

ART GALLERY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA — VISITOR NUMBERS

3414. Mr A. Krsticevic to the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the report of the Auditor General into the Management of the State Art Collection at the Art Gallery of WA and ask:

- (a) What is being done to address the drop in visitor numbers since the 2012–13 peak;
- (b) What market research is conducted by the Gallery and how much has been spent/allocated on market research for each of the past five years;
- (c) What is being done to address the limited access to the Collection from people living outside of the metropolitan area; and
- (d) Is the Gallery developing a strategy or policy to increase access to the Collection outside of the metropolitan area and if so, by what date will the same be complete?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) In late 2015 Art Gallery of Western Australia (AGWA) embarked on a new audience development program which has returned annual visitation to comparable figures. The visitation for 2017/18 was 375 698, up 32% on 2015/16 with 91 000 extra visitors recorded. The new strategy has included the appointment of a Director of Engagement to focus on visitor experiences and engagement (October 2015), launching the AGWA brand ‘See things differently’ (March 2016) which included new initiatives such as AGWA TV programs, The Imagination Room, ‘Aggie’ the world’s first art gallery engagement robot, a range of new targeted programs including ‘Art Bubs’ for new parents and their young children, ‘Super Saturday’ events to launch major exhibitions and Naidoc week; and a new program brand ‘Culture Juice’ aimed at new and different audiences which opened with ‘Sneakerheads’ and continued with Heath Ledger: A Life in Pictures. About 180 000 visitors saw these two exhibitions. The State Art Collection has been central to the new brand with five new collection displays including a dedicated Indigenous gallery completed (September 2017–August 2018) and a marketing campaign ‘Different every time you visit’.
- (b) AGWA carries out a rolling annual survey through Morris Hargreaves McIntyre, an internationally renowned firm, designed to understand visitors’ needs and behaviour. AGWA also undertakes occasional research on planned major exhibitions to guide the targeting, advertising, pricing policy, exhibition experience and messaging. This was successfully used in the campaign for The Corsini Collection. AGWA also uses the Culture Counts system to assist profiling visitors to exhibitions.

Expenditure totals are:

2014	79 632.98
2015	65 720.00
2016	112 851.10
2017	75 130.50
2018	58 990.00
Total	392 324.58

- (c) AGWA is currently working on better online access including a new website. Access to the State Art Collection, starting with the celebrated Indigenous holdings, is being done with the assistance of the Gordon Darling Foundation and stage one has been successfully launched. AGWA TV for education audiences included two ‘Inspire’ TV programs, providing educators in remote locations with valuable distance learning tools. The latest edition, ‘Drawing Breath’ launched August 2018, includes a useful student work book and focuses on the key curriculum area of ‘visual analysis’ and includes several State Art Collection works.
- (d) AGWA is currently working in partnership with Art on the Move to deliver the Government’s election commitment for the \$8 million Regional Exhibitions Touring Boost (RETB). Over the next six years the RETB will increase the number of touring visual arts exhibitions available to regional audiences.