

BREATH — FILM PREMIERES

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [12.10 pm]: I would like to inform the house of significant events I had the pleasure of attending, the state premieres of *Breath*, in Albany on 21 April and in Perth on 23 April, prior to the film's Australian theatrical release in May. *Breath* is based on a novel by one of Western Australia's most celebrated authors, Tim Winton, and is the directorial debut of Simon Baker. Filmed entirely in the great southern region, it employed many local creatives and crew over the duration of the production, contributing significantly to the local economy. *Breath* received major production investment support of \$2 million from Screen Australia, \$800 000 from Screenwest and Lotterywest, and \$1.5 million from the royalties for regions regional film fund.

The local production had a significant impact on the region's economy, supporting an estimated 150 jobs over the project's life and generating an estimated \$5.6 million short-term benefit for the local economy. The film not only showcases Tim Winton's incredible storytelling, it also features the region's magnificent natural landscape. Having previously premiered at the 2018 Toronto International Film Festival and the Gold Coast Film Festival, the film will contribute to promoting Western Australia as a world-class tourist attraction.

Cultural tourism is founded on a respect for and valuing of authentic cultural experience through the telling of the rich stories that Western Australia can offer. This is inseparable from our state's rich nature-based experiences. There are significant social and economic benefits from cultural tourism including employment, economic growth, and the long-term benefits it provides to health and community wellbeing outcomes. In a regional context, it is critical that we not only promote a deep appreciation of the magnificent WA landscape, but also highlight the connection between culture and creativity. *Breath* offers a good example of this connection.

It is important that we keep telling local stories and using local voices, and the only way we can continue to do this is to showcase the real outcomes from these sorts of local initiatives and attract new investment in creative industries in our great state. I congratulate all involved in bringing this unique Western Australian story to the screen and for continuing to share our rich stories with the world.