

**ROTTNEST ISLAND — ASSET MANAGEMENT**

*Matter of Public Interest*

**THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson)** informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the Opposition seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

**DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition)** [2.58 pm]: I move —

That this house establish a select committee into asset management at Rottnest Island to identify all potential safety risks and to develop a bipartisan approach to long-term asset investment and management to protect tourists and the people of Western Australia.

Last Tuesday, there was a serious accident at the Army jetty or ammunition jetty, as it is sometimes called, in Thomson Bay at Rottnest Island, where a 48-year-old mother and her 11-year-old son and their 63-year-old relative fell into the water when the concrete on the pier collapsed. One was in the water for 40 to 50 minutes with her foot trapped in concrete. The young boy fell in and was unconscious and his mother was holding him up above so he could breathe. Luckily, there were people to help them and they survived.

That was not just an accident, as we now know; it was an accident waiting to happen. I will go through some of the history of this. It was a fundamental error of the Rottnest Island Authority board some time last year to allow the risky Army jetty to continue to be used for personal traffic that resulted in this accident. We know that there has been long-term underinvestment in the assets on Rottnest Island. It has been very challenging for successive governments, because the operating options of the Rottnest Island Authority does not allow it to generate sufficient capital to reinvest in and enhance the capital infrastructure on the island; we know that.

I also want to make some comments about the Rottnest Island board chairman, who has led the explanation to the public on this serious accident. First of all he claimed that it was just an accident. Indeed, he was reported as saying on 6PR that he was on the jetty just the weekend before the accident and he saw no problems with it. To give him his due, that was no doubt true. I go to the jetty often. I know it well. It is decrepit. It is visible and people do not know when the rust is going to break through or where the concrete is. But he is no expert. What is the Rottnest Island board? It is largely an agency that has, as one of its primary objectives, managing the assets of the authority. Much of the activity on the island is provided by private ventures; the bus services, the Rottnest store, the pub and the hotel are provided by private people. The Rottnest Island board's major task is to maintain, enhance and ensure the safety of its infrastructure. The chairman made a comment that flabbergasted me. I will paraphrase him. He said, "It's outrageous to expect us to ensure and guarantee the safety of all the assets on Rottnest." That is wrong. That is his primary objective as the Rottnest Island board chairman; that is what his major objective should be. When he was asked when the Army jetty was last inspected, he gave two responses that were in complete conflict. At first he said that it was in 2015 and then he said that it was five months ago. We want to know when it was done and what was done. Every government agency has to provide to its board and to its respective ministers a strategic asset management report that specifically indicates the assets of the body, their state, when they need to be repaired, what investment needs to be done, and when, and what the priority is. We demand to see that strategic asset report.

It is true that there has been systemic underinvestment in Rottnest Island infrastructure; we have known it for some time. Back in the early part of the last decade, the then Labor government invested \$20 million in infrastructure on the island, but that was not enough. Under the previous government's watch, we provided investment after a building collapsed, killing a boy. We invested very heavily in infrastructure, particularly in roofs that needed to be replaced.

One of the things that was identified in 2010 when the board first looked at the Army jetty and stopped boat and vehicular traffic was that it needed to be replaced, effectively. It identified that it needed to be replaced, and so it put in place processes to investigate how to replace it. One of the big issues is how the island board can get funding to replace a very expensive asset when it cannot generate surplus cash and cannot, under its current funding arrangement, pay for the debt needed to invest in the asset. We all agreed that it had to come from external sources. In 2014, the Rottnest Island board began a review—firstly, a 20-year strategy in five-year segments for the island's future. It also undertook a boating management strategy in 2014. This strategy is instructive because it highlights clearly what needed to be done and what the Rottnest Island board started to put in place—a plan to replace the Army jetty by using external funding. That plan not only was very advanced, but also was sitting in the current chairman's in-tray when he became chairman. One of the major objectives of the authority is a duty of care to maintain and repair to ensure the safety of its existing marine facilities. That is what it identifies, quite rightly. I do not think we would have any disagreement; I hope we do not. The strategy states —

The Main, Army and Stark jetties have current outstanding and ongoing maintenance issues, which need to be addressed to ensure their ongoing structural integrity, requiring substantial investment.

Note that this was in 2014. It was not just the Army jetty, but the Army jetty was identified as a priority four years ago. The strategy also has a section about the Army jetty and it goes through some history. It states —

The concrete hard stand of the jetty has deteriorated over recent years and the assessment of an engineer has recommended that it is closed to vehicle and boating traffic due to structural integrity.

This was four years ago. It goes on to state that the wooden berthing face, which is what the boats tie up to, has also deteriorated. The strategy also indicates that the boat ramp next to it has degraded and needs to be replaced. I also add that the boat ramp is open to swells and therefore is not suitable for the barges to use. The strategy states that, at a minimum, the Army jetty needs to be replaced and it will cost in the vicinity of \$3 million. One of the major questions in the strategy is how to replace the Army jetty and get external funding to do so. One of the things it has identified is the private installation of a marina at the Army jetty site. That proposal was very progressed; in fact, tenders had been put out. The objective of the marina was manifold: it was to cater to boats, and to get external funding to replace the Army jetty and the ramp adjacent to the Army jetty. The board said that this was a priority and it undertook extensive necessary preliminary studies to facilitate that. Indeed, it found the site, it did investigations of the costing and staging options, it did the financial modelling for it, it did the environmental, geotechnical and demographic studies, it looked at the aesthetics and landscaping—this is Rottnest after all—and it gained the acceptance of the many varied and disparate users of the island. It then went out to tender. It set up a tender document and sought tenders from the private sector to build the marina to replace the Army jetty and the ramp. Those tenders took some time. There were expressions of interest and then tenders were put out, and those tenders were complete and sitting on the desk of the Rottnest Island board a year ago.

**Mr M. McGowan:** Three years ago.

**Dr M.D. NAHAN:** No, a year ago. The Rottnest Island board decided not to pursue the marina option. It decided not to pursue the tender. When it did that, it had an obligation to do something to fix the jetty. The marina option was going to fix the jetty, amongst other things. The board ditched the marina option and that source of funding and was therefore stuck with a deteriorating, dangerous Army jetty, but what did it do? Did it approach the government for \$3 million to replace the jetty? At the time it made the decision to stop the process of fixing the jetty, did it find another option? Did it undertake an engineering study into the jetty to see whether it could keep it there for personal individual traffic during that time? Once it had said that it was ditching its strategy to replace the jetty, what did it do to replace it? We do not know. When the chairman was queried on 6PR again this week, he said that just last month he had committed \$400 000 to \$500 000 to fix the Army jetty, with the objective of moving the barge from the ferry jetty to the Army jetty. We query that. He said \$400 000 to \$500 000; that is not enough to fix the Army jetty. He is actually spinning the issue. Yes, he is committed to the long-term plan of moving the barge from where it is now at the ferry jetty to the Army jetty and use the ramp there, but that is a roll on, roll off facility; it does not use the jetty at all. That \$400 000 to \$500 000 is not to fix the Army jetty; it is to fix the ramp. The Army jetty is not to be touched. It is there decaying and accessible. Yes, blocks might be put there to inhibit people from coming on, but anybody who uses Rottnest, like I do, will know that people wander around there. Next to the Army jetty are the Kingston Barracks, which are often filled with children visiting, playing and enjoying themselves at Rottnest and using the Army jetty. Soon we will have leavers' week, with thousands of young people enjoying themselves at Rottnest and using the facilities. That Army jetty is still there. The board of Rottnest made a decision about a year ago not to go ahead with a long-term plan to pursue external funding and have a marina replace the Army jetty, and it dropped it without an alternative plan. The government of the day did not, at least in the indication of the budget, replace that plan with \$3 million injected into Rottnest Island to replace the jetty. The government response has said there would be a study into all infrastructure around the island. That has already been done. It was done four years ago. An investment in a strategy is required. If the government does not want to put the money in, it should find something else.

When the government came into power, it had on its hands a plan to replace the Army jetty and it dropped it and did not replace it with anything else. It left a dangerous asset there for people to use, and as a result there was an accident. If this had happened at a private firm, if a private firm had allowed access to one of its assets that had deteriorated and collapsed like that, occupational health and safety and work safety would be all over it. I might add, the directors of a firm in the private sector are directly culpable for injuries and death on their sites. Instead, the government said it would rip up the jetty. The problem, according to the chairman, is that he has invested \$400 000 to \$500 000 into that jetty, actually a ramp, but the ramp cannot be used for barging unless there is a jetty there. That is what the report says. If the barges are to be moved next to the Army jetty, the Army jetty or a jetty equivalent needs to be there. The government is all over the place on this stuff. As usual, it is trying to avoid coping it sweet, being forthright, being direct and being honest. When the government makes a mistake, it should admit it. The Rottnest Island Authority dropped the ball on the Army jetty and, unfortunately, a year later people almost died. The government still does not have a strategy to fix that asset or to invest in the many other assets identified as needing investment four to eight years ago. They were identified four to eight years ago in a strategy that was put together. What does the Premier do? He laughs. He thinks this is funny. He thinks it is funny that

thousands of schoolchildren are going to go to Rottnest Island and be exposed to dangerous assets needing repair, and he has no strategy to repair them. He thinks that is funny; I do not. I do not think that, and I do not think the people who were injured or who use Rottnest think this is funny. But that is the Premier. We need a full inquiry into this—not one of the government’s so-called independent inquiries. We have seen the government’s independent inquiries. They are about as independent as two conjoined twins—not independent at all. We need a parliamentary inquiry into this because we do not trust the government. We have heard the government’s explanations on this and they do not hold water. The government is just trying to duck and weave and not take accountability. Most importantly, when something happens, the government does not react properly and put anything in place to fix it. It just asks for another study. We also need a review of the effectiveness of the board of Rottnest. It is ineffective.

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse)** [3.15 pm]: I would also like to contribute to this matter of public interest, which states —

That this house establish a select committee into asset management at Rottnest Island to identify all potential safety risks and to develop a bipartisan approach to long-term asset investment and management to protect tourists and the people of Western Australia.

I believe that this motion underlines the importance of what is so special about Rottnest Island and what is so important about this valuable tourism asset. Rottnest Island is the jewel in the crown of WA’s tourism product. It is a fantastic natural asset. It is an island that has had challenges over the years as it has been managed by the Rottnest Island Authority as an A-class reserve with competing commercial interests, but it is recognised as an exciting tourist destination full of diversity and vibrancy. After a five-year decline in visitor numbers, we saw a climb, a growth, from 2007–08 in the number of tourists visiting this important attraction. From 2016–17, 647 000 people visited Rottnest Island and that increased by 14 per cent in 2017–18. There has been a lot of work undertaken by both governments. There has been a significant push by the current government to market this island for interstate and overseas visitors. It is also very much loved by Western Australians as a playground for our intrastate visitation. It is important. When managing a public tourism asset, the number one priority is to ensure the safety of those who visit and enjoy it. That is clearly what we in Liberal opposition seek. We seek an assurance on behalf of the people of Western Australia. We seek an assurance on behalf of those who visit Rottnest Island and want to enjoy it—those who see Roger Federer or Margot Robbie enjoying a selfie with a quokka and who would love to enjoy that beachside holiday destination. We want to give them an assurance that public safety and the assets at this island, which have been highlighted as a concern, are no longer a concern. That cuts to the core of what this motion is all about—a select committee into asset management to give assurance to the people of Western Australia.

It should be of no surprise to government members that we seek this assurance. What happened last week was an awful incident. Many have referred to it as an accident. It was not an accident; it was a very serious incident in which three people were injured when a slab of concrete gave way on the Army jetty.

We are all very thankful that someone was nearby and responded quickly and that no-one was more seriously injured, or killed. With the Premier and others, I acknowledge those involved. Our thoughts go out to the people affected by this incident.

The collapse of the jetty highlights the McGowan government’s failure to manage critical issues at one of the state’s most valuable tourism assets. This is a significant infrastructure failure at what is supposed to be our jewel in the crown at a time when the Labor government is desperately trying to turn the tide of poor tourist visitation figures. I look forward to seeing the international visitor figures when they come out tomorrow. But this is not a new issue: an Auditor General’s report undertaken in 2003 highlighted the challenges associated with accommodation and essential infrastructure. The Leader of the Opposition talked about the 2014 boating management strategy, which highlighted the deterioration of the jetty and the government’s actions to close the jetty. But, following that, we also had a plan for a report, which was undertaken, and a plan for a marina and a plan for a \$3 million investment into the Army jetty, which would have addressed these concerns and the infrastructure issues.

I refer to the comments from former board member Peter Hick, cited in an article in *The Weekend West* titled “Rotto Time Bomb”, in which he talks about the plan that was undertaken and progressed under the former government for a new resort and marina near the jetty at the southern end of Thomson Bay, which would provide safer mooring compared with the existing facilities. He is reported as saying —

“It would have allowed us to remove the unsightly barge facilities from the Main Jetty, develop a charter-boat industry, provide an emergency ferry wharf if something happened at the Main Jetty and provide shelter for all types of boats.”

There was an undertaking, and when the head of the Rottnest Island Authority, John Langoulant, was asked about this, his comments were that the facility was ageing and it had been known since 2010, and he pointed to an investment of \$400 000 into what seems to be the Army jetty. But if we look at the comments further, the Rottnest Island Authority chair was not referring to the Army jetty at all; he was referring to a \$400 000 investment

in the barge-landing facility, which would not have addressed the Army jetty. That is quite contradictory to his initial comments and to any suggestion that that investment would have improved or mitigated the devastating incident we saw at Rottnest. That incident has caused heartache for the people involved, but obviously it could have been so much worse.

I would like to refer to the suggestions made during question time that the former government had not undertaken any work at Rottnest during its eight and a half years in government, which is becoming a very common call from government members whenever issues come up. It is worth pointing out that the government has been leading this state for half a term already and it was aware of many of these issues, which were outlined in the Rottnest Island Authority “Annual Report 2016/2017”. The report states —

Jetties management

RIA will develop strategic plans for the longer term management and maintenance of all jetty facilities.

The report acknowledges that work needed to be undertaken on the seawall, because there were significant issues with that infrastructure as well. The 2017–18 annual report acknowledges that ageing infrastructure was a problem. The fundamental issue is that the issues at Rottnest were known but they were not addressed under this government’s watch. In fact, the maintenance budget was actually cut.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, you will have your opportunity.

**Ms L. METTAM:** To suggest that the former government did not undertake any work at Rottnest is simply untrue. We removed asbestos at the island, we ran a cabin roof inspection and repair program, we repaired the 1840s orange seawall, we upgraded the desalination plant and the power plant, and we had a 20-year master plan to put in place a long-term strategy. These were all undertaken by the former government, including a plan for a marina and an upgrade of the Army jetty. These projects are important. What we have seen prioritised under this government so far is the marketing of the island. We have seen millions of dollars invested in bringing celebrities to the island. I understand that Chris Hemsworth is coming next. We have also seen free admission for people coming to Rottnest and incentives for an additional service. That is all very good, and representing the tourism portfolio it is something I would support, but I go back to my original point that the absolute priority for any tourist or for any government managing tourist infrastructure public assets on behalf of the people of Western Australia is to ensure public safety. We are asking for the government of the day to give confidence to the people of Western Australia and visiting tourists that it will look at not only what went wrong at the current facility at the Army jetty—I think Gary Adshead nailed it when he said that it is quite clear what the issues were—but also an expanded, independent, bipartisan inquiry by a select committee into asset management on the island. I believe that this is a worthy initiative, because this issue raises other concerns. I support the initiative for a select committee into Rottnest Island.

**MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier)** [3.28 pm]: The government will not be supporting this motion. In saying that, once again I want to indicate a few things. It was a very near tragedy and the people involved must have been terrified. They, and we, are very fortunate that nothing worse occurred. It was obviously very difficult for them, and I am very pleased that they were rescued. I wish them the best in their recovery. I want to reiterate our thanks to the people who conducted the rescue—Rottnest paid employees, state government employees, volunteers and, in particular, bystanders who came along and helped. It was no doubt a very traumatic situation for about an hour. I am pleased that it did not end up far worse than it did.

There are lots of speakers on this motion on our side of the chamber, but I want to go through the points raised by the opposition relatively quickly. First of all, I think John Langoulant is a good chair of the Rottnest Island Authority. I think he is a well-qualified person who has an interest in the island and the tourism industry there and who has people’s safety at heart. He is someone who is well respected in the community. I do not think the opposition’s demeaning of him or his character is appropriate. I indicate that up-front.

Secondly, the government came to office last year—I want to put a bit of context around this—but the issues with the Army jetty were known about in 2010 after an engineering report into the matter. So, in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016 and 2017, the Liberals and Nationals in government did nothing about the Army jetty. a collapse of this nature could have happened in any one of those years. It could have happened at any point in time because there was an ongoing safety issue that no-one knew about. When the Liberal Party was in office, it did nothing about it.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**Mr M. MCGOWAN:** Now he says that. The former government did not spend a cent on the Army jetty; it did not spend one cent over all that time. I heard the shadow Minister for Tourism, who has conveniently left the chamber, say that the former government allocated \$3 million for jetty works. That is false; that is a false statement. There

was nothing in the budget. There was no announcement. That is an imaginary statement on which the Liberal Party has been caught out.

Thirdly, there was all this talk that a marina was going to be built. I will explain to the house what happened. A tender for a Rottnest Island marina and resort development was released in August 2015. It closed on 8 September 2015. Two proposals were received for evaluation, but neither was compliant or acceptable to the Rottnest Island Authority.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I was quiet for you.

The former government issued the tender for a marina in 2015. It had the remainder of 2015, all of 2016 and the beginning of 2017, but it did not award a tender. The former government did not proceed with a marina essentially because the proposals that came forward were noncompliant and unsatisfactory. Last year, the Rottnest Island Authority decided not to proceed with that plan; instead, it decided to spend some money on the area around the Army jetty to create a barge laydown area so that all the equipment and material that go across to Rottnest on a daily basis—goods, consumables, the export of rubbish and all that sort of thing—would happen in that part of Rottnest rather than in the town centre. To me, that sounds fair and reasonable; the Rottnest Island Authority made that decision. But here are two points up-front. First, the opposition said that the marina was all ready to go—it was not. It had 18 months from the close of the tender to award a tender, but it did not do that. The tourism minister responsible for that is sitting on the opposition front bench.

The second point is that \$3 million was not allocated; indeed, there is no record of it. Last week, the opposition went out there about this issue—while those involved were still on their way to hospital or in hospital—making these claims. They are both false. The third point that was made was that there has been a reduction in maintenance on Rottnest. That is another falsehood on which it has been caught out. There has not been a reduction in maintenance on the island. The figure for repair and maintenance—excluding roofing, because there was a specific roofing project in 2015–16—is \$6.2 million. In 2016–17, under the Liberals and Nationals, it was \$2.9 million. In 2017–18, under my government, it was \$6.6 million. In other words, there was a big reduction in the amount spent during the Liberal Party's last year in office, but, prior to that, \$6.2 million was spent on maintenance, and in the last financial year, \$6.6 million was spent. The repairs and maintenance budget has paid for numerous things: \$900 000 was spent on restoring the heritage seawall to preserve its integrity; \$215 000 was spent on the replacement of aged plaster-glass ceilings for 22 accommodation units; \$223 000 was spent replacing power poles; \$190 000 was spent on the replacement of a diesel generator; and \$151 000 was spent on two additional mobile generators to provide a back-up facility. The list goes on and on. There are about 20 things on the list of what that maintenance budget has been spent on over the course of last year—all worthy initiatives to make sure that the island continues to function. If the opposition wants further evidence of the fact that it was not going to do anything about the Army jetty while it was in government, I refer to an article in the *Subiaco Post* of 22 February 2014 that is headlined "No plan to fix Army jetty". It states that the Army jetty at Thompson Bay on Rottnest is out of action and that the former Minister for Tourism, Liza Harvey, said that the jetty was unusable and there were no plans for its upgrade or extension.

There it is. When something like this occurs, and it was a near tragedy, we have to act responsibly and not tell falsehoods with a view to scoring a few political points. The Leader of the Opposition should not sit there shaking his head, making a fool of himself.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you were heard in silence.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** He does it all the time.

There were no plans to improve the jetty. The former government did not issue a tender to provide a marina and there was no \$3 million for work on the jetty. Now the opposition says that we need a parliamentary inquiry. The Rottnest Island Authority has organised an inquiry to be conducted by the professional services firm KPMG. I will quote John Langoulant —

We have engaged KPMG to conduct a comprehensive investigation into the matters that contributed to this event ...

...

A comprehensive review of Island infrastructure is also underway by the Rottnest Island Authority in order to provide necessary assurance to the Western Australian community regarding the condition, performance and safety of the publicly-owned Island assets.

Both of those things are occurring currently, but the inquiry is being conducted by KPMG. The opposition wants a select committee. No doubt the Leader of the Opposition wants to fly around the place and look at jetties all over the world. That is probably his ambition. He wants a select committee to look into this matter to try to politicise the issue and make out that all this bad stuff happened in the 18 months that my government has been in office and that the eight and a half years that he was in office, when he did nothing about it, are to be ignored.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you were heard in silence.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Why do opposition members impugn the integrity of John Langouant like that? Why do they always come into the chamber and impugn someone? Last week, the National Party attacked Chris Ellison. Then it was Nathan Harding and John Langouant. The opposition seems to hate eminent Western Australians. It seems to me a reasonable approach to engage KPMG to undertake the inquiry. If we want someone independent, I would have thought that that is a pretty independent organisation.

I will close on this point: lots of awful things have happened at Rottneest over the years. For the opposition to come in and allege that it is somehow one government's fault and that it can somehow score some points politically is tawdry, demeaning and ugly. During the former government's term in office, some terrible things happened at Rottneest, but I did not go out there screaming that it was all its fault. Eric Ripper did not go out there screaming that it was all its fault. The way the opposition does that is shocking. While those people who were injured were still on their way to hospital, the Leader of the Opposition was out in the media trying to score political points against a government that has been in office for 18 months. We did not do that in opposition. It is ugly. It is an ugly and shocking way for the opposition members to conduct themselves.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport)** [3.38 pm]: I also acknowledge the family that was involved in the terrible incident on Rottneest Island. I cannot imagine their fear as this accident happened. I went to Rottneest during the recent school holidays. It is a great place. It is terrible that that happened on that beautiful island. I understand that they are recovering, and I wish them well in that recovery.

I will go through some of the points made, confirming many of those made by the Premier, but also bringing in some additional points. I, too, was appalled by the actions of the opposition after the accident. We all know that things happen. It is how we react and handle those things that is the test of our character. The Leader of the Opposition ran to the media while the people involved in the accident were still attending the hospital, which shows that he will stop at nothing and say and do anything as opposition leader.

The Premier outlined that things happen under a government's watch. The same response did not occur from the opposition at that time. The Leader of the Opposition went out and not only tried to make political capital but also misled everybody. Some of the positions that were put to me when I was out on Saturday were incredible—some of the claims members opposite were making were incredible—and I had the opportunity to respond. I also want to clarify another comment, which is in relation to John Langouant. We know that opposition members do not like John Langouant because he did a review into the previous government. We know members opposite do not like him but going after him is an extraordinary attack. Members opposite said they targeted John Langouant because he seemed to be the government's spokesperson on this issue. I do not know whether members opposite heard what happened to the Minister for Tourism, but his mother passed away on Saturday. It is difficult during those times and John Langouant did some of the media. That is what happened. Members opposite stood up and said they did not know why John Langouant was out in the media. They should know why John Langouant was handling it. Of course, many of us, including the Premier, me and the Minister for Fisheries, were very happy to take questions on this issue.

I will go through all the mistruths said about this, but today in Parliament illustrated just how members opposite are willing to mislead this place and the public. The shadow Minister for Tourism highlighted the 2003 Auditor General's report but the Leader of the Opposition tried to claim that the first time the army jetty was seen as an issue was in 2014.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** That's false.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** That is what you said. You said that the 2014 strategy was an engineering report.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The 2014 report picked up work that had been done years previously in 2010.

**Dr M.D. Nahan** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the third time.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Leader of the Opposition did not say it; he missed everything before this strategy document.

In 2010, members of the opposition, then in government, were told about structural problems with the army jetty. An independent engineering report talked about the status of the pillars and the concrete slab. Members opposite were told that and the response at the time from the Rottneest Island Authority, in 2010, was that the long-term viability of the jetty was currently being reviewed by the RIA. That was in 2010. Members opposite were in government for the next seven years. They were in government for the next seven years and they did nothing. They did absolutely nothing. To come in here and say that an engineering assessment in 2014 came up with a boating strategy is completely false. This was a strategy based on earlier work—work in which the government was told in 2010 about the problems at that jetty.

Let me go through it. The Leader of the Opposition came out and said that 2014 was when it was all found out and that they were going to build a marina. He said there was a plan for a marina. There was no plan for a marina. The government went through a tender process that took two and a half years and both proposals were not compliant. Members of the former government had seven and a half years from the time the structural report about the army jetty was known to them to do something about it and they did nothing. Not only did they do nothing, they also went out and did not tell the truth about it. The Leader of the Opposition used media grab after media grab to try to politicise it. It is as though all the structural issues occurred on 11 March 2017. It is as though nothing was a problem before then. Let me go through it. On Wednesday, 24 October at 3.00 pm, the Leader of the Opposition said the previous government had a plan to replace the army jetty and that the McGowan government came in and cancelled that plan. That is absolutely false. The opposition had a strategy, which said that it would cost \$3 million to replace the facility. The Leader of the Opposition then interpreted that to say, “We had a budget of \$3 million to replace it.” He misled about the marina. He misled about the \$3 million budget. That is what he did.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** Did Ljiljana Ravlich call for leavers to be cancelled in 2009, after that incident?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Have you done some Google searching? Good on you for doing the research. Keep researching and see what else happened that time—go on. I have it all here. I know what happened. I can compare how the member is treating this incident with how we treated that incident.

Let me go through it. The Leader of the Opposition went out and said they had a marina planned. The government went through a tender process that it could not land in two and a half years. The Leader of the Opposition said the previous government had \$3 million in the budget and it did not have \$3 million in the budget. He said that maintenance had been cut, and maintenance had not been cut. The roofing program expenditure had started to tail off because the work had been done. If we take that into consideration, maintenance expenditure actually increased. The Leader of the Opposition went out time again and tried to make political capital over what was an awful incident. I believe that the jetty should not have been open to pedestrians; it is obvious. But this review will find out why the issue was not addressed when it should have been addressed. Of course, members opposite were told about it in 2010. Former Minister for Tourism, did you know the status of the army jetty?

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** It was on our priority list to get repaired but we were waiting until the marina proposals had been finalised.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So you left an unsafe jetty for all that time? You knew about it, and you left it unsafe.

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** No, it was deemed to be —

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, you did!

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** — safe for pedestrians but unsafe for vehicles and boats, and you know it.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, you did! Let us get to the bottom of this.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** What are you doing about it now?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Well —

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, you are on three calls, so I would be very careful.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The engineering assessment was done in 2010; what did you do for seven and a half years? The Leader of the Opposition is walking out. He does not like knowing the truth.

**Mr S.K. L’Estrange:** He’s on three calls.

**Mr W.R. Marmion:** You’re baiting him.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Am I baiting him because I am telling the truth about what happened? Opposition members go out and make awful claims in the media—awful claims—and we stand here and tell the truth about the history. They cannot handle it; the Leader of the Opposition had to walk out. This happens all the time. Members opposite can go out and say anything, like that they had \$3 million budgeted when they did not. They said they had a marina ready to go. It was underway, apparently, but no-one could see it, feel it, touch it or know where it was. They said that maintenance funding had been cut when it had not. They tried to make political mileage out of something when, if we go through all the facts, in 2010, they knew it was unsafe. The Rottneest Island Authority said that it

was going to review the jetty's long-term viability in 2010. In the meantime, the former Minister for Tourism used to love visiting the CEO's cottage and the golf course was upgraded. If we stand back and look at the facts, members opposite know that what they have done is absolutely wrong. Basically, do not come in here and pretend that somehow the board is totally responsible for all that has happened when, in 2010, members opposite had the advice. The former Minister for Tourism said that she knew it was unsafe in 2014. Why would you wait for a marina in five years?

**Mrs L.M. Harvey:** It was deemed unsafe for boats and vehicles.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It was closed in 2010 for vehicles and boats. As part of that, there was a commitment to investigate the long-term viability of the jetty in 2010. When the former minister went over there, did she ever ask about the jetty? Did she ever ask about it, even though she knew it was not safe and went out and said there was no money for it, as commented by the Premier? These are awful things that have happened. As I said, I would hate to be in that mother's situation; it would be absolutely awful. We are going through the review to make sure that these things do not happen again. The Liberal Party should not come in here and try to completely wipe its hands clean of this matter. It knew about this in 2010 and was in government for the next seven and a half years. All it had to prove was that it had some sort of tender process that had no compliant applicants anyway. That is all it had to prove. In 2010 the former government said that it needed \$3 million to upgrade the jetty. I do not know why that did not happen. I do not know why it made commitments elsewhere. In relation to the other comments the Leader of the Opposition made about tourism and selfies and Roger Federer, we all know that Rottneest has been a bit of a closed shop for too long. The aim is to open it up so more people can enjoy the experience. There has been analysis about who visits and all that over many, many years. What the Minister for Tourism is attempting to do is to get more day visitation and also more accommodation options. That is happening, and why? It is happening because we need a sustainable funding model. Increasing visitation is an essential part of creating a sustainable model for Rottneest. If we do not do that, if we do not tackle that—that is, increase visitation, provide more accommodation options and other new services; retail not hospitality choices—then we will not create a sustainable funding model. It involves two parts: the injection of capital and the creation of a sustainable funding model. That is what the minister is doing. I had the opportunity to comment on Saturday. I thought the performance of the opposition was appalling. Again, the Leader of the Opposition let his hatred for John Langoulant cloud his judgement. When he particularly does not like someone or something it clouds his judgement.

**Mr W.R. Marmion:** I don't not think he hates him; he's a friend. I just want to get it on the *Hansard* because that's a terrible thing to say.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Nedlands, look, we would all like to get something on *Hansard*, but you have got to talk sense!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Leader of the Opposition let his hatred for John Langoulant overcome him, and he said things that did not need to be said at that time. Let us make sure that we fix the issue and make sure that these types of issues do not happen again.

**MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection)** [3.52 pm]: I would like to make a contribution on this motion because, as members know, Rottneest Island falls within my electorate. I have had a close interest in the challenges of managing an A-class reserve—a holiday destination with many of its resources under public ownership. I agreed with one comment relayed by a previous Rottneest Island Authority Board member—although it is easy for them to fire pot shots from the past—who said that the challenge is that essentially we have a holiday destination and many of its goods are held in public hands. People are frustrated that government money, public money, is spent on infrastructure that is then enjoyed by only a small number of people and on the challenge also of maintaining an A-class reserve. I am very aware of that and I know that successive tourism ministers have grappled with these issues, but the failure of the previous government to deal with those issues constructively for many years is highlighted by opposition members' conduct in the current debate. I join with others who have said how terrible it was to hear about that accident, and, as bad as that accident was, how very lucky it is that it was not worse. It could easily have been worse, so my thoughts are with that family, as I know many others are.

It was my frustration as a member of the opposition from 2013 to 2017 to watch the then Liberal–National government prioritise the expenditure of nearly \$2 million on greening the golf course, which was then let to private hands to operate. I understand it struggled to make it a viable venture. Of course, those who have enjoyed the greening of the golf course the most have been the local quokkas, who cause problems by coming onto the golf course and causing problems for the players. My frustration was not just because the government prioritised the expenditure of nearly \$2 million on that venture, through the wastewater treatment plant replacement, but because work on the wastewater treatment plant was delayed. In fact, the authority had to continue drawing on precious groundwater to green that golf course. That was the priority of the previous government, under the member for Scarborough, as the then Minister for Tourism, and the former Deputy Premier, Kim Hames, who we know was a keen golfer. That was our frustration. While so many capital works were crying out for attention, the previous

Dr Mike Nahan; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Rita Saffioti; Ms Simone McGurk

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Liberal government opted to spend money on the golf course. That was its priority while in government. Now the Liberal Party is absolutely crying crocodile tears and criticising us, in government for 18 months, for not making it a priority to fix the army jetty when it had the same engineering reports and advice and it allowed pedestrians to continue to use the jetty.

Maintenance on Rottnest Island is an absolute challenge. All governments have grappled with how to prioritise fixing the ageing infrastructure on Rottnest. I think Labor's record in government stands up very well. During the Gallop and Carpenter governments, more than \$32 million was committed to Rottnest. More than \$20 million was allocated to accommodation refurbishment, \$7 million to water, power and waste management infrastructure, and nearly \$5 million on heritage-related works. I think that our record has been very clear in terms of investments at Rottnest; notwithstanding, as I said, that it is an absolute challenge to manage an A-class reserve, with infrastructure and holiday accommodation.

Let us look at the Rottnest Island Authority "Boating Management Strategy 2014", and the "Rottnest Island Management Plan 2014–19" that was released in 2014 and the master plan that was part of that. There were clear opportunities for a strategy for the island. The Liberal Party has hidden behind its failure to not land a successful applicant when the marina went out to tender and used that as an excuse for not dealing with the army jetty. We know that it had ample opportunity, over eight years, to deal with this matter. It is with frustration both as the member responsible for the island, and as one of many Western Australians who value that island and the resource that we have, when I agree with those who say that it is absolutely taking pot shots from the cheap seats.

*Division*

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (16)

Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr K. O'Donnell
Mrs L.M. Harvey	Mr A. Krsticevic	Mr J.E. McGrath	Mr D.T. Redman
Dr D.J. Honey	Mr S.K. L'Estrange	Dr M.D. Nahan	Mr P.J. Rundle
Mr P. Katsambanis	Mr R.S. Love	Mr D.C. Nalder	Ms L. Mettam ( <i>Teller</i> )

Noes (34)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr S.J. Price	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Mr M. McGowan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr R.H. Cook	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr M.J. Folkard	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Ms S.E. Winton
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms C.M. Rowe	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms E. Hamilton	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms R. Saffioti	Mr D.R. Michael ( <i>Teller</i> )
Mr T.J. Healy	Mr M.P. Murray	Ms A. Sanderson	
Mr M. Hughes	Mrs L.M. O'Malley	Ms J.J. Shaw	

Pairs

Ms M.J. Davies	Mr P. Papalia
Mrs A.K. Hayden	Mr D.J. Kelly

Question thus negatived.