

TOURISM — MAJOR EVENTS

**95. Ms M.M. QUIRK to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts to attract major events to Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the facilitation of major events in Western Australia, such as the upcoming FIFA Women's World Cup, will provide both economic and social benefits for Western Australians?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house what measures this government is taking to prepare for these events, as well as their legacy?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

(1)–(2) After the Minister for Housing's last effort, I feel intimidated! It is a hard act to follow.

**The SPEAKER:** I am sure you will do your best.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** I would like to thank the member for Landsdale for the question. It is a very important one. In acknowledging her, can I also acknowledge her advocacy on behalf of the community. The mighty Kingsway Regional Sporting Complex has been announced as the host training ground for the Denmark international side for the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup. I think she has done a great job in continuing to galvanise the community and create a great sense of belonging with that team.

I recently spoke about the fact that Western Australia is becoming one of the great event destinations of South-East Asia. The other weekend, we obviously had the UFC 284. That not only had a huge impact in elevating Western Australia and Perth in the eyes of the global audience, but also resulted in a 30 per cent jump in the number of beds booked, adding an extra \$2.3 million in bookings for our hotels on that weekend alone. That is a huge outcome. In a time of global economic uncertainty and an extremely competitive tourism market, now more than ever we have to continue to lift our game and make sure that we take every opportunity to promote Western Australia through our tourism strategy.

The 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup is going to be another huge event for Western Australia. I am particularly excited about it because it not only is a great tourism outcome and will continue to elevate Western Australia in the eyes of our global audience, but also has the potential to inspire young women and girls to the global game. The FIFA Women's World Cup is the largest single female sporting event in the world. In 2023, Australia and New Zealand will have the honour of hosting this major event. Perth will host five matches at the Perth rectangular stadium between 22 July and 3 August. Denmark, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Ireland, Canada, Jamaica, Morocco and Colombia will all showcase their sporting prowess here in Western Australia. The tournament will also generate significant international and domestic media coverage and literally be watched by up to two billion fans worldwide, presenting a huge opportunity to showcase Western Australia. Obviously, it will inject millions of dollars into the Western Australian hospitality and tourism industry as people come to Western Australia to watch these great events.

To plan for this unique opportunity, the state government has established a multiple cross-government working group, led by Tourism WA. Plans are progressing well and so is the sale of tickets. We want to continue to see how we can promote the games over the next 100 days or so, but in particular make sure that we take the opportunity to celebrate the tournament through the Unity Pitch activation, trophy tour and FIFA Fan Festival.

The government's WA recovery plan committed \$2.6 million to improving the Olympic Kingsway Sports Club's infrastructure and floodlights, making sure that the visiting athletes will have world-class facilities and amenities, which will be enjoyed by local communities in future years. In particular, the upgrades that have been made to the rectangular stadium will stand the square-field sports in great stead in the future. This is a great legacy contribution.

In November last year, the Minister for Sport and Recreation, the member for Bicton and I met with the leaders of the Perth-based advocacy group Gaining Ground, which runs a mental health and wellbeing program that empowers women and girls to take up leadership positions in football. That organisation impressed me with the fact that we need more women and girls in leadership roles: you cannot be what you cannot see. We stand to make a huge legacy change in relation to the FIFA Women's World Cup. This will be an important tournament for Western Australia. It will not just be a legacy project for sporting facilities and for the world game here in Australia. It will not just be a great opportunity to showcase Western Australia and Perth in particular as part of this global event. It will be an opportunity not just for tourism and hospitality businesses to continue to thrive in our economy, but also to continue to inspire and create a great opportunity for young women and girls to see just where they can go to when they take on great sporting roles.