

TOURISM INVESTMENT

**122. Ms J.J. SHAW to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to the fall in international visitor numbers that this government inherited due to the previous Liberal–National government’s —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Start again.

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I refer to the fall in international visitor numbers that this government inherited due to the previous —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the member for Dawesville. The question will be heard in silence.

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** I refer to the fall in international visitor numbers that this government inherited due to the previous Liberal–National government’s lack of investment in tourism, —

Several members interjected.

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** I refer to the fall in international visitor numbers that this government inherited due to the previous Liberal–National government’s lack of investment in tourism, tourism jobs, and attracting direct flights to Western Australia.

Several members interjected.

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** I refer to the fall in international visitor numbers that this government inherited due to the previous Liberal–National government’s lack of investment in tourism, tourism jobs, and attracting direct flights to Western Australia. Can the minister outline what is being done to turn around this appalling lack of investment in tourism that the McGowan Labor government inherited; and can the minister advise what the government is doing to address the damaging impact —

**Mr S.K. L’Estrange** interjected.

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** Would you like me to start again, Mr Speaker?

**The SPEAKER:** No. It is all right. I am writing it down, and there is going to be a whole list of calls to order in a minute when the member has finished her question.

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** Can the minister advise what the government is doing to address the damaging impact —

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L’ESTRANGE:** Just for clarification, Mr Speaker, if you are going to call somebody on this side of the chamber, we would like to know at the point that they are called if they have breached the standing orders.

**The SPEAKER:** I will make that decision. I want to get the question out, and your members keep interjecting, so I am going to let the member have her say, and then you will get the good news.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** Can the minister outline what is being done to turn around this appalling lack of investment in tourism that the McGowan Labor government inherited; and can the minister advise what the government is doing to address the damaging impact this has had on Western Australian tourism and tourism jobs?

**The SPEAKER:** Before you answer, minister, I call the member for Carine for the second time; and the members for Geraldton, Vasse and Churchlands for the first time.

*Point of Order*

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** Standing order 77, under “Rules for questions”, states —

**77.** The following general rules apply to questions —

(1) Questions should not contain —

(a) preambles, opinions, statements of facts or names of persons unless they are necessary to render the question intelligible ...

They should not contain arguments, allegations, inferences, imputations or opinions.

**The SPEAKER:** It is not a point of order.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

*Point of Order*

**The SPEAKER:** This is ridiculous. We are trying to get a question up and, as I said yesterday, just be quiet for a moment, please. All of a sudden, over the last two days, we are going into standing orders. Question time is the opposition's time to keep the government to account. Yesterday we went until 3.10 pm; today we will be finishing at 2.50 pm. If you want to play these games and do all the standing orders, you will not benefit because you will not get your questions up.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Mr Speaker, thank you for your guidance. This is not about games. All we are trying to ascertain is that when somebody is called to order, they need to know why they are being called to order at the point in time that they are being called to order.

**Mr M.P. Murray** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** I call the Minister for Sport and Recreation to order for the first time.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Further to the point of order, the opposition, particularly the Manager of Opposition Business, is clearly canvassing your ruling and should be called to order. He is clearly canvassing your ruling. I am drawing your attention to this. I believe he should be called to order; he clearly does not understand the standing orders.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Churchlands, I heard your point of order in silence. You have interjected twice. I could call you to order twice for that, but I have not.

That is not a point of order. Let us get back to the answer.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Thank you, Mr Speaker, and I thank the member for Swan Hills for her question, which we eventually heard.

It is a good thing that there is so much attention on tourism. In fact, it is obvious that there has not been anywhere near the amount of attention on tourism over the past nine years than there has been in the last six months; we could safely say that. We have drawn more attention to tourism and there is more action occurring in the tourism portfolio now than at any time under the four responsible tourism ministers of the previous government.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** When we took office, the first industry forum the Premier hosted was with the tourism industry. He sought its advice as to the key issues it confronted. It said things were diabolical. That was in March last year. Things were diabolical. The industry requested that we take some action to immediately try to bring people from interstate and overseas to this state, and to take action to re-establish a marketing presence on the east coast, which had been shut down six years earlier by the previous government. We did those things. In September, we asked Tourism WA to bring forward and run campaigns in China, Singapore, Malaysia and the east coast to draw people to Western Australia. As a consequence, between September and December, 52 417 more people arrived in Western Australia than had arrived over the same period 12 months earlier.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** One of the things about the international visitor survey's data is that it covers a period of 12 months, so clearly a significant proportion of the period between December 2016 to December 2017 was under the previous government, and the consequences of the previous government's strategy was felt throughout that period. In September last year the Auditor General tabled a report that condemned the previous government's 2020 strategy. We have abandoned that strategy and we have directed Tourism WA to create a two-year action plan to immediately respond to the need to fill our hotel beds. That is being developed in conjunction with the industry and it will be released in coming weeks for all to see, and the industry fully supports it.

Other things we have done include building relationships with our Asian markets. When I went to China for the first time for a tourism ministers' meeting, I sought a meeting with one of the senior executives of China Southern—the only airline that flies directly from China to Western Australia, four days a week. In comparison, Melbourne gets 14 flights a day and Sydney gets 12. There are similarly large numbers for Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Cairns. We do not have direct flights at anywhere near the proportion we should because of the previous government. When was the last time —

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the third time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The senior executive from China Southern looked at me with interest, because I was the first WA tourism minister he had seen. In fact, I was the first WA tourism minister to visit China since 2011 and the first WA tourism minister to visit Japan since 2012. We do not have a direct flight from Tokyo, either; that went away in 2012. We are focused on getting direct flights from Shanghai, Tokyo and India, for which the one from London will assist. We are going to establish ourselves as the western gateway to Australia—that is the objective. That is what will fix this problem. There will be a return on this effort and it will be in the short term. I can guarantee the house that this government cares about tourism and is doing something to fix the mess we inherited.