around.

You cannot win elections unless you have a good team of loyal supporters around you. I would like to personally thank branch president Paul Dixon, Belinda, Josh, Elliot, Paul Kelly, Lee-Ann Daly, Turk Shales, Pete Clancy, John Spargo, Ashley Dowden, Ross and Pix Pigdon, Karen Williams, Peter Grundy, Noel and, of course, our polling booth workers and all the branch members in my electorate, of which there are quite a few. To my good friends and candidates in the Mining and Pastoral Region who gave it their all, I would like to say a huge thankyou for the tireless work undertaken to cover such a large and challenging electorate. I want to say thank you to Nick Fardell, Lionel Quartermaine, Tessa Daly, Mark Young and Kieran Dart. All I can say is: do not give up fighting for regional Western Australia.

Earlier this year, just before the election, Carnarvon experienced a flood, which is not uncommon to Carnarvon, but it still damaged quite a few plantations. Although the flood mitigation that was put in place, through the great policy and initiative by the Nationals WA called royalties for regions, managed to ensure that a percentage of those plantations were protected, the other 20 per cent of the west of the crossing was unfortunately impacted. Those plantation owners have lost quite a bit of topsoil, which the government, during election time, committed to provide \$1 million to replace. It is about timing and ensuring that growers can get up and grow, and provide the produce that members and the people of Perth get to enjoy. That topsoil replacement has yet to occur, and the delays could impact the financial viability of those plantation owners and the produce that comes to Perth.

In this house we have spoken about how tropical cyclone Seroja had a devastating impact on Kalbarri and the midwest. In Kalbarri, which is a new town for my electorate, 75 per cent of homes and businesses were impacted, with major damage to 30 per cent and just over 10 per cent will have to be knocked down and rebuilt. We still hear about the forced position that the government has to move into when it comes to supporting those cyclone-affected areas. Still today, 700 homes in Kalbarri do not have power. There seems to be an impasse between Western Power and the Electrical Trades Union on having the right working conditions in order to restore power.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: That is five weeks after the cyclone and still 700 homes do not have power. That is an absolute disgrace! How about the government steps in to resolve the situation to ensure that the people of Kalbarri can get the power on?

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: I would like to hear the member's contribution. I do not want to hear this particular member. If he wants to make a speech, he is welcome to stand up later.

Mr D.J. Kelly: What point of order is that?

Mr R.S. Love: Because you're engaging in disruptive behaviour.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms K.E. Giddens): Members! I will make the decision. There is no point of order, but I do ask members to please cease their interjections.

Debate Resumed

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is absolutely disgraceful and I urge the government to step in to ensure that the residents of Kalbarri and the midwest get looked after.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I will remind you, interjections will please cease. Thank you.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.

When we look at the issues that face places like Kalbarri, which is in my electorate now, we see that the visitors centre needs to be equipped to ensure that it can explain to visitors and tourists what is on offer since the government opened up Kalbarri a week ago. That will ensure that they know that Kalbarri is not normal at the present moment, that there is a lot of pressure on people because they do not have power, some businesses are yet to reopen and those businesses are struggling because there is still a shortage of workers' accommodation, which is desperately needed to ensure that we can rebuild Kalbarri.

I would like to personally thank the Shark Bay crew who came down and met me straight after the cyclone, in particular the Morgan family, Jamie, Robby, John and Lisa; Colin Fitzsimons; Rodney and Cindy Appleton; Jason; and Helen Regen, who for five days were able to assist over 75 homes to clean up and help people start the rebuilding phase. I just want to say thank you. You are legends and champions of the regions.

I want to touch on my shadow portfolios. Firstly, tourism is a very important portfolio that is experiencing not only wonderful growth at this present moment, but also a two-speed economy, if you like, because of the uncertainty around people being able to visit regions and the state. Infrastructure is needed to capitalise on tourism, which is something that I have been harping on about in this place for the last 15 months. Infrastructure for power, water and telecommunications is needed to ensure that we are able to keep pace with what is happening in tourism and to ensure that there is a workforce, something that this government has failed to acknowledge and do anything about. There is a huge shortage of workers for small businesses and tourism businesses. If businesses in regional towns can find the workers, there is nowhere to house those workers because there is a housing crisis. This is why we desperately need to build workers' accommodation, to cater for that growth and the number of tourists that are coming in, particularly in towns such as Exmouth, Coral Bay and Kalbarri. As I said, the population in Exmouth is normally around 2 500 people. During the tourism high point, it had around 25 000 people. That provides a huge amount of pressure on the boat ramps and the electricity, water and sewerage supplies. Those towns need to be able to cater for tourists coming in, but businesses are not able to get workers and if they can, there is no workers' accommodation.

This is when the government needs to use its surplus, its massive windfall, the boom—which is probably one of the biggest booms this state has ever seen, with the iron ore price reaching \$US200 a tonne—to reinvest in tourism icons, such as the One Mile jetty, the Overseas Telecommunications Commission dish and the Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum, and make sure that we have the boat ramps needed to cater for the influx of visitors and tourists who are coming into places like Exmouth and that we do not delay the artificial reefs for places like Kalbarri and Carnarvon. The list goes on. This is the time to invest. This is the time to set up our tourism destinations, including Perth. When we look at the comments made by the new Lord Mayor of the City of Perth, Basil Zempilas, he is correct: What is Perth? What does Perth have to offer? What is the government doing to be able to get people to come to Perth?

We talk about the need to have affordable airfares, not only to the regions to enable people to fly to places all around Western Australia in an affordable and competitive way until overseas travel opens up, but also the other way, to make it affordable for people in regional Western Australia to come to Perth and see the attractions, go to nice restaurants, and go to Elizabeth Quay and Kings Park and all the other places that Perth has to offer. This is where the government has neglected tourism in this state. The government says it has the Wander Out Yonder campaign. In a light-bulb moment, people in Western Australia have not been able to go anywhere. We have a captive audience. That is helping tourism and it is helping our small businesses, but the uncertainty when it comes to lockdowns is making it difficult for people to plan and book into the future, and the cancellations that take place put pressure on the small businesses that have to provide the refunds and restructure their business to minimise their loss. We talk about slogans. This is quite systemic of this government and the past government—we hear the slogans, but we do not hear about the actions that need to take place to capture and grow our tourism industry in Western Australia.

One of my other shadow portfolio areas, and I think an area that is absolutely vital, is Aboriginal affairs. That is absolutely critical. I have heard and read the valedictory speeches of Hon Robin Scott and Hon Robin Chapple. They make some very valid points about their observations during their time as members for the Mining and Pastoral Region. The Native Title Act has issues. It has problems, members. The Native Title Act was originally handed down so that Aboriginal people could negotiate and mediate to resolve recognition of Aboriginal people's ongoing connection with their land. There are native title cases that take years, and sometimes decades, to be resolved in courts, rather than through negotiation. The act needs to be reviewed. I repeat: the Native Title Act needs to be reviewed. The act causes division within Aboriginal communities. It puts family against family. The act has lost, in my belief, the intent that it originally set out to achieve. The question in my mind is: how has it improved the lives of Aboriginal people and communities? This is one of the questions that need to be asked. That is why I urge the federal government to review the Native Title Act so that it will reflect what it was originally set out to do and be able to keep pace with what is happening at the moment.

As members would be aware, the parties to a native title claim can be numerous and diverse, and their relationships very complex. Native title and Aboriginal affairs is a very complex area. For example, the claim of the Thalanyji people in my electorate involved more than 35 parties. That is just one claim. I am sure the member for Kimberley will understand this. A huge number of people are now involved in native title negotiations. If more than one Aboriginal group is claiming native title, disagreements between Aboriginal groups may delay or even derail the native title claim. One group may decide to lodge its own claim, or disagree with another group's decision, and claims may have to go back to the drawing board, taking more years to be resolved. Disagreements may cause splits between families that have relatives on both sides, creating an environment for violence between the groups. Disagreements between Aboriginal parties sometimes split families forever.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr V.A. CATANIA: If elders' views conflict with the agenda of others, they may be deliberately excluded from native title deliberations.

Many Aboriginal people live on land that is rich in resources and brings wealth to Australia but delivers little for Indigenous peoples. I think the common misconception about native title is that when people hear about tens of millions of dollars in the bank, they think it is like when we sell a house or do a development—they expect that those native title groups will get that cash windfall. That is often and clearly not the case. The perception that native title holders have tens of millions in the bank often influences government when it comes to providing the necessary infrastructure that is required, such as education, health and housing. One would say that the way in which native title is being conducted these days is actually discriminatory towards Aboriginal people, because they are not in control of how native title can benefit their members and their families to ensure that Aboriginal people's lives can be improved.

When it comes to financial issues, native title moneys paid to Aboriginal groups are eyed off by many parties, Aboriginal council members, and also lawyers. The amount of funding that goes into lawyers for native title is extremely concerning. Often we have seen up to 80 per cent of the funds lost to so-called experts.

Mr R.H. Cook: Like yourself.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: You're a fool! I'm not even going to bother.

Withdrawal of Remark

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms K.E. Giddens): Member for North West Central, I ask you to withdraw that comment.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Sorry?

The ACTING SPEAKER: I ask you to withdraw that comment. Thank you.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I withdraw whatever I said. I think it was "a fool". I withdraw it.

Debate Resumed

Mr V.A. CATANIA: As I said, there is a huge number of so-called experts who have created an industry around native title—a multitude of lawyers and experts who quickly emerged from the Mabo decision back in 1992. Often people would say, "What does 'Mabo' stand for?", and they would say "Money available, barristers only". That is the common catchcry when it comes to the decision.

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: That is because they are the only ones benefiting from the system.

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Members, it is actually —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! We have a high level of excitement today. Can we cease the interjections.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is actually quite an important issue.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I have just asked you to cease interjections.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: There are also quotes from people who have made comment that —

"If ... Mabo were alive today, he would be an angry man," —

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It continues —

... "The rights he won in the High Court have been eroded away by government, courts and socio-economic pressure".

"The current system has not achieved a good outcome in land rights.

It goes on.

Members, what we have seen here is that we need an urgent review of native title. Again, the key issue when it comes to native title and our own state government is that it wants to consolidate native title determinations so that a number of groups are pulled into one native title claim. These take around 20 years to pass, which creates a profiteering environment for native title legal services. These organisations want it to be this way. They get rich. The government knows that the Aboriginal politic among the groups and subgroups will result in a lack of consensus.

Mr D.J. Kelly: You're an absolute disgrace!

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The member can get up and speak, but let me tell him, this is a reflection on my discussions —

Mr D.J. Kelly: The racist history of the National Party, when it comes to native title, is plain.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The member does not know what he is talking about. I am sure that the member for Kimberley knows what I am talking about.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! I am losing my patience and I will start making calls.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, you are called for the first time.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo!

Point of Order

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Madam Acting Speaker, under section 95 of the standing orders can you tell these members that if they want to speak, they can get up and speak after me.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms K.E. Giddens): I am pretty sure that I have the chair, member for North West Central. Please cease your interjections. Member, you may continue.

Debate Resumed

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. Like I said, the government knows about the Aboriginal politics amongst the groups and subgroups, which often results in a lack of consensus and provides the Western Australian government with the ability to use the land for its own benefit. Once native title is determined, the fighting and politics within these large groups provides ongoing profiteering for legal services as they need to be continually brought in to manage and administer the role of native title groups. Essentially, a handful of people represent these large groups, some of which have over 2 000 members.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Madam Acting Speaker, I thought that you ruled that members should cease interjecting.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you. You may continue, member for North West Central.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: This is an important point that members need to understand. This is not about being anti-native title, but about improving native title and the need to review native title for it to really benefit the lives of Aboriginal people. Clearly, it is not doing that at this moment in time, which is the point I am trying to make, members.

The other issue is that the prescribed bodies corporate that have been established to sit alongside Aboriginal corporations are set up to fail. PBCs and Aboriginal corporations often lack the skills and capacity to administer and govern. Mining royalties are paid to these groups that are sometimes run by a questionable chief executive officer. Last year in this place, I mentioned how the CEO of an Aboriginal corporation had behaved and how tens of millions of dollars had vanished. Directors and lawyers all tend to be profiting from this system. The corporations are left with no power to fight and change the system, even though the groups want reform for the subgroups to have the ability to make decisions on the use of their land and the programs and services that they could benefit from.

I will talk about the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations and its lack of will and power to assist and make sure that these Aboriginal corporations are held to account. The money that is held in these trusts is controlled by the mining companies. For example, a board is set up to determine the flow of money—all, but limited—which then goes to the board of trustees and the PBC. The Aboriginal corporation sits alongside the PBC and works out how to support its members, sometimes forming other businesses to assist and benefit a small group that has control of that Aboriginal corporation. In some instances, CEOs have taken advantage of their position to benefit themselves. Aboriginal people need to have control of native title money; that is the point that I am trying to make. The processes in place do not allow those riches that we hear about to flow to Aboriginal people. They are told by the mining company how to spend their money and they are told by the trust how to spend their money. They then go to meetings to try to get consensus amongst the group on how to split up a proportion of that money. Enough is enough! If we want to close the gap and empower Aboriginal people, this is how we do it: we allow Aboriginal people to have control of their own native title negotiations and money that has been given to them in recognition of their connection to that land. That is the point, members. That is what is missing and that is why we need a review of the Native Title Act.

I want to touch on the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations. The feedback I received from my Aboriginal constituents and Aboriginal associations is that the initial intent of ORIC when it was created as an independent regulatory authority for Aboriginal corporations was to strengthen governance, accountability and compliance. Firstly, it would focus on the vetting of CEOs who were appointed by the Aboriginal corporations to ensure that they had the skills, experience and right intent to work with an Aboriginal board. It would focus on reducing corruption and fraudulent activities, because Aboriginal directors are vulnerable to corporate abuse due to their limited director skills and experience. Secondly, it would provide governance and corporate skills training to Aboriginal boards prior to the organisations being established, stopping a volume of Aboriginal corporations being

set up with limited knowledge, skills and capability to deliver an organisation appropriately. ORIC does not do this. It is poorly funded by the commonwealth, which leaves it under-resourced and ineffective. It now only focuses on annual compliance, which is rarely mentioned, not to mention the limited training support it offers to Aboriginal corporations, especially those in remote and regional areas. As a result, an oversubscribed number of Aboriginal corporations have been set up, with the majority being defunct, insolvent, in administration, non-operational or noncompliant. There needs to be an inquiry into ORIC, members.

I will be pursuing this matter as shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs because a lot more needs to be said and done in this space. I hope that members on the other side support and echo the calls for a review of the Native Title Act and ensure that an inquiry is held into the way that ORIC conducts itself, and the impact that has on Aboriginal corporations and Aboriginal people in this state.

Amendment to Motion

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I move —

That the following words be added to the motion —

but regret to inform His Excellency that unless the McGowan government addresses the need for housing assistance in the wake of tropical cyclone Seroja, there is a risk of depopulation in midwest communities

This is a very important amendment that I am sure the member for Moore will speak on, because, as I said, 700 houses are still without any power five weeks after the event. It is absolutely disgraceful.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.08 am]: I would like to speak to this amendment moved by the member for North West Central, and in doing so, once again put on the record my concern for the people affected by tropical cyclone Seroja. Many of them are still undergoing very real hardship, as the member for North West Central said. As of Tuesday, many weeks after the event, 794 properties throughout the midwest are still without power. That is a long period for people to have gone without power. Other people not only do not have power, they also have no roof over their heads. Strictly speaking, that is not true; they may have a roof over their heads, but it is a temporary arrangement as their homes have been badly damaged or destroyed. This problem is widespread across the impact zone, which spreads from Kalbarri in the member for North West Central's area, a town I used to represent until March this year, and we have seen it devastated, primarily as the first impact point of the cyclone. Many of the homes and public buildings suffered damage and many were destroyed. That cyclone then went across many other areas in the midwest such as the rest of the Shire of Northampton. Binu Primary School was badly affected, as were farmers around the Binu area. The cyclone went down through Ogilvie and Northampton itself, impacting some of the iconic buildings of Northampton. People who have not been to Northampton might not appreciate the history of that place. There is a very long history around Northampton. There are very many houses and buildings of significant heritage value, the bottom pub being one of them, and that has been very severely impacted. It lost its roof and was structurally damaged. The cyclone then carried through to the Shire of Chapman Valley and the City of Greater Geraldton. Members might be surprised to understand that I represent most of the City of Greater Geraldton in geographic terms. Of course, the member for Geraldton represents the vast majority of the population, but most of the landmass used to be the Shire of Mullewa, which is in my electorate and takes in many of the areas affected badly by the cyclone. The cyclone went down through the Mingenew, Morawa and Perenjori shires, touching on the Carnamah and Three Springs shires and into Dalwallinu and beyond. I am told that the impact area was about 100 kilometres in width and it was 700 kilometres inland before the storm damage became less.

One of the characteristics of those affected communities is that many of the towns are quite small. Many have old buildings and houses within them, and quite a few are made of asbestos. There is a problem with what will happen next in those communities. It is very difficult to borrow money from a bank to build a house in a small country town. There are very real limits on what banks will loan people to build a house. There are also very real problems with the insurance values, because the insurance value of a 40 or 50-year-old asbestos house will in no way cover the cost of rebuilding it. As we know, there is also a building boom going on, with skills and material shortages leading to steep price rises even in the metropolitan area. If those issues in the metropolitan area are taken out of it, we have to add on a percentage of the cost for every few kilometres we are further out from the circle.

It is hard to get workers out to places like Perenjori or Morawa. There is very little accommodation for people there at the moment, because already there are families there who do not have somewhere to live. The excess capacity that some shires might have had in their own buildings and caravan parks has already been soaked up in making sure that citizens who have lost their houses have somewhere to go. In fact, after the cyclone first hit, I went to some of the badly affected communities, and one of the shire CEOs raised the point with me that he was very grateful for all the help the shire had received from groups like the State Emergency Service and others, but there was no understanding amongst emergency services of the level of disruption in those towns or that the volunteer crews that came up should have brought a communications network of their own because there were no communications in the area they came to—zero. There were no phone lines, no mobiles—nothing. There was no power, so there was

no way for those people to have a campsite. Some of them showed up without accommodation looking for somewhere to stay—in a place where there was already no accommodation—and they did not have any extra fuel. Of course, there was no fuel in the towns. Some of the towns had fuel at the service station, but people could not get it out, because they did not have a generator that was capable of running the pump systems. These problems need to be understood. It is a learning process for the Department of Fire and Emergency Services to understand that there needs to be a self-contained capacity in going to areas to assist, given the breadth of the damage. Everybody knows the first damage was apparent in those communities just north of Geraldton, but it took a while for it to emerge just how widespread the damage was throughout the rest of the area because of the lack of communications.

We have heard that there are 794-odd connections still without power as of Tuesday. A lot of those people are running generators to provide their own power—to provide household power and power for their water pumping et cetera. A lot of those generators are fairly cheap petrol generators that are very expensive to run. They are not really meant for continuous service. They have already been running for several weeks and they may be running for several more weeks. When the government makes an application to the federal government for further assistance, it should consider in its compensation the costs that people have been put through. As we heard yesterday, an approach is being made for category C assistance under the disaster relief arrangements with the commonwealth. That is welcome news, and I know that the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is on the ground gathering information from farming and other communities, looking at some of the welfare aspects of the towns and DFES is trying to understand and coordinate that to put the application through. Recognition of the cost that people have had to go through to generate their own power for this length of time needs to be part of that assessment. It is a question I have been meaning to ask in the house, but I have not had the opportunity. I just put on the record that there is a very real impost on those people who have been living through that situation.

As I have said before, many of those communities are quite small. Some of them have suffered a long run of depopulation already. One of the concerns that the communities have is the fact that they may suffer further population loss if there is not an urgent focus on addressing the housing situation. I intend mainly to talk about the Shire of Mingenew because, quite surprisingly and handily enough, there was an article in the *Midwest Times* about that area only this week. It quotes the president of the Shire of Mingenew, Gary Cosgrove. He talks in the article about having 29 displaced residents and a big concern that that will lead to a further dwindling of the town's population. On the front page is a picture of a very old asbestos house. I know it is a bit hard to see in black and white. I have visited that house and I know the gentleman who owns it. I really do not think the insurance is going to cover the cost of rebuilding that house. Whether that means the gentleman stays in Mingenew or moves to Geraldton or Perth is rather the problem.

There is already a hollowing out of the small communities like Morawa, Mullewa, Mingenew and the like as people leave to get services in Geraldton. I have spoken before about this, but there seems to be a delivery pattern for many of the government and human services delivered in the midwest that relies on people accessing them from Geraldton. I am aware that in other regions there is much more outreach, but in the midwest there is a peculiar method of delivery that is completely centred on Geraldton. Indeed, when the first impact of the cyclone hit, while there were power losses in Geraldton and some loss of food, other people in my electorate and that of the member for North West Central were sheltering under tarpaulins, in sheds, in caravans or in cars because they had nowhere to sleep. Yet when I drove through Geraldton to go to Northampton, there was a line of people outside the QEII Seniors and Community Centre getting money or vouchers for hundreds of dollars—I assume from the Department of Communities; I am not sure—for their losses. Nobody in Chapman Valley, Mingenew or Morawa was getting assistance at that point.

Ms S.F. McGurk: Just because there were people in the queue doesn't mean that money was being given out.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

Ms S.F. McGurk: I wasn't talking to you. It doesn't mean that money was being given out; it means that people were in a queue.

Mr R.S. LOVE: They were in a huge queue. The QEII centre is a long way from the road. Right through the car park was a snaking queue. There were hundreds of people lining up. I assume they were lining up to be handed some much-needed cash. I am not denying they probably needed some money; they probably had suffered loss.

Mr V.A. Catania: Member, they were. As the minister should be aware, it was reported in the media on ABC and in the *Midwest Times* that there were queues of people going there to get support.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.A. Munday): Members! The member for Moore is speaking.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The point I am trying to make is that the people who were most badly affected were not able to access money at that point. It took quite a while for that assistance to reach those communities. I am talking about the delivery of services in the midwest, and that is an example of how that delivery is very Geraldton-centric. I am not taking away from the needs of people there, but there are further needs. We have a system—I see it in my own electorate—under which if there is a big town and a small town, most delivery of services ends up in the big towns. The smaller towns and areas often miss out. I am just making the point that there is need right across the impacted

area. I am sure that the emergency and other services are well aware of it. I am not criticising the minister at all. I spoke to the minister about this issue and she was very responsive, and I appreciate her assistance, but I am pointing out that there is a bit of an issue with the system in that area. We need to ensure that people throughout the region, not just people in Geraldton, have access to government services. I am not criticising the minister or people in Geraldton; I am just pointing out the problem.

I will get back to talking about the situation in Mingenew. People there have been very proactive in putting their concerns on the record. I have been furnished with not only this article from *The West Australian*, but also an impact statement for the shire, which is a government of Western Australia State Emergency Management Committee impact study on the Shire of Mingenew as at April 2021, from which I will read a few quotes so that people get an understanding of the problem. But what I am basically standing here saying is that attention and focus needs to be put on ensuring that people can rebuild in these communities and can be offered something in the meantime so that they do not drift into Geraldton and never come back. We want them to stay in their communities and local towns. I have also made some communications to the City of Perth, to the Lord Mayor's Distress Relief Fund, pointing out my concerns about what might happen and asking that that be considered.

The article in *The West Australian* states that 29 residents were displaced in Mingenew. It quotes the shire president —

“If they leave town we will never get them back.

“Our biggest threat to small towns is declining population—we can't afford to lose anyone.”

The article goes on to highlight the situation in nearby Perenjori. As I have said, that is another community that was badly affected by the situation. The shire provided housing in town for nine adults and four children who had been displaced from homes on farms. That is another point: the towns have been impacted, but I think that most of the housing losses are out in the farming communities. It is not unusual to hear reports of some farms losing two or three homes on one farm, because a lot of those people have, over time, amalgamated several properties with houses on their land. They might have accommodation for the permanent or seasonal workers and another house that is lived in and owned by the family. That is the situation. In the Shire of Mingenew, the CEO said that 21 of the displaced adults lived up to 50 kilometres from town. These people are out in the farming communities, not just in town. This is a situation that needs to be addressed.

The shadow Minister for Housing has been up there; I do not know whether the Minister for Housing has also been up there. But the government needs to focus on ensuring that there is a temporary housing response and accommodation for these people so that they stay in the area and farmers have accommodation for their workers. The government needs to work with insurance companies and funding agencies to try to make sure that things like asbestos removal and planning can go ahead smoothly and all the building fees and red tape can be smoothed over so that we can facilitate people getting back to their homes and staying in their communities.

The Shire of Morawa was also affected, with 30 residential properties either severely damaged or entirely destroyed. That is not including those other communities that I have already mentioned, such as Chapman Valley, Northampton, those in the City of Greater Geraldton, Dalwallinu et cetera. These impacts are ongoing—many farming families are still without power and could be for some time. The power issue has also been very difficult. In many cases, the powerlines and infrastructure have been down, which has prevented people from getting onto their properties to do their seeding. As we know, that is time critical.

I will talk about a couple of points in the impact statement that I have from the shire. Its main concern is housing for the shire's displaced persons. It states —

- Main concern remains the Shire's displaced persons
- Secondary concern is availability of housing for seasonal workers ...

Where will the workers stay when they come for harvest et cetera? The shire was hoping to have some updates from the Department of Communities and the like on assisting with that. This document is now a few weeks old. The shire was actively looking for temporary accommodation. It wanted to understand the medium-term plans from the Department of Communities for those displaced persons, it was waiting for builders and needed the capacity to look after the people who will come to help out, as well.

The report continues under “Medium-Term Housing” to state that the shire's displaced population is in temporary accommodation or with friends and family, which is likely to be viable for only a few weeks. It states that many of the rural property owners are insured but are unable to easily relocate for housing, and housing will have to come to them. There are concerns about the speed at which housing can be repaired and about the rebuild time and cost, but, of course, for those people in older houses in some towns, my concern is that it will be easier for them to consider just moving somewhere else—taking a bit of money from the insurance or whatever and heading off. We do not want to see that happen. I want to see those towns thrive, not go to the wall. I have spoken before about asbestos. That is raised as a concern for the shire, as is underinsurance. Right through this document there is a reiteration of those workforce issues.

With that, I commend the proposed amendment to the house.

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Emergency Services) [11.28 am]: I appreciate the opportunity to be able to speak on this issue, because so much has happened in a very short time, and I appreciate the concerns of members opposite.

In Western Australia, we are all concerned about the impact of cyclone Seroja. It has been devastating and widespread. I am always at pains to state—when I have been in the Agricultural Region and in Perth, I have always made this point—that the media and most people concentrated on the dramatic damage in Kalbarri because it is a place that is familiar to many Western Australians, but this disaster has had a widespread impact. In the north of the state, if a cyclone hits a town in the Pilbara or Kimberley, it is usually a centre by itself and there are very few outlying communities. When there is damage, it is concentrated on one community and one town, and it is easy to deal with and easy to see. It is a different situation in the midwest, which is not used to cyclonic activities. It is very important to remember it is widespread and that it affects a range of communities, large and small. Let us remember, members, that it is 13 May and that this cyclone struck on 11 April; it was just over one month ago, yet the response to this disaster has been enormous and widespread. Support has not been centred on Geraldton at all; it has not been Geraldton-centric, as has been suggested. There has been a massive effort to get into the smaller communities and towns to respond to this issue.

A comment was made about long lines of people waiting for assistance at the QEII Seniors and Community Centre in Geraldton. I was there the day after those long lines at the centre, and it was explained to me that it was a one-off event. It was the first time that many people had realised that support was available. It was a process of trying to manage the number of people there. There was a long line, but it was swiftly and very professionally dealt with by staff at that centre—a combination of staff from federal and state agencies. The Department of Communities was there. The people from the Department of Communities either came from the regions or Perth and they did an amazing job. They are recognisable from their purple polo tops. They are passionate and they want to help people. That is their guiding force; that is what they are about. They managed to get a system up, they took names and they were able to get to people and book appointments. That issue was smoothed out. It was a testament to the professionalism and commitment of the people at that centre in how they dealt with that issue, and the queues were seen on one day—and maybe not for the whole day.

Mr R.S. Love: I was not intending to criticise anyone.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Fair enough, too, but I thought I would explain that.

We have been reaching out to remote communities. I have made a point of doing that when I have gone there. I visited the QEII centre in Geraldton, but, apart from that, Geraldton has been the transit point for me, as it has for other members before they go to Kalbarri and Northampton; and I have been to Morawa and Perenjori as well. I know my cabinet colleagues have been right throughout the areas.

Mr R.S. Love: It is much appreciated that you have travelled to those places.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Indeed, 13 local governments in the area have been activated under disaster recovery arrangements with the federal government. The member referred to displaced residents in Mingenew, was it?

Mr R.S. Love: Mingenew was the centre I was mainly talking about, but also Morawa and Perenjori.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: There was a report of an issue in Mingenew and my colleague the Minister for Housing would like to elaborate on that, and perhaps my colleague the Minister for Commerce more directly. I understand that there was a report initially about 27 families; it turned out to be 27 people, so that was a reduced number. Communities reached out in the first instance to half those people and spoke to them directly and asked what were their requirements. I understand that one family of four people required accommodation, while the others said that they were okay. On a second attempt to contact the balance of those people, everyone said that they did not require accommodation. I think initial reports can be a bit misleading. It sounded quite concerning, but when we got to the nub of the issue, short-term emergency accommodation was not needed by all those people.

I understand that it has been very trying for a lot of families. I understand that in many rural communities people just get on with it and find a way to deal with it. I know that some of those local governments have been very good and have accommodation in town. The member mentioned Perenjori, where fortunately about a dozen homes had gas hot water so that when power was an issue, farmers still were able to have a warm shower at the end of the day, which I know was welcomed. The member for Roe made the point that this issue affects people right out in the smaller towns and outlying farming communities, and how farmers are coping with this. I have spoken to those farmers that the member mentioned. I have been to their properties. I heard stories of how they hid under the table with their family as the roof was peeling off. I know what they have gone through; I know about their losses, and I have spoken to them directly. This does not take away from the need for assistance, but when I have asked how they felt when their house was being torn apart and they were under that table, the response was, “Oh, it was all right.” This is the stoic nature of farmers—they get on with it!

That assistance has definitely been there. We have people from the Department of Communities and a range of agencies reaching out to those communities. I know that when the Department of Fire and Emergency Services had to assess the damage, staff were making contact with farmers and people on those properties and surrounding communities but they also have the radar on in terms of the support they needed. Psychological support is another issue we have to consider and think carefully about.

As the member knows, we are working with the federal government on the disaster recovery funding arrangements, which will help unlock support for primary producers. This is where farmers and also small business can get assistance through state and federal arrangements, which is on top of the announced support with the \$4 000 grants we have announced for small business already. We have also appointed the State Recovery Controller, Mel Pexton. I am not aware whether the member knows that she has a background in local government and emergency management within DFES. She is a very capable person. She hit the ground running. The day after she was appointed, she was visiting those communities. She has gone back many times and made it a point to visit all those communities—the smaller towns throughout the midwest and beyond, right down to Dalwallinu, which is the point at which the damage stopped occurring. The member would be aware of the dire need for accommodation, both immediate and long term. However, some of the homes in Kalbarri were holiday homes so that is not so much an issue, but where that is not the case, people often find accommodation with friends or relatives or they move to Geraldton or they manage to do repairs. They get up there and they manage to make their house sustainable.

I know in Northampton, Communities and others urged people to leave and seek more comfortable accommodation in Geraldton, but most people did not want to leave. There is a real sense of community in Northampton, in particular, and people did not want to leave their properties. A partial issue was leaving their valuables in a damaged home and the fear they might lose something. I do not think that was a reality, but we made it known to them that they had the support of the police.

Mr R.S. Love: They live in Northampton because they like it there.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Exactly, member. There was a bit of a security issue, but we assured them police would be in town keeping an eye on this. But it is their home. A lot of people of retirement age go to Kalbarri and Northampton, and they do not want to leave. They want to stay there; that is where they are. We get that. But there is a need to address accommodation needs. Initially, it is with displaced people out of damaged homes, people who reside in those towns and communities. That issue is being addressed very rapidly. I have not spoken about the financial support from Communities and the federal government so that people can get accommodation independently; they get the financial wherewithal to do that.

The secondary concern that we mentioned was the need to make sure that workers on farms—people employed in Kalbarri and elsewhere, and towns across this region—have accommodation. That is crucial. An ongoing issue right across Western Australia is accommodation for workers in these towns and communities. The third accommodation need is for the reconstruction workforce. When it is time to rebuild, we need to put those tradies somewhere. We have had widespread discussions with industry. I have personally spoken to the Master Builders Association, the Housing Industry Association and major builders such as David Carruthers in Geraldton, who the member would know, and who they tell me basically built Geraldton, and talked about this issue and how we can progress and get tradies up into the region. It is a key focus for our disaster recovery coordinator as well. In short, and I will end here, as I have just described, enormous effort and enormous attention and focus has been paid to the issue of accommodation for these affected communities. It began on day one as a concern. I can remember speaking to ABC radio and others about what we will do about accommodation, so it quickly became an issue that we were aware would have to be addressed. It has been an ongoing journey. This is week four or five since the cyclone hit. It is very early days in the scheme of things, because we all recognise that it will take a long time to get back to normal. However, I understand tourists are already back in Kalbarri; businesses are already operating in Kalbarri since those roads have opened; and the tourist businesses that can open have actually opened. That is a good story that needs to get out. I take the public opportunity now to say to the community: if you want to go to Kalbarri, do so but please make sure you have accommodation arranged. Let us get Kalbarri back on its feet. It will be a slow start, but it is important that we make a start now.

Member, I suggest that this motion is ill-advised. It does not recognise the reality of what is happening and I think the reaction and the response from emergency services, industry and the state, federal and local governments have been very impressive and will continue to be.

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Community Services) [11.40 am]: I want to address some of these issues because, as the Minister for Emergency Services pointed out, the Department of Communities has had a presence in part of the emergency response. It has traditionally been part of its role in response to a natural disaster to set up the emergency response relief centres and provide, if you like, a clearing house so that people can help and be directed to the sort of assistance they need. I therefore thought people might be interested in hearing how that practical support has been applied. I am interested to see that even though the member for North West Central moved this amendment, he has not bothered to hear the government's response. I think that illustrates his level of real interest and concern.

Point of Order

Mr R.S. LOVE: I believe it is not considered appropriate to reflect on a person's absence from the chamber.

Ms S.F. McGurk: What is your point of order?

Mr R.S. LOVE: I just read it out.

Ms S.E. Winton: She didn't suggest that. You're the one who pointed it out.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.A. Munday): Minister, carry on.

Debate Resumed

Ms S.F. McGURK: Thank you, Acting Speaker.

I actually attended in Northampton myself last week after I was with the member for Geraldton doing some work in Geraldton. I took the opportunity to travel up to Northampton and visit the centre there. It was great to see the relief centre, where I was welcomed at the reception by two volunteers from Australian Red Cross, who had come across from Queensland. It was a retired couple who were very energetic and experienced in this sort of work. A number of agencies were collocated there. The Department of Communities was doing its work there and the Salvation Army had a financial counsellor there and there was other assistance. But, importantly, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency had been specifically contracted to make sure it could do one-on-one case management for people who needed assistance, and, of course, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services was there as well. I think in question time on the following day, I mentioned that at that visit I had met Edith Blood, who is 91 years old. Her daughter works for the Department of Communities in Geraldton. As the Minister for Emergency Services pointed out, she is a very stoic member of the community. She was in her house when the cyclone took place, but, fortunately, her son was with her. Her comment was that she seemed to handle it a lot better than her son did. In any case, her house was not severely damaged.

There was good coordination. People made the point that we need to make sure that we are doing outreach, not just relying on people coming into those centres, but going out, knocking on doors and making sure people understood that assistance was available for them. They also made the point that the mental health impacts of a trauma such as a cyclone can take a while to land with people, so there might be delayed effects on people experiencing this sort of shock and that can delay the response needed to deal with it, so service providers are very aware of all those issues.

There is a disaster response hotline and 2 810 calls have been made to it. The majority of those calls were about financial assistance. At the close of business on 6 May, the Department of Communities had received 7 686 applications for financial assistance and had issued a total of \$1.495 million in financial assistance, the vast majority of them through electronic funds transfer and some to direct debit cards. We also have welfare and recovery centres. I mentioned the Northampton RSL, but originally we used the Kalbarri Golf and Lawn Bowls Club, which has continued. The member also mentioned the Morawa Community Resource Centre in Winfield Street. Those outreach teams present in those centres are not only a point where people can go in, but also reach out to farmers and members of the community who have not come into the centres for assistance.

The Department of Communities is working with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to target people who may not yet have had their welfare needs assessed. The Department of Communities is also looking to set up a consistent schedule of visits to outlying towns, member, to ensure that there is some presence on the ground and we can then give feedback through people such as Mel Pexton on the needs of the community to make sure that we are in our best position to respond to them. I think it is also worth noting that some damage assessment has been made of properties. The rapid damage assessment teams have been assessing losses and these assessments are expected to change once formal building and insurance inspections have been undertaken by qualified assessors, but the initial DFES assessment is that there have been rapid damage assessments of all known habitable residential structures; that is, 1 858 are habitable, 317 are non-habitable, 20 are unknown and we are yet to get information on 266. We are starting to make sure, as I said, that we are reaching out to people through the coordinated work of departments and that we are not relying on people coming into the centre. DFES has received 1 659 requests for assistance and only 19 of them remain open, so they require continuing support.

Sixteen households, which comprise 48 people, including 23 children, have been placed in emergency accommodation since 11 April, and 14 households, which comprise 39 people, are currently in emergency accommodation. The DFES State Recovery Controller is currently leading discussions with state agencies, local authorities and partner agencies to manage the recovery process.

Finally, the food provision in Kalbarri will cease, but emergency packs are still available for people, and I could see them at the Northampton centre. In terms of personal supports, Regional Alliance West and the Midwest Mental Health and Community Alcohol and Drug Service have received funding for a team of community legal service lawyers, financial counsellors and mental health professionals from around the state to travel to the cyclone-affected areas in the region. These teams will be able to assist with advice on things like insurance policies, pro bono legal services and professional referrals.

I could talk also about the specific work being done in Morawa. The member mentioned that he had contacted me personally and said that there was concern that staff were travelling to and from Northampton and Geraldton each day and losing valuable time. We have recalibrated that, and accommodation has been secured in Morawa so that the staff can maximise their time dealing with local residents. The staff located at the Morawa recovery centre are split into two teams. There is a static presence at the centre, but there is also a mobile outreach team. The Department of Communities' local government liaison officer is connecting with local governments to determine current community needs and is having ongoing dialogues with them. Finally, the Department of Communities' regional

director, Jamie Strickland, an experienced senior staff member from the department, has contacted the CEO of the Shire of Morawa, Gavin Treasure, to discuss the establishment of the centre and any issues requiring further consideration. Of course, the public message is that urgent welfare requests can be directed to the disaster response hotline on 1800 032 965.

I hope that I have demonstrated, from the Department of Communities' perspective, that we are working very professionally, compassionately and, most importantly, collaboratively with not only other government agencies, but also local governments, community organisations and local community members who are volunteering to make sure we are responding in the best possible way in such a challenging situation.

It is true that there will be demands for the physical rebuild of damaged properties and the replacement of uninhabitable properties; that will be a challenge. In fact, those pressures on the building industry occur not only in Western Australia; they occur all around the country. But I am confident that we have the pieces together to make a good response in a very difficult situation for that community.

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Housing) [11.51 am]: The Minister for Emergency Services is obviously the lead minister in response to this amendment, but in my capacity as Minister for Local Government, I would like firstly to acknowledge all the local governments in the midwest that have been assisting their communities. I called each of the mayors and CEOs of all the affected local shires on the first Friday to reach out. I acknowledge that they did not need to be inundated by a number of ministers, but as the Minister for Housing; Local Government, I wanted to offer any potential assistance.

On that issue I will say, very quickly—I am sure the member for Moore will agree—that this event demonstrates once again that local governments are about far more than just roads, rates and rubbish. In fact, I was deeply impressed by the smaller councils, which were really rallying points for their communities. The CEO of one local government actually got their staff to go out and visit people in their homes. Obviously, communications were down, but they sent their staff out—which was very difficult in the early days—to reach out and let residents in Perth know that they were okay. I thought that was outstanding, so if I ever hear anyone say that councils are about just roads, rates and rubbish, I will tell them to go to the councils of the midwest, because they are outstanding.

Obviously, the lead effort is coming from the State Recovery Controller, but from a Housing perspective, I think the member for Moore is absolutely right: we are all acutely aware of the next steps in respect of getting building back on track. We all know that there will be insurance claims and so forth. The main complexity will arise in getting new homes built. That is something that we are facing in Western Australia and across Australia. We have 23 000 new building approvals and it is difficult for me, as the minister responsible for public housing, to get new houses built or houses refurbished. I know the Minister for Emergency Services has been leading the charge and reaching out to industry. I will be frank: I have the same demands in the City of Swan in respect of the fires because it is facing the same predicament. My agency has been looking at the broader picture of prefabricated and modular homes and what the potential expansion of those industries could be.

I will not speak for as long as the other ministers, but with regard to the emergency response from the Housing perspective, temporary living expenses assistance is on offer to people who need temporary accommodation and are uninsured or are yet to receive an insurance payout. Perhaps less known is that because of the scale of the cyclone's impact, communities have engaged the Adventist Development and Relief Agency, which has probably been the primary agency organising and coordinating emergency assistance beyond the initial three-week period. Obviously the focus is on the first three weeks, after which people start to be able to make decisions about where they may live in temporary accommodation. But if there are issues beyond the initial three weeks, that agency has been there to provide assistance. I also note the \$4 000 payments that have now been approved for areas where houses have been destroyed.

I want to assure the member for Moore that I will work with the lead minister, the Minister for Emergency Services, but I think the member is right: the key focus should be on how government can best assist with the drive to get new homes built in that area.

Amendment put and negated.

Motion Resumed

MR D.R. MICHAEL (Balcatta — Parliamentary Secretary) [11.56 am]: I thank the Acting Speaker for the opportunity to speak to the Address-in-Reply. I would like to extend my congratulations to all members re-elected to this place and elected to this place for the first time, and to our new Madam Speaker for being the first woman Speaker. She has already shown some very good judgement in this chamber, but I cannot say the same for her judgement in football teams as a West Coast Eagles and East Perth supporter!

First off, I would like to thank the electors of the district of Balcatta. Thank you for the faith you have shown in me and the McGowan government. I am humbled by the support for me to continue representing our local area, which I am so passionate about. It is where I grew up, it is where I still live, it is where I went to primary and high school, and it is where I was a local government councillor. The opportunity to represent it in this place is the greatest honour of my life, and I am very humbled and thankful to my local residents to be able to do that for another four years.

I have a few thank-yous to get out of the way first. Hon Martin Pritchard, MLC, is one of the most prolific winning campaign directors in this Parliament, along with Hon Kate Doust, Hon Darren West and Hon Dr Sally Talbot. They are campaign directors on whose advice many members in this house relied at the last election. Martin and Gina, his wife, very much supported me at the last election, as they did in 2017, and I thank them for their support.

Thank you to the other members of my campaign team: Andrew Vitolins, for his continued support; and Shaun Hawkes, who did a great job of marshalling my volunteers and organising my field campaign. I think he is about to become a dad, and then I think he is going to serve the member for Bateman very, very well as an electorate officer. I thank Glenn and Fiona Sterle. I used to work with Fiona in Hon Kate Doust's office. Glenn, Fiona, Ben, Karen and Marie would come out letterboxing on weekends with me in Westminster. They provided absolutely unbelievable advice, support and assistance. I thank Benedict Coates, who was the former Whip assistant and took leave to come and campaign with me. Ben is an exceptional young man who did a very good job for me looking after social media and generally doing whatever we threw at him, and learning along the way. Ben, congratulations and thank you for your assistance.

I have been very lucky over the last four years to have a very loyal and stable electorate office. I would like to thank Andrew O'Donnell and Magenta Wilders for their continued support and help during the campaign. All members in this place rely upon our electorate office to represent us when we are here and doing other things, and both Andy and Magenta do that very well for me. I am in their debt both in this and the last election.

Mr R.R. Whitby: She's from Baldivis; she must be very good.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: She is very good. I think she is closer to Rockingham these days, but she is from that part of the world. It is long drive or a long train ride every morning up to Balcatta.

I thank all my donors, supporters and other volunteers who have supported me. I have mentioned a few of them. I thank Giovanni Italiano and his wife, Anne; Tony, Mary and Sal Vallelonga; my booth captains, Barry Wood, Michael Crogan, Frank Paolino, David Alexander and Emma Gibbens, Dan and Anne-Marie Hill and Joe Drago. I thank David Michael Sr, who with my family looked after Tuart Hill Primary School for me on election day. I thank Carl Kobelke, who was not only a star doorknocker for me, but also booth captain at Balcatta Senior High School. It was so nice to visit Balcatta Senior High School and to have a Kobelke on the booth to stand in front of the new \$50 million Balcatta Senior High School.

Former members of Parliament are always great to talk to get advice from. I would like to thank a couple of former members, firstly, the late John Kobelke, a former member for Balcatta. For the first few years, until John passed, he was a regular visitor to my office. He was still involved in lots of community organisations and doing lots of things for our community. He was always a source of advice and assistance. I would like to thank John and his family. I thank my old boss, Bob Kucera, who represented half of my seat at one point and still gives me words of advice from time to time. I thank Jann McFarlane, who has been mentioned by the member for Scarborough and a few others in this house in the last few weeks. Jann puts in an enormous effort for the community and the Labor Party in the western suburbs of the City of Stirling. She visits the office from time to time with advice and is always there to help. I thank Nick Catania, a former member for Balcatta as well. Nick was unbelievable during the campaign. For at least one person, this might not be agreed upon by everyone on this side of the house, but I am very fond of all the Catania family! Nick Catania provided unbelievable support to me during the campaign.

Some other volunteers were standouts for us. I mentioned Michael Crogan from Osborne Park, who is an all-rounder. He joined our local branch after I assisted on lots of local government matters. He is great. Ben Riley and Carl Kobelke were doorknocking nearly every weekend. I thank Henry Clarkson, Michael Dolecki, Sonia Dando, Dan and Anne-Marie Hill, and Tony Newton with his van, who was carting stuff around for us all—I see the member for Mount Lawley over there! I thank Joe Scarvaci who spent days and days, especially with my family, on pre-poll, especially up at Warwick, and if the member for Kingsley were here, she would very much talk about what pre-poll is like at Warwick and some of the interesting members the Liberal Party had out there. It was a very strange place. To the soon to be MLC Dan Caddy, and his son Patrick, thank you for helping set up on election night with my team, Mitchell Griffin, Hamza Ansari and Jeanette Evans. Thank you all for your support to all my volunteers.

To members of the union movement, I thank Tim Dawson and Steve Curtis from the Transport Workers Union; Mick Buchan and one of the other Catanias, Steve Catania and the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union for their great support; Ben Harris and Peter O'Keeffe from the Shop Distributive and Allied Employees Union; and Brad Gandy and Harry Burrows from the Australian Workers' Union. Their support was invaluable and very much appreciated.

To my family, dad and mum, and my aunties and uncles manning pre-poll and Tuart Hill Primary School on the day, helping me with the odd house and garden clean-up because I was not able to, thank you for your support. To Lenda and our babies, Pepper, Pricillia, Churl and Pepe, thank you for putting up with me, but especially to Lenda; I think she had the unofficial title of "Campaign Overlord". Obviously, I regard Lenda as the best campaigner in the state, as I think a lot of people in this room do, according to speeches this year and four years ago. Having her look over our campaign and make sure that I get in trouble, when I am meant to get in trouble for not doorknocking as much as I should have been, is always very helpful to me and I love her to bits, so thank you, Lenda.

Being a member of Parliament and a local member means you get to keep a list of achievements. For me, there is no point being a local member of Parliament unless you are always working for your local area. There are obviously other things you can do in this place in legislating and progressing larger issues that have broad impact upon our state, but for me, some of the local stuff is the most important and what I wake up and think about first and foremost almost every single day. I want to run through a few of those achievements.

I will first talk about Osborne Park Hospital. Especially with the new members on the western side of the Mitchell Freeway, there are many members in here who are in the Osborne Park Hospital catchment. In the last four years, we have expanded and refurbished the rehabilitation unit and centralised a therapy hub for rehabilitation services following a stroke, amputation or neurological condition. We have also built the new level 2A neonatal nursery for low to moderate-risk pregnancies. In the past, mums would have to be transferred to King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women if there was a problem. A larger portion of them can now stay at Osborne Park Hospital. There is a new maternity assessment unit with built-for-purpose assessment rooms and bays. Importantly—this gets forgotten a little bit, because of what happened with COVID—we introduced the urgent care clinic network, including four clinics that service Balcatta. This is important for getting people to urgent care clinics at local GPs and, hopefully, not going to emergency if they do not need to or can be looked at at that local level. I will always continue to fight for a better Osborne Park Hospital. In the future, I think Osborne Park Hospital will be absolutely critical to the healthcare needs of the rapidly expanding population of the northern suburbs, including the inner north. I expect that Osborne Park Hospital will be around for a long time to come and will continue to need upgrades and more services provided. That is something I continually annoy the Minister for Health about. I hope that the Department of Health has at least started planning what Osborne Park Hospital might look like into the future.

I mentioned Balcatta Senior High School before. When I was first elected and visited Balcatta Senior High School, it looked as though it was a school that if I were a dad, I would not want to send my kids to. It had had no money spent on it since it started in 1967. I think one building has been built since. I went to Servite College in Tuart Hill, because Tuart Hill Senior High School closed down before I could get there. Balcatta Senior High School looked worse than Servite College did when I entered year 8 in 1993. Servite has come leaps and bounds since then, but Balcatta was stagnant. I am very proud that only finishing touches are now needed to the \$50 million redevelopment of Balcatta Senior High School. Staff and students moved into the new multistorey building in term 4 last year, which includes a new sports hall; a proper sized basketball court, which they did not have before; a fitness centre; performing arts spaces; administration facilities; a new staff area; science laboratories and general classrooms and amenities. The works also included, as I said, new hard courts and a refurbishment of the original swimming pool. I am proud to say that as part of the redevelopment, the heritage-listed classrooms on Poincaire Street and areas around them have been refurbished for a new education support centre, which will cater for up to 50 students. The best thing about the redevelopment of Balcatta Senior High School is that enrolments had been relatively low for a very long time, but I am told that they have started to surge and have been growing each year since we began the project. That is terrific news. We still have some work to do. There are some traffic issues on Amelia Street and a balcony issue that we are trying to sort out, but I am very confident that the department is working on that as part of wrapping up the project, and we will get a good solution for the school and local residents.

My constituents who live in the suburb of Joondanna are in the intake area for Bob Hawke College. I obviously was there for the opening of stage 1 of that college. It is an exceptional high school, named after a great man. I know that Joondanna residents are very happy that Bob Hawke College will service their suburb.

We have built science labs at Takari, Westminster, Balcatta and Osborne Primary Schools. It is so important these days, with the world moving so quickly, that kids are learning, I will say, STEAM. I know the Minister for Culture and the Arts is not here, but we will add arts. The world is moving so quickly that some of the jobs that exist now will not exist in the future, and kids will need those skills to transition into those future jobs. I am really happy that the government is putting science labs into all our schools.

I am looking forward to working with the new member for Scarborough on the Stephenson Avenue extension. The former member for Scarborough supported this project as well, but unfortunately her government never funded it. If people drive along Scarborough Beach Road, they will see the works underway for stage 1 of the extension of Stephenson Avenue from Mitchell Freeway to Scarborough Beach Road. Members who have ever gone to IKEA, the Osborne Park industrial area or anywhere around the Innaloo shops or Event Cinemas will know that, especially at peak hour and on the weekends, the traffic congestion is unbelievable. That is because there is no permeability between streets. People have to use Ellen Stirling Boulevard, and there are a lot of traffic lights. The Stephenson Avenue extension has been a ghost road on the old UBD maps for 30, 40 or 50 years. We are finally putting it through. A local Osborne Park contractor, Densford Civil Pty Ltd, is delivering stage 1 of the works, which is being overseen by the City of Stirling, with federal and state funding. It will see Stephenson Avenue extended from Scarborough Beach Road to Sarich Court, including new connections to Ellen Stirling Boulevard, and eventually Howe Street and Oswald Street.

The second phase that Main Roads WA is currently working on will continue from Sarich Court and over Mitchell Freeway to join up with Cedric Street. That will include a new freeway interchange to replace the Cedric Street on and off-ramps. In conjunction with the Stephenson Avenue extension, the Stirling Bus Interchange will get a \$90 million upgrade, including transforming the existing 18-stand facility to a new 30-stand bus interchange,

as well as construction of a new pedestrian access bridge between Stirling station and the southern car park. This will improve connectivity between the bus interchange and the station. Just so that members will know, the bus interchange at Stirling station is at capacity for buses. They cannot get another bus in there at peak times. This will have an enormous impact in getting cars off the roads and more people catching a bus to the train station, especially with the Yanchep Metronet project, with more trains coming through and getting more people in and out of the city.

Other achievements are that we introduced a 40-kilometre-an-hour speed zone for Main Street, Osborne Park. We delivered a \$1.5 million upgrade for a new playground, path network, drinking fountains, seating, barbecues and a skate park at Robinson Reserve in Tuart Hill. This is something that I drive past every day. I live a kilometre or so away, and again I am proud of it because every single day when I drive past, I see people using the facility, and more people walking around it on the path network. People who might be a bit unsure on their feet, senior citizens, mums and dads with prams, and disabled people, are now using the park, which is absolutely wonderful.

We have realigned the principal shared path along the eastern side of Mitchell Freeway, including a new cycling and pedestrian bridge over Scarborough Beach Road along Mitchell Freeway, and a new cycling tunnel under Hutton Street. Again, every morning when I come here, I come via the freeway, and I see people using that cycle path to get to Glendalough station or into the city. It is an important bit of infrastructure.

Something that I get thanked for a lot is that we funded the Boya Way–Erindale Road roundabout in Balcatta. That roundabout cost \$750 000. The former Liberal and Nationals WA government made a lot of noise about that but with no funding. The City of Stirling was not going to fund it. We funded it, and that intersection is now a lot safer.

We installed right-turn arrows at the Karrinyup Road–Grindleford Drive–San Remo Boulevard intersection in Stirling. That is near the new Woolies store at Roselea Shopping Centre, which was opened by the Minister for Transport late last year. It is important to be able to get people safely in and out of that new shopping centre.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: We have provided black spot funding for new roundabouts at Powell Street–Waterloo Street in Joondanna and McDonald Street–Albert Street in Osborne Park, making our local roads safer.

Another big project is that we have widened Mitchell Freeway northbound from Hutton Street to Cedric Street and southbound from Cedric Street to Vincent Street. At this point, I thank Main Roads WA. I also thank the Minister for Transport, Rita Saffioti. The number of projects that she has underway and the amount of negotiation she has done with the federal government to get money that the former government could never get is absolutely unbelievable. Hopefully she will be Minister for Transport for a long time, but she will be remembered in this state for some of the major projects that she has delivered. That will have a lasting impact for all Western Australians.

We also made some commitments in the election. We have a fantastic program of local work. Some of the commitments we made were \$1 million towards Grindleford Reserve in Balcatta to upgrade the clubrooms for Balcatta Football Club, formerly Balcatta Etna Soccer Club. That is a massive club with 400 juniors. They had the tiniest club change rooms and clubrooms. They have pasta nights on Fridays for the mums, dads and kids, and they cannot fit them in, so we, in conjunction with the City of Stirling, will expand it, with some new lighting, and also again hopefully get some amenity for the park, such as a path network for local residents to use.

We have \$500 000 for a major upgrade to Rickman Delawney Reserve, just north of that. That will include community barbecues, water fountains and park bench seating, again in conjunction with the City of Stirling, to link up the Vasto Club, the northern suburbs model train engineers and Stirling Men's Shed, as well as Melvista, the aged-care provider, so that people can actually use the park. We will spend money to upgrade the facilities used by the Stirling Lions Soccer Club—I think it is now back to being called Stirling Macedonia Soccer Club—at Macedonia Park in Stirling. We have \$250 000 to upgrade lighting at Richard Guelfi Reserve, which is where, in terms of AFL, the Stirling Saints Football Club—it is over 100 years old; it used to be called the Osborne Park Amateurs a long time ago—and its junior club, the Stirling Saints Juniors, train. We need more lighting to get more men and women on the field to train during the weekends for match day. There is also some money for the Balcatta Bears Baseball Club to help it with a batting cage.

We will partner with the City of Stirling to provide upgrades for the Balcatta Cricket Club at Jones Paskin Reserve. We will provide funding towards stage 2 of the Robinson Reserve redevelopment for the change rooms and clubrooms, which are very old. That will benefit the Osborne Park Cricket Club, the Osborne Park Football Club and the Osborne Park Agricultural Society, which is over 110 years old and provides services to run the Osborne Park Show every year. We are improving accessibility at the Joondanna Community Food Garden, as well as some funding for the Westminster Community Food Garden. We will have some further funding to help the City of Stirling create a more vibrant Main Street in Osborne Park.

This is a big one. I thank the former member for Mirrabooka, Janine Freeman, on this one. We are about to start on a major upgrade of \$12.8 million for Westminster Primary School. The new facilities will include two teaching buildings, an administration block, playing courts and a car park. There will also be refurbishments to existing buildings to provide a high-quality learning environment across the school, and a very much needed upgrade to the administration area. This follows the junior primary and the primary schools amalgamating last year. In fact,

it was the last school in the state to do so. That school in Westminster will now come on in leaps and bounds. I should also say that I am very excited that we are spending money at Balga TAFE, which is just across the road from Westminster Primary School, with a \$32 million overhaul of the campus, which was constructed in the 1970s. The new multistorey building will replace 22 transportable classrooms and provide training in building and construction, community services and general education.

I have mentioned science. There are two primary schools in the electorate of Balcatta that do not have a science lab now. We have a policy that we will put money toward Tuart Hill Primary School, my old school, and West Balcatta Primary School to get STEM resources into those schools. As members have heard this week, we are doubling the student capacity at Bob Hawke College with a \$57 million commitment.

Members for Mount Lawley and Mirrabooka, and other members as well, we have a million dollars on the table to plan for a Wanneroo Road activity corridor and for the future of a vibrant Wanneroo Road that will benefit local residents and businesses. Wanneroo Road carries a lot of traffic—it always will—and we need to make sure that the suburb of Wanneroo is liveable, has good public transport, and has good activity centres with some density and with some commercial and retail so that people do not have to travel too far to go to the shops or to a restaurant or small bar.

We also have \$3 million for an upgrade to the Main Street–Hutton Street–Royal Street intersection, which is a de facto freeway on-ramp, to make the intersection safer for pedestrians, motorists and cyclists. We also have additional funding for a roundabout at the Green Street–Scarborough Beach Road intersection near Main Street, which was worked on in conjunction with the member for Perth and will make that intersection a lot safer.

We are expanding local cyclepaths. As part of the Stephenson Avenue extension, the principal shared path will run from Telford Crescent to Civic Place and be delivered as probably an underpass at Stephenson Avenue. That will be very much welcomed by those residents who have a principal shared path out the front of their house that they have to reverse over every morning when they leave their homes. We will also be extending the principal shared path northwards along the freeway from Civic Place to Erindale Road, which will get more people using bikes and walking. After strong community support, we will be delivering an amenity wall along Reid Highway in Westminster to address noise pollution, illegal dumping and antisocial behaviour. The wall will replace what is currently a very small broken fence. With some federal funding, we will be upgrading the intersection of Morley Drive and Wanneroo Road with more north–south through lanes and an east–west bus lane for the 98 and 99 bus routes.

Lastly, in terms of commitments, \$100 million will be used to convert the Mitchell Freeway southbound to a smart freeway. I was a little sceptical about smart freeways, but everyone who lives south tells me that it is an absolutely wonderful thing that works very well, so I am looking forward to that. I have made many other little commitments as well that I will go through at another time. They support local clubs and local groups and are smaller projects that I feel are important.

I mentioned before the Transport Workers' Union of Australia. Last year, so many frontline workers in Western Australia stepped up. In our schools, cleaners, education assistants and teachers stepped up to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. The public health response from our teams in health—whether they be cleaners, doctors or nurses in hospitals—was stepped up and our public service gave the government great advice. The other day the Leader of the Liberal Party said, despite the year that we have just had, that he would definitely cut the public service. The public service stepped up and looked after us. I want to give credit to the public service—they were unbelievable. Before there were perspex screens, our retail workers had to deal with angry and concerned customers; it was an enormous job. We have made commitments to the transport industry and its workers. Truckies kept us going last year. They dealt with all the restrictions coming across the border and they kept distributing food to our grocery shops so that people did not panic about things running out. I am very happy that Labor has promised over \$14 million for truck driver amenities along key freight routes throughout the state.

I understand that the Minister for Transport is also working on amendments to the Owner-Drivers (Contracts and Disputes) Act that will assist contractors who transport loads using vehicles with a gross vehicle mass under 4 500 kilograms, such as couriers or pick-up delivery drivers. This will make sure that the rates are fair, contractors are paid on time and there is a legal avenue for them to pursue the Road Freight Transport Industry Tribunal if they find themselves in an unjust situation. We are working on a package to help the transport industry ensure that its workers look after their mental health. Across all these sectors last year, the workers—whether a school cleaner, a retail worker, a truck driver, a police officer, a nurse or a doctor—stepped up and we owe them all a debt of gratitude. A lot has been said about how people voted for a Labor government for the first time at the election, but a lot of thanks should go to all those workers across our state.

In my inaugural speech, I mentioned some bigger issues that I care about and in my last three or four minutes I will go through them. One issue is animal welfare, and all members will know my views on this, I am sure, if they have seen me sitting in the dining room not finding much to eat on the menu—chips and tomato sauce work well! The RSPCA put out a report recently that showed that Western Australia's animal welfare laws are some of the weakest in the country, and I know that Australia's laws generally are some of the weakest in the developed world. A conservative party in the United Kingdom has just announced major reforms to its Animal Welfare Act, which

makes its animal welfare laws very progressive. I still remain disappointed that an industry that I do not think can be made humane, the live export industry, continues in Western Australia. I am concerned about the reporting of animal welfare issues in the racing industry. I know that through Minister Papalia and now, I am sure, with Minister Whitby, we will still try to achieve the best integrity we can in the racing industry. We must be vigilant on this matter. I am also looking for the puppy farming legislation to be passed in this Parliament. I cannot believe that the Liberal Party in particular voted against it last time; that shows how right-wing and non-mainstream it has become.

I remain sad that Australia is still not a republic. The idea that a kid attending Mount Lawley Primary School, Tuart Hill Primary School or Mirrabooka Primary School cannot be Australia's head of state is unfathomable to me. I do not accept any argument a monarchist has ever given me, and I never will.

I look forward to the Minister for Sport and Recreation working to make sure that our peak sporting bodies fund community sport better than they currently do, whether it be the West Australian Football Commission—we saw that excellent report last year—or the West Australian Football League making sure that money flows down to community football, or the WACA with cricket. It is going to have a great development program, but it needs to make sure that the money flows to district and community cricket to get juniors playing and to get blokes like me, and women, who are getting older with dodgy knees, out on the field playing every week and having a go for their mental and physical health. I look forward to our minister doing what he can in that area.

Finally, I will talk about what has happened in this country with climate change. We still have these crazy Institute of Public Affairs right-wing arguments that filter through the media—only some parts of the media, thankfully. I was very disappointed with this document, the federal budget, that came out on Tuesday night. The climate is hardly mentioned in it. Climate mitigation is not mentioned. Two things happened on Tuesday: the budget came out and, in the mail at home, I got my latest issue of *Mad* with Alfred E. Neuman on the cover painting a Hummer green. These two documents do as much for climate change as each other. It is so sad that Australia is so far behind the developed world in these things. We have the worst Prime Minister—second worst; I forgot about Tony Abbott. We have the second worst Prime Minister Australia has ever had and it is so sad what he is doing to our country.

MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley — Parliamentary Secretary) [12.27 pm]: Congratulations, Mr Deputy Speaker, on your elevation to the role. It is a great privilege for me to follow on from the member for Balcatta, with whom I once again find myself in furious agreement on all the issues that he traverses. One of the great privileges of being the member for Mount Lawley is that my electorate is surrounded on all sides by Labor members of Parliament, much like I am in the chamber today, be they the member for Balcatta, who has been elevated to cabinet secretary, which I will come back to shortly; the member for Morley, who has been elevated to Minister for Commerce; the member for Perth, who has been elevated to the Minister for Housing; or my great friend and community advocate the member for Maylands, Lisa Baker. On all sides I am surrounded by Labor members. We share so much in common including a passion for our community. The member for Balcatta during his contribution to the Address-in-Reply, which picks up on some of those important themes that the Governor raised when he spoke to us, talked about the investment in Osborne Park Hospital, the congestion-busting, job-creating infrastructure project that the Minister for Transport, Rita Saffioti, is rolling out, and in particular the Morley Drive–Wanneroo Road intersection, which will have a significant beneficial impact on the people in his electorate and his community, in my electorate and in the member for Morley's electorate. Being able to work collaboratively and constructively with fellow like-minded local members of Parliament is fantastic. Added to that, the magnificent investment into Osborne Park Hospital that this government is making will benefit not only all of those members from 2017 to 2021 who advocated so hard for it, such as me and the members for Balcatta, Kingsley and Mirrabooka, but also the current members for Carine, Scarborough and Churchlands. This investment will deliver for the whole of our community.

On that point, I just want to mention that one of the great challenges of following a contribution by the member for Balcatta is that he speaks so persuasively and passionately—he also names half of my volunteers! It is a function of somebody who has dedicated two decades of his four decades of life to the service of his local community, growing up in Tuart Hill, going to Tuart Hill Primary School and going on to serve the City of Stirling as one of the youngest-ever elected councillors and deputy mayors. It is to his great credit that he continues to advocate so strongly, stridently and passionately on behalf of his community. It is no surprise that he has been elevated to the role of cabinet secretary, and I congratulate you for that, member. The other thing you have done is pinch the structure of my contribution—it was brilliant!—so I am going to try to jiggle mine around a bit.

I am making this contribution today in response to the Governor's speech opening the forty-first Parliament, but it would be remiss of me not to reflect on how our community rallied together during the course of the fortieth Parliament. In that regard, I want to divide my contribution into two parts. There will be a pre-COVID part and a COVID part.

When I think about the pre-COVID part, I reflect on the myriad promises we made in the lead-up to the 2017 election—promises to keep Western Power in public ownership, promises not to do dirty deals with One Nation and promises to deliver for our community. In Mount Lawley, those promises included \$4 million for a new science and technology

building at Mount Lawley Senior High School. There was \$11.6 million for a new mental health emergency centre at Royal Perth Hospital, as well as more than \$20 million to refurbish the intensive care unit at Royal Perth Hospital. These were our investments in health. In addition to these promises, all of which we delivered, we made a number of significant promises to all our local public primary schools, and they were all delivered and all those investments were made. In particular, there was the \$400 000 contribution to Yokine Primary School, a school very similar to Tuart Hill Primary School. It was built in the 1950s and probably had not had a significant amount of expenditure contributed to it since it was built. There is a new administration block there, which generated local economic activity and local jobs for painters, electricians and plasterers who came in to do that work and fit-out. That is to say nothing of the things we delivered for schools that did not even form part of our election commitments, such as the delivery of the science lab at Sutherland Dianella Primary School. My electorate, like the member for Balcatta's, has seen those science labs roll out in primary schools across the neighbourhood, which, as the member says, is incredibly important when we look towards what the jobs of the future will be. I will come back to this theme of jobs later.

It was not just about delivering our election commitments and it was not just about injecting money into the economy in order to keep it stimulated and growing; we did other things as well. We passed some important landmark legislation, legislation of which I am particularly proud. We passed legislation to lift the statute of limitations for victims of historical child sexual abuse, which has now opened the door for those people to seek and receive compensation for the suffering they received at the hands of their abusers. I have watched in the media and the courts that justice is being delivered. That was incredibly important. That was a legislative amendment that could be delivered only by a McGowan Labor government, steered through this place by the Attorney General. We passed legislation to ensure no body, no parole. We passed legislation to modernise and standardise our work health and safety regime. This is something, Deputy Speaker, that you are passionate about, and that you mentioned specifically in your first speech to this place in 2017. We have standardised that legislation and introduced industrial manslaughter laws, and that speaks volumes to the work that everyone in this chamber put in to get that legislation passed. We introduced legislation in the midst of a global pandemic. It is worth remembering that this McGowan Labor government and Minister Roger Cook passed legislation to apply the dividend from our future fund specifically for medical research. This is vitally important legislation. Medical research is now a priority of our future fund. In addition to all that, in a move that speaks volumes to the compassion and egalitarianism of the Labor government to the sense that people ought to have the right to die with dignity, we tackled the very difficult, complicated and personal issue of voluntary assisted dying, and we passed that legislation as well. This was all before the onset of the COVID pandemic.

I have heard members opposite—or members in the corner!—talk about the fact that this last election was a COVID election, and I hope they continue to make that mistake, because when I was speaking to people in my community, it was apparent that they were grateful for the fact that we had achieved all those things before the COVID pandemic hit. I do not understand the hypothesis that those members put forward that simply being a leader in a democratic country during COVID automatically guarantees re-election. For example, Donald Trump and his hyper-individualistic, hyper-selfish, hyper-neoliberal response to the COVID pandemic in the United States stands in stark contrast to the leadership we had from the McGowan Labor government—from the diligence and discipline that it demonstrated to the commitment it made to the people of the whole community in making decisions and then standing by those decisions. Whenever I go anywhere in Mount Lawley people say to me, “It is not just that the Premier kept us safe, it is not just that he kept COVID out of WA, it is when he said something, he actually did it, and he could not be bullied, harassed or harangued out of that position despite the best efforts of the Liberal Party, the Nationals WA and Clive Palmer.” We stuck to our guns. The Premier, the McGowan Labor government and the whole Labor team were rewarded by voters on 13 March for that commitment and leadership. It is an unsophisticated, un-nuanced and unintelligent response from conservative parties, which have been reduced to a rump, simply to say that the McGowan Labor government won this election because of COVID. I hope they stick with that mistake, because if they stick with that line, in 2025 they will still not have learnt that lesson and will be faced with a similar predicament to the one they find themselves in today.

The other great attribute of the McGowan Labor government's response to the COVID pandemic is that it provided the space, the environment, in which we could really see those egalitarian and social democratic values that are so important to the Australian people. It provided the space for those values to come to the fore, and I saw this in particular in Mount Lawley. The community's response to COVID was driven by all of us working together and supporting one another. The ideas of solidarity that the member for Mirrabooka talked about in her speech are not unique to the union movement; they permeate throughout Australian society. One of the great privileges of representing my city is that it is a close-knit community. Throughout the pandemic I was moved by the capacity of the community to come together and help support one another. Facebook posts popped up, locals supported local businesses and people popped into the electorate office with contributions to local food hampers that we would run down to Foodbank. Margaret Thatcher once famously said that there is no such thing as society, and she could not have been more wrong. The response of our community to the COVID pandemic demonstrates just how strong we are as a community.

In the time I have, I want to turn to my feelings of optimism, because despite delays in the federal government's "stroll-out" of the vaccine, I am optimistic for what the future holds. I can see in other nations around the world whose vaccination program has continued apace that it has had a material beneficial impact to the community. Once we catch up and our vaccine program is rolled out, we will be so much the better.

The other concern I have about the way the federal government has responded to the COVID pandemic is that it has completely abrogated its responsibilities under the commonwealth Constitution to deal with quarantine. It makes me so scared to say it, but one of the problems I have with this is that this is not the last time we will see a global pandemic. This is not the first global pandemic and it will not be the last. In the globalised international world that we live in, quarantine may have a significant role to play in the future. Commonwealth government investment in appropriate quarantine facilities, such as Howard Springs in the Northern Territory, is worthwhile, because those facilities will inevitably need to be used in the future. For the commonwealth government to abrogate its responsibility and pass that obligation on to the state governments to then have to use hotels that were never meant to serve this purpose displays a complete lack of leadership. It speaks volumes to the contrast between Scott Morrison and Mark McGowan.

I hope that the two issues of quarantine and vaccination will be resolved. Once they are resolved, I know that, as a community, we will be able to come through the COVID-19 pandemic, and, once we do, we will bounce back stronger in Mount Lawley. As well as the \$5.5 billion economic stimulus package that was introduced by the former Treasurer, the former member for Victoria Park, Hon Ben Wyatt, last year, in addition to that, as the Premier said today in his brief ministerial statement, we have invested \$28.9 billion in infrastructure to support our economic recovery and create jobs. I will keep returning to the issue of jobs, but let me tell members about where some of that money is going in the Mount Lawley electorate. There will be significant and much-needed investment into Mount Lawley Senior High School. On top of the \$4 million we spent over the last term of government for the new STEM building, another \$15 million has been allocated for the refurbishment, renovation and construction of new classrooms. In an era when xenophobia and hatred is on the rise, I am incredibly pleased that this government is committing \$6 million towards the refurbishment of the Jewish community centre in Yokine. I think this is an incredibly important contribution, because a Holocaust memorial will be included in that centre. As I said in my very first speech in this place, that will help remind us what happens when politicians are driven by hate and fear and divide the community. That is a fantastic \$6 million investment towards a Holocaust memorial.

There is also a significant investment in health and jobs. I want to highlight a couple of health initiatives. In addition to all the money that has been spent on Royal Perth Hospital, as I mentioned previously, I am also incredibly proud that over the term of the last Parliament, it was this government that finally opened Perth Children's Hospital. As part of the continued revitalisation of the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre and the continued upgrade of medical and health infrastructure in Western Australia, there is a \$1.8 billion investment in a new women's and babies' hospital at the QEII site, which I think is an incredibly important investment for the benefit of the entire community. This investment will not only make sure that we continue to deliver a world-class health system to the citizens of Western Australia, but also, in the interim, create hundreds if not thousands of local construction jobs and stimulate the local economy in the seat of Nedlands and in the Perth metropolitan area more broadly. It is a testament to this government that its strong financial management has placed it in a position in which it is able to deliver that sort of investment into our health service. But it is not just about building the physical and infrastructural capacity of our health system; it is also about building the human capacity. I have said in this place before and I will say again that jobs in health are the jobs of the future. Speaking volumes to that is this government's promise to recruit another 600 new nurses over the next couple of years. Nursing is an incredibly important profession and endeavour and it plays a key role in the delivery of a caring and compassionate health system in our community. Yesterday was International Nurses Day. I acknowledge the contribution of all nurses, doctors and allied health professionals. As mentioned by the member for Balcatta in his contribution, they played such an important role in keeping our community safe during the COVID pandemic. Adding to their number will only benefit the state of Western Australia even more.

I will speak more about health and jobs. Members will forgive me; I wanted to express my gratitude to the Premier, Mark McGowan, and Deputy Premier, Roger Cook. I am extremely grateful to have been appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Deputy Premier. It is fair to say that one of the great attributes of the McGowan government and one that, as I mentioned previously, has been widely recognised by the people I speak to in Mount Lawley is leadership. That leadership is provided by the Premier but buttressed by a capable and enthusiastic cabinet. It is a testament to the vision of the Premier that the Minister for Health is also the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade; Science; Medical Research.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: It is clear that diversifying the economy is and has been a key priority of the McGowan government since our election in 2017. The last 12 months more than any other time in history has demonstrated quite clearly that we as a community need to be at the cutting edge of health and medical research. It is the only way that we can continue to deliver a world-class health system that puts patients first. It will also help to generate the

permanent highly paid, highly skilled jobs of the future. It goes without saying but I will say it anyway, as I have said it before: the jobs in our health and caring industries cannot be outsourced, offshored or automated. These are jobs that will be with us forever. The two portfolio priorities of jobs and health are of vital importance to the people of Mount Lawley and it is a great honour to be able to work with the minister in these areas.

I have talked about jobs and the incredible work of the McGowan Labor government across the board, and I talked before about the \$28.9 billion infrastructure investment that is being made. There is so much construction work going on in the fields of residential construction, commercial and civil construction, transport and infrastructure. Where are we going to find all the workers? The only sensible, proportionate and reasonable response is to do what this government has done and freeze TAFE fees. That will encourage people to undergo the necessary training in order to become fully participating members of our workforce. It speaks to the fact that this is a cohesive government that is united in its vision that we have a Minister for Education and Training who is prioritising the education and training that will be required to provide the jobs that the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade is emphasising in order to work on projects initiated by the Ministers for Police, Housing and Transport to make sure that there is a pipeline of works that continues to serve the people of Western Australia. We have seen the benefits of that. I look at the Mt Lawley campus of North Metropolitan TAFE and I see firsthand the incredible benefits that that delivers.

I want to finish on another area that members here will know I am passionate about. The member for Landsdale alluded to the work that we continue to need to do. I think now of one of my areas of passion, and that is justice. Obviously, the Address-in-Reply is in response to the Governor's speech. In that speech, the Governor spoke about this government's commitment to address one particular injustice that I am passionate about, and that is the injustice for victims of asbestos-related diseases. I am incredibly pleased and proud to be standing here today as part of a government that is committed to removing once and for all damages for victims of asbestos-related diseases and introducing provisional damages. I will not speak about this issue today—I have spoken about this issue previously—but I warn members that I am very excited about the prospect of making a contribution when that bill comes on for debate.

This year also marks the thirtieth anniversary of the report being handed down by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. There are recommendations in that report that need to be implemented. We have continued the work of implementing the recommendations of that royal commission, and I think about the work of the Attorney General last year on the custody notification scheme and the fines enforcement legislation. Again, I am very proud of what we achieved in the fortieth Parliament and I am optimistic about what we can do in the forty-first Parliament to address that historic injustice. I think it is an area in which, as the member for Balcatta said, more work needs to be done.

We need to look at funding for our community legal centres, we need to emphasise the importance of diversionary programs in our justice system and we need to sensibly and conclusively tackle the issue of raising the age of criminal responsibility. My two boys are eight and six years old. My son Willis will turn nine in July. It is incomprehensible to me that the age of criminal responsibility for children is 10 years old. This came up in the fortieth Parliament and it should come up again in the forty-first Parliament. We should continue discussing that, because if people become aware of that, it is unconscionable for it to persist. We need to look seriously at fixing that.

I want to congratulate all the new members. I sat here last week and listened to the inaugural speeches of all the new members who have been elected. I was so impressed. I was flabbergasted. I thought the contributions that were made were incredible. Their contributions spoke to the passion and compassion, the intellect and ability, and the endeavour and desire of these people to represent their communities and make a difference. I look around and there are so many people here—we bat so deep on this side of the house! The extent of talent that we have is unbelievable. Look at the member for Kimberley. I listened to the contribution that she made. I am rapt to have her here. I used to sit with the former member for Kimberley, Josie Farrer, in the hallway behind the Speaker's gallery and we would talk about native title, Aboriginal access to justice, and Aboriginal participation in the political process. How good is it that we have Divina as the new member for Kimberley. The new member for Mirrabooka is a great friend of mine and a staunch advocate for workers. I think about the contribution of her predecessor, the former member for Mirrabooka, who was a terrific advocate for not only workers, but also migrants and all of her community. I have had people come up to me subsequently and say, "We want to make sure we can keep Janine Freeman involved in these conversations because she has so much to contribute."

I want to thank the three wise men of Cockburn, Albany and Collie—Preston, who I am glad to see have been replaced by two wise women and one wise man. I congratulate the member for Cockburn for taking that well-trodden path of working as an industrial lawyer at Slater and Gordon and then Eureka Lawyers before becoming a member for Parliament—more credit to him.

Member for Victoria Park, I loved your contribution. You have, as you say, very big shoes to fill. I think about the contribution made by Hon Ben Wyatt and the incredibly difficult job he had. People have commented that the federal budget that was handed down was a Keynesian budget, because it had so much spending in it, yet Ben Wyatt was able to navigate getting the finances under control and re-establishing a sound foundation for our state's economy

in a way that continued to speak to and deliver fundamental Labor values and election commitments. Ben was an outstanding Treasurer and outstanding member of this Parliament who made an outstanding contribution, and I wish him all the best for the future.

A couple of members were elected to formerly Liberal-held seats. I will probably attract the ire of some on my side as I pay compliments to some of those who have departed. I am ecstatic to see the new member for Hillarys, but before I sit down, I must say that I am incredibly grateful to the former member for Hillarys. I have a large Greek community in my seat of Mount Lawley. If the member for Hillarys took one thing passionately, it was his Greek heritage. Whenever we went to Greek community events, he was always very accommodating and made sure I was able to fully participate in that community, so I am incredibly grateful to him for that.

We have a new member for South Perth. I had the great privilege of serving on the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices with the former member for South Perth. The member for Morley was the chair. As all members will know, the former member for South Perth is passionate about three things—South Perth, sport and horseracing. The job that he did as a contributor to the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices was like nothing I would have expected or had seen from him. He was thoughtful, focused and empathetic. He listened to the stories of witnesses as they came forward. He wrestled in his mind with all the difficult issues and he did it with such good grace, diligence and dedication that his retirement from this place cannot go unremarked upon.

My comments about the former member for Bateman might surprise some people. He was the deputy chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and worked on that committee with the new Minister for Sport and Recreation, me and the member for Bicton, who will now become the chair of the Public Accounts Committee. Every one of our reports over the course of the entire fortieth Parliament, which traversed issues such as the West Australian Football Commission, government procurement, and the construction of Perth Children's Hospital with asbestos in the ceiling and lead in the water, was a unanimous report. That speaks to the capacity of the former member for Bateman to act in the interests of his community.

Mr D.J. Kelly: The travesty is he was never the leader of the Liberal Party.

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: It is interesting that the minister should say that. One of the great things exposed by the Liberal Party's train wreck of a press conference on costings two days before the election was that when the member for Bateman walked out the door, all of that party's economic and financial expertise walked out the door with him, and it was left with nothing. It speaks even further to that point that two out of the three stooges are no longer with us! I should raise the tone in my contribution in the few minutes I have left.

I am incredibly pleased to see the new member for Warren–Blackwood. The previous member for Warren–Blackwood gave one of the most moving contributions to debate I have ever heard in this chamber. We were debating the closure of the Wittenoom township, long after the mine was closed, the town de-gazetted and most of the people had moved out. Terry Redman said this —

In closing, I want to talk a bit about that risk. A lot of people have been exposed to mesothelioma or asbestosis. I, sadly, lost a brother to the disease just over four years ago. It was terribly sad. The guy was an accountant. How did he get this disease? But it happens. We have to make every effort to make sure it does not happen again. These steps are terribly important and I absolutely support the government in this space. This stuff is aggressive. My brother was diagnosed on 10 March 2014 and he died on 27 November. How the hell does that happen? I remember going to the place where everyone looked at blue asbestos and pulled it apart. I remember having a rock collection that had the bloody stuff in it. It can touch anybody. One does not have to be a miner to be exposed to it, as the member for Nedlands highlighted. Exposure can happen on a range of fronts; for example, it has affected the people who worked with brake shoes years ago. We did a bit of building and that is as close as we can come to understanding where my brother might have been exposed to asbestos. It sits there, latent, for a long period, and it plays out as it does.

I remember sitting in the chamber riveted by what Terry Redman was saying. His intellectual capacity, his compassion and his empathy was on clear display, and I want to thank him for his contribution as well.

In the time I have left, I want to thank two members of the Legislative Council, Hon Colin Holt—see above comments made about the member for South Perth—for his contribution to the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices, and because this is a multi-partisan expression of gratitude on my part, I mention Hon Tim Clifford, who is a friend of mine who served one term as a Greens MLC. He has been a great servant to the local community.

I have run out of time and I still have a massive list of thankyou's, which I will have to save for another occasion.

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Water) [12.57 pm]: In the couple of minutes I have, I want to do two things. Firstly, it is great to have been re-elected as the member for Bassendean. The campaign for Bassendean was not as vigorous as it was for some other seats in this chamber, but I did have a dedicated group of volunteers. The Bassendean branch of the Labor Party is fantastic. I want to particularly thank Jan Mason, Anthea Mathews, Pam Day, Dorothy Griggs, Carol Seidel, Lorna Harper and Ann Giles in particular for being a loyal band of campaign workers. They were very good and excelled at things as varied as train stations and wobble boarding, in

particular. I had people comment to me that I had the oldest group of wobble boarders they had ever seen! I do not think Pam Day will be offended when I inform the house that she recently turned 90, and to see her out by the side of the road wobble boarding was a sight to behold.

Mr D.A. Templeman: That's a health and safety issue!

Mr D.J. KELLY: Member for Mandurah, just listen! I had to schedule my wobble boarding on a Wednesday because that was the day that Pam did not start the day by swimming a kilometre. She is a formidable woman, and I wanted to thank her. I am not sure quite how old Dorothy Griggs is but she is an absolutely fantastic woman. Most of her working life was as the skipper of a prawn trawler. She took her children onboard with her as a young mother. She is an absolute formidable and very modern woman. She has recently bought herself an electric vehicle like mine.

This was a fabulous group of volunteers. I cannot mention my volunteers in Bassendean without giving a special mention to Carol Seidel. Many people in this chamber will know Carol, who is an absolute force of nature. If anyone has ever been asked by Carol to contribute to a fundraiser or buy a raffle ticket, they will know that the best thing to do is to succumb and hand over your cash! I could not be the member for Bassendean without the absolutely outstanding work that is done by that group of largely women.

The other thing I will do is mention John Lawrence, who recently was awarded \$1.3 million for sexual abuse that was inflicted upon him by the Christian Brothers at Clontarf and Castledare. That award was made last year by Judge Mark Herron. It was the largest judgement in Australia up to that point and was made possible only by us changing the laws, which we did in the first term of the McGowan government. This month, that award was increased by about \$140 000 because the Court of Appeal determined that the calculation of interest was incorrect. That was in response to the Christian Brothers appealing the decision, seeking to have the payment of interest knocked down. The Christian Brothers never cease to amaze me at how heartless they are in dealing with this matter. It is well time that the Archbishop of Perth, Tim Costelloe, got rid of the Christian Brothers in this diocese. The Catholic Church would be well served by the Christian Brothers being disbanded and their assets distributed to the victims of abuse—of whom there are many. It is about time that the Archbishop of Perth stood up, showed leadership and did the right thing.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 628.]

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES — SIXTY-FIRST REPORT

88. **Mr R.S. LOVE to the Attorney General:**

I refer to paragraph 5 of the executive summary of the sixty-first report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, which states —

Quite simply, it is the PPC's view that at the heart of this matter is an entirely inexplicable sudden cessation of good faith negotiations between the PPC and the Commissioner of the CCC. This coincided with the bald usurpation of the powers and privileges of the Legislative Council through the calculated intervention of the Attorney General and State Solicitor's Office ...

Has the Attorney General compromised the integrity of the Corruption and Crime Commission by intervening in a Corruption and Crime Commission process?

Mr J.R. Quigley: I'm sorry; I missed that.

The SPEAKER: Maybe the member could speak a little slower. It seemed to me to be quite a long preamble. I do not know whether that can be abbreviated at all. Can you just make the question clear to the Attorney General?

Mr R.S. LOVE: Paragraph 5 of the executive summary of the sixty-first report reads —

Quite simply, it is the PPC's view that at the heart of this matter is an entirely inexplicable sudden cessation of good faith negotiations between the PPC and the Commissioner of the CCC. This coincided with the bald usurpation of the powers and privileges of the Legislative Council through the calculated intervention of the Attorney General and State Solicitor's Office ...

Has the Attorney General compromised the integrity of the CCC by intervening in this process?

The SPEAKER: I know that the Attorney General will be cognisant of anything that might be sub judice. Could he keep that in mind.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:

I will keep it in mind and I will keep it brief. No, I have not.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES — SIXTY-FIRST REPORT

89. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Attorney General:

I have a supplementary question. Does the Attorney General concede that by his actions he has been undermining the rights of the procedure and privileges committee of the other place?

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:

No, I do not.

CORONAVIRUS — RESTRICTIONS — EASING

90. Ms M.J. HAMMAT to the Premier:

I refer to the state government's strong response to COVID-19 that has protected the health of Western Australians and delivered a world leading economy. Can the Premier update the house on what the return to pre-lockdown conditions will mean for Western Australians, including Western Australian business, and advise how the snapback will help continue to drive the WA economy?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Mirrabooka for her first question. I congratulate her on her significant victory in the electorate of Mirrabooka at the state election.

I announced a few moments ago that on Saturday Perth and Peel will return to pre-lockdown life. This snapback is only possible because of the good and hard work of all Western Australians, and because people have listened to the health advice. Since Saturday, 1 May there have been no new community cases of COVID-19, despite 101 000 tests having been undertaken since 25 April. Based on health advice, as at 12.01 this Saturday morning, masks will no longer be mandatory except at the airport; there will be no capacity limits at weddings and funerals; events will be able to operate at 100 per cent capacity; visitor limits for patients in hospitals, aged-care or disability facilities will be lifted; and limits of 100 on home gatherings will be lifted. That will allow people to go back to life as we knew it prior to the lockdown over the Anzac Day long weekend. However, it is very important that people continue to use the SafeWA app or a written contact register, because that allows our contact tracers to do their important work.

Of course, Madam Speaker, Western Australia's amazing job over this period has delivered a strong state economy, with the lowest unemployment rate and the best financial management in the nation. The federal budget released this week was an endorsement of our COVID-19 management strategy. The recent economic indicators show that. Australian Bureau of Statistics weekly payroll data released this week shows that jobs over the fortnight to 21 April increased by 0.1 per cent. That was the first fortnight since the end of JobKeeper. It shows growth in jobs despite the end of JobKeeper. It also shows that Western Australia has the strongest jobs recovery of all states. According to this metric, the number of jobs is 4.5 per cent above pre-COVID levels. Internet job vacancies in April were at the second-highest level in nine years. That reflects the confidence in our business community and consumer confidence. This government's economic, financial and health management of COVID-19 has created the strongest business, consumer and economic conditions in Western Australia since the height of the last boom, despite large parts of the world going through significant economic contractions. We have done that whilst maintaining the best financial management of any government in Australia. Indeed, Standard and Poor's indicates it is the best financial management of any government in the world.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL — SUPREME COURT CASE

91. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:

I refer to case 2717 of 2019 currently before the Supreme Court and launched by the President of the Legislative Council against the Corruption and Crime Commissioner. If it is found that the commissioner acted unlawfully in issuing notices to the director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to produce privileged documents, will the Premier continue with his support for the reappointment of Mr McKechnie as head of the Corruption and Crime Commission?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Under standing orders, me commenting on a matter before the court and pre-empting its judgement would be improper.

Dr D.J. Honey: It's not pre-empting it.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is what the member's question asked. I think that shows the inexperience of the Liberal Party.

The SPEAKER: I will provide further counsel to the Leader of the Liberal Party. My understanding is that there are determinations before the court and that you are likely infringing on the sub judice parts of the standing orders of this place.

Several members interjected.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL — SUPREME COURT CASE

92. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:

I was not asking for the Premier to comment on the court case.

The SPEAKER: Member!

Dr D.J. HONEY: My supplementary question —

The SPEAKER: Member, when I give you —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! Member, when I give you the call for a supplementary question, it is for that; it is not for you to engage in debate.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I have a supplementary question. Can the Premier guarantee that his government will not interfere with the completion of important court case 2717 of 2019 before the Supreme Court?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The initial question asked by the Leader of the Liberal Party was: if the court makes some judgement, what am I going to do, and am I going to overrule some judgement of a court, the number and details of which I am unfamiliar with? The whole premise of this question is based upon a breach of the standing orders and somehow me interfering in some court case. Is it any wonder that the member for Vasse looks so embarrassed sitting next to the Leader of the Liberal Party?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Leader of the Liberal Party, order, please! I am hoping to give the next question.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister, we would like your government member to ask her question. Member for Bicton.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, order, please!

BEELIAR WETLANDS — ROE 8

93. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to protect the Beeliar wetlands and stop the destructive and grossly expensive Roe 8 project. Can the minister outline to the house how the state government will deliver on this important commitment and honour the overwhelming mandate it received at the last election from the people of Western Australia?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

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

We went to the 2017 election promising to stop the flawed Perth Freight Link and save the Beeliar wetlands, and of course we got elected. We are delivering the commitments we made to plan for a new port at Kwinana, move more freight onto rail, upgrade High Street and develop intermodal services. As I said, all those commitments are being delivered, and we have protected and saved the Beeliar wetlands for future generations.

We introduced specific legislation in the last term to protect and preserve the Beeliar wetlands. It succeeded in this place, but it was frustrated in the other place. Again, in January this year, we took a commitment to the election not to proceed with Roe 8 and 9 and to save the Beeliar wetlands. Yet again we have introduced that legislation into this place. We thought the Liberal Party would have moved on, but yesterday they were again protesting as though it was the first time they had ever heard about it. The member for Cottesloe was shocked and surprised about our commitment. I thought I would go through some history again, because members know I like to go through history. The other side, the Liberal Party, yet again made Roe 8 and 9 the centrepiece of their election campaign. It was its second-biggest election commitment, just behind the energy plan.

Ms S.F. McGurk: How did they go in that election campaign?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is a good question. My favourite day was "Honk for Roe 8 and 9" day. I went through to see who was in that "Honk for Roe 8 and 9" picture. It shows the member for Vasse, who is still here, the puppetmaster of the Liberal Party, and, of course, the former Leader of the Opposition, the member for Dawesville. Let us go through all the Liberal candidates. The picture shows the Liberal candidates for Riverton, Fremantle, Jandakot, Bicton, Willagee and Cockburn. What do they all have in common?

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: They are not here! Not only did people not honk for Roe 8 and 9, they did not vote for it either. However, it was good to see the member for Cottesloe go back, yet again, to the 1960s to bring that old policy back. We have all moved on. We are saving the Beelihar wetlands for future generations. We are planning our freight and trade future. We are planning for a new port. We are making sure that we have a port for future generations and we are saving the Beelihar wetlands for future generations. That is forward-thinking policy. We will let them stay in the 1960s, where the Leader of the Liberal Party feels very, very comfortable producing his policies. We are happy to take this issue to the next election. Last term I said, “Let’s take it to the 2021 election”, and I am happy to take it to the 2025 election.

MINISTER FOR HEALTH — AISHWARYA ASWATH

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

I refer to the expert panel report into the tragic death of Aishwarya Aswath and the Minister for Health’s comments last night when he said that the report made no findings about staff shortages on the night. Given the report stated that uncovered sick leave of medical staff resulted in a reduction in the number of available medical staff in the evening, delays in medical assessments and prolonged waiting times and impeded the capacity for medical staff to provide a more comprehensive response to parental escalation, how does he explain his comments?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I assume the member for Vasse has now had the benefit, as have the Premier and I, of a briefing from the chief executive of the Child and Adolescent Health Service, who provided proper insight into the actual report. In the debate earlier today, the Premier went into some detail on the configuration of staff on that day. It is true that the report makes observations that on that particular occasion, there was not a staff shortage. Reflecting on the comments from the secretary of the Australian Nursing Federation earlier today on radio, that does not mean that there are not staffing issues. The issue has been known about by both the doctors and nurses on the floor and the leadership of the Child and Adolescent Health Service—in fact, by the leadership of pretty much every hospital in Australia—that is, demand has put significant pressure on our hospitals and we need to respond to that demand through not only physical infrastructure but also workforce and labour. That is why, since late last year, the leadership team at Perth Children’s Hospital has been working with the doctors and nurses on how we can continue to grow the capacity of the hospital, particularly through increased staffing, to make sure that we can meet that demand as it continues to challenge the hospital. I think it was the week before the incident involving Aishwarya that meetings were held between doctors in the ED and the leadership at PCH to look into and discuss the very measures that were needed.

Subsequent to these issues, the Australian Nursing Federation has written to me and consolidated the concerns of ED nursing staff about staffing levels and configurations. Obviously, we have had the opportunity to complete the work that the PCH leadership team was already undertaking. I want to take some time to provide members with details on the new staffing arrangements. The strategies that the PCH leadership is implementing include an immediate increase in permanent nursing staff to enable two additional registered nurses to be rostered for the emergency department across all shifts, resulting in an increase of 11.1 FTE. There is an increased allocation of leave provisions across the nursing establishment, enabling permanent recruitment of an additional five FTE, bringing the total overall increase to 16.1 FTE. The increased FTE includes an additional nurse allocated to monitor patients in the emergency department waiting areas and an additional nurse allocated to work across the emergency department and support areas with higher levels of activity. There is the introduction of rapid nurse recruitment and additional support for onboarding across PCH, along with enhanced graduate nursing capacity to optimise permanent recruitment to the increased FTE. A designated ED resuscitation team is on every shift, supported by senior medical and nursing staff from within the hospital, to attend every resuscitation in the emergency department. There is an increase to the allocation of staff development nurses in the emergency department, effectively doubling the allocation, and an increase in clinical nurse specialists to cover each day to provide supervision of junior nursing staff. The establishment of a medical short-stay unit on 13 April provides treatment for general paediatric patients with a length of stay less than 72 hours and supports timely admission, improves outcomes and improves emergency access. The expansion of the surgical short-stay ward supports an increase in theatre sessions and emergency theatre access, while the activation of beds in our high-dependency unit is being developed. This work has been detailed in a letter to the secretary of the Australian Nursing Federation. I table it for the benefit of members’ information.

[See paper [230](#).]

Mr R.H. COOK: As the Premier pointed out in the earlier debate, there was a good allocation of doctors and nurses working that particular evening. We will continue to make sure that we work with all frontline staff so that we can continue to support them in the best way that we can.

I conclude by saying that this was a horrible incident, a dreadful incident. We continue to extend our thoughts, appreciation and apologies to the family impacted by Aishwarya’s passing. I also place on record my appreciation, admiration and respect for all our frontline staff, doctors and nurses, who do a difficult job on behalf of all of us, making difficult decisions every day in a complex, high-pressure environment. I will do everything that I can to make sure that they feel supported during this period as well.

MINISTER FOR HEALTH — AISHWARYA ASWATH

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

I have a supplementary question. Given the minister's response to the Australian Nursing Federation, does he now admit that Perth Children's Hospital has been chronically understaffed, and what is the time line to implement additional staffing and much-needed resources?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

No, I do not. All our hospitals are facing increased demand pressures at the moment. As I said before, this is going on right across Australia, where there has been an increase in volume, an increase in acuity, high mental health presentations and a high number of patients requiring emergency surgery. At Perth Children's Hospital, in particular, there has been an increase in demand around eating disorders, which is putting the system under pressure. But, as I said in my earlier remarks, this work has been ongoing for some time now—since late last year, once we saw that pattern of demand change. That is what we expect from our leadership—we expect them to work with the doctors and nurses on the front line to make the necessary resourcing decisions to make sure that we can continue to support them. As I said in my earlier remarks, the advice we have is that on that evening a staffing shortage was not a contributing factor in that incident, but we acknowledge that there continues to be staffing pressures. That is why we have been undertaking this work for some time now and why we will continue to do that work.

ENERGY — TECHNOLOGIES

96. Ms J.J. SHAW to the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to delivering cleaner and greener energy, diversifying our economy and supporting new sustainable job-creating industries.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on how the McGowan Labor government is responding to imminent challenges facing WA's energy sector?
- (2) Can the minister outline how this response will create new jobs for Western Australians?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

I am pleased to answer the question. I want to acknowledge the hard work that the member for Swan Hills did in the last Parliament as the chair of the committee that inquired into microgrids and congratulate her on those insights that are assisting the government's response to rising distributed energy resources in Western Australia.

- (1)–(2) The government is dedicated to making our electricity system cleaner, greener and ready for the future. In the last 12 months, 300 megawatts of additional solar has been put into the south west interconnected system. To put that into scale, that compares with the largest single power station in the south west interconnected system, the Collie power station, which is 340 megawatts. That is, basically, an entirely new power station paid for by mums and dads. We want to make sure that that type of investment is at the heart of our energy transformation.

I congratulate Stephen Edwell and the Energy Transformation Taskforce, whose work is just about complete, on the road map that it has provided to the government to deal with this changing energy environment in Western Australia and globally. The key element of that strategy is our distributed energy resources road map, with which we are trying to build distributed energy resources into the system. Rather than having installations that are additional to the system, we want to embed them so that the system can work with high levels of rooftop solar. Unlike the crazy plans of the member for Cottesloe, we want a sensible plan that rewards families for their investment into the system. As part of that, Western Power has installed 10 PowerBanks—that is, batteries that are embedded into the distribution network. We are now testing this globally important piece of work to see what additional response we can get out of that. Those embedded batteries will continue to be installed across the south west interconnected system.

We are trialling a tariff that rewards people's energy consumption, so if they consume electricity in a manner that supports the grid, they will be rewarded for that. It is pleasing to see the 400 people on that trial responding very positively to the opportunity that they are engaged in.

We are also about to launch Project Symphony, we hope, in the electorate of Southern River. That will bring together, through Western Power, Energy Policy WA, Synergy, the Australian Energy Market Operator and a range of universities, the coordination of rooftop panels, behind-the-meter batteries, embedded batteries and appliances so that they can act as a virtual power plant. That will show that it is about not just increased supply, but also the use of demand to make sure that we can manage the system. That globally significant project will be done here in Western Australia. I want to congratulate everybody involved in that project.

Finally, I want to talk about standalone power systems. Western Australia is uniquely placed to take advantage of this. I am pleased to say that last year, we launched a second round of standalone power systems, all manufactured here in Western Australia. During the election campaign, the Labor Party committed to building 1 000 additional standalone power systems here in Western Australia. Western

Australian manufacturing businesses are leading the globe in this technology. I also want to let people know that Horizon Power is, in fact, investing directly in the manufacture of these standalone power systems. One of the companies involved in Western Australia is called Boundary Power. It is a joint venture between Horizon Power and Ampcontrol, a leading supplier of technological solutions to the global energy sector. Boundary Power is now a joint venture that will be manufacturing here in Western Australia to support the rollout of standalone power systems. They will be delivering 17 SPSs on the edge of the grid over the next period of time. It is an exciting opportunity.

Here in Western Australia we have technology that is leading the globe and we are trying to support businesses to export their technology to other parts of Australia and the rest of the world, which is exactly what was recommended by the member for Swan Hills in the excellent report that she did in the last Parliament. The good news is that the McGowan Labor government is committed to a greener energy future. We want to make sure that those technologies are being developed here in Western Australia.

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — AISHWARYA ASWATH

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

I refer to the *SAC 1 clinical incident investigation report* into the tragic death of Aishwarya Aswath. Why has the government given itself six months to implement these recommendations and why is it not acting with more urgency given the potentially dire outcomes in delaying their implementation?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

We are moving swiftly to appoint the independent review. The director general of the Department of Health has already spoken to the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care to get its advice on what should be considered. But, most importantly, we are committed to working with Aishwarya's family on the issues that they want inquired into. That will not stop us from implementing changes straightaway, and many changes will have already been made. We want to make sure that it is not only a comprehensive review and that it benefits from the collective wisdom of all those working on the front line, but also, most importantly, provides further answers and resolution for Aishwarya's family.

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — AISHWARYA ASWATH

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

I have a supplementary question. Minister, if it will take six months to implement these recommendations, what confidence can the people of WA have in the system in the meantime?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

The member should have listened to my answer, which was that we will not wait for six months to implement the review and that it will be an ongoing iterative process that will clearly feed from the experience of others. The member should listen to the answers in the same way that we would hope she would listen to the briefing she was given on this matter.

CORONAVIRUS — CULTURE AND THE ARTS

99. Mr D.R. MICHAEL to the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to supporting the Western Australian arts and events industry, particularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Can the minister outline to the house what this government's significant support has meant for businesses and jobs in Western Australia's arts and events sector?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

Yes, I can, and I am very pleased to. I want to acknowledge the member for Balcatta, a fine man of culture and a fine patron of the arts. He is a magnificent member and I congratulate him on his re-election, because I know that he is very highly regarded by his community just as he is in this place.

It is a great question because it is important to highlight to the house that, as we know, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a huge impact on a whole range of industry sectors including, of course, the arts and entertainment industries. I highlight very clearly to the house that this government initiated a number of programs, ensuring that our artists keep on creating their art, that our performers keep on performing, and that the people involved in our entertainment and events industries continue to be able to participate in and put on great shows, festivals and events. We have been focused on that despite the challenges that have been faced due to COVID-19.

We also know that some programs have been implemented through the McGowan government's investment in our recovery programs. One of those is the \$15 million Getting the Show back on the Road program that is focused on supporting the entertainment industry, the performing arts industry and the music industry so that they can, with confidence, continue to put on events and stage shows, even though we have had, of course, the threat of COVID-19. I have to tell members about the Getting the Show back on the Road program because it has been a very important investment that other states and territories have looked to copy. It has allowed the government to underwrite events

so that if they are impacted by changed circumstances, there is a floor of support for them. That has allowed many, many events to take place, despite the pressures of COVID-19. There are a number of them that I want to go through. Earlier this week, the opposition highlighted that the entertainment industry in Western Australia had stopped; it has not.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Culture and the Arts, you and the Minister for Transport have ensured that the arts industry has kept going and that the entertainment industry has not stopped.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Absolutely. I am glad you are with me, Madam Speaker. We could be a double act!

Some significant events have been held over the last 12 months, including during times when there was significant pressure on the entertainment industry. We have seen Zaccaria Concerts and Touring hold eight events, including the Castaway festival, Birds of Tokyo, Hoodoo Gurus, Missy Higgins, *Bernie Dieter's Berlin Underground*, and the Good Day Sunshine Festival. The Black Swan State Theatre Company of WA continued to deliver three events, including *Oklahoma!*, *The Cherry Orchard* and *Playthings*. I went to *The Cherry Orchard*, and it was very good. The West Australian Symphony Orchestra performed six events, including Birds of Tokyo, Ben Folds, and the MACA Classic Series. The Fairbridge Festival continued and more than 45 other individual events have been supported through this initiative. What does that show? It shows that our entertainment industry in Western Australia is in very good shape.

I want to pay tribute to those artists, artisans, musicians, producers, the people who work behind the scenes and the people who work on the stage. They have been stoic under a great deal of pressure, but they continued to focus on delivering high-quality entertainment to the Western Australian public—and it is high quality. We now know that during the past 12 months many of our creative industry people have been honing their creative talents. When we are able to welcome audiences from interstate and internationally, they will be served up a whole range of cultural opportunities, which, of course, will be a huge boost to tourism, our visitor economy and to the psyche of Western Australia. They will deliver it to a place that we now know is not only one of the safest in the world, but also has one of the strongest economies in the world. That is what we have been doing, and we will keep doing it because we recognise that the creative industries play a critical role in the narrative of a diversified economy and a vibrant Western Australia.

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — AISHWARYA ASWATH

100. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Health:

Will the minister ensure that the independent, external review into Perth Children's Hospital's emergency department will include a specific investigation into the tragic death of Aishwarya Aswath and the 20 other severity assessment code 1 events since January 2020 and that the terms of reference will be made public and open for comment before commencing the review?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for the question. If he had listened to my previous answer, he might have had greater clarity on this. Yes, we will look into all the matters that impacted on the operation of the ED, particularly the issues with which Aishwarya's family is concerned. Obviously, any SAC 1 events feed into any clinical review process; that is what they are there for. The member engaging in political blame-gaming is counterproductive to the SAC 1 process, which is to give people absolute freedom and support and the confidence that they can report on where they think clinical delivery can be improved. Of course the review will be informed by these things.

POLICE — TACTICAL RESPONSE GROUP

101. MR S.J. PRICE to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's unprecedented support for the Western Australia Police Force and the recent comments by the director general of the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation regarding Australia's terrorism threat levels. Can the minister update the house on how this investment is supporting WA's police preparedness to respond to serious incidents and emergencies; and, furthermore, can the minister outline to the house how this investment will support WA police in the work it does to protect our community?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for Forrestfield for his question and also for his wholehearted support for the Western Australia Police Force in dealing with the challenges it confronts.

On 17 March, the director general of ASIO tabled his annual threat assessment, and it was quite concerning. It confirmed that the risk of terrorist threat remains at probable. His actual statement about terrorism was —

We have credible intelligence that individuals and groups have the capability and intent to conduct terrorism onshore.

He made it very clear that the threat is significant and is not going away. He went on to refer to those motivated by religious violent extremism and also the growing threat of what is termed right-wing terrorism or ideological extremism. Investigations into that side of the terrorism threat spectrum is consuming some 40 per cent of ASIO's time. It was therefore timely that a couple of weeks after that, I was able to visit the Tactical Response Group's training facility here in Perth and have a close look at our capability in Western Australia. I have firsthand experience

of counterterrorism training and capability, as does the member for Willagee, whom I acknowledge in his absence. I have to concede that my experience is a little dated. It was a little disturbing to note that I commenced that training two years before the member for Scarborough was born. Although my knowledge of the capability is a little dated, it gives me a benchmark. After visiting the wonderful people in the TRG and witnessing some of their equipment and capabilities, I am able to confirm that it far exceeds anything that I was able to employ all those years ago. It has all changed since I was in the tactical assault group, as it was called in those days, when it was the only one in the country in the Special Air Service Regiment. Subsequent to the 9/11 attacks, there has been a massive increase in capability right across the country. There is another TAG in the 2nd Commando Regiment in Sydney. All the police assault groups are well resourced and coordinated in their response and are supported far more fulsomely by the commonwealth and individual states and territories. Our TRG's equipment and capabilities are world class. It has method-of-entry capabilities that were resident only in the military when I was doing it way back when. Its weapons and techniques are first class. I take the opportunity to convey to the house and the Western Australian public that there is a threat out there. There are threats other than COVID-19. This one is very real, but Western Australia is prepared. Our government has ensured that over the forward estimates, some \$900 million will be added to the police budget and an additional 950 police officers will be put into the field. Madam Speaker, as the former Minister for Police, you ensured that our police are well armed with their legislative powers, with this Parliament having passed the Terrorism (Extraordinary Powers) Amendment Bill 2018 and the Terrorism (Preventative Detention) Amendment Bill 2019 to ensure that we have every capability and law behind us that is necessary to respond to this threat.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

102. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the Auditor General's report *Regulation and support of the local government sector*, with its reference to seven damning failures that have significantly undermined the ability of local government entities to provide good government and properly service their communities.

- (1) Does the minister agree that the department has fundamentally failed to implement the principles of good governance?
- (2) Does the minister concede that, as a result of these failures, organisations such as the Western Australian Local Government Association have been required to pick up the slack?
- (3) What steps will the minister take to ensure that those serious issues are addressed and rectified?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I thank the member for his question.

- (1)–(3) The Auditor General's review of the agency and regulation noted two critical trends: first, the escalation in the number of complaints in the sector, in particular the large number or increasingly significant number of complaints of minor breaches; and, second, a trend in major breaches. I think it is fair to say that we are seeing a larger number of investigations, a larger number of inquiries and, unfortunately, a sector—I think there is general agreement—that has not been performing its best. Yesterday, I tabled three inquiry reports. We now have perhaps history repeating itself—I hope not—at the City of Canning. We need to be acutely aware that reform is needed in the sector. The Auditor General's report also noted, and I agree, that the agency needs to focus on early intervention—I want to get to this point—yet the department has been reactive. It has had to be because of the number of issues coming forth. We do not have an act that enables early intervention. None of us wants to see inquiries, because they absorb time and money et cetera. In reforming the Local Government Act 1995, we want to enable early intervention so that when problems emerge, the minister or the agency—we have not worked out which model as yet—can send someone forth to work in the local government so that we do not get to an inquiry. My department has accepted all the recommendations of the Auditor General and we will be working on it. She clearly identified bigger and broader issues that require a change to the Local Government Act. I assure the member that my training wheels are well off the ground and I am deeply focused on reforming the sector. I have been engaging with a large number of local governments to date to begin that discussion.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

103. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Local Government:

I have a supplementary question. Why is the minister now repeating his predecessor's reckless and unnecessary politically based forays with these reckless inquiries, and repeatedly launching inquiries, which the report has outlined has led to the department's problems?

Point of Order

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Apart from being attacked, of course, this is not a supplementary question. It is a preamble.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Further to the point of order, the minister outlined that he just launched three more inquiries today. That is the point of the supplementary question.

The SPEAKER: Can we hear the member's supplementary question so that we know what we are expecting the minister to answer?

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr R.S. LOVE: I will clarify the question. Why is the minister now repeating his predecessor's reckless and unnecessary forays into this endless number of politically inspired inquiries?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

Member for Moore, if ignorance is bliss, you must be the happiest person on earth! I want to address this. Yesterday, I tabled three inquiry reports. I have not called any additional inquiries. That is what I stated, and I did that yesterday in the Parliament. What I put on the record today is: I do not want further inquiries and I do accept that they are a waste of money and time for everyone. Developers and stakeholders do not like it because the local government is in total disarray. Councillors and the community do not like it. What I am proposing—this is what I just said in answer to that question—is that I will be looking at an alternative model that will enable early intervention so that we can avoid inquiries in the future. At the moment, under the Local Government Act, there are very limited opportunities when there is a dysfunctional council and, unfortunately, an inquiry, under the current provisions, is usually what occurs, even though a minister may not want to go down that route. I am prepared to work with WALGA and with the member for Moore's party, because I know that members in his party have received complaints about local governments and chief executive officers. To suggest that it is some sort of political witch-hunt is absolute nonsense, because I have not called one inquiry yet.

The SPEAKER: Members, that concludes question time.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR Y. MUBARAKAI (Jandakot — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.47 pm]: Good afternoon, Madam Speaker! I take a moment to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today. I acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

Madam Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge your elevation to the position of Speaker and how glad I am to see that. Your service to the state of Western Australia has been inspirational and many of us in this chamber are glad to see that you have been recognised by this place.

It is an absolute privilege to be re-elected to the McGowan government and to represent the electorate of Jandakot. I would firstly like to welcome the new members; I look forward to working with you all.

The year 2020 was a difficult year for many constituents in my electorate of Jandakot, so it is with much gratitude that I acknowledge the hard work and cooperation of everyone in my electorate for participating in a unique COVID-19 election, and I graciously thank them for re-electing me. During my campaign, I had thousands of conversations via doorknocking, phone banking and community events. I often felt a great warmth and appreciation from my community for the work of the McGowan government in combating the pandemic. The win in Jandakot marks two large swings in the electorate, and I feel a huge sense of determination to serve well the people of Jandakot, who have overwhelmingly put their faith in me to represent them in this chamber.

I would like to thank all the volunteers from my campaign who worked hard and tirelessly to see me elected here once more.

I would like to address some points from the Governor's address to the Parliament. Governor Beazley spoke eloquently about the responsibility we have as parliamentarians to uphold the dignity and process of the chamber to ensure that democracy itself functions well. He asked that we, as politicians, always seek to appeal to "the better angels of our nature" in enhancing this great state and polity. The Governor spoke of the McGowan Labor government's agenda for the forty-first Parliament of Western Australia. I will address that here today for members of the Assembly. Governor Beazley said that a great deal of the government's time will go towards management of COVID-19 and prioritising the legislative tools required to respond to the pandemic, with which I agree wholeheartedly. The devastating scenes we have seen in India recently and the heartbreak of our own Indian diaspora here in Western Australia has highlighted the importance of our state's COVID measures and the capable management of the pandemic by the McGowan government.

The Governor spoke of the government's focus on jobs, stating —

The prosperity and stability of this state has always been anchored by the creation and availability of quality, stable employment.

I echo that sentiment. The WA government's Plan for Jobs is based on improving on current strengths in sectors such as mining and making sure that our workforce is trained in the skills that are needed for the jobs out there

now and to be created. An election commitment of \$95 million was announced to enhance vocational education and training career support, including the introduction of VET taster programs for year 9 students and a targeted trial placing qualified career practitioners in 70 government schools.

In my first term of office, I was proud to present an award for Trade Teacher of the Year to Tyson Alder from the College of Electrical Training in Jandakot. Mr Alder had developed some innovative methods that allowed apprenticeship students to continue their learning from home during the worst of the COVID pandemic. Passionate teachers are our state's greatest assets.

I am particularly excited by the investment that the government will be making in diversifying our economy with new manufacturing and fabrication jobs. This can be supported through government and industry working together, as well as support for a just transition for workers to green jobs of the future, which is something my good friend Steve McCartney of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union has been a strong advocate for. My electorate takes in three key industrial zones, in Cannington, Jandakot and Forrestdale. I will continue to work with our amazing industries in Jandakot to see them thrive. The McGowan government has announced it will reintroduce a new industrial relations amendment bill in addition to finalising the Work, Health and Safety Act 2020 reforms, because all workers deserve to come home safely to their families.

Governor Beazley noted the enormous investment in infrastructure underway and in the pipeline for our great state. Infrastructure like the Thornlie–Cockburn Link that is being built in my electorate as part of the Metronet project will soon deliver a huge benefit to commuters in the South East Metropolitan Region. A priority for this government will be making sure that hardworking tradies and subcontractors are not being ripped off by dodgy operators in the building and construction industry through security of payment laws.

As always with a Labor government, we will be committed to improving health services for everyday Western Australians. Our election commitments included 500 additional beds for our health system, a new women's and babies' hospital and the reintroduction of the Health Services Amendment Bill.

We have also announced a \$355 million plan to upgrade science, technology, engineering and mathematics facilities in WA schools, with \$1.5 million of those funds going to Leeming Senior High School in my electorate.

The McGowan government is also committed to the environment, with the plan for our parks to increase the amount of land under conservation. This is a government that delivers on its promises. We announced that we would introduce legislation to protect the Beelihar wetlands from the flawed Perth Freight Link. Yesterday, I was proud to stand with Minister Saffioti and my south metro colleagues as the Metropolitan Region Scheme (Beelihar Wetlands) Bill 2021 was announced to protect this sensitive wetland system well into the future.

Along with the Governor, I look forward with interest to reforms to our electoral system, in housing and on the issue of domestic violence. I was elected to the fortieth Parliament as a surprise package—an unusual and unexpected guest to this place. I never thought I would have the fortune to be a one-term member, let alone be privileged to be chosen to serve my community in the McGowan Labor government for a second term. It is a feeling like no other to have the role of representing my community again. To those who reminded me and my colleagues in this place over and over again that we were not welcome, you were only helping us to get out there and work even harder for our communities. For that, I say thank you.

To my colleagues who have been re-elected, I am excited and overjoyed to know that you are stuck with me for the next four years. To my colleagues who have served their time with distinction and are now taking some quality time in retirement after their worthy service to their electorates, my best wishes to you all and your families—from Watto to Micko, Auntie Josie to Janine, Mike to Johnno and Benjamin, my mentors, my mates and my family. And to Francis “Fran” Logan, I shall miss your presence the most.

To our newly elected members, I am mighty impressed with your efforts and journey to this place. I cannot wait to work with you all under the leadership of our Premier, Mark McGowan. We have not stopped talking about all the 19 new members who made their inaugural speeches last week. I want to share my personal thoughts and highlights from your individual contributions, beginning with the inaugural address of our new Speaker. The Speaker, Hon Michelle Roberts, is the first woman to hold the office of Speaker. In her speech, she mentioned Edith Cowan and the 100th anniversary of her being the first woman to be elected to any Parliament in the nation of Australia. Speaker Roberts mentioned that Edith Cowan was heckled all the way through her inaugural address. I was glad to see that no-one from the house decided to heckle our members as they gave their speeches during the Address-in-Reply, apart from Madam Speaker herself, who heckled the member for Mandurah!

As I mentioned earlier, I would like to individually recognise each new member's inaugural speech. I feel it is important to describe the mixed and talented pool of individuals who have come to this place and will make a contribution in the forty-first Parliament. Lara Dalton is the first woman member for Geraldton in its 131-year history. Lara talked about the resilience of the people of her electorate while dealing with cyclone Seroja. I witnessed Lara as a candidate in the 2017 election. She pretty much showed her resilience and experience from that result by coming back into this place. She also mentioned that from 1921 until today—100 years—only 93 women have been

elected to this Parliament, starting with the election of Edith Cowan. That is something to be considered. Today, with 30 new women sworn into the Legislative Assembly, that number has risen to 106, and it will rise again to 114 when the new Legislative Council members are sworn in.

Ms Caitlin Collins is the new member for Hillarys. Caitlin's story is an inspiration for us all. Many people share similar family stories involving the journey by migrants to Western Australia for a new beginning. She talked about her experience and knowledge as a teacher and about the diverse professional backgrounds of other members of this house. She indicated her interest in education and how education can change the lives of people in countries where education is not of the same quality that we have here in Western Australia. Caitlin is also the 100th woman to be elected to the WA Parliament—an amazing milestone! Caitlin's task is to make sure that the next 100 women are elected in record time. I was inspired to read a quote that Caitlin read in her inaugural speech. It is by William Butler Yeats and states —

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

Stuart Aubrey, member for Scarborough, is the youngest member of this house, and so we nicknamed him “Pup”. He is eager to share his experiences as a tradesperson. I believe he is the only tradesperson left in Parliament after the retirement of Mick Murray and Fran Logan. He is a sparky, a fly-in fly-out worker and a surf lifesaver at heart. Stuart is passionate about the Scarborough beaches and the beach life that he represents and that represents Western Australia. One of the main reasons for me coming to Western Australia as an international student was the attraction of the Western Australian beaches. The one piece of advice that allowed Stuart to get through his campaign with resilience and strength was from the Premier, who said, “Leave no stone unturned”. That is a good piece of advice for all members of this house. In his inaugural speech, Stuart read a quote from Albert Pine that has guided him through the years, which is —

What we do for ourselves dies with us. What we do for others and the world remains and is immortal.

Hannah Beazley is the first female member for Victoria Park. She has the amazing family history of having three generations of Beazleys represent the people of Victoria Park and serve in both state and federal governments. I also want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the former Treasurer, Ben Wyatt, who has retired. Hannah has some big shoes to fill. Hannah's values are about equality, diversity and inclusivity. As she stated in her inaugural speech, at the election, 11 seats changed from being represented by men to being represented by women, and all those seats are now held by Labor women. Furthermore, six of those seats are represented by women for the first time—I guess we have them in spades! What appeals most to me about Hannah's thinking—and I agree with her on this—is that Western Australia should be the factory as well as the mining engine of the nation; it should invest more in manufacturing capabilities; and our nation and WA are stronger and safer when our defence is manufactured here. Hannah is equally passionate about the quality of health care—listening to her personal story, I fully understand why—and education, and support for small businesses. Hannah also mentioned that politics is a family sport.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family, who have played a very important part in helping me to continue doing what I do today.

Katrina Stratton is the first Labor member for Nedlands and only the second woman to hold the seat since its inception in 1930. It is a remarkable achievement. Her strong intention to work alongside the community of Nedlands and show them what it means to have an active, engaged and inclusive Labor local member is a good example for all new members of Parliament. Katrina's background in social work, justice and fairness has seen her raise important issues such as grandparents raising grandchildren. Her inaugural speech had a very strong focus on policy, and I am certain that she will make some brilliant contributions to Parliament.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr Y. MUBARAKAI: I, too, would like to join Katrina in passing on a message of thanks from the over 65s to the Premier for his handling of COVID-19, and to the Premier and Deputy Premier; Minister for Health for keeping WA safe and strong.

Lisa Munday, member for Dawesville, had a smashing outcome. Lisa is the first female from the Labor Party and the first Labor member to hold the seat of Dawesville since its inception 27 years ago. Lisa's vast background in psychology, with a personal focus on the politics of psychology and character strengths, will value-add to her contribution of ensuring trust and fairness in her electorate. Lisa's advice about not being about smarts or talent, but being consistent and disciplined and being okay with failure is inspirational to those who are listening.

Ms Divina D'Anna, member for Kimberley, is a proud Yawuru woman from Broome. Her family is bigger and way more important to her than anything else on earth. This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody. Since that royal commission, more than 475 Aboriginal people have died in custody. Between 2008 and 2019, Western Australia recorded the highest number of Indigenous deaths in custody of any state or territory in Australia. That number is currently sitting at 51, which is not good enough.

Jodie Hanns, member for Collie–Preston, has some big shoes to fill after the marvellous Mick Murray, who has been involved in the grassroots of Collie–Preston for a long time. I wish Jodie all the best in her involvement with that electorate.

Ms Christine Tonkin, member for Churchlands, is the first Labor woman to hold the seat of Churchlands. She has an impressive background as an international expert in public procurement, management and reform. Christine's contributions to reform of that sector will be valuable. In her inaugural speech, Christine stated —

... we work better together when we embrace diversity. Different sections of the community have different insights, aspirations, challenges and resources.

Geoff Baker is the first Labor member for South Perth. In his inaugural speech, Geoff talked about his experiences during the election campaign. Many people had chased him down the street or through supermarkets to let him know that the McGowan Labor government was doing a fantastic job during the COVID-19 pandemic. Like many of us, Geoff's political values were developed by an inspirational teacher and mentor.

Ms Meredith Hammat is the member for Mirrabooka. It was moving to hear the story of the electorate of Mirrabooka, which is named for the southern cross, and the story of the wise man of Mirrabooka who loved and watched over his tribe. The member for Mirrabooka and I share very diverse electorates and I look forward to working with her in the forty-first Parliament. She comes from a strong union background and stands up for Western Australian workplaces to be fair, equitable and safe. She has fought for a fair go for everyday working people, and that is commendable. I wholeheartedly agree that well-paid jobs are an important way in which we can build a society in which nobody is left behind.

Mr David Scaife is the member for Cockburn. I heard about this young kid, a bright spark who was going to futureproof WA Labor's next generation of leaders. It was my mentor, Hon Fran Logan, who first broke the news of his retirement to me and that David would replace him. David has strong Labor Party values. He has been brave enough to express his stories and his courageous passion about mental health and its importance in our society today. His background as a lawyer and a voice and warrior for workers is commendable.

Mr Hugh Jones is the member for Darling Range. I talk about Hugh in a way as a friend, because I have known him for quite some time, since we were involved in a few campaigns before his time here in Parliament. He has also been a councillor for the City of Armadale, and we thank him for his service in the Navy, where he has served our country for the past 30 years. The values of discipline, teamwork and technical skills will take Hugh a long way in this place and we wish him all the very best in his term.

Dr Jags Krishnan, the member for Riverton, is a close friend. He migrated from the state of Tamil Nadu in India. I have to say that the one part of Dr Jags' story that raised the hair on the back of my neck was the news of how he missed the United Kingdom bombing by a few minutes. He told us how he tried to upset the great Terry Healy in his doorknocking numbers. I guess those are quite impressive stories to share, but most impressive of all is the story of his father giving him the right advice and telling him, "The people of Riverton have now accepted you as their son. Do to them as you would do to me." Those are valuable words.

Ms Ali Kent is the member for Kalgoorlie. It has been 20 years since Labor last held the seat of Kalgoorlie. She is the 101st woman to be elected to this Parliament. She has strong family values and brings us another story of migration, this time as part of a family from the United Kingdom that chose Western Australia for better pastures. She spoke of her deep love for Kalgoorlie and the goldfields region. She has done great work in serving her community in the space of mental health, and she shared stories about suicide prevention. The story of Sharon's devastating loss of her 19-year-old son Bryce was heart-wrenching.

I met Mr Paul Lilburne, the member for Carine, at the 2017 election and I am glad to have him join us in this house. Paul comes from an old Western Australian settler family—his oldest descendant was once the Government Resident of Albany. His passion as a teacher, the roles he has held and his involvement with the State School Teachers' Union of Western Australia since leaving university will stand him in good stead to improve education within his community. The member for Carine is also a black belt in jujitsu. I wish I had known that before because I could have used him in my campaign launch as a crowd controller, especially when the Premier was around with his rock star appeal!

Ms Rebecca Stephens is the member for Albany. I would like to take this opportunity to wish "Watto", Dianne and Harry all the best in their retirement. As Rebecca stated, he is indeed a very loved person in his community. She fully understands that, as she is local to Albany herself and has deep grassroots in her connections with Albany, not only as a small business person, but also in serving the community as a councillor for the City of Albany.

Ms Kim Giddens is Madam Acting Speaker. It was an exciting moment to have shared election night with her and watch the results come through of her emphatic win for the seat of Bateman. I guess what was inspiring for me to take away from her contribution was that she is larger than life, she is young, wild and free, and she has a passion for social justice and wrestling crocodiles in Arnhem Land! I guess her passion to end violence against women and children remains to be addressed in this state.

Ms Jane Kelsbie, the member for Warren–Blackwood, is the first female elected to the seat of Warren–Blackwood, and also the person entrusted to bring this seat back to Labor after 32 years. I am glad she graciously thanked Hon Terry Redman for representing the area and the region, and I, too, would like to wish him and his wife, Marie, all the very best in the years to come. Jane has a passion to inspire our youth and to see our young people’s confidence grow and self-esteem blossom as they start to believe they are worthy of the opportunities that come their way, and to see them proactively take up these opportunities. That is a lesson for us all to share.

On that note, Madam Acting Speaker, I would like to say that I greatly appreciate the opportunity to give my contribution to the Address-in-Reply to the Governor’s speech.

MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda) [3.15 pm]: Before I add my contribution, I, too, would like to extend my congratulations to members elected and re-elected on both sides of the house.

This morning the member for Burns Beach reminded me of the continuing contribution that the former member for Churchlands would make, particularly when he felt that we were vulnerable. I remember the by-election for Darling Range. Because of what he regarded as being a significant swing to the Liberal Party at the election, he would point around the chamber. When the member for Burns Beach this morning made mention of some of the members who were in his crosshair, so to speak, he failed to mention me, but every time I got to my feet, I seemed to excite him a little. I want to send my commiserations to the former member for Churchlands.

Ms J.J. Shaw: What?

Mr M. HUGHES: I do. We have to be generous. He is one of a number of people who failed in their attempt to be re-elected to this place. However, history pops up points of irony. It is very ironic that the newly elected member for Churchlands now sits in the seat that I used to occupy as the member for Kalamunda. I think there is a slight irony in that, do you not?

Ms J.J. Shaw: There is poetry in it.

Mr M. HUGHES: Yes, I think so, but I do not want to be too smug about it. I am truly thankful to the electorate of Kalamunda for placing faith in WA Labor again, supporting WA Labor’s continuing promise to keep WA safe and strong, and re-electing me as their member of the Legislative Assembly as part of the McGowan team.

Madam Acting Speaker, you may be aware that through its various iterations from 1974 to 1989 and from its re-establishment in 2008, the electorate of Kalamunda did not return a Labor member of the Legislative Assembly until 2017. I was that person. I like to think, actually, that given that was a blue-ribbon Liberal seat, I actually set something of a trend, seeing a significant shift away from blue-ribbon seats to the Labor Party.

Mr P. Papalia: I see where you’re going with this!

Mr M. HUGHES: I thought I set a trend. I know that the Premier’s capacity to keep us safe and strong had something to do with it; nevertheless, it was gratifying that in 2021, I was elected on 51.27 per cent of first preferences and a resulting two-party preferred vote of 61.78 per cent. Over the last two elections, we have improved our primary vote by 39.53 per cent. I think that is significant for what was formerly a Liberal seat. I know it is not as remarkable, perhaps, as the achievement of the member for Southern River, but I think I am up there, championing the Labor cause in what we previously regarded as Liberal heartland.

The records show that we have to go back 25 years, to 1996, to discover when the seat was last won on first preferences, and that was by my immediate predecessor, with a similar two-party preferred vote. I think the 2021 result in the electoral district of Kalamunda was truly a once-in-a-generation outcome. I do not want to overshadow the enormity of the total party’s success at the last election, but I think I deserve a little pat on the back, too. I hope my colleagues on this side of the house agree at least.

I know that being elected for the second time is due to the absolute determination of local members and supporters of the WA Labor Party. I am particularly appreciative of the commitment and work of the grassroots members of the Zig Zag branch, who, over decades, have remained steadfast and determined to represent Labor values in our community, providing the base on which we established the 2017 and 2021 campaigns. It was the hard work of those branch members over time, working in what was regarded as a blue-ribbon Liberal seat, in combination with the efforts of many other supporters, including previous supporters of the Liberal Party and other volunteers who came to the fore during the two election campaigns, that resulted in my election to the Legislative Assembly for a second time. I pledge that I will work hard to repay the efforts that they put in. They are the unsung heroes of our party.

I know that many traditional Liberal voters decided to support WA Labor in Kalamunda at the 2017 election, and it is gratifying that they have continued to place their trust in me. Of course, the Liberal Party had a significant reduction in its first preference vote as a result of that trust. Why did people support Labor at the 2017 election? It was because they were tired of being taken for granted by their member of Parliament, the lack of action in tackling a range of issues in the electorate, and what they saw as the Liberal–National government’s gross mismanagement of the state’s finances. It is interesting that the senior members of the opposition alliance are currently represented by one member on the opposition bench—down from six to one.

People in Kalamunda needed a change. We promised them a fresh start, and that is what they got. The Liberal–National government was viewed as increasingly out of touch with, and disconnected from, the needs and concerns of the community. Members opposite failed to understand and learn that lesson of the fortieth Parliament, and the results are all too plain to see today. They failed to adjust to being in opposition. They failed to read the mood of the people. Members opposite did not make use of the opportunity opposition provides to develop a coherent narrative based on sound policy development. They were lazy and confused, and unfit to be seen as an alternative government. Sadly, it would seem that although the Liberal Party was annihilated and reduced to two members in the Assembly, taking on the role of the junior member of a mere six-member enfeebled Liberal Party–Nationals WA alliance, it has failed to understand that members have to work hard in opposition to justify a return to the Treasury bench. From the contributions made by members opposite to the Address-In-Reply and their tactics of the last couple of weeks, it appears they remain in denial about the reasons for their comprehensive defeat at the 2021 election, and are even more ineffectual as a result.

Mr P.J. Rundle: You're a hard man.

Mr M. HUGHES: The member does not agree. The opposition needs to learn from its mistakes.

Mr P.J. Rundle: I don't think I can work much harder, put it that way.

Mr M. HUGHES: Labor values the role that government plays working with people to create a better future for ourselves, our children, their children and future generations. Keeping WA safe and strong during the COVID pandemic indicated to the people of Western Australia that they should put their faith in the Labor Party and a Labor government. In its first term, the McGowan government did not squander the trust placed in it at the 2017 election. The result of the 2021 election shows that the people of Western Australia understand the need to have a competent and strong government in place, and that is why we are here in such strong numbers.

During the first term of the McGowan Labor government, I was pleased to be able to promote a number of important issues, not least of which were aged care and palliative care. Within nine months of coming to office, the McGowan Labor government established an inter-agency aged care availability working group, in pursuit of its election commitments in this area. I am pleased to have called for the establishment of the working group and to have served as an ex officio member. The working group reported in October 2019, identifying a number of proposed responses to the barriers impacting on residential aged-care development. The ensuing Western Australian Planning Commission *Position statement: Residential accommodation for ageing persons*, gazetted in December 2020, provides guidance to all local governments on the consistent treatment of persons in residential aged care within statutory and strategic planning processes, which provides developers with greater certainty. It states, in part —

This position statement outlines the Western Australian Planning Commission's ... requirements to support the provision of residential accommodation for ageing persons within Western Australia's local government planning framework.

It seeks to remove planning process barriers and encourage the provision of an appropriate supply and diversity of options for residential accommodation by establishing consistent, simplified and streamlined approval pathways ...

The position statement complements existing government policies and services for older Western Australians, and I am pleased to have played a part in ensuring that it came into being.

The suitability of land for residential aged-care development has been incorporated into the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage's assessment process in determining the future use of surplus government land. This systematic consideration will now ensure government is able to identify and make suitably located land available for residential aged-care development. The Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage has also raised the prospect of examining aged-care facilities situated on conditional tenure land, with the prospect of considering proposals for unconditional tenure to be granted, when it can be demonstrated that this would increase organisational capacity and directly lead to increased residential aged-care provision in the state.

I am strongly of the view that the state government should engage directly with the commonwealth government to develop the means to ensure better coordination and delivery of aged care in response to Western Australia's changing demographics and in light of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's recommendations, which are necessary to repair what is clearly a broken system.

I refer to the availability of aged care in the electoral district of Kalamunda and the adjacent district of Forrestfield. During the last four years, we have seen the construction of the long-awaited Hall and Prior Aged Care Group residential aged-care facility at Karingal Green; the gazettal in August 2017 of lot 500 Gavour Road, Wattle Grove, for an integrated retirement and aged-care facility—previously rejected by Hon John Day when planning minister; the allocation in 2018 of crown land adjacent to Sunshine Park, Lesmurdie, for an expansion of the existing facility; the expansion of Valencia Aged Care Home to provide an additional 80 beds; and, recently, the repurposing of Heidelberg Park on Pomeroy Road, Lesmurdie, for aged care. This rezoning process has been fast-tracked with statutory planning requirements, and the process will be completed within 12 months. I am advised by the department that the land is scheduled to be offered to the market imminently.

I am particularly pleased that as part of the COVID-19 recovery plan, \$9.5 million has been allocated for the enhancement of palliative care facilities at Kalamunda Hospital. The intention is that the hospital will be developed as a centre of excellence for the delivery of palliative care in the East Metropolitan Region. I think it is fair to claim that more has been achieved in the last four years than was achieved in the previous 23 years in removing constraints on the provision of residential aged-care facilities and in the identification and provision of suitable land, with a resulting increase in the number of aged-care beds available in the district.

The schools in my electorate were neglected under the previous government, but a significant contribution has been made to improving facilities for schools in the electorate of Kalamunda since the McGowan Labor government was elected. I will not go through all the funding that has been made available, but as part of the maintenance blitz across the state, \$3.938 million was spent on providing much-needed maintenance in schools in the electorate of Kalamunda, including the school at Pickering Brook, which used to be in the electorate of Darling Range until the boundaries were redrawn for the most recent election. A further \$535 000 has gone to minor improvements in the schools across the district. We spent \$1.5 million on an administration upgrade to Kalamunda Primary School and \$1.1 million on an administration upgrade to Falls Road Primary School. As part of the COVID recovery plan, we committed \$15.2 million to completely rebuild Lesmurdie Primary School on its existing site. The school has required that action to be taken for at least the last 20 years. An amount of \$18.3 million has been provided for what I hope is the first stage of the upgrade of Kalamunda Senior High School. An amount of \$2 million has been provided to Lesmurdie Senior High School and \$1.7 million to Kalamunda Senior High School for STEM upgrades. An amount of \$730 000 has gone to Gooseberry Hill Primary School to upgrade existing classrooms and improve air conditioning.

In the area of community infrastructure, we have expended \$5.5 million on the completion of the community learning centre at Jorgensen Park in Kalamunda. As part of the COVID recovery plan, \$5 million went towards the first stage of the upgrade of Ray Owen Reserve. We provided \$2.02 million for the upgrade of trails at Goat Farm Mountain Bike Park and the Kalamunda Circuit. We have also made an election commitment of \$8.4 million towards funding an enhancement of visitor facilities at John Forrest National Park. Members present might not be aware that John Forrest National Park is WA's first national park and the second-oldest national park in Australia.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr M. HUGHES: We made a number of pre-election commitments totalling close to \$1 million to fund a range of small projects across the electorate. Funding will be provided to Walliston Scout Group; Darlington History Group; Mahogany Creek Hall; Break the Boundary; Kalamunda Lapidary Club; Kalamunda Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service; Darling Range Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade; Kalamunda Bush Fire Brigade; Kalamunda Men's Shed; Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade; Kalamunda RSL; Mundaring Cemetery; the Victoria Road children's playground in Hovea; Burkinshaw Park in Glen Forrest; Norris Park in Stoneville; the Kalamunda Club; Kalamunda Tennis Club; Lesmurdie Tennis Club; Kalamunda District Bridge Club; and Kalamunda Community Radio station.

We have also made an election commitment of \$1.6 million over the next four years to the Perth Observatory in Bickley to provide assistance for its recurrent operations and STEM projects. This is in addition to the close to \$1 million provided in the first term of the McGowan government by Lotterywest for a number of education initiatives and conservation projects at the observatory.

Mr D.A. Templeman: What was the amount for the election commitment?

Mr M. HUGHES: The election commitment was \$1.6 million over four years, not in one hit. It is interesting that when the opposition got wind of that before we made the official announcement—there was a bit of a leakage from the announcement that we made to the club—my Liberal opponent came out and pledged \$2 million. I am not sure where they got that figure from. I worked for four years with the Perth Observatory to try to get security of funding for both recurrent purposes and some of its projects. Interesting—tell the honourable member for Cottesloe about that.

I have 11 minutes left. I am going through some of the achievements that we have made in broad policy since I have been the member for Kalamunda. For aged care, we have done as much as we can as we do not have the kind of levers that the commonwealth government has, as the delivery of aged care lays in its jurisdiction. We have certainly improved processes and done what we can to try to make land that is—it is not quite within the gift of government—owned by government available for aged-care purposes.

In the area of public transport and road and community safety, the \$86 million upgrade separation of Kalamunda Road and Roe Highway is nearing completion. We have completed the upgrade of Great Eastern Highway from Bilgoman Road to Mundaring township. Following that, we instituted a road safety audit in May 2020 to make sure that the newly upgraded road was, effectively, fit for purpose. We started some additional works to improve sightlines at several intersections by clearing vegetation, relocating and modifying road safety barriers, relocating some streetlighting and applying some line marking. These works are expected to be completed in July 2021.

We have installed light-controlled pedestrian crossings at Great Eastern Highway in Mundaring Village, near the shopping precinct. We have improved the light-controlled crossing, including the timing of light changes, at the

intersection of Great Eastern Highway and Stoneville Road to improve safety for the disabled. With the agreement of Main Roads Western Australia, we will install a light-controlled pedestrian crossing on Canning Road in Kalamunda. The City of Kalamunda will have to meet the costs of that.

We have improved the services for the 307 and 322 bus routes to facilitate students travelling to and from school, obviating the need for them to travel via Midland to access services in Kalamunda and Lesmurdie. We obtained the special event bus service that travels from Kalamunda bus station to Optus Stadium and return.

The state has committed to allocating \$10 million to match the federal government's funding commitment to develop the EastLink WA freight route, formerly known as the Orange Route. That is intended to remove heavy vehicle travel from Greenmount Hill.

An amount of \$1.1 million has been committed to upgrading the lighting and pavement markings on Canning Road, between Welshpool Road and Glenisla Road; and \$740 000 has been committed for the installation of a much-needed roundabout at the intersection of Railway Road and Elizabeth Street in Kalamunda.

In land use planning and areas like that, I worked to reverse the decision of the previous Liberal–National government to rezone Wilkins Road reserve for urban development. We ensured the retention of land on Schmitt Road for the alignment of the Railway Reserves Heritage Trail, which was against a decision to subdivide it for residential purposes. I worked closely with Save Perth Hills to demonstrate to the Western Australian Planning Commission the flaws in the North Stoneville structure plan, SP34, which led to its refusal by the Western Australian Planning Commission. I chaired the Pickering Brook and surrounds sustainability and tourism strategy government working group that made specific recommendations for the modest but meaningful and sustainable expansion of the Pickering Brook town site, much sought after for at least three decades. As chair of that same working group, I am in the process of delivering a report and recommendations to government regarding strategies to preserve identified high-priority agricultural land in the district and to enhance business activity in the district linked to agritourism and ecotourism.

Issues that are raised with me in conversation across communities in my electorate are as varied as they are particular, but time does not permit me to speak to each of them in detail. However, there is much to keep me busy over the next four years. I will continue to focus on ensuring that school facilities keep pace with demand and the expectations of the education of students in the twenty-first century. There is a particular necessity, I think, to ensure that the accommodation provided for children in the early childhood phase of learning in schools is up to par. As we have lowered the age of formal schooling to embrace kindergarten, it is the case that established schools have had to adapt existing facilities or make use of demountable classrooms for this purpose, often with results that are below par. Glen Forrest Primary School is a case in point. That school, I believe, would benefit from a major upgrade of its facilities, particularly with the construction of a purpose-built early-years learning centre. It remains for me to prosecute that argument. Kalamunda Senior High School requires the continued phased redevelopment of the campus in accordance with its new master plan to include consolidation of its performing arts and manual arts facilities. In conjunction with the member for Swan Hills, I hope to prosecute the case for a comprehensive review of the facilities assessment that has been undertaken for Eastern Hills Senior High School. I think that school probably needs a bit of a look at, too.

There are a number of other initiatives that have been brought to my attention, some of which are major projects that will bear examination. The Minister for Culture and the Arts has left the chamber, but I think there is an argument to be mounted for the development of a new arts and culture centre in Mundaring.

Ms J.J. Shaw: The parliamentary secretary is still here.

Mr M. HUGHES: So she is; I apologise. The parliamentary secretary might deal with that.

We need to source, whether from our government or the commonwealth government, funding for the remaining stages of the redevelopment of Ray Owen Reserve. I am keen for the government to undertake an examination of the feasibility of the restoration of the Alan Fernie Pavilion in Pickering Brook. I think there is justification for funding the upgrade of the Pickering Brook Bowling Club greens. There is an argument for the establishment of an Indigenous culture and learning centre and an improved visitor experience at the Perth Observatory in Bickley. That could become an iconic visitor destination, if it were marketed well. It would bring together 60 000 years of looking at the night sky along with, let us say, 200 years of navigation to this neck of the woods on wooden ships with sextants. I think there is an intersect between the science of our Indigenous community and that of our more recent arrivals. An argument could be mounted for the improved access and management of the Zig Zag Scenic Drive and adjoining national park, and improved visitor amenities. There is an argument for the funding of an upgrade of Kalamunda Water Park and certainly an argument for the upgrade of the Stoneville Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade fire station and training facility—to name but a few.

I have a couple of minutes to go. I am interested also in engaging further with the community about ways in which the government can secure the future of the Perth hills, and to preserve the hills and its communities from incompatible development. I could have made comments on public transport, but I will leave that for another day.

I want to return to where I began and say this: I am deeply appreciative of the work members of my campaign team and a host of volunteers brought to the campaign not only in 2017, but also repeated in 2021. I wish to thank particularly Hon Dave Kelly, my campaign director; Luke Clark, my campaign manager; Lorna Harper, MLC-elect; Nancy Reed; Brodie Park; and Nigel Dickinson for their combined efforts as part of the core of my campaign team. On the ground, we were enthusiastically supported by the Zig Zag branch members whom I mentioned earlier, but I particularly would like to thank Ben Zuber, Howard Watts, Chris Brown, John Walker, John Reed, and Marcia and Ray Maher. I am particularly indebted to the United Workers Union for its practical contribution, and to Tim Picton, Ellie Whiteaker and the WA Labor central headquarters team for direction in the 2021 campaign.

I am particularly grateful for the support and encouragement of my family, particularly my wife and her wise counsel—that is, Christine—who, despite undergoing major surgery in the weeks before the 13 March election, was out on the pre-poll booth in Midland and the Darlington booth on election day, setting up and coordinating support for polling booth workers. I am constantly amazed by her resilience and capacity for hard work and her unstinting support of me on what is a second career.

In conclusion, congratulations to the McGowan Labor government. It did much to restore faith in government in this state in its first term, and it has been repaid magnificently for the 2021 election. I am humbled to have been given the opportunity to have been re-elected as a member of the forty-first Parliament. The people of Western Australia will not be disappointed in me, nor will they be disappointed in the second-term Labor government.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr S.J. Price**.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

Special

On motion without notice by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 25 May 2021, at 2.00 pm.

House adjourned at 3.46 pm
