

**RAMS — SCREENWEST PRODUCTION — MT BARKER**

*Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts)** [9.05 am]: I rise to inform the house that last Monday, 1 October, filming for *Rams*, starring Sam Neil and Michael Caton, began in Mt Barker, bringing to the region an energy and a buzz of excitement. The production is one of WA's latest big-name feature films to showcase great home-grown talent both in front of and behind the camera. *Rams* received major production investment support from the Western Australian Regional Film Fund, administered by Screenwest, with direct support from the state government of \$1 million. The film also received Screenwest production funding via support from Lotterywest of \$550 000. This support from the McGowan government allows the film to be shot entirely in our state's magnificent great southern region, employing a great number of WA creatives and crew for the duration of production. As part of this government's commitment to a creative Western Australia, this funding continues to encourage investment in the unique and talented people of this state and to provide the opportunity to create more jobs within creative industries. I met with producers Janelle Landers and Aiden O'Bryan, Screenwest head of production and development Matthew Horrocks, director Jeremy Sims and a raft of cast in the beautiful Plantagenet Hotel in Mt Barker.

*Rams* is the next in a long line of feature films to be shot in the southern part of Western Australia, which includes *Breath in Denmark*, *Go Karts* in Busselton, *Jasper Jones* in Pemberton, and *Drift* in Margaret River and Nannup. It is vital that we continue investing in our local film and screen industry. We must acknowledge the economic benefit that local film and screen productions bring to local people and their communities and how it encourages and builds skill development and ensures a stronger future for our state. The recent success that the screen industry has enjoyed in Western Australia is a testament to our local talent, who continue to drive our uniqueness, and also the commitment by the McGowan government to ensure that our Western Australian stories and voices are heard around the world.