

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 13 August 2013]

p3241c-3293a

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Peter Watson; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Fran Logan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Dave Kelly; Mr David Templeman; Mr Bill Johnston

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**APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT) RECURRENT 2013–14 BILL 2013**  
**APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED ACCOUNT) CAPITAL 2013–14 BILL 2013**

*Declaration as Urgent*

On motion by **Mr T.R. Buswell (Treasurer)**, resolved —

That in accordance with standing order 168(2), the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013 be considered urgent bills.

*Cognate Debate*

Leave granted for the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013 to be considered cognately, and for the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2012 to be the principal bill.

*Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from 8 August.

**MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park)** [4.08 pm]: I advise the chamber that I am not the lead speaker on the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013.

During the matter of public interest debate the Treasurer said that it is easy to govern from the cheap seats. Indeed, I will remind Liberal backbenchers and, indeed, the Treasurer and members of cabinet that when the now Treasurer sat on this side of the chamber, it was easy for him to make demands of the former Labor government. I will do a comparison of exactly how the demands of the Treasurer and the Premier when they sat on this side of the house have been met once they moved into government. The Premier has had two different split personalities during his parliamentary career—the opposition member for Cottesloe and the government member for Cottesloe. I will go through some of those stark and destructive differences that will leave generations of Western Australians with a significant problem in respect of governments that they will elect into the future.

This budget is the budgetary equivalent of throwing your hands into the air and saying, “This financial management gig is way too hard!” All that stuff over the last 20 years that Richard Court, Geoff Gallop and Alan Carpenter applied around issues of debt, about the mix of debt and sustainability of interest assumptions has all been walked away from. We now have seen the Treasurer walking away from the AAA credit rating saying, “If we lose AAA, it is just an issue that will result in a small increase in interest charges.” He is walking away from the credit rating that has been a guiding principle in Western Australian financial management for at least the last 20 years.

The budget represents the last four to five years’ financial management of this government coming home to roost. As I have said time and again, under Colin Barnett we have had strong revenue growth. Prior to this budget we had some 30 per cent revenue growth, but 40 per cent expense growth. It is utterly unsustainable. I will talk about the caps that the Treasurer used to argue against. This budget is putting on the Western Australian credit card the great big lie of the election campaign. Members will all remember the great big lie—namely, it is fully funded, fully costed! That was the great big lie of the Western Australian election campaign of 2013 because when that lie was proven, and when the third party—namely, the commonwealth government—did not come to the party with rivers of extra revenue, instead of what people would normally expect a conservative political party to do in prioritising and budgeting out accordingly across the terms, the Treasurer said, “Don’t worry about it. We’re going to build it all, and we’re going to build it now—and let’s not worry about the debt!”

It is important to note that the Premier only has himself to blame for the financial circumstances in which he now finds himself. He has created this big spending government; he has created this now very big taxing government; and he has created the problem that his budget apparently was meant to fix. I will make some comments about the FA plan—the fiscal action plan—shortly. Of even more concern is that the financial horror story that this budget is based on the fact of absolutely no room for error. I say to the so-called liberal backbenchers—I have heard their inaugural speeches—that they were elected to provide government, not just whilst Colin Barnett is the Premier, but also to leave future generations of Western Australians with a government that can respond to the infrastructure demands of their times. That is also their responsibility that they have walked away from. When making the point that this is a budget with no room for error, I say that all Liberal backbenchers should refer to page 68 of the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, budget paper No 3. It is sober reading, because despite massive increases in debt, there are still so many unknowns—the unknown unknowns!

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I refer members to pages 68 to 70, which are sober reading. Under health spending, it says that the Fiona Stanley Hospital commissioning has gone incredibly well under the stewardship of Colin Barnett. However, it makes this point —

Following the Government's announcement, negotiations commenced with Serco to re-profile the delivery of facilities management services ...

It goes on —

There is a significant risk that approved expenditure on service reconfiguration and commissioning activities at FSH, including costs under the facilities management contract, are under-stated in 2013–14 and 2014–15. WA Health was unable to quantify the expected financial impacts at the time of finalising the 2013–14 Budget estimates ...

It goes on under “Health Information and Communications Technology” —

This future investment requirement for the State's health system could be substantial.

I refer to the government trading enterprises. Another \$1.1 billion of Western Power investment may come into those books. I do not need to say anything more about Verve and Muja!

I turn to police officers. Interestingly, page 70 of the budget paper states that some \$282 million has been committed; however, it states that this money —

... does not include the recruitment and deployment costs of additional public servants or the resulting accommodation requirements for the additional officers.

The costings put forward by the Liberal Party as its election promises estimated that as another \$60 million!

Under “Bunbury to Albany Pipeline”, the budget papers further state —

Future revenue from the users of the pipeline may not be sufficient for a private investor to recover its investment, potentially resulting in the need for an ongoing public sector subsidy.

Liberal Party members have delivered a dog! Not only is the horror story contained in this so-called budget leaving future generations of Western Australians with debt that has no limit, but also government members are assuming everything is going to be okay. There is no margin for error whatsoever in these budget papers. Clearly, what has happened since the election, since the federal government did not come to the party with billions of dollars to fund the election commitments made by Colin Barnett, is that a political decision has been made. I dare say it was not cabinet, which is an irrelevant side process to the way Mr Barnett governs. It would have been a conversation between the Premier and the Treasurer. They would have said, “Look; politically we can just keep going. We'll do everything. We'll put it on the debt meter. We'll put it on bank card. We've got to walk away from the financial management parameters that have guided the WA governments for at least the last 20 years.” Incredibly, the Treasurer agreed and became complicit in what is clearly the Premier's ambition to be remembered simply for the monuments regardless of the costs and how we will pay for them. When I think about what the Treasurer used to say when on the opposition side of the chamber—I will go through that in a minute—it shows a betrayal of himself; namely, he has walked away from every ambition and every standard that he demanded when he sat on this side of the chamber.

I will take members back, because from the cheap seats, as the Treasurer called the opposition benches, I will quote some of the things that the Treasurer used to say. One of the things that the Treasurer liked to demand was that the former Labor government impose on itself a per capita spending cap. Demand—that indeed was the case! On 11 April 2006, the now Treasurer moved a motion as a matter of public interest stating —

That this house condemns the government for its failure to control the growth of the state's public sector expenditure and its ongoing failure to cap recurrent public sector expenditure increases at the real per capita growth rate.

He wanted it capped! He wanted it capped at effectively population growth plus inflation. When government members talk about population growth, that cap would allow for that, but that is not their excuse. I refer to what the now Treasurer said of the former Labor government about not meeting that cap; he said —

... the government could not cap public spending growth at real per capita levels, because it lacked the discipline and the capacity to manage the state's finances effectively.

That is what the Treasurer said. Later on during that debate, he went on further —

This government has put future generations of people in this state in a very precarious situation by creating structural instability in Western Australia. The great tragedy of the government's

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mismanagement and the explosion of public sector expenditure in this state is that it has mismanaged the good times. Future generations of people in this state will be left with a legacy for which I fear they will pay for a long time to come.

When the Treasurer sat in his so-called cheap seats, he condemned the former Labor government for failing to put a per capita expense growth cap on government at that time. He decried that failure as lacking the discipline and capacity to manage the state's finances. Nevertheless, here we have a government that not only never meets that cap, but also has now changed its financial targets in its budget. This was not part of the now Treasurer's speech when he got up and said, "By the way, I am also changing the financial targets of government." Every year for at least the past decade, and certainly under the budget papers of this government—that is, its 2009–10, 2011–12 and 2012–13 papers—one of its financial targets was to ensure that real per capita own-purpose general government expenses do not increase. Do members know what? It has suddenly gone! That has been changed. Of the five targets, four of them are new and, interestingly, the per capita cap is gone. The cap the Treasurer demanded, and said that if it could not be met, it meant financial discipline was lacking, is now gone and has been replaced with "ensuring that annual general government sector expense growth does not exceed revenue growth". What an extraordinary change from the former political animal; the holder of Liberal Party philosophy when he sat in the cheap seats on this side of the house, compared to where he now sits.

Unsurprisingly, I want to now turn to debt. I looked back at the last nine or 10 budget speeches made by Treasurers. In every speech the word "debt" was mentioned. There was a paragraph referring to debt. In fact, I want to take members back to a long, long time ago—to last year!—to when Treasurer Porter came down here and delivered his budget. Now when I look back, the fact that Treasurer Porter delivered his budget and then immediately quit is starting to make a lot more sense. I have simply cut and pasted the paragraph in Treasurer Porter's speech that refers to debt. It reads —

Net debt at 30 June 2012 is estimated at \$15.2billion, which is significantly lower than forecast in the Mid-Year Review and the last Budget.

Wait for it, members; this is the good bit —

This Budget also shows net debt peaking in 2014–15 —

He still has the word "peaking" underlined to make that political point. It continues —

again at a level below previous estimates; and shows debt commencing its reduction in the final outyear 2015-16.

A year ago, when the Treasurer handed his budget down and then quit, debt was peaking and then commencing its reduction. That is what former Treasurer Porter said. It is worth reflecting on what has happened in the last year. We would have thought there would be a dramatic turnaround in finances in light of the fact we are now looking at debt peaking. It certainly does not peak over the next 10 years when it will reach \$47 billion, but that is not yet confirmed as peaking. It continues to rise by billions and billions into the out years. Are we seeing an economic catastrophe? No, we have not. The difference between Treasurer Porter's 2012 budget speech and Treasurer Buswell's budget speech delivered just last week shows a 0.3 per cent reduction in revenue and at the same time a more than \$2 billion increase in debt.

When I left the chamber after Mr Buswell's budget speech, I scratched my head and thought, "I don't recall the Treasurer talking about debt; I don't recall that standard paragraph about debt being part of the Treasurer's speech," so I thought that I must be mistaken. So I went online, brought up his speech and keyed "debt" into Adobe's search area. The response was "Reader has finished searching the document. No matches were found." Interestingly, Treasurer Buswell does not want to talk about debt anymore not only because he is unable to meet the per capita expense growth demands he made when he used to sit in the cheap seats, but also because it is getting to levels that are damaging to the future of Western Australia, as we all know and as members opposite all know in their heart of hearts.

I will again take members back—a long time ago!—to 4 September 2010 when the Premier said the following —

"In reality you don't have to pay back the debt, what you have to do is make sure the debt is (under) control and as a guide I'm intending keeping our total level of net debt below \$20 billion,"

I was so curious by that statement at the time that I asked the Premier a question in Parliament, just three days later, when he replied —

As a guide—in fact I made this comment to Treasury the other day—I would not want to see, in absolute terms, state debt rise above \$20 billion.

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Not only was that the Premier's view but he "mentioned it to Treasury the other day" before he said it, so clearly the Premier was serious when he said he did not want to see debt rise. This is an interesting point. When the Premier said he did not want to see net debt rise above \$20 billion, it was September 2010 and the 2010–11 budget had been delivered just a few months previously. I thought, "Now that we are looking at \$28 billion, what has changed? I must have missed that other financial catastrophe that wiped out revenue." I looked at the 2010–11 budget about which the Premier said debt would not rise above \$20 billion and I looked at the actual revenue return, which showed an extra \$6.5 billion in revenue. The reality members opposite must face up to is that the bloke running their government says anything and it makes no sense because he says it and moves on. He may mention it in a comment to Treasury, but he says it and moves on, and members opposite all endorse it; I saw them clapping the budget—the dog they will leave future generations of Western Australian to deal with.

Where is that debt being held? I have always complained about ever-increasing components of debt being held in the general government sector. We all talk about good debt and bad debt. Members opposite will all stand up and say, "Debt is good; all these income-producing assets; it is wonderful; we need it all," like the good left-wing organisation they are on that side of the chamber.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Led by the Premier.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** They are led by comrade Barnett, loving it. He has a big picture of Gough Whitlam in his office! I have no doubt he is admiring his approach: "Don't worry about it, we'll build everything." The problem is where that debt is being made up. We talk about income-producing assets but the reality is that an increasing component of the debt is being held in the general government sector. By 2014, 33 per cent of total net debt will be held in the general government sector. By 2017, the end of the forward estimates, it will be 45 per cent. More and more debt is being held in the general government sector. Part of the reason, no doubt, is that Mr Barnett has been unable to account for the sugar rush he gets from revenue and worries later about redistribution from the Commonwealth Grants Commission. But bigger components are being held in the general government sector.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I take members back to one of the most sterling speeches made by the Premier. I remind members of the member for Cottesloe in opposition and the member for Cottesloe in government; these are two very different creatures, and members should not confuse them as the one individual. I take members back to 28 August 1991, when I was finishing year 12, and the then opposition member for Cottesloe moved a motion in this place to establish a select committee to inquire into debt and to develop a debt management strategy. The opposition member for Cottesloe said the following about debt being held in the general government sector—debt being used to invest in non-income producing assets —

... we need a change in policy in the way in which we operate our State Budget. We need to shift the financing of non-income generating assets away from debt finance into finance from current revenues. That is the socially responsible thing to do, it is the economically responsible thing to do, and for this generation it is a fair thing to do for the coming generation.

That is what the opposition member for Cottesloe said about debt in the general government sector, yet, now, members—I remember the first speeches of all those new members on low tax and small government—45 per cent of debt is being held in the general government sector. By 2013, the government's annual interest bill will be just under a billion dollars—\$930 million a year in interest. I note in passing that one of the other changes to the government's financial targets is that it has removed the cost of interest measure; it has gone, and I dare say there has been a deliberate strategy around that because members opposite know that the current low interest rate environment will not be here forever. The government is getting that awkward one out of the way before interest rates eventually start to rise.

I keep waving this paper around because, as I said at the beginning of my speech, this is the great lie—the "fully funded, fully costed" lie. At the time Treasury said there was a \$1.2 billion net debt impact. That was Treasury's estimate of the total impact of the Liberal Party's election commitments. Two days before the election we find out, as I said, that it was based on a third party paying for the vast majority of its election commitments. But the fully funded, fully costed lie is now physically being parked on the taxpayers' credit card.

Fiscally conservative! What a load of codswallop! The fiscally conservative people are on this side of the chamber. They are certainly not on that side of the chamber.

Instead of a debt of \$1.2 billion, we got another \$1 billion, and we now have a debt of \$2.2 billion. This is starting to be reminiscent of the Bligh government in Queensland, which after the election broke election promises, abandoned the AAA credit rating and took on debt. We have seen what happened in Queensland: the electorate passed judgement on the Bligh government for walking away from its election commitments.

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**Mr J.H.D. Day:** So what projects would you not do?

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That is the great irony, minister. We had identified \$3 billion in savings. I remember that on television that night, the government member for Cottesloe said that we had gone crazy, because these are all important things that need to be done. That was when, as shadow Treasurer, I foolishly operated on the assumption that we had to pay for our election promises! I now know that that was ridiculous! Under the member for Cottesloe's paradigm in which we now operate, I know that when in government we do not need to take responsibility for our election commitments! But that was a different time. That was a lovely time. It was a time when Western Australians might have looked forward —

**Mr M. McGowan:** As the Premier says, stop dwelling on the past!

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Yes, stop dwelling on the past! Those times have now gone!

I will now go to revenue, because apparently, looking at that \$47 billion long-term terrifying projection of debt, revenue must have disappeared, suddenly, since former Treasurer Christian Porter said just 12 months ago that net debt will be "peaking"—that is underlined on the Treasury website—in 2014–15. Now, between the time when Mr Barnett moved from being the opposition member for Cottesloe to being the government member for Cottesloe in 2012–13, the government has received an extra \$2.5 billion in revenue that it had not budgeted for. This government has been awash with revenue. The government has handed down its budgets, and money has flowed in on top of that. Since the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* for the 2013–14 budget was handed down—just a few months ago, members—the financial crisis that the government claimed immediately after the election has not eventuated.

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** In 2013–14, there will be revenue growth of 8.9 per cent, or nearly nine per cent. Unfortunately, that will be pretty much eclipsed by the fact that the government cannot control its spending. As I have said, between the time of the PFPS and the budget that the government has just handed down, there has been a change in revenue of only 0.5 per cent. That is despite what has been done to net debt.

I want to remind members what we heard from the Treasurer prior to the election. This was when he was sitting in the expensive seats of government. I will not forget it, because I saw it as a message to the Premier. I refer to an article by Peter Kerr in *The Weekend West* of 19 January 2013, as the state election campaign was heating up. The article is headed, "Buswell turns on cautious mode", and it quotes the Treasurer as follows —

In any event, he said ... the Government would take a watchful approach to changes in royalty revenue, which now make up 20 per cent of the State's income. Any rise, he said, would mainly be used to pay off net debt, which is forecast to hit \$24.8 billion by 2015.

The Treasurer is storming out of the chamber in high dudgeon! The article goes on to quote the Treasurer as follows —

He said the Government would aim to stabilise debt in its second term, if re-elected, and said that he would have a fully costed plan before March 9.

Fully funded, fully costed! This is the great lie of the 2013 election campaign.

The Treasurer said that the government would stabilise debt by using the extra revenue to pay down debt. The Treasurer has now walked away from that, because the government member for Cottesloe has got hold of him, and, unfortunately for the finances of the state, it will be left up to our kids, and my kids, to pay for this. How dare the government assume that it knows best about how governments in the 2020s will want to spend their revenue on infrastructure challenges and prioritising general government spending? The government is removing all of that. What I dare say we will also see at some point is that the government will hive off to the private sector the stadium, and maybe one of its rail projects. That will move the spend from capital to recurrent, and that will further limit the flexibility of future governments. That is what the government will leave for future generations of Western Australians.

One of the big issues in the federal election campaign that is taking place now is the ridiculous amount of debt that has allegedly been taken on by the federal Labor government. I want to remind members of where Western Australia stands on a per capita basis with net debt. For the 2013–14 financial year, net debt in Western Australia per head of population is \$8 791. The commonwealth government debt is \$7 541 per head of population. By the end of the forward estimates period in 2016–17, using Australian Bureau of Statistics population figures, and using the projected population growth as shown in the budget, net debt in Western Australia will be \$10 600 per person. Importantly, the commonwealth debt will be \$7 478 per head of population. That is a 41 per cent increase in state debt. If Liberal members want to say that the Rudd debt is outrageous, they should keep in the back of their minds what the government member for Cottesloe will be leaving this state with. They should not

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forget for one moment that what this government will be leaving to the people of this state is a 41 per cent higher net debt per head of population.

At the end of 2007–08—I will use that as a starting point—total government expenses was \$16.7 billion. By 2013–14, that had grown by 52 per cent, or \$8.7 billion. Revenue during that same period has grown by 33 per cent. Yes, there has been strong revenue growth, but we have a guy in charge who does not know when to say no. He does not know when to stop. That is the reality. That is the structural imbalance that we have in this state. If Mr Buswell had been able to achieve what he demanded when he was sitting in the cheap seats—that is, apply to himself the real per capita cap—he would have had up until 2012–13 an extra \$14 billion in revenue. That is the reality that we have from a Premier who cannot control himself. We have a Premier who, four days after the budget has been handed down, walks away from the fiscal action plan. I have heard Liberal members say, “We have a pretty sweet FA plan; it’s wonderful.” But four days later, that plan is utterly irrelevant. Part of that spending has been because the wages policy under the first term of the Barnett government failed utterly. I want to make this point, because the government used to lash the former Labor government about wages growth under its watch. I have it here. In the *Hansard* of 31 March 2009, Mr Buswell said —

The policy applies a more strategic and coordinated approach to public sector negotiations, with an emphasis on early preparation and planning ...

That was why he had a wages policy of consumer price index and wage price index if employees could negotiate some productivity improvements. That would have meant that between 2008–09 and 2012–13, there would have been an increase in salaries of between 13.25 per cent and 21.2 per cent. But what did the government member for Cottesloe deliver? He delivered a 37 per cent increase in salaries at a cost of an extra \$3 billion.

It is the government’s inability to manage its own financial circumstances and meet its own financial targets that has created the mess.

**Mr J.H.D. Day** interjected.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I want to make this point as well: the nurses—good on them—absolutely gazumped Mr Barnett during the election campaign. If the wages policy had applied, the nurses would have had a pay rise of 8.25 per cent; instead, they got 14 per cent. I want to remind members of the briefing from Mr Conran’s functionary who came down and briefed the opposition on 27 February. According to my notes he said, “I don’t know the detail of the costing and I don’t know anything about the wages policy.” This is the reality we have with a Premier who does not care. The Premier has no interest in financial management.

I conclude by going back to where I started my speech. This Premier has had two very different personalities—opposition and government. The famous Langouland letter highlights that. To quote the then Under Treasurer in a letter to Richard Court, Premier —

- Individual Ministers proposing, and Cabinet endorsing, expenditure proposals with no regard to the state of the overall budget and with no examination or consideration of existing budgetary capacity within a portfolio. Examples include the ... Education Minister’s announcements on matters such as reduced class sizes which are not funded.

The letter went on to castigate the education minister, the now Premier, on how he handled his finances. This is what the government is doing: members are being led up the financial garden path by a Premier who does not care about the future of the finances. He is interested in the monuments with the plaque with his name on it and, ultimately, some members may still be around —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman):** Time, member.

**MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [4.41 pm]: I rise to make some comments on the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013, particularly in relation to the health portfolio, but I will also take the opportunity to reflect on the science portfolio and some issues that are very important in my electorate.

As the Leader of the Opposition says, this is the budget of broken promises and lies. We heard a long debate today about the detail of the process by which the Minister for Energy went about unravelling the agreement on the feed-in tariff that the government had with members of the public and how it was prepared to walk away from that. There has been a lot of debate of late about the political fallout or collateral damage done to the government by its subsequent decision to walk away from that original cabinet decision. Obviously, the \$50 million is an important component of revenue that the government is now forgoing by reversing that decision. The processes by which the government unilaterally decides to negate a carefully considered budget consideration are important, but what is more important is the breach of trust with the people of Western Australia that cannot be undone. It does not matter how many decisions the government revisits; it now no

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longer has that trust it entered into with the people of Western Australia at the time of the election. It does not matter what government members do or say from now on; they cannot get that back because the people of Western Australia will remember what the government was prepared to do. If it were not for the fact that we were bringing on the issue to debate today, that talkback radio was receiving calls left, right and centre, that government members were getting emails and phone calls to their offices and that the members for Hillarys and Southern River—who are really running the government backbench—were doing what they were doing, the government would not have decided to reverse the decision to withdraw the feed-in tariff. It is because of that that the government can no longer be trusted. The government can no longer be trusted because it renege on those solemn commitments it made to the people of Western Australia.

In the lead-up to this budget, the Premier said that it would be a tough budget. He said it would be a budget about hard decisions and that we all had to brace ourselves. This was a budget that was tough for the people of Western Australia and it was tough for those who care about integrity, but it was not tough on the government at all; it simply moved to rack up more debt and to increase taxes. This was never tough on the government; it sidestepped every hard decision it had to make. We on this side were prepared to make those hard decisions at the time of the election—that is, if people want one thing, they may have to compromise on another. These are the things that the government was not prepared to do and, as a result, we see now the spiralling debt that is impacting on this state and which, as the shadow Treasurer says, we will all have to pay in the future. This is the result of decisions that the government has made on taxes. Essentially, the Premier gets what the Premier wants without any regard for the consequences. There has been no pain for the government whatsoever.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** No pain?

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Whatever cuts the government is planning under its so-called fiscal action plan, they are broad notions of corrective measures, such as the efficiency dividend. The government has shirked its responsibility to go through the budget line by line and make those tough decisions.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** So you would like to see further reductions in some areas.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** I would like to see the government take responsibility for its decisions and not simply lump the consequences of those decisions onto future generations. I would like to see the government actually be a responsible government, but most of all I want to see it be an honest government, because health, like other areas of this budget, has not been immune from the processes of broken promises and broken trust. The dishonesty with which this government treated the people of Western Australia both before the election and now are written right across the health budget. That is no more starkly displayed than in the Royal Perth Hospital issues.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** Just tell me if we're spending too much, because you can't have it both ways.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** The government cannot have it both ways, and that is the problem. The government wanted to go to the election and say to the people of Western Australia, "It is fully costed, fully funded; you can have it all. You can have lollies and you can have ice-cream as well; there are no consequences for these things." Of course, there are no consequences for the Premier because he is on the way out. There are no consequences for the Minister for Health because he is on the way out. It is government members on the backbench and those who aspire to be ministers who will take the pain for this one. Look at the Royal Perth Hospital saga. The government went to the 2008 election saying that it would protect Royal Perth Hospital, and it did not deliver. The government introduced legislation and allowed it to lapse on three occasions. That legislation never got through in its first four and a half years in government. Another thing the government said is that it would redevelop Royal Perth Hospital. In its "Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill" policy, the government stated —

A Liberal Government will transform RPH into a 400-bed trauma facility with a new emergency department and a new west wing.

To be fair to the minister, he has himself suggested that it is not the west wing that the government will be able to rebuild but in fact the main block that people associate with the southern side of Wellington Street.

We asked the minister on numerous occasions: When will we see the redevelopment of Royal Perth Hospital? When are the people of Belmont, Mt Lawley, Morley and Perth, all of whom were promised the redevelopment of Royal Perth Hospital, on which government members campaigned relentlessly, going to see the government actually deliver on this promise? During the last term, the minister sidestepped this issue time and again. The member for Belmont will be very interested in this matter because I know she campaigned on this issue in the election just gone. The minister constantly said in this place, "Wait, wait! We'll get onto it." On 19 June 2012 in answer to a question from the member for Mount Lawley, the minister said —

... I have said on numerous occasions that it was going to be in our second term of government—in debates in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 over and over again. In a quote from 2011, I said —

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 13 August 2013]

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This is the minister quoting himself —

My view is that we cannot start any work there until everyone has moved out to Fiona Stanley Hospital; it would be silly to do that. We have to wait until all those people have moved, which is in 2014.

Fiona Stanley Hospital will open in 2014, albeit eight months late and with a staggered start. The people of Western Australia have a right to expect the government to stick by its promises, to be honest and to have some integrity. But in this budget we see that \$108 million of the expected \$180 million to redevelop Fiona Stanley Hospital has been taken out and pushed out beyond the next election. What an act of abject, arrogant dishonesty! The government did not even manage to legislate for the protection of Royal Perth Hospital; the opposition had to do that! Now the government is renegeing on the only other part of its hospital commitment; that is, it would redevelop Royal Perth Hospital in its second term of government. That time is here. It is now time to get on with it, but the government is not going to do it. The Minister for Health does not care! He got some cheap votes out of it. It was a great little political stunt in the 2008 election campaign. The minister is drifting off into retirement. The issues of the health department are whirring in the background, and he is paying them scant attention. On no fewer than four occasions, the minister gave a commitment that the government would redevelop Royal Perth Hospital in its second term of government. Now it is clear that the government has no intention of doing this.

On 23 May 2012, the minister said —

The other thing we made very clear is that we would put \$20 million in the budget towards developing plans, and in our second term of government we would address what we would do with that hospital. I made it quite clear that my preference was for a new west wing; nevertheless, whatever the outcome, that would be in our second term of government.

It is not going to happen. The minister pulled \$10 million out of whatever planning was in progress.

**Mrs G.J. Godfrey** interjected.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** We have been over this a thousand times—before the member for Belmont came into this place! We accept the political gains the minister made off the back of that very successful political campaign around the so-called saving of Royal Perth Hospital. The minister did not do that! He introduced the legislation and then left it there to lapse on three occasions! It is the opposition's bill; it is not the government's bill! The government is not saving Royal Perth Hospital; we are! Government members are sitting by and watching. What else is the government going to do? It said it would redevelop the hospital! I see the member for Morley sitting up the back. In his pamphlets, he proudly stated that the government would redevelop Royal Perth Hospital; and on no less than four occasions the Minister for Health said the government would do it in its second term. The minister is in the chamber now. His dishonesty around Royal Perth Hospital has been exposed. He played a cynical little political game with that hospital. It was not a commitment around tertiary hospital services; it was around votes! The minister was hunting votes before the election. He has got those votes and now he does not care. The government has been exposed for its dishonesty and lack of integrity. By virtue of its decision on the solar power feed-in tariff the government has demonstrated it has no integrity and it is prepared to break its trust with the people of Western Australia. The redevelopment of Royal Perth Hospital is another example of that. Let us not dwell on Royal Perth Hospital, because there are other issues associated with this government's broken promises.

Prior to the election the Australian Medical Association called for a large increase in the amount of medical research undertaken in Western Australia. It called for a \$40 million-a-year increase for medical research in this state. It put significant resources into that campaign and even put together a very expensive function at which it ambushed the Premier on that issue. The minister said prior to the last election in "The Liberals' Health Policy" that the government would allocate an additional \$30 million to foster and support leading medical research through what it called its "FutureHealth" initiative.

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** That doesn't mean they'll do it though, does it?

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Clearly it does not, member for Bassendean, because as we have seen from these budget papers, after the election, with people's votes in the back pocket, it is a case of, "Thank you very much! We'll take credit for that"! Now after the election we see a very different approach from this government. It sneaks out an extra \$12 million over the forward estimates and glibly says that an extra \$18 million will come from some sort of reprioritisation of the health budget. Clearly, that is a betrayal of that particular election commitment. The Minister for Health made it clear that this was additional money that would go on top of the medical research budget. Madam Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman) would be aware of the scrambling that goes on in the health sector for the meagre medical research dollars in this state. What did the AMA conclude from the minister's efforts in the budget? Dr Gannon, representing the AMA, said —

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“If you were a medical researcher looking for increased support from the State Government, today’s announcement of just \$12 million in new funding, —

Members will remember that the minister said it would be \$30 million, not \$12 million —

might be enough to send you interstate or overseas to continue your research.

“Ignoring the dire need for medical research in this budget will be the catalyst that sees our best and brightest young researchers lured away to the East Coast or overseas,”

That is an important aspect of this budget. The government can build all the hospitals it likes and attract all the patients it likes, and it can run up all the debt it needs to build those hospitals. We know that when the government opens the doors of those hospitals, the patients will fill the hospitals, but unless it attracts the staff and the senior clinicians to practice in this state and gives them the research opportunities, it will not be in a position to provide services.

What we welcome in this budget is that the government has put aside funding for the new beds that will open at Fiona Stanley Hospital, which the government says has an expanded capacity. I look forward to hearing the minister’s explanation of how it will increase the budget by only 4.5 per cent globally, whereas he has presided over an average of eight per cent growth in expenditure over the previous five years.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** It is actually seven per cent growth in activity, not hospital funding.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** That is right. The minister is saying that he will fund a seven per cent growth in activity through a 4.5 per cent increase in health funding. Of course, the minister has put aside an amount in the budget for costs in activity growth. That will primarily be chewed up by new beds at Fiona Stanley Hospital. Although there will be a significant growth in hospital services and so forth coming off the back of an eight per cent growth in the health budget, he is increasing the global health budget by only 4.5 per cent. That will be a Houdini act, and the minister has not been successful in doing that to date.

We also heard the Minister for Health say prior to the election that the completion of the new Fiona Stanley Hospital was on time and on budget and that was not an issue the government needed to be concerned about during the election campaign. Once we got past the election, the minister discovered, somewhat belatedly, that in fact the hospital was running significantly over time. We have heard from the minister that he did not receive that advice prior to the election and that it magically appeared on 10 March 2013. However, the minister told us prior to the election that Fiona Stanley Hospital was running on time and on budget and would open in April 2014. We now know it will be October 2014 and that costs are associated with that.

I want to explain those costs, because budget paper No 3 refers to Fiona Stanley Hospital and states —

Following the Government’s announcement, negotiations commenced with Serco to re-profile the delivery of facilities management services, including agreement of cost mitigation measures under the contract.

The allocation for service reconfiguration and clinical commissioning is also under review. There is a significant risk that approved expenditure on service reconfiguration and commissioning activities at FSH, including costs under the facilities management contract, —

For those members who are not familiar with that, that is the privatisation contract with Serco —

are under-stated in 2013–14 and 2014–15. WA Health was unable to quantify the expected financial impacts at the time of finalising the 2013–14 Budget estimates, either precisely or a general order of magnitude.

That is on page 68 of budget paper No 3.

It is clear that prior to the election, the Minister for Health said Fiona Stanley Hospital is on time and on budget because he knows that to admit that it was not on time or on budget means there will be penalties associated with the privatised contract with Serco.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Because of the penalties associated with the Serco contract, we are now compromised in terms of expenses associated with that hospital. It is clear that the minister has no idea how much it will cost.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Because we are negotiating it.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Serco has the minister over a barrel because he has mismanaged the commissioning of Fiona Stanley Hospital. There is a contract with Serco, and the meter starts running in April 2014.

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**Dr K.D. Hames:** It has actually delayed costs. If we had opened in April 2014, the meter would have started running the same date, with higher costs but nowhere near at the same rate.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** The meter is running, and the minister will pay for the costs associated with that. I will be asking the minister about how a \$57 million policy for an extra 155 full-time equivalent additional school nurses to provide health care to WA school-aged children can somehow become a \$38 million commitment in the budget. How will the minister provide an extra 155 FTE child health nurses by taking \$19 million out of his commitment? It is either a \$57 million commitment, fully costed and fully funded—which is needed to provide 155 nurses—or he is clipping the bill on nurses because he is not serious about that commitment. We see the health budget is continuing this narrative of arrogant dishonesty. It is a government that is prepared to say one thing prior to the election, and also prior to the 2008 election, and simply allows that dishonesty to continue.

The minister solemnly promised the people of Western Australia that he would redevelop Royal Perth Hospital. With the help of the member for Morley, the minister said that it would be redeveloped in this government's second term of office. The budget papers today show that that is not the case. The minister is walking away from that commitment. He is not going to redevelop that hospital prior to the next election. He will no doubt turn up to the next election and say, "Trust me again", but of course the WA public will not trust him again. We know the government has breached the relationship of trust with the people over the solar power feed-in tariffs. That trust, once breached, will never return. We know the colour of the government's honesty. The people of Western Australia have now had that put in front of them in stark terms.

We also do not see in this budget any sort of commitment towards Scitech—one of the other flagship promises from the Barnett government prior to the last election. To refresh people's memories, the government said that it would commit \$15 million in the next term of government to assist Scitech to move to the Burswood precinct. We have science classes next to gambling classes—the Premier is okay with that—but having said that, we looked forward to seeing that appear over the forward estimates. There is no mention of Scitech at all across the forward estimates. Fifteen million dollars is a significant commitment; the Premier told us so at the last election. Surely it should be in the forward estimates at some point so we can understand how that impacts upon the state's finances. It either impacts on state finances and should be in the budget or, like a whole range of other promises from the Liberal Party prior to the election, it is a complete lie. The Premier has to come clean on how serious the government is about science. We know that in 2011–12, \$53.5 million was spent on science grants through the now titled Office of Science. In 2012–13, there was \$31.5 million budgeted, although only \$21.5 million of that was actually spent. In 2013–14, that figure goes down to \$25.7 million. In 2016–17, it drops again to \$16.3 million. There is more to Scitech than simply a great day out for the kids. It is an important part of what we do as a state to make sure we continue to improve our capacity to shift to a knowledge-based economy; otherwise we will simply become that empty quarry to the south of Asia if we do not try to move our economy to one that is knowledge-based. I quote Australia's Chief Scientist when he said —

The need to move is illustrated by some simple facts of life: there is no entitlement to a particular future; there will be no free ride on the back of the accomplishments of the rest of world; or on the back of our own recourses. We could rest on the oars, of course, but **only** if the rest of the world was doing the same. But much of our world is not. Indeed, the countries that we might compare ourselves with show a sense of urgency—an anxiety if you like—about **not** being left behind—so they are **not** sitting back resting and drifting with the tide, they are making things happen.

They are making things happen in the world of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. If this government is serious about taking this economy forward, it is important that we take seriously the commitments we make in relation to science. If the Premier is serious about this portfolio, he has to make this an important part of what we do—not simply a one-day wonder during an election campaign but then forgotten as an office and hived off and stuck in the corner of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. It has to be a serious policy consideration. To date all the signs indicate that science is not a serious part of this government's economic strategy.

In my seat of Kwinana, we are particularly disappointed to see a lack of spending or commitment to new primary schools. Kwinana is one of the fastest growing cities in Western Australia. That is backed up by the tsunami of growth we are experiencing in the southern end of my electorate in the area of Baldivis in the City of Rockingham. It is extraordinary that we do not see one primary school flagged for development in this area—in particular in Kwinana. I note that a primary school in south Baldivis has been flagged for the future but none in the area of Kwinana, despite growth in that area. One primary school in Kwinana, Bertram Primary School, has 753 students and is bursting at the seams. At last count, it has five demountables. This school has been completely oversubscribed in terms of local enrolments. It is time the government made sure it kept up with the growth in our suburbs by making sure it develops the primary schools that we need.

**Extract from Hansard**

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**Dr K.D. Hames:** So this is paid for with increased debt, I assume you are saying?

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Deputy Premier, it is paid for by increased economic management. The Liberal Party has to make a decision at some point about whether it will simply say it will do everything and lie about it being fully funded and fully costed or simply drift off into the never-never. I know the Deputy Premier and the Premier are off—they are in the departure lounge of their political careers; I get that. But I am looking at all the government backbenchers up there. A future Labor government will have to contend with the debt that this government, quite frankly, has no commitment to or interest in managing.

I also want to put on the record that there is no money for further widening of the Kwinana Freeway south. I am sure the member for Dawesville has no idea what it is like to travel up the Kwinana Freeway in the mornings and deal with the congestion.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Indeed it is being widened south of the railway crossing.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** That is right. I am saying that a further widening of the road is needed to relieve that congestion. The people of Kwinana will be disappointed to see that further works are not pegged. I also note that there is not a cent to be spent on the Back on Track strategy.

Several members interjected.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** I am sure that the member for Dawesville and the member for Victoria Park could carry on their conversation outside this chamber.

There is no money for the Back on Track strategy, as we all know. One of the issues afflicting the suburbs of Perth is the high incidence of hooning, particularly in the outer suburbs where there is remnant bushland; a lot of that hooning takes place in the form of trail bikes. When the member for Darling Range chaired the committee on the Back on Track strategy, he said on many occasions that there would be money for it. Despite the deaths associated with trail bikes, there has been no money and no commitment from this government to resolve those issues.

This budget will be known as the broken promises budget. It is a budget based upon dishonesty from a government that is prepared to say one thing prior to the election and another thing after the election. It is a budget crafted by a Premier who simply wants to leave monuments to himself and does not care about the legacy of debt and high taxes that he will leave the people of Western Australia.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan)** [5.11 pm]: I rise to make my 30-minute contribution to the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Revenue 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013. The issue is where to start. I have had about 20 different ideas about what I will speak on today, because it is an absolute horror budget, by any measure. If we are low-tax people, it is a horror budget. If we want to protect Western Australian families, it is a horror budget. If we are keen to see the infrastructure of WA develop, it is a horror budget. If we care about our children and future generations, it is a horror budget. Debt will climb to \$21 billion in this budget year and to \$28 billion in 2016–17.

Last week we asked how much this government would spend on promoting the budget. I understand that it will all be online. Now I know why. Of course the government does not want glossy brochures about it in people's letterboxes, because this is an absolute dog of a budget. In fact, we are trying to get glossy brochures in people's letterboxes because it is such a horror budget! I have tried to find the promotion of this budget online. I went to [www.please-do-not-look-at-this-site.com](http://www.please-do-not-look-at-this-site.com) because I thought that would be the title of the state budget website! Honestly, it is a budget that the government should hide. From the solar tariff debacle, we have seen absolute chaos under this government. I want to make a couple of comments on that. To my mind, it is incredible that a minister would go to the Economic and Expenditure Reform Committee and agree to a significant change to a key policy without bringing his own advice to that table. The Treasurer said, "Look, minister, it is okay. Treasury says it is okay; there is no legal risk." We know that Treasury plays one part in government, but other agencies play other parts. I do not think Treasury would have known that Synergy sent out a letter at the end of 2011, but that is why we have ministers. We have ministers to represent their departments and to seek information from their departments that central agencies may not have. The idea that the Minister for Energy agreed to the change in policy without advice from his own department is incredible. Then he said that he sought advice, but it did not come and he did not follow it up. I understand the government has a pre-budget briefing in its party room. I reckon about that time a few guys may have said, "Hang on, Minister for Energy, how about those contracts? How about those letters?" Then the Minister for Energy rushed to try to get different legal advice. The government is full of ministers who believe they are commentators on these subjects and not the participants. We have special comments; it is like watching a football game. These people do not take responsibility for what is happening.

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I want to move on. As I said, we could talk about a number of things today. The shadow Treasurer has done a great job speaking about the aggregates, and the Leader of the Opposition will give his speech tomorrow. Therefore, I will make some general comments about the budget and then I will talk about my electorate, because what is happening with election commitments in my electorate is worthy of a speech in itself.

I want to quickly talk about commonwealth–state relations. This budget demonstrates that the commonwealth government is injecting a lot of money into infrastructure. I want to go through it. The Gateway project is a significant investment in roads around the airport and is 80 per cent funded by the commonwealth government. Other projects in the 2013–14 federal budget include the Swan Valley bypass. The commonwealth has put \$418 million on the table. The commonwealth has put \$140 million towards the three overpasses on the Tonkin Highway at Benara Road, Collier Road and Morley Drive. The total cost is \$280 million and the commonwealth has put in \$140 million.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Brilliant.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I hope that the Treasurer has sought assurance from the possible alternative Prime Minister that he will match all those commitments.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I have had discussions with the possible alternative Prime Minister’s representatives.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** What was the answer?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** He is very focused on roads.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, but has he matched the state government on the Swan Valley bypass and the Tonkin Highway overpasses?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We have had no indication that there will be any change.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I would be a bit worried. I watch these matters with a bit of interest and I understand that there has been a lot of talk about specific roads over east. In Tony Abbott’s budget reply speech, he stood and mentioned investment in a lot of roads over east, totalling over \$6 billion. However, he did not mention one road in WA.

**Mr I.C. Blayney:** Watch this space.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Okay.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We are sending him a suppository of information.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** If that’s the correct way to use the term, yes!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I do not even want to go there.

As I said, this budget has significant funding from the commonwealth government. The commonwealth government will provide 80 per cent of the funding for the Gateway project. I did a quick analysis. Main Roads is investing \$3.4 billion through the asset investment program over the next four years and \$1.4 billion will come from the commonwealth.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** That is great.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, I know. I hear the Treasurer congratulating the commonwealth government all the time.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I do! I’m always out there with Albo. In fact, Albo elbowed me at Perth station the other week.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Did he? That is cute.

As I said, a lot of money from the commonwealth government is on the table.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Do not forget it’s our money—\$16 billion out of the state.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Of course it is. I think the state government should seek some sort of confirmation from the federal Liberal Party that it will match those road commitments. I am not even talking about public transport. I know that public transport is not Tony Abbott’s knitting. The state government should check whether all those little savings the federal opposition intends to make to fund some of its promises over east will not result in funding cuts to road projects in WA.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** It sounds like you are assuming he’s going to win.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** There are two of them; we should get assurances from both of them, should we not?

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Peter Watson; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Fran Logan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Dave Kelly; Mr David Templeman; Mr Bill Johnston

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As has been highlighted, this is a budget of broken promises. No broken promise is bigger than the claim made throughout the election campaign that the government's commitments were fully funded and fully costed. It was an absolute lie to the people of Western Australia, and it was a lie that was put into everybody's letterboxes numerous times—"fully funded and fully costed". We know that was not the case, as I will demonstrate in a minute. What disturbs me a lot about this whole issue is the status of election commitments in Western Australia. It has been said that at election time a party enters into a contract with the people. I am not even talking about the solar tariff contract. The party puts forward policy ideas and commitments. Should it be elected, it has an obligation to deliver on its side of the contract. The Premier believes that election commitments do not matter, and that is clear from everything he has said over the past couple of weeks. He believes that people do not take notice of election commitments. Then why does he make them? Why does he spend millions of dollars promoting election commitments? Why does he have glossy brochures, DL flyers and electronic flashing signs promoting election commitments if they do not matter?

**Mrs G.J. Godfrey:** What about the train to Mandurah?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Pardon?

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza):** Member, are you taking that interjection?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I am actually confused about it more than taking it!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, that is enough; thank you.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have to say that that Perth–Mandurah rail line comment threw me. I am still processing what the angle was. I am sure it is an angle that suits the member for Belmont, although I do not think it is because we promised it and we delivered it, and we did it without borrowings. That is what we did, as I recall. Yes, I think that is it—we promised it and we delivered it. As I recall, in six years we planned and built 110 kilometres of rail track without any debt. So I thank the member for Belmont for raising the issue.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** There was all the planning that went on before you even came along.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Apart from that whole section that made it work.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** On the opening day, when you had been in government for four years, Alannah gave a certificate to a public servant for eight years' work on the rail.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Does the minister think that via Kenwick was the best route?

**Dr K.D. Hames:** No, I don't.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Okay. So the Liberal Party's election promise to go via Kenwick was obviously another bad commitment.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** No, Alannah did well.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I thank the minister. Darryl Moore will be pleased to hear the minister say that. I am glad he can play basketball.

**Mr M. McGowan:** He can play wheelchair basketball. He's very good at that.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes.

As we said, the Liberal Party made a contract with the people of Western Australia, and that contract was based on a number of commitments. As I said, if they did not matter, why were they publicised so heavily? If they did not matter, why did the Liberal Party spend hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions, delivering those pamphlets to people's letterboxes. Of course they matter. As a candidate, I know when I am out there that if the other side makes a commitment, people ask me, "What are you doing? Are you matching the Liberal Party on this?" My office received numerous calls on the 24/7 police station. When people drove around Ballajura and saw those flashing signs saying, "Vote Liberal for a 24/7 police station", they rang my office and said, "Are you committed to a 24/7 police station?" They also asked me whether I was committed to a swimming pool in Ellenbrook, which the Labor Party was. So election commitments do matter.

Of course, the mother of all election commitments was that things were fully funded and fully costed. The Treasurer takes great delight in commenting on the Metronet costings—fair enough—but to stand and attack the Metronet costings —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** They were wrong.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Treasurer's documents were wrong, too.

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Peter Watson; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Fran Logan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Dave Kelly; Mr David Templeman; Mr Bill Johnston

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**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Which one?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Treasurer's documents in which he said that he was going to build an airport rail project with no impact on net debt and his document in which he said that he was going to build a Metro Area Express light rail with no impact on net debt.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** How could it have no impact?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Treasurer said it and Treasury confirmed it, which I have to say —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Where does it say that?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Here in this document that I have in my hand. In this document it says zero. It says that the total cost announced is \$1.9 billion and the impact on net debt is zero. There we go. The total cost announced for MAX light rail was \$1.8 billion.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Over what period?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Over the four years. The amount for the Perth–Darwin highway was \$196 million, with no impact on net debt. Let us go through it. Let us go through the Treasurer's commitment in relation to —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** There was a large sum of money already in the forward estimates—NB2 money.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Okay. I will tell the Treasurer how much money in the forward estimates was Nation Building 2 money. There was \$940 million of NB2 money in the forward estimates. Let us see how much of that the Treasurer allocated. There was \$1.6 billion —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No, no. That was over a longer period.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Yes, it was.

A member interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** In 2018. There was \$1.6 billion to the airport rail project, \$941 million to MAX, and \$418 million to the Perth–Darwin highway. That is about \$3 billion. There is \$930 million over the forward estimates. Let us be generous for a second, extend it out another year and go to \$1.4 billion. So, let us say that the total for NB2 is \$1.4 billion, as a compromise; I am willing to give a little bit here.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** What was it for the last year of the forward estimates at the time of the election?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have it here.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** What was it?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have \$940 million.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** By which year?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** By 2016–17. It was information we obtained through the costing process, so we know it.

Several members interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I am just going through this. In 2014–15, 2015–16 and 2015–16, there was \$940 million under NB2. Let us assume another year; I will even give the Treasurer another year and a half. It is still up to only \$1.4 billion or \$1.5 billion, and the Liberals said that \$3 billion was coming from the commonwealth. That was absolutely false. I have to say that that was not a risk; it was absolutely false. Treasury and the Liberal Party knew that there was only X million dollars. Let us assume there was \$940 million over the next three years, and a little bit more outside those forward estimates. Let us say it was \$1.4 billion—I do not think it was. Both Treasury and the Liberal Party said that \$3 billion was going to be funded through that program. As I told my colleagues today, it would be like us saying that half of Metronet will be laid by the private sector for free, because that is the assumption we are making. Sure, it is a risk, but that is the assumption we are making. This was absolutely ridiculous, as the shadow Treasurer said. I have participated in costings processes and budget processes for 20 years now and I have never seen anything like it—the Treasurer went out and committed to \$5 billion or \$6 billion worth of projects and assumed that someone else would pay for it, and it was signed off.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** By Treasury.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, by Treasury, even though it knew how much of it was NB2 money. I still cannot understand it. I cannot understand how anyone could sign that off. There was \$3 billion needed from NB2 and it knew that there was not \$3 billion in NB2.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Are you having a go at us or Treasury?

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**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Both. As a former Treasury officer, I feel like I can; it is like having a go at one's parents. I am still gobsmacked. Yes, there was a lot of focus on our Metronet, and there should have been a focus on Metronet, but because of the fact that everybody got so obsessed with Metronet, they forgot to look at this government, which was going out and making announcement after announcement after announcement, with no plan for how to pay for these things. That is what happened. There was a lot of focus on Metronet, and fair enough. But in the meantime the Public Transport Authority was working with the minister's office and thinking, "Let's go and get this rail project ready because—goodness gracious—we haven't got anything ready. Let's get this rail line to the airport ready", which we knew that the government was not going to announce.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** How could you know that? You could not know that because that decision hadn't been made, and we'd done a lot of work on the railway line.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No. Does the Treasurer know what? If the government had done work on the rail project and if it had done costings, why was it not in the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement*?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We hadn't committed to it. Let me tell you why.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, no. This is the key point here. I know how this works.

*Point of Order*

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Mr Acting Speaker, the Treasurer has not been in the debate pretty much ever since we got to the budget. Now he has come in here and is interjecting, with the member for West Swan having 13 minutes to speak. Perhaps you might want to bring him to order.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza):** Member, he has been here. I am watching the member for West Swan. If she is taking the questions, I cannot protect her.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Let us go through the proposed Metro Area Express light rail project. Was a decision made to build the MAX light rail before the writs were issued?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Was there not a decision to build the MAX light rail? So the government advertised for something that it had not made a decision on.

Several members interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Advertisements were on television that the government was going to build the MAX light rail. There was \$1.2 million —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We'd made a commitment to progress the project. There is no doubt about that.

Several members interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Who costed the MAX light rail?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members! I just want to hear the member for West Swan.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Who costed the MAX light rail?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The Department of Transport.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No; the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* said that the Department of Transport had not costed it and that no reliable costings had been done. Who costed it and when?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I can tell you that the Department of Transport had costed MAX light rail.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Why was it not included in the PFPS?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Because we hadn't made the decision as the government to spend that money.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, no, no. The PFPS said that there was no reliable costing at that stage because further planning work had to be done. It did not say that the government had not made a decision.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We hadn't made a decision.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No; this is an absolute corruption of the past election process.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Rubbish.

**Extract from Hansard**

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**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Treasurer used the Public Transport Authority to help develop his election projects during the election campaign and that is why he will not release those freedom of information documents.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members! I am hearing three conversations. I want to hear the member for West Swan.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Let us go through the MAX light rail proposal. We understand the PTA costed it, so why was it not in the PFPS?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The money we had committed —

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I am not asking; I am making a point.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** You asked the question.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I can ask questions of myself; the Minister for Energy does it all the time.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** He doesn't have the answers.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** If you don't have the answer, there is no point asking the question.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have got the answer. The government spent \$1.2 million advertising a decision to build the MAX light rail project. It could only advertise the proposal if it had made a decision. Then, 10 days after the writs were issued, a document said that further planning was required to develop a costing of the MAX light rail. Lo and behold, a costing appeared during the election period. Who costed it?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The Department of Transport.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Then it should have been in the PFPS. It is as simple as that.

**Mr T.R. Buswell** interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, no, no. Who costed it?

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** They costed a Liberal Party promise.

**Mr T.R. Buswell** interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Sorry; The Treasurer had not made a decision.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We were in the process of making a decision; we were getting information on the capital cost. It's not a problem. It most certainly did not happen during the campaign; that is absolutely certain.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We know what happened, from the FOI documents. Why will the Treasurer not release all the FOI documents from the campaign?

Several members interjected.

**Mr P.B. Watson:** Mr Speaker, Hansard is having trouble.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Hansard is having a few problems here.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Sorry. I will stop.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The key issue is that at PFPS, these projects were not costed. I understand that the government made a decision on the MAX project because it promoted it.

**Mr T.R. Buswell** interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The PFPS said that a costing could not be provided because no further planning had been done. When the writs were issued, no further planning had been done; there had been no costing.

**Mr M. McGowan:** Why did they say that?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It had. I'm telling you it had.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Treasurer is accusing Treasury of lying.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I'm not.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The point here is, as I know—one of the newspapers has gone through the FOI process, and so have I—significant documents between the minister's office and the department were not released from during the election period. Why was that the case? The excuse is that it is the deliberative process of government. Hang on, it is not government; it is the caretaker period. It is not the cabinet or the Economic and Expenditure Reform Committee process; it is the caretaker period when there are no deliberative processes because, under the Westminster system, the government cannot make decisions.

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**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I also had your Metronet costed before the election campaign.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, if you addressed the Chair, it would be easier for me to protect you.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Under the Westminster system there are no deliberative processes during the election period because the government is in caretaker mode; there is no cabinet, in a sense, and cabinet does not make decisions, so I think that excuse is pretty poor. We know documents were flying back and forth between the department and the minister's office. We know that at the time of the PFPS, when the election was called, which, as I recall, was 6 February, Treasury said there was no costing. Treasury said more planning was needed on this project before costing could be done.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** In that case, how did they cost it at the end of the day?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Minister! Thank you.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Treasury costed it because it is independent and it goes out and gets costings, but how did the Liberal Party cost it? The question is not whether Treasury costed it.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The Department of Transport costed it for us prior to the campaign.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Treasury said there was no costing. Obviously, no-one told Treasury that a costing had been done on the MAX light rail project. Is that what the Treasurer is saying?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The government got the Department of Transport to cost it.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Table the documents if it's not a Liberal Party document. You said you wouldn't because it is a Liberal Party document.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I didn't say that.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** This is what happened. Between about 26 January and 5 February, and throughout the campaign, significant work was being undertaken by government agencies to develop projects for the Liberal Party. It is as simple as that; it is the only explanation.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It's not true.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I want to finish on this because I want to talk about my electorate. Let us go through the MAX light rail proposal again. There were no costings.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** There was.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Treasury did not include them, so we will ask the Under Treasurer next week why Treasury did not include a costing of the MAX light rail proposal, if there was a costing. The PFPS said that further planning had to be undertaken to establish a reliable costing. Then, lo and behold, the Liberal Party released a costing. Treasury checked it, and that is fair enough. But there was no doubt, from the response to our FOIs, that significant activity was being undertaken by the PTA throughout the election period to develop the projects. The Treasurer may have a go at Metronet, but it caused the Treasurer to completely change his election campaign.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It most certainly did not.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It did; it completely changed the Liberal Party's election campaign. It was about to announce other projects and then it announced the airport rail.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It's not true.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We will find out within the next few weeks. It is clear what happened.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We had a buffet of projects.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Treasurer said before that we want everything, but we just want him to keep his promises and tell the truth during the election campaign. The Liberal Party should not go around spending millions of dollars telling people it will undertake those projects and then say afterwards that they do not matter anymore. We want the government to deliver on its election commitments. I will quickly go through them. Talk about a buffet—it is a buffet of broken promises in my electorate. The Malaga–Reid overpass was referred to on the front page of the paper last December. I am sorry, Mr Acting Speaker, but this is on a brochure that you put out saying that construction would start in 2013–14, this financial year, and finish in 2014–15. Where has that gone? It might start in two or three years. That absolutely is a broken promise.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** You know why?

**Extract from Hansard**

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**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It is because the Treasurer breaks his promises. The government committed to the Ellenbrook bus rapid transit system and then reneged and committed to it again, but it is definitely not in the forward estimates. That is what the government committed to after it had broken the previous election promise to deliver the Ellenbrook rail line. The Lord Street and Reid Highway intersection traffic lights will be installed at the end of 2014 but the government's earlier commitment was to deliver them by 2012. We all remember the story of the Ballajura police station. The government closed it.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Then they said it wasn't needed.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** For 1 300 days the government said it was not needed and that the Ballajura community was better served without a police station. With 25 days to go before the election, the government committed to a 24/7 police station to be manned by 21 officers and to commence operating by 2015. I asked the minister last week whether she stands by the construction and delivery timetable for Ballajura police station. The minister's answer was, "We have no commitment to any time frame." That was a massive election promise. But the answer that was provided by the Minister for Police was that the government has no commitment to any construction time frame. Ballajura police station is identified as a separate line item in the budget, but there is absolutely no time frame for its construction.

I turn now to the promise about two swimming pools for Ellenbrook. Members may remember that we had flashing signs about a 24/7 police station in Ballajura. There were also flashing signs saying, "Vote Liberal for swimming pools in Ellenbrook." It was noted in the election costing documents that the net debt impact of the government's swimming pool promise was \$7 million. Is that in the budget papers?

**Dr K.D. Hames:** There were not enough of them who voted for the swimming pool!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So that is it!

**Dr K.D. Hames:** That was a joke, Hansard.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Remember, sometimes jokes do not translate in *Hansard*.

The government has broken a major election commitment about swimming pools in Ellenbrook. The government did not do the Ellenbrook rail line. It completely lost the plot on the BRT. The government briefed the City of Swan with an overhead presentation on, I think, 23 January, saying, "Look at the BRT! It's going to be spectacular!" But it then disappeared!

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It will be good!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I know it will be good. But it disappeared.

The government promised swimming pools. But in the budget, there is nothing.

The Perth–Darwin highway is another one of the government's sagas. The government said, "If only the commonwealth would fund it." The commonwealth has now funded half of it, and the government is now saying, "Oh, gee, did the commonwealth really have to fund it". The government is also saying that it is going to start in the north and go down south. That makes absolutely no sense. That project was committed to be completed in 2016. It has now been pushed back to 2019.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Where was it committed to by 2016?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** In a letter from the member for Swan Hills, and in the flyer that was inviting people —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Where does it say 2016?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I will get the Treasurer the letter, and I will get him the flyer that accompanied that, when he went out there to announce the infrastructure in December.

**MR P.B. WATSON (Albany)** [5.42 pm]: In speaking on the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013, I will have quite a few things to say about broken promises in Albany. Firstly, the Premier and the Leader of the National Party have no credibility on the key promises that they have twice broken for the people of Albany. They said during the 2008 election campaign that the gas pipeline would be built by 2012.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** What about the new hospital down there?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** In October last year, the Premier and Hon Brendon Grylls issued a press release. It is headed, "Bunbury to Albany gas pipeline corridor unveiled", and it states in part —

- **Pipeline to supply more than 100,000 South-West and Great Southern residents**

**Extract from Hansard**

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Roger Cook; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Peter Watson; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Peter Tinley; Mr Fran Logan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Dave Kelly; Mr David Templeman; Mr Bill Johnston

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The State Government has selected a preferred corridor and operational model for a natural gas pipeline from Bunbury to Albany.

Premier and State Development Minister Cohn Barnett and Regional Development Minister Brendon Grylls today announced the Bunbury to Albany gas pipeline would service Manjimup and towns along the corridor ...

It goes on to state that the pipeline will be 350 kilometres long, will have an expected carrying capacity of 12 terajoules of gas a day, the preferred route would service more than 100 000 residents, and it would be built by 2012. Let us look at what happened next. A big sign was driven around during the election campaign. It said “Trevor Cosh and the Liberals will build the gas pipeline to Albany; Labor will not.” That was great, because the sign had the word “Labor” across the top of it. This sign was driven up and down York Street, the main shopping centre of Albany, every day, upsetting people. But we thought it was great, because everyone was saying, “I love your sign; it’s a great Labor Party sign”. But the government made a promise that it could not keep.

Let us look at what the government promised last year in the forward estimates. In 2013–14, it promised \$16.5 million for the gas pipeline. Remember that number. The Premier even floated the idea of building a gas-fired power station in Albany to go along with that. The gas pipeline is now listed in the budget papers as a potential risk to the state’s finances. I think I have it here. It is in the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, at page 70, under the heading “Risks with Government Budget Priorities. It states —

*Bunbury to Albany Pipeline*

A provisional allocation has been made for the construction of a gas pipeline between Bunbury and Albany which is intended to be built in collaboration with the private sector. The planning for the procurement of the pipeline is not yet final and therefore uncertainty remains around the total cost.

We were told at the time of the last budget that the cost would be \$135 million. It continues —

Future revenue from the users of the pipeline may not be sufficient for a private investor to recover its investment, potentially resulting in the need for an ongoing public sector subsidy.

That is something that I have been saying for the last eight years. We went out and spoke to people in the private sector and they said there is no way they can do it without a government subsidy. It continues —

These issues are subject to a business case to be submitted to the Government before the project proceeds.

It was going to be done in 2014. It is now 2013. An amount of \$16.5 million was promised. That is now down to \$7 million. All that will be done with that \$7 million is look at the route and the planning. Nothing will be built. All the government will do on this pipeline in the next 12 months is spend \$7.5 million.

The Premier wonders why he cannot get people to come to the functions that he has in Albany. That is because people do not trust him. The Minister for Planning mentioned Albany Hospital. That is great. I have got up in Parliament and thanked the Minister for Health on the great job that he is doing there. But there are some issues at Albany Hospital, and I will get to that a bit later.

There has been a massive blowout in state debt. By 2016–17, state debt will be \$28.3 billion a year, and the annual debt interest bill will approach \$1 billion a year. If I were talking to the Treasurer, I would ask him how we are going to pay off this debt. My kids and my grandkids will have to carry this debt for a long time. When we were in government, I did not agree with paying off the Perth–Mandurah railway line, because I thought there were a lot of things that should be done in regional areas. But this is a huge debt. It probably amounts to \$10 000 for every man, woman and child in Western Australia. I would not have minded this huge debt if it had been planned. During the election campaign, the Labor Party came out with Metronet, so all of a sudden the Liberal Party had to come out with something bigger, and everything was going to be fully funded, fully costed. We have this debt now because of the promises that were made. I do not blame the Treasurer for that.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Some of that debt is to pay for Albany Hospital.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Let me get to that. When the Minister for Health made his promise about Albany Hospital, he promised \$135 million. That was government money. It was not money from royalties for regions. But \$60 million of the total cost will come from royalties for regions. When we spoke about where the money from royalties was going to go, it was to be money for the regions, above and beyond normal government processes.

**Mr T.R. Buswell** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Hold on! Let me have my say. The Treasurer can get up and have his say.

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We talked about local government authorities, and I was a great critic of that. When we debated the royalties for regions legislation, I said that local government authorities should have a business plan. Near the end of the process, Albany, Denmark and Mount Barker were putting in joint plans. It was very good, the way it worked. But royalties for regions has been rorted. It is as simple as that. The Minister for Regional Development can get up and talk as much as he likes. He came in as a kingmaker four or five years ago. I thought it was great. I congratulated him and I fully supported royalties for regions. But he sold out the bush on this. I want to know what percentage of royalties—it was 25 per cent—is now going to royalties for regions.

My staff have done some work and they reckon it is about 16 per cent, which would be breaking the law. Look at everything now: the moneys for the WA regional development commissions are all coming out of royalties for regions; road expenditure is coming out of royalties for regions; and hospitals are being funded out of royalties for regions. But this expenditure was supposed to be above and beyond what it is. From recently talking to a prominent National Party member—I will not say his name because it might get me into trouble—but he said that the people have gone off the National Party big time! All Brendan Grylls is worried about is the Pilbara. Members only need to go out to the wheatbelt and ask people what they think about the National Party at the moment. It is not the flavour of the month. There is a billion dollars a year in debt. Members have talked about the Albany Hospital, but if the government were to take some \$60 million out of the, probably \$175 million, I suggest to the Minister for Health, it is only \$110 million. Therefore, it is some \$20 million less than it was going to cost in the first place. Where has that \$20 million gone in that election promise? Last year during the election campaign, the Premier even floated the idea of building a gas-fired power station in Albany. All of a sudden that is gone. No-one hears anything about that now. I would love for the Premier to come down to the Albany Entertainment Centre, which was fully funded —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Net debt!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** No, we built it for \$68 million.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It's still debt; every cent that you spent, that's debt.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** No, I say to the Deputy Premier—he will be the Premier in a few months—that it was fully funded; anyway, he can keep talking about it. Today in the *Albany Advertiser* I saw a big puff story—I think the *Albany Advertiser* is an outlet of *The West Australian*—announcing the realignment of Princess Royal Drive. Is it not great! That was in last year's budget. Some \$3.8 million —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Announce early and announce often!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes, announce early—but where has that \$3.8 million gone? There are some good things in the budget—namely, the upgrading of the education and training facilities at Spencer Park; that will be great.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Spencer Park.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** That is great.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I've been there three times!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes, I know, and the Treasurer still did not get him in, did he! That might have been the reason. Last year, the great southern received \$92.4 million and this year it is receiving \$41.1 million. No election this year. What else have we got?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It is a good upgrade at Spencer Park.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes. The Labor government was going to upgrade Flinders Park too, but the Treasurer never actually followed that one up. I think his figures were showing that the government was going well, and that I would be knocked off!

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Lazarus, you are!

**Dr K.D. Hames:** We would've knocked you off!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I will still talk about the hospital! A sign of arrogance of this government was the solar feed-in tariff. I do not think I have ever in such a short time had so much contact from all parts of the community. I had pensioners, young people and families who probably could not really afford to do it, but they were looking at saving money in the long term. I think it was a good decision. From what I have heard, I think the Treasurer got rolled. I thought I heard the Treasurer saying before he went into a cabinet meeting that, "No, it won't get changed." Then the Premier said today that they made the decision before the meeting. There is a little bit of mystery there, but my feedback is that the Treasurer got rolled.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** You're looking at a very poor source, whoever that might be, because you're 100 per cent wrong!

**Extract from Hansard**

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**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza):** You received that interjection. That is why I was watching you like a hawk. Member, are you going to receive that interjection?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** No.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** You can't come in here and tell little fibs!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members! Thank you, member for Albany.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Is fibs a lie, Premier? Because I know he is on shaky ground. I would be more worried about the people behind me than about those in front of me.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** The member for Albany.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** I would wear my tie back to front if I were you, Premier!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Albany!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Stay with me so that I can protect you.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Thank you; I appreciate your protection.

The cut in funding for the grandparents' scheme from \$5.3 million to \$1.7 million is another mean and heartless decision from the government. It has outraged grandparents in Albany who care for their grandchildren. This will impact upon the Indigenous community. We have a lot of grandparents who bring up their grandchildren. They do not just look after them on a short-term basis. Where there are families who have drug habits and social issues, it is the grandparents who actually bring up the child. To cut such funding is outrageous.

We have an issue with the police roster changes in Albany. I have spoken to the chief inspector.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, can we have the conversations down a little bit, please? I think there is a bit of difficulty in recording it.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Thank you very much, Mr Acting Speaker.

I turn to the new hospital; I just received a letter before I came up to Parliament. It was from a mother who wrote to me saying that her three-year-old daughter got food poisoning one night at 1.00 am. She was so concerned that she phoned the hospital and was put through to a helpline. The daughter was getting worse so they went to the hospital emergency department at 5.30 am because she could not stand and could barely open her eyes. When they arrived, there were two other people in front of them and they were told that it would not be long before someone would come to see them. After being left to sit in an empty waiting room and not being attended to, the mother decided to leave at 7.40 am and got in to see a family GP later that morning. She could not believe that she had to sit there all that time with a sick daughter in an emergency department without being treated.

I have another letter from one of my constituents who had a rather disturbing issue at the hospital. It states —

1. On Wednesday July 10 2013 I was admitted to the emergency dept. of the new Albany Health Campus as a result of a badly infected hand. I was surprised to learn that so soon after opening, there was no beds available. I waited several hours in emergency for a bed to become available. The staff in emergency were excellent.
2. After being admitted I noticed that the bedside cabinets from the old hospital had been jammed in beside the beds. On one occasion a nurse was forced to drag the cabinet away from the wall to access switches behind.
3. For more than 36 hours after admission I had someone else's name on the wall behind my bed. As a result, no one seemed to be aware (including myself) that I should have been fasting. On Thursday the eleventh, I was given breakfast and assuming that all was in order I began to eat breakfast. Then a doctor appeared ... and advised me that he needed to operate and would have to delay my operation for 6 hours as I had begun to eat.
4. Finally in the late afternoon I was prepared for surgery and an orderly came to wheel me down to the theatre. I was placed in recovery, which was empty pending going into surgery. I glanced at the clock over the desk in recovery and noticed that it was 3.50 pm. A nurse stayed with me for around 10 minutes then handed me a buzzer and left to attend to other work. I was completely alone. At 4.25 pm an orderly walked into the recovery room and I asked him what the delay was. He informed me that doctors were finishing up with another patient. After another 25 minutes lying alone on a bed in an

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empty recovery room, garbed to have surgery I was finally taken into theatre. Whilst I was waiting, on three separate occasions a couple of outside workmen ... wandered past carrying ladders —

Looking in —

— laughing and chatting somewhere down a corridor.

5. The nurses are under tremendous pressure with too few of them to do their jobs effectively and efficiently. The nurses call bell rang constantly night and day. On one occasion my regular medication was late and I only received it 1½ hours later after calling a nurse.

I was on a drip and both input and output of fluids needed to be measured. This didn't happen. (The same thing happened to the lady in the bed next to me who was also supposed to fasting only no one seemed to be aware of it).

The morning after my operation ... the doctor who performed the operation ... named Georgina Stephenson who, I was advised would be attending me in the doctors absence.

On Saturday after 3 sleepless nights in an uncomfortable bed, what with the nurses call bell going all night, along with a sick child in a room opposite ... The doctor and his "assistant" ... conducted a "debate" at my bedside as to how long it would take for test results of a sample of the infection in my hand would take. I decided that I would discharge myself as I didn't believe it necessary to stay in hospital for another 24 hours ...

I asked ... for a prescription for the antibiotic I was being treated with so as to continue the treatment at home, with the proviso that I would return to the hospital immediately for another script if it was determined that I needed another antibiotic.

Ms Stephensons demeanour became abrupt to the point of rudeness. She said "I suppose I could do that! I then asked her what would be the better time to call her the next day to determine further treatment. She rudely answered "I'm working 72 hours straight, so don't call me in the morning, you are not my patient and therefore not my priority!"

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** The letter continues and states —

This was unprofessional in the extreme, and I can only believe that when she saw my face after that statement she realised I may take the matter further.

She called me around 3 pm the next day ... to confirm that I was on the correct antibiotic. I do not regret discharging myself as the sequence of events in my hospital stay would be laughable if they were not so serious.

Nurses are being called back to work during time they should be on breaks (one had 3 days off, only to be called back to work after less than 24 hours).

The letter is from Alison Goode, who was formerly the mayor of Albany. She is a very respected person in our community and was quite willing to give her name to this letter. The reason that I read the letter is that I am receiving similar sorts of issues from people at the hospital. We have a brand-new hospital and that is tremendous.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm.*

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Mr Acting Speaker, I see they have brought you back. I did such a good job earlier that you wanted to return!

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.M. Britza):** And do you remember where you are?

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Yes. One of the main points I brought up in the first half of my speech was the promises that were made about the Albany gas pipeline. I want to table this paper for the rest of today's sitting. It is a photograph of a sign that said that Trevor Cosh and the Liberals would build the gas pipeline to Albany and that Labor would not.

[The paper was tabled for the information of members.]

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** It is good to see the Premier in the chamber with such a happy smile on his face! I am sure that some of the survivors of the Katanning experience would be very, very unhappy with the Premier. It was reported in the weekend paper that compensation has been blocked for the Katanning sex abuse victims. I will be

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doing a grievance to the Premier on this matter on Thursday. It is an absolute disgrace. I give the Premier credit for doing the inquiry, but one thing he did not put in the terms of inquiry was that compensation should be paid. I will be following that up with the Premier at a later date.

I will speak about the Esplanade Hotel site in Albany. The last time the Premier was in Albany he told local radio that we should watch this space as he expected news by August last year that something would be happening with the Esplanade Hotel site, or that if it did not, he would reclaim the land for the government. We are now in August this year and nothing has happened, so that is another false promise by the Premier to the people of Albany. Then there is the proposed foreshore hotel next to the Entertainment Centre in Albany. The Minister for Regional Development came down with great fanfare and said that the government had someone and that it hoped the project would be completed before the Anzac celebrations in 2014. A press release was put out yesterday saying that this will not happen. We have probably got the biggest thing in Western Australia's history happening in Albany in 2014 and accommodation is going to be very, very hard to find. If people are coming to Albany in 2014 for the Anzac celebrations, they should bring a tent.

A token \$300 000 more has been given by this government for the planning of stage 2 of the Albany ring road after the federal government chipped in \$1 million. Hon Anthony Albanese, the federal minister, came and said that the federal government would give us \$1 million for that. I think the state government put in \$100 000 in a previous budget, so that is \$1 400 000 in funding but nothing is happening; it is another broken promise.

In 2001 Hon Geoff Gallop instigated budget breakfasts so that ministers could go out and talk about what was happening in the community and what the regions would get. It has happened every year since I have been a member of this place, but there has been no budget breakfast this year. I can understand why; there is nothing to sell. All the government had to come down for was to explain broken promises. Before the election we even had the Treasurer, the Minister for Regional Development and the Minister for Water come down and announce things in Albany, but funnily enough this year no-one turned up.

It is great that the extra dollars have been found for the Spencer Park Preprimary Centre; that was one of our election promises and I am glad to see that the government has put money in there.

The government has changed the Buy Local policy. One of the big problems big businesses in Albany had with these contracts was that the regional price preference was only up to \$50 000; it is now up to \$500 000. One of our big builders in Albany had been losing contracts hand over foot. Now these businesses will be on an equal footing, or probably a bit ahead, of some of the other ones.

The budget papers state that electricity and water charges will go up by seven per cent. So much for the Premier saying that there would be no increase greater than inflation. I do not think that inflation is at seven per cent. It could get up to that under this government, but it is not at the moment.

Things like the community environment awards have gone. We have very good environmental groups in Albany. I have been out with some of them; I have been out to the sand dunes in Torbay and also down by the foreshore in Albany. These groups go out and replant things. Groups such as that feed off the awards that are given for these people in the community. This government is just taking away the encouragement for groups such as that to get together. They do it on a voluntary basis, but it does cost them for equipment and for the things that they plant. They are doing a job that the government should be doing.

I note that the Treasurer said before he went into the cabinet meeting the other day that there would be no changes to the feed-in tariffs. I can understand why Christian Porter is going to Canberra. Obviously, he looked at the budget and the way in which the Premier decided he would run the budget; that is, spend, spend, spend. He is "Credit Card Col", as they say. I thought Hon Christian Porter was a very good Treasurer. I think he had some very good ideas, but I think the Premier said, "No; we've got to spend, spend, spend!" Christian comes from a very good family. His dad was an Olympic high jump silver medallist. He probably has better values than the Premier has.

Low-income families and pensioners are doing it tough because of the hikes in government fees and charges. I know this does not affect regional areas, but the government has said that people will be charged \$2 a day, or \$460 a year, to park at the railway stations. All the charges are also going up by seven per cent. The Premier obviously does not get out and talk to the people in the street. I have people coming to me who are severely embarrassed because they have had to go to the hardship utility grant scheme to get money to pay their bills and survive. These people are not whingers. They work hard. For some, both the husbands and wives are working, yet they just cannot pay the bills. They cannot pay the school fees. I am on the school board at Mount Lockyer Primary School and we have a lot of instances of parents who want to be able to pay the school fees but who just cannot do it. I am a little disappointed with that.

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I was the biggest supporter of royalties for regions when it first came in. I was a great supporter of Brendon Grylls; I thought he did a great thing. Unfortunately, he has been rolled by the Premier. I think 25 per cent of the royalties was supposed to go to the regions. I know that some money was paid off the future fund, which I do not think had anything to do with royalties for regions. I spoke earlier about the Albany Hospital, which is a core government facility or business. An amount of \$60 million is being paid out of royalties for regions to that hospital.

The increase in firearm licence fees is just another grab for cash. Many people in regional areas, especially farmers in my electorate, rely on having rifles and guns on their farms. We have a great sporting shooters association in Albany and its members are incensed about the increase in firearm licence fees. They are also a very strong lobby body.

I see some of the new members come in here with a bounce in their first term of Parliament saying “Isn’t it great. I am looking forward to spending a long time in this job.” The Treasurer can say these things but I do not know about the rest of the government. We have an inept Minister for Energy, and the Premier is doing his own thing with forced council amalgamations. Albany city and shire amalgamated in 2000—no; it must have been before that, in 1999—and it is still owed \$600 000 from the then minister; I think it was Paul Omodei

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Send him the bill. He is on the old super scheme. He can afford it.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** That is right. The councils are supposed to be getting money from the state government. I would be very wary about that.

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Mr Acting Speaker, can I have some protection from the member for Mandurah?

The funding for the Albany Entertainment Centre is a core responsibility of the state government. It funds all the entertainment centres throughout the state and it also funds arts centres and the like in Perth. It is very important that that funding continues.

I congratulate the Minister for Sport and Recreation on the KidSport program. It is tremendous. Our Noongar boys make up some of the highest numbers in the state taking up the KidSport program. Is that right, minister?

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** I was just about to send every member details from their own area.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Okay, just put Albany on top as normal.

I asked the Minister for Health a question about dialysis and patients at Albany Health Campus. People from Albany are living in Perth to get dialysis and want to get their treatment in Albany. I asked the minister how many patients were on the campus’s wait list and the reply was that data on the wait list time prior to being accepted in Albany Health Campus is not kept. I cannot understand that. If someone receiving dialysis in Perth is waiting to come to Albany for treatment, and if the campus does not keep a wait list, how does it know who in Perth is next to receive dialysis at the campus? When there is not enough room to receive dialysis in the regional areas, a person must go to Perth to receive treatment. Their whole family must relocate to Perth and this throws everyone’s lives around. Albany is a regional centre with a regional hospital and it is a disgrace that there is no wait list.

One last thing, we have a great hospital but it is understaffed. When the hospital changed over from the old one to the new one, the staff were put under tremendous strain. If members could look at the stress leave at Albany Hospital at the moment, they would be embarrassed.

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells)** [7.13 pm]: I rise to speak to the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013-14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013-14 Bill 2013. I will structure my speech in four parts; that is, talking about each of my three portfolio areas and my electorate of Gosnells.

I will begin with my portfolio area of the environment. It is disappointing to see that overall funding, by my estimate, has been reduced by 9.2 per cent. The Minister for Environment is not in the chamber but I am sure he will see my comments in *Hansard*. I am concerned about the reduction to the budget of the environmental agencies that serve this state so well. They will be suffering budget cuts at a time of restructuring. Even with the best will in the world and the restructuring and theories about efficiencies that might come, and bearing in mind that we have split the department of environment and conservation into two agencies, I do not believe that this agency will be able to achieve a 9.2 per cent cut without significantly cutting the services provided, and I will talk about some of these.

One of the policies the minister has championed has been the idea of making our conservation estate, especially our national parks, accessible to people. It is a laudable objective and I support it. It is a good thing that people

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from our electorates can go to our national parks to appreciate and enjoy our natural heritage and begin to make that connection between this country and state we live in and its natural history and heritage. I support that objective. However, the budget papers show that staffing levels for the parks and visitor's services section of the new Department of Parks and Wildlife has dropped. This drop is even more significant when put into perspective with the enormous new Kimberley Wandjina national park. It is a laudable proposal, but the Kimberley Wandjina national park will need more park rangers. I see no evidence in the budget that we will be adding to the number of park rangers; they have already been incredibly stretched. Park rangers ensure that walking trails are properly maintained. A few weeks ago I was in Karijini National Park, a magnificent park. It is absolutely stunning and the walks to the gorges are just breathtaking. It was a wonderful experience, but there is no doubt that those trails can be dangerous if people who use them are not properly prepared. If, for example, someone has not quite understood the colour coding system that indicates the level of difficulty of the trail, someone could get into danger. That is just one aspect that I fear for when it comes to what is really, in terms of a per hectare ratio, a cut in this budget to a range of services in our national parks, which is extremely worrying. Rangers have all sorts of tasks to do. If we encourage more people to go into our national parks, we must manage them and ensure that they are looked after, their needs are met and their presence is not a detriment to the natural environment—that there is no littering and the inevitable signs of human interaction are properly managed. That is my first concern with this budget.

When I look at the Department of Parks and Wildlife section of the budget, I note a decline in funds for nature conservation. This is another major area of the department's activities, and by my estimate, and taking into account the consumer price index, we are looking at least a million-dollar reduction. The department provides a nature conservation service and is responsible for all those endangered and threatened species. It develops recovery plans for those species, and it makes sure that for animals such as our faunal emblem, the numbat, there is a proper recovery plan in place. I know we can breed these animals in captivity but then we want to reintroduce them into national parks, nature reserves, conservation parks and the like, and make sure there is a self-sustaining population. We must be able to do that, and if we reduce the budget for these programs, we will not achieve the outcomes that Western Australians expect. We have so many animals that are unfortunately on the endangered and threatened species list. We also have many flora species on the declared rare flora list or the priority list, and they all need their recovery plans to be properly developed. In some cases they do not even have recovery plans, but if they do they also need those plans to be implemented. That area is another fear of mine when it comes to this budget.

Sustainable forest management is another area very much in the news because of the development of the forest management plan, which is under consideration with the minister at the moment. That area has also had a cut in staffing levels from 273 to 270, another real reason for concern.

Perhaps one of the most telling aspects of the budget, indeed of this government's attitude to matters environmental, is the axing of the environmental community grants program. The environmental community grants program has served us very well over the years. For people with an economics background, it was an excellent way of leveraging a positive result. For every dollar put into the environmental community grants program, many, many dollars of effort were returned. Looking at the sorts of groups that have been recipients of environmental grants over the years, it is sad to think that these and similar groups will not be in the future. I will outline some of those groups. One that is very close is the Friends of Lake Claremont. Last year it received \$30 000 for the rehabilitation of a portion of the southern end of Lake Claremont. Perhaps that work has been completed; I hope so, because that would be a good thing—perhaps some money is still in the bank account. Right across this state are many examples of environmental degradation and many groups who want to undertake works; they just need that little bit of funding to do them. But what do we see in this budget? The program has gone to zero; there is nothing at all allocated for it. We are missing the opportunity to enable environmental groups to do on-ground works, and we are missing the opportunity to harness their energy and goodwill, capacity to build up networks, and ability to organise things and tap into federal government grants; sometimes these sorts of grants have been the embryonic phase of a bigger project. So it was a fantastic approach that has been cancelled.

Last year, Chittering Valley Land Conservation District Committee received \$27 370 for the mapping, control and prevention of *Phytophthora cinnamomi*—dieback—in the reserves in the Shire of Chittering. If that group had not been doing that work, who would have? It would have fallen to government to do it, or it would not have been done at all. If we do not map and identify areas of dieback, there will be a real problem because all sorts of development activity could lead to the spread of this disease, and there is an inability to tackle it. There could be a lot of problems if these sorts of works are not done, and there was a group prepared to do it. I am sure there are many other cases throughout our forest ecosystems in which action on dieback at this stage is so vital. As with so many environmental initiatives, it is very much a case of that old adage of “a stitch in time saves nine”. Putting in that little investment now will save either having to give up on something—so accept, perhaps, that a whole

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swathe of land is going to be wiped out through dieback—or having to pour in many, many more dollars to tackle an out-of-control problem.

That also applies to some of the other works, such as programs around weed eradication. Invasive weed species are easily forgotten. In the past I think there has been a problem in that tackling invasive weed species has fallen a little between the agriculture portfolio and the environment portfolio. In this budget nothing has been allowed for tackling weeds; this program has gone, and I do not see it covered anywhere else in the budget papers.

The South East Regional Centre of Urban Landcare is a group that covers my electorate, and it had a program for the control of weeds in Canning River Regional Park that received a \$26 000 grant. The Friends of the Western Ground Parrot had a program to monitor western ground parrot populations. People identify with these sorts of programs, and they really take them to heart and want to act on them. They can also be community building, which is a point I have not yet made. In some areas, perhaps where the wheat harvest is not looking promising, such as the eastern wheatbelt, for example, people are obviously facing a very difficult time, and I think it is important for them to have other positive things they can look towards and develop their identity around. I was travelling through the eastern wheatbelt looking at some of the granite outcrops there just a month ago. I was struck by how we call this region the wheatbelt, but there were lots of paddocks where no wheat crops were in the ground. People had actually decided they did not have the financial reserves to put crops in. If we have more years like that, we will have to review calling that area the wheatbelt. Perhaps in the future we will come to call these areas “the granites” because these granite outcrops feature in the landscape. They are islands of biodiversity in that area, and I am not sure that that area will have wheat in the future. That is just a little example of how the environmental features of an area can become defining characteristics of it. That is another reason I think environmental community grants are very important.

We have already in this house touched on what I would call the cancellation—I note the minister says postponement—of the environmental awards. When I looked at some of the award winners from past years and saw the quality of their contributions, I thought it was a great shame that we were putting in any doubt the future of those awards. The claim that the awards have been postponed was not in a media release put out by the minister; it was actually put out by the department—I thought that was strange. One of the media releases stated something about there being a lack of interest or not enough interest, yet I know that the awards were cancelled—postponed—about 72 hours before the closing time for nominations. People were already telling me on the Wednesday that they did not bother putting in a nomination because the awards had been cancelled, yet the close-off time was originally set for close of business on the Friday. How can it possibly be said that these awards have not received interest if that judgement call is made three days out from the close of nominations? That does not make any sense at all. Like many busy sectors, people would have been putting in nominations at five minutes to five on the day the nominations closed. Naturally, a judgement call could not be made on the interest level until that time came about. There were all sorts of curiosities about this. The claim that it was a costly exercise, I think, was a bit of an insult as well. It is my understanding that most of the people who had gone to this awards night in the past had actually paid and took friends along because they wanted to be a part of it. This was a missed opportunity for a new environment minister to have conversations in an informal setting with people who are doing on-ground community conservation work. It was a missed opportunity. I hope he has other opportunities; I am sure he will. But here was a really good opportunity missed, and that says something to me about the lack of belief in the value of community interest in conservation works, which is really unfortunate.

Turning to climate change, another area of my shadow portfolio responsibilities, I note that late last year the government put out “Adapting to our changing climate”. I am concerned to see, though, that throughout the budget papers there is no mention of the funding of the works of the climate change unit, which sits now in the Department of Environment Regulation. I understand there are only two people, yet they have a mighty task ahead of them. That unit has to develop—perhaps working in collaboration with other agencies, which is fine—adaptive processes and systems for things as complex as our agricultural practices, making sure that our farmers can adapt and diversify their activities and that that can be done in conjunction with the climate change unit and the Department of Agriculture and Food. We need to make sure there is investment for that. What about the investment necessary in the planning portfolio? An enormous amount of work will have to be done in anticipation of vulnerable coastlines that have storm surges and rising sea levels to contend with. Even if it is only a few centimetres, the fact is that increased intensity and frequency of storms on days when there is a high tide and a storm surge will combine to pose problems for coastal communities. Yet I do not see anything here that would tell me that we are developing capacity for our coastal communities to adapt to what they will be facing. I see a lot of good work going on. In passing, I acknowledge the “Peron Naturaliste Partnership Business Plan 2013–2015”. Members will be interested to know that the local governments involved in that partnership include the City of Bunbury, the City of Busselton, the Shire of Capel, the Shire of Dardanup, the Shire of Harvey, the City of Mandurah, the Shire of Murray, the City of Rockingham and the Shire of Waroona. Those

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local governments are doing excellent work in this space. They should not have to do that without the support of the state government.

**Mr D.C. Nalder:** How much money do you require?

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** For the development of a study, one component would be to assess the vulnerability of coastal communities, and that is the sort of thing that could be done for \$500 000 or \$600 000. A lot of work is already being done, but it needs finetuning. Professor Pattiaratchi at the University of Western Australia has done quite a bit of work in this space. It needs to be developed and finetuned.

[Member's time extended.]

**Dr K.D. Hames:** We've added that to the budget deficit, of course.

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** The Deputy Premier might say that, but if the government invests in something that will help people make decisions for our future, that is a very wise expenditure of money. I question the usefulness of some things in the budget. I do not think some of the subsidies that are given to some industry sectors are worthwhile. I particularly note that the resource sector gets a subsidy for exploration work. Is that really essential? Would we not still have the current level of exploration? I know that there are claims that it is dropping back, but I think we would still have a high degree of exploration without necessarily giving that particular subsidy.

I want to move to another area of my shadow portfolio responsibilities—that is, lands. In the last week, the Minister for Lands put out a draft lease for the 500-odd pastoral leases that cover 36 per cent of the surface area of the state, which I have spoken of in this place in the past. I think that this draft lease agreement is going somewhere; it has made some progress. It puts it there for a leaseholder. It is a 14-page document. I know that some in the industry complained that it was a bit rough and that they were going from a two-page document to a 14-page document. I think this is helpful to them. It tells them to watch out as they could fall foul of the issue of environmental harm if they do not manage the pastoral lease correctly. I think there are some useful things in this lease agreement.

I want to talk about the rangelands reform process that is underway. I will provide a few quotes from *The Rangeland Journal* and a paper presented by Rodney Safstrom and Peter-Jon Waddell from the Department of Agriculture and Food. It relates to the issue of viability of these pastoral leases. This is the real issue that we have to face. Unfortunately, I do not see any money in the budget papers to deal with this issue, and that is a real concern. The abstract from the paper titled "Using economic, social and ecological spatial patterns to guide policy development in the Pilbara and Southern Rangelands of Western Australia" states —

... lease buy-back may be required where leaseholders are locked into a poverty cycle. Carbon-based income is problematic until governance and economic parameters are resolved. Mapping the economic, social and ecological patterns in the landscape is a basis for policy ...

That sets the scene. I have also received through a freedom of information application two reports that I know the government has had for a little while—in fact, since 7 September 2012. The document titled "A Report on the Viability of Pastoral Leases in the Southern Rangelands Pastoral Region Based on Biophysical Assessment" has a very telling statistic. It states that only 46 of the 292 leases were rated as viable. The other document titled "A Report on the Viability of Pastoral Leases in the Northern Rangelands Region Based on Biophysical Assessment" states that 60 of the 92 Kimberley leases and only 12 of the 62 leases in the Pilbara were rated as viable. A lot of work needs to be done in that rangelands space, and I am sure it is an issue that the minister will want to return to in the future. The draft lease agreement that the minister has is a start, but we really need to look at the capability of that land. What is it capable of? If it is determined that the land is not capable of pastoralism, we should not reissue a lease, bearing in mind that all 500 leases come up for renewal on 30 June 2015. We should not reissue leases if we know, as was said in the paper, that it will lock people into a cycle of poverty. That is just not a sensible thing to do.

Today we had a debate about the government's backflip on the feed-in tariff for solar panels. Clearly, the government does not understand renewable energy; it does not understand the needs of the sector and the fact that we had to stimulate that investment and that consumer-driven push towards having photovoltaic panels on home roofs. I do not think the government has fully understood the benefits to the south west interconnected system from that electricity production. That saves us having to use additional black power generation. Surely that is a good thing. I do not think that was considered at all by members opposite in the debate earlier today. It was simply said in the most curious manner that it was a bad program, yet it is one that we introduced. It does not make sense at all. It reflects a lack of comprehension of the issue of renewable energy, that there is community support for it and, more importantly, that it is a way of diversifying electricity generation in Western Australia. We need that diversity. It is possible to do it in a way that is highly cost competitive. The more we

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have of it, the more cost competitive it becomes. The proof of that is that if people want to put a big system on their home, the price is much lower now than it was only two or three years ago. The fact is that when there is investment in these areas, the cost comes down.

I now turn to issues in my electorate. Certainly, the solar panel feed-in tariff was an issue for many of my constituents. I was pleased to see a number of them in news reports and people called talkback radio. People in Thornlie and Gosnells are well represented in the 75 000 households that would have been affected by the poor decision but are now relieved that the government has backflipped.

Parts of the electorate of Gosnells are well served by train stations, but people are very concerned about the future parking arrangements. Parts of the electorate do not have good access to public transport. That is the nature of my electorate. People get stuck in traffic snarls. That is why they desperately want extensions to the Thornlie train line. I know that the government has talked about the new stadium being something of a driver for an extension of the Thornlie line going through to the Mandurah line, and that would be an access line to the stadium. I know that there will be huge problems with people getting access to the stadium. Things are not making sense; the government is not looking at transport planning for this majorly expensive stadium in the same context, and that suggests to me that there is some poor planning going on around transport access for the stadium. If it were not the case, we would know that Thornlie was getting a train line extension because it would be essential for getting people to the new stadium.

There are other issues. The member for Southern River and I have discussed in this Parliament the need for a roundabout for the intersection of Nicholson Road, Yale Road and Garden Street. That has been upgraded, but it now needs the final stage to be completed; I hope it will be funded, but I have not seen in the budget papers any funding for traffic flow control lights. That is another thing that people are keen to see. A local environmental issue in my electorate is the Canning River. During the election campaign, I was promised \$300 000 for environmental works on the Canning River. The then Minister for Environment said that he would come up with a \$5.36 million program, but I have seen no sign of that in the budget papers at all. That is extremely disappointing. We were also told that we would be the beneficiaries of upgrades to the Gosnells and Canning Vale Police Stations, but I have not seen any sign of those in the budget papers, either. I should acknowledge the only positive thing that I have been able to pick out, the Nyoongar Patrol service—which is a skeleton service, a service nevertheless—which has received some funding for one further year. However, we are always on this “one year, each year, is-it-going-to-last?” basis, and that is worrying. Other promises were made about uniformed police youth engagement officers being permanently on site at the Gosnells PCYC. We were also promised that the flashing school zone signs program would be continued and finished.

I am very worried about the supersizing of year 7 parental contributions, which will happen from 2015. It seems to me that we are going up from a maximum of \$60 to \$235 when year 7s are moved into secondary school. I do not think many of the parents in my electorate have anticipated that or are even aware of that yet, but they are going to get a real shock. They have heard the debate about whether or not their child should be in year 7 in primary school or secondary school, but an increase in parental contributions from \$60 to \$235 is going to hit a lot of my families very hard. I note also that at Southern River College there is a bill of \$90 000 outstanding in unpaid contributions from families. People in my electorate find it hard to make those contributions, and they need some sort of assistance. I just do not think the present arrangements are realistic; the attitude of many people is that this is just a government cash grab, and their children’s education should be a free right that is given to them.

I have many concerns about this budget, and I think more will be revealed during the budget estimates hearings process. To come back to where I started, though, it is especially disappointing to see a 9.2 per cent cut in environmental spending.

**MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee)** [7.43 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the government’s fifth budget and speak to the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013-14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013-14 Bill 2013. As an opening statement, I found it quite interesting to listen to the government’s pre and post-election changes, backflips and prevarications around this budget, after the promises that it made when seeking a second term. One of the starkest illustrations of this for me and for many of the people who have come through my office is the fact that the government tried to mitigate the situation it found itself in after apportioning blame for the ambush that it claimed had happened in relation to the GST take, and an increase in demand for services for the oft-quoted thousand people a week moving to this state. I think it is really important to look at the evidence supporting the notion that the state government was ambushed as soon as it was re-elected—as if everything were reinvented and new again—and what information it had at its disposal that could have given it some sort of insight and capacity to forecast where its problems would lie. It should have known where caution should have been exercised, and what it should reasonably have

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done to plan, in a prudent way, to ensure a base level of service delivery for all Western Australians, be they long-term residents, native Western Australians or the newest Western Australians, looking for an opportunity to bring their families here to contribute to this state's great growth story.

The argument that both the Premier and the Treasurer have been most prominent in promoting is the idea that somehow 1 000 people a week just turned up on a whim, like a tap being turned on or a train being loaded for a trip across the Nullarbor: "Oh my goodness—where did all these people come from?" That is a complete and absolute fabrication. There is, at the disposal of any government, a great raft of economic and other social data through which very strong strategic plans can be made for meeting the needs of all Western Australians.

To make a brief dip back into history, Planning Western Australia undertakes its own regular population analysis. We have only to go back to 2009—the year after this government was first elected in 2008—and look at the estimated resident population in the population bulletin for that year. On page 4 of that bulletin, reference is made to the fact that the Perth statistical division—growing by approximately 1 000 people a week—made up 74 per cent of the state's population. We had those sorts of statements in 2008 and 2009; the state was growing in population, and when a government plans its budgets and makes strategic decisions about the things that it does or does not want to fund, surely one of the key pieces of data it would look at would be how many people it would have to school and how many people it would have to take into medical facilities et cetera. The government should anticipate the draw on all the utilities and services that it has an obligation to deliver to its people, and that planning should be principally informed by the size of the market. The government needed to assess the size of the group that it would have to cater for, and the information was right there in 2009; there was another population bulletin in 2010. We can go even further back from that, to 2005, if we want to gain a trend line starting before the current government came to power. The government may be surprised to learn that, in 2005, the population bulletin anticipated that Western Australia's total population would be 2.8 million people by 2031. We know, from subsequent bulletins, that this projection has now been revised in the order of more than three million, and even then there is some suspicion about how accurate those numbers might be. We need to be constantly vigilant to understand the projected population growth.

However, regardless of what the figure is, when we look at the trend from 2005 to 2011—the period that this government ought to take into account as a very important input into its strategic planning—we know that the trend line goes up. We could start wherever we like, but we are looking at the period from 2005 to 2012, when this budget was starting to come together. What happened in 2008, 2009 and 2010, when these budgets were delivered by this government? The government somehow decided that the magic pudding would provide all that would be required to build the new stadium and Elizabeth Quay, to sink the rail line and build any number of other projects around the state, including some very important infrastructure projects and what might be called vanity or, more generously, headline projects. This government had choices to make. The government had a clear choice between meeting the needs of the 1 000 to 1 500 people moving to this state every week and building some of these projects. It was simple. This government lost its way because it did not have, and still does not have, a vision for this state. It has a list of projects; a set of ideas around what may or may not be done, but, as I have said many times in this place, it simply works through an in-tray of decisions. The government came to power in its first term on the basis of making decisions. It is all well and good to make decisions and not have delays. The people love that. But, by any measure, it is an irresponsible government when those decisions are ill-informed or not respectful of the data or the people who put a lot of time and effort every day of every working week into determining what the future of this state might look like by numbers, by binary fact. Decisions cannot be made way back in 2008 without any foresight or thought about when the crunch could come.

These decisions are clearly the decisions of one or two people inside the government. They are decisions that if not driven principally by, are certainly accepted by, one man, the Premier. One man has decided what we will or will not do, and even what we will call it. He will name the projects and he will decide what will be done. Western Australians have had to endure this sort of thing from the Premier since 2008—an autocracy without a clear, binding vision. The Premier has spoken many times in public and in this place about the great achievements of this state, which is his right. But invariably he starts at the Ord River and works project by project along the coast. That is all good; there is no problem with that. He runs down the metro area and then goes down south and talks about things. But what is it all for? What does it deliver apart from the bricks and mortar of a promise and the incapacity of future generations to pay for it? Where is the binding vision of this government when it says, "We are building Elizabeth Quay because it relates to the philosophy we have"? Where is the binding philosophy and narrative that ties all that up? Even in its first term, people were happy for the government to be something that was grouped around a four-year ambition, an agenda, but Western Australians are more deserving of a wider vision than simply a bunch of projects. This is just a collection of ideas. There is no binding narrative that shows the people of Western Australia a cogent, logical connection between the decisions made and the things the government wants to deliver for Western Australians.

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We also keep hearing about the GST take and the fact that Western Australia is somehow completely and utterly at the mercy of some wizard in Canberra who waves a magic wand and all of a sudden puts WA into \$28 million worth of future debt. That is a myth. One of the most interesting sections of the budget papers for me not only this year, but also in preceding years, is the “Statement of Risks” and “Forecasting Uncertainties”. Any business or company in this state—or anywhere in the world for that matter—would kill to have the sort of sensitivity data produced by Treasury and all government departments. It is absolutely first class to have those low-probability or high-probability sensitivities around a business, and the business of Western Australia, to be able to deliver some certainty to government spending and to taxpayers about where the debt levels will or will not go. One thing members know about debt is that a dollar can be borrowed only once. People cannot continually go back to the pot and borrow from it. Western Australians will blanch at the capacity to pay the forward net debt of this state. There are even sensitivities around adjusted GST relativities. Net financial liabilities to revenue is also referred to, which, by any measure, is one of the best forecasts of the state’s capacity to pay. The budget estimate for 2011–12 was 67 per cent net financial liability to revenue. I do not want to be too simplistic about it, but when those percentages are put against a loan-to-value ratio of a standard house, we start to get into dangerous territory. I know people borrow up to as much as 90 per cent, but when we talk about variability in the sensitivity data we talk about net financial liabilities, and that is forecast to be around 70.8 per cent. We ought to be saying that that is what it is. It is the assessment of Treasury, with all of its people looking at it all of the time. But what did the Liberal Party think was a reasonable number when talking about debt? I would be open to an interjection, because I could not find it and I would love the Premier to help me out. When the Liberal Party came to government, the debt-to-revenue ratio was about 45 per cent. It was then revised up to 55 per cent, and now there are four projections of debt to revenue of about 61.6 per cent out to 2017.

When we look at the state’s capacity to pay and service that debt and not risk its AAA rating, and we are told about the sensitivity changes in this statement of financial risks, we start to see the downside potential. The Treasurer has even said that because of the parameter sensitivity of revenue estimates—I am referring to 2011–12—a one cent change in the exchange rate will have a variability of plus or minus \$60 million. That was just royalty income from the North West Shelf—there would be grants or iron ore royalties of plus or minus \$28 million for a dollar change in the United States tonne rate. That can be taken across to the 2013–14 budget. The sensitivities around that increase slightly and the risk to finances and government revenue can absolutely blow out, unlike the parallel I drew of a family home in relation to the leveraging that people would allow themselves to take as a personal risk. The revenue parameters for the average household income are not as wide as the potential revenue parameters or changes to the inflows as a result of these estimates. The idea that GST and some other revenue intakes are some ambush—something that dawned on everybody come 10 March, when we suddenly realised that the revenue intake of this state had fallen into a hole—beggars belief and is an insult to Western Australians represented by every member of this chamber, and certainly more stridently by this side, in keeping accountability. The taxpayers of Western Australia have a right to understand who will be paying off this debt, and when.

In the light of what many commentators have put forward and the research carried out by organisations such as the Grattan Institute and its report on structural revenue take for state and federal governments, we know that there is a structural problem with revenue take to expense across the country. There is little evidence that that is acknowledged in this place because we know that in the end we will be talking about how we change the revenue balance or how we improve the revenue take for this state.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr P.C. TINLEY:** These are the sorts of things, like many others, that occupy a fair bit of my interest. I would like to distil it down to the potential impact of what happens to those services. What is happening as a result of that capacity when all of a sudden we need to put on the choker and find savings that in large measure go some way to address or redress the problem that this government has found itself in and the black hole it has fallen into?

I am privileged to sit on the school council of Hamilton Senior High School, which is very interesting and insightful. Hamilton Senior High School is part of the public schools partnership with South Fremantle Senior High School and North Lake Senior Campus to deliver an aggregated curriculum because it simply does not have enough money to deliver the Australian tertiary admission rank subjects that each of those schools needs to deliver on its own. For example, kids from Hamilton high who have an ambition of receiving a tertiary education and improving their ATAR are taking chemistry over at Melville. To do so, they have to get on a bus and travel through the week. They do their best with the timetable so that they are not travelling as much. It is one of the problems a school such as Hamilton Senior High School faces. Hamilton Senior High School is expertly run, as can be seen by the passion and professionalism of its teachers. It is probably quite emblematic of the wider teaching profession generally from my experience and throughout my short time in this place since I have had

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the privilege of being the member for Willagee. The school is completely dedicated and committed to innovative measures to deliver a great outcome. When we look at education in the budget papers, we suddenly find lines such as “Public Sector Workforce Reform” on page 72 of budget paper No 2. We now have an estimated \$280 million reduction in spending in public sector workforce reform. When we compare that with other agencies, I think it is the single biggest hit on any agency. This is at a time when education services need to be delivered to an increasing number of people who are looking for it.

The added problem that Hamilton Senior High School has is that it is working like crazy to ensure that it is carrying a budget surplus through to next year. It is working hard on that. It is doing that because the half cohort comes in the year after. It has to survive 12 months with 460 kids, which would not necessarily attract the resources and teaching staff that it currently has. It has some fantastic people there, particularly those working with kids at risk of failure. The school has to survive the next 12 months to retain the very best staff before it gets the half cohort and moves back to a school with 650 students. As we have said before in this place, 650 is not really the optimum number that it needs to deliver the services. It needs about 1 000 to 1 100 students to offer the full range of academic streams for both ATAR and vocational education and training, being one of the great VET schools. We have a very good example of money being stripped out of an economic multiplier. Building the jobs of our kids and our kids’ kids is getting a structural hit right in the midriff because of this budget and because of this government without a vision and without ideas for a binding narrative to define a future.

This budget also affects the little one per centers. Hamilton Senior High School is blessed to have a nice 50-metre swimming pool. Unfortunately, because it is a 50-year-old school—that pool is not 50 years old—it has a real problem with maintenance, and right now the pool is out of commission. No worries. It went to the department and talked about it. Lo and behold, before the election, Willetton Senior High School was offered a great wad of cash. It had the same problem with its swimming pool, and it got fixed. When we complained about it and asked about the relative merits of Willetton over Hamilton or anything else, there was a deathly silence. Looking at this budget, particularly in the area of education, it looks like Hamilton Senior High School has Buckley’s chance of getting the swimming pool fixed. Why is that important? It is because in the southern suburbs there are swimming pools in Fremantle, Melville and Bibra Lake. Usage of swimming pools—that is, those that can be used by schools for the usual things such as swimming lessons, school carnivals and any other water sports—do not get a look in. One of the service conditions for year 7s when they attend high school is being taught swimming to a state swim standard. Schools are required to provide two hours of swim training a week, which is completely appropriate. How is Hamilton Senior High School and any other school able to deliver that requirement and the service provision for those kids? It sounds like I am venturing a long way from forward estimates, the GST take, royalties and those sorts of things but this is what is happening on the ground in the seat of Willagee. I am sure I am not alone. Hamilton Senior High School cannot get its pool fixed. It has a service obligation to deliver. It does not have enough capacity in the outer school pools to provide swimming lessons on the scale that it needs. There will be an additional cost of catching buses and lost time. We can imagine all of that. This is a very good example of the big impact of this government’s short-sighted view about its strategy and vision.

Why did I pick education as opposed to police and community youth clubs or the delivery of health services, primary health care or primary schools? I picked secondary education because it is the nexus, if you like, between an economic multiplier and a social right. It is the absolute right of every Western Australian to receive the best education we can give them, whether they got here last week, 100 years ago or four generations ago or whether they were one of the first Australians.

During the winter recess I was unfortunate enough to end up in Fremantle Hospital with appendicitis.

**Mr T.K. Waldron:** Did you have it out?

**Mr P.C. TINLEY:** It came out by itself; it popped out. The quality and professional standards of the doctors, nurses and the semi-skilled staff at Fremantle Hospital, which is my first and only experience in hospital for a general operation in Western Australia, absolutely blew me away. They were fantastic. The commitment to service of the men and women there was fantastic. I made it very clearly known to anybody and everybody that my care was of the highest quality. As the Minister for Health has said many times, if one is going to get crook in Australia, WA is the place to get crook because of the quality of the service. We can talk about all the other issues regarding health but that is a good example of how we have continually invested because the people of Western Australia have a right in a state as rich as ours to the very best health care that we can provide. The same goes with education, and even doubly so. If we want to talk about a binding narrative for a future 20 years from now and if we want to talk about what sort of vision we have for Western Australia, we cannot go past the education and training requirements of this state to meet the challenges over the next 20-plus years. This is the point I make about a binding narrative. I do not want this to be a negative outlook of the budget that we are

considering in this place. If we were going to have a vision and if we were going to have a binding narrative about our future from which all policy decisions could be logically hung, what would it be? For me, it is quite simple. Western Australia, with nearly 2.5 million people, is sitting on the Indian Ocean. We have one of the richest opportunities. A lot of people talk about once-in-a-lifetime opportunities through the resources that we are now mining and the step change within our productive output over the past five or so years. The reality is that a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity is presenting itself not inside the borders of this state, but with our trading partners to the north. We do not have to go too far to have an understanding of the scale of what is out there and the available opportunities. I will quote now from the “Australia in the Asian Century: White Paper”, which is really insightful. The whole report contains all the actual figures, but the executive summary states —

Within only a few years, Asia will not only be the world’s largest producer of goods and services, it will also be the world’s largest consumer of them.

It states that Asia has the fastest growing middle class of any region in the world and it will outstrip that of the rest of the world combined in the next 20 to 30 years. With that growing middle class, as we all know, there comes a high disposable income with a requirement for options to spend that money. One of the things we ought to be doing as a state is very clearly positioning ourselves to take advantage of that. We are being given that; it is all here. There is the work of the Murdoch Asia Research Centre, and any number of universities have been looking at this issue for a very long time. The “Australia in the Asian Century: White Paper” presents to us five key areas of opportunity. The very first thing the paper states is —

Critical to this will be ongoing reform and investment across the five pillars of productivity—skills and education, innovation, infrastructure, tax reform and regulatory reform.

They are the very things we talk about in this place day in, day out, but we are too frightened, in my view, to really take them on as a complete and thorough policy for reform. Why? This government believes in nothing; it does not actually believe in things. For every moment we think it applies a conservative or right-of-centre or Liberal philosophy to a particular view, be it law and order or infrastructure or any of those things, the Premier provides something totally counterintuitive to the general understanding of that philosophy. If a government does not believe in anything, all it will do is work on what is in front of it. All it will do is be a problem solver for the things happening in front of it, as opposed to being an agenda setter or a vision maker for what we need to do in this state. There is an old saying: “If all you have in your tool bag is a hammer, you will see every problem is a nail.” The tool bag has to be expanded and the vision needs to be expanded. We need to walk a bigger argument and a bigger vision, because Western Australia is on the cusp of having the capacity to deliver a step change that the rest of Australia will never have because of its geography and its own limited economy. For our own survival, and to thrive, we need to turn north, focus on Asia and work on those things in which we have a competitive advantage. We need to make sure we invest in doing more than just “ripping it up, digging it up and shipping it”. We have to be able to leverage up from all those other things, and firstly we need to ensure that our skills, training, education and grey matter are very well fit for purpose to adapt to that future we cannot even describe today.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale. I am sorry—member for Cockburn.

**MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn)** [8.13 pm]: I thank the member for Armadale for his generosity. I was down the list.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** That’s not generous; you’re senior to him and you should have the right to go first.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I thank the Minister for Health for reminding me of that.

I rise to speak on the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013. The issue I would like to talk about tonight is a crisis affecting Western Australia in a dramatic way, and it follows on from the speech given by the member for Willagee and the need for Western Australia to diversify and improve the other secondary areas of its economy by diversifying from minerals and resources into skilled areas of work. The area of work I am talking about is the engineering fabrication sector, which is being devastated at the moment—it is in crisis. This year alone we have seen the closure of United Group Limited’s workshop in Kwinana. A few years ago that company had 600 people working in its operations and it had over 120 apprentices. Today, that fabrication company has closed its doors. Across the road, on Old Mandurah Road, is Western Construction Co, which is a company that has been there for over 50 years servicing the construction, engineering and fabrication sector, and it also did maintenance for organisations like Alcoa. That company was taken over by a larger eastern states company, but it has now closed its doors, which is another loss to the fabrication industry. The company Civmec is one of the largest engineering organisations in the southern hemisphere. It is based in Henderson and it has the capacity to bid and compete on a global scale for any large modular construction in any type of industry, whether that be the oil and gas industry or the minerals and resources industry. Civmec has the capacity to bid for and win that work. It is

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the largest engineering fabrication facility in the whole of Australia. Four weeks ago it had 600 people working for it and it had over 60 apprentices. Today it has fewer than 120 people working in the workshop and about 15 apprentices. Everyone else has had their employment terminated. All those apprentices who were employed have lost their jobs. I know from the people who have contacted my office that the apprentices have not found other jobs—they have not found other employers willing to take them on. Their apprenticeships are either suspended or they have left the trade altogether.

Pacific Industrial Company at Naval Base is similar in size to Civmec, not quite as big, and it, again, has the capacity to take on virtually any type of engineering work in Australia and overseas. It is struggling to win any work. Fremantle Steel Fabrication, which is based in Jandakot, merged with a company called Park Engineers in Welshpool, and its combined resources make it probably one of the largest fabricators behind Civmec. It is a giant organisation and it has the capacity to put out over 10 000 fabricated tonnes of steel a year. It too is absolutely struggling for work. I was talking to the board of Italsteel in Welshpool only last week. It is a small flexible family-owned company that can bid for lots of different types of work up to the medium range of engineering. Again, it is absolutely struggling for work. I was given an example. The normal type of work that Italsteel does is for light structures. For example, it bid for, but lost, the tender for the roof structure for the expansion of Perth Airport. Whoever was the contractor for that job decided to give the tender for that small steel structure to the Chinese, so the whole structure was imported from China. Now that the structure is in place in terminal 2—or whatever the new expansion of the regional airlines sector of the airport is called—Italsteel has been contacted by Perth Airport and asked to repair the work that was done by the Chinese and imported into Australia. This is a classic example of why the engineering and fabrication sector in Western Australia is struggling. It has been undercut by companies in China that are effectively dumping fabricated steel into our market, and the steel they are dumping into our market is of very poor quality that has to be repaired on a regular basis by Western Australian companies. That is the engineering and fabrication industry.

The engineering and design industry, again, is a disaster. The organisation Engineers Australia is beside itself about the amount of work that has gone overseas, denying its members jobs. Its members now have to follow the work, as Western Australia is losing engineers on a daily basis because there is no work for them. They are simply following the work overseas. Whether it be to London, to The Hague in Holland or to Paris, they are following the work to where it has gone. If one argues that is a free market and says, “Oh well, you know, that’s a globally competitive marketplace for engineering. That’s just the way the world works”, that is one way of looking at it. However, that denies Western Australia the capacity to bid for future work in future resource projects—whether it be in oil and gas or mining—and our capacity to be able to deliver anything on those projects.

It gets worse. The issue is not simply about Western Australia losing work overseas to organisations that, as I say, are effectively dumping fabricated steel into the international marketplace; it is also about the intellectual property of those companies being taken overseas from Western Australia. It is not simply a matter of taking work away from Western Australia; companies and the intellectual property of those companies are now being taken away from Western Australia. A good example of that is W.D. Moore & Co, which has a very long history here in Western Australia. It has 150 years’ experience of making windmills, as you may well know yourself, Madam Deputy Speaker. W.D. Moore had a workshop in O’Connor and that company and the windmill work of the W.D. Moore company was taken over by a Singapore-based company called Pan Asia, which basically picked the eyes out of W.D. Moore, forcing the O’Connor workshop to send its patents and its casting moulds for the latest Yellowtail windmill model to a factory in China. This was not a company that was struggling. It is not in the mould of those types of companies I was talking about earlier, such as fabricators who are literally struggling for work. This was a profitable, competitive organisation with a loyal customer base, full order books and a rock-solid reputation for making the best windmills in the world. The Yellowtail model I referred to was the company’s latest design and would have brought in a significant number of export orders. The Singapore-based company simply came in, took the intellectual property and its patents, sent them to China and has now auctioned the company and all its assets. It is gone; a 150-year-old, highly profitable, highly competitive company has been taken over by an overseas company and its assets basically stripped and sent over to China. The next windmill that you will be buying for your farm, Madam Deputy Speaker, will be made in China. It will have a Western Australian name to it but it will not be made here basically because the company was gutted, split up and sold off. That is another example of what is happening in the engineering industry.

Is that the sort of acceptable free market that we want in Western Australia? Do we agree that companies should leave themselves completely wide open to have their jobs and their companies taken off them and the work sent overseas so that we then have to import that equipment and that technology? I do not think we agree with that. If members went into the community and spoke to their constituents, they would find that they would not agree with that either. They would say, “What is the current government doing about this? Why can’t the government

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actually step in and do something about it?” The current government—the Liberal–National government—did so back in 2011. After many complaints here in the chamber about the failure of the Barnett government to basically take up that challenge and defend Western Australian companies and Western Australian jobs, the then Minister for Finance; Commerce; Small Business, Simon O’Brien, in conjunction with the Premier, came up with a document entitled “Western Australian Government Local Industry Participation Framework”. I think the current Treasurer, when he was Minister for Commerce for a very short time, had his fingers on this as well. The “Western Australian Government Local Industry Participation Framework”, which was released in 2011, contains 10 key strategic points for basically improving the capacity of Western Australian companies to bid for and win work, particularly in major resource projects and oil and gas projects. I will refer to those 10 points. The first point, “Strategic focus”, states —

The ... Government intends to work with selected energy and mineral companies to improve its appreciation of international business and procurement trends impacting on the Western Australian economy.

That may have been done, but I do not think so, because the appreciation that those companies should have for Western Australian businesses is just not there. Had it been there, those companies that I referred to earlier would have their workshops full of work.

The second point, “Supplier performance”, states —

The State Government will engage with project proponents and suppliers to facilitate an improved understanding on the relative competitive performance of Western Australia’s manufacturing and service industries, and to develop a shared vision of current and future growth opportunities.

That has not happened. Go and ask the fabricators. Go and ask the engineers. That has not happened.

The third point, “Definition of local benefit”, states —

A broader approach to the identification of benefits accruing to Western Australia is required. The Government intends to expand the reporting of such benefits in terms of research and development, regional initiatives, indigenous programs, community support, facilitation of technology transfer and joint ventures, training and skill initiatives, and the encouragement of local suppliers into international markets.

That is all very nice stuff. None of it has occurred.

The fourth point, “Strategic projects”, states —

It is recognised that priority projects exhibiting characteristics such as high value and significant levels of contestable content require greater attention in terms of the proponents’ approach to local content and anticipated outcomes.

Yes, it sure does. Has anything been done in this area? Not a thing. An amount of 400 000 tonnes of fabricated steel from the Gorgon steel project all went overseas. Another 200 000 tonnes from the Chevron Wheatstone project all went overseas. Local companies were not even required or asked to tender for that work and were not even asked to tender for a part of that work. So much for the fourth point.

The fifth point simply refers to what the Industry Capability Network does, which is based in the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia. From my examination of what Industry Capability Network WA has done, I know that it has done a very good job on behalf of Chevron but it has done very little on behalf of the engineering and fabrication companies of Western Australia.

The sixth point states —

The Local Industry Participation Unit within the Department of Commerce will have a strengthened role. It will be charged with ensuring local industry receives full, fair and reasonable opportunity to supply.

I do not know whether it has had a strengthened role; all I know is that it has not delivered any work for Western Australian companies. The seventh point states —

The State Government believes the Commonwealth should take a more active role in the promotion of Australian industry participation in major resource projects.

We all concur with that. Nevertheless, an article in the business section of *The West Australian* of Monday, 5 August 2013 outlined that Gary Gray, in his determination for FLNG and James Price Point, has been trying to encourage the Premier to drop his opposition. The article states —

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Mr Barnett yesterday hinted that a commitment from the consortium to build a supply base at James Price Point, to service the broader Browse Basin oil and gas industry, could be sufficient for his support to axe the contentious development condition.

So much for working with the commonwealth! It appears that we are working with the commonwealth to give up the fight against FLNG and Browse Basin as long as we get a supply base. So what? How many jobs will that create? It will create a couple of hundred, maximum, as opposed to thousands of jobs should that LNG project be based onshore.

The eighth point refers to international cooperation, which is absolutely non-existent. The ninth point refers to leadership and the tenth point refers to the skilled workforce. On the subject of the skilled workforce, we can look at the number of apprentices in the metal trades area.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** The metal trades area is the specific area in which skills are needed for the fabrication workshops and for the construction and maintenance of these projects into the future. In March 2008 the number of people enrolled in metal trades apprenticeships was 5 800. In May this year that number had dropped to 5 000. Between 2008 and this year we have lost 800 apprentices; the number of metal trades apprentices has dropped by 800. I talked earlier about Cimtec, which has laid off lots of apprentices. When we look at the number of metal trades apprentices in May 2014, we will find that that number will be significantly lower than it is now, as a significant number of apprentices will lose their jobs as a result of this crisis in the engineering industry.

What can we say about the Barnett government's approach to encouraging resource companies and oil and gas companies to create more work for the engineering and fabrication sector in Western Australia? The government had a 10-point plan. That plan was a commitment to industry. It was not just a promise; it was a commitment to industry. That commitment is detailed on page 7 of the "Western Australian Government Local Industry Participation Framework". Unfortunately, like a lot of things with the Barnett Liberal-National government, every one of those 10 promises has been broken. The commitment to industry that was promised in May 2011 under this plan has been broken. As a result, there have been hundreds of lay-offs in the electorates of the members for Jandakot, Kwinana and Rockingham and in my electorate. In the southern suburbs we are losing jobs in the engineering and fabrication industry hand over fist, yet the government is absolutely silent on this. There is not one mention of this program in the budget papers and there has been no mention whatsoever by the government of the crisis that is facing this critical industry for Western Australia. This issue only ever gets an airing when the opposition raises it in this house.

Why do companies feel that they have a free hand in sending work overseas? They know, for one thing, that these commitments are not worth the paper they are written on. The other thing is that it is about leadership. One of the key parts of the local industry participation plan was leadership. When the leader of the Western Australian government indicates to major resource companies that it is okay to send work overseas, they will take advantage of that; they will go straight through that door and send as much work overseas as they can because they will supposedly bring the project costs down by doing that. Does the leader of the government, the Premier of Western Australia, give them that indication? Yes, he does. I draw the attention of the house to the Oakajee state development agreement. On Wednesday, 24 November 2010, before this house dealt with the state development agreement, I highlighted to the Premier the report in *The Australian Financial Review* of the likelihood that this agreement contained a clause under which the state would encourage Chinese companies to take work from Western Australia; that is, the agreement would deliver work from Western Australia to Chinese companies on the basis of their investment in Oakajee. I asked the Premier whether that reference in the article in *The Australian Financial Review* was correct. The Premier said that he did not think so. The *Hansard* then reads —

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** What are you trying to fantasise about?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** Did the Premier do that in the state development agreement? Did the Premier put in the state development agreement any provision —

I got cut off there. I was talking about sending work overseas. I went on to say —

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** No, no; forget about the tender. The Premier signed off the state development agreement. Did that state development agreement insist that work would go offshore to China?

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** No.

Lo and behold, clause 3.3 of the state development agreement was called "Chinese involvement". An email containing this clause was tabled in Parliament, and stated —

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The Infrastructure Provider agrees with the State to use reasonable endeavours to secure the involvement of private or state-owned Chinese companies in the Project in the following areas:

- (1) the provision of rail cars;
- (2) the provision of fabricated structural steel;
- (3) the provision of engineering and construction services; and
- (4) the provision of debt financing,

to meet the requirements of the Project.

When I put to the Premier whether the state development agreement included a clause that would allow work to be sent off to China, his answer was clearly that it did not. Then when the state development agreement came to this house, it contained just that provision, which I have just read out. That was an absolute misleading of the house. It was a clear indication to multinational companies in Australia that basically if the Leader of the Liberal Party and Premier of Western Australia can send work overseas, then he is sure it is okay for them to do so. That is the message that gets sent from this chamber down the hill to the resource companies along St Georges Terrace. The message is that if it is all right for the state government to send its own work overseas—to China—then it is okay for those companies to do the same thing. Regardless of what the Premier says in the media, it is okay for those companies to do the same thing. I have one thing I would like to know from the government, following on from the Oakajee breach of promise and misleading statements made to this house along the same themes. Leighton has the construction project for Elizabeth Quay, which involves a significant amount of steel; I would like to know whether that steel is being brought in from overseas or whether it has been sourced locally. Should the football stadium go ahead—of course the government is absolutely insistent that it will—that will involve a significant amount of fabricated steel. Will that steel be sourced from Western Australia, or will it be, like the Perth Airport corporation did, brought in from overseas and repaired later? Companies such as Fitti Steel, Italsteel and Pacific Industrial would like to know whether the government has any intention, given the significant billion-dollar football stadium contract, of ensuring that that fabricated steel engineering is done here in Western Australia.

Madam Deputy Speaker may well have heard me moan about this issue before in this chamber, and many members of this house have heard me raise the issue of the engineering industry and fabrication industry over and again because it is critically important. It is a big employer of people in Western Australia, and it is part of our capacity as a state to do things. One of the things the opposition has raised, and I have raised over and again, is whether there are ways to address the problem. Clearly, the government does not want to address the problem, but are there ways to? Of course there are. The opposition has brought in two pieces of legislation—namely, the Skilled Local Jobs Bill 2011 and the Skilled Jobs (Benefits from the Boom) Bill 2012—and argued the case that this legislation should pass and that it would pressure the major resources companies to actually do work in Western Australia. It would expose publicly, through a transparent process, the amount of work those companies do in Western Australia. It would not exactly have been a binding requirement on those companies that they do work in Western Australia; it would have been simply another tool that a government could use to pressure those companies to do work in Western Australia. On two occasions we argued that that pressure should be brought to bear by way of these fairly ordinary and uncontentious bills, and on both occasions—in 2011 and 2012—the government voted down those bills. We lost on both occasions, as you may well be aware, Madam Deputy Speaker, by one vote.

Had that legislation passed, things may have been different. Those apprentices might still have their jobs, those people at Civmec might still have their jobs; and UGL might still have its workshop open. That is how different things could have been had this legislation passed, but it did not. Through one vote we have basically abandoned any effort to change the face of fabrication engineering in Western Australia. Other countries have done it; it is not difficult. This is the Hebron agreement between the state of Labrador, Chevron, ExxonMobil, Stadoil and Petro-Canada for LNG projects onshore—exactly the same as we have up north. This state agreement forces those oil companies to do work in Newfoundland and to do work in Canada. It is not in breach of any free trade agreement; it is a model we should be picking up here in Western Australia, and I appeal to the government to do so.

**DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale)** [8.44 pm]: At last I get up to speak, and I am glad I follow on from the member for Cockburn, who made a lot of sense in what he said.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Uncommon sense. I did not even hear him, and I knew he made sense.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I am sure many members on the other side felt uncomfortable.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** Sorry about that, member for Armadale.

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**Dr A.D. BUTI:** No, that is fine; quality always wins out in the end, member for Cockburn.

I rise to make my contribution to the second reading debate on the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013. I do not think it would be an exaggeration to say that the 2013–14 budget handed down by the Treasurer, who has just walked back into the chamber, on Thursday, 8 August 2012 would have to go down as one of most chaotic, ill-conceived and, even worse, fraudulent budgets that has come before this Parliament for a long period of time. I will talk later about the breach of trust between this government and the citizens of Western Australia, because there has been a massive breach of trust in this budget and in the reaction of various ministers since the handing down of the budget.

Before I do so, I would like to talk about some local issues and how this budget will affect my community. As usual, as has been the wont of the Barnett government, this budget contains nothing, or very little, for the Armadale community. In my three years in this place there has never been anything of significance for my community in those budgets, except increases in charges and cost-of-living imposts.

As we know, there will be a \$2 a day charge for parking at local train stations. I have four train stations in my electorate.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Luxury! I have only one!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** In answer to a question today, the Premier said that people make a decision to drive their car to the station. If someone lives in Bedforddale, they have no choice; there are no buses in Bedforddale. They have to drive their car to the train station or walk the 10 or 12 kilometres to get to the train station. There is no choice. It might be okay for people in the western suburbs who have that choice; they can get on a bus at Stirling Highway or walk half a mile to catch a train on the railway line that was closed by the Court government many, many years ago and reopened by the Labor government, but people who live in certain parts of my electorate do not have that choice. There is either no bus or an infrequent service, although in some areas the service is better than others.

I received an email from a constituent on Monday, 12 August that reads —

Dear Mr Buti,

I am a resident of Armadale and I am writing to you to express my dissatisfaction with the parking fee at our local train stations. Mr Buswell reckons it will cost approx \$240+ per annum but I don't understand his maths.

At \$2 per day, it will cost \$10 per week. Allowing for 4 wks annual leave and 2 wks public holidays, there's still 46 working weeks which equate to \$460 parking fees p.a. This doesn't even include the already inflated train fares.

Of course, for people who live in the outer suburbs, the train fares are greater. They are even greater for people who live in Mandurah. What is it at the moment?

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** It cost me \$8 on the train this morning.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** That's because you go further.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Of course they go further!

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** It was \$8 one way.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** But does the minister also realise that the average income of people who live in Armadale is a lot less than that of people who live in the inner city?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** What are you proposing?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I am proposing that the minister consider not imposing greater imposts on people who live in the outer communities with this parking fee.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Are you proposing a constant fee?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Does the minister not think \$460 a year is a significant amount for people on an average income?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Are you proposing a constant fee for train fares?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I do not necessarily propose a constant fee for train fares, but the government should not impose an additional cost when there is no need to impose a \$2 a day parking fee.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** So who do you think pays for it at the moment?

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**Dr A.D. BUTI:** The taxpayer. That is what happens with public utilities. It is very well known that the public as a whole agrees with public transport and that there is a subsidy. Is the Treasurer agreeing that it should be user pays?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Not at all; I'm just saying that the subsidy is very high and we need to look to reduce it a little.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** What does the Treasurer think the subsidy is on the roads and highways? Some people who live in outer suburbs do not have a car because they cannot afford a car, so they have to get on public transport. They also subsidise the roads. Does the Treasurer think that is fair?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Think what is fair?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** That it is fair for people who do not have cars to subsidise road maintenance.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** A lot of road maintenance and road upgrades are paid for by the redistribution of the taxes that people —

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** By the commonwealth, not by you.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No; let us get this right. The commonwealth collects the fuel excise. The commonwealth then redistributes that through the states.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** It is not just fuel excise. The Treasurer knows it is much more than fuel excise.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Order, members!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Wait until we get to the portfolio of the Minister for Corrective Services. The Minister for Corrective Services made this big hoopla about justice reinvestment. Where in the budget is there much about justice reinvestment?

**Mr J.M. Francis:** Do you want me to show it to you?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** No; I would like the minister to just be quiet while I speak to the Treasurer!

**Mr J.M. Francis:** You should read it.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I do not think there is much there, minister.

Public transport has always been subsidised from the general taxation base of any state, but the Treasurer is proposing that that should be changed.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No, I'm not.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** People in the outer suburbs already pay more than people in the inner suburbs.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I know that, because they go further.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** They may go further, but they also may not be able to afford to pay any more.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I'm not disputing that. I am saying that traditionally the reason you pay more is that you go further.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Why did the Treasurer say that it would cost only \$240 per annum —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I did not say that at all.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** The Treasurer did not say that at all. So this email is wrong, is it?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Who is it from?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** It is from a constituent.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Ask them where they got that figure from.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** But the Treasurer said that it was a gold coin donation, did he not?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I said "gold coin contribution".

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** It is not a contribution; it is a compulsory fee.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It's a contribution.

**Mr J.E. McGrath** interjected.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** The member for South Perth would not know what trains are out his way.

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**Mr J.E. McGrath:** We have a lot of trains going past!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I am sure the member would like a train out there.

Several members interjected.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** This budget raises a number of alarm bells for education. Many schools in my electorate require significant capital works. There is a drastic need for the renovation of the administration complex at one school in particular. This school does not even have a sick bay. There is no spare room where parents and teachers can have a conference. Once someone comes through the front door at the foyer of the administration office, they are basically face to face with the office staff. There are major safety, health and privacy issues at this particular school. I hope that the Minister for Education, the former Minister for Energy, who of course has singlehandedly created a great headache for the current Minister for Energy, will agree to renovate —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I'm sure he'll be very sympathetic to your argument after that statement!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Is the Treasurer denying what I just said about the Minister for Energy?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Yes.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** And that the tariff system he imposed for solar panels was the right system?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It was a system that the government imposed.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** But who was the minister? Is the Treasurer responsible for it too?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It was a government decision.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** So the Treasurer is going to own that bad decision as well, is he? That is fine.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Of course; it's a decision of government.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I am glad that the Treasurer is going to own it, and therefore he will not come into the chamber and criticise it because he partly owns the decision.

On page 272 of volume 1 of budget paper No 2, under the line item "Corrective Measures", it refers to a \$265 million cut over four years for public sector workforce reform. I wonder what effect that will have on education. Does that mean there will be a massive reduction in staff? If it does mean a massive reduction in staff, how will that be possible when the government's own figures refer to a massive increase in the student population? When we reconvened this Parliament not long after the election, one of the excuses the Treasurer found for breaking election promises was the additional cost of the education system because of the increase in student enrolments. I wonder how that fits with a \$265 million cut for public sector workforce reform. It will be interesting during estimates hearings next week.

Most schools manage to find savings in their budgets. Whether it is an independent public school or a non-independent public school, most schools have a savings element for any special contingency or to replace furniture et cetera. I wonder whether the government will seek to claw back those savings, which are incredibly significant for some schools. In some high schools, the savings would be approaching \$1 million. Not only has the government denied schools extra funding by not signing up to the Gonski reforms, but also if it engages in that tactic, it will be engaging in the robbery of schools that have managed their affairs in a prudent manner and have saved some resources for future needs. It will be a crime if this government seeks to recoup those savings from schools. It will be a significant amount of money.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** A crime?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** It would be a crime.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Would it?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Yes. If we have to take each word that is said in this chamber literally, we would be here all day with regard to the words that the Treasurer uses, so let us not go down that path. The Treasurer knows the way in which I am using the word "crime".

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I was just checking.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I have used it in a moral way.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** No wonder he didn't understand.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** He would not know what we mean by moral obligation, which I will get to later in my speech.

**Extract from Hansard**

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All members in this chamber would have received an email from Emma Burke. It is very interesting that this government has decided to impose a \$4 000 fee on students who come to Australia with parents who are on 457 visas. Of course, politically this is a smart measure, because these people are a small part of the population.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** They can't vote.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** They cannot vote. As Emma Burke mentioned in her email, one day she hopes to be a voter. Emma Burke emailed members yesterday. She lives in my electorate at the moment. She states in part —

My husband and I, along with our two children, aged 3 and 7, immigrated to WA in September 2012 on a 457 Visa from Ireland. We didn't move to Australia with the assumption that we would be extremely wealthy, but with the belief that we were creating a better life for our children with more opportunities.

...

My family and I moved to Australia with the Australian values, outlined on "Form 1066" Application for a Subclass 457—Business (Long Stay) Visa, firmly on our minds. This states "*Australian society also values equality of opportunity for individuals, regardless of their race, religion or ethnic background*" ...

If I remember correctly, when the federal government was making some political capital out of the abuse of 457 visas, the Premier made a statement along the lines that 457 visa workers were incredibly important to the Western Australian economy and that we needed 457 visa workers in Western Australia.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** They sent Peter Collier to Ireland to try to drum up extra —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** He might've recruited this lady.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** So he recruits them, brings them out here, and then slugs them with a \$4 000 education fee? Talk about morality! I reckon that is a crime, Treasurer, if that is what he has done! That is absolutely disgraceful. On the radio yesterday there was an Irish lady from, I think, Bull Creek or around that area, who now has a \$16 000 annual education fee to send her four kids to a public school.

The penultimate paragraph of Anna Burke's letter reads —

My knowledge of politics is limited but I understand we (457 Visa holders) are an easy target due to the fact we have no vote. However, many of our friends do have a vote, we plan in the future to have a vote, and for our children and grandchildren to have a vote. In other words, we plan to do everything we can to make a life for our family here, we hope also down the road to be like yourselves, citizens of this great country.

I am very disappointed that once again there is no funding for a new justice centre in Armadale. During the estimates hearings last year when I quizzed him on this matter, the former Treasurer and Attorney General, Hon Christian Porter, said that the new courthouse was a number one metropolitan priority for the government. I think the current Attorney General also made similar statements after the state election, but once again, there is no money in the budget for a new courthouse. The Minister for Corrective Services came out to have a little tour of Armadale with the federal member for Canning, and visited the courthouse.

[Member's time extended.]

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** I am sure the minister would agree that that courthouse is in dire need of not just renovation, but a complete rebuild. There is no privacy; there are solicitors advising their clients in the corridors and children running up and down through packed courthouses and waiting rooms. It is completely undesirable. The prefabricated building outside that deals with domestic violence restraining orders is completely inappropriate, and there is a desperate need for a new courthouse and police station complex in Armadale, but once again that has been overlooked by this government.

While I am on the matter of the Attorney General's portfolio, I note that on page 606 of budget paper No 2 it is revealed that the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia has been brought into the Department of the Attorney General. Even though it was and remains an independent statutory authority, it is now inside the Department of the Attorney General. This raises a couple of questions: why was this done? Presumably it was to save money, but the amount of money that will be saved by this budget action is minimal—no more than \$1 million at the most. Although one may argue that the commission remains independent, the fact is that now the Department of the Attorney General has the right to decide what auxiliary officers work for the Law Reform Commission and who the research officers—who do the bulk of the work—will be. The Law Reform Commission is to go from being a completely independent statutory authority that decided who would work for the commissioners to a situation in which the Attorney General has a complete direct say over who will assist the commissioners. He does not necessarily have to exercise that power, but he has the right to do so, and that, I

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think, is an alarming prospect. The Law Reform Commission was set up as an independent statutory authority to provide reports and advice to government on references that the government has sent to the Law Reform Commission. The Law Reform Commission is dealing with a very important domestic violence reference. It appals me that this body has now been brought within the Department of the Attorney General and has consequently lost some of its independence.

It is a shame that the Minister for Health has vacated the chamber because last week I asked a question without notice about the closure of the ophthalmology ward at Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital. However, this is a pattern that has been developing at Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital under this minister. Last year, the Bickley ward—which was the private maternity ward at Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital—was closed. We debated a motion on the closure of the Bickley birthing ward, on 19 October 2011, during which the minister said, in part —

There is no other private hospital in the eastern corridor. Women need to have somewhere to deliver if they have private insurance. I am strongly supportive of that.

At the moment there is no private maternity ward or hospital in the south east metropolitan corridor. The minister continued —

I will just say that the government is strongly of the view that, if there are midwives to be employed, we will employ them; we have the money there. We are 10 FTE short, and we will employ those staff, get them into that ward, and get it back to what it was, where possible ...

That was in October 2011; since then I have written to the minister a number of times about the progress of that, and I am surprised that he has not been able to find midwives to man the Bickley private ward; I wonder whether he is actually seeking to man the Bickley private ward. I doubt it.

We then had the extraordinary decision to prevent people from attending Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital for eye surgery. Last week, when I asked a question without notice on that matter of the minister, he said that it was a great decision for patients who would normally go to Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital, because now they would be able to go to Bentley Hospital where there are shorter waiting times. That is so far from the truth, it is not funny. One of the doctors there has written to the Minister for Health to say that the waiting lists at Bentley Hospital are not low. He also stated —

Please note we are only allowed to send a form for each eye at any one time thus the numbers at the hospital is therefore halve than what it actually is. I am also surprised when another surgeon mentioned that someone told him that my wait list was only 8 patients which is quite incorrect and I don't know who is feeding the numbers to whom.

I also received a letter from a retired registered nurse. Her letter states, in part —

We need your help to keep this unit open. Eye surgery is elective surgery due to the fault of no-one. It does not save lives but it does save sight and gives patients a better quality of life.

The Health Minister and CEO at Armadale Hospital appear to have decided to cease eye surgery there and allocate these beds to other units such as Orthopaedics so that they can have more timely care and theatre time. That is good but not at the expense of eye patients.

The intention is to transfer all Armadale patients to Bentley Hospital which could be a recipe for disaster as both hospitals already have a waiting time of 365 days which means that Armadale patients will end up waiting two years.

The Eye Specialist working at Armadale Hospital has been given only one months notice of this change, normally six months notice would be given to allow for these changes. This is very unfair to both the specialist and the patients.

I am led to believe—I have not been able to verify it—that it was announced today that 100 staff were to be retrenched from Bentley Hospital. If that is true, then due to the decision to close the eye surgery ward at Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital, we are going to have an increased number of patients at Bentley. That cannot make sense. How can the government say that it will increase the number of patients it has to deal with but reduce the number of staff?

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Shame, shame, shame.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** That is definitely a case of shame, shame, shame.

In the six minutes that I have left I would like to move on to the issue of a breach of trust. There is no doubt that this government has engaged in a massive breach of trust. As we know, the Acting Speaker, the member for

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Southern River, emailed the Minister for Energy on the weekend about the government's decision on solar panels. He knew that it was a breach of trust. He knew that it was not ethical. I applaud him for that measure. The problem with a breach of trust is that it is not only damaging for the government—it is very damaging to the government, as it should be, and it should be held accountable for that—but it also damages this institution. It damages all of us as politicians that politicians go to elections and promise X, Y and Z, but when they are successful and they win decisively, they turn around and say that election promises do not really matter. They are just things that they say; they do not really matter. That affects us all—backbenchers, ministers, government backbenchers, opposition backbenchers and opposition frontbenchers.

In 1651, Thomas Hobbes described civil society as being founded upon a covenant or social contract. He said that when government meets its obligations under the terms of a contract, its performance is called “keeping of promise” or faith, and the failing of performance is a violation of that faith. The idea that governmental obligation is established by a promise or oath can be traced back to ancient Greece. The famous British political scientist John Locke stated that government is established through social contract. Therefore, there is a social contract between government and its citizens. When a government promises its citizens something and it does not deliver, it is breaking that contract and it is breaking that relationship that a civil society is based on.

The whole issue of this breach of trust is appalling. How can electors now go to an election and believe what the government or political party is promising, when we have the leader of a political party, the Premier, stating that alleged promises do not really matter? Of course they matter. If they do not matter, why do we go to elections and promise X, Y and Z? That brings me to a speech that was made by Edmund Burke in 1788. I am sure members opposite would be supportive of many of the writings and speeches of Edmund Burke. I wish to refer to a speech he made on the impeachment of Warren Hastings with regard to India. I thought this was appropriate because, as we know, the Premier manages his government with total dictatorial authority, although from what we hear, that may be on the wane. He believes in arbitrary power. Edmund Burke stated —

*He have arbitrary power!—my lords, the East India Company have not arbitrary power to give him; the king has no arbitrary power to give him; your lordships have not; nor the Commons; nor the whole Legislature.*

We have no arbitrary power to give, because arbitrary power is a thing which neither any man can hold nor any man can give. No man can lawfully govern himself according to his own will—much less can one person be governed by the will of another.

The Premier believes that he can govern according to his own will. The promises he has made do not matter. It does not even matter what his colleagues believe, although, as I said, I think that may be changing.

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** The member knows that. I think the Premier has a complete hold on his backbenchers. The member for South Perth had the numbers. This complete breach of trust is damaging to the government.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Shame, shame, shame.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Yes, it is a case of shame, shame, shame. The government should be held accountable for this. It also damages this institution. The 2013–14 budget is a budget of shame. It is a budget of broken promises. It is a budget that breached the trust between the government and its citizens and basically breached the trust between good government and the citizens of Western Australia and between Parliament and the citizens of Western Australia.

**MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean)** [9.15 pm]: Well said, member for Armadale. When I was thinking about what I might say about the budget and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013, I thought of the many broken promises associated with this budget. It is difficult, as the hardest thing is knowing where to start. I thought I might start where the member for Armadale finished—on the issue of trust and honesty in government. There are various views about governments and its roles in the community at times. There are those, especially those on the conservative side of politics, who denigrate the role of government. One of the most popular amongst some conservative supporters is a politician called Ronald Reagan. He famously said something along the lines—I may have the quote wrong but the gist is right—that if we have a problem, the government is not the answer; the government is the problem. There is a strong view amongst members on the other side of the chamber to put the argument that the government is the problem. I would like to say tonight that government is not the problem; this government is the problem. The actions that it has taken over the past few months by going to an election with what it claimed was a fully funded, fully costed program, and then in the blink of an eye basically tearing it up, has damaged the standing of government within the eyes of the Western Australian community. It has trashed not only its own reputation but also the reputation of government.

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One of the constant problems we face when we talk to constituents is the constituent who says, “Whoever you vote for, the government just ignores the will of the people; it just does what it wants. We cannot believe anything they say.”

**Mr J.E. McGrath** interjected.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** That is exactly right. When the government does what it has just done with this election and with the program that it said was fully funded and fully costed, and then in the blink of an eye throws it all out the window, it has damaged not only itself but also the standing of government in the community. When the government breaks promises in the way it has, it makes it more difficult for governments of the future to govern. That is a very sad thing.

As I said, the biggest and the boldest broken promise was that the government had a fully funded and fully costed program to take to the people. I do not know how the Premier in good conscience could have letters sent to so many Western Australians with his signature on it. That letter claimed that the government’s program for the election was fully costed and fully funded. The Metro Area Express light rail and the airport rail link, which we all now know were not fully funded, were reliant on funds from the federal government which were in no way secure. These examples just show what a dishonest statement it was for the Liberal Party at the last election to say that it had a fully costed and fully funded election program. At the end of the day—I was going to say Prince Albert, but I cannot say that—members have to be able to sleep at night. How do government members sleep comfortably in their beds at night given the dishonesty of the Liberal Party at the last election about a fully costed, fully funded budget? I do not know how the Premier does it, having signed those letters.

Members have moved on from the issue of the budget being fully costed and fully funded to look at specific items in the budget. I asked a question today about the increase in water charges in the forward estimates. Time and again the Premier said in the lead-up to the state election that the worst of the utility price hikes was behind us. He deliberately led Western Australians into believing that utility costs would increase only modestly in the coming years. In the case of water, the first increase was six per cent, but there are three more seven per cent increases in the forward estimates. That will mean that the total increase in water charges since the government was elected in 2008 will be nearly 100 per cent. That is an extraordinary record. It is even more reprehensible because the Premier deliberately attempted to convey the message to the public of Western Australia at the last election that those hefty increases were behind us. It is a disgrace that the budget has come out with three more increases of seven per cent, seven per cent and seven per cent. Perhaps the Premier does not consider increases of the magnitude of a further 21 per cent, or 22.5 per cent if it is compounded, as significant, but ordinary Western Australians will consider them heavy increases and will feel betrayed by the Premier’s comments in the lead-up to the election. That is another example of the Premier saying one thing to get elected and being willing to do anything to fix his budget problems now that he is safely back in office.

In answer to my question today, the Minister for Water argued that forward estimates are just forward estimates; they do not really mean anything, they are just estimates.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** The point is that we have never made a decision in this term of government to track what was in the forward estimates of the previous years.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** I thought this was my time to make a speech, not for the minister to try to use my time to paper over the appalling decisions he has made in his portfolio.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** You were goading me.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** I did not goad you. I am talking about the appalling decisions in this budget—increases of seven per cent, seven per cent and seven per cent. What you would like us to believe in this budget are the bits that you think are good —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** I urge the member for Bassendean to direct his comments to the chair and not the minister if he does not want interjections.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I will take your advice. I got a little excited.

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** When I give these types of speeches, I can have a preamble because it is part of my speech.

I was talking about the water charges over the forward estimates. The government cannot have it both ways. It cannot ask the public to rely on those bits in the forward estimates that it likes and then tell the public that the nasty bits will not apply and not have any regard to them. That is essentially what the government is saying about the 22.5 per cent increase in water charges. They are in the forward estimates. The government can either

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say to the people of Western Australia that the budget can be trusted or it cannot. I will come back to that matter later.

I now turn to the broken promise on parking at train stations. It is an appalling proposition to say that charging people an extra \$460 a year to park at a train station is not significant. It is significant because it was deliberately hidden from the public prior to the election. There was a deliberate strategy by the Premier and those around him to hide that from the people of Western Australia. The government did not want the public to know that it was going to charge people for parking at train stations because it did not want that decision to affect the election result. That is a dishonest strategy in anyone's terms. Charging people \$2 a day is a significant impost because it is not only a breach of trust, but also an impost on people's budgets. That will be a financial burden to many people in the community. It will be no small issue for a government hospital worker who earns less than \$50 000 a year to find an extra \$450 a year for parking at a train station. It may not be an issue for someone earning \$300 000 a year or more, but it is a real impost on someone earning \$20 000, \$30 000 or \$40 000, as many people in our community do. It is a significant matter.

The explanation by the government for that charge is that public transport is heavily subsidised. I will make two points on that matter. Firstly, if it is such a good argument and justification for putting up parking fees, why did the government not make that argument before the election when the people of Western Australia had a right to know instead of lecturing the house on it now? If it is a good argument now, why did the government and the Premier not have the courage of their convictions to put that argument to the people of Western Australia?

Secondly, public transport benefits the whole community well beyond the benefit that is derived by the individuals who use it. Congestion is a huge issue for everyone in Perth, and it is getting worse. Everyone who chooses to use public transport delivers a benefit to everyone else. It alleviates congestion on our roads. Using public transport delivers a social good to all of us, not to mention the benefit of a reduction in greenhouse gases and helping to fight climate change. The use of public transport delivers a real benefit to the community in a range of areas that go beyond the benefit derived by the individuals who use it. That seems to be completely lost on the Premier and the Treasurer when they talk about this issue.

Parking at train stations affects my electorate. How many times was the Ellenbrook bus rapid transit system promised? That promise seems to have completely disappeared. The BRT was to go from Ellenbrook to the Bassendean train station. The government did not deliver on its promise to build the Ellenbrook rail line, but the people of Ellenbrook, Lockridge and Kiara, who would have been picked up by a rail line, were told not to worry because a bus rapid transit system would be put in place. That promise seems to have disappeared altogether. No wonder people are cynical about the role of government when such clear and unambiguous promises are made and the government walks away from them. In the case of the bus rapid transit system, the government promised it once, twice, three times, and now it has disappeared altogether. No wonder people are cynical. A lot has been said about the Metro Area Express and the airport rail link. The MAX is a \$1.9 billion project and there is \$432 million for it in the budget across the forward estimates. The airport rail link is a \$2 billion project and there is \$174 million for it across the forward estimates. I go back to the concept of fully funded. So far in the forward estimates for those projects there is \$400 million for MAX and \$174 million for the airport rail link. It is nowhere near the whole funding, but at least there is something. The government is asking the people of Western Australia not to look at what will be spent this year, but to rely on what is in the forward estimates to show that the government is dinkum about delivering those two public transport projects. I am sorry to go back to the water increases, but when there are seven per cent, seven per cent and seven per cent increases for water prices in the forward estimates, the government says, "No, don't rely on them; it is never going to happen." However, if we look at the little trickle of money in the forward estimates allocated to MAX and the airport rail link, the government says the people of Western Australia can rely on those figures and that they are the basis on which the people can trust the government when it says that the MAX light rail in the airport link will actually be built at some time in the future. The government cannot have it both ways. The government cannot say people can hang their hats on the dribble of cash in the forward estimates and use it to say that it will deliver on its promises —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Do you think they should be built sooner?

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** I welcome the Treasurer to the chamber. He has missed the first half of my speech. If he wants me start again, I am happy to.

**Mr T.R. Buswell** interjected.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** The Treasurer should let me finish my speech then.

**Mr T.R. Buswell** interjected.

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**Mr D.J. KELLY:** Could the Acting Speaker please ask the Treasurer to stop interjecting?

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** Treasurer, the member for Bassendean has the floor.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** I refer to another infrastructure project in the budget. The federal government has very kindly put forward \$140 million to pay for half of three new overpasses on Tonkin Highway—much-needed overpasses at Benara Road, Morley Drive and Collier Road. The federal government will pay for half and in the budget there is a commitment of \$66 million across the forward estimates, which is the state government's contribution. There will be a huge amount of \$1 million in 2014–15, \$5 million in 2015–16 and \$60 million in 2016–17.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** The government says that it will complete the project and it relies on the dribble of cash leading up to the \$60 million, which is somewhat substantial. We have to trust that the government will provide the rest of it beyond the forward estimates. Again, the government relies on the forward estimates to say it will do this stuff, but we should not rely on the forward estimates when we look at things like water or electricity charges. Again, the government cannot have it both ways. We often hear people say how frustrating it is that the electricity people dig a hole and put some cables in it, and then fill it up. Then the water people dig a hole and put some pipes in it, and then fill it up. Then Main Roads come and do it all again. Would it not make sense if government got together and saved a lot of money by doing all of those things at once? The tragedy of those three overpasses on Tonkin Highway, as important as they are—this is if the government ever gets around to building them—is that they really should be built in conjunction with the railway line from Ellenbrook down Tonkin Highway meeting up with the Midland line at Bassendean.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We're not building that.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** That is exactly my point. The government will go ahead, if it can find the cash, and build those overpasses, and it will be left to a subsequent Labor government to do what is really needed for the people of Morley, Noranda, Beechboro, Lockridge, Kiara and Ellenbrook. A subsequent Labor government will have to then put a railway line down and it will cost the public more than if this government was able to get its act together, see the genuine needs of that region and honour the commitment it made to build the Ellenbrook line. It could all be done at once and it would be much, much cheaper.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Not going to happen.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** I can hear someone saying that nothing will happen as far as public transport goes and I fear that is the case.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** There will be a railway line to Forrestfield.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** That is right—probably about 2022.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** In 2018 or 2019.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** Yes—long after the current Treasurer has stopped being Treasurer.

I refer the house to page 68 of budget paper No 3. There is an absolutely fantastic sentence on that page about Fiona Stanley Hospital. The government opposite is very proud of Fiona Stanley Hospital. The hospital was planned by the previous Labor government, which put \$1 billion aside to build it. What do the budget papers say about that? This project was planned and funded by the previous Labor government, and the great contribution that the government opposite has made to it is to bring in Serco to run 31 of the facilities there. At the time the decision was made, a lot of people, myself included, said that this would end in tears. What is at page 68 of budget paper No 3 that refers to the commissioning of Fiona Stanley Hospital specifically to do with the Serco contract? It states —

WA Health was unable to quantify the expected financial impacts at the time of finalising the 2013–14 Budget estimates, either precisely or a general order of magnitude.

The government cannot actually say how much the commissioning of Fiona Stanley Hospital will cost either precisely or even in a general order of magnitude. The government is almost saying that with the Serco contract, with all the complexity around the delay, it will cost a lot more, but it does not know whether that number will have one zero on it or 10 zeros on it. It is a phenomenal financial risk that is right there on page 68 of budget paper No 3. It is the flagship infrastructure project of the health budget. It was planned for by the previous Labor government and the construction was planned by the previous Labor government. The only contribution that this government has made to that project has been to bring in Serco to run 31 services, and that has gone pear-shaped. It is not as though the government was not given plenty of warning. Serco is a company with form. It has been fined in recent times for the way it is running the immigration detention centres. It has failed to meet its key performance indicators for court security. It has been notorious for the way in which it has run some United

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Kingdom prisons, and just recently it has been under investigation in the UK for the way it has been tagging offenders. The two major companies that have that contract in the UK, G4S and Serco, are now under investigation for charging for prisoners who were either dead or no longer in prison. When dealing with these sorts of companies and privatising services, there is plenty of evidence here in Australia and around the globe that these things go pear-shaped.

**Mr D.T. Redman:** What about Acacia?

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** That just proves that people cannot get things wrong all the time. There are glaring examples here and around the globe where things go wrong. One privatisation of the previous Liberal government that went belly up was the privatisation of cleaning in the 1990s at Royal Perth Hospital. Even the current minister admits that the privatisation of cleaning there was one of the prime reasons that Royal Perth got a superbug. It cost \$2 million to clean up the superbug and I think over 100 patients were infected with it. The current Minister for Health stood in this place and acknowledged that. So, why take the risk with privatising some of our major hospitals? Again, there was no mention of privatising prior to the election. There is a lot more I could say about this budget. As I said, we are spoilt for choice when it comes to broken promises.

I will say something about the feed-in tariff issue. I was most interested to hear the Premier today in defence of the government's actions read out the contract on the feed-in tariff. I should mention that I have a solar panel or two on my roof, so I may have an interest in this issue. I have not recently looked at my contract. I was one of the lucky people in that I did not hock myself to the eyeballs to do this, so it is not going to hurt me financially one way or another, but it may directly impact on me, so I should say that.

The Premier read out the contract with Synergy and said, "Oh, you know, the government under the contract can, if it wishes, vary the prices." He then read out the letter from Synergy, which states that it will not change the feed-in tariff for 10 years. The Premier said that the letter from Synergy is inconsistent with the contract. Clearly, that is not the case. The contract states, if the Premier is to be believed from the quote he read out, that the government can, if it wishes, vary the feed-in tariff. The letter from Synergy, presumably written by someone authorised by government, states that for 10 years Synergy is not going to vary it. The two positions are not inconsistent. One states that the government has the right to vary it, and the letter from Synergy states that it is just telling people that it is not going to vary it. The two are not inconsistent. One is Synergy just saying that the government is not going to exercise its right under the contract to change the feed-in tariff. The Premier was therefore on extremely shaky ground today in saying what he did; that is, the letter from Synergy was inconsistent with the contract and that is why the government got into trouble. Regardless of that, it is clear again that this government had plans to do that for a considerable time. It should have fessed up to the Western Australian people, and the Western Australian people would have had that knowledge when they went to the election.

I want to say one more thing about the issue of forced redundancies, which is again no small issue. The government could have been up-front with the people of Western Australia. It could have been up-front with the public sector workforce and said, "We're going to bring in legislation to introduce compulsory redundancies in the public sector for the first time." Again, the government did not do that, and that does not seem to bother many government members. All we get in this place is a lecture from the government benches on why members think it is a good idea. If government members felt they were on such firm ground, had the courage of their convictions and believed they would be able to convince the people of Western Australia that these measures were good and necessary for the good governance of the state, why did they not have the guts to make it part of the election program they put to Western Australians? Why did they not have the guts to put notice of these initiatives into the publicly funded advertising that this government engaged in leading up to the state election?

Finally, I want to put in a plug for the many Western Australians I mentioned earlier who are doing it quite tough. The way this government carries on, saying that an extra \$500 a year here and \$500 a year there is only slight and insignificant, completely ignores the plight in which many Western Australians find themselves. There are people on incomes that are considerably less than the incomes earned by members of this chamber—and obviously not as much as the incomes earned by those in the corner of the chamber who are having a nice chuckle. Many Western Australians on lower incomes, whom the Premier should get out and meet sometime, find that the things he has done have put intense financial pressure on their budgets. I see nothing in this budget that shows that this government has any idea that the two-speed economy exists, and it certainly has no idea about how to address it. The government thinks that people currently struggling in rented accommodation on fixed incomes are going to mythically and magically be able to improve their circumstances. It is not going to happen, and in fact this government is making it significantly worse.

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**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah)** [9.45 pm]: I am very pleased to make a contribution to the second reading debate on the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013.

I was thinking about the Treasurer over the past few days after he brought down his budget last Thursday. I was trying to think whom he reminded me of when he brought his budget down in this place last week. At first I thought he reminded me a little of the late Naughty Don Rogers, who used to go mad with money and throw money everywhere. But then I thought more about it and thought that he actually reminded me a little more of Rodney Rude, who is touring Western Australia this month. I am an old Rodney Rude fan. I remember Rodney Rude in the 1980s. Rodney is actually 70 years of age and he is now badging his concerts as “See Rude before he kicks the bucket”. I thought in many ways the Treasurer is a little like Rodney Rude—all puffed up, full of bravado but sort of beyond it now. I think the Treasurer is beyond it now because the budget he brought down last Thursday is probably one of the worst budgets that we have seen in recent times, and certainly in the past few decades. There is no doubt that it was a disaster waiting to happen. Within literally hours of the budget speech being presented to this place, there was almost immediate scurrying by members of his own side when they realised the ramifications of some of the decisions included in the budget.

In the past few days we have seen the debacle that was the solar panel decision. Now we have seen the backflip that was subsequently delivered yesterday after the cabinet meeting. Before the cabinet meeting, the Treasurer, supposedly going to a pre-organised meeting with the Premier, was asked about the solar panel issue by the media waiting at the entrance to the building where cabinet meetings are held. Of course, as we know, he infamously said, “Well, nothing’s changing. We’ve brought down the budget. We’re making the hard decisions. This is one of them and nothing will change.” Within an hour or a bit we now know that the Premier and the energy minister had to very sheepishly and in an embarrassed way come out and face the music and say that the decision on the solar panel debacle had been reversed. The theme of a betrayal of trust has been highlighted by many members on this side during their contributions this evening and during the matter of public interest debate this afternoon. The solar panel issue has been very much the lightning rod for that theme of a betrayal of trust. I remember seeing on the news last night, or it might have been on Sunday evening, a lady in Thornlie somewhere who beautifully summed up the feelings of most Western Australians about this government, this Premier and, ultimately, this Treasurer; that is, their huge disappointment, a feeling that their trust has been betrayed, a belief that they have been lied to and a belief that promises that were made in good faith to them as electors before the March election have been well and truly broken.

I want to highlight a couple of important budget-related issues concerning my area. I jumped on the train this morning and I am going to try to catch the 10.45 back to Mandurah tonight —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No chance!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** — because there are only three other trains after that. Congestion is a massive issue for us. In fact, I now take the train from Mandurah more than I drive my car because it is becoming increasingly frustrating and difficult to make this place within two hours. Last Thursday, budget day, I left my home in Mandurah just before 7.00 am and I got to this place at 9.20; it is not a good thing for the opposition Whip to be one of the last here. It took me two hours and 20 minutes. I know it is the case for lots of Mandurah people that if they leave Mandurah after 7.00 am, they are very likely to be caught in the traffic that now banks up at Anketell Road or even before. This is happening every morning. Traditionally, congestion has occurred in the peak times of six o’clock to eight o’clock, but now during the day the traffic slows to a stop on many parts of the southern end of the Kwinana Freeway. This is a major issue for government and planners as we try to plan for the increased population of the metropolitan area. Coupled with that is the government’s decision in this budget to not fund any new railway stations south of Warnbro between Mandurah and Warnbro.

I have always argued for a second station north of Mandurah. My preference, as the government would know from the number of budget submissions I have written over the years—I never get a response, by the way, but I still put them in—has always been Lakelands; however, at the March election, WA Labor promised a new station would be built in the first term at Paganoni Road. I was quite happy with that, because one of the big problems we face in Mandurah is that the Mandurah terminus is expected to cater for all of the Mandurah city population as well as those from the hinterland areas of Pinjarra and further out. The only option for a person living in Mandurah to board the train is the Mandurah train station. The only option after that is to drive to Warnbro station, which has a smaller car parking area that is already full, like at most stations, before 7.00 am. There was no announcement in this budget for a new train station for Mandurah, but there was also no announcement for any extra car parking at the Mandurah station.

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We know that the southern suburbs railway line will be required to cater for even more patrons, but the government has left us with no options. That situation could have been helped had the government in this budget dramatically increased the public transport linkages within the seats of Dawesville and Mandurah, which I will ask about during the estimates committee process. If the government dramatically increased the frequency of the internal bus services that link to this train station, that would at least alleviate the problem it now leaves us with by giving us no new railway station and no additional car parking. That is what the government has done. There is no plan for the next four years to provide for any growth. Members can go down to the railway station in Mandurah at any time of the day and they will see that car parking is spilling out around LandCorp's new greenfields site development. The verges and everywhere else are filling up with cars; it is chaos. I feel sorry for the people who live, for example, in Stirling Grove, Truarn Street and the feed-in streets of Wyeree Road and Morfitt Street, because the trend will simply be for people to start to park in those streets because there is nowhere else to go. The government has no plan to provide for those people. I know the member for Dawesville is aware that there are no frequent buses on Sundays in parts of his electorate and, indeed, in parts of my electorate, such as the burgeoning suburb of Lakelands. People in those areas cannot catch a bus on Sundays; there is no service. At the bottom end of Dawesville, people cannot catch buses on Sundays.

The government is leaving the people of Mandurah and Dawesville in an invidious situation. The government is not giving us a new railway station, which is what I wanted. The Karnup station was essential for planning in terms of congestion, but the government has not given us that. The Liberal candidate for Mandurah during the election campaign waved around a proposal for a multistorey car park, which is being built in Edgewater, but that is not proposed for Mandurah in either this budget or the forward estimates over the next four years. This will add to congestion. We can add to that the government's decision to make everyone pay for parking. The Treasurer might say that \$2 a day is nothing. It is a gold coin donation, to use the Treasurer's term. The people who commute by train from Mandurah fill up the car parking spaces usually by half past seven or eight o'clock at the latest. All the northern car park, which is currently paid parking, is full by eight o'clock. I got there this morning at 6.20 and parked in the free bit—not in the first section, but in the second section to the north. So the Treasurer is saying that \$2 is not much. However, we are the last zone on the rail zoning system—we are zone 9, I think, from memory—but after 1 July everyone who cannot get a free car parking bay, as was previously the case, will pay an extra \$10 a week, and hidden, I understand, in the budget papers is the issue of projected fare increases.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It's not hidden; it's on about page 4.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Okay. But the increase in fares means more costs for people who live in places in and near Mandurah. They will be paying full parking fees by this time next year, and then the Treasurer has built into the budget, as he has already highlighted now, fare increases over the out years. I got on the train this morning—here is my little SmartRider—and, from memory, when I scan it, the fare is just over \$8 for a full-fare payer like me. Most people travelling at that time of the morning are paying full fare; there are not many concession fares.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** A full MultiRider?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** MultiRiders are cheaper than a cash fare.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes, but it is still \$8. That is the cheaper rate because I upload my card. That is for one way. Today it will cost me, and most of the people who travelled on the trains this morning and who travel home tonight or late this afternoon, \$16 a day. I do not have a problem with paying that because I love trains; I would much rather use the train now than drive a car because, quite frankly, I am sick of the congestion and the frustration of sitting in that car for up to two hours every morning.

I know the member for Dawesville understands this issue, and we have to do something about it, member, because it is a real challenge for us. I am pleading with the member for Dawesville to try to get his colleague to understand the implications we face. We will have no option in the next four years: there are no new options with no new parking, no new bus services planned, and no new rollout of increased bus connections on Saturdays and Sundays. Some Sunday routes, as I have already said, do not exist. We are expected to deal with the congestion. This is a major, major issue for us in the most southern part of the train network.

I am glad the Minister for Health, the member for Dawesville, is here.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** The change from Health Solutions to Ramsay at Peel Health Campus raises a whole range of issues about the future of Peel Health Campus in terms of expansion, and I will be asking some questions about it during the estimates hearings. One of the things I really cannot understand—I have written to the minister on a couple of occasions about this—is why our hospital does not provide what I see as basic

services. I am specifically talking about orthopaedic matters—I think that is the correct term—such as the common breaks such as broken arms and broken ankles and the sorts of things kids do at sport and other people do on a weekend. I have written to the minister on this matter, and he has written back—I will give him credit; he always writes back quickly, which is excellent—but I just cannot understand why our hospital is not able to cater locally for people who have those sorts of breaks and require their bones to be reset, or the work that needs to be done to fix up their wounds and then carry out the follow-up care. I have had probably one dozen letters in the last year about this from various people, including some from the member for Dawesville’s electorate, and each time the experience has been that those people are sent to the fracture clinic, I think, in Rockingham, and some have even been sent to Fremantle. I just cannot understand why, if the government is planning for growth—we always talk about population growth in the Peel and Mandurah areas—that those sorts of services, which to me seem fairly simplistic and basic, are not available in a normal hospital of our size with our capacity. Why is it not dealing with those sorts of cases? I know there have been some issues around particular doctors performing that type of service, but I really am a little befuddled by that. I know the minister will respond to me in letter form on this one, but I think it is important, given the change in contractor at Peel Health Campus, that the mapping out of the future of the hospital is done properly. I met with the director of Ramsay there, and I was very impressed with her; she seems to be well and truly across the sorts of issues that the hospital faces in terms of growth and demand into the future. I think it now has to be expressed to the wider public what our hospital will be delivering in the next 10 years to 15 years—that is, what suite of services will be provided, why that suite of services, and how they will actually deliver for the growing population. The Minister for Planning knows from the 2031 planning document that Peel continues to be one of the focus areas to cater for population growth.

Turning to policing, on 1 August the Minister for Police and the Commissioner of Police attended a police forum in Mandurah. I attended also. It was a very important forum. I had been calling for one since last July, when one was held in Rockingham. I wrote to the Minister for Police on a couple of occasions asking for one, and I am really pleased we had one. It was actually a very good meeting. I said to the minister before the meeting started that I did not think she would get the hiding she got in Armadale a few months or weeks beforehand, and that we were much more welcoming and accommodating in Mandurah. It was a good, robust meeting, and some good questions were put. The member for Dawesville was unable to attend because he had an important function—I think it was the multiple sclerosis ball or something and his apologies were given, which was good.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** But one of my office staff was there.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes, Gary—Mr Greg.

The meeting exposed something I had been highlighting for a period of time, which was the alarming statistics. To the credit of the commissioner, he did not hold anything back and he put up the crime statistics, which were stark. He had trending graphs for a range of crimes, ranging from burglaries to assaults on persons to violent assaults to domestic violence—type assaults and domestic violence—related crimes, and antisocial behaviour including murders. In the last year we have had a very sad statistic of murders in the Peel and Mandurah area.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** I think we were on the news twice tonight.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I think that might be another matter; that fellow in the car.

The fear I have had for a long time is the impact this is having on our identity and reputation. As I said at the meeting on Thursday, 1 August, I am concerned. Every night on a weekend if I am watching the news and a violent crime has been committed or a clandestine drug laboratory has been exploded or had been exposed, or there had been a serious attack, my wife and I say to each other, “Please, please, don’t let it be Mandurah.” It was getting this awful trend. We would say all the time, “Please let it not be Greenfields or some of the other suburbs.” There was an out-of-control party in Dawesville on the weekend. The impact of this crime trend was starting to affect our reputation. The last thing I want to do is downgrade our reputation. I live in a beautiful place. It is a great place, but we were starting to get a bad name.

All these statistics were put up at this meeting. Peel is the worst region for domestic violence in Western Australia. One-third of domestic violence assaults in all the regions in Western Australia occur in the Peel region. It is an appalling, disgusting statistic, yet we have only one women’s refuge, and allied groups such as Allambee Counselling, which provides counselling for victims and their children who are affected by domestic violence, are struggling for money. There is not enough counselling. Those statistics were highlighted.

Out of that meeting came the announcement about Operation Esteem, with 50 police officers to be placed in Mandurah from 14 August. I absolutely welcome it. That will take place over the next three months. As with the operation held in Armadale a month or so ago, those 50 police officers will be out there, so I say to anyone who drives around drunk or does anything, “Watch out, because the coppers are going to be there.” I welcome that.

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The concern I have and the question I ask is: what will happen after that operation is complete? What will happen when those 50 officers have finished their work and leave? What I want to know and what I have been calling for for a couple of years is: how many permanent police officers will be added to the contingent at Mandurah Police Station? I honestly believe that at least 20 officers are needed in Mandurah. I am pleased to see—it is in tomorrow's newspaper tonight—that the Armadale experience has seen 15 permanent officers delivered to Armadale. That is great. I want to see at least that minimum number of officers delivered to Mandurah after Operation Esteem.

In the few minutes I have left I want to highlight that the government still has not delivered on the Retirement Villages Regulations. The long-awaited Retirement Villages Amendment Bill was passed late last year, after much lobbying and strong representation by many people who live in retirement villages. There is a higher number of retirement village residents in Mandurah, Dawesville and other places in the Peel region than in many other electorates. But it is a fact today that the regulations that protect people living in retirement villages still have not been gazetted. One of the important aspects is a cap on the ongoing maintenance costs that a person is liable for when they sell their unit. Today I have put in a question to the minister asking when those regulations will be gazetted so that the people who live in retirement villages are protected under the amendments that were made to the retirement villages legislation. The question went in today. Please get it sorted out and get the regulations gazetted so that those people are protected.

I want to finish on the environment. As mentioned by the member for Gosnells, there is no mention in this budget of significant environmental funding, particularly for community-based effort. The government has scrapped the \$5 million conservation grants scheme, which has been very popular and used by groups in the Peel such as the Peel Preservation Group, the rivers appeal and the heron group, which is down at the bottom end, if you like, of the Peel–Harvey system. No funding has been allocated for those groups to continue the great conservation work they have been doing. There is no gazettal of or funding for the Peel region scheme to cover all of the terrestrial land that has been identified for protection and conservation, which is the fundamentally important aspect in protecting the Peel–Harvey estuary system. I have said before in this place that the health and wellbeing of the Peel–Harvey estuary system underpins everything that happens in Mandurah, Dawesville and the Peel region.

**Mr A.P. Jacob:** There is money in there!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I do not have time to talk about that now; I will talk about that another time. There is no money for the Peel region scheme in this budget. The government has not delivered the key thing that is required to underpin the protection of the Peel–Harvey estuarine system into the future. The government has not delivered it—again!

**MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington)** [10.16 pm]: I have the great joy of speaking at 20 past 10 at night!

**Mr J.M. Francis** interjected.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** The minister can feel free to leave whenever he likes; I have no objection if he wants to leave the room.

I will start off on the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Recurrent 2013–14 Bill 2013 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Account) Capital 2013–14 Bill 2013 with a couple of issues in the energy portfolio. The first issue I will talk about is Muja. I note the answer to question 155 in *Hansard*, 12 June 2013. The other chamber has those cute questions without notice of which some notice has been given, and it is always a great thing to read them. Hon Alanna Clohesy asked the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Energy about the Muja AB refurbishment. Her question had three parts. The first part of her question asked about the dates that cabinet considered the matter, but the minister refused to answer that, so I will go to the others parts, which read —

- (2) On what date did cabinet approve the initial capital injection by Verve Energy into the Vinalco joint venture, and what amount of money did cabinet approve for Verve Energy to spend on this project at that time?
- (3) Has cabinet subsequently approved further injections of money by Verve into the Vinalco joint venture; and, if so, when and what amount of money each time?

The answer was given by the Leader of the House, but as is the practice in that place, the Minister for Energy actually signed the answer. As I understand the practice, where the minister is in this chamber, they sign the answer and give that to the minister representing them in the other place, who answers the question for them. The answers read —

- (2) It was on 9 July 2010, and \$2 million.

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- (3) On 30 August 2012 Verve Energy received approval for a \$23 million injection; on 24 January 2013, Verve Energy received approval for a \$46.8 million injection.

I make the point that the minister provided that answer on 11 June 2013. I believe that answer is wrong. I believe the minister has provided an incorrect answer, because there was an additional amount of \$5 million. The minister has never given a proper account of this, but when the minister commented in this chamber on 19, 20 and 28 June on the issue of Verve Energy in the matter of public interest, the suspension of standing orders and ministerial statement, he discussed an additional amount of \$5 million. The implication, from the way that the debate occurred, was that \$5 million was approved subsequent to 11 June 2013, but I actually believe that to be wrong, that the Minister for Energy's answer hid the truth, and that, in fact, he gave approval for that additional \$5 million before 11 June 2013. This is not a matter that I will leave alone; I will come back to it at another time, through the procedures of the Parliament, to have it dealt with, because I think it is a serious issue. I think the minister should be obliged to provide truthful answers, even if they are embarrassing. It seems to me that what often happens with the current Minister for Energy is that he will provide answers that cover up facts. I am not saying that he is telling lies, because maybe he simply does not understand his own portfolio area. But it seems that much of the information that the minister provides to this house and to the people of Western Australia is completely and utterly inaccurate. Whether it is deliberately inaccurate, I do not know; only he can say that, but it is clearly wrong, and he needs to do better.

I point out that in June the minister gave a figure to the media that the Muja project had cost \$280 million; I note that page 186 of budget paper No 3 indicates that the project is costed at \$330.8 million. We will explore with some force the question of the Muja refurbishment through the budget estimates process, and it will be interesting to see what we can find out. I also draw attention to pages 308 and 309 of budget paper No 3. At the bottom of page 308 there is some text under the heading "Electricity Tariffs". The last line on page 308 reads —

Approved increases for 2014-15 onwards are outlined in Table 8.2.

Table 8.2 is on page 309; it is a table in two parts, one of which is headed "Non-Contestable Tariff Increases", and the other, "Contestable Tariff Increases". I am not interested in the contestable tariffs because that is in a full market, but I am interested in the non-contestable tariff increases. The table shows the figures for 2014–15 to be seven per cent; for 2015–16, seven per cent; and for 2016–17, seven per cent, in respect of the residential A1/A2 tariff.

During question time today there was a bit of a debate between the shadow Minister for Water and the Minister for Water about what is in the budget papers, and I draw members' attention to the fact that the reference in the budget papers is to "approved" increases. Members can read in budget paper No 3 that the certification by the Under Treasurer is that the budget papers contain all the information based on decisions of cabinet that are known to him. It would appear to me that the Under Treasurer is being very, very specific; he said that there are "approved" increases, so it is actually not possible for the government to just try to wish away those amounts, because they are actually referred to in the budget papers as being approved.

I will now move on to the issue of the solar feed-in tariff. I am in the interesting position of being able to quote tomorrow's paper; I have *The West Australian* of 14 August 2014, as I stand here on 13 August 2013.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney):** I am not sure whether that is allowed! I will have to check the standing orders.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I will just quote a couple of things. There are two articles on page 11; one is a news report, and the other is an opinion piece. The news report, titled "Nahan kept in dark over solar rate cuts" states, in part —

It means Dr Nahan had no formal briefing note from his department when he signed off on a decision that he would be legally responsible for enacting as minister.

I find it extraordinary that a minister would be so cavalier in his responsibilities to the people of Western Australia. We have been through in detail during question time and the matter of public interest earlier today the briefing note that was provided to the Minister for Energy. He said he received it on 23 July. He does not deny that the document on *The West Australian's* website is in fact the briefing note he received. I make the observation that the briefing note is signed by Ray Challen, the deputy director general of the Department of Finance. He is of course also the head of the Public Utilities Office. He is a very, very senior bureaucrat. The minister's defence is that his department provided him with incomplete advice. The minister has admitted to *The West Australian*, which is reported in tomorrow's paper, that he had no other advice at all. In fact, he had no advice at all at the time he made the decision. As the Minister for Energy explained, this briefing note from his department came to him after he had made the decision to close the scheme. Tomorrow's paper quotes the Premier of Western Australia —

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“The scheme is flawed,” the Premier said. “It is fundamentally flawed. Every version of the scheme is flawed. And we’ve got to take responsibility for that.”

I now go on to quote from the opinion piece written by *The West Australian’s* Gareth Parker. It is not like the feed-in tariff scheme suddenly burst into people’s understanding on budget day last week. Of course it has been a major controversy in Western Australia for some time. In 2011, the scheme was closed. There was great controversy at the time. Last year, not long after I became shadow minister, through the work of the previous shadow minister, Hon Kate Doust, we got a whole pile of documents through freedom of information that showed the government had not been honest with the people of Western Australia about the closure of the scheme. There was brouhaha about that. In fact, it is the third occasion this scheme has become a matter of controversy. In tomorrow’s *The West Australian*, Mr Parker points out things said in 2012 that were rejected by the then Minister for Energy Peter Collier. I quote Mr Parker —

At the time the Government rejected that criticism, with Mr Collier declaring the policy was a “phenomenally successful” and “a terrific outcome” that had convinced the community about the merits of “a more sustainable energy future”.

Let us contrast that with what the Premier said. To quote from the newspaper, the Premier said “It is fundamentally flawed”. These two things are totally and utterly inconsistent. This scheme has been botched from day one. The Liberal Party simply did not understand what it was doing here. It messed up from the start. It was a fundamentally flawed proposal and it was fundamentally flawed in the way the scheme was cancelled. Every time they touched that solar feed-in tariff scheme, it has been a disaster. They simply got it wrong from the start.

I do not imagine that the solar feed-in tariff debacle will disappear from today. I am sure that issue will be talked about more. It has been a disaster. It was a disaster because of the handling of that matter by the government. Both Hon Peter Collier and the current Minister for Energy failed to grasp their legal, moral and ethical obligations in the handling of that scheme. They both failed their job. They both should resign. Leave aside Muja, which they both should resign for, they should certainly resign for the complete disaster that is the solar feed-in tariff scheme.

I want to briefly discuss state development issues. At lunchtime today I attended a briefing by the Under Treasurer arranged by the Public Accounts Committee. I am a new member of that committee. I understand that the briefing is an annual event. I was pleased to go to part of that briefing. The Under Treasurer explained that the Department of Treasury and Finance does not see any new major projects in Western Australia in the foreseeable future. The department’s view is that the mining and resources investment boom has peaked and that in future there will be a whole washout of investment in those projects and no new projects are on the scene. That is an extraordinary situation. The Premier likes to puff his chest out frequently on being able to deliver major projects for this state, yet the official position of the Western Australian government is that no new major projects are likely for the next four years. That can be seen as only one thing; that is, a failure of the minister responsible. We can look at his failure to get Oakajee to work, his failure to get James Price Point to work and his failure at every turn to get new projects going in Western Australia. Now he talks about the Perdaman project. If the Perdaman project ever succeeds, that will be a great thing for Western Australia. It is a \$2 shelf company. It reminds me of that echo from the 1990s and the problems with Kingstream when the Premier comes in here and boasts about the possibilities of Perdaman. I would be really pleased if it happens but it is not the same thing that we saw during the period of the Labor government when projects such as Gorgon, Wheatstone and others were delivered to this state.

I would also like to talk about the question of royalties. In last year’s budget, the government announced that it was going to review royalties. It set up a process to do that. I have asked questions of all the ministers that I thought could possibly be involved in this matter, and I have had answers back about who they are consulting. When we talk to the people that they say they are consulting, they say they have not heard about it and they do not know what the government is doing about the royalty review. There seems to be a big disconnect. At the briefing from the Under Treasurer this morning, I asked him—I think the government booked \$180 million in the last year of the out years from last year’s budget—what is happening with those royalty increases. He said that the process is continuing under the leadership of the Department of State Development. It continues to book \$180 million for year 3—last year it was year 4, but this year it is year 3—of the forward estimates and another \$180 million for the final year of this year’s forward estimates. That is \$360 million that the government is saying it will take off the mining sector in Western Australia but it has not told us who it will take it off, what mechanism it will use and what rates will apply. That is happening in a market in which all the pundits, including the Department of Treasury and Finance, are saying that the payments for our mineral exports are going to decline.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** It is extraordinary that \$360 million is being ripped out of the mining sector in Western Australia, yet there is still no proper explanation of how it will happen. What will the government do? Is it lifting gold royalties? Is it lifting mineral sands royalties? How will it do this? I make it clear that this is not about volumes; this is about increasing the rate at which the government charges royalties. It will be interesting to see how the government can continue to justify that \$360 million of income, which it requires to show a balanced budget. If it does not have that \$360 million, it does not have a balanced budget over the out years.

I briefly turn to my final portfolio responsibility of mines and petroleum. I note the government's continuing failure to act on legislative reform of the approvals system. It is interesting that the Keating report by the former Labor government sits unread on the minister's shelf. Although some administrative changes may have been made to arrangements in Western Australia, we are still yet to see any significant change to the laws that apply to the mining sector in this state. The minister will stand and say, "What about the change to the arrangements for environmental bonds?" But that is not the sort of thing the industry sector is talking about.

I turn now to some issues in my electorate. First, I recently wrote to the Minister for Planning to ask him for \$100 000 for assistance with the City of Gosnells in creating a master plan for Hester Park. I have been lobbying the City of Gosnells about this issue for quite some time. I am pleased that it is now ready to start the master plan. Hester Park is an embarrassment for the people of Langford. It needs work. I have said to the City of Gosnells that it should at least create a master plan so that we know where it is going. Then it can make incremental changes to the park so that people can see that the little changes will add up to a big change in the long term. I do not know whether it is the Western Australian Planning Commission or the Department of Planning—please forgive me, minister; I do not know the correct body—but one of them has told the City of Gosnells that the Department of Housing has its eye on some of the land in Hester Park. I am not sure what the department intends. Local residents point out to me that Ruby Gardens was created on the edge of Langford, in their view, as an exchange for keeping the whole of Hester Park on the river side of Spencer Road. If the department is to come back and say, "No, we want to have more of the park cut up for housing", we will have to see what local residents think about that. I do not know whether everyone locally will agree to that. One way or another, we need a master plan. I am asking for \$100 000; I am not asking for a million dollars. I reckon the government can manage that, even in its much-reduced budget. It would get big bang for its buck.

The next issue is the Mills Park redevelopment in Beckenham. The council has a master plan and cash allocated to the project. It is still looking for a bit of money from the state government and a bit of money from the federal government. The City of Gosnells is obviously taking advantage of the current federal election campaign to lean on both the Labor Party and the Liberal Party candidates in the area to try to get some commitment of federal funds for the Mills Park upgrade. I think the council is also after community sporting and recreation facilities fund funding, which, of course, is an existing program. I am not talking about an additional budget allocation, but simply allocating some existing money to a project that is very worthwhile.

I recently spoke to the Minister for Housing regarding the land in Karri Way in Ferndale. I received a disappointing reply. I asked for the retention of open space, and the minister said that in the Department of Housing's view the land being reserved as Bush Forever land is the open space for that community. Clearly, people cannot kick a football at a Bush Forever site. People cannot walk their dogs at a Bush Forever site. Of course, the Bush Forever site is very important. When Dr Constable was the Minister for Education, I had a commitment from her in writing that the Bush Forever part of that site would be protected. If all that the minister is saying is that he will not cut down those trees, that still does not satisfy the local residents. The local residents want the whole of the former school oval protected. That is certainly my desired outcome. If the minister came back to me and said, "I can give you 70 per cent of the oval and 30 per cent of the area cut up for houses", maybe I could wear that, but it is not acceptable for local residents to lose all their open space. The Bush Forever part, whilst it is important, is not a place where someone can walk the dog or take the kids to kick a footy. I know that Damla College, which is occupying the final part of the site, will never complain about the land allocated, but, quite frankly, it currently uses the former school's oval for its own sporting activities, so it is clear that if the open space was retained, it would continue to take advantage of that open space and therefore would get a benefit from it too.

I also note that the Western Australian Planning Commission has approved the Department of Housing's application for the northern end of Quattro. That is a disappointment and I think it is a mistake to build 87 units on that land; that is too many for that site. I do not have a problem with higher densities in Queens Park, but that is the wrong spot—it is completely the wrong end of Queens Park. If it was being done down near the railway line, I could understand it and I would encourage it, but it is being done way up against Welshpool Road. This does not make sense. It will severely impact traffic flows in Quattro and it will make problems for buses, garbage trucks and a whole range of vehicles that will need to access the road into Quattro. This is not a good

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plan, particularly because the Department of Housing owns a large site in the City of Canning—the city centre of Cannington—where the council and residents would love it to develop and put up a big block of places on that site directly across from the train station. Everybody would be happy with that.

I note that local conservation groups in my electorate are concerned about the axing of conservation community grants. There are a number of organisations in my local community like the Wilson Wetlands Action Group, Friends of Brixton Street Wetlands, Bannister Creek Catchment Group, Canning River Regional Park Volunteers, South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare and the Friends of Queens Park Bushland. A whole range of local groups have relied on those conservation community grants, and they were disappointed by the end of them because that will directly impact on the capacity of those very important groups to do the work they do in our local community.

I congratulate the Treasurer for not funding Roe 8. I think that is a really good decision.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Yet.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Let us see it!

The Treasurer's complaint earlier was that we all call for him to spend money, but here I am congratulating him on not spending money! Of course, the project has been promised in the last three elections by the Liberal Party, but it only won two of them, so that is fair enough. Given that the Minister for Transport is in the chamber, he should have a look at what is happening on Leach Highway with heavy trucks. There really is a problem with the fact that there is no enforcement of the heavy traffic ban on Leach Highway. They go through Wilson in my electorate before they go on to the member for Riverton's electorate. There really needs to be some enforcement action. When I am at the corner of Manning Road and Leach Highway, the number of large trucks going through is amazing. Of course, I understand that it is not a ban on all trucks, it is only a ban on large trucks, but there is simply too much happening and we need to do something about it.

The member for Riverton also promised the third lane for Shelley Bridge, and I do not know whether the Minister for Transport is aware of that. It would be great for that to happen, but I do not know whether it will.

Even though it is nearly 11 o'clock, I have three minutes to go so I want to talk about something that I think there should be more understanding of; that is, the relationship between Australia and Indonesia prior to white settlement here. I recently read a book called *The Voyage to Marege*, which was the name given to Arnhem Land by the Macassans for hundreds of years while they traded with areas of Arnhem Land. I have done quite a bit of research on this issue and it is interesting that quite a bit of research has been done on the connection between Macassar and Arnhem Land, but no similar body of research has been done on the connection between Macassar and the Kimberley. All the research shows that there was probably just as much communication between Macassar and the Kimberley as there was between Macassar and Arnhem Land. To give it a picture, at least a thousand Macassans would spend six months of the year in Arnhem Land and there was probably at least that number in the Kimberley. That went on for hundreds and hundreds of years. There is enormous demonstrated connection between Macassar and the Indigenous people of the north. It had a large impact on language throughout the area; in fact, a person I know told me about a farewell ceremony they attended in Arnhem Land that was actually the Muslim call to prayer, so we can see there was an incredible connection. There are recorded examples of Indigenous men travelling on the praus back to Macassar and spending at least six months, and perhaps longer, in Macassar before returning to Arnhem Land.

This is a fascinating and important part of Australia's history that is rarely told and I think we need to look at how we can tell it, particularly with respect to the Kimberley.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**.