



# Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION  
2021

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, 9 September 2021



# Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy) took the chair at 10.00 am, read prayers and acknowledged country.

## JOINT SITTING — ELECTION OF SENATOR

*Statement by President*

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy) [10.03 am]: With reference to the motion this house passed yesterday on the fixing of the day and place for a joint sitting of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly to fill the Senate vacancy arising from the resignation of Senator Siewert, I advise that I have conferred with the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly and have received agreement that the houses will meet in the Legislative Council chamber at 12 noon on Tuesday, 14 September 2021. Shortly, I will send members a memorandum with further information.

## R U OK? DAY — SUICIDE PREVENTION

*Statement by Minister for Mental Health*

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Mental Health) [10.04 am]: Today is R U OK? Day. R U OK? is a national harm-prevention charity that aims to start life-changing conversations. It is a nationwide movement that encourages people to stay connected and have conversations that can help others through difficult times in their lives. R U OK? focuses on building motivation, confidence and skills in the help-giver—the person who can have that meaningful conversation with someone who is struggling with life. R U OK? makes a valuable contribution to suicide prevention efforts by encouraging people to invest more time in their personal relationships; to build the capacity of their informal support networks—friends, family and colleagues; to be alert to those around them; and to be able to have a conversation if they identify signs of distress or difficulty and connect someone to appropriate support long before they are in crisis.

Here in Western Australia the Mental Health Commission recognises that suicide prevention is a whole-of-community issue and requires a whole-of-community approach. We last year released the *Western Australian suicide prevention framework 2021–2025* providing a roadmap for government, communities and other key stakeholders to work together, so that a coordinated approach can be taken to support suicide prevention efforts across WA.

President, on average approximately one person a day dies by suicide in Western Australia, and suicide is the leading cause of death for young people aged 15 to 24 years, but many people do not realise that suicide is preventable. It is complex, and many factors and pathways can lead to a person to attempt to take their life, but if there is one message I want everyone to take away from this place today, it is that suicide is preventable.

I urge everyone to start a conversation with a colleague or a friend and ask them, R U OK? It is not always easy to keep a conversation going when someone says, actually, no, they are not okay, but it could change a life. This year's theme is: "Are they really okay?" and the R U OK? website has uploaded some really good resources that show people not just how to ask the question, but how to have the conversation—simple steps that could change a life.

In closing, President, I would like to acknowledge that tomorrow, 10 September, is World Suicide Prevention Day. On this day every year countries around the world commit to taking action to reduce the rate of suicide attempts and deaths, and limit the devastating impact it has across the community. I urge that action start with asking the question R U OK? Do it today. Ask the question, and if the answer is no, or your gut says the person is not, then have the conversation—simple steps that could change a life.

## JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION

*First Report — City of Kalamunda Dogs Local Law 2021 — Tabling*

HON LORNA HARPER (East Metropolitan) [10.06 am]: I am directed to present the first report of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation titled *City of Kalamunda Dogs Local Law 2021*.

[See paper [535](#).]

Hon LORNA HARPER: The report that I have just tabled advises the house of the committee's view that the City of Kalamunda did not follow the mandatory procedures prescribed in sections 3.12 and 3.13 of the Local Government Act 1995 when it made the City of Kalamunda Dogs Local Law 2021. In making the local law, the city breached section 3.12(4) by adopting a law that was significantly different from that which was proposed. Further, in that scenario, section 3.13 of the Local Government Act 1995 required the city to recommence the local law-making procedures prescribed in section 3.12. However, the city failed to do so. In the committee's view, the local law was made invalidly and consequently is not within the power granted by the empowering acts. The committee recommends that the local law be disallowed. I commend the report to the house.

## JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

### *First Report — Annual report 2020–21 — Tabling*

**HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition)** [10.08 am]: I am directed to present the first report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission titled *Annual report 2020–21*. [See paper [536](#).]

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** This *Annual report 2020–21* summarises the activities of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission between 1 July 2020 and 30 June 2021. As members may be aware, the committee's role is to monitor and report on the exercise of the functions of the Corruption and Crime Commission and Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission; commence own-motion inquiries relating to means by which corruption prevention practices may be enhanced within the public sector; and carry out functions under the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003.

During the reporting period the committee held 11 deliberative meetings and nine formal evidence hearings with 26 witnesses. The previous committee undertook one formal inquiry, and tabled three reports during the reporting period. In one report tabled in November 2020, the seventeenth report, *Meaningful reform overdue: The Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*, the previous committee called on the government to undertake a comprehensive review of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003. In June 2021, the government announced that the Department of Justice had commenced a complete review of the act. Although to date the committee is not aware of details of this review, this development is encouraging.

I welcome Matthew Zilko, SC, the new Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission, to his role. He is the first new inspector appointed to this role since 2013. His office, the Corruption and Crime Commission, and its commissioner play a vital role in ensuring the integrity of the public sector for the benefit of all Western Australians. I look forward to working with members of the committee in progressing the important work of the committee in this Parliament.

### *Second Report — If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force — Tabling*

**HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition)** [10.10 am]: I am directed to present the second report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, titled *If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force*.

[See paper [537](#).]

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** The fifteenth report of the previous Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, titled *If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force*, was tabled in both houses on 24 September 2020. Due to the prorogation of Parliament, the government did not respond to the recommendations in the fifteenth report. Through the report I table today, the current committee requests a government response to the 13 recommendations in the report.

Allegations of excessive use of force by members of the WA Police Force—that is, using more force than is justified by law—fall within the remit of the Corruption and Crime Commission to oversight and/or investigate. It is important to note that members of the WA Police Force have around 2.2 million interactions with the public each year compared with, on average, around 400 allegations of excessive use of force each year. Fewer than five per cent of the allegations are sustained. The CCC refers most allegations of excessive use of force back to the WA Police Force to deal with and investigate. It closely oversees a small number of these investigations, and independently or cooperatively investigates an even smaller number—around two per cent of allegations since July 2015.

The previous committee found that, in some circumstances, complainants hesitate to make a complaint to the CCC because of a lack of confidence in the process. Some complainants found the process circular, confusing, costly and time consuming. The previous committee also found that the relationship between the CCC and the Aboriginal Legal Service appears to be dysfunctional. The ALS more often goes directly to the WA Police Force with allegations of excessive use of force rather than to the CCC.

The former committee found that even if there were more robust internal police oversight, the CCC cannot abrogate its responsibility to oversee excessive use of force complaints. Among other recommendations, the previous committee recommended that the CCC should refocus its efforts and current resources on police oversight.

## McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### *Notice of Motion*

**Hon Jackie Jarvis** gave notice that at the next sitting of the house she would move —

That the Legislative Council notes the continued improvement in Western Australia's economy and financial situation under the McGowan Labor government.

**INSURANCE COMMISSION — BELL RESOURCES SETTLEMENT***Notice of Motion*

**Hon Nick Goiran** gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house —

- (1) Notes that the Insurance Commission of Western Australia —
  - (a) received \$665.4 million on 11 September 2020 as its share of the settlement of the Bell Group litigation settlement;
  - (b) was not involved in the preparation of the Premier’s media release on 4 October 2020, which said that every residential household would from 1 November 2020 receive a one-off \$600 electricity bill credit “funded from the recent Bell Group settlement”;
  - (c) paid approximately \$200 million to the government in 2020–21 by way of tax equivalent payments on the Bell settlement sum; and
  - (d) has covered approximately \$292 million in costs arising from the Bell litigation, leaving it with an after tax net sum of \$173 million.
- (2) Expresses its concern that the Premier —
  - (a) misled Western Australians when he made his electricity credit announcement on 4 October 2020; and
  - (b) did not have the Bell settlement funds when the electricity bill credits were issued.
- (3) Reminds the Premier that the funding of the Bell Group litigation was derived from a WA Inc levy imposed on motorists.
- (4) Calls on the Premier to —
  - (a) acknowledge that the commission board owes fiduciary duties;
  - (b) undertake not to interfere with the discharge of those duties; and
  - (c) table any reports he receives from the commission under sections 28 or 29 of the Insurance Commission of Western Australia Act 1986.

**BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — EXTENDED SITTING HOURS***Standing Orders Suspension — Motion*

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [10.15 am] — without notice: I move —

That so much of standing orders be suspended so as to enable the Council to sit beyond 5.20 pm on this day’s sitting and take members’ statements at a time ordered by the house.

By way of explanation, this is to give us enough time to deal with the matter that is before us on the orders of the day. I have spoken to each of the party leaders and, on the basis of the advice I have been provided, I anticipate we will not need to sit beyond 5.20 pm, but this enables us to do so if we just need a bit more time to deal with the report recommendation that is before the house in the orders of the day.

Question put and passed with an absolute majority.

**NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING***Motion*

**HON STEVE MARTIN (Agricultural)** [10.16 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house condemns the McGowan government for its ill-conceived plan to ban the logging of native forests, which —

- (a) was a rushed decision announced without any consultation with the forestry industry;
- (b) will shut down a sustainable industry resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs in the regions; and
- (c) will decimate the regional local communities of Nannup, Greenbushes and Manjimup and more broadly across the south west.

I rise to speak to this motion following on from the announcement by the government yesterday morning. I will come to various parts of the motion, but I will start with a discussion of the process that started yesterday, I assume in the lead-up to yesterday’s announcement, but that is a little unclear, certainly to the industry.

At approximately 7.30 yesterday morning, Ian Telfer, the president of the Forest Industries Federation of WA, received a call from the Minister for Forestry, Dave Kelly, suggesting that there would be an announcement later that morning. There was no detail. Ian took the call. He was a little concerned. Shortly after that, the world changed for the forestry sector in the south west of WA. My phone and the phones of a number of other members started ringing with news of what had been announced. Ian and the sector were staggered at the announcement for all sorts of reasons, but mainly because of the lack of consultation in the lead-up to that announcement. There had been none. They were completely blindsided. I spoke to an official from FIFWA this morning who said that right about the time the announcement was being made, they received an email from Parkside Timber, one of the hardwood mills just out of Manjimup, discussing supply issues that had been ongoing for some months and wanting to know whether they would be resolved. Obviously, one of the largest mills and investors in the sector simply had no idea that this was coming. I find that process extraordinary. There was no consultation at all in the single biggest announcement for 20 years in the forestry sector. No consultation had taken place and the sector was completely blindsided. That was very disappointing.

I will look at the announcement and investigate that in a little detail. The media release states —

- South-West native forests to be protected from logging from 2024
- Forest Management Plan 2024–33 to end logging of native forests
- All two-tier karri forest immediately protected

By the way, Parkside Timber processes karri. I assume “immediately” means tomorrow and that Parkside will have to think about its staff, markets et cetera.

The media statement also mentions “a \$50 million Just Transition Plan” that will support affected workers and communities. In the words of the great HG Nelson: “We don’t make this stuff up!” The euphemism “a just transition plan” clearly comes from someone who has never worked in private industry. It is a public servant definition of what it means to shut down an industry and evidently spend \$50 million. Parkside alone has probably invested \$50 million in recent years. I will come back to that and what that will look like.

Ian Telfer rang me this morning to explain what he knew about the just transition plan, which is precisely nothing. No details have been released. He has tried to find out what it means, but I assume that that will be worked out after the event, which again is disappointing.

It is important that members are aware of exactly what the forest sector means to Western Australia. The hardwood industry in particular has been a sustainable, long-term profitable business that has operated for 180 years in Western Australia. It has provided jobs and export income right across the south west and more broadly.

I will provide a few quick details about what the sector means to Western Australia. These forests are not old-growth forests. The logging of old-growth forests stopped in 2001, approximately 20 years ago.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** You opposed that one as well, didn’t you?

**Hon STEVE MARTIN:** Twenty years ago, I did not.

The forests have been managed and harvested a number of times—two or three times—over the last 100–something years. They have been managed resources and re-harvested a number of times. The forestry industry is sustainable and provides jobs. I will provide a little more detail about what that means. A report entitled *Socio-economic impacts of the forest industry: Western Australia* by Jacki Schirmer and others, released in December 2017 by the University of Canberra, refers to some figures. It states —

In 2015–16, the direct value of output generated by the WA forest industry at the point of sale of primary processed products was \$649 million, increasing to \$1,405 million when flow-on effects generated in other industries as a result of spending by the forest industry are included.

...

Up to the point of primary processing, a total of 508 direct jobs were generated by the native forest industry ...

That independent report was done into the sector. I spoke to people in the sector recently who said that they believe the numbers in that report are similar to the numbers in the industry now and may have even increased due to the value of the timber resource. In small towns like Manjimup, Greenbushes and Nannup the forestry industry provides valuable jobs outside the agriculture and horticulture industries. This sector has been providing jobs in those communities for decades and now that investment is at risk.

Those employed in the forest industry are obviously aware of how the world has changed in recent years. Community expectations have changed and the industry has adapted and changed its practices. On a recent tour of the south west I was shown the new forest management strategies that have been put in place. People engaged in the industry are aware that they need to use every single scrap of valuable hardwood that is harvested. Laminated products and processed products are being produced. They are aware that growth rates are changing as a result of declining rainfall in the south west corner of the state and have adapted their harvesting strategies. The forestry industry is sophisticated and produces a valuable resource.

The industry recently trialled thinning to ensure it uses 100 per cent of the product and the results are very promising. I was completely unaware of some of the flow-on industries in this sector. Just outside of Bunbury is a business called Simcoa, which produces silicon. I am sure all members own at least one of these devices and benefit from the silicon chip that is produced by Simcoa. Production of the chip is a complicated and sophisticated process. Quartz rock is trucked from Moora to Bunbury. That quartz is then put under enormous heat through a process that uses enormous amounts of electricity to produce silicon. One of the key components of that process is charcoal produced from jarrah. Evidently, jarrah has the right or best properties to produce the purest silicon, which is then used in mobile phone chips and all sorts of industries around the world. Obviously, there are alternatives to the jarrah product. One of them is harvested in South America, shipped to Europe where it is processed, and then shipped to Australia. That is Simcoa's fallback if they are not able to access jarrah. Tucked away in the outer suburbs of Bunbury is this wonderful business that produces export income and hires locals but it relies very heavily on the use of jarrah.

There are lots of flow-on businesses like Simcoa that rely on the forestry industry, including trucking operators. I met a young guy recently who is involved with Parkside. He recently signed a contract to ship karri to the eastern states on his fleet of trucks. He has been upskilling his team, hiring new people and bringing new trucks in so they can ship timber from Manjimup across Australia. He has been hiring people who have moved to town. Their kids are going to local schools and small communities have been thriving.

There is another flow-on effect of this decision. Where will people get hardwood flooring and timber from if not from the south west of Western Australia. As I came into the chamber today, I stamped on the floor. I am fairly certain that there is timber under these carpets. I hope it is from the south west. I assume it is jarrah. When we build in the future, will that hardwood come from overseas? I am not sure that chopping wood down and processing it somewhere else and putting it on a boat and getting it all the way to Fremantle is a carbon-friendly process. Bunnings and other timber supply businesses will be forced to source their product from overseas.

I come back to the "just transition plan" of \$50 million. I believe that in 2001, when the decision to stop logging old-growth forests was made, the package was \$180 million. It is \$50 million now. I am not sure what that will look like in terms of investment in the region. If I was someone who is employed in a timber mill and I woke up this morning to that news, I would not be waiting for \$50 million. I would be thinking that my job was gone or is about to be gone, and I would be out looking for employment elsewhere and planning to leave town. Security in the sector has gone. Any future investment has gone. What kind of conversations will businesses like Parkside and those that operate mills have with their banking institutions when they are asked, "Where is the security in your business in the long term?" We simply do not know. The government can arbitrarily, overnight, shut us down and change the rules and the guidelines. I imagine those businesses would be very nervous about the future of their investment and probably will not make any more investment in that region. They certainly will not hire anyone, and they will be working very, very hard to keep their staff in town, but that will be difficult. Those communities will lose people. They will lose kids from the school and volunteers from St John Ambulance. There will be enormous flow-on effects right across the south west of Western Australia.

Minister Kelly has his hands all over this. He has some form when it comes to industries in regional Western Australia. He recently had a crack at the crayfish industry, and that ended in tears. He thought that with his vast experience in private enterprise he would explain to the cray fishermen how they should run that sector or, more importantly, how the government should run that sector for them. That did not work well.

Minister Kelly and I attended the industry's fifth annual showcase dinner event in Fremantle recently, and he sat there smiling and nodding and made a nice speech about how wonderful the industry is. This was a very recent dinner. He must have known this was coming. He looked them in the eye and then a month later he did this. Member opposite, please do not give Minister Kelly any more portfolios that have an impact on regional Western Australia. The two that he has had a crack at have been a mess. One of the reasons Minister Kelly and the Labor government has had a crack at things, like the crayfish industry and the timber industry, is that it is quite clearly keen to paint the people in these industries as evil, and that plays well in the suburbs. That plays well in metropolitan Perth where the government is keen to court that left-leaning vote, which is a shame because those regional industries, such as the crayfishing and hardwood timber industries, are very sustainable, wonderful employers of people, and they deserve better than this.

Just on what plays well in the suburbs, I will digress slightly and talk about the government's keenness to stop cutting down trees in the forest industry. I will pose a question. Whereabouts in Western Australia is the easiest place to cut down a tree at the moment, and has been for some time? It is here in the suburbs. In the wheatbelt, where I live, farmers have been taken to court for clearing firebreaks to protect their property. Road verges in the wheatbelt and great southern are full of trees that are so close that if we stand on the bitumen, we can reach out and touch the white gums and salmon gums, but we cannot clear them. There are not many salmon gums along the Kwinana Freeway. New suburbs sprout up endlessly in the city and the native vegetation on those evidently has no value or, if it does, we can offset. Guess where we offset it. It is not here. It is somewhere out there. Again, that metro-centric view of the world does us no good in regional Western Australia.

The Premier talked about various topics and why this was a good thing. He talked about climate change. The foresters know full well what is happening in their part of the world. They are very, very sophisticated about how this industry works and what has changed. He talked about how this will somehow store extra carbon. This wood in the chamber is an outstanding storage of carbon. It is not going anywhere. It was harvested a long, long time ago. That is stored carbon. That is what forest-harvested hardwood does. I would like to see the maths for some of the Premier's suggestions about how locking up the forests somehow stores extra carbon. In fact, we would not use this as an argument, but I believe new regrowth sucks more carbon out of the atmosphere than very old, very mature trees. That is an interesting argument. That is a Western Australian view of the carbon world. Obviously, we are still shipping in our hardwood from Borneo or Brazil or wherever they cut it down so that we can use it in our ever-expanding suburbs in the city. We will still be using up someone's carbon storage, but not from here.

In the short time I have left, I would like to close by concentrating my remarks on the people of Manjimup, Greenbushes and Nannup and more broadly across the south west. I cannot imagine how difficult the last couple of days would have been for them when they heard the harrowing news when they work up or were putting their kids on the school bus. Someone may have just bought a house in Manjimup after coming to the town to take a job in a sawmill and read the news. They would be very nervous about their future and their mortgage. They would be having palpitations about sitting the kids down and saying, "Look, I know you're enjoying this school, we've settled into town nicely, but we are off. I haven't got a job." That is a very tough time and those communities will need our support. I do not think we can put a monetary value such as \$50 million on that support. The government has ripped up their industry and forced them to leave town, so that is very disappointing. The shire president of Manjimup had no idea this was coming. There has been significant investment in that community. The local government had been planning for this industry to be a vital part of its future, but that has all been ripped apart.

Members, please consider the people of Manjimup, Greenbushes, Nannup and Bunbury in your response today because they are really hurting. We are employed next week. The public servants who put together the Just Transition Plan will be employed next week and the week after. They are not nervous about their jobs. The people in Greenbushes, Nannup and Bridgetown who are involved in this industry certainly are. They deserve our thoughts this morning. Thank you.

**HON JAMES HAYWARD (South West)** [10.36 am]: I rise to speak about this matter. What has gone on over the last 24 hours is absolutely disgraceful. I refer to the issues around emotiveness and whether the timber industry is legitimate and the right of governments to change that. I know what I am talking about. Initially, I will talk about the way in which this was managed. In 2001, I was in Manjimup doing some work as a cameraman on the day that Richard Court announced an end to logging in old-growth forests. He got on a plane and flew down to Manjimup.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** Richard Court? Sorry, sweetie, I think you've got yourself massively confused. It was Geoff Gallop from the other side—Labor.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** Sorry. I think the backflip on the RFA was done —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** I mean, you guys opposed that.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I apologise. I stand corrected. It was in 2000, not 2001. The actual ruling came in 2001, but the decision was made in 2000. The backflip on the Regional Forest Agreement was done by Richard Court. He came down to Manjimup —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** You're saying Richard Court ended logging in old-growth forests?

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** No, I am saying Richard Court came down and did a backflip on the RFA in terms of ending a large amount of logging, perhaps just before the Gallop government ended old-growth logging in 2001.

But the point of the matter is that there was a major decision made and he got on the plane and went there and faced the community on the day that it happened. He did not get a very positive response to that. In fact, he landed at the airport, drove down the road and there were probably 150 angry loggers standing across the road who would not let him pass. Paul Omodei, the member for Warren–Blackwood, spoke to those people and got them out of the way. Richard Court then went down to the mill at Pemberton and spoke to the people there. By the end of the day, someone had locked themselves on his plane and he had to drive back in a car from Manjimup. At least he had the guts to turn up and talk to the community about it. That RFA phase, like this one, came out of the blue and the industry was not expecting it —

**Hon Dr Sally Talbot:** Was not the RFA a commonwealth agreement?

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** The state was a party to the RFA.

**Hon Darren West:** I'm not sure who's doing your research.

**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** No, my research is right. I was there. I was physically there when it happened. We can argue about it all you like and be pedantic —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** You were there, but you didn't have your glasses on.



**Hon JAMES HAYWARD:** I was not wearing glasses in those days—thank you very much.

Honestly, who does that? I spoke to the Manjimup shire president yesterday and he said that nobody had even called him to say, “Look, there’re going to be some fairly major changes in your community.” Who does that? Surely government members would acknowledge that although the government has the right to change the policy of the state, it should at least talk to the people involved. I spoke to the industry and the Forest Industries Federation (WA) Inc yesterday and, again, they had no idea about this. They got a phone call saying, “We’re putting out a media release.” That was it! It was absolutely disgraceful.

Jane Kelsbie is the new local member down there. The other day in the local paper I called for her to go in to bat for south west timber communities. I attended an industry dinner in South Perth at which the minister spoke and I was so concerned by what he had to say that I thought I had better get on my feet and call the local member to get her involved in standing up for timber communities. I called on Jane Kelsbie, the member for Warren–Blackwood, to stand up for local communities among fears that the state government was set to pander to Perth-based conservationists. She replied, saying to the *Manjimup Bridgetown Times* —

... she had met with those in the forestry industry on a number of occasions and there was no way the drafting of the FMP would take place without the proper parties.

“(The industry) will continue to be involved in the consultation process as the new FMP is formed,” she said.

“The State Government will continue to work with the timber industry through each stage of the FMP formation.”

That article was published on 25 August. Just 14 days later, not in the paper but in a post on her Facebook page, she said —

Climate change has resulted in declining yields of timber in the state’s native forest, slower than expected regrowth of native timbers and the loss of habitats and biodiversity. Which is why we can no longer continue large scale commercial logging beyond the end of 2023.

She said that 14 days later. Two weeks ago, people living in Manjimup would have got the impression from reading their local paper that their local member had their back and that they would be included in the process. Then, 14 days later, there was a Facebook post and news on ABC radio that said it is all over. The government is playing with people’s lives.

I have not even started to talk about the realities and the science around sustainable logging, but let us talk about how businesses are run and how people and communities are treated. It was absolutely disgraceful. To be frank, I expect that government members will realise this has been a fairly big faux pas and that the government needs to put out an olive branch and reach out to these people and do its best from now on to include them in the decisions it is making. I never would have imagined the government announcing a Greens policy in Perth without talking to the people who are most committed to it; it is disgraceful. As Hon Steve Martin said, this minister has form in this space with the lobster fiasco, and now this is happening in our timber industry. It is a bit like the old live export decision made by the Gillard government in 2011. Last year, I think the feds spent or were expected to spend \$600-odd million fixing up that very, very poor decision.

We talk about carbon benefits. About 1.8 tonnes of carbon is stored per tonne of dry timber. It is stored for a lifetime. It is stored forever. I do not understand the argument that this is not a sustainable industry. The Shire of Dardanup is about to build a new building completely of timber. I think it had better get a hurry on because there might not be much of it left! I talked to the Master Builders Association last Friday night and was told that builders are desperately short of timber, of softwood. I talked to guys from Laminex and others that produce this softwood and they said there is a massive shortage. Funding of \$350 million towards softwood production is welcomed and needs to happen but it certainly will not replace the native timber industry. In 2015, a massive fire in Northcliffe burnt out 98 000 hectares of bush. The fire got so out of control because the equipment, people and expertise the timber industry brought to managing those forests was no longer there. It had been reduced to such a point that that fire could not be put out for a significant period; from memory, it was around 10 days.

We need timber and it is absolutely disgraceful that we think it is okay to cut down somebody else’s forests overseas and not manage our own. Honestly, who does that? When we talk about global warming, that is the globe. That is everybody; that is not just us in Western Australia. The reality is that it is a good industry and it continues to do better, it provides a product that we need, okay, and despite the emotion of the argument, it is an industry that deserves to be supported.

I also want to say that this issue was never taken to an election. That is a bit of a theme we have going on with the current government; is it not? The Labor Party said electoral reform was not on the agenda and its first order of business is: let us get it on the agenda. Nobody spoke about this at all during the election campaign. There was no indication that this could possibly be on the radar. People in the Manjimup community and others had absolutely no idea this was coming. The government wants to outlaw native forest logging in 2024. I suggest that the government rejigs its plan to make that 2025, takes it to an election and is honest with the people of Western Australia.

**HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (South West — Minister for Regional Development)** [10.46 am]: No-one in any way doubts the difficulty that this will present to people in the community who are involved in this industry, but, members, to say that people have been blindsided is absolutely absurd. We know what is going on with climate change. In the last few months, the last report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change showed us just how incredibly dire the situation is and that we need to take action to address climate change. This is not something that can be put off. Before the last election, the Liberal Party understood that and put out a policy to close down the coal industry in four years. That was the Liberal Party's policy. Before the last election, the Liberal Party recognised that climate change is an issue. Apparently, the position it took to the election has been forgotten, but climate change is real and action has to be taken.

I travelled throughout the south west during the last election campaign and everyone I spoke to was very aware that a review of the forest management plan was being undertaken. I contest Hon Steve Martin's proposition the government is doing this to play to the suburbs. No, that was the plan David Honey and Zak Kirkup had at the last election to save some of the furniture around South Perth. I think the opposition is completely out of touch with the people of the south west, because going from town to town, not just Margaret River, but also Manjimup, Pemberton, Albany and Denmark, there is an absolutely overwhelming passion for saving the forests and reducing the amount of forest logging going on. I am sure my colleagues Hon Dr Sally Talbot and Hon Jackie Jarvis had exactly the same experience. In 2017, a leading businessman in Manjimup said to us, "Look, there's been a change in this area. In 2001, everybody hated the Labor Party because it shut down logging in old-growth forests, but, do you know what? Now people think that was the right thing to do." It took a period of adjustment but leading businesspeople in Manjimup now recognise that this was a positive thing. It takes time and it takes a bit of courage. One has to make these hard decisions to do it.

We have been working through the forest management plan and it has become quite clear, with the massive decline in rainfall in the south west, that the rate at which we have been logging those regrowth forests is simply unsustainable. This government decided to come clean as early as possible, as soon as we were conscious of the evidence that this practice is unsustainable, and take action to deal with it. We were not going to let this thing limp on a little bit here and a little bit there. We said, "This is not sustainable. We need to deal with it. We need to fix up this thing." We are absolutely aware that it will impact people from the south west, but, we believe that a Just Transition Plan will work for the south west, just as it has worked for Collie. That concept was pooh-poohed by Hon Steve Martin, who is obviously completely unaware of what is going on around the world. This concept is about making sure that when there is to be a structural adjustment in an area, that new industries are put in place. They cannot be created overnight. I have overseen the delivery of the Collie Just Transition Plan. I know that it takes a number of years to get these new industries up and running and to put in place jobs. The government's decision to go early on is a recognition that we need to be working extremely hard over the next three to four years to put in place new industries. We have been able to establish a number of new enterprises in Collie and we are absolutely confident that we can do that in the south west, rather than limping along in a process of attrition with a reduction in the logging take because of the reduced rainfall and the scientific assessments around what can be done in that regard.

There are around 500 direct jobs in the native timber industry. We will still be actively managing the forest. A logging take will still continue that will allow various existing demands to be met, particularly for artisanal timber that is used to make things such as the furniture in this chamber. I want to correct the suggestion made by Hon Steve Martin that karri logging will shut down immediately. I am advised by Minister Kelly's office that karri harvesting will continue until the end of 2023. It is also important to understand that the bulk of the jarrah that is currently being logged is used for firewood and charcoal production. We think that the charcoal production path under Simcoa Operations will be able to satisfy the demand for timbers that are cut down as part of Alcoa's activity. Some logging will still be ongoing. We are not pretending that there will be no logging; there still will be some logging. But 400 000 hectares will be protected and will perform that incredibly important role of expanding our carbon sink. We estimate that around 100 of those 500 jobs will still be required as part of that ongoing work within the native forest industry. That leaves us with around 350 to 400 new jobs that will need to be created.

We are investing \$350 million into the softwood industry. Even Hon James Hayward acknowledged that the shortage of softwood is a problem and that there is a demand for it, particularly in the building industry. We have invested \$350 million in that area and we think that that alone could probably create up to 100 jobs. We also know that the expansion of the processing plant at Greenbushes mine is underway. We know that a lot of the mining operations in the south west are short of people. We also know, from our experience in Collie, that this injection of funding will attract new industries into the south west to create opportunities for those people.

No-one in government—the Premier, Minister Kelly or Minister Sanderson—underestimates how very confronting this is for those people in the industry, but this is a problem that we have to deal with decisively. We need to deal with it now. There is no point in letting this thing limp out, and then, in two years' time, say that we have got to fix it and we have not had that opportunity to put in place the Just Transition Plan that we need. I am very, very confident that we are going to be able to deal with this. It will be an adjustment. The team that we have in the South West Development Commission has learnt a lot from the work that we have done in Collie, and we will be able to use those skills to help us to deliver that Just Transition Plan.

I ask members to go into their community and to talk to the people in the south west. They feel more strongly about the forests than the people in Perth do. Members should ask themselves why someone like Jane Kelsbie was elected. She had six weeks to campaign. How was she elected as the member for Warren–Blackwood?

**Hon James Hayward:** She wouldn't have been if she'd been honest with the community and told them that this was coming.

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** I will tell the member that she was elected because people actually got the fact that she was in touch with the aspirations of the community. She was in touch with the people of the community. She was prepared to go around and listen to them. It is extraordinary! For her to become the member for Warren–Blackwood after having campaigned for just over six weeks with Hon Jackie Jarvis and me was an extraordinary achievement. She understands that this community is not the same as it was in 2000. Hon James Hayward harked back to 2000. People grow and people learn. This whole area has become immensely more complex in its characteristics, and people saw that their world did not fall off a cliff when we stopped logging in old-growth forests. I can remember the hostility, the anger and the protests that took place, but I can tell members that by 2017 that community had changed. Its whole view of what is important and where they wanted their community to go changed. I really feel very sorry for the opposition, notwithstanding that brief couple of weeks in the pre-election campaign when it was looking like it would lose the seats of South Perth and Nedlands, it had the suburbs in mind and said, “We're going to close down Collie. We'll close down in four years. We won't worry about a just transition. We'll close down Collie in four years.” That understanding of the urgency for action on climate change somehow or other has vanished. I can tell members that it has not vanished within the Labor Party and it certainly has not vanished amongst the people of the south west of the state. They understand that they want an industry that is going to be sustainable. This is a hard decision, but it had to be made. Get your head around this fact: there is no way that we could have allowed the current volumes under the forest management plan to continue. There would, in any event, have had to be a very significant contraction just to get anything like a sustainable production. Of course, that would have undermined the business model, but not provided this opportunity to really put in place a properly thought through just transition. I know that members on the other side have form. They opposed the just transition process in Collie, notwithstanding the fact that it has been massively successful in bringing new industries about. We acknowledge that this is tough for those 400 or so workers whose jobs will be under threat, but we will be there working through it and providing a sustainable future for them and their children.

**HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan)** [11.01 am]: I mentioned earlier this week that I always pay attention when the Leader of the House speaks. Additionally, I always make it my business to pay specific attention when the Minister for Regional Development speaks because she is an experienced practitioner of her art form. One of her art forms is the defence of the indefensible, and we have just seen an absolute masterclass in that.

Today, we could have a conversation based on the merits of the policy. We could debate the policy position in a meaningful and intelligent way based on the scientific, ecological, economic and industrial facts, and also based on social expectations. That would be reasonable. We need to have a comprehensive debate, but today we are debating this decision after the fact. That is the very point of this motion, which I am here to stand and support. Despite the very interesting argument put in defence of the government's position, not one of the three limbs of this motion was answered. They were all evaded. There are three limbs to this motion. The first is that this plan —

- (a) was a rushed decision announced without any consultation with the forestry industry;

That is true. There has been no consultation with the forestry industry. How do we know that? It is because the forestry industry has told us and it has told the media. There has been no consultation—period. The second limb of this motion is that the plan —

- (b) will shut down a sustainable industry resulting in the loss of thousands of jobs in the regions ...

The full consequences will take time to play out, but the attempt to distract us from this point is to refer to the so-called Just Transition Plan. I might put a question across the chamber in a way that is meant to be constructive: is there actually a plan or does the government just have a catchphrase? I would expect this to be a clean sheet of paper. This is a \$50 million piece of paper that has not been filled in yet.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** Like we started with Collie, and we put it together.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I will take that interjection, because that is a reasonably constructive interjection, so I will respond in kind. Will the government negotiate with the industry in the development of this plan, or will this just be a bureaucratic thing?

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** No. We will develop it with the community, as we have done with Collie.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Once again, the industry has just been pushed to the side.

**Hon Dr Sally Talbot:** You have not even read the media release.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** There is nothing to read. The government has nothing to offer. It is just a media statement; it was a stunt.

Despite all the bluff and bluster here, the Labor Party did not have the guts to take this to the election. The Liberal Party has paid a price for brave policy at the election, but at least we took something to the election. There is absolutely no courage left in the modern Labor Party. We may individually decry our political circumstances, but the one thing I take heart from is that the government, the modern Labor Party, is so divorced from its working-class origins that it bears absolutely no resemblance to its former glory. I have not seen a party more divorced from reality than the one I see when I look at members opposite.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** It is not a shadow of its former self. It is an absolute shame.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** Are you saying that working people don't understand climate change and it is only the people of Nedlands and Cottesloe who do?

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** No. I am too experienced to fall for that trap. I will take that interjection. It might be the last one I take. The Labor Party does not care about the working class anymore and has not cared about them for 20 years.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** We do. We care about their children and their grandchildren.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** I knew that would elicit a response.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Perhaps we might kindly refrain from stepping off the topic and get back to the motion.

**Hon TJORN SIBMA:** Thank you, President.

It is absolutely clear that this policy decision will have some consequences on the communities of Nannup, Greenbushes, Manjimup and, more broadly, across the south west. Because I take my colleagues at their word, I can only take it that there has been no consultation with those communities other than the 15-minute heads-up phone call from a minister or staffer to say, "We've got some news for you." Frankly, I think that is an abysmal way to transact. The Labor Party is a transactional political outfit. It will use and abuse its power on a whim. This is the big fact: a Labor Party that controls everything does not even need to pretend to consult anymore. It will do what it wants. If an industry does not have the leverage over the government that the mining industry has, look out. Any competent board in this state that is involved in primary production will have to do a pretty serious risk assessment now. It will look at what the government is doing to the native timber industry and make plans to ensure that does not happen to their industry. I think there is a lesson here for everyone. It is a sad but necessary one.

In the remaining time, I want to speak, effectively, to the first limb of this motion about the lack of consultation. I put a series of questions to the Minister for Environment through her representative here about consultation. I was alerted at the start of this process to a survey commissioned by the Minister for Environment herself, which is quite an unusual way to commence the initiation of discussions about the next iteration of a forest management plan, but that is what happened. There is a media statement from 22 June 2021 titled "WA public invited to have their say on native forests". That is fine. That is a reasonable thing to do, but it was geared towards informing the position that the government might adopt for the next FMP. I asked a range of questions about what consultation would occur with the industry and was informed that the formal drafting process of the next forest management plan is a detailed and thorough process spanning 12 to 18 months. I put that question to the minister on 3 August. At that stage, the Minister for Environment committed to at least 12 to 18 months of negotiations with the industry. That answer was provided to me five weeks ago. Something has happened in that five weeks that has absolutely accelerated the government's decision-making. The Minister for Environment has a range of stakeholders to meet, but it appears to me that she has not met with the forestry people at all—or the first time she did was after she put out that media statement on 22 June. I think that is completely and utterly unreasonable and unfair, as is the process around it. We will hopefully examine this in more detail with questions I ask today. The survey to which I refer was not asked for by the department or industry, but originated out of the Minister for Environment's office. She had three meetings with the Western Australian Biodiversity Science Institute—I underscore that this is a respected organisation—basically to draft or to construct a survey methodology that obviously met with the minister's satisfaction. It was a piece of work worth around \$56 000 to \$57 000—not an enormous sum in the scheme of things, but still the allocation of public resources. When I asked whether the minister would table the results she said no, she would receive a copy, but effectively no-one else would. Somebody appears to have received a copy of those results and that was Jess Beckerling from the WA Forest Alliance. I have respect for her. We have to respect our adversaries, I suppose, or people in the field when they are good at what they do. She is a first-rate activist. But yesterday she said that 17 000 submissions were received on that survey alone, and the majority of people supported the government's position. How can she know that, but the forestry industry and the communities in the south west do not know that? How can it not be put up on a departmental website? How can an institute commissioned to do that work not do that? Something very, very scurrilous has gone on here, and it has been absolutely unnecessary and avoidable, but yet again, the government cannot resist the temptation to throw its weight around, and that is exactly what it has done to this industry.

**HON DR SALLY TALBOT (South West)** [11.11 am]: It is great to get the call on this motion to speak firmly against it—its style, content and substance. Honestly, when I first saw the business program today and the content of this motion, I thought that somebody had been doing some archiving in my office and had pulled out something from the mid-1990s. The Liberal–National coalition—or whatever it is called these days—really needs to get with the game. It really needs to be on the right side of history. There is an old saying: “When you are in a hole, stop digging.” When I saw this motion today, I thought that the opposition had learnt absolutely nothing. The key date in this whole debate is February 2021. How can the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA, which are in league with the Liberals, lecture the McGowan Labor government about consultation? How can they do that when their own people have been briefing behind the scenes about how they were hung out to dry in February 2021 with the closure of the coal industry in Collie? Yet they have the gall to come into this place and talk to us about consultation. I am not defending the McGowan Labor government’s decision on the basis that the Liberal and National Parties are worse than us—I will go into that in a minute—but I am saying that it is the height of hypocrisy, barefaced hypocrisy, to accuse us of not consulting. The Liberal Party put out a policy by press release that half its own party had not seen, and its own candidates had to take to the media to try to explain themselves. Unlike Hon Alannah MacTiernan, I never feel sorry for anyone in the Liberal Party. You make your choice when you sign your membership papers and you make your bed and you have to lie in it. But I have to say that the closest I have ever come to that was to feel sorry for the Liberal candidate for Collie–Preston during the last election campaign when she had to say —

“During my campaign I have consulted with locals, the coal industry and Collie Shire, and have always given them my word that I will continue to work with them every step of the way, both as a candidate and local MP.

“Unfortunately, on this occasion, my ability to keep my word was undermined by a lack of consultation on the new energy jobs plan.

“I heard the details when it was announced at a press conference—the same time as the WA public.

Hon Steve Martin was not here then, so maybe he does not have to wear this guilt that hangs like a shame around the neck of the Liberal Party. But I say to the member that if he is the new face of the Liberal Party, if he is what renewal and regeneration represents in the Liberal Party and if he truly wants to stake his claim as being the face of renewal and regeneration, he has to come up with something better than a motion that is about 30 years old in both its style and content.

Let me turn specifically to the issue in front of us today. I thank Hon Alannah MacTiernan for her contribution to this debate. I was wondering where we were going. Eighty minutes feels like such a long time when we have to sit through half an hour of this mob on the opposition benches talking about stuff like this. When we talk about protecting the native forests in the south west of this state, I want to see a bit of energy and passion going to this debate, not this dreary recital of half facts and rambling on about something that we vaguely remember from—was it 2001? “Which Premier was it?” “I am not sure.” “Was it a commonwealth or state agreement?” There is all this rambling rubbish that seems to represent research coming from the Liberal–National opposition. It is just nonsense.

When Hon Alannah MacTiernan talks with passion, commitment and energy about this issue, I am proud to be on her team, and I intend to stay right here on her team and be part of the team batting for the whole south west community. Hon Alannah MacTiernan has only been a member for South West Region for a couple of months, but of course she is no stranger to the south west. I have always made the comment, having walked behind Hon Alannah MacTiernan on a number of occasions at processions, functions and all sorts of things, that we really need Alannah on our team. She is the greatest asset. Hon Alannah MacTiernan lives and breathes Labor values, and the community of the south west recognises and honours that in the contribution she has made over a number of years now, just as the constituents in her previous political roles have honoured and respected that. She is a fantastic addition to our team. Of course, she is also no stranger to the local communities in the south west, having a reputation, as Hon Darren West always says, as the finest Labor agriculture minister this state has ever seen. The bar was set very high with our former colleague Hon Kim Chance, so I am going to say we have equal first, with Hon Alannah MacTiernan right up there with Hon Kim Chance.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order, Hon Sally Talbot has the call.

**Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT:** Hon Alannah MacTiernan knows those communities in the south west, because she has been pursuing those issues vigorously in her portfolio now for over four years. It makes me blind with fury when I hear my south west colleagues on the other side of this chamber, opposition spokespeople—whatever labels they might give themselves in opposition—bagging our south west communities like Manjimup, Pemberton and Nannup. Have they actually been there? I have worked with Hon Paul Omodei for many, many years, as communities like those three I have just named—Manjimup, Pemberton and Nannup—have worked their way through the diversification of their economies. I have such a short time on this motion, but I am looking forward to continuing these remarks, because this is a debate we can have over the next three and a half years. This is such a good policy setting to be pursuing. It will not stop when the bells ring to signal the end of debate on this

motion today. Those towns in the south west have now been in transition for over 20 years. They knew exactly how things were going to go and they have looked to governments over the years to help guide and support them through that transition.

What we have heard from the Liberal–National party—I think I have to say “the National–Liberal Party”, because I think the Nationals WA is now the senior partner in the coalition—is that it has no idea what “just transition” means. Members opposite stand up in this place and say, “We have no idea what just transition means.” They did not even read the press release from yesterday. The press release had six dot points. They could have used that if they really wanted to do just transition 101, which translates of course to diversifying the economy 101. Just get with it, guys! Members opposite have to be able to talk the talk. We do not do it in terms of slogans. We have policies.

**Hon James Hayward** interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT:** We have well thought out and consulted policies and procedures that are now rolling out in various communities all around this state, but particularly, of course, in the town of Collie. In February 2021, when the Liberals announced that it was going to close down Collie, where was the National Party? It was very, very quiet on that day. We had hundreds of people on the streets in Collie saying, “This mob does not get it. They do not understand what it means. We know what the modern economy entails. We know that we have to diversify. We know that you can’t wave a magic wand, throw some money at a community and walk away. We want to work with Labor and the McGowan Labor team to work through this transition to get it right.” Of course, that is what Labor has been doing in that town now for years. I will have much more to say about that later.

Exactly the same is true in Manjimup, Pemberton and Nannup. I have been working with those communities for years, as has Hon Alannah MacTiernan, and our new colleague Hon Jackie Jarvis has now joined the crew. They have some very, very solid representation, along with their lower house members, as well.

Of course, a former hat I used to wear was as a shadow Minister for Environment. A colleague reminded me this morning that this is a demonstration of the fact that it is a marathon, not a sprint. In fact, Labor started talking about this issue in 1999. In 2013, we took to the election a platform to end the logging of native forests.

**HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition)** [11.21 am]: Thank you, Deputy President, for an opportunity to address this very fine motion moved by Hon Steve Martin. I have had to listen to a fair bit of nonsense this morning. The problem is that there are all these glowing reports from those opposite about their knowledge of the south west, how much they know, and that the Minister for Regional Development is so wonderfully loved down there at the moment and knows all those communities. Members do not get to know those communities by flying over the top of them; they have to actually get out of the plane and drop by. But that is okay, because, in my view, nobody sitting on that side of the chamber has any expertise in this area.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** This was probably written by departmental people, but let us go to someone who has put their name to some comments in this area and might be attributed some expertise.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** I will come to you in a moment. I will seek to table this in a little while. This is a press release from Dave Kelly, BA, MLA, Minister for Forestry, from 3 December 2019. Members should possibly listen to the words. I know it is hard for members on this side to listen to the words of Hon Dave Kelly—I think we want to take it with a grain of salt—but, in this case, a Labor Party member stood up and said, “This is what it means for the timber industry.” Let us see what Hon Dave Kelly said this might mean for the timber industry. On 3 December 2019, he said —

**Local timber industry gets a boost as leading miller joins WA**

- Parkside Timber purchases two South-West mills
- Plans to re-open the Manjimup processing centre expected to create local jobs
- WA’s forestry industry supports more than 6,000 jobs, particularly in regional areas
- McGowan Government committed to maintaining a sustainable forestry industry

That is the headline from the Minister for Forestry not that long ago. We get to the substance of the press release. It states —

More Western Australian jobs are expected to be created in the local forestry industry over the coming months with Queensland miller, Parkside Timber purchasing two South-West mills.

We might just jump ahead, because it says that the company will invest \$1.5 million. Since that time the company has invested significantly more than that, and we might have to look at that in a bit more detail. But I think that these couple of paragraphs in a Labor government press release should be noted by all members. The media release continues —

The change of ownership provides investment and employment certainty, and the potential to create local jobs in the South-West region. The native forestry industry injects \$220 million into the Western Australian economy each year and supports more than 800 jobs in the forestry industry.

This investment is another step towards native forestry's transformation into a resilient, future industry that can deal with the challenges of utilising smaller logs from regrowth forests. This transformation started with the Gallop Labor Government's decision to protect the South-West's old growth forests.

This is a comment attributed directly to the Minister for Forestry, Hon Dave Kelly —

“The McGowan Government sees Parkside's investment as a step forward in maintaining a strong forestry industry that supports WA jobs, while still protecting the environmental values of our beautiful native forests.

I like the last sentence attributed to him, which states —

“The purchase follows the release of the McGowan Government's —

I always have trouble with this one —

Djarlma Plan which set out the strategic direction for the future of the Western Australian forestry industry to support healthy forests and WA jobs.”

In December 2019, the Labor Party said, “This is a great industry. We support it.” Let us go back to the numbers again. It employs at least 800 people and is worth \$220 million to the Western Australian economy. Let us jump forward a little bit. What is the Labor Party saying now? “We had a plan in place; we put a plan in place; we consulted with the industry.” I remember the Forest Industries Federation WA coming out in support of the plan put together by the Labor government. FIFWA endorsed that plan. What is it saying about the plan the government released yesterday? FIFWA is probably catching up, because nobody consulted it in advance. I understand that it got a phone call at the last minute to say, “We're about to announce the end of your industry, look forward to that”, but the reality is that there was no consultation. There was previous consultation with the industry for the first four years of the McGowan government, to the point that the government released a plan for the future of the industry, which I would have thought was a good model that it might use. But guess what the government has done now? It has form for this. It has now jumped in because it sees a political benefit in ending the timber industry in Western Australia—it probably gets an old barnacle! This is something for which the government has form.

It was interesting to see the Minister for Regional Development get up and spruik the transition plan for Collie. Having a transition plan for Collie is not a bad thing. I think \$100 million ended up in that plan. Some of that money got transferred across, because the Labor Party, with its weak ideology, came up with a \$20 million wind farm proposal and a \$20 million biomass plant for Collie. I agreed with the minister when she took that money out and stuck it into the transition plan for Collie, because they were dumb, foolish election ideas. I am sorry that the minister does not have the chance to respond to this, but maybe at some point she might make a ministerial statement and tell us how many permanent long-term jobs we can attribute to the transition plan for Collie and whether it will replace the hundreds and hundreds of jobs in the coal industry, because that is what we are talking about. That is the \$100 million plan.

**Hon Stephen Dawson:** Is this the coal industry that you're closing down?

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** I was not. I have made significant comment on this. My position is absolutely public, minister. The government has a \$100 million plan for Collie, of course, and that is probably to some degree because Collie has been Labor heartland for a very long time, but members opposite should be careful because the union membership is slowly being abandoned by the Labor Party one by one. The Labor Party abandoned the forestry industry many, many years ago, despite the best attempts of Hon Dave Kelly in his plans and announcements to try to save the timber industry a couple of years ago. It was December 2019, so less than two years ago he was out there trying to save the industry. Twenty years ago the Labor Party still had some strength in Manjimup because a lot of timber workers in Manjimup joined the unions.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** We actually won the seat!

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** The Labor Party did not win Manjimup though. The minister should be honest with the people; the Labor Party did not win Manjimup.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** The people of Manjimup did not vote for the Labor Party. Where did the Labor Party win a seat? It won in the seats of Margaret River and Walpole.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** What about Denmark?

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** And in Denmark.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** That is where the Labor Party won a seat.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order, members! I can no longer hear the Leader of the Opposition. Please cease your interjections.

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** It won votes where Labor Party members have their holiday homes. That is where it won votes.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** Are you saying we stole the vote?

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** The minister should remember the Labor Party had held Manjimup until Paul Omodei came along. It was a Labor Party seat. But the Labor Party abandoned the forestry industry and the unions. It threw them to the wolves for political gain, and it is doing it again. It is doing it in Collie as well. There is a transition package in place, but it is not going to replace all the jobs. The transition package is more about media opportunities for the minister than it is about changing the genuine economy.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** It is shutting down Muja C units 5 and 6. I can tell members that there are some issues around Collie's Muja A station; it might shut that before it gets to units 7 and 8.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** As that transition occurs, the Labor Party continues to abandon its roots. The Labor Party is much more interested in getting into the leafy western suburbs and chasing the Green vote wherever it can. It is chasing that and abandoning the workers and the unions. It has no interest in its heartland.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order!

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order, members! I think most other speakers whom I have observed in the last little while have been heard in relative silence. The Leader of the Opposition has only 20 seconds remaining.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Minister!

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** It is no wonder, Deputy President. I thank you for your protection.

The Labor Party has lost its connection to its heartland and base. It will throw them under the bus for political gain. It has no capacity left for honesty. It is a sad, sad day for the Labor Party in this state.

**HON SOPHIA MOERMOND (South West)** [11.32 am]: I understand Hon Steve Martin's concerns and I appreciate his speaking out about financial stability and the community in the south west. As humans, we all like security and stability, but the fact of life, the very essence of life, is adaptability. Some of the most amazing things about us humans is our ingenuity and our ability to change and to evolve. A great example of this is Nokia. We all know about Nokia phones. It was originally a single paper mill operation. It changed with the times. Here is a great opportunity for WA and the south west to focus on the hemp industry. We have the space. We need sustainable, innovative economic empowerment that is also climate-change proof. Hemp provides all the materials and more that members have spoken about.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order, members. Hon Neil Thomson has the call.

**HON NEIL THOMSON (Mining and Pastoral)** [11.33 am]: This is a sad, sad day and a sad, sad reflection of the modus operandi of this government. Hon Dr Sally Talbot mentioned consultation and the case of a candidate. This government compares itself with that of a candidate in an election —

**Hon Dr Sally Talbot:** No; you weren't listening.

**Hon NEIL THOMSON:** That is this government's standard of consultation. The whole apparatus of government has set itself to the standard of a disappointed candidate in an election. That is the standard this government holds itself to in relation to consultation.

The common complaint I hear when I talk to Aboriginal people in my region is about the lack of consultation on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill, for example. That is a common complaint. When I talk to the people of Broome



about the location of the Broome prison, they say that there has been absolutely no consultation. These things occur overnight after a decision is made. This is the way in which this government operates. On the notice paper at the moment is a matter about guillotine provisions. That is the form of this government on any decision it makes.

Let me look at the history of this matter. On 22 June, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson invited people to have their say on native forests. Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson put out a survey on [wabsi.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/wa-forests](http://wabsi.mysocialpinpoint.com.au/wa-forests). That is the way in which this government consults. I am sure that when thousands of submissions came in—I am sure there were thousands from overseas and from various groups thrown in there—someone in the public sector will have panicked and sent the results of the survey to the Minister for Environment; Climate Action; Commerce and said, “Look at all these numbers.” That is the way this government operates. It is not actually best practice. When it deals with an industry, the government should speak to that industry.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES

### *Recommendations 1 to 38 — Adoption — Motion*

Resumed from 8 September on the following motion moved by Hon Dan Caddy —

That recommendations 1 to 38 contained in the sixty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, *Review of the standing orders*, be adopted and agreed to.

**HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan)** [11.38 am]: Last evening, prior to the end of formal business for the day, I had just commenced my remarks on this matter, so I will go over my introductory remarks. I indicated last night that around three months ago when the motion was originally put by the Leader of the House to refer the standing orders to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, she invoked a speech by Hon Norman Moore. In that speech, she reflected on the fact that he had suggested there needed to be a degree of urgency with regard to looking at the standing orders. I reflected last night that, indeed, when I went back to the speech made by Hon Norman Moore, he had, in fact, reflected on the importance of urgency with regard to dealing with the standing orders. Unfortunately, when the Leader of the House first moved the motion to refer the standing orders to the committee, she did not read the entire speech that was made by Hon Norman Moore on that same day. I read part of it, but I will read it again now given my time was cut short yesterday. This is what Hon Norman Moore said on that same day —

Let me just say this: a review of the standing orders will work only if members go into this with an open mind. If a government member goes into this type of committee with the sole intention of maximising the government’s advantage, it will be a waste of time. Similarly, it will be a waste of time if an opposition member goes into this with the intention of maximising the opposition’s position. Members on both sides of the house must recognise the demands placed on both sides and recognise the opportunities that both sides require. We will then get reasonably balanced standing orders regarding what the government needs and what the opposition wants. I hope that members go into this committee with an open mind and will not seek to obtain an advantage for their current situation. It is said that the wheel always turns.

Hon Norman Moore continued —

I hope that this committee will reach a consensus position. I have taken the view, up to now at least, that any change to the standing orders should be made by consensus ... Consensus is the way to go, in my view, because we all have to work with the standing orders. Let us try to make a set of rules that everyone feels comfortable with. I recognise that that will not always be easy to achieve because of the adversarial nature of this place. However, we should have a go at doing that.

It is that statement, not the statement relating to urgency, that is most relevant to the debate that we are having today and which we have had throughout the week.

Last week, the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges released its second report into the review of the standing orders and for the second time in a row the committee’s report was tabled in a manner to which this house is not accustomed—that being, generally, a report based on consensus. For as long as I have been in this place—I think members would be hard-pressed to find any other examples—I have not seen a report handed down by this most important committee of this house with both a majority and a minority report, and it has now not been done once; it has been done twice in the matter of three months. New and old members might not think anything of that, but I do. In my view, it is highly unprecedented and highly regrettable.

I agree with other members in the house that the report provides, through a number of recommendations, some good opportunities to modernise our standing orders. I certainly take no issue with those. I would have liked an opportunity, perhaps, to seek some further clarification on some aspects, but overall I have no particular qualm with them. But I do certainly take an alternative view on others and I absolutely align myself with the comments made in the minority report by Hon Tjorn Sibma and you, Deputy President. They relate to recommendation 5 and the related recommendations concerning urgent bills. This matter should not be taken lightly. With all due respect, if this is

what was being considered—it is clearly what the Leader of the House wants because it is reflective of her letter to the committee—there should have been greater consultation with all parties and all individual members in this place. There should have been more thoughtful consideration of this matter, but that has not occurred.

I want to be very clear. Should the recommendations be agreed to—we know that they will be, because the Labor majority in this place will make it so—proper scrutiny of bills in this place will be diminished. I bet your bottom dollar that it will be the most contentious bills that all of a sudden will have the word “urgent” put in front of them. We know that the Leader of the House in her contribution back in June this year, and again in subsequent contributions even this week, has always had the productivity of this house in mind in passing more bills that the government wants. I accept that. I have no problem with the Leader of the House’s position. All governments want their bills passed. I have sat on the other side and I, too, wanted my bills passed. I have no doubt that the Leader of the House routinely has all the ministers from the other place knocking on her door to tell her that they have the most urgent bill that must pass through this house. The Leader of the House has a difficult job in managing her ministers, so I accept that. I have no issue with it. But if we are going to talk about productivity, my response is twofold.

If the government improved the quality of some of its legislation that it routinely brings into this house, we might progress a little more quickly. I say that not only in the context of bills that are contentious or complex, but those on which we all agree. I have seen bills come in time and again that need amendments made to them—simple amendments that should have been in the bill in the first place. Time and again, I have seen amendments being introduced by the government to fix its own bills. I remember a very significant and very complex piece of legislation that came through in the last term of government. It was the Strata Titles Amendment Bill 2018, and I think that the Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council, Hon Stephen Dawson, was indeed responsible for taking that through.

**Hon Stephen Dawson:** Am I getting in trouble?

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** No, the minister is not in trouble. He is the one minister who will never be in trouble with me, because he actually answers questions. He is actually helpful.

**Hon Stephen Dawson:** You’ll get me in trouble with these ones.

**Hon DONNA FARAGHER:** I will get the minister in trouble with his friends over there, but anyway, he can wear it as a badge of honour. I digress.

The Strata Titles Amendment Bill was a significant piece of legislation that started under our government and was introduced under the current government. We supported the provisions of that bill, but it was an enormous bill. Everyone wanted to see it through. Hon Stephen Dawson and I, along with some of the crossbench, were able to reach an agreement to progress that bill and to pull out and refer just one section to the Standing Committee on Legislation. One area was causing some not insignificant contention within the community. We did that and, as a result, some significant recommendations were made by the Standing Committee on Legislation. To the government’s credit, it accepted those recommendations. I think that that legislation is now much better than it would have been if it had not gone through that committee process. Another bill came in that was related to that bill; I think it was called the Community Titles Bill 2018. It had similar provisions to the strata titles bill and provisions that were subject to the same concerns that had been the subject of the Standing Committee on Legislation’s report.

I will tell you, Deputy President, what happened in the circumstances when the Community Titles Bill came in. I read the bill again and looked at the amendments. I saw that the government had forgotten to put on the supplementary notice paper amendments to reflect the amendments that had been previously made to the Strata Titles Amendment Bill to make it consistent. I had to ask the departmental officials whether they were going to introduce amendments. There was a lot of silence. I have a lot of time and respect for Hon Stephen Dawson so I advised him of what had occurred. As a result, amendments were finally moved. But if I had not raised it with him, it would have been very embarrassing for the minister to sit in this place and realise that the government had not done its job. That is just one example of the government not doing its job properly and this house having to facilitate improvements to legislation.

It evident to me that the government wants the Legislative Council to be simply a rubberstamp for its legislation just like the Legislative Assembly. The last time I checked, this is a house of review. It is a place where legislation should and must be scrutinised properly. It is a place where, inevitably, legislation is improved. That improved legislation then becomes laws that the people of Western Australia have to work through. With all due respect, the Legislative Assembly can, and routinely does, ignore good legislative improvements that could be made to legislation. It can cut debate and it can ignore the views of other parties, and we have seen that happen time and again. The Leader of the House, who is out on urgent parliamentary business, on 3 June suggested that scrutiny can still occur in this house. She was talking about time limits and I will read what she had to say —

I think what this house does, and how this house creates better legislation, is done in one of two ways, or sometimes in both—a bill is referred to a committee, where expert advice is sought, submissions are called for and stakeholders are invited to express a point of view, and/or in the clause-by-clause examination, including extensive examination across the breadth of a bill, in the Committee of the Whole stage, when we literally examine the detail of the bill. It is that type of debate that provides the scrutiny and questioning that a house of review can be most effective at.

I agree with the Leader of the House, who I appreciate is out on urgent parliamentary business. My response to that is twofold based on this report. First, will the Leader of the House and her ministers undertake to always refer bills when a member of the opposition or the crossbench seeks for a bill to be referred to committee? Will the government say, “Yes, we can refer that to the legislation committee—no problem at all”? Will we get that response from the government on every occasion? I doubt it very, very much. Secondly, if we see the adoption of recommendation 5 and related recommendations—which we will—it will diminish scrutiny during Committee of the Whole. The role of the Legislative Council in a bicameral system is important, but it is clear that this government, as I have said, wants the Legislative Council to be just like the Legislative Assembly and rubberstamp poor legislation, not to be a check and balance, because it just does not care.

There has not been a semblance of any reasonable discussion or consideration of this matter. The government has not even been prepared, as we have seen in earlier decisions in this place that I will not reflect on, to entertain the report and consideration of the report recommendation by recommendation. The government knows that it has the numbers and it will get it through; therefore, it can do as it likes. Members opposite may think that they are very, very clever and that they will win the day and yes, when the bells ring, by the numbers, there will be more government members voting aye than those voting no, but I remind government members of the Hon Norman Moore’s words from all those years ago, “The wheel always turns.” I want to be very clear here: the only mischief around the standing orders at the moment is the making of this government and what it wants to do with this Parliament and this house, for which it clearly has no regard. The executive government, because of its complete failure to articulate a coherent legislative program over the past few years, has decided to use its numbers because it can. Decisions on standing orders should be made and built on the notion of consensus—no ifs, no buts.

I want to finish with a couple of comments made in previous debates in this place. First is a statement made by the Leader of the House in 2017 that was reflected in the first report into the review of the standing orders and again in the debate this week, but I am going to read it, too. On 29 November 2017, the Leader of the House said —

*That is why we have had a position irrespective of who had the numbers in this place that we would have a very deliberate and considered process for making changes to the standing orders.*

She went on to say —

*Although the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges may provide a consensus report, —*

She is referring to a circumstance in which the committee has consensus —

*which everyone on the committee will have agreed to, the approach of this house has been and is now as we speak that that Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges report will not be proceeded with if it does not have the consensus of the whole house.*

I absolutely agree. The Leader of the House goes on to say —

*I will give an example. The Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges has considered e-petitions and has made certain recommendations. Despite that report suggesting that the house go down a particular path, there is not consensus across the house, so we will not be proceeding with that.*

That is what the Leader of the House, who is the leader of the government, said in 2017. She continues —

*That is the time-tested method that we use to make changes to the way we do our business. We bring everybody with us. People will criticise us for that, and I am critical of doing that sometimes because I think we do not move fast enough; however, it ensures that everybody buys into the process and it ensures that we have the time and the opportunity to consider all ramifications and possible consequences, unintended or otherwise.*

I absolutely agree with the comments made by the Leader of the house in 2017. It is a pity she has not taken that same approach to what we are dealing with today. I want to end on a final quote by a very learned former member of this house, Hon George Cash, who I had the privilege of sitting next to in my first four years in this place. In 2002 Hon George Cash said —

Clearly, the standing orders are coupled with presidential rulings, previous practice in the House and associated decisions. However, unless members have confidence in the standing orders, this place will descend into chaos.

Hon George Cash was right, and today clearly represents the start of more to come!

**HON DR BRIAN WALKER (East Metropolitan)** [11.59 am]: It was my pleasure on the weekend to enjoy a couple of beers with a Labor Party stalwart of many years’ standing, a man who had worked within the party machine and the union movement. I will not name him but many here would know him.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** Name the names.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** I do not want to socially embarrass people who might be drinking beer with me, but I will happily share behind the chair.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** He is well known. His comments, upon hearing of this pending debate, were simple and to the point. He said, “When you have all the levers of power within easy grasp, you don’t tamper with standing orders unless you have broad support across the chamber. You find another way to achieve your aims, by all means, but without cross-party support, the standing orders of the house should be sacrosanct.” I came into the chamber on Tuesday hoping—expecting perhaps; naive as I am—that the government would intend to take such an approach and seek agreement where it could find it, and when compromise is not available, I hoped that it would show good grace and not use its massive powers, because the numbers are there and the government would win a division anyway. I am disappointed that we have not got that far.

I would happily agree with most of the recommendations. Recommendation 2 shaves half an hour off the dinner break on Tuesday. My wife would be very happy with that. It would mean that I eat less and put on less weight—she loves that idea. Those members attending the business management meeting could manage a light meal in between—not a problem.

Similarly, recommendation 3 removes the afternoon tea break. I love my afternoon tea, but, again, she who must be obeyed—my wife—would disagree with that. I am happy to work with that, but I am not going to be able to agree to this report because I cannot agree with the whole bundle of recommendations. This is sad because I really want to show support for some very sensible ideas and recommendations. Recommendation 4 on committee meetings is sensible enough. I do not see that as a sticking point. Recommendation 9 codifies what we are currently doing as an exception with regard to motions on notice. I believe that that is what happened in the last Parliament and that is a rule that we have. I would be happy to support that sensible amendment. Recommendation 12 flows on from recommendation 9. I would have been perfectly happy to show my support there.

I had hoped that the government would have approached recommendation 13 in the spirit of collegiality. The norm would have been to refrain from blocking, by dint of its majority, a member who wished to interrogate a report in more detail. This does not strike me as a stumbling block. I would have given this amendment my support. With that understanding and from that perspective, I find myself also in agreement with recommendation 14. Committee reports are important documents and it would do them a disservice to skim over them and not to give them the time they need. For that same reason, I am happy to support recommendation 15. Of course, the very first report that has come before us for consideration is this sixty-fourth report, which is now being treated in a very different fashion by the government to suit a purpose that we can only speculate upon, so I am concerned. I would have liked this report to have been considered in the way that the government has recommended other reports be considered.

I turn to recommendation 16 and 17. I listened with great interest to the debate on Tuesday and there are many issues that I had not actually thought about, but I would still agree with these recommendations. I am a computer tragic. I have loved computers since the 1980s. In fact, in 1988 my medical practice in Germany was paperless, so I am very much interested in e-petitions. There are failings and merits on both sides of the e-petition argument. If someone is keen to petition Parliament, I think we should make it easy. On the other hand, like members here, I have received lots of emails on certain subjects that are just a cut-and-paste job—a cookie-cutter email—that does not require any thought. A person just clicks on the link on the webpage and up pops another email to the member of Parliament that says the same thing without having to give any thought to it. I am sure that the same thing could be done with e-petitions. On the other hand, it is something we can filter out. I am very happy to support that recommendation. I welcome it. However, I suggest that we look at this as a trial, rather than making it a permanent standing order.

I am heartily behind and support recommendation 19 that welcomes the inclusion of infants into the chamber. In fact, would go further and suggest that, especially in view of dog day on 23 September, we bring dogs into Parliament. I think it would improve the mood in the house remarkably. I am sure that there would be cross-party support for that.

Recommendation 20 is fine. I like the fact that recommendations 21 and 22 put a speaking limit on ministers and parliamentary secretaries, making them mere mortals like us. Recommendation 24 is about a sensible reordering or table of precedence. It is logical and I like that.

Recommendation 26 deals with answers to questions on notice. I have to count on my fingers to work out when I need to speak again on items that I have put forward. To have a response to a question due by one calendar month after asking the question has been asked is a very sensible move. I would welcome the opportunity to put my name to that, but I will not be able to do that because I am simply unable to carry on supporting a complete report when parts of it are fundamentally dangerous and risky. I am attributing only good intents to the government, but the law of unintended consequences must be considered. We should move on as time is a little pressing.

Recommendation 28 is sensible. There is little to be gained by allowing a standing or a select committee to make unlimited amendments to a bill after its second reading. Recommendation 29 deletes schedule 1, paragraph 4.4. As a member of the Standing Committee on Legislation, which has not yet met this year, I am happy with that—no problems. Recommendation 30 is similar. Recommendation 31 gives force to e-petitions and I am very happy with that.

Recommendation 34 is about renumbering. I could make a point here about Latin terminology and its erosion, and I would have conceded reluctantly the removal of the word *pro forma*. I might continue *ad infinitum*, but leave it here, *cum aliqua scrupulositate*, with some regret.

**Hon Peter Collier:** Good luck, Hansard!

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** That is my Scotch College education—sorry.

**Hon Tjorn Sibma:** That’s your problem.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** Yes, indeed. I am terrible.

I find a number of the recommendations really delightful. I would have broken up recommendation 25 into a couple of parts. I spent a little time in the United Kingdom and came across *Dad’s Army*, a British comedy—hilarious. It has a fabulous plethora of characters. Sergeant Wilson, the bank’s senior clerk, and the irritating and pompous Captain Mainwaring—pronounced “Mannering”; I will have to give that spelling to Hansard as well.

**Hon Dan Caddy:** They are just to your right—the terrible *Dad’s Army*.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** We will talk over a beer. When the insufferable and pompous Captain Mainwaring would make yet another stupid decision, Wilson in his refined voice would say, “Are you sure that is wise, Sir?” He would drive Captain Mainwaring to distraction. I am not going to compare in any way the Premier with Captain Mainwaring, but I ask: is the Premier wise to make this change? By doing so, members must bear in mind that a situation is created whereby the entire Parliament, including every single member of every single party not in government, is opposed to chapter 3 of the report. It is not that we want to oppose it permanently, but we would like to have more time to discuss it and to consider the ramifications.

The government has lost an opportunity to get multiple support from various voices, not just the one autocratic dictator-style voice from the government. I fear that the danger for the government is that that will be the perception in the public, and the government needs to be aware of it. I think it is dangerous. The government could have dealt with this entire chapter separately. There is no rush. The government has the numbers. We could have dealt with this in a manner better suited as the reviewers of legislation. I understand that the government has taken the stance it has because of its concerns about members of the opposition. The government has blamed the necessity for this on time wasting and prevarication from certain quarters, but without these amendments to the standing orders the government has all the levers of power at its disposal. It does not need to rush into this, and that troubles me. We have already given the government a great deal of leeway with the COVID-19 legislation. I think that was a wise and prudent course for us to have taken, but I do not feel that we should allow the same latitude without fetter. Effectively, that is what we are doing with this motion. If the government wishes to propose a guillotine motion, I would like that to be made plain and open. As was mentioned earlier, in the Senate, the guillotine is in place but it has never been used, very wisely. I think it is dangerous to allow the possibility of guillotining legislation to be enshrined permanently in the standing orders. In the wrong hands, that could cause great damage. I hope the government will look at that and reconsider it.

I think we need to look at recommendations 6 and 7 in more detail. Surely, the government would agree with that. As a member of a smaller party, we have the same number of members as the Liberal Party in the other place, but that does not make either us or the Liberal Party an even larger party than our electors made us. We would like to see the same time allocated to motions on notice. This is one of the few opportunities that we have to propose binding votes. I feel it is important that we have that opportunity to debate those issues in suitable detail. I would have had difficulty in supporting recommendations 10 and 11. A compromise might have been possible, but that would have required a certain degree of collegiality, understanding and support. As members can tell, I am disappointed that this will not be the case.

At various points in the report, references have been made to the standing orders that apply in the Australian Senate. I know that we joke, and perhaps half-joke on occasion, about the merits of Western Australia seceding, but in all seriousness, having observed the debate in the Senate—I have said this before in the chamber—I am firmly of the opinion that we do things better here than in the Senate. I think the Senate should follow our example, not the other way around. Do not underestimate the great power of what we have here and how it might help others in other Parliaments.

We have to speak about what is in the report but also what is not in the report. Two points come to mind. There is no mention, for example, of removing or curtailing entirely the opening prayers. I raised that issue in my own submission to the committee, which members will find in the appendixes. I thank Hon Tjorn Sibma for his kind words on Tuesday about that submission. It was, of course, for the most part, the musings of a new member finding his way in this place—I hope I have found it. As it turned out, many of the issues that I raised have since been extensively canvassed in this chamber, albeit just on this side of the house—the crossbench and the opposition. One question that we have not dealt with, of course, is daily prayers. Whether members agree with them or not, in the context of modernising the standing orders and in a multicultural society, I would have expected that we would have at least discussed the prayers in this house.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** I think you should move that as a separate item at some point. You would have me onside.

**Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER:** I thank the minister for that. I shall take that as an order, of course! We could talk about that.

We are not really having a debate here, are we? There is no to-and-fro. It is a dictation on the part of the government. I understand that. It is what I would do in the government's place, absolutely. I do not know whether it comes from the idea that the government has the votes, or is it based on a larger insecurity? Does the government want to make things stable now for later when the tables are indeed turned? I do not know. My second point is that this raises in the public the impression—I hope it is a false impression—that we are being led into an autocratic dictatorship. I know that is not the case, but I mentioned yesterday or the day before in one of my contributions that we are at risk of needing to revise into English—I spoke in Russian and Chinese—the concept of “we vote yes and there is to be no dissent”. That is what we are facing. I just raise this concept, this false perception. Nevertheless, perceptions are important and the government is running the risk of awakening the perception that the government is actually an autocratic dictatorship, and I think that is most unwise of the government. Once again, Sergeant Wilson will be asking, “Was that wise, sir?”

We could also talk about the matter of how we deal with questions without notice in the house. There are clear guidelines on that in the standing orders. However, a couple of days ago I expected a simple yes or no answer to a question I asked to a minister, but the answer I was given meant no and no, although it was couched in language that said anything but. Clear answers to clear questions should be the rule. We need to have that set out in the standing orders. We need to demand a clear question and expect a clear answer.

Basically, what I am saying here is that there are plenty of positives in this report that I would happily agree to. There are some issues on which I would like a lot more discussion. To be honest, we would all agree that discussing these points in more detail would be immensely helpful. However, we will not get that chance. I regret that. In years to come, people will find this to be an immense problem. We will look back and say that we wish we had done that—we should have and could have.

This is very much a point I would like to bring forth. I will stand and oppose this very sensible committee report not because I think it is a bad report—not at all—but because I cannot agree with it in total, and as a result I must reject it all. I actually find putting me in this position confrontational, unsettling and unhelpful. I find it detracts from the quality of the conversation we are having about this whole motion and the fullness of time that is needed to properly discuss and bring out those small points that even the cleverest among us might have missed. I think that is lacking, and I regret that. I think that is a mistake and I ask the government to reconsider its position, but I recognise that it probably will not.

**The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon James Hayward):** I have some housekeeping to do. Because of the budget today, we need to vacate the chamber by one o'clock, which means that at about a minute to one o'clock I will need to give the call to Hon Pierre Yang to interrupt the proceedings at that point.

**HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan)** [12.18 pm]: Thank you, Acting President, for the guidance on the procedure between now and the interval.

I rise at this point to indicate that I will be opposing the motion that is currently before us. It is order of the day 16, for the benefit of the record. The chamber is now considering the sixty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, which was tabled on 2 September 2021. On that same day, the most junior member of that committee moved a motion seeking that the house agree to all of the recommendations, and that is set out at recommendation 1. Regrettably, after that notice of motion was given, realisation occurred that there were errors in the sixty-fourth report and subsequently the sixty-fifth report was tabled out of session. Before us now we have in effect an amended form of the motion that was originally given notice of. That is the background to the matter currently under consideration before the house.

Ultimately, there are some 38 recommendations under consideration. Again, for the benefit of the record in perpetuity, the house is now considering a change of law in the sense of a change to the laws of Parliament, specifically the Legislative Council of Western Australia and the rules under which Parliament will operate. That in itself is not without precedent, but the manner in which this is being dealt with is at the very best irregular.

I wish to make a few remarks about the 38 recommendations before us. With respect to recommendation 1, I might say that this report is conveniently set out in seven chapters, but the 38 recommendations are housed in chapters 2 through 6, so they are the five core chapters. In an earlier debate, I referred to that as effectively a five-part bill. In chapter 1 is the overarching recommendation, recommendation 1, which states —

That recommendations 2 to 8, 13 to 17 and 19 to 38 come into effect on the first sitting day of the week following their adoption.

Putting to one side whether members agree that those recommendations set out should be agreed to or not, the proposal by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges that they take effect on the first sitting day of the week following their adoption is entirely appropriate and sensible. That would alleviate any problems in the event that these recommendations were adopted mid-week. As it so happens, I think there is a view amongst members that this matter ought to conclude today, so, in any event, the adoption and implementation of those recommendations will commence when we are next due to sit, which, barring some strange sequence of events, will be Tuesday next week.

I then turn to the substantive recommendations set out in that chapter 2, which are recommendations 2, 3 and 4. These recommendations, or at least recommendations 2 and 3, deal with times when the house will be in session or adjourned for a short time, and this is under the broad heading from the committee of “Making more time for core business”. I am on the record as saying that no change in times for the Legislative Council, the house of review, will do anything to change the work ethic of members. There can be an extra half an hour on a Tuesday to undertake business, there can be an extra 15 minutes on a Wednesday and there can be an extra 15 minutes on a Thursday. We can do any number of those things, but it will not change the work ethic of those who have been entrusted by the people of Western Australia to be members of the house of review, to be the final determiners on whether something becomes a new law that affects the people of Western Australia. I have no difficulty in principle with the proposals set out. In many respects, they do not surprise me, but it would be far better, regardless of the hours or days of the week put forward, that members as a whole lift their sense of responsibility for their duties to the people of Western Australia when it comes to reviewing the laws of Western Australia. That will require members at first instance to read and consider the documents before them before they hastily agree to them and find at a later stage that there are flaws and amendments needed. As has been indicated in this instance, when the ink on the sixty-fourth report was still wet, amendments suddenly needed to be made.

Recommendation 4, the final recommendation in chapter 2, is perhaps the most peculiar of the recommendations that have been put forward. Yes, there are very strong views by members on the recommendations housed in chapter 3, which I will get to in a moment, and they have been enunciated over the course of the last couple of days. There have certainly been very strong views about that from this side of the chamber. Recommendation 4 is peculiar because, as I read it, it says that there is this magical period of time that begins at 4.15 pm on a sitting day and ends at 4.30 pm, and during that 15-minute period, something magical takes place whereby it might be appropriate for a number of members to be absent on urgent parliamentary business so they can undertake committee business—but under no circumstances should that ever happen at any other time, only during this magical period of time between 4.15 pm and 4.30 pm. I just find that peculiar. I find it particularly odd. If we had been in a Committee of the Whole House process, the members who have assigned their names to that process might have been able to provide some explanation about what they found so magical about that period between 4.15 pm and 4.30 pm on a sitting day that they thought justified the President granting a committee—not all committees, mind you, but apparently only one committee—to undertake this magical process on any day. I find that odd. But it is my expectation that recommendation 4 will hardly ever be used. It is not apparent to me why members would need to use it. But if it is used in due course, the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, under its remit of constantly providing review of our standing orders, will provide some analysis for us, and hopefully something more substantial than what is currently before us.

I move to chapter 3. This is the most contentious chapter because it seeks to implement dictatorial-type rules for the chamber. We have had an extensive debate about that over the course the last couple of days, thanks largely in part to the work of the Leader of the Opposition who sought to suspend standing orders so we might be able to consider this matter in a different forum. He did that on Tuesday, and, if memory serves, yesterday there was a subsequent attempt to carve out chapter 3 and its recommendations for further consultation. The will of the house is very clear—the record reflects that. Those proposals by the Leader of the Opposition were rejected, and it is now clear that those recommendations will become the new norm for the Legislative Council, not just for the forty-first Parliament, but in future Parliaments. I, again, anticipate that those future Parliaments will make the most of these recommendations set out in chapter 3. Even if they are used in the forty-first Parliament, they will mean nothing, because the government would have been able to proceed whether or not they were in place.

It should be noted here that there will be a maximum 30-minute debate to discuss how long these urgent bills can be debated. Of course, members should not confuse that with the 60-minute time period that was proposed by the leader of the Greens yesterday. It will be 30 minutes if we are to pass it in the form that is currently before us, and members will be able to speak on that debate for a maximum of five minutes. In large part, my views on this chapter are already on the record, courtesy of the debates that we have had over the last couple of days. With those remarks in mind, I move to chapter 4 of the report that is before us.

Chapter 4 is titled “Permanent adoption of former temporary orders”. As a matter of principle, I again reiterate that when the Legislative Council is looking to change the laws of Parliament and the rules of the chamber, it is good practice for them to be tested first as a temporary order, unless there are extremely good reasons not to do so. That requires the articulation of those extremely good reasons, which, generally speaking, has been absent in the forty-first Parliament.

The first of the recommendations in chapter 4 is recommendation 9, which deals with motions on notice. This particular process has my support, because in the past, not only at the start of the forty-first Parliament, but also, indeed, in a series of previous Parliaments, we have seen how the motions on notice system ends up descending into a farce. I thank the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges for bringing forward this improvement, and if there were an opportunity to support individual recommendations and oppose other ones—incidentally, that would be the better approach—I would be providing my support to this recommendation. We have seen in the past that, effectively, there ends up being a competition between the government and the opposition. I say that, reflecting on the fact that that has happened irrespective of who has been in government. That occurred when the Liberal and National Parties were in government and when the Labor Party has been in government. It occurred when the Labor Party has been in opposition and when the Liberal–National alliance has been in opposition. There ends up

being a farcical race to lodge as many motions on notice onto the notice paper as possible as some form of competition. Unfortunately, the existing standing order—not to be confused with the existing temporary order—does not facilitate debate on current issues, whereas this recommendation would stop the farcical motions race. It would stop that particular process from happening and instead fairly distribute amongst members, including the government, the opportunity to have a motion on notice debated for a period of two hours, at which time it will go to a vote. I, for one, support the fact that those motions go to a vote. When we consider some of the other aspects of our business, it is, again, somewhat peculiar that we have these type of debates, particularly on Thursdays, when a robust debate takes place and then it just stops and no vote is taken. That is not the case with motions on notice, and I thank the committee for now seeking to enshrine what has been well tested over a series of Parliaments—this idea of a roster and a schedule for motions on notice.

Recommendations 10 and 11 are consequential to that, because they enshrine the idea that members will have a maximum of 20 minutes to speak on motions on notice and that the entire debate will be concluded within two hours.

Recommendation 12 is simply indicating that the temporary order that was adopted by the house on 23 June this year will have no effect from 31 December 2021, because this arrangement will be permanently enshrined and have effect from 1 January 2022, a day of the week on which I hope we will not be sitting.

In chapter 4 a separate portion deals with the consideration of committee reports. I note at this point that it is—maybe the most charitable word to use would be “cute”—a little cute that the government has decided that now, on 9 September 2021. It has suddenly re-found its enthusiasm for the sensible provisions set out in recommendations 13 through to 17, because that enthusiasm seemed to have vanished up until this point in the forty-first Parliament. Members might like to reflect on whether any committee reports have been tabled in the forty-first Parliament prior to today. I note that today, the Leader of the Opposition tabled a couple of reports of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, which I am looking forward to debating. As it so happens, I know that there was at least one other matter that was before the house in the forty-first Parliament. As I recall, it happened to be a very, very substantial, weighty tome from the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges dealing with a highly controversial set of circumstances whereby the government and the Legislative Council were in dispute, and that particular report has now been noted and considered by the house. Of course, I would say it was convenient for the government that that was all dealt with within a speedy, one-hour process. We will now revert back to a far more sensible period, whereby not only will there be an opportunity for members to speak for more than 10 minutes should the case arise, but also the debate will not be simply concluded after 60 minutes and the ordinary adjournment process will be invoked. I thank the committee for recommendations 13 through to 17 at the end of chapter 4. In summary, chapter 4, “Permanent adoption of former temporary orders” has my support.

We move to chapter 5. The first recommendation in chapter 5 is recommendation 18, which deals with the notion of an e-petition. I find it interesting that all of a sudden the members of the procedure and privileges committee, particularly those in the majority, have decided to ask us to agree to adopt a temporary order with regard to e-petitions. The Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges report states —

That the Council adopt the following temporary order to be in operation from 1 January 2022 until 31 March 2023.

I have no problem with that; in fact, I support that. Let us test the idea of e-petitions, which has been talked about for a period of time. The committee’s proposal is to test it by way of a temporary order. Why would we test an e-petitions process by way of a temporary order, but not test an urgent bills process by way of a temporary order? As far as the majority of committee members are concerned, under no circumstances should we consider an urgent bills process by way of a temporary order—no way!—but we should do it for e-petitions.

I ask members: with respect to the role of the Legislative Council as a house of review, which of the two processes will enhance scrutiny of legislation and which of the two will dilute it? I do not think the e-petitions process will dilute scrutiny. I am not sure that it will especially enhance scrutiny. Probably the best that I can say with regard to the e-petitions process is that it might make the provision of information from constituents to Parliament a little more efficient, but, absolutely, let us trial it. Let us have a temporary order. But the urgent bills process that will now be subject to ministerial edicts, which plainly dilutes scrutiny, will not under any circumstances, according to government members, be considered by way of a temporary order. We will not trial it because the majority, who know all, have determined, along with the government, that it is such a good process that it should be enshrined permanently in the standing orders, notwithstanding the fact that there is a close cousin to all of that—that is, the COVID-19 temporary order, which, in the unanimous view of the committee, including the government majority, has not been evaluated. It bemuses me greatly that such stark contradictions can be set out in black and white in one report.

When I turn quickly to the sixty-fifth report, there is no correction on this point. The sixty-fifth report does not suddenly say, “Actually, we made a mistake. There should be a temporary order with regard to the urgent bills process.” There is no correction there. Once again I wonder to what extent the majority of committee members read the report before they signed off on it and enthusiastically jumped to their feet to say, “I want to move that everybody adopt it.” If a lesson has been learnt by this experience and in future members read the documents before they sign off on them, some benefit will have occurred as a result.



Recommendation 19 of the report before the house deals with the issue of strangers. That matter has also been canvassed and set out in the report in paragraphs 5.14, 5.15, 5.16, 5.17 and 5.18 and that leads to recommendation 19. As far as I understand, the issue of strangers is not something at all unique to this chamber and it is consistent with a ruling made by the President earlier this year.

I move now to chapter 6, “Minor and technical amendments”. My introductory remarks on chapter 6 are this: I thank the committee for its work and, in particular, the work of the hardworking staff on the committee. I have served in multiple Parliaments on the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges and I know firsthand the quality of the support that is provided to members. I thank those staff for participating in this inquiry and in what I describe as an unreasonable time frame. It was an unreasonable workload in an unreasonable time frame, but, again, if there was not at first instance in the minds of members a substantial work ethic that understands and appreciates the work that needs to be done to achieve a particular outcome, we would end up with rushed processes.

Chapter 6 contains an indication from the committee about the notice of questions process, with which members will have now become familiar because each day under formal business the President asks whether there are any notices of questions. I do try to ensure whenever humanly possible to be here for formal business every day, but to the best of my recollection, I do not think there have been any notices of questions in the forty-first Parliament or, indeed, in the 13 years that I have sat through formal business. I can say that it has happened, because to the best of my recollection, I remember Hon Ken Travers getting up and giving notice at least once. Whether it has happened more than once, I cannot say. Suffice it to say, it is an exceptionally rarely used process and, as quite rightly identified by the committee, there really is no need for it any longer, particularly as all members—well, all opposition members—will be well aware that there is a capacity to lodge questions on notice to the government by way of the electronic system. I certainly encourage government members not to be shy and to lodge questions on notice. There is nothing wrong with that. They have a responsibility on behalf their electorates to ask the questions that need to be asked. It is okay even for a member on the government backbench to ask a question. Sure, there might be ways of crafting the question, but there is nothing wrong with doing that and there is nothing wrong with members seeking to use that process. But all of this seems to be saying that there is no longer a need for the utility of notice of questions.

Recommendation 21 refers to the statement on tabling of committee reports. I encourage members to support this recommendation. Again, it is disappointing that I will not have an opportunity to cast a vote in favour of recommendation 21 in the absence of the duress and undue influence of the government insisting that I do that only if I agree to all recommendations in chapter 3. That is a shame because recommendation 21 is eminently sensible. Why do we know that? We know that because of the lived experience of this chamber. When committee reports are tabled, as has occurred twice today, sometimes the three-minute time limit is insufficient. The two reports Hon Dr Steve Thomas, Leader of the Opposition, tabled on behalf of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission today are good examples of reports that can be tabled with a statement within three minutes. Why is that? First, it is an annual report process, which we might discuss another day, in which the procedure flows from a committee that operates under the standing orders of the other place; and, second, it is a fairly routine report—important as it may well be—and is clearly able to be tabled with a statement delivered within three minutes.

The second report was essentially the re-tabling of a very important report from the last Parliament, which, of course, the government conveniently never provided a response to. Therefore, this committee quite rightly re-tabled it and now seeks a response from the government on the important matters of police oversight. Again, because it is re-tabling a report from the previous Parliament, it can easily be done and a statement delivered within three minutes, but that is not always the case. Sometimes, some members will have been part of huge committee inquiries. I think the Standing Committee on Public Administration did a mammoth report in the previous Parliament on work health and safety laws. It is massive. Incidentally, the government has, typically, shown no interest in the report whatsoever, and the record reflects some of those responses, but the point is this: my recollection is that Hon Adele Farina chaired that inquiry—she was an outstanding member of Parliament—and three minutes did not do justice to that report. This recommendation is to allow for five minutes, so that is some improvement, which is certainly better than none at all. I thank the committee for bringing it forward and realising that there has been that lived experience.

We then turn to recommendation 22. I am absolutely agnostic about recommendation 22 because it simply says that statements by ministers and parliamentary secretaries need to be limited to five minutes. I think this is the point being made by Hon Dr Brian Walker: as a matter of fairness, the same instrument should apply to all members. If it is good enough for members of the committee to have to table their statement in five minutes, there is no reason why ministers and parliamentary secretaries should not have to as well. I make the observation that I am not sure I have been present when a minister or parliamentary secretary has delivered a statement that is longer than five minutes, so I am not sure whether there is any issue here that needs attending to.

**Hon Dr Steve Thomas:** Sometimes it feels like it.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** We might not always like to hear what is said. A statement is not to contain a debatable matter, but what is and what is not a debatable matter is probably a debate in itself. That said, I am really agnostic about recommendation 22. I do not think much turns on it.

I provide my strongest support for recommendation 23. This will see the deletion of a standing order. The standing order to be deleted relates to the allusion to debate in the Legislative Assembly. This has been a highly confusing standing order, if ever there was one, about what we can and cannot say. I even recall a ruling that seemed to indicate that if we quoted a question and answer from the other place, that was okay, but if we quoted a debate that had occurred—say, for instance, a second reading debate—that might be an issue. This seems to be a very good improvement. I do not think that anything negative can flow from this recommendation. If there is a matter before the other house, so be it. Obviously, the language that we use should be appropriate with regard to that. But otherwise, there should be no reason that we cannot be cognisant of matters in this chamber that, if we walked out of the chamber, we would be able to talk about and discuss with constituents and the like. If there is a concern about something the government is pushing, of course members in this place should be able to speak on those things. Therefore, I support the implementation of recommendation 23, albeit that the record will ultimately reflect that I opposed this motion in its entirety because of the misconceived recommendations that are found in chapter 3.

There is nothing new in recommendations 24 and 25. As the committee has said, these are minor and technical amendments. They reflect what has been taking place in any event with respect to imputations and the like.

Recommendation 26 caught my eye because those members who lodge questions on notice will know that there has been a quaint process in the house, certainly for at least as long as I have been here, whereby the government's response to questions on notice is given in nine sitting days. This recommendation will make it so much clearer by allowing one calendar month, which is how the other house deals with it. I simply make this point, and I say this no matter who is in government: members do not have to leave it to the last day. If they have nothing to hide, just provide the answer. It is not exclusively the case that every minister deals with this in the same way, but some ministers and some departments sit on their answers and they will provide them only on the very last day as though there were some kind of game going on. It is a game of accountability to the people of Western Australia. However, I have seen other ministers—sometimes Labor ministers and sometimes Liberal–National ministers—provide it at the first opportunity. Matters sometimes require more research and data collection, so the officers work hard and, once it is available, it should be provided. It should be understood here that recommendation 26 is for ministers and parliamentary secretaries to provide an answer at a maximum of one calendar month, not on one calendar month or the first sitting day that is impacted by this new rule.

Recommendation 27 simply deals with matters pertaining to omnibus bills to make it clearer what can and cannot be included in such bills. When there is, if you like, a transgression of this rule, it could be remedied by way of a referral to a committee. We saw that already in the forty-first Parliament; we have a bill at the moment that would be impacted by this recommendation being adopted. From memory, it is the Statutes (Repeals and Minor Amendments) Bill 2021. But, in any event, our custom and practice has been for those types of bills to be referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation, and that is what has occurred.

Recommendation 28 primarily deals with the Standing Committee on Legislation and its ability to make amendments on bills. Again, a point of contention over some years has been whether it can make those types of amendments and recommendations dealing with policy. This will simply make it clear that it all depends on when the referral took place.

Recommendation 30 is that the standing orders should no longer provide that the Clerk calls the first meeting of committees. We all know it is ordinarily a parliamentary officer who is delegated that job by the Clerk. Nothing flows from that. It will enshrine the existing practice.

Recommendation 31 refers to the preparation of a report and the opportunity for the chair to apply what is referred to as an electronic signature. Again, as I understand it, this will simply enshrine existing practice.

I refer to recommendation 32. I do not support recommendation 32 in its entirety. The reason is that this recommendation provides that if a committee of the Legislative Council tables a report in this place, it will not be considered during the Wednesday afternoon Committee of the Whole House process if it is a report on a bill; if it is a report on a motion for disallowance; or if it is a report seeking an extension of time on an inquiry referred by the Council. I do not have a problem with any of that, but I am not enthusiastic about the first category; that is, when a committee tables a report giving notice of an inquiry that it wants to initiate, we are not to discuss it. We will not have the opportunity on a Wednesday to discuss that committee-initiated inquiry. One example is a particularly controversial inquiry into the ambulance service, which is being looked into at the moment. We will see what the report says in due course. Why can we not have a debate early on that might aid the committee in its consideration of its inquiry? Believe it or not, it might not be only the five members of the committee who have all the expertise in respect of the ambulance service of Western Australia. Other members here might know a thing or two about that and point the committee in the right direction of stakeholders who should be consulted or they could give their own lived experience to the inquiry. If recommendation 32 is adopted, we will not be able to do that anymore. This again highlights why the minority of the committee asked us to press the pause button here and undertake some further consultation, because some members might listen to that and think that that is fair enough and maybe we do not need to curtail discussion on these types of reports. Maybe there is an opportunity for some form of discussion about it. But we will not get the opportunity to do that, because we are currently dealing with the “my way or the highway” approach.

Now, regrettably, I have only a short time to conclude my remarks. I am now up to recommendation 33 in this 38-recommendation report. We see that recommendation 33 deals with the balloting process in the event that one is held for the presidency. Again, I do not recall having participated in such a thing, but if this will avoid any doubt, that is a good technical improvement. I note also there are some clarifications of what is considered to be disorderly, but again no issue flows from that because, as the committee says, it simply improves readability.

Noting the time, I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of this day's sitting.

[Leave granted for the member's speech to be continued at a later stage of the sitting.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Pierre Yang**.

[Continued on page 3680.]

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*

## **ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE**

*Tabling of Budget Papers*

**Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Mental Health)** tabled the budget papers.

[See papers 534A–D.]

*Consideration of Tabled Papers*

**HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Mental Health)** [2.00 pm] — without notice:  
I move —

That pursuant to standing order 69(1), the Legislative Council take note of tabled papers 534A–D (2021–22 budget papers) laid upon the table of the house on Thursday, 9 September 2021.

This motion enables the Legislative Council to examine and debate the budget papers associated with the appropriation bills, which are now before the Legislative Assembly. The Treasurer's budget speech accompanying the budget papers provides the detailed economic and financial framework for the 2021–22 budget.

[The Minister for Mental Health read the following speech.]

### **INTRODUCTION**

President, I am honoured to advise the House of the McGowan Labor Government's fifth Budget.

Since coming to Government, and throughout the pandemic, we have made the responsible decisions to place our finances on a solid footing. We brought spending under control, turned deficits into surpluses, and put our debt on a much more sustainable trajectory.

Our fiscal capacity has been bolstered by our strong economy and our efforts to keep the mining sector, and indeed the whole economy, operating safely throughout the pandemic.

This Budget uses the capacity we created, to tackle the challenges we face, continue the fight against COVID-19, address the pressures in our health system and to protect our most vulnerable.

This Budget is an investment in our future—in our hospitals, in addressing climate change, saving our forests, growing new industries, building METRONET, building Westport and creating high quality local jobs.

### **WA ECONOMY**

President, WA's economy is not just the strongest in the nation—it's one of the strongest in the world.

Our domestic economy has grown by 5.7% since the start of the pandemic, almost double the growth of the rest of the nation.

Treasury estimates Western Australia's Gross State Product grew by 3.25% in 2020–21, and is expected to accelerate to 3.5% in 2021–22, the fastest rate of growth in eight years.

Driving our strong economic performance and projections is confidence. Western Australian households and businesses have consistently been among the most confident in the nation throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, given our successful response in crushing the virus.

Consumption has been supported by surging retail trade, which has been growing at the fastest rates on record and the strongest of any jurisdiction.

Our Building Bonus has not only maintained the pipeline of works and protected the jobs of more than 65,000 residential construction workers during the pandemic, but created a boom in activity.

Business investment is also expected to grow strongly for a third consecutive year in 2021–22.

Western Australia's exports grew to a record \$223 billion last financial year, accounting for well over half of national exports.

Since coming to office, around 107,000 WA jobs have been created.

An additional 34,000 Western Australians are expected to gain employment in 2021–22, with job vacancies at around their highest level since the peak of the mining investment boom in 2012.

The unemployment rate has fallen to its lowest level in more than seven years and is expected to average just 4.5% from 2022–23.

### **STATE FINANCES**

President, I am pleased to report that last financial year, Western Australia's net operating surplus was stronger than expected, at a record \$5.6 billion.

Revenues are higher across a range of sources as a result of strong economic conditions, including increased royalties from a higher iron ore price.

In 2021–22, a net operating surplus of \$2.8 billion is projected, with solid surpluses expected to continue across the forward estimates based on prudent revenue assumptions.

Western Australia's net debt is forecast to fall for a third year in a row to \$32.1 billion in 2021–22.

Significantly, no additional borrowings are required by the Consolidated Account over the next four years, with only a limited rise in debt held by government trading enterprises.

### **COVID-19 RESPONSE**

President, our work to fix the finances has allowed us to deliver an unprecedented response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with almost \$9 billion announced to date as part of the WA Recovery Plan and additional measures.

More than \$4.4 billion has been spent since the start of the pandemic, including over \$1 billion on frontline services to keep us safe—including the vaccine roll-out, COVID testing, hotel quarantine, PPE, contact tracing and managing our borders.

More than \$2.6 billion has been provided to support WA businesses and households—with business assistance grants, fees and charges relief and electricity bill credits.

We have committed a further \$605 million for our frontline services and community health and safety initiatives in this Budget to continue our fight against COVID-19, with a key focus on delivering the vaccine roll-out.

A further \$800 million has been allocated to deal with any costs that may arise, including due to the virus, with \$240 million set aside specifically for WA Health.

### **HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH**

President, the McGowan Labor Government has approved a massive \$1.9 billion boost in spending for health and mental health.

This includes an additional \$960 million for WA Health and a record \$495 million for the Mental Health Commission to expand and improve services.

A large proportion of this investment will go towards an additional 332 beds, supported by around 100 new doctors and 500 nurses.

A \$100 million Emergency Department Support Package is underway that includes at least 50 additional staff, better triaging of patients in ambulances, and targeted measures to boost capacity at the Perth Children's Hospital.

This Budget includes specific measures to attract more healthcare workers, including hiring more graduate nurses, as well as a local, national and international recruitment campaign.

An additional \$311 million is being invested in community-based mental health services. These services are designed to treat people in more appropriate settings, reducing pressure on our hospitals and EDs. The increased funding includes \$130 million specifically to enhance services for youth mental health.

The 2021–22 Budget allocates \$3.1 billion to expand our WA Health system.

\$1.3 billion of that is invested over coming years to improve health infrastructure, with major redevelopments and expansions of hospitals underway across metro and regional Western Australia. These upgrades will add a further 314 new hospital beds, in addition to the 332 beds in this Budget.

We have also taken the financially responsible decision to set aside \$1.8 billion to build the new Women and Babies Hospital in Nedlands.

### **SOCIAL HOUSING**

This Budget delivers a record \$875 million additional spend on social housing—including the establishment of a new \$750 million Social Housing Investment Fund to help vulnerable Western Australians access safe and secure housing.

This increases the total spend on social housing in this Budget to over \$2.1 billion, which will fund around 3,300 homes.

## **SAFER AND STRONGER COMMUNITIES**

This Budget delivers on our election commitment to expand the Home Stretch WA program, to allow children in foster care to remain there, if they wish, until the age of 21. At the moment, they are only funded up until the age of 18.

\$41 million has been committed to this initiative, as well as increased funding for Youth Futures to deliver crisis accommodation for teenagers.

In addition, we will invest:

- \$93 million in increased funding for child protection services;
- \$46 million for a range of measures to prevent family and domestic violence and support victims, including measures to rapidly re-house women and children and improve safety, as well as prevention and education initiatives;
- \$6 million for planning and land acquisition for an Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation facility in the Perth CBD for people visiting for medical, cultural or family reasons;
- \$12 million for rebates to seniors for home security and safety equipment; and
- \$4 million to establish an elder abuse advocacy service.

Suburbs and towns across Western Australia will benefit from \$136 million to build and upgrade community infrastructure, plus \$49 million on a range of community-based initiatives and to fund commitments to sporting clubs, community and local arts groups.

## **INVESTING IN THE REGIONS**

This Budget delivers \$627 million in regional election commitments and additional initiatives, with significant investments in education, health and mental health, growing regional industries, upgrading tourism infrastructure, road safety, promoting Aboriginal well-being and much more.

The State Budget delivers the Government's election commitment to enhance the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme, increasing the accommodation subsidy to \$100 per night, and increasing eligibility for vulnerable and disadvantaged people, and women travelling to give birth.

An additional 25 full-time equivalent paid paramedics will also be employed throughout regional WA to support its network of volunteer paramedics.

The Budget also includes \$19.8 million towards the Regional Airfare Zone Cap to make air travel for regional residents more affordable.

Over the next four years, a record \$9.1 billion has been committed for regional infrastructure, as well as billions more in State-wide infrastructure programs.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

\$486 million will be invested in new education infrastructure over the next five years, with a focus on enhancing STEM education in our schools.

In addition, we will help meet our future skills needs by investing \$121.4 million in training and workforce development initiatives, including:

- incentives for mature-age apprentices;
- industry placements for TAFE lecturers;
- additional VET places for Year 11 and 12 students;
- introducing a VET Taster Program for Year 9 students; and
- further upgrades to TAFE infrastructure.

\$59 million has also been delivered to assist our children in planning for work, with career practitioners being placed in 70 schools and increased industry training for VET teachers.

And President, we will support them in the classroom, by:

- funding an additional 100 school psychologists by 2025;
- expanding the school chaplaincy service to provide emotional and social support; and
- expanding the Alternative Learning Settings program to an additional eight sites across the State.

## **POLICE**

The 2021–22 Budget ensures that we provide our WA Police with the resources they need to serve our community.

\$41 million will be spent on building new police stations in Baldivis and Forrestfield—as committed to at the recent State election.

Also in keeping with our commitments, WA Police will be funded to ensure opening hours at Gosnells, Warwick and Rockingham stations will be extended to 7pm on weeknights.

\$83.6 million will be spent for the refurbishment and expansion of police stations to help house the additional 950 police officers being delivered by this Labor Government.

And \$27.5 million will be invested to purchase and operate a second new police helicopter, in addition to the helicopter already being built for WA Police.

There will also be \$18 million to fund services delivered by Police and Community Youth Centres; providing safe spaces and structured programs to support at-risk and disadvantaged youth across the State.

### **ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE ACTION**

From 2024, WA will end the logging of our native forests, protecting at least an additional 400,000 hectares of native forest in our South West.

At the same time, we will invest a record \$350 million over ten years in softwood plantations—planting up to 50 million pine trees, sequestering at least 7.9 million tonnes of carbon and creating hundreds of new jobs, and supporting thousands more, including providing certainty for the construction industry.

That \$350 million investment is part of our new \$750 million Climate Action Fund with other initiatives including:

- \$206 million for renewable energy projects, including standalone power systems, and wind turbine manufacturing;
- \$50 million to support the development of a renewable hydrogen industry; and
- \$144 million in climate response measures such as addressing coastal erosion and capacity for future initiatives.

With climate change, severe weather events and natural disasters becoming far more frequent, this Budget delivers an additional \$232 million to respond to natural disasters, particularly Severe Tropical Cyclone Seroja.

### **DESALINATION PLANT**

This Budget sets aside \$1.4 billion to help fund Perth’s next desalination plant, which will be powered by renewable energy.

Planning for the next desalination plant is currently underway and a final investment decision will be made in a future Budget.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT**

President, our 2021–22 Budget delivers a record \$30.7 billion investment in infrastructure over the next four years.

Our unprecedented investment in rail, road and transport infrastructure continues, with an additional \$2.4 billion in this Budget. This includes delivery of our election commitments such as the Mandurah Estuary Bridge, the Regional Road Safety Program, and upgrading key priority black spot locations across the State.

This Budget includes \$5.7 billion for 15 METRONET projects—planned, under construction or completed.

This year, the first METRONET project was completed—the Bellevue Railcar Facility, bringing railcar manufacturing back to Western Australia after 25 years.

Nine METRONET projects are currently under construction:

- Forrestfield Airport Link;
- Morley–Ellenbrook Line;
- Thornlie–Cockburn Link;
- Yanchep Rail Extension;
- the new Bayswater Station;
- the new Lakelands Station;
- the Mandurah Station Multi-Storey Car Park;
- Denny Avenue Level Crossing Removal; and
- the Thomas Road Bridge, as part of the Byford Rail Extension.

Our Budget also includes funding for additional level crossing removals on the Armadale and Midland lines, the Byford Rail Extension and additional bus services.

The 2021–22 Budget also contains new funding for METRONET with \$38 million to deliver a 700 bay multi-storey carpark at Greenwood Station, a key commitment at the State election.

\$400 million has been allocated to Westport for strategic land acquisition for priority industrial lots and road corridors.

This Budget also makes significant investments in our social, cultural and environmental future, with:

- \$105 million to build a state-of-the-art film studio and screen production facility in Fremantle;
- \$50 million to plan and seed fund the nation-leading Aboriginal Cultural Centre; and
- \$30 million to commence delivery of the Perth Zoo Master Plan.

### **ECONOMIC REFORM**

\$120 million has been provided to streamline Western Australia's approvals system and unlock billions of dollars in new projects. 150 additional staff will be employed by relevant agencies to speed up project approvals, while at the same time ensuring we retain the level of protection of our environment, heritage and communities the public expects.

We will continue to diversify and strengthen our economy with \$100 million to establish an Investment Attraction and New Industries Fund, plus \$50 million for an Industrial Land Development Fund, both significant elements of our WA Jobs Plan.

The off-the-plan transfer duty rebate for multi-storey developments has been extended at 50% for a further two years, at a cost of \$26 million. This will assist in smoothing the pipeline of work for the residential construction sector as the impact of recent grants unwind.

### **ICT**

In order to keep pace with the demands of the digital world, this Government has committed \$500 million over the next four years to upgrade ICT systems across Government.

This investment will ensure that service delivery keeps pace with public expectations and protects key agencies against cyber-attacks and operational threats.

### **HOUSEHOLD FEES AND CHARGES**

President, this Budget limits growth in the household basket of fees and charges to less than CPI, and continues to increase concessions to our most vulnerable, at a cost of \$397 million. Relative to pre-COVID levels, fees and charges have risen just 0.6% since 2019–20.

Public transport fares, including TransWA fares, are frozen for another year.

Importantly, this Budget delivers our election commitment to cap public transport fares at two zones.

This means that from January 1, people living further from the city will no longer be penalised for using public transport. The introduction of our two-zone fare cap will save families hundreds, or thousands of dollars, every year.

### **WAGES POLICY**

Last year, given the initial economic and financial uncertainty caused by the pandemic, the public sector wages policy limiting growth to \$1,000 per year was extended, with a review to be undertaken in 2023.

However, given the State's stronger than expected financial position, this review will now be brought forward to begin immediately.

### **CONCLUSION**

President, the 2021–22 Budget shows that hard work pays off.

This Government worked hard over many years to place the finances on a sustainable pathway. While our fiscal capacity has been bolstered by the strong economy here in WA, this Budget is built on a foundation of spending restraint and prudent decisions.

By responsibly managing the finances, and building a strong and resilient economy, we can deliver on our commitments and make some of the biggest ever investments in our State's future.

This Budget continues the fight against COVID, invests heavily in our hospitals and health care workforce, and takes essential action on climate change.

President, this Budget is an investment in WA's future.

I commend the Budget to the House.

Consideration of the papers made an order of the day for the next sitting, on motion by **Hon Pierre Yang**.

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES

### *Recommendations 1 to 38 — Adoption — Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan)** [2.24 pm]: Prior to the interval and commencement of the noting of the budget papers we were considering the sixty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, which sets out the review of the standard orders. It has been debated in various formats over the past few days. Prior to the interval I was looking in particular at recommendation 35. This is a 38-recommendation report, albeit a report that has subsequently needed to be amended by virtue of the sixty-fifth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. Recommendation 35 is an unobjectionable recommendation by the committee and is described as a technical amendment. It simply seeks to delete a redundant word in standing order 67(3) and, again, is an example of one that can be supported, albeit in the current circumstances we are being required to agree to all recommendation en bloc or not at all.

Recommendation 36 that follows deals with standing order 101 and the issue of petitions. Again, the committee has found a form of words—in this instance, seven words—that can be deleted because the committee has said that they are redundant with respect to the form and content of petitions. The penultimate recommendation in report 64 deals with uniform legislation and how matters are described with respect to working and business days and the like. It is a mere technical amendment that reflects the current practice.

The last recommendation deals with the issue of a quorum for committees and it puts beyond doubt that a committee at any meeting will have a quorum if a majority of the members are present. For example, if it is a five-member committee and three are present, that would be sufficient to satisfy a quorum, and four-person committees will still need to have three members present. With those words, I indicate that I will not support the motion before the house because of the problems that we have discussed, particularly around chapter 3 of the report.

**HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary)** [2.27 pm]: I rise to make some comments on the sixty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges and the motion moved by Hon Dan Caddy. As other members have said, I start with a huge thank you to the staff on the committee who performed above and beyond, as they always do in committees. Their frank and fearless advice was humbling and I am happy to say that the staff did a fabulous job putting this report together and I am sure all members of the committee thank them very much for that.

The report, which has been extensively debated, reads for itself in my view. A lot of hard work has gone into what the house charged the committee with. The executive summary sums up clearly what the committee was attempting to achieve in this report. It states —

The Committee is satisfied that the Council's Standing Orders are largely fit for purpose. Despite this, the Committee has identified a number of enhancements that increase the time available for core business, modernise certain procedures and simplify areas of confusion amongst Members.

I think that is very clear in the recommendations and I have heard a fair bit of positivity around a lot of the recommendations in this report that should bring us up into 2021. One of the intriguing parts in this report that is a little complex to me is at page 31—we talk about offensive language in the chamber. That was quite an interesting standing order to look into, particularly around what is offensive language in Parliament. People can take things differently and be heard differently by people. There was only a slight recommendation about offensive words, which was to clean it up a little bit by inserting the following —

A Member shall not use offensive words in debate, including offensive words against the Sovereign, the Governor, either House of Parliament, any Member of either House or a judicial officer.

It is definitely one of those areas for which, if there was more time and it was looked into further, we probably would not know how to identify what offensive language is. There are the obvious words, which, obviously, I cannot say. However, people can definitely have different views about offensive language. It was quite interesting to look at that part of the standing orders.

Another one I am very proud of is recommendation 19 to allow for caring for infants in the chamber. I think that is a very positive step in the right direction and is family friendly given it is the people's house. That recommendation obviously followed on from what had already been achieved in the chamber but it is appropriate that it be included in the standing orders in 2021. I am very impressed that that is allowed in this chamber in 2021.

An interesting part of the report to note is around the consideration of committee reports. Comments have been made about temporary orders and how things have played out. I reflect on how in the fortieth Parliament a stack of committee reports was constantly listed on the notice paper for debate. Before we knew it, the notice paper would list the reports and near the back end of last year there was a heap of reports but we could not get to our report to have a discussion. Reports were on the notice paper for the entire duration. I think an appropriate amount of time should be given to debate. In my view, four hours is appropriate; it gives an opportunity for members to have their say and for reports to be given attention. I reflect a bit personally on that because a report that was delivered towards



the end of the fortieth Parliament that I was involved in was the Standing Committee on Public Administration Inquiry into WorkSafe. It was a huge report for which an hour could not be justified as enough time to debate it. Unfortunately, it was rotated out after an hour and we did not get back to it. Other reports that had been debated for years ended up coming back on. It was very unfortunate for that to happen. Given where we are heading now, we may not run into that type of situation again, and that will be good because the work our committees do and the work the staff behind them put into reports is tireless, and a lot of the time it is thankless. It is therefore important that we focus on detailed debate rather than just an opportunity to speak. Even though 10-minute intervals are allowed, it is probably not the intention to string out a speech but more to get into depth about a report and have a decent discussion within the chamber about the recommendations and the government response.

Obviously, there has been a lot of discussion about chapter 3. As we said in the executive summary of the report, there is an attempt to see more available time for “core business, modernise certain procedures and simplify areas of confusion amongst Members.” It has been mentioned that the Senate has it but never uses it. Who is to say that that will not be the case here? I find it intriguing that a guillotine motion has been available in the past but has not been utilised. From memory, I think it has been utilised once although it is in the standing orders. I understand that some people try to play it up and try to convince us that the world and the roof will fall in on us all. However, with a little bit of common sense and understanding on reading it, legislation has been bogged down and drawn out and utilised for personal advantage to avoid getting legislation through. Remember again that the people who will be in charge of passing legislation will be the Leader of the House for the government. That comes from an election and a mandate. When we get elected we put out what we will do. The fortieth Parliament and some of the things we went to the election with in 2017 —

**Hon Martin Aldridge** interjected.

**Hon KYLE McGINN:** I will not take interjections, Acting President.

**The ACTING PRESIDENT:** Order, members!

**Hon KYLE McGINN:** We can look at what we clearly had a mandate for in 2017, yet the opposition is just not happy about it and could not accept its fate. It is reflected again in the forty-first Parliament. The people voted for what they wanted and that is what they will get. I definitely do not agree with a lot of what has been said, particularly by the opposition, on all of this. Reference to the roof falling in was described in the last report about speaking times, but the roof is still there. I think sometimes it is a little bit played up. As I said, did the world end because the guillotine motion is in standing orders? I do not think it did; I think we are still going in the forty-first Parliament.

Again, I would like to say that the committee did a very good job on the charge given to it by the house and has delivered, I believe, a very good report that goes a long way to modernising the standing orders. I understand there are different views in that space, but that is how it works. I find it intriguing that some people who were part of the committee do not seem to have some of the recommendations in the minority report but seem to say that they did not support the recommendations.

**Hon Martin Aldridge** interjected.

**Hon KYLE McGINN:** That is how I interpreted it. I will keep my comments brief. Once again, I say to the staff: amazing work and I look forward to seeing this motion put to the house.

**HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [2.38 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth reports of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. I do not intend to speak at length; however, it is difficult not to speak at some length because there are 38 recommendations in this report, and we cannot indicate our support or otherwise for any of those recommendations other than to record that via *Hansard* through this debate, because we do not get an opportunity to vote on those recommendations individually. Members will be aware that I made a submission to the committee off my own bat and I did indeed mention where I thought we could gain some time, including changing the dinner and afternoon tea breaks. I think these changes are eminently sensible. I am always keen for efficiency and to see us able to do our job of scrutinising, but not rushing, legislation. I think it is very important that we understand that they are different things. I will go through a few of these recommendations bit by bit.

Regarding the dinner and afternoon tea breaks, I am sure that we can live with shortening our dinner break to an hour and it is a good thing to remove afternoon tea. The committee’s recommendation 4 would enable committees to meet between 4.15 and 4.30 pm on sitting days. It is an interesting recommendation. Nonetheless, when committees have needed to urgently achieve some particular committee business, they have tended to do that anyway during the afternoon tea break. I think it is good to set a time when that can happen, for consistency. Committee members will know that that is the time of day to meet if they need to, and it can be arranged to do so. That is not a bad thing at all.

Recommendation 5 is the core problem with this report, because this is not an urgency provision in any way, shape or form; this is an expedited-passage-of-legislation provision. This provision will allow a bill to be rammed through, essentially. If a minister declares a bill urgent, we will then debate how long we are going to debate it. Once that

is decided, the bill can be dealt with. However, as members will be aware, the procedure is that when a bill arrives in this house, it is first read. The minister then moves the second reading of the bill and makes their second reading speech. It is at that point, should this provision be enacted, that the minister will declare a bill urgent. The bill will then sit on the notice paper for a calendar week if it has come from the Assembly, or two calendar weeks if the bill originates from the Council. It might be an urgent bill, but it will still sit on the notice paper, because it is obviously not that urgent! This provision will not do anything to expedite the debate on such a bill. That is the key difference between this and other urgency provisions. If a bill is urgent, it is urgent—there is a reason that it needs to be brought on and debated urgently, which means in a reasonable time frame. During debate there was some discussion from the Leader of the House—I am reading from *Hansard*—who said —

The other circumstances in which I think an urgent bill might be declared is if there were some circumstance, not dissimilar to the COVID arrangement, in which there was some external reason why a particular piece of legislation needed to be treated as urgent. I cannot think of any example off the top of my head —

Then an honourable member interjected referring to the Clive Palmer bill.

The issue is that this is not about bringing a particular bill on for immediate debate. This is only about rushing a bill through the house after the normal period of it sitting on the notice paper has occurred. I think there is some merit in debating a bill urgently. Over the COVID period, we have seen a need to debate bills urgently and quickly in order to protect our community and economy from what was unfolding in front of our eyes. The opposition supported that process at the time and the COVID bills were able to be brought on under the temporary orders and debated straightaway, with time limits and so on set. This provision will not allow a bill to be debated immediately. It will not make a bill urgent.

Indeed, what is most likely to happen with this provision, as has been alluded to in some of the contributions, is that it will be used towards the end of a sitting year or perhaps even towards the end of a parliamentary term—perhaps towards the end of the forty-first Parliament, when, in October 2024, there will be a bunch of bills on the notice paper that have been second read but never brought on for debate. They will suddenly be declared urgent bills and we will have to push them through before the election, even though they sat on the notice paper for years, as occurred in the previous Parliament. Bills sat on the notice paper during that Parliament for years. They were never brought on for debate. The opposition was blamed for holding them up, but it is not the opposition who decides whether bills come on for debate; that is firmly the remit of the government. I certainly do not support recommendation 5. That is not an urgent bills provision; it is a battering ram provision to essentially allow bills to be pushed through without proper scrutiny and due process. It will also not allow a bill to be read in and urgently debated, as is implied in the name given to the proposed provision in the report.

I think the committee has done a great job with some of the recommendations, and I note the minority report as well. I think the minority of the committee has done a good job in outlining its concerns, and writing a minority report is no easy task. I think the committee and its staff did a good job in the limited time available. In his contribution, Hon Kyle McGinn referred to a particular provision—the offensive language one. He said that if there was more time, perhaps the committee could have looked into that a bit more. We did not set the time frame and we gave the committee an extension.

Regarding the other recommendations, it is eminently sensible that we look at the motions on notice process and the procedure of adopting the practice that we have now. In the past, before my time in fact, the notice paper would fill up with motions, and by the time they were debated, they were well and truly out of date. I think the suggested change is an eminently sensible approach that will give all participants in the chamber the opportunity to debate motions that are of particular significance and importance to them and their political party. That is a good thing.

Regarding the speaking times on motions on notice, the adoption of a 20-minute rule is good. It will give enough opportunity for members to outline what they think. Most of the other recommendations, I have to say, are sensible. I agree with the recommendation to increase the time given to debate committee reports. Hon Kyle McGinn made a very good point in his contribution about the WorkSafe inquiry. That committee did an incredible body of work and produced a massive report that deserved a much more thorough debate than it got, by virtue of the fact that it moved down the notice paper and could not be debated again. There are plenty examples of that happening with committee reports; for example, the report of the Select Committee into Alternate Approaches to Reducing Illicit Drug Use and its Effects on the Community. The report of that committee, which Hon Samantha Rowe and I were on, was worthy of debate for far longer than the opportunities we had to debate it. I think the decision by the committee to extend the debate on committee reports to 240 minutes is a good one. It will give us time to properly consider those reports.

Recommendation 18 talks about e-petitions. I am a fan of electronic petitions, I have to say. It is the twenty-first century and we want to give all participants in our democracy the opportunity to contribute to debate. The vastness of our state means that many participants may not be able to physically get hold of and sign a paper petition or submit it in time, or indeed at all, for consideration. The opportunity for others to contribute via electronic means is a good one. No doubt, there will be some IT and security challenges in making sure that that e-petition system is robust, cannot be gamed and is secure, so that individuals' data is definitely protected and privacy prevails. That

will be a big challenge, but I think it is worth pursuing. As I said, e-petitions offer a great opportunity for members of the public to be more involved and engaged in the debate in this place and in the lawmaking of their state and to bring forward issues that matter to them. Every opportunity that we can have as members of Parliament to be more connected to our communities and allow them the opportunity to engage in and understand what we do in this place will be a good thing.

Recommendation 19 is that we change the definition of “strangers”. This will give effect to a ruling made by the President earlier in this government’s term. It is a good recommendation. We are in a modern world. We need to enable whoever is elected to this place to actively participate. If a member needs to care for their child, obviously particularly an infant, and bring that child into the chamber, that is something we absolutely have to consider and allow, because we want a diversity of representation in this place. That is incredibly important for the health of our democracy across our nation.

Recommendation 20 deals with questions on notice. As I have said, I am supportive of many of these recommendations. Recommendation 21 is about the time allowed for statements upon the tabling of committee reports. This goes back to the comments made earlier. Five minutes is probably barely enough time, to be honest, to enable a statement to be made on some of the bigger reports. The provision of extra time for debate on committee reports will probably go some way towards solving that problem. It is certainly a real struggle to make a meaningful statement in three minutes when tabling a committee report in this chamber. Therefore, that is a good move.

Recommendations 24 and 25 deal with offensive words, and imputations and improper reflections. The proposed changes are relatively minor, but they will clear up some things that have been confusing for members, and every opportunity that we can have to do that is a good thing. Recommendation 26 is an interesting one around the answering of questions on notice. It is eminently sensible that we remove the nine sitting day period and go to one calendar month. There are obviously times when six sitting days have gone past, but we then go to the winter recess and we do not get the answer back until the third sitting day after the end of the winter recess. It is important that questions on notice are answered in a timely fashion. This will enable that to happen.

As I said at the start of the debate, I am broadly supportive of many of these provisions. However, I cannot support the motion overall, because I do not support recommendation 5 in its current form. We have debated various proposed amendments. Therefore, unfortunately I will have to vote against the motion itself when it comes to that. I find that disappointing, because the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges has made some very good recommendations and done some very good work.

I broadly support recommendation 32. I think I share the same view as Hon Nick Goiran on that recommendation. That recommendation proposes to amend standing order 188(2)(b). I will go to the actual standing order to make sure that I refer to it correctly. Standing order 188 is headed “Tabling of Report”. Paragraph (2) states —

Upon tabling in the Council, a Committee report shall be —

- (a) deemed printed and published under the authority of the Council; and
- (b) except for ...

It then refers to particular reports that are not subject to that provision. I share the concern expressed by Hon Nick Goiran that members should be given the opportunity to have a debate on committee-initiated inquiries under standing order 179 in order to express their views. Many members in this place have experience in a variety of different fields. From a committee member’s perspective, it is always good to hear the views of other members on a particular committee-initiated inquiry. Members of the chamber are not always aware of those inquiries because they are initiated by the committee itself. It is important that other members have the opportunity to at least contribute in the initial phase of the committee establishing an inquiry. Therefore, I am not particularly supportive of that proposed amendment to standing order 188(2)(b).

I will leave my contribution there. I have made it clear that there are a number of provisions that I support. The committee has done a lot of good work. I support many of the recommendations. However, I do not support the urgent bills provision. It is not an urgent bills provision at all. It is simply about giving the government the ability to ram a bill through the house. It is not an ability to bring on a bill for urgent debate, as was the case in the last Parliament with the COVID-19 crisis when we needed to bring on an urgent debate in order to keep people safe. This proposed amendment will not allow that to happen. On that basis, I will be joining many of my colleagues—I am sure all of my colleagues—in voting against the motion before us. I will not be supporting it.

**HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan)** [2.56 pm]: I want to make a few comments on the sixty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. I firstly want to acknowledge the report and thank the members who participated on the committee, and certainly the staff, because I know how much work goes into pulling these reports together. I will note my disappointment that there is a minority report. That is a very unusual circumstance to occur on that committee. I have been a member of that committee on and off during a range of terms in my 20 years in this Parliament, and this is the first occasion on which I can recall a minority report. I hope this is the one and only minority report that will come out of the committee for the duration of this term.

I will not talk specifically about the range of recommendations. A lot of them are simply a tweaking or minor update of language in the standing orders. However, I will talk about the proposal to deal with—finally—the question of e-petitions. Having spent a couple of terms on the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs—I cannot remember whether it was two or three terms; it might have been three—the dominant work of that committee, certainly for the last term at least, was around petitions. There was a high volume of petitions over that time. The issue of allowing e-petitions was certainly canvassed in the early 2000s as people became more tech-savvy and wanted to speed up the process and get their message in. This has been raised on a number of occasions, and certainly during the last term we tried to get this issue resolved. There was a particular block in our way—a member who had quite strong views on e-petitions. Sadly, he is no longer with us in the chamber.

**Hon Peter Collier:** He might be listening!

**Hon KATE DOUST:** Yes, he might be listening. We had some interesting discussions about how this would work and about that member's concerns. I think we have to give these things a go. It will be a temporary arrangement. That will allow the public, members and staff to determine what works best and what does not work and to tweak it to see whether it will be a long-term arrangement. Extensive work was done in the early 2000s to look at how e-petitions function in other Parliaments. I think Tasmania might have run with that at one point. Certainly the Parliament of Scotland was a leader in this space. I do not see why we should be dragging our feet, given that we are one of the very few Parliaments in our country that deals with petitions appropriately by having them referred directly to a committee, seeking responses from ministers and departments, and with the possibility of an inquiry. Some substantial inquiries have arisen out of the petitions process. I think back to the inquiry on Alcoa, on which we spent four years, and the subsequent report. That erupted from a petition. We did a lot of inquiries around waste and also emissions in the early days. Some of those inquiries resulted in changes to legislation or changes to the processes. The Alcoa one in particular turned out to be very expensive for that company as a result of the recommendations made by the committee. A lot of very important work was done.

Given the tyranny of distance and access to members, hopefully it will be a lot easier for some members of the public to present a petition and have it dealt with. During that period, I will certainly watch with great interest to see the uptake around the number of petitions that are presented in that manner. It will certainly not preclude members from using the more traditional form. It will be interesting to see how the results are collated and presented back to this house in due course, with a view to maintaining that process.

As members would be aware if they have read this report, as a former Presiding Officer, I was asked to provide a submission. I provided a very brief submission. I thank the committee for picking up a couple of the comments that I made in my submission. I have noted that further work needs to be done on a couple of those matters. The committee dealt with that in chapter 7 of the report. We have had an extensive debate on this report over the last couple of days. One of the issues I raised related to making the review of the standing orders a much more regular feature on the calendar of the upper house. This is done as a matter of course in a number of other Parliaments, both within Australia and overseas. I think the New Zealand Parliament does that at the very beginning of a new sitting period. From memory, the outgoing Parliament makes recommendations on any possible changes that may assist the incoming members of a new Parliament, and that is dealt with. I hope that at some point, perhaps by way of a self-referral, the privileges committee may elect to conduct a further inquiry into whether the standing orders should be amended to allow for a more regular, if not permanent, revisit of the standing orders. Perhaps if that were to happen, and we had an occasional tweak, update or inclusion of a new arrangement to deal with what was happening at that point in time, debates on those changes might be dealt with in a lot more economical fashion than we have seen over the last couple of days. I sincerely hope that that matter is given further consideration in due course.

The other issue that I raised related to the functions and arrangements of our parliamentary committees. I note that this was picked up by Hon Barry House, one of our former Presiding Officers, and certainly by Hon Simon O'Brien in his submissions. The comments in my submission related to the discussion that we need to have about our significant number of committees. We have not really looked at their form and function for an extended period. Members of both houses are often quite stretched, given that we have joint standing committees, and certainly in the last Parliament, we had a number of select committees. I am not sure whether that will be the case in this Parliament but perhaps we need to consider the make-up, the function and the issues that are canvassed in those committees. If we want to modernise them, I suggest that might be a way of doing that.

I have always been very keen to look at how we engage the community in our committee work. There is perhaps a lack of education or understanding about the value of parliamentary committee work in our general community. Our Parliamentary Education Office has done a fantastic job with its regional outreach program, trying to raise these issues and provide information to interested parties when it visits the regions. Perhaps more work could be done in that area, looking at different mechanisms of how we can engage. Since the arrival of COVID-19, we have seen an increased use of technology in the digital space to engage with the community and run hearings and access submissions online. There is a piece of work to be done in that area. I am not sure whether the Deputy President might take that on board in his role as Chair of Committees or whether the privileges committee might take it up as well. Some interesting work can be done there.

Referencing COVID, I also talked about that in my submission. Unfortunately, the privileges committee did not deal with that particular comment. I think it arose a few times during the debate. Like a number of other Parliaments, we need to take a formal look at how we functioned during the COVID pandemic: what we did, what we could do better and how we can manage it. Some work has been done through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, with some discussions about how various Parliaments managed it within their committees and in the chambers. Did members sit in the chamber or were they online? I note that the House of Commons only came back to real-time physical sitting arrangements last week for the first time since COVID erupted. An interesting piece of work can be done around that. Although we were able to operate under a set of arrangements during COVID relating to seating in the chamber, divisions, questions without notice, staff movements, member movements around the chamber and pair arrangements—a whole range of things—a bit of work can be done to clarify some of those issues, futureproofing, if you like, for an occurrence that might happen down the track so that we do not have to negotiate every time. Instead, as a starting point, some sort of framework will be in place so that people know where they stand and we can just drop back into a set of arrangements that have been agreed if we have to deal with that sort of situation. They are some of the matters that I wanted to talk about.

The one issue that has been quite contentious in this chamber relates to recommendations 5 to 9 and declaring bills. As a member who has been here for quite a while—I have put my view quite clearly for my party in other venues—I have expressed some concern about the application of declaring a bill urgent. My view is that something should be spelt out in the standing orders, such as a set of criteria or circumstances that would apply when that would happen so, again, there is clarity for all members. Members have talked about longevity, the cycle and all those things, so I will not go through those.

I note that Hon Colin de Grussa raised the issue of members of a committee being able to meet between 4.15 and 4.30 pm on a particular day to deal with committee business. I took a slightly different view. I was really pleased to hear what he said—setting aside a specified time so everyone knew where they stood. That makes sense. I agree that given that we will not have an afternoon tea break and business might be happening in the house, only one committee should be able to meet a day. If the President has to give permission and announce to the chamber, does it really matter what time of the day that is if they are going to take 15 minutes? I do not know whether the privileges committee might review that at some point once it has seen how this works over a period of time. I think it is really important that committee members have the capacity to step outside the chamber when they have to deal with something urgent. It may be that a bill or an issue has just been referred to their committee and they need to decide when they are going to advertise for submissions or have their first meeting. It might be that they have to sign-off on a report. Those things are always important. In the past when we tried to finalise a waste authority report or a children's commission report, Hon Norman Moore was quite adamant that we could not do these things—that we had to do them outside of a sitting period. Things have moved on and committee members may very well need to have that flexibility, but I am not too sure that we should be restrictive with the time. The Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges might go back and review that after a period of time.

I wanted to put on record just a few comments about this report. It is never easy when change is about to be implemented—one group will be happy and another group will not. Members might want to think about embracing the change. There is always opportunity after a period of time, after we see how things work, to revisit these issues. How we manage our business in this place should be a constantly evolving question. If we had stuck to the standing orders of this chamber when it began, God knows how we would manage our business. I hope there is still opportunity to review some of the issues that I raised in my submission. I wait with bated breath to see the outcome of today's debate.

**HON STEVE MARTIN (Agricultural)** [3.11 pm]: I rise to make a few comments on the motion moved by Hon Dan Caddy on the sixty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, *Review of the standing orders*. I thank the members and staff of the committee for their hard work. There is some good work in the report, so congratulations. Unfortunately, like other members, because of a small number of recommendations I will not be able to support the motion. Rather than doing what other members have done, which is to go through the various recommendations, I will take my time to reflect on this process and some of the things that I have learnt in my brief time in this chamber.

We have been at this for the best part of two and a half days and aside from a brief opening remark or two from Hon Dan Caddy, who led the debate, and a contribution from Hon Kyle McGinn, I am none the wiser about the answers to a number of questions about the report. That is unfortunate given that, in particular, I have found the process of the Committee of the Whole really informative and useful. We obviously do not win many votes; in fact, I am not sure whether we have won one yet, and we probably will not win one. During the Committee of the Whole process on the Agricultural Produce Commission Amendment Bill 2021 and the Veterinary Practice Bill 2021 with Hon Alannah MacTiernan, we had conversations. Amendments were proposed by the minister, industry and members on this side of the house. We had conversations about issues that were raised during our second reading contributions. The minister sought feedback from the sector. Amendments were made and the result was a better bill. We were tinkering around the edges, but the minister listened and explained the reasoning behind some of the various provisions in the bills. We learnt a little bit. The minister moved some small amendments and we ended

up with a better bill. It would be unfortunate if the outcome of this review of the standing orders is less of an opportunity for review in this chamber. I heard the Leader of the House's remarks. When the other new members and I joined the Legislative Council, we received some useful advice from Hon Kate Doust and other experienced former and present members: "Sit and listen as much as you can and take your role as legislators in this house of review seriously." I have attempted to do that. When experienced members of this place, such as the Leader of the House, get to their feet, I do my very best to listen and learn. I disagree with her comments, "Trust me, we won't use this. I know what I'm doing." If we look at this in terms of good governance, Hon Sue Ellery may be the most outstanding Leader of the House for the rest of her time in this place. But she will not be here forever and another Leader of the House from either side of politics will probably correctly use the standing orders to their advantage. Hon Kyle McGinn said that similar provisions have been available in the Senate since 1926 but they have not been used. Therefore, my immediate response is, "Why are they there in the first place?" I do not agree with the Leader of the House's suggestion that we need this provision just in case—"I will do the right thing." We saw what happened with the COVID SafeWA app. The police carefully and correctly read a line in the Emergency Management Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Bill 2020 and interpreted it to mean that they could do certain things—the legislation was rushed back to Parliament to be fixed—and surprise, surprise, that is what they did. That analogy might be a stretch but if the standing orders permit something, at some stage it will happen. Much to my surprise very early in my term, we had two sitting Thursdays in one day. Members who have been here a long time were shocked about that. We finished at the normal time on Thursday and, shortly after that, we came back for another sitting Thursday. The Clerk and the staff organised a new business program and the President read another Lord's Prayer and welcome to country. We had two Thursdays because that is permitted by the standing orders. If the standing orders allow for that, the Leader of the House was well within her rights to choose to do that. Some Leader of the House will take advantage of the new standing orders.

As I said, I will not go through the various recommendations. There are some good things in the report. I am concerned about recommendation 5. Going back to my remarks about the committee process, I had hoped for a response before I stood to contribute to this debate. I was not sure whether Hon Kyle McGinn was going to provide one. If any member opposite can, I would still like some answers so that I leave here better informed about what this might look like. As Hon Kate Doust asked, "What sort of bill will be declared urgent?" Can a minister or a parliamentary secretary say at the end of their second reading speech that there will be no talking time on the bill? I do not know. I do not know about a number of things in the report. I understand that Hon Dan Caddy, who led the debate, did not know what questions would be asked. After two and a half days of debate, we are no better informed and that is disappointing. I guess we will find out about these provisions when they are first used. It might be during the debate on upper house reform; that would be disappointing. It would be nice to get a clearer picture of what the changes will entail. I know what the outcome of the vote will be at the end of this very long discussion. I will not prolong it much further.

I have some small questions about e-petitions. I broadly support members of the Western Australian public having the ability to sign an e-petition. But, for example, will a seven-year-old be able to sign an e-petition? That is not clear in the recommendation. I do not know and I will not get a chance to ask. There are flaws with the process that has been used to get through the review of the standing orders. I congratulate the committee for its hard work. Unfortunately, because I cannot separate recommendation 5 from the other recommendations, I cannot support the motion.

**HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral)** [3.18 pm]: I rise to make several remarks about the recommendations in the sixty-fourth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, *Review of the standing orders*. I thank the committee for the hard work it has put into this report. I have already made my views known during the 15-minute afternoon tea break. I am certainly not here to die on the hilltop, but I would like to spend some time talking about e-petitions. I am glad that the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges has included a recommendation for e-petitions. I made that recommendation to the committee using the Victorian model as a solid model to follow and I am glad that that has been reflected in the report. I am a firm believer that e-petitions are an effective tool in enhancing our democracy and making the petition process more accessible to people in Western Australia. As members will be aware, the Mining and Pastoral Region is a very large region; it covers more than two million square kilometres, has about 70 000 electors and presents a number of challenges when circulating a hard copy petition to people in that region. I note the objections raised by Hon Dr Steve Thomas and the grumblings from Hon Kyle McGinn about e-petitions potentially lowering the bar for submissions and inundating the committee with applications. In response to these concerns, I would like to point out that there is a workflow recommended by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges as part of e-petitions, which includes verifying that the person submitting the petition is a WA resident. The clerks are also involved in screening e-petitions, and a member of Parliament is still required to table a petition and put their name against it. I would also point out that Victoria and other jurisdictions around the world have successfully implemented e-petitions. I am starting to realise that Victoria is, in many ways, more progressive than WA in its legislative and parliamentary processes, and is typically a good model to follow.

I am also sure that the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges has done its due diligence in respect of measuring the effectiveness of e-petitions in other jurisdictions. As Hon Kate Doust pointed out, there is a 15-month trial recommendation here. In the tech industry there is a saying: fail fast and often. That means that you trial

something, and if it does not work, you go back and you measure the effectiveness of that change. If it fails, that is fine; you have learnt something as part of that process. I understand that the WA Parliament moves a little slower than the tech industry, but 15 months feels like an appropriate amount of time, in my opinion.

Another tech term that I will share with you all is a one-way or two-way door decision. A one-way door decision is when you make a decision and you cannot go back. An example of that would be COVID response border policies and the situations we are seeing in New South Wales and Victoria. They tried to achieve COVID-zero, but the cat is out of the bag, the genie is out of the bottle, and they are unlikely to get back to that zero space. A two-way door decision is reversible; you can make the decision but then go back to the original state. E-petitions are an example of a two-way door decision in that they incorporate technology and are a more progressive approach, and I welcome that recommendation by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges.

I would also like to touch on the urgent bill recommendation that is outlined in the report. I am certainly not here to rehash the points that have already been raised by the opposition and the crossbench. There have certainly been some excellent arguments as to why the urgent bill provision is dangerous. I note the Leader of the House's comment that an urgent bill would only be declared in very select circumstances, and I take her at her word that she has the best interests of Western Australians at heart. However, we all know that best intentions can morph over time and become a different beast from that which was originally perceived.

The Leader of the House also gave examples of what might constitute an urgent bill. A couple of the examples were the pieces of legislation dealing with COVID and Clive Palmer. In both examples, it is very likely that there will be unilateral support. I do not think anyone from the opposition or the crossbench would really drag their feet or delay the passage of legislation that deals with either a global pandemic or a billionaire trying to sue the WA government for millions of dollars.

That raises the question: if the government is going to get support for the examples presented by the Leader of the House anyway, why then would we need urgent bill provisions, unless they are to advance and streamline the government's agenda and limit the role of the upper house as the house of review?

In closing, I thank the PPC for its hard work. It has achieved a lot in a short space of time. It is unfortunate that we could not step through this report, recommendation by recommendation, as would have been appropriate considering the importance of the standing orders. It is for that reason that I cannot support this motion today.

**HON SOPHIA MOERMOND (South West)** [3.24 pm]: I rise to speak on the *Review of the standing orders*. I will not speak for long because of my dislike of wasting time. Like almost everyone else on this side of the chamber—the crossbench and the Liberals and Nationals—I have concerns about the recommendations under chapter 3 of this report. The passing of this motion appears, to me at least, to hinge on the definition of “urgent”, and how that will be interpreted by the minister. This is currently based entirely on trust. As a critical-thinking feminist hippie, I am well aware of how the public generally perceives politicians; I think we sit somewhere near used car salesmen on the trust scale! Although I personally trust Hon Sue Ellery to do the right thing, I am here to represent the people of South West Region and WA, and they may not share my sentiment.

Like my colleague Hon Dr Brian Walker, I can see the benefit of almost all the other suggested changes. I am all for speeding up procedures to make us more efficient and more effective in this place. But I ask: please define “urgent”. That is my only question. Thank you.

**HON DAN CADDY (North Metropolitan)** [3.26 pm] — in reply: I will be very brief. I start with the words of Hon Martin Aldridge in my ears, when he interjected on Hon Kyle McGinn to say, “the briefer, the better”. I will not touch on the contents —

**Hon Martin Aldridge** interjected.

**Hon DAN CADDY**: You did say that!

I will not touch on the contents individually. I outlined at the beginning the way in which the contents are broken up, and everyone in this chamber who has spoken has touched at length on either all or some of the contents; others have certainly dug into it. But I will take a minute to talk to the way in which the motion is structured, because there has been a lot of conjecture about the fact that my motion was to move recommendations 1 to 38 in one hit.

Hon James Hayward—I am not singling the honourable member out, because many others said the same—asked how we could possibly speak to each of the recommendations in the time given. That is a fascinating question because when Hon Dr Brian Walker spoke, he did exactly that, extremely eloquently, and probably within about the first 15 minutes of the 45 minutes he had, so it certainly was possible to do. Hon Colin de Grussa also spoke very well and did exactly that also. Hon Steve Martin—who also spoke well—chose to outline why he was not happy with the process, rather than actually using his time to address the recommendations in the report. He reflected very well on the Leader of the House and the fact that she had said that she would use the recommendations that he was not happy with in moderation, or with a great deal of thought. I am not sure about his reservations about future leaders of the house, but I am sure they will all follow in Hon Sue Ellery's footsteps; he then turned to the COVID app.

Those members who wanted to and chose to all had an opportunity to put on the record what they thought about each of the recommendations in the report, within the time they were given. Some members chose to say, “I am

happy with all of them bar this one”, which by default was almost like moving, en bloc, that they were happy with all the recommendations other than the ones they chose to speak about, and then speaking about the ones that they were not happy with. It certainly was possible.

I will finish by thanking, first of all, the committee staff for all their hard work and the long hours that they put in.

I also thank not just the members I have referred to by name, but all members who spoke to this motion, especially Hon Kate Doust for her contribution. I recognise, along with most people in this chamber, that there is probably no-one here more qualified to talk about the standing orders of this place than Hon Kate Doust. I will not take any more of the house’s time and I will retake my seat.

*Division*

Question put and a division taken, the Acting President (Hon Jackie Jarvis) casting her vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (18)

Hon Dan Caddy  
Hon Sandra Carr  
Hon Kate Doust  
Hon Sue Ellery  
Hon Peter Foster

Hon Lorna Harper  
Hon Jackie Jarvis  
Hon Alannah MacTiernan  
Hon Kyle McGinn  
Hon Shelley Payne

Hon Stephen Pratt  
Hon Martin Pritchard  
Hon Samantha Rowe  
Hon Rosie Sahanna  
Hon Matthew Swinbourn

Hon Dr Sally Talbot  
Hon Darren West  
Hon Pierre Yang (*Teller*)

Noes (11)

Hon Martin Aldridge  
Hon Peter Collier  
Hon Nick Goiran

Hon James Hayward  
Hon Sophia Moermond  
Hon Dr Brad Pettitt

Hon Tjorn Sibma  
Hon Neil Thomson  
Hon Wilson Tucker

Hon Dr Brian Walker  
Hon Colin de Grussa (*Teller*)

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Pairs

Hon Ayor Makur Chuot  
Hon Klara Andric  
Hon Stephen Dawson

Hon Dr Steve Thomas  
Hon Steve Martin  
Hon Donna Faragher

Question thus passed.

*Point of Order*

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** If we are changing the standing orders, an absolute majority is required. If the vote is 18, does that constitute an absolute majority?

**The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Jackie Jarvis):** In relation to the point of order, a motion that requires concurrence of an absolute majority is on the suspension of a standing order without notice. This was a motion with notice.

**CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2021**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from 2 September.

**HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan)** [3.34 pm]: It is National Child Protection Week 2021. I am pleased we now have the opportunity to consider the Children and Community Services Amendment Bill 2021. I mention in passing, for what it is worth, that the priorities of the McGowan government this week have been wrong with respect to this chamber. Nevertheless, it is its choice as to what gets debated at what particular point in time. I just think that, given it is National Child Protection Week —

*Point of Order*

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN:** I bring to the attention of the house that the speaker’s time on the clock is not correct.

**Hon Nick Goiran:** I had started my comments; this is a continuation.

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN:** My apologies.

*Debate Resumed*

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Can I just acknowledge the hardworking Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General, who has always been a gentleman, but in this instance I confirm that I had the opportunity to commence my remarks on this bill last week. My point is that I would have liked us to have already dealt with this bill this week, being National Child Protection Week, but the government has decided that that will not be the case.

The genesis of the bill before us is the statutory review that had been undertaken in a previous Parliament, and also this bill seeks to implement recommendations arising from the royal commission. I have already touched on a number of elements in the bill and I am keenly looking forward to our going into Committee of the Whole House.



However, before we do that I want to finish off on a couple of areas that I was addressing when this matter was last before us. In particular, members will note that in this bill we are seeking to legislate what is the current policy within the department, certainly with respect to leaving care. That is to say that there is a policy in the department that when a child hits the age of 15, there needs to be a leaving care plan, or at the very least, the planning for leaving of care needs to commence in earnest. This bill will elevate that policy into the form of a statutory requirement. The concern I have around that is not the idea that there should be a leaving care plan and that it should be legislated; my concern goes to the resourcing to ensure that that actually occurs. We know that there is a policy at the moment and yet it is frequently not happening. Hopefully, when we look into this element of the bill, the parliamentary secretary's advisers might be able to provide us with some data on the frequency with which leaving care plans are being prepared for children between the ages of 15 and 17 and the frequency with which there simply is not a plan. It would be useful for us to know what the current statistics are because as best as I can recall, historically the figures have been something in the realm of fewer than one in five. Therefore, 80 per cent, or four out of five children, do not have a plan when they leave care. Anecdotally, the information provided to me by carers and children leaving care is that to the extent that there have been some plans, often it is best described, most charitably, as a rushed job or a tick-the-box exercise for something that is quickly put onto a file. Although on behalf of the opposition in my capacity as shadow Minister for Child Protection I support the elevation of that policy into the legislation, my concern is not so much the requirement, but the implementation of the requirement and the resourcing to facilitate it.

Last month I attended with Hon Steve Martin a walk-through of Anglicare Western Australia's Home Stretch trial. I want to commend Anglicare for the presentation of the work undertaken. Not only was Anglicare most hospitable, but also we could see the level of authentic engagement in that trial from the feedback that had been provided, so I want to commend Anglicare for its work on that. Obviously, I am yet to have an opportunity to properly scrutinise the budget that has just been delivered today by the government. However, I noted in passing that the government has made some form of commitment in this area, and a certain amount of money has been allocated to continuing or extending that program. That certainly has my support, and I look forward to getting further details around that, either in the Committee of the Whole House or, alternatively, during the estimates process we will embark upon as members over the coming weeks.

As I say, it was incredibly encouraging and valuable to be able to speak, in particular, to young adults who had left care. Despite the fantastic work that has been undertaken by Anglicare in that area, I was surprised when I recently asked a question about the numbers. On 12 August—less than a month ago—I asked the Minister for Child Protection, through the parliamentary secretary, about the Home Stretch program. I was looking to ascertain how many young people had left care in the last financial year, in the reporting period 2020–21. The answer that came back from the parliamentary secretary was that 897 young people had left care during that reporting period. In the last financial year, on average, more than two young people per day left care. That is the statistic provided by the parliamentary secretary. The question that followed was: how many of that number are supported in the Home Stretch program? It surprised me that the answer was five. There were 897 young people who had left care in the reporting period in the last financial year. That is just a statement of fact; it is a statistic, it is not a criticism—897 had left care. On a multi-partisan basis, we want to make sure that when young people leave care, they are well-equipped for that leaving process, no matter what circumstances they find themselves in. Indeed, it is our aspiration that they are better equipped than when they first went into state care.

There were 897 who left care, and as I say, that is not a criticism; it is a statement of fact. However, it is peculiar that only five of the 897 were supported through the current Home Stretch trial. Maybe the parliamentary secretary will give an explanation of that in her reply to the debate on this Children and Community Services Amendment Bill. If not, alternatively, I certainly encourage the advisers to try to ascertain some of that information when we get to the Committee of the Whole House, because it seems curious that there could be such a disparity between the number of young people who leave care and those supported by the Home Stretch program. It may well be that the government says, "We agree that it is an issue and that is exactly why, in today's budget, we have allocated a whole chunk of money for this purpose." If that is the case, that is a great outcome. I would like some further information on that so that we can be sure that all those 897 children who leave care and are appropriate and eligible for the Home Stretch trial will be able to access it. Obviously, I accept that not all of the 897 young people who leave care would necessarily be eligible or appropriate for the Home Stretch trial, including, if for no other reason, their age and circumstances.

I think the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Child Protection tabled the *Foster care refresh project* report. I do not have the date it was tabled, but from memory it was sometime in the last month. At page 21 of the report under the heading "Leaving care", the report states —

Carers specifically discussed the lack of meaningful child centred leaving care planning that included supports, services and planning to prepare the young person to live independently as an adult. They talked about rushed care planning which can increase the risk of the care leaver going into unstable, short-term arrangements, which were particularly difficult for children with trauma-related behavioural issues or with an intellectual disability. Most importantly, where leaving care arrangements were not planned, carers felt children were denied choice and autonomy, and were not able to exercise their independence or make their own decisions.

Carers with older children in care were often concerned about the future of those children, and the planning for their leaving care. There was a strong sentiment that planning did not start when it was supposed to, at age 15, but often was left until very shortly before the child left care.

I pause there to say that that is exactly the feedback that has been provided to me anecdotally over the last five years. It may well be the case that this was an issue long before that. When I say “the last five years”, I am not necessarily saying that this is solely a child protection issue at the feet of the McGowan government, but it is the consistent feedback that has been provided, and at some point someone needs to do something about it. The report goes on to say —

Carers feared that a child leaving care would be cut off from supports from Communities and from the carers themselves as soon as they turned 18. Under the *Children and Community Services Act 2004* support is available to a child leaving care until they turn 25, and some carers were unaware of this.

Again, I pause, because not only are the carers routinely unaware of it, but also, of course, the young people themselves are frequently unaware of it. The report goes on to say —

Carers wanted children leaving formal care to have independent living skills such as budgeting, cooking and meal planning, home maintenance and cleaning, and transportation.

Again, I pause to say that it is certainly my aspiration that we, as a state, should facilitate and help every young person in Western Australia who attains the age of 17, particularly children in care, to get their driver’s licence if they want it. The report goes on to say —

Carers also wanted children to have strong connections to supports and services, and to know what they were entitled to and how they could access those services. If leaving care planning commenced as early as possible, it maximised the opportunities for a child in care to learn these skills and develop and strengthen useful connections.

Carers felt that if leaving care planning was left until shortly before the child left care, —

As is routinely the case —

there would be little opportunity to connect with services or build skills. So the child was at risk of having no strong connections to provide support, few skills, and no place to call home.

Carers wanted a strong focus on building independent living skills as part of long-term, planned responses to leaving care. Carers wanted to be part of the decision-making process and to continue to be part of a child’s support network.

It ends with a quote —

Young people living in care should have life skills training and supports for budgeting, be job ready etc.

That was a comment from one of the foster carers, found on page 21, for the benefit of Hansard, from the recently tabled *Foster care refresh report*.

In conclusion, I want to acknowledge that the government has—not just at this time but certainly, in my observation, over the last four to five years—consistently expressed a commitment to putting child safety first. That commitment is wholeheartedly shared by the opposition. This bill before us is indeed important legislation. It has its history in the statutory review that was undertaken. It has elements associated with the recommendations arising from the royal commission. It is disappointing that this matter was not able to be implemented in the fortieth Parliament, notwithstanding the vocal support provided by me, in particular, in the previous Parliament urging the minister to make sure that all five categories of mandatory reporters be included in the bill. In fairness to the minister, eventually there was a supplementary notice paper after the committee inquiry had made its recommendation to that effect that would have seen that occur, but the bill was never brought on for debate at the end of the previous Parliament. Although it is disappointing that that did not occur in the fortieth Parliament, here we are in the forty-first Parliament, during National Child Protection Week, in a position to now implement a lot of these longstanding reforms.

I appreciate that the bill that is currently before us, which is what I would describe as the 2021 version, is different from the original presented to us in, as I recall, 2019, but to the extent that it is different, it has been improved and enhanced in large part because of the work of the Standing Committee on Legislation in the fortieth Parliament and the report that was tabled in September 2020.

For the benefit of the parliamentary secretary, when we get into the Committee of the Whole Stage I will want to look into the elements that have changed between the 2019 and the 2021 bill and also look at the concerns that I outlined when we last discussed this bill about the extraordinary powers that have been provided to child protection, those police-like powers, and seek a cogent persuasive explanation about why they are necessary and not simply some reference to another piece of legislation where it already exists. The concerns that I raised on the last occasion on behalf of the opposition about implementation and the resourcing that will be provided to the department to implement these reforms has been some concern of mine for some time. I have been on the record for more than four years that the government decided to amalgamate the then standalone Department for Child Protection to the mega-Department of Communities notwithstanding that even if we are mere reasonable students of history, we

will know that the forward report at a time of crisis in child protection recommended exactly the opposite, that there be a standalone department for child protection and that was the case and was working well. Since the amalgamation, all I have heard from stakeholders is the large amount of difficulties that have arisen as a result.

We have in recent times even seen an exodus out of the department of its most senior and experienced officers. This continues to be a concern for the opposition. We can change the laws and support the government in this process today, but it will come to nothing if there is not then the resourcing provided to the department. That does not mean simply making a budget speech referring to millions of dollars; it means making sure that the right people are at the helm with the expertise and capacity to drive these reforms. That has not been evident for quite some time. I hope those responsible will take this very seriously.

I was pleased this morning to be joined by the parliamentary secretary at a breakfast hosted by the Safeguarding Office. I think this is the fifth or sixth time that it has done this, with perhaps the exception of last year because of COVID-19. Dr Karl O’Callaghan made a very touching, personal, passionate presentation this morning. I only wish it had been recorded, because I think all members would be the better and more enriched for having listened to that this morning. I am very, very pleased that in our community we have individuals like Dr Karl O’Callaghan. Despite his extensive time in the public service in a very, very difficult job—he could be quite rightly forgiven for just taking it easy and retiring—he is still there doing the heavy lifting at a personal level. One of the words used this morning was “herculean”. That really resonated with me this morning when I was listening to the presentation with all the people of fantastic goodwill there, because the task of child protection requires exactly that. It is at times so overwhelming. Just the mere thought of the numbers involved and the complexity of cases makes it feel like mission impossible at times, yet the solution cannot be simply to throw up our hands, vacate the space and say it is just too hard. We need these herculean efforts in order to make sometimes even the smallest of steps forward. It is with those remarks that I indicate that the opposition supports the bill before the house. We have concerns about some of the extraordinary powers and implementation of these reforms, including the resourcing, but we will unpack that a little bit further when we get in to the Committee of the Whole House.

**HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan)** [3.57 pm]: I rise to make a few brief comments about the Children and Community Services Amendment Bill 2021 before us. As Hon Nick Goiran has already outlined, the opposition supports this bill, which, as he has already indicated, covers very, very important matters relating to children.

In my contribution today I intend to focus on the part of the bill specifically relating to the mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse made some 409 recommendations of which two are particularly relevant to the bill, being recommendations 7.3 and 7.4, and I want to read those. Recommendation 7.3 states —

State and territory governments should amend laws concerning mandatory reporting to child protection authorities to achieve national consistency in reporter groups. At a minimum, state and territory governments should also include the following groups of individuals as mandatory reporters in every jurisdiction:

- a. out-of-home care workers (excluding foster and kinship/relative carers)
- b. youth justice workers
- c. early childhood workers
- d. registered psychologists and school counsellors
- e. people in religious ministry.

Recommendation 7.4 said —

Laws concerning mandatory reporting to child protection authorities should not exempt persons in religious ministry from being required to report knowledge or suspicions formed, in whole or in part, on the basis of information disclosed in or in connection with a religious confession.

I indicate that I support strongly both those recommendations. I appreciate—this has also been noted in the parliamentary secretary’s second reading speech—that there were some concerns around recommendation 7.4, including from some survivor groups. I am very cognisant of that. That was also raised in the report by the Standing Committee on Legislation. However, I remain of the view that recommendations 7.3 and 7.4 are very important.

Hon Nick Goiran referred to the fact that this is the second Children and Community Services Amendment Bill to come before this chamber. The first bill was introduced in 2019. This bill was introduced this year. It is important to reflect a bit on the history of this piece of legislation. The 2019 bill did not include any of the categories that were reflected in the findings of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, other than ministers of religion.

From my perspective, having had the benefit of the royal commission’s findings, I was somewhat unconvinced by the reasoning of the Minister for Child Protection as to why only ministers of religion had been included in the 2019 bill and not the remaining categories. I say that because it was very clear from the royal commission’s recommendations that all five categories should be included. Although I accept that there might need to be a phased

approach to when each of those categories would come online in order to provide the necessary training, I felt it was important that all five categories be included in the bill in the first instance. Indeed, I was not alone in thinking that. As Hon Nick Goiran has indicated, the 2019 bill was referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation. That committee undertook a substantial report into this bill. It identified that Western Australia was the only Australian jurisdiction in which none of the five recommended groups were mandatory reporters. Notwithstanding the minister's explanation as to why the inclusion of ministers of religion was to be expedited before other groups, it was clear from my reading of the committee's report that the committee had received multiple submissions from both individuals and organisations, including the WA Council of Social Service and the Youth Advisory Council of Western Australia, calling on the government to introduce all five categories.

I also indicate that on 16 September 2020, in a public hearing of the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People, I asked a number of questions of the Commissioner for Children and Young People, Colin Pettit, about this very point. I want to reflect on a couple of the comments that he made. I asked —

... are you concerned that WA is the only Australian jurisdiction where none of the five recommended mandatory reporters are included?

Mr Pettit responded —

I am concerned that the recommendations have not been enacted at this point in time. I think the debate that you are having through the Parliament is an important debate to have. I think the committee needs to understand that. But I will be more content when the whole bill is through in its entirety.

We then talked about some of the issues that had been raised about definitions and the like and the reasons why there might have been delay. I then put to Mr Pettit —

I suppose there were some concerns raised with regard to needing to expedite the consultation process.

I was talking in the context of the committee's report. I went on to say —

I am not putting words in the committee's report, but having read the report, it is my understanding that that was a conclusion made by the committee, that that needed to be expedited. Would you be of the same view?

Mr Pettit responded —

I would think that we have had nearly a year of debate on this, and it is time to get it moving, yes.

That was the position of the Commissioner for Children and Young People when I asked him about this matter last year. Of course, those members who have read the Standing Committee on Legislation's report will know that the committee made a number of recommendations calling on the government to include all categories. I point to a couple of the paragraphs in there. Paragraph 4.45 of the report states —

On the balance of the evidence received, the Committee is not convinced that there is any adequate justification for ministers of religion to be the only reporter group included in this Bill.

Paragraph 4.47 states —

The Committee is of the view that the other recommended groups should become mandatory reporters as soon as possible. Definitions are readily available for early childhood workers, out-of-home care workers and psychologists, removing one of the main objections to including these groups in the Bill. Consultation should commence as soon as possible on the relevant definitions for youth justice workers and school counsellors. The Committee makes recommendations 13 and 14 to this effect.

Following the release of the committee's report, I was pleased that the minister agreed to the inclusion of the remaining groups in the 2019 legislation, albeit, quite obviously, that had to be done through the circulation of amendments in this place. Obviously, that bill lapsed, but I note that the minister had sought to incorporate those amendments, and they have been incorporated in the bill that is now before us.

I am very pleased, because it is my very, very strong view—I know that everyone in this house will have the same view—that individuals who work with children should absolutely be mandatory reporters. That includes workers like early childhood workers and out-of-home care workers, much like doctors, nurses, teachers and other defined groups. I fully support the inclusion of all five categories as identified by the royal commission, with no exceptions.

Child sexual abuse is abhorrent. Child abuse in any form is abhorrent. No child should suffer in silence—not one—and I know that every member in this house would agree. With that in mind, I raise one matter. I want to express some disappointment, to put it mildly, with some comments that were made by the Minister for Child Protection in the other place last year. I appreciate that time has passed, and the opposition called out the remarks that the minister made at the time, but given that we are now debating the very bill that was the genesis of those remarks, I feel it is important that I place them on the record today. I understand that, in answer to a question without notice, the minister was reflecting on a minority recommendation in the committee report, but then, notwithstanding her knowledge that the opposition was fully supportive of this legislation, she decided to extrapolate that to effectively say that the Liberal and National Parties in this house, in this chamber, of which I am a member, did not stand with victims of child sexual abuse. This is what the minister had to say. I do not like to raise these things, but it is important, and it is important to me.

On 15 September 2020, the minister said —

Without the support of the other parties in the upper house, the legislation is at risk of failing to pass. Survivors of child sexual abuse will rightfully be asking themselves, as we are on this side of the house: Do members of the Liberal and National Parties think that they know better than the five-year royal commission? Why are they prioritising religious institutions over victims of child sexual abuse?

The minister continued —

Why are they not putting child safety first?

A little later, she said —

I want to make it clear that this government stands by its commitment to implement the recommendations of the royal commission. It stands with victims of child sexual abuse.

Through those words, the minister suggested that the Liberal and National Parties do not stand with victims of child sexual abuse. She said, “Why are they not putting child safety first?” I do not intend to dwell on this because the bill is too important. I find that the comments made by the minister in the other place—that somehow the Liberal and National Party members in this house, which includes me, would not stand with victims of child sexual abuse—were disgraceful and offensive. Those comments were a very poor reflection on the minister who, quite frankly, should have known better.

Given that we are speaking about mandatory reporting laws in this state, I want to acknowledge a former member of this house for her significant advocacy on that issue. Some members will know Hon Barbara Scott, a member of the Parliamentary Liberal Party who championed the cause for mandatory reporting laws in this state. Hon Barbara Scott first prepared and oversaw the introduction of a private member’s bill back in 2006, which was introduced in the Legislative Assembly, calling for mandatory reporting, actually with no exceptions. That bill was struck out after the second reading without any further parliamentary debate. After that, the then Labor government introduced a bill. The Leader of the House is in the chamber today. She will tell me if I am wrong but I believe that the Leader of the House was the then responsible minister who had carriage of that bill. She introduced that legislation, and I commend her for that.

In ending my comments about the Minister for Child Protection, I want to say that in my view the protection of our children is absolutely paramount. They are the most vulnerable within our community. They are and need to be protected, valued, loved and supported by individuals, family members, carers and friends and by society as a whole. The minister was wrong in what she said. I hope that she reflected on what she said at the time because, as I said, her comments were deeply offensive to members on this side of the house. To suggest that we—that I—would not put child safety first was really unacceptable. No child should suffer in silence, not one. Every member in this house, irrespective of political persuasion, whether they are a member of the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, the Nationals WA, the Greens (WA), the Legalise Cannabis Party or the Daylight Saving Party, would agree that no child should suffer in silence.

That is why the Liberal Party supports this legislation. I absolutely support the inclusion of additional groups as mandatory reporters. In fact, in my view—I think everyone would share this view—no-one, whether or not they are mandatory reporters, should ever turn a blind eye to child abuse. Last year, the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People tabled its fifth report, titled *From words to action: Fulfilling the obligation to be child safe*. The committee tasked itself to examine the direction of work being undertaken by government agencies and non-government organisations to improve the monitoring of child-safe standards and, using the words from the terms of reference, “the role of the Commissioner for Children and Young People in ensuring Western Australia’s independent oversight mechanisms operate in a way that makes the interests of children and young people the paramount consideration”.

The committee’s final report, to which I am pleased to say my name is attached, identifies a number of significant recommendations on improving child safety in this state. Importantly, it impresses upon the government the need to progress certain matters. In particular, the committee recommended that, as a crucial part of child-safe reform, an oversight body with a purpose of assisting child-safe approaches and a focus on achieving better safety outcomes for children be established as a priority by government. A number of other recommendations were also made. They were made in the context of child-safe monitoring, education, legislative reform and information sharing. More specific recommendations were made, including the need for urgent additional resources to be provided to the advocate for children in care. Members may have noticed that I asked a question of the parliamentary secretary about this because I was interested to see whether there had been any progress. The report identified that, notwithstanding the invaluable role that the advocate currently plays within the department, there is significant concern about whether there should be greater resources.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3704.]

*Sitting suspended from 4.16 to 4.30 pm*

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE****2021–22 STATE BUDGET****674. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the minister representing the Treasurer:**

I refer to the 2021–22 Western Australian state budget.

- (1) What was the estimated actual or actual general government surplus or deficit for the 2021–22 financial year?
- (2) Is this the biggest general government surplus in the state’s history; and, if so, by how much?
- (3) What is the estimated general government surplus or deficit predicted for the 2021–22 financial year?
- (4) What was the average iron ore price for the 2020–21 financial year?
- (5) What was the total iron ore royalty income for the 2020–21 financial year?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I answer on behalf of the minister representing the Treasurer. The following information has been provided by the Treasurer.

- (1)–(3) Refer to page 4 of the 2021–22 budget paper No 3.
- (4) Refer to page 3 of the 2021–22 budget paper No 3.
- (5) Refer to page 75 of the 2021–22 budget paper No 3.

**GST — PRICE RELATIVITY****675. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the minister representing the Treasurer:**

I refer to the Labor Party commitment in the 2017 election to deliver a debt reduction account that would receive incoming funds when “WA’s GST relativity returns to above 65¢ in the dollar and the iron ore price is more than \$85 a tonne”.

- (1) Is the WA GST relativity above 65¢ and for how long has it been so?
- (2) Is the iron ore price more than \$US85 a tonne and for how long has it been so?
- (3) What incoming funds have been credited to the debt reduction account since the GST relativity passed 65¢ and the iron ore price exceeded \$US85 a tonne?
- (4) Has the government kept its 2017 commitment from the former Labor shadow Treasurer that “The key part of our strategy is to ensure that windfall gains, high commodity prices, can never again come into the ordinary spend of government”?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I answer on behalf of the minister representing the Treasurer. The following information has been provided by the Treasurer.

- (1) No. Refer to page 67 of the 2021–22 budget paper No 3.
- (2) Yes. Since the third quarter 2021–22.
- (3) Refer to page 266 of the 2021–22 budget paper No 3.
- (4) Not applicable. The GST relativity is below 65 per cent.

**CORONAVIRUS — TRANSPORT, FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS DIRECTIONS (NO 4)****676. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the minister representing the Minister for Police:**

I refer to Transport, Freight and Logistics Directions (No 4).

- (1) At what time and date were the local governments of Kalgoorlie–Boulder, Esperance and Wyndham–East Kimberley officially notified of the direction?
- (2) For those drivers who receive a non-negative result after a rapid antigen test undertaken when entering into Western Australia and are directed to either Esperance, Kalgoorlie–Boulder or Kununurra —
  - (a) how will they be required to isolate;
  - (b) what risk assessment was undertaken to determine the level of isolation; and
  - (c) what arrangements have been put in place to accommodate the drivers and their trucks during the isolation period?
- (3) What course of action will be taken in the event that a truck driver subsequently tests positive following a PCR test in Esperance, Kalgoorlie–Boulder or Kununurra?

- (4) How many additional police and health personnel have been deployed in Esperance, Kalgoorlie–Boulder or Kununurra to deal with the isolation, testing and potential positive cases?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Police.

The Western Australia Police Force advises —

- (1) On 3 September 2021, it was announced that truck drivers entering Western Australia from a high or extreme risk COVID-19 location will be required to submit to rapid antigen testing unless they have returned a negative test result in the prior 72 hours or be refused entry at the border. The Transport, Freight and Logistics Directions (No. 4) was published by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet prior to implementation on 8 September 2021.
- (2) Transport, freight and logistics drivers who receive a non-negative result from a rapid antigen test will be directed to attend a hospital to present for a COVID-19 test. Once at the hospital, they are to remain in their vehicle and contact the Department of Health and a relevant health officer will give them directions on isolation and testing.
- (3) Isolation requirements after testing are managed by the Department of Health.
- (4) The Western Australia Police Force deploys staff to the Eucla and Kununurra borders on a rotational basis. The management of testing is the responsibility of the Department of Health.

NATIVE FOREST SURVEY

**677. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to the minister's taxpayer-funded native forest survey that appears to have influenced yesterday's announcement to end the state's native forest industry.

- (1) Were comments made yesterday by Jess Beckerling of the WA Forest Alliance to the effect that the survey elicited some 17 000 submissions, the majority of which called for the end of the native forest industry, broadly accurate?
- (2) If so, how were these results known to Wafa but unknown to anyone else considering that the data has not yet been published?
- (3) How many submissions were received from individuals or organisations domiciled in the following areas —
  - (a) the south west region of Western Australia;
  - (b) the Perth metropolitan area;
  - (c) from within Western Australia in areas excluding the two abovementioned areas;
  - (d) Australia but outside Western Australia; or
  - (e) overseas?
- (4) Will the minister table the survey result data; and, if not, why not?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I reply on behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Environment.

- (1) A total of 16 944 responses were received. Ninety-five per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "More areas of native forest should be protected".
- (2) In informing stakeholders of the government's announcement to end native logging from 2024, a number of stakeholders requested an update on the survey results.
- (3) (a)–(e) A total of 16 944 responses were received: 64 per cent of responses were from the Perth metropolitan area and 32 per cent were from regional Western Australia; fewer than four per cent of respondents did not supply their postcodes or identified an interstate or overseas postcode.
- (4) Please refer to the "Western Australia Native Forest Survey 2021 Snapshot". The information is in tabular form, so I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

**The PRESIDENT:** The parliamentary secretary seeks leave to have the attachment incorporated into *Hansard*, but it cannot be incorporated into *Hansard* because of the nature of the attachment, so I invite him to table the document.

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN:** I table the document.

[See paper [540](#).]

## CHILDREN IN CARE — WHEREABOUTS UNKNOWN

**678. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Child Protection:**

I refer to the answer to my question without notice on 8 September 2021 in which the minister informed the house that as at 31 August 2021 there were 11 children in the care of the CEO of the Department of Communities whose whereabouts and/or living arrangements were recorded as unknown.

- (1) Why was an answer not provided as at 7 September 2021?
- (2) For what period have each of the 11 children been recorded with an unknown status pertaining to their whereabouts?

**Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Child Protection.

- (1) The Department of Communities provides child protection data as at the end of each month to align with internal reporting and the provision of data from other business areas.
- (2) As at 31 August 2021, the length of time that the whereabouts and/or living arrangements of the 11 children recorded as unknown are as follows. The information is in tabular form and I seek leave to have that part of (2) incorporated into *Hansard*.

[Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.]

Living arrangement recorded as unknown	
Number of children	Days in unknown living arrangement
1	3
1	5
1	15
1	40
1	41
1	77
1	84
1	186
1	187
1	200
1	384
<b>11</b>	<b>Total</b>

**Hon SAMANTHA ROWE:** Young people living in these arrangements are still in the care of the chief executive officer. Although their specific location is unknown, or the young person is unwilling to disclose that location, all but two young people are in regular contact with their caseworker. Their safety and wellbeing is monitored by their caseworker and they are able to access the same supports.

## TAFE COURSES — COMPLETION RATES

**679. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the Minister for Education and Training:**

For the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020, what was the total number of students who successfully completed the following TAFE training courses —

- (a) certificate IV in ageing support;
- (b) certificate III in allied health assistance;
- (c) certificate IV in allied health assistance; and
- (d) certificate II in health support services?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (a) A total of 64 in 2017; 136 in 2018; 54 in 2019; and 43 in 2020.
- (b) A total of 66 in 2017; 27 in 2018; 100 in 2019; and 101 in 2020.
- (c) A total of 58 in 2017; 40 in 2018; 81 in 2019; and 87 in 2020.
- (d) A total of 59 in 2017; 31 in 2018; 47 in 2019; and 67 in 2020.



The following course fees have been reduced under the lower fees, local skills initiative, by 56 per cent for the certificate IV in ageing support from January 2020; 50 per cent for the certificate III in allied health assistance from January 2020; 50 per cent for the certificate IV in allied health assistance from January 2021; and 67 per cent for the certificate II in health support services from July 2020.

POLICE — MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

**680. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Police:**

I refer the minister to the critical incident response crisis support service referred to in his answer to question without notice 591 on Wednesday, 1 September.

- (1) How much was spent on fully funding external treatment for police officers' work-related conditions in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 to date?
- (2) How much was spent on reimbursing police officers for non-work related psychology and psychiatry services in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021 to date?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Police, I provide the following answer based on information provided by the Minister for Police.

The Western Australia Police Force is committed to supporting police officers and police staff to access support through health, safety and welfare services; and destigmatising mental health and awareness raising. The Western Australia Police Force advise this is likely to lead to more personnel seeking assistance and using services.

- (1) Funding in 2018 was \$252 173; in 2019, it was \$375 568; in 2020, it was \$767 093; and in 2021 to July, it was \$503 466.
- (2) Reimbursement in 2018 was \$121 592; in 2019, it was \$183 190; in 2020, it was \$122 193; and in 2021 to July, it was \$12 152.

HOUSING AND HOMELESSNESS PACKAGE

**681. Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Housing:**

I refer to the housing investment package.

- (1) How many home builds have been completed as part of this package to date?
- (2) How many of the completed homes in (1) are tenanted?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) The McGowan government is investing \$2.1 billion into social housing over the next four years, which includes the recently announced record investment of \$875 million as part of the 2021–22 state budget. This is the single largest one-off investment in social housing in the state's history and will provide an immediate boost to social housing. There has been significant planning work undertaken to facilitate delivery of the housing and homelessness package. To date, through HHIP, 10 properties under the first tranche have been completed and a further 119 properties are currently under construction. All completed properties are currently tenanted or are in the process of being tenanted. Existing funding streams have been recalibrated to deliver more social housing immediately, in response to the challenges currently faced from the heated construction market. The use of spot purchasing and the use of modular and prefabricated construction will deliver quicker-to-market social housing.

CORONAVIRUS — VACCINE HESITANCY

**682. Hon WILSON TUCKER to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

According to the Melbourne Institute, vaccine hesitancy amongst the adult population of Western Australia remains at 22.5 per cent.

- (1) What exactly is the government's strategy for addressing vaccine hesitancy?
- (2) Has the government sought expert advice on how best to address vaccine hesitancy; and, if so, from whom?
- (3) With respect to (2), will the Leader of the House please table that advice, if it exists?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) The Department of Health and the COVID-19 Vaccine Commander are leading targeted communications and stakeholder engagement in order to encourage hesitant groups within the Western Australian community to take up the COVID-19 vaccine.

- (2) The Department of Health has engaged with a range of stakeholders, including the Office of Multicultural Interests, the Telethon Kids Institute and the University of Western Australia, on how best to address vaccine hesitancy amongst particular cohorts, and has drawn upon this advice in the delivery of the vaccination program. The state government continues to follow the expert health advice, which has protected Western Australians throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.
- (3) Not applicable.

BUNBURY OUTER RING ROAD — ALIGNMENT

**683. Hon SOPHIA MOERMOND to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer the minister to Hon Adele Farina's valedictory speech on Thursday, 13 May 2021.

- (1) Will the Department of Transport consider a different alignment of the southern section, which dissects the small community of Gelorup?
- (2) Will the McGowan government reconsider its decision on the alignment of the southern section of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road?
- (3) If no to (1) and (2), why not?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

- (1)–(3) A number of routes were considered during the planning process, with the comprehensive reasons for selecting the original route detailed in the southern section alignment selection report.

CORONAVIRUS — VACCINE

**684. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the minister representing the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the media statement issued on 8 September titled "West Coast Eagles back push for WA vaccination rates to soar" which stated, according to my notes, "More than 1.9 million first doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered in Western Australia so far."

- (1) Is it correct that more than 70 per cent of WA's population has received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, as the minister's media release states?
- (2) If no to (1), will the minister correct his media statement, which has been published online, and issue a correction to all media outlets it was distributed to?
- (3) What is the total number of Western Australians who have received their first dose of a COVID-19 vaccine?
- (4) For each COVID-19 vaccine in Western Australia —
  - (a) what are the current stock levels;
  - (b) what were the stock levels at 1 August 2021; and
  - (c) what were the stock levels at 1 July 2021?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Health, I provide the following answer based on information provided by the Minister for Health.

- (1) No. The media statement should have referred to 1.9 million total, not first, doses.
- (2) The media statement has already been corrected online. WA Health releases a daily media statement with the correct figures.
- (3) Commonwealth data published on 8 September 2021 indicates that as of 7 September 2021, a total of 1 159 894 first doses have been administered.
- (4)
  - (a) AstraZeneca, 18 079; and Pfizer, 125 009, which includes 45 030 doses delivered today.
  - (b)–(c) Vaccine deliveries from the commonwealth are received daily; therefore, the number of vaccine doses stored—stock on hand—is ever-changing, according to the deliveries received versus the doses administered. No figure is available for these dates, as it is always provided as a moment in time.

BUNBURY SPEEDWAY — SAFETY UPGRADES

**685. Hon JAMES HAYWARD to the Minister for Regional Development:**

I refer to the announcement by the member for Bunbury that the state government will provide \$700 000 in funding for upgrades to Bunbury Speedway.

- (1) Has work commenced to perform the \$700 000 of safety upgrades at Bunbury Speedway?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) When will the safety upgrades be completed and what rating will Bunbury Speedway have when the \$700 000 of works are completed?

- (4) Are sprint car races able to be held at Bunbury Speedway at this point in time?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Safety upgrades will be completed in the next few months, with a five-star track rating endorsed by Speedway Australia.
- (4) No. The next sprint car show is not scheduled until 1 January 2022. I am advised that sedan races are scheduled for November and December following the completion of the works.

#### BROOME REGIONAL PRISON — RELOCATION

**686. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:**

I refer to the proposal to build a regional prison adjacent to the 12 Mile community, located outside Broome.

- (1) Following the meeting held at 12 Mile on 20 July, can the minister please confirm whether there has been further contact or consultation with affected residents?
- (2) If yes to (1), can the minister please confirm the dates on which the following modes of consultation or contact occurred —
- (a) written correspondence; and
- (b) in person meetings?
- (3) If no to (1), can the minister confirm that a significant and meaningful community consultation process that includes 12 Mile residents will occur?
- (4) When does the minister expect to make a final decision regarding the relocation of Broome Regional Prison?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question. The following information has been provided by the Minister for Corrective Services.

- (1)–(4) The government is committed to the replacement of the existing Broome Regional Prison with a modern facility that can provide cultural support and rehabilitation facilities. The need for a new prison in Broome is obvious; the existing prison in the centre of town is no longer fit for purpose and needs to be replaced.

In progressing the work to replace Broome Regional Prison, the Minister for Corrective Services has the interests of the local community in mind, as demonstrated by his attendance in person at the meeting held with residents of 12 Mile on 20 July 2021. The minister agreed to investigate alternative sites suggested at this meeting, including by the Shire of Broome, advise 12 Mile residents of the outcome and meet again with the community, even if only a videoconference is possible.

On 21 July, the department again met with the shire to discuss alternative sites. The department wrote to the shire on 28 July, and correspondence has been ongoing. Additionally, the minister met with the president and deputy president of the shire on 5 August. The department wrote to 12 Mile residents on 13 August to outline actions taken since 20 July, and to reiterate the minister's commitments. The minister will write to all 12 Mile residents to update the community on the project, including the evaluation of external sites, and will meet again with residents, perhaps by Zoom.

#### ACT-OF-GRACE PAYMENTS

**687. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the minister representing the Treasurer:**

In relation to the financial years 2016–17 to 2020–21 inclusive, will the Treasurer advise of all act-of-grace payments made by any agencies or departments under the Treasurer's portfolio responsibilities, including —

- (a) the name of the person, business, company or entity receiving the payment;
- (b) the amount of each payment;
- (c) the reason for the payment;
- (d) the time frame associated with the application for the payment to the delivery of the payment; and
- (e) the number of act-of-grace payments accepted and the number of act-of-grace payments refused?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I am sorry, member, I do not have that answer in the file, so, hopefully, someone is listening to this and it might be dug up. It does not appear to be in the file. On behalf of the minister representing the Treasurer, I will give an answer if it comes in at the end of question time.

CORONAVIRUS — SKILLED AGRICULTURAL WORKERS —  
BLADIN VILLAGE, NORTHERN TERRITORY

**688. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to the announcement of a \$5.6 billion surplus by the Treasurer today for Western Australia.

Why can the government not find a few million dollars to open Bladin Village to ensure that our agricultural industry has workers for its grain harvest this year?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

Just to explain, Bladin Village is in the Northern Territory; we do not have extraterritorial reach. This is very much independent of all the things we can do. We are encouraging the Northern Territory. We would like it very much if the Northern Territory were able to do it, but that is a decision it has to make. We have been asking the commonwealth to get involved and help negotiate this through so that this can happen. I just do not understand why the member thinks it is acceptable for the commonwealth, which imposed the international barriers and has constitutional responsibility for this, not to help us organise it. We have been doing the costings and calculating what the charter flights would cost to try to assist. However, at the end of the day, the member cannot accept that Minister Littleproud and the Prime Minister can just say, “We’ll sign the visas and that’s all we’ll do. We’re not putting in place any scheme; we’ll just sign the visas if someone finds somewhere that they can go.” This is something that absolutely needs commonwealth engagement to deliver a result. I have to be honest: I do not think we will be able to get there, because we cannot get the commonwealth to engage in a process so that we can all work together to achieve this as a possibility. I regret that. I would very much like to have been able to do this, but we are working on other plans to help get the harvest off.

NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING

**689. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to yesterday’s joint media statement headed “McGowan Government’s historic move to protect native forests”, which has effectively and abruptly ended the native timber industry in Western Australia.

- (1) Why did the government not take this policy to the March election?
- (2) Why was the industry not consulted or at the very least advised of the government’s decision prior to yesterday’s announcement?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide the following information on behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Environment.

- (1) The policy direction for the forthcoming *Forest management plan 2024–2033* was a government decision. Questions regarding campaign decisions should be referred to the relevant party.
- (2) The Minister for Environment and the Minister for Forestry meet regularly with stakeholders, including industry. The government is required to establish a policy direction for the forthcoming *Forest management plan 2024–2033*.

The development of the *Forest management plan 2014–2023* includes extensive consultation with industry stakeholders over an extended period of 12 to 18 months.

CHILD PROTECTION — MANDATORY REPORTING

**690. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Child Protection:**

How many mandatory child protection reports were received by the department in each of the past six reporting periods?

**Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Child Protection.

This answer encompasses the Department of Communities and the legacy agencies whose functions were amalgamated into the Department of Communities from 1 July 2017.

Communities reports on the number of mandatory reports received for each financial year in its annual report. The number of reports received for the last six reporting periods are as follows: 3 677 in 2019–20; 3 199 in 2018–19; 3 105 in 2017–18; 2 689 in 2016–17, Department for Child Protection and Family Support; 2 432 in 2015–16, Department for Child Protection and Family Support; and 2 125 in 2014–15, Department for Child Protection and Family Support.

## HOVEA FALLS — PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

**691. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:**

The parliamentary secretary is having a busy day today.

I refer to the answer given to question without notice 665 asked yesterday when the minister advised that it was no longer the government's intention to replace the Hovea Falls pedestrian bridge.

- (1) When did the government make the decision to not replace the bridge?
- (2) Who made the decision?
- (3) Why is a new bridge not being constructed in addition to the universally accessible viewing platform?
- (4) Will the minister table the design of the proposed platform and any other related works to be undertaken?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Environment, I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer based on information provided to me by the Minister for Environment.

- (1) In December 2019.
- (2)–(3) It was an operational decision made by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions following a detailed site assessment that identified constraints and complexities at the site, including access, ground levels and the inability to provide a universally accessible turnaround on the north side of the bridge.
- (4) The design drawings for the viewing platform have not been completed. Concept plans have been developed.

I table the attached documents.

[See paper [538](#).]

## POLICE — MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

**692. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Police:**

I refer the minister to the critical incident response crisis support service referred to in his answer to question without notice 591 asked on Wednesday, 1 September.

- (1) What is the composition of staff that make up this service?
- (2) What was the total cost of this service for the Western Australia Police Force in 2018, 2019 and 2020?
- (3) How many officers accessed the services of this unit in 2018, 2019 and 2020?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Police, I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Police.

The Western Australia Police Force is committed to supporting police officers and police staff to access support through health, safety and welfare services; and destigmatising mental health and awareness raising. The WA Police Force advises this is likely to lead to some personnel seeking assistance and using services.

- (1) An on-call psychologist and on-call chaplain provide a critical incident response and crisis support service.
- (2) The costs were \$708 844 in 2018, \$1 326 478 in 2019 and \$1 429 716 in 2020.
- (3) As the support is provided in confidence, the data is not able to be provided.

**QUESTION ON NOTICE 235**

*Paper Tabled*

A paper relating to an answer to question on notice 235 was tabled by **Hon Sue Ellery (Minister for Education and Training)**.

**ACT-OF-GRACE PAYMENTS**

*Question without Notice 687 — Answer Advice*

**HON MATTHEW SWINBOURN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.03 pm]: Earlier today Hon Dr Steve Thomas asked question C641. I now have an answer and seek leave to have that answer incorporated into *Hansard*.

[Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.]

As the question relates to multiple government agencies, it is not possible in the time permitted to provide a complete and accurate answer. I recommend the Member put the question on notice.

**CORONAVIRUS — HOTEL QUARANTINE  
CORONAVIRUS — HOTEL QUARANTINE — STAFF VACCINATIONS**

*Answer Advice*

**HON MATTHEW SWINBOURN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.03 pm]: I would like to provide answers to Hon Martin Aldridge's questions without notice 638 and 648 asked on 7 September and question without notice 658 asked on 8 September.

I seek leave to have the responses incorporated into *Hansard*.

[Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.]

**Question without notice 638 —**

I thank the Honourable Member for some notice of the question.

- (1) As at 1600 hrs 07 September 2021 there are 992 guests in state managed hotel Quarantine.
- (2) 830 rooms.
- (3) Novotel Perth Murray, Hyatt Regency, Pan Pacific, Intercontinental Hotel and Westin hotel. The Holiday Inn is a dedicated flight crew only hotel.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Not applicable.

**Question without notice 648 —**

I thank the Honourable Member for some notice of the question.

- (1) 1133
- (2) 12, each of whom have had their first dose.
- (3) The access to quarantine centres direction stipulates a quarantine centre worker must have had at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- (4) In accordance with the Access to Quarantine Centres Directions, a quarantine centre worker must not enter, or remain at, a quarantine centre if the quarantine centre worker has not been vaccinated against COVID-19.
- (5) See tabled paper no.

<https://www.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-05/060521-Access-to-Quarantine-Centres-Directions.pdf>

**PUBLIC HEALTH ACT 2016 (WA)**

**Sections 157(1)(e), 157(1)(k), 180 and 190(1)(p)**

**ACCESS TO QUARANTINE CENTRES DIRECTIONS**

The World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on 11 March 2020.

On 23 March 2020, the Minister for Health declared a public health state of emergency with effect from 1.30 p.m. on 23 March 2020 in respect of COVID-19 pursuant to section 167 of the *Public Health Act 2016 (WA)* (**Act**). The public health state of emergency applies to the State of Western Australia.

I, Dr Andrew Robertson, the Chief Health Officer, authorised as an emergency officer under section 4 of the Act to exercise any of the emergency powers while the public health state of emergency declaration in respect of COVID-19 is in force, consider it reasonably necessary to give the following directions to all persons in Western Australia to prevent, control or abate the serious public health risk presented by COVID-19 pursuant to sections 157(1)(e), 157(1)(k), 180 and 190(1)(p) of the Act.

**PREAMBLE**

1. The purpose of these directions is to prevent the importation of COVID-19 into the Western Australian community and to otherwise limit the spread of COVID-19 in Western Australia.

**CITATION**

2. These directions may be referred to as the **Access to Quarantine Centres Directions**.

**COMMENCEMENT**

3. These directions come into effect at 12.01 am on 10 May 2021.

**DIRECTIONS**

4. Subject to paragraphs 5 and 6, a **quarantine centre worker** must not enter, or remain at, a **quarantine centre** if the quarantine centre worker has not been **vaccinated** against COVID-19.
5. Where only part of **premises** are being used as a quarantine centre, nothing in these directions prevents a quarantine centre worker who is not vaccinated against COVID-19 from entering that part of the premises which is not being used as a quarantine centre.
6. Nothing in these directions prevents a person who is not vaccinated against COVID-19 from entering any part of a quarantine centre for the purposes of:
  - (a) law enforcement; or
  - (b) responding to an emergency other than COVID-19; or
  - (c) performing maintenance or repairs, but only to the extent that, due to the nature of the maintenance or repairs, it is not reasonably practicable for a quarantine centre worker who is vaccinated against COVID-19 to perform the maintenance or repairs and the person who is able to perform the maintenance or repairs is not eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19 at the time that the maintenance or repairs are required to be performed.

*Example: a fire fighter or ambulance officer responding to an emergency other than COVID-19 would be persons referred to in paragraph 6(b)*

7. A quarantine centre worker must produce for inspection evidence in the form approved by the Chief Health Officer or the State Health Incident Controller that they have been vaccinated against COVID-19, if **directed** to do so by an **emergency officer**.

#### DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these directions:

8. **Chief Health Officer** has the same meaning that it has in the Act.
9. **Direct contact means:**
- (a) more than 15 minutes of face-to-face contact in any setting; or
  - (b) more than 2 hours in the same room.
10. **Direction** includes any direction under the Act, whether the direction is given orally or in writing, and **directed** includes directed by way of a direction under the Act, whether the direction is given orally or in writing.
11. **Emergency officer** has the same meaning that it has in the Act.
12. **Police officer** means a person appointed under Part I of the *Police Act 1892* (WA) to be a member of the Police Force of Western Australia.
13. **Premises** has the same meaning that it has in the Act.
14. **Quarantine centre** means any quarantine centre operated or managed by the State Health Incident Coordination Centre (including a hotel quarantine centre) or which has been arranged by the State Health Incident Coordination Centre for the quarantining of people for public health purposes in connection with COVID-19 and, where the entirety of the premises is not being used as a quarantine centre, means only that part of the premises which is being operated or managed by the State Health Incident Coordination Centre as a quarantine centre.
15. **Quarantine centre driver** has the same meaning that it has in the Quarantine Centre Drivers Directions or any direction that replaces or amends those directions.
16. **Quarantine centre worker** means:
- (a) a person employed or otherwise engaged to provide at a quarantine centre:
    - (i) security services, cleaning services or reception services; or
    - (ii) food and beverage or hotel maintenance services; or
  - (b) a person who is employed or otherwise engaged to provide at a quarantine centre services that involve the provision of medical, health or ancillary services, including welfare related services; or
  - (c) a **police officer** who is deployed to carry out an assigned shift at a quarantine centre; or
  - (d) a member of the Australian Defence Force who is deployed to carry out an assigned shift at a quarantine centre; or
  - (e) a person who for any other reason knowingly has **direct contact** with a person in a quarantine centre who is subject to **quarantine requirements**,
- but does not include a **quarantine centre driver**.
17. **Quarantine requirements** has the same meaning that it has in the Controlled Border for Western Australia directions.
18. **Vaccinated** means that the person has had at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.

#### PENALTIES

It is an offence for a person to fail, without reasonable excuse, to comply with any of these directions, punishable by a fine of up to \$20,000 for individuals and \$100,000 for bodies corporate.

**Dr Andrew Robertson**

Emergency Officer

6 May 2021

1002 hours

#### Question without notice 658 —

I thank the Honourable Member for some notice of the question.

- (1)
  - June – 2552 persons (plus 1148 flight Crew)
  - July – 2028 persons (plus 1211 flight crew)
  - August – 1722 persons (plus 1174 flight crew)
- (2) Yes, these were based on approval by the incident controller and includes essential service workers, those on compassionate entry, maritime off signers, security escorts and international medical graduates.
- (3)
  - June – 2
  - July – 11
  - August – 74
- (4) One.

**HEALTH — BUDGET***Question on Notice 233 — Answer Advice*

**HON MATTHEW SWINBOURN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.04 pm]: Pursuant to standing order 108(2), I inform the house that the answer to question on notice 233, asked by Hon Dr Steve Thomas on 11 August 2021 to the Minister for Mental Health representing the Minister for Health, will be provided by 16 September 2021.

**CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2021***Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting

**HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan)** [5.05 pm]: Prior to us stopping for the final afternoon tea break for the Legislative Council, I was reflecting on the fifth report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People, *From words to action: Fulfilling the obligation to be child safe*. As I mentioned prior to the break, I am proud to have my name attached to this report, and I also acknowledge in the chamber Hon Dr Sally Talbot, who was the chair of the committee at the time. I will complete my comments on this bill by reflecting on a couple of aspects that she raised in the chair's foreword. Prior to the break, I indicated a number of the recommendations that were made, some obviously fairly large in scope and others quite specific. One was in relation to the Advocate for Children in Care. The committee had expressed some concern with the resourcing of that role. The committee noted that the legislative review of the Children and Community Services Act recommended that the advocate be external to the department, but it had also recognised, based on submissions that had also been received by others—I think the Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia in particular—an issue with regard to resourcing of the advocate. Despite the positive comments on the value and capacity of the advocate, there is only one advocate position for over 5 000 children in care. The Youth Affairs Council of WA stated that it was woefully inadequate, and the committee also agreed with that position. I asked a question to the parliamentary secretary yesterday, because I was keen to hear whether there had been any movement from the government in increasing resources and the number of advocates in this very important position. The answer that I received was that there remains only one advocate. Obviously, I have not had the opportunity to peruse the state budget at any great length today, but I will be interested to hear whether any additional funds have been put in place for the Advocate for Children in Care, because I think that is important.

In drawing my remarks to a close today, I note that the sharp reality is that mandatory reporting, which has obviously been the substance of my contribution today, is one tool, and it is indeed a very important tool when it comes to combatting child sexual abuse. We must ensure that our efforts are focused on not only mandatory reporting—I know that it is the view of the government to have a multifaceted approach to this—but also improving child safety and therefore prevention from harm in the first place.

I refer to the chair's foreword to this report. It started with a quote from volume 6 of the royal commission's final report. It says —

What if we changed the way we think about child sexual abuse, from inevitable to preventable? ... We need to recognise that, like every form of violence, child sexual abuse is an avoidable tragedy.

I want to leave the house with some words that were said to the committee by a lady by the name of Sarah Blakemore, who at the time—I am not sure whether she still is—was the chief executive of Keeping Children Safe, an overseas-based independent not-for-profit organisation. It is helpful to highlight the remarks that were made in the chair's foreword to put Ms Blakemore's comments in some context. I know that Hon Dr Sally Talbot will agree with me that the meeting we had with her was particularly profound because of some of the perspectives she gave. The foreword to the report says —

... the Committee met with Sarah Blakemore, Chief Executive of Keeping Children Safe, an independent not-for-profit working to ensure that all organisations working directly for and with children have comprehensive safeguarding measures in place. I know I speak for all of my fellow Committee members as well as our advisors when I say that Ms Blakemore's evidence provided us not only with confirmation that our inquiry was on the right track, but also with the focus and the energy needed to complete this report. In comments that go right to the heart of the critical issues facing Western Australia, Ms Blakemore observed that while we all know what bad looks like, we are less clear about what good looks like and how we might make real and lasting improvements to our system.

It is worth quoting Ms Blakemore at length:

The more transparent we can be the more we can learn from our mistakes. We all know stories of people who turned away when they shouldn't. There are stories of people who have actively covered abuse up, but there are millions of stories of people who have not looked too hard. If we are not clear about what is expected of us as individuals, and we do not support that process



in a transparent way, we will continue to have child abuse because the perpetrators look just like the other people who are not trying to stop the situation. If we can be really clear and empower people and make them not be frightened, then they will do the right thing. Otherwise...many people will think—"I'll just stay in my lane."

All children deserve to be safe from harm and abuse in all its forms. I know that all members in this place, irrespective of where they sit, would agree with that view, and for those reasons I support the bill very strongly.

**HON SOPHIA MOERMOND (South West)** [5.13 pm]: I rise as the lead speaker for the Legalise Cannabis Western Australia Party on the Children and Community Services Amendment Bill 2021. I would like to make it clear from the outset that we are very much supportive of this legislation. I think it is a great way forward to acknowledge culture and that even after care finishes when children are old enough, they require support to deal with the trauma they have experienced and support with independent living. As I understand it, the bill stems from the recommendations of the 2017 Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, and specifically from the recommendation that state and territory governments enact legislation.

I am interested to hear about the additional resources the department might need to implement this bill and put its various requirements into place. I presume that, especially in the surplus situation in which we find ourselves, additional moneys will be made available to the department if required, but it would be good to have reassurance on that in the parliamentary secretary's reply. Beyond that, I welcome the bill and the additional safety it offers to some of the most vulnerable in our society. I commend the government for bringing it forward and I am happy to support its implementation.

**HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.15 pm] — in reply: I welcome the opportunity to speak on the Children and Community Services Amendment Bill 2021. At the outset, I would like to thank those members who have made a contribution to the debate on the bill today, and also last week, and also for indicating their support. To Hon Sophia Moermond, thank you for your support for this bill. To Hon Donna Faragher, thank you for the very passionate contribution that you made, and also for indicating your support.

The shadow Minister for Child Protection, Hon Nick Goiran, made a contribution this afternoon, and also last week, and I would like to thank him for his indication of support for this bill. The honourable member raised a number of questions in his second reading contribution, and I will attempt to address some of those in my response. The member raised questions about new part 10A, which is proposed to be inserted into the Children and Community Services Act to provide powers of enforcement, and asked about the rationale for these provisions. I am advised by our advisers that the powers proposed in new part 10A—which were referred to by the honourable member as extraordinary powers—are standard powers that are provided under various Western Australian regulatory regimes. The introduction of these powers into the act will enable the Department of Communities to play a greater role in protecting children's safety and wellbeing by undertaking targeted compliance work and necessary investigations into allegations of breaches under the act—for example, mandatory reporting—in situations in which other agencies such as the WA Police Force may not be able to. Currently, investigations and prosecutions are largely undertaken by the WA Police Force, which has its own powers to investigate, but which makes independent decisions about whether to investigate based on police priorities and other related matters.

The Department of Communities has no powers of its own to investigate offences under the act, other than in respect of the employment of children provisions in part 7 of the act. This work will not fall onto Department of Child Protection workers. It will be undertaken by specialist compliance officers, who will be authorised to exercise the new investigative powers and will be located within a discrete business area of the department that delivers regulatory services. This will provide legal oversight of the exercise of other powers that are operating in parallel with the department's complaints management process and for addressing any possible complaints in the first instance.

External oversight avenues will include the Ombudsman WA under the Parliamentary Commissioner Act 1971, requests under the Freedom of Information Act 1992, and other available avenues such as representations to an aggrieved person's member of Parliament or to the minister responsible for the administration of the act.

Hon Nick Goiran also asked whether any extra resources will be required for this bill. I have been advised that the Department of Communities is determining the financial impacts of this bill, including the expansion of mandatory reporting and the development of Aboriginal representative organisations. The workload impact of the additional reporter groups will be closely monitored as each group is phased in and adjustments will be made accordingly. This is part of the rationale for having a staggered commencement of new mandatory reporters, and will support the smooth and efficient implementation of the expansion of mandatory reporting to those five new reporting groups.

The member also raised questions around the government's response to the Auditor General's report on young people leaving care. I am advised by the Department of Communities that it accepted all recommendations and commenced implementation of strengthened leaving care approaches in metropolitan and regional districts. This includes, but is not limited to, a pilot of new models of service delivery, including leaving care teams—a number of districts have adopted dedicated leaving care teams, including Fremantle, Mirrabooka, Armadale and Rockingham districts; improvements to assist data collection and the development of outcome measures; compulsory leaving

care training; integration with other projects and reforms, including development of the new at-risk youth action plan and out-of-home care reform; updated guidance on leaving care practice, currently in the review phase, including referral information and updates to the leaving care planning policy and casework practice manual entry; new practice resources for leaving care; and ongoing implementation of the care team approach practice framework.

The member also noted that there was an error in the casework practice manual at chapter 3.4.13. I thank the member for bringing that to the government's attention and can advise that that has now been corrected.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

### **QUBE PORTS —JOBKEEPER PAYMENTS**

#### *Statement*

**HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.22 pm]: Today, I want to talk about an industrial dispute that is taking place in the port of Fremantle involving Qube Ports. Qube is a corporation that had revenue of \$2.1 billion in the 2020–21 financial year and increased its after tax profits by 37 per cent to \$142 million. In the 2019–20 financial year, Qube had revenue of \$1.9 billion, which was a significant increase on its 2018–19 earnings of \$918 million. Despite Qube's good fortune during COVID-19, at a time when many businesses closed their doors and workers lost their jobs, it was one of the first companies to put its hand out for JobKeeper payments, to the tune of \$30.5 million of taxpayers' money, even though its revenue did not collapse, which was the key hurdle of the program. When Qube was caught taking JobKeeper contrary to the program's clear guidelines, it repaid \$17 million but pocketed the \$13.5 million, which was left, which it has still not paid back to the federal government.

At the same time that Qube was doing this to the Australian taxpayer, it was attacking its own employees, who were supposed to be beneficiaries of the program—workers who had actually lost hours and wages. It took money that had been paid to them as JobKeeper subsidy. While Qube was roting both the federal government's JobKeeper scheme and its own employees, it was also busy ensuring that it paid out large executive bonuses and dividends to its shareholders. Amongst the bonuses paid out by Qube Holdings, the parent company of Qube Ports, CEO Maurice James managed to pick up a lazy \$2 million! Qube has refused to pay back \$13.5 million of the \$30.5 million it rorted out of the JobKeeper program. We know that it accessed a program that it had no right to and, in turn, it looked after its executive management with large bonuses.

How has Qube treated its stevedoring workforce during COVID-19 beyond just taking back money paid as JobKeeper to those most affected by the COVID-19 downturn? Terribly, is the answer. Qube has had a long reputation for cutting corners on safety, and the occupational health and safety shortcuts have been put in the spotlight in a dispute in which the workforce in the port of Fremantle is currently out the gate. This is not a dispute about wages or remuneration but rather a dispute about the rights of Qube workers to have a safe workplace, to have proper fatigue management at their place of work, to have a proper work–life balance, and to be given reasonable and proper notice of the allocation of work. Not one worker employed by Qube in Fremantle has a roster. That includes its permanent workforce. Not one worker employed by Qube in the port of Fremantle is told prior to 4.00 pm on the day before any scheduled work occurs whether they will be working the next day. If they are allocated work, only then do they find out what shift they will be working, be it a day, evening or night shift, and whether they are required to work an eight-hour or 12-hour shift. Due to these late allocations, workers cannot plan their personal lives. Casual workers are prevented from taking other work before 4.00 pm or they are penalised. Single parents cannot plan child care for the next day until early evening, and workers have no ability to manage any work–life balance outside of being at the end of a text from Qube at 4.00 pm every day.

The Qube Fremantle bosses—I make special mention of Michael Kranendonk, the state manager of Qube in Western Australia—have sent employment standards back 100 years. It is an archaic employment regime that is at odds with the supposed values of occupational health and safety governing Qube's management. Its policy states —

We have a strong team of people who work together to create an inclusive and collaborative safety culture. This creates the opportunity to identify and mitigate risk, develop and innovate solutions and share our knowledge with industry.

Qube's allocations and shift patterns are nowhere near providing workers with a collaborative safety culture. Who has Qube blamed for its allocations and shift patterns? It has blamed none other than its clients, which include Wilhelmsen, a global shipping company based in Norway. Shame on you, Wilhelmsen, if you have collaborated with Qube to destroy the safety and work–life balance of stevedores employed by Qube in Fremantle!

How has the Maritime Union of Australia dealt with these issues? It has spent 15 months negotiating with Qube in an effort to incorporate standards in the enterprise bargaining agreement that would improve the safety regime of Qube's Fremantle operations and the work–life balance for Qube employees. Out of 42 bargaining claims that were nearly all zero-cost claims, Qube rejected—wait for it—42 claims, including the claim to bring allocation times forward two hours to 2.00 pm. In light of Qube's refusal to agree to a single claim, the union took lawful protected action authorised by the Fair Work Commission to support its bargaining position. What was its action? Workers

needed to be allocated work prior to 2.00 pm on the day before the scheduled work. Qube, true to form, not only refused to allocate work prior to 2.00 pm on the day prior to the scheduled work, but it also withdrew access to the port for 125 of its Fremantle employees. That is an absolute disgrace. It was a lockout in every sense of the word.

Again, right from the start, Qube has sought to shift the blame for the six-week stoppage of work in Fremantle onto its workforce and its union. Importantly, Qube has tried to blame the MUA for lengthy delays to agriculture and mining equipment arriving for those important WA industries. But the facts are very different.

I want to read out a letter that was sent to all at Fremantle port on 13 August by the MUA, explaining the reasons for this dispute. It states —

To whom it may concern:

...

The MUA think clients of QUBE should be concerned about the conduct of QUBE and the manner in which they are flagrantly using their cargo and their business as pawns in a game of oneupmanship on their own workers.

The MUA believe QUBE have misled their clients by informing them that they have to send their cargo to Melbourne because the MUA have a 2-week stoppage in place.

**The MUA have never notified QUBE of an extended stoppage—quite the opposite!**

The MUA have notified QUBE that they will not work unless QUBE allocate them for work at 1400 instead of 1600, that they will only work 8-hour shifts and only start work after selected vessels have been alongside for 24 hours since tie-up.

Qube had two options in this scenario. The letter continues —

1. **What QUBE have actually decided to do in acting in their own self-interest:** QUBE decided that they would divert their ships with their client's cargo to Melbourne and have it discharged there, and then get it back at some stage in the future. Presumably by ship because of the road and rail restrictions currently in play.
2. ... QUBE could have brought the allocations forward by 2 hours ... given that the labour requirements were well known in advance. They could have waited 24 hours and then discharged the cargo in Fremantle.

Within 48 to 72 hours of the ship berthing in Fremantle, the cargo would have been delivered on time as always. The letter continues —

The MUA say that instead of putting the interests of their clients first, QUBE made the calculated decision to continue to attack their own workforce. As they have been doing for years in their neglect of their own workers health and safety, work life balance and dignity and respect. The only thing we can say is, it appears as though both clients and employees come dead last when QUBE consider what is in their own self-interest.

That letter was written by WA branch secretary of the Maritime Union of Australia, Will Tracey.

The mess Qube has found itself in is self-inflicted. The arrogance of this company in ripping off JobKeeper is matched by its arrogance towards all Western Australians when it blatantly breached COVID-19 directions of the WA government to prevent COVID-19 being let loose in the community from foreign-crewed vessels, a breach for which we understand Qube's Fremantle port manager, Sam Lee, other Qube supervisors, and the company itself are now being considered for criminal prosecution, as they should be. How dare they put Western Australia at risk by flouting safety laws and getting on foreign vessels that potentially hold COVID-19..

It seems clear that Qube attacked the community of WA with its recent failures and COVID-19 breaches. It seems clear that Qube attacked its own workforce by opposing genuine safety concerns around hours of work, fatigue and addressing work-life balance. It seems clear that Qube attacked its own clients and the WA agriculture and mining community and has used them as pawns in an industrial dispute against its own workforce. The delays in arrivals of agriculture and mining equipment are simply because of calculated decisions by Qube and not because of the workforce standing up for safety rights in an illegal protection action. It is an absolute disgrace.

I call on Qube to sort out its bargaining dispute with its Fremantle workforce. I call upon Wilhelmsen to insist on proper safety standards and not to promote a race to the bottom. It is time for Qube to accept its corporate responsibilities to its Fremantle workforce and the broader Western Australian community.

## NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING

### *Statement*

**HON DR BRAD PETTITT (South Metropolitan)** [5.32 pm]: I rise today to speak about yesterday's announcement by the government to ban native forest logging in Western Australia. I rise partly to apologise for missing the debate during non-government business today. I was in the wet at a World EV Day event and would like to have been here

for that debate. It would be no surprise to anyone on either side of the chamber that I would have been very broadly supportive of the government's announcement. I was pleased to hear it and to hear that WA is leading the way. We often joke that WA stands for "wait awhile", but I think in this case WA is showing leadership that the rest of the country is acknowledging. I congratulate the government for that.

Although I am aware that some of the finer details of the announcement, such as time lines and transition plans, are not yet known, one thing is clear: it is a significant announcement that deserves congratulations. It is one that the community has been working for tirelessly. In fact, it has been working on this for over a century. It is also an important win for traditional owners of Noongar and Bibbulmun country within which these forests lie. I want to especially thank the traditional owners who have worked alongside community groups over many generations.

Of course, it is part of a longer story. As far back as the 1890s, 82 per cent of Australia's timber exports came out of WA. In fact, the *Fremantle Herald*, my local paper, as early as 1874 contained objections to the fact that WA was doing too much logging and exporting. The movement against logging grew in the 1990s. That is certainly when I got first involved in huge protest marches; in fact, I think they might be the biggest protest marches that have ever been held in this state. I want to say a special thanks to pioneers like Beth Schultz and Peter Robertson. I became involved early on in these protests because of people like that and their leadership. Of course, there were big wins under the Gallop government, particularly around old-growth forests. We probably saw in the decades following that that they did not go far enough, which is why what has now happened is so welcome. It is really pleasing.

I want to pause and thank my colleagues in this place before me. Hon Jim Scott, Hon Chrissy Sharp, Hon Paul Llewellyn, Hon Giz Watson, Hon Diane Evers and Hon Alison Xamon all stood, as I have today, and said that they want to protect these forests. It is ultimately a decision that needed to be made by government, but it is always good when a government makes decisions that are well backed by people. I was interested to hear in question time today that 95 per cent of the almost 17 000 people who filled in the survey wanted more forest protected. It was a good consultation process and it was a really strong result.

In addition to acknowledging the government's important decision, I want to give a big thanks to Jess Beckerling and the WA Forest Alliance team. I cannot name them all, but they know who they are. I want to say a huge thankyou to that amazing group of people who work tirelessly. I also want to thank the many people in the community who took action on this over a long time, sometimes putting their bodies on the line, attending blockades, getting out there and protecting those forests that they knew had more value than being turned into woodchips or burnt and used in those kinds of ways. At the heart of this is an acknowledgement that these forests have more value standing, and that is really, really important.

Of course, this is not the end of it. There are two years until the *Forest management plan 2014–2023* is signed and sealed. There are other issues around jarrah forests being cleared for bauxite mining and the like that need to be addressed, but this is an important day. I acknowledge the government for its decision. I also want to acknowledge the other side. I appreciate that during the debate there were some concerns raised about whether there can be a just transition. I think that is really important. When we do big changes like this, it is essential that we ensure that communities are well protected. That has my full support, but this transition needed to happen. I wanted to stand and acknowledge this important moment and place my thanks on the record. I am pleased to be part of a place where WA truly is showing the way.

#### *Statement*

**HON JACKIE JARVIS (South West) [5.37 pm]:** I also rise today to speak on the issue of native forests. I was deeply distressed when the Leader of the Opposition stood today and stated quite categorically that no-one on this side of the chamber understood the south west or the forest industry. The Leader of the Opposition may wish to check with his colleagues who were in cabinet in 2015 when cabinet endorsed Hon Mia Davies' decision to put me on the board of the Forest Products Commission. I do understand the forest industry. I went to timber mills and Simcoa and met with workers on a number of occasions over those five or six years. In fact, Hon Steve Martin knows that I understand the forest industry because he took the opportunity to come up to me in the lunchbreak to clarify his statement on two-tier karri forests. I am happy to assist now by clarifying the situation.

Two-tier karri forests, for those who are not aware, are mixed-age forests. Silviculture practices quite often see karri harvested in an almost clear-fell operation and then replanted in a plantation format, but some older karri forests are what we call mixed-age or two-tier forests; they have a combination of mature trees and younger regrowth. A suspension on logging two-tier karri forests was announced in early 2020. The industry has known that, because the Forest Products Commission excluded those forests from the 2020 native timber harvest plan back at the start of 2020. Minister Kelly's statement that said we will not resume logging of the two-tier karri forests literally just confirms for industry that the suspension will continue. Karri will still be available under the *Forest management plan 2014–2023*. Existing contracts will be maintained under the existing forest management plan until it ends.

Forest management plans run for 10 years. It is no secret that they are reviewed. Everyone in the industry knows that they are reviewed.

I feel for those people who are losing their jobs—I absolutely do. I do, however, take umbrage at the motion that Hon Steve Martin moved this morning, which was defeated, saying that the announcement yesterday will result in the loss of thousands of jobs. He knows that is not true because he said something different on his social media page. The words “thousands of jobs” were in the motion. On Hon Steve Martin’s social media yesterday, there was a graphic that had “800+ jobs”, but in the wording of his social media post he concedes that native forests provide a sustainable source of employment for over 500 people. We have gone from thousands to 500!

Yes; forestry industries employ thousands of people. They employ thousands of people in bluegum plantations, which are not managed by government. Private companies manage our bluegum plantations—paper is a valuable export industry. A high number of people are employed in our softwood industries, which is our pine resource. Pine is used to build all our houses here, with pine roof trusses. Laminex is made in Dardanup in my electorate. About 500 people are employed in that Dardanup timber hub. That is where our pine is processed.

I get it that it was a hard announcement for people. There was this talk that we should have kept consulting. We continued consulting right up until the end of the current forest management plan. I am not sure what the alternative was. At some point industry has to be told what is going to happen. I am not sure whether the alternative is that on 1 January 2024 we put down a new forest management plan that says, “By the way, there are no more trees available.” We have been honest and said that the climate is changing and there are not enough trees. Hon Steve Martin knows that there has been a shortage of trees, because, again, social media is great! On 5 August, Hon Steve Martin said on a social media post —

The WA Forestry Industry are struggling to continue operating as a result of the Government ... falling behind on its contractual obligations.

We are falling behind in the supply of logs because we know there are fewer logs to harvest. We know that we have a declining rainfall situation. We know that jarrah takes a long time to grow; it is a very slow growing tree.

In that post on 5 August, Hon Steve Martin made a great suggestion, but it actually started with a criticism. It stated —

The Minister for Forestry has denied support for the industry, and left forestry businesses in the South West to deal with the fallout on their own.

What have we done? We have announced \$50 million. I know that about 400 people will be impacted by this decision—that is, 400 hardworking mill workers. We have heard about Parkside Group several times. It employs about 200 people across three mills. I have been to all those mills, including the one at Nannup. It is one of the largest employers in Nannup—absolutely. It also has mills at Greenbushes and Manjimup. Those people will be impacted. We have given the group two years’ notice and we have announced \$50 million to assist not only those business owners but also those employees.

We are concerned about consultation. One criticism was that it is not clear what that \$50 million will be spent on. We are going to consult with industry about the best way to move forward. On one hand we are damned for not consulting, and on the other we are damned for consulting. We will be consulting about how that \$50 million will be used.

I now refer to this idea of transitioning. A few people have bagged the word “transition”. I have an extract from *Hansard* dated 9 August 2001—20 years ago—quoting a gentleman by the name of Hon Colin Barnett. I am not sure whether anyone knows of him! On 9 August 2001, Hon Colin Barnett said —

My own view, which I have held for a long time, is that most people in the community want to be reassured that our magnificent native forests, particularly the karri forests—which are the icon—will be preserved for their future enjoyment, and for the enjoyment of their children and grandchildren. They want to be confident that large areas of quality, mature, diversified forest will be reserved and protected for future generations. In my judgment, that is what the community wants.

He continued —

Second, we need to sustain a viable timber industry, albeit a timber industry based on a smaller volume of native hardwood; and, third, we need to manage the transition taking place.

That is what we are doing here. I do not want to see those people lose their jobs—I really do not—but this industry is not sustainable, and everyone knows it. It was implied to me that during the election campaign Jane Kelsbie, the newly elected member for Warren–Blackwood, and I somehow had our heads in the sand. I can tell members: we had overwhelming encouragement to stop logging in native forests. We have a drying climate and it is no longer sustainable.

Hon James Hayward was concerned about Simcoa. He seemed surprised, as though he had only just heard about Simcoa, which is interesting, given that it has been mining quartzite in the Moora district of his electorate since 1989.

**Hon James Hayward** interjected.

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** I apologise. It has been in operation since December 1989, and I do apologise —

**Hon James Hayward** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon JACKIE JARVIS:** Simcoa uses jarrah to make high-grade charcoal, and I know that when it cannot access jarrah, it uses imported charcoal. I believe it imports some of it from Ireland and some from Colombia. Simcoa, however, is incredibly nervous about native forest, and at one point would not keep any jarrah logs on site; it would actually have it delivered almost under cover of darkness, because it was concerned. Simcoa will continue to receive logs because we still have agreements in place. We have agreements that Alcoa timber will be available to the market; we have agreements for ecological thinning. Simcoa will still be able to access jarrah. We have not said that it will stop completely; we have just said that it will drop significantly.

A member was concerned about imports. The biggest concern around imports is in respect of pine plantations. We have state agreements in place with Wespine Industries and Wesbeam. Between 2001 and 2008 the Labor government planted, on average, 1 400 hectares per annum of pine plantations. Between 2009 and 2016, Liberal–National government ministers Redman and Davies planted an average of 175 hectares per annum. We have now announced that we are going to plant 33 000 hectares over 10 years. That is important, because if we do not have pine trees to meet our state agreements, the building industry will use imported pine from Scandinavia. With that, I will conclude my remarks.

*Statement*

**HON JAMES HAYWARD (South West)** [5.46 pm]: I would like to quickly respond to a couple of things Hon Jackie Jarvis just said. I think the issue was about the way it happened, and perhaps announcing something as significant as this on breakfast radio was not the way to do it. I will not speak for very long. This morning I mistakenly talked about old-growth forest logging being stopped in 2001 by Richard Court, and I was rightly and properly pulled up on that by members opposite. I appreciate that. I would like to clarify that it was Tuesday, 27 July 1999 when Richard Court announced that logging in old-growth karri and tingle forests would end when the then-current contracts expired, as part of the state government’s decision to accelerate changes to forest management in Western Australia. The media release for that announcement stated, in part —

While the revised logging plans are being developed there will be a three month moratorium on logging of old growth in Karri and Tingle areas—other than those already being logged, or due to be logged, to meet 1999 contractual commitments.

That was the incident that I was talking about; the then Premier came down to Manjimup, and there was also an ABC news story recounting that visit. I seek leave to table those documents, if I may.

[Leave granted. See paper [541](#).]

***SURVIVOR***

*Statement*

**HON MARTIN PRITCHARD (North Metropolitan)** [5.48 pm]: I just want to make a couple of personal observations, if I may. I do not tend to watch much TV, but I have got a little hooked on a recent so-called reality show called *Survivor*. That is a bit strange, because it is a brains-versus-brawn program, and I do not think I fit into either category! I watched an episode the other day that showed me something about humanity. I think most people know the general concept of *Survivor*: a group of people are put on an island or in a remote location, form tribes and vote people off the show periodically until one is left. Another aspect of the show is that contestants can participate in races to try to get immunity from being voted off. It is getting towards the end of the series; the final episode is on Sunday. The episode I watched saw one of the contestants, Wai, trying to participate in one of these races, but she could not get off the start line because it was a physical challenge and she was getting very frustrated. One of the other contestants, George, who I think would describe himself as a political animal, noticed her frustration and took probably 12 seconds to go back to the start to help her get into the race. It was not the fact that he wanted her to win, but he saw it was a kindness to help her contest the race and not feel frustrated. It did not cost him much, about 12 seconds—he did not win the race—but it was a real act of kindness that one would not expect from a political animal such as George. I thought that action showed the better part of humanity.

I used to work for the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association of WA as an organiser. During the week, I ran into a person who reminded me that I had helped him retain his job. Obviously, that is one of the things organisers do. It made me think about what I had done. If I remember correctly, it was not so much that he deserved to keep his job—he probably did not—but the state manager and I got together, and as he was a married man who had people who relied on his income and the issue was so-so, the manager conceded, “Let’s do the right thing by him.” He reminded me that that was 20 years ago and told me that he still works for the same company. It brings to mind that we can display humanity and be kind and have a very lasting impact on other people’s lives. I encourage everyone to show a bit of humanity and a bit of kindness.

**NATIVE FOREST — LOGGING**

*Statement*

**HON STEVE MARTIN (Agricultural)** [5.52 pm]: That was a thoughtful note from Hon Martin Pritchard. I have been verbalised so I should respond. I assumed, and it was probably naive of me, that conversations outside this place are if not confidential, then private, but I have learnt that lesson. Therefore, I will repay the favour. Hon Jackie Jarvis and I had several conversations today. One was earlier than the one she mentioned when I talked about how concerned people would be about this decision and she said, “They’ll be right; they’re getting 50 million bucks.” I thought I might close with some correspondence I received today from people at Parkside Timber on the front line of this decision. I received this message mid-morning —

We have spent some time talking about the future that Parkside was proposing for the native industry. We have been blind side by the latest news. I would like some clarification on what this means for our industry.

I really cannot say more. We have a huge amount of direct and indirect jobs throughout Greenbushes, Nannup and Manjimup. This will cripple our towns, our employees and our business.

Parkside has invested over 54 million into the industry.

Please advise use how we move forward with this news.

Later I received this message —

Today I spoke with all of the staff at Nannup (45) during a tool box meeting to ease their stress. Our staff are very concerned regarding their livelihood, This will affect all of Nannup Manjimup and Greenbushes directly and indirectly.

I am quite pleased that we might be finishing the day on comments from the people who will be most affected by this decision. Thank you.

***SURVIVOR***

*Statement*

**HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition)** [5.54 pm]: I want to finish the week on a harmonious note because it is a Thursday. I thank Hon Martin Pritchard for that little contribution. I am a little bit nervous, though, because once he starts with things like *Survivor*, he might end up coming in and telling us about *The Bachelor* and *Married at First Sight*. It is a slippery slope and I urge the honourable member not to go down it!

**The PRESIDENT:** Thank you, Leader of the Opposition, and may harmony rule.

*House adjourned at 5.54 pm*

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**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

**ENVIRONMENT — LAND CLEARING**

**227. Hon Colin de Grussa to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:**

In relation to land clearing and native vegetation, I ask:

- (a) for the following years, please identify how many native vegetation clearing permits were received:
- (i) 2017–18;
  - (ii) 2018–19;
  - (iii) 2019–20; and
  - (iv) 2020–21;
- (b) for those in (a), please detail how many permits were approved and the total area approved for clearing by Local Government Area in:
- (i) 2017–18;
  - (ii) 2018–19;
  - (iii) 2019–20; and
  - (iv) 2020–21; and
- (c) for the following years, please identify how many fines were issued for illegal clearing:
- (i) 2017–18;
  - (ii) 2018–19;
  - (iii) 2019–20; and
  - (iv) 2020–21?

**Hon Stephen Dawson replied:**

- (a)
- (i) 545
  - (ii) 602
  - (iii) 472
  - (iv) 538
- (b)
- (i) 394
  - (ii) 424
  - (iii) 333
  - (iv) 284

See table below for the total area approved for clearing within each local government authority jurisdiction:

Local Government Authority	Clearing Approved* by Hectares			
	2017–2018	2018–2019	2019–2020	2020–2021
City of Albany	4.23	25.41	7.37	0.26
City of Armadale	1.37	7.95	6.50	6.88
City of Belmont	0.56	6.95		0.10
City of Bunbury	2.58	9.69	0.35	0.76
City of Canning		0.77		4.19
City of Cockburn	9.72	3.52	9.37	8.96
City of Gosnells	0.41	11.16	1.25	0.14
City of Greater Geraldton	0.91			
City of Joondalup		3.17	11.68	0.18
City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder	1752.75	1478.82	687.45	1427.62
City of Mandurah	15.40	7.69	0.27	



City of Melville	0.55	0.72	1.47	
City of Nedlands		0.90		
City of Rockingham	0.39	4.11	1.48	0.25
City of South Perth			0.18	0.19
City of Stirling	0.96	2.32	1.39	
City of Swan	12.92	2.64	1.55	0.60
City of Wanneroo	456.94	2.23	94.26	4.19
Shire of Ashburton	9.69	159.99	498.63	376.67
Shire of Augusta–Margaret River	2.12	2.92	0.79	3.63
Shire of Beverley		0.32		
Shire of Boddington	6.11	4.00	0.25	0.99
Shire of Boyup Brook	0.36	0.15	2.30	
Shire of Bridgetown–Greenbushes	43.72	8.27		3.45
Shire of Broome	147.86	283.19	1.74	3.94
Shire of Bruce Rock		0.19		
Shire of Busselton	5.21	35.30	0.37	0.11
Shire of Capel	17.29	0.30	1.35	
Shire of Carnamah		71.63		6.36
Shire of Carnarvon		16.99		15.64
Shire of Chittering	112.42		4.73	2.63
Shire of Christmas Island		2.00		0.20
Shire of Collie	4.17	0.40	55.65	4.11
Shire of Coolgardie	1266.14	612.84	1.20	689.83
Shire of Coorow	0.18		1.50	
Shire of Corrigin		0.60		
Shire of Cranbrook	21.60	9.60	62.81	
Shire of Cuballing	2.32	0.10	0.28	
Shire of Cue	8.49	416.87	63.00	694.81
Shire of Cunderdin				0.20
Shire of Dalwallinu	0.93	34.76		
Shire of Dandaragan	7.20	21.33	22.92	0.26
Shire of Dardanup	0.62	3.56	24.86	
Shire of Denmark	7.28	6.59	0.50	0.10
Shire of Derby–West Kimberley	117.70	17.42		2.97
Shire of Donnybrook–Balingup	1.30	7.65	0.98	1.37
Shire of Dumbleyung	7.12			
Shire of Dundas	19.00		2.00	
Shire of East Pilbara	486.26	2826.10	1399.00	561.53
Shire of Esperance	27.70	22.12	127.22	151.79
Shire of Exmouth	56.90	252.00	2.30	1.48
Shire of Gingin	52.43	32.15	46.12	7.26
Shire of Gnowangerup	5.47			
Shire of Goomalling			2.80	
Shire of Halls Creek		79.00	142.67	

Shire of Harvey	3.28	16.42	7.64	0.39
Shire of Irwin	3.80	25.18	0.48	25.37
Shire of Jerramungup	3.25		0.19	0.37
Shire of Kalamunda	2.52	3.37	1.69	1.21
Shire of Katanning	8.82			8.38
Shire of Kellerberrin		0.19	3.47	
Shire of Kent		1.10		
Shire of Kojoonup	5.50	0.56	1.13	0.28
Shire of Kondinin	4.25	8.55	13.66	2.69
Shire of Koorda		8.58		98.54
Shire of Lake Grace	88.63	24.36		144.76
Shire of Laverton	368.00	812.38	312.00	16.97
Shire of Leonora	423.20	424.70	139.00	552.41
Shire of Manjimup	14.63	233.78	52.42	12.25
Shire of Meekatharra	825.00	545.73	473.90	1891.60
Shire of Menzies	197.70		872.56	229.50
Shire of Merredin	4.32	6.73	0.91	
Shire of Mingenew		9.62	0.84	0.35
Shire of Moora	15.46	11.57		
Shire of Mount Magnet	228.00	176.00		184.00
Shire of Mount Marshall	5.10			
Shire of Mukinbudin	2.00	0.10		
Shire of Mundaring		0.24		0.30
Shire of Murchison	25.80	2.00	145.70	
Shire of Murray	14.55	2.37	0.18	1.95
Shire of Nannup		1.67	0.78	
Shire of Narrogin	0.75			
Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku	36.63	33.20	169.45	6.10
Shire of Northam	1.16	3.22		
Shire of Northampton	55.45	4.30	49.30	251.32
Shire of Perenjori	35.00			
Shire of Pingelly				0.74
Shire of Plantagenet	0.69	4.40	2.23	
Shire of Quairading		0.15		
Shire of Ravensthorpe	4.88	1.33	0.72	2.38
Shire of Roebourne	93.13	263.80	44.32	85.92
Shire of Sandstone				35.00
Shire of Serpentine–Jarrahdale	31.13	2.18	3.19	12.63
Shire of Shark Bay		39.30	1.00	0.38
Shire of Three Springs		74.99		
Shire of Toodyay	37.98	0.18	2.98	0.26
Shire of Upper Gascoyne	137.00			
Shire of Victoria Plains	0.70	32.57		
Shire of Wagin			0.16	

Shire of Wandering		0.14	0.14	
Shire of Waroona	7.60	1.95	36.69	1.70
Shire of West Arthur	0.42		0.14	
Shire of Westonia		5.00		0.90
Shire of Wickepin	1.15	0.30		
Shire of Williams	4.50	29.76		
Shire of Wiluna	536.86	616.90	42.00	495.11
Shire of Wongan–Ballidu		0.63		
Shire of Wyalkatchem	0.53	0.11	6.55	
Shire of Wyndham–East Kimberley	165.96	45.63	16.32	116.56
Shire of Yalgoo		35.00		115.93
Shire of Yilgarn	375.31	2.76	23.30	125.40
Shire of York			0.11	
Town of Claremont		1.50	77.10	
Town of Kwinana		26.44	0.43	
Town of Narrogin	3.00			
Town of Port Hedland	14.84	81.52	78.10	127.43

\* by both the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety; does not include clearing authorised under State-wide purpose permits.

- (c) (i) 1  
(ii) 1  
(iii) 3  
(iv) 6

#### PUBLIC SCHOOLS — STUDENT-TO-TEACHER RATIOS

#### 235. Hon Donna Faragher to the Minister for Education and Training:

- (1) I refer to student to teacher ratios in Western Australian government schools, for the years 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, and ask, what was the median student to teacher ratio in:
- (a) primary schools;  
(b) secondary schools;  
(c) curriculum and re-engagement in education (CARE) schools;  
(d) school of special educational needs (SEN);  
(e) language development centres; and  
(f) overall?

- (2) For each government school, will the Minister table a list of the individual student to teacher ratios in 2021?

#### Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (1)

Category	Median Ratio 2017	Median Ratio 2018	Median Ratio 2019	Median Ratio 2020	Median Ratio 2021
(a) Primary	16.10	16.20	16.15	16.20	15.80
(b) Secondary	13.80	13.80	13.80	14.15	13.95
(c) CARE Schools	Not applicable				
(d) SEN Schools	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.30	0.35
(e) Language Development Centres	7.90	8.50	8.20	8.50	8.50
(f) Overall	14.60	14.80	15.00	15.10	14.60

- (2) [See tabled paper no [539](#).]

## EDUCATION AND TRAINING — INTERNAL REVIEW

**236. Hon Donna Faragher to the Minister for Education and Training:**

- (1) I refer to the *WA Today* article titled, “Our kids are dying: Perth parents search for answers from school over son’s suicide ends up in Supreme Court” (26 May 2021), which makes reference to an internal review undertaken by the Department of Education, and I ask, what were the terms of reference for this review?
- (2) Will the Minister provide a list of the final recommendations that were made by the review and include details as to when they were implemented by the Department?

**Hon Sue Ellery replied:**

- (1) The terms of reference for the review were:
- Should the School have used the Guidelines to support decision making and action for the safety and welfare of [the student] before his death?
- Should the School have used the Guidelines to provide appropriate support for the safety and welfare of its students after [student’s] death?

This information was outlined in a letter of 2 July 2020 from the Department of Education to the parents.

- (2) The Final Recommendations and implementation details are:

Recommendation	Implementation
1. A review of the Guidelines in consultation with the partners to the Guidelines, that being the public, private and Catholic school systems, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and Youth Focus.	Completed. 21 January 2021
2. Establish better lines of communication with private psychologists, including having a sample letter in the Guidelines to obtain consent when a School is advised that a student is being treated by a private psychologist.	Completed. 21 January 2021
3. Developing an operational checklist as an Appendix to the Guidelines for Principals in the event of an unexpected death or suicide of a student (for example, ceasing automated reporting in all systems, including the Reporting to Parents Program, and advising SCOSA).	Completed. 21 January 2021
4. Providing training, professional development and support for staff to manage the impact of serious critical incidents.	Actioned and currently being implemented.
5. Mandatory training for Student Services staff.	Actioned and currently being implemented.
6. Establish a Critical Incident Response Team to conduct reviews of the most critical incidents in a timely and impartial manner. The Team should collect facts about the incident and make recommendations to the Department to action.	Completed. September 2020

## CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH SERVICE — PARENTING PROGRAMS

**237. Hon Donna Faragher to the minister representing the Minister for Health:**

I refer to parenting groups available through the Child and Adolescent Health Service, and I ask, in the 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years, how many families took part in the following parenting programmes:

- (a) Early Parenting Group (0 to 3 months);
- (b) A Solid Start (for parents of babies aged 4 to 6 months);
- (c) Let’s Sleep (for parents of babies aged 6 to 12 months);
- (d) Circle of Security Parenting (for parents of children aged 4 months to 6 years); and
- (e) Triple P (for parents of children aged 3 to 8 years)?

**Hon Stephen Dawson replied:**

I am advised:

	2019–20	2020–21
(a) Early Parenting Group	6,401	8,167
(b) A Solid Start	2,420	2,103

(c) Let's Sleep	253	145
(d) Circle of Security Parenting	147	156
(e) Triple P	218	178

## WA COUNTRY HEALTH SERVICE — PARENTING PROGRAMS

**238. Hon Donna Faragher to the minister representing the Minister for Health:**

I refer to parenting groups available through the WA Country Health Service, and I ask, in the 2019–20 and 2020–21 financial years, how many families took part in the following parenting programmes:

- (a) Early Parenting Program;
- (b) Boodjari Yorgas;
- (c) Solid Start/Introduction to Solids;
- (d) Circle of Security; and
- (e) Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)?

**Hon Stephen Dawson replied:**

I am advised:

The numbers of families that participated in specified programs delivered by the WA Country Health Service (WACHS) in the financial years 2012–20 and 2020–21 are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Numbers of families by program and financial year

<b>Program</b>	<b>2019–20</b>	<b>2020–21</b>
(a) Early Parenting Program	1,343	1,532
(b) Boodjari Yorgas	582	422
(c) Solid Start/Introduction to Solids	239	219
(d) Circle of Security	160	144
(e) Triple P (Positive Parenting Program)*	219	156

\* The Department of Education (DOE) delivers Triple P seminars in regional communities, sometimes in partnership with WACHS. If DOE is the lead agency these individuals and families who attend the seminars are not captured in WACHS data systems.

## TRANSPORT — PRACTICAL DRIVING ASSESSMENTS — BUNBURY

**239. Hon James Hayward to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to driving assessment availability, and I ask:

- (a) how many driving assessment cancellations occurred in Bunbury during the period 29 June 2021 to 4 July 2021 inclusive;
- (b) what is the current pass/fail rate for driving tests at each testing location in the State; and
- (c) how many of the following has the Minister's office received from community members expressing concern about the driving test system and fail rates since 1 June 2021:
  - (i) physical letters;
  - (ii) emails; and
  - (iii) telephone calls?

**Hon Sue Ellery replied:**

- (a) 41 across the South West.
- (b) Current pass/fail rates are in line with the figures provided to the member in response to Legislative Council Question Without Notice 262.
- (c)
  - (i) 1
  - (ii) 10
  - (iii) Community members raising matters with the Ministerial Office over the phone are asked to send their query via email – see above (ii).

## CYCLONE SEROJA — TEMPORARY HOUSING — CARAVANS

**240. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Emergency Services:**

- (1) I refer to the Minister's media statement of 21 July 2021 relating to eleven caravans that had been sent to the Mid-West region to assist with housing, following Tropical Cyclone Seroja and comments made by the Minister in response to Legislative Assembly question without notice 368, and I ask:
- (a) what procurement process was utilised to purchase the caravans?
- (2) Will the Minister please identify the following for each of the caravans purchased:
- (a) purchase price;
- (b) make;
- (c) model;
- (d) year of manufacture; and
- (e) supplier of the caravan to the State of Western Australia?
- (3) On what date did the State Government take possession of each caravan?
- (4) On what date did the State Government supply each caravan to a cyclone affected person(s)?
- (5) What was the cost of transporting the caravans:
- (a) from Perth to Geraldton; and
- (b) from Geraldton to the cyclone affected person?
- (6) The Minister claims that the caravans were a 'result of direct contact with the community', and I ask how was the number of caravans determined across the 16 affected Local Government areas?
- (7) Have any further person(s) been identified in need beyond the recipients of these 11 caravans and, if so, how will the State Government respond to their need?
- (8) The Minister claims that the caravans were in the process of being 'made good', and I ask:
- (a) what has been the total cost of making good the caravans;
- (b) were these deficiencies known at the time of purchasing the caravans;
- (c) have the caravans been inspected for compliance with electrical and gas regulations prior to allocation; and
- (d) given these caravans will be semi-permanent homes for cyclone affected person(s), has the State Government ensured the provision of RCD and smoke alarm detection in each caravan prior to allocation?
- (9) The Minister claims the delay in providing the caravans was in part related to licensing, and I ask:
- (a) how many caravans were not licensed at the time of purchase;
- (b) why was licensing a pre-requisite prior to allocating caravan(s) given the semi-permanent nature of the accommodation;
- (c) on what date was each unlicensed caravan licensed;
- (d) what repairs were required to each caravan to ensure roadworthiness prior to licensing; and
- (e) who will be responsible for the ongoing costs of licensing?
- (10) Who will be responsible for the ongoing repair and maintenance of caravans supplied?
- (11) Has an exemption been granted by the Minister for Local Government as required under the *Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995* to enable residents to remain in the caravans longer than three months if required?

**Hon Sue Ellery replied:**

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) advises:

- (1) (a) Direct sourcing, in accordance with WA Procurement Rule C5 Exemption from Appropriate Procurement Method. The exemption is available when an Emergency Situation arises.
- (2)

(a) Purchase price	(b) Manufacturer	(c) Model	(d) Year of manufacture	(e) Supplier
\$39,600	Jayco	Heritage	2005	Midland City Caravans
\$25,300	Avan	Erin	2007	Midland City Caravans
\$47,300	Eco	Tourer	2014	Midland City Caravans

\$25,300	Roadstar	Voyager	1995	Midland City Caravans
\$64,900	Crusader	Castle	2016	Midland City Caravans
\$30,800	Jayco	Heritage	2003	Midland City Caravans
\$26,400	Paramount	Delta	2005	Midland City Caravans
\$21,990	Coromal	Excel	2007	Crown Motor Company
\$23,990	Jayco	Westport	1999	Crown Motor Company
\$48,990	Jayco	Expanda	2015	Crown Motor Company
\$36,990	Jayco	Expanda	2009	Crown Motor Company

(3)

<b>Manufacturer</b>	<b>Model</b>	<b>Possession date</b>
Jayco	Heritage	20 July 2021
Avan	Erin	20 July 2021
Eco	Tourer	20 July 2021
Roadstar	Voyager	20 July 2021
Crusader	Castle	20 July 2021
Jayco	Heritage	20 July 2021
Paramount	Delta	20 July 2021
Coromal	Excel	19 July 2021
Jayco	Westport	19 July 2021
Jayco	Expanda	19 July 2021
Jayco	Expanda	19 July 2021

- (4) All caravans were delivered by 24 August. The delivery schedule was based on recipients' availability and circumstances. DFES delivered the caravans and assisted with their set-up at the recipient's chosen location. All caravans were delivered by 24 August 2021.
- (5) (a) \$14,520 inc. GST  
(b) Nil.
- (6) The number of caravans was identified through consultation with affected Local Governments, community groups, welfare agencies and industry bodies, including assessment of all available datasets. DFES personnel made more than 100 phone calls to community members to confirm community need and to schedule delivery. This included site visits where required.
- (7) Requests for assistance are being received and assessed on a case-by-case basis in collaboration with recovery and welfare agencies. To date no additional requests for accommodation have been received.
- (8) (a) \$2,541 inc. GST for minor gas and electrical rectification on three caravans.  
(b) No.  
(c) Yes.  
(d) Yes. The caravans provide temporary accommodation for those in need to enable them to stay close to home during the rebuild.
- (9) (a)–(b) None of the caravans were unlicensed. As a part of the purchase and licensing process, transfer of ownership was required. The State Government requires that government owned motor vehicles, trailers, caravans and motorcycles licenced in the name of Government Agencies have government plates. All 11 caravans had State (ordinary) plates and had to be re-licensed and issued with government plates.  
(c) N/A.  
(d) Nil.  
(e) Department of Fire and Emergency Services.
- (10) Department of Fire and Emergency Services.
- (11) Please refer this question to the Minister for Local Government.

