



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2022

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 22 June 2022

Legislative Assembly

Wednesday, 22 June 2022

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) took the chair at 12 noon, acknowledged country and read prayers.

PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — VALEDICTORY REMARKS

Member for North West Central — Standing Orders Suspension — Notice of Motion

Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House) gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the member for North West Central to make a valedictory speech of not more than 30 minutes after question time on Thursday, 23 June 2022.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT — GYMNASTICS PROGRAM — SPORT INTEGRITY AUSTRALIA REVIEW

Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [12.02 pm]: I rise today to respond to the Sport Integrity Australia review into the Western Australian Institute of Sport, or WAIS, gymnastics program that ran from 1988 to 2016. The review is a response to gymnasts raising their experiences within that program and highlighting the harmful behaviour that the gymnasts were subjected to. Some of those gymnasts and their representatives are guests in the Speaker's gallery today.

The state government acknowledges the courage shown by the women who shared their experiences as part of the Sport Integrity Australia review into allegations of abuse at WAIS while in the women's artistic gymnastics program, and sincerely thanks those who participated. Your contributions have exposed systemic issues and unacceptable conduct in the WAIS WAG program that had distressing, long-term consequences for many gymnast participants. The vast majority of gymnasts were children at the time—some as young as five years old. The review heard evidence of conduct and coaching practices that should never have occurred. Although an apology cannot undo the actions of the past, it is an important starting point to make amends and rebuilding trust.

The Western Australian government unreservedly apologises to all gymnasts who suffered as a result of participating in the WAIS program and to families and carers of those who suffered.

The review recommends that WAIS adopts the national integrity framework, including the independent complaint handling process; ensures that all sports programs involving children are child focused and age appropriate; continues to embed athlete wellbeing into policies, procedures and practices for all sports programs; and engages in a restorative and reconciliatory process. WAIS has accepted and agreed to implement these recommendations.

In addition, I have directed the director general of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries to oversee and audit WAIS's compliance in the implementation of the Sport Integrity Australia review recommendations; facilitate the restorative and reconciliation process; and undertake a comprehensive governance and culture review of WAIS. The department will also establish a specialist child safeguarding unit and investigate appropriate measures to ensure the protection of children in all levels of sport.

The implementation of these recommendations and undertaking of these actions will be carried out in consultation with the affected gymnasts. The safety and wellbeing of our young athletes is of the utmost importance. We all have a duty of care to the young people in elite sports programs.

Finally, I would like to thank the gymnasts who have come forward. I acknowledge the harm you suffered and continue to suffer. I have met with a small number of the gymnasts and applaud their advocacy on behalf of the wider group. I sincerely hope that these actions help with the healing process.

ENERGY TRANSFORMATION STRATEGY

Statement by Minister for Energy

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Energy) [12.05 pm]: I rise to update the house on work underway in the energy sector to support our transition to a greener, cleaner energy future. Earlier this month, I released the two-year progress report of the *Distributed energy resources roadmap*. The road map was launched in April 2020 as part of the McGowan government's energy transformation strategy. It sets out the actions we must take to meet the challenges of an evolving energy landscape, while keeping the system stable and prices affordable.

Two years on and the road map is on track. Major milestones have been met, and a number of important additions have been made. Most significantly, we have implemented new requirements for rooftop solar. The new requirements

leverage recent technological improvements to allow for the management of solar output in emergencies, while supporting continued rooftop solar uptake. We have also launched the electric vehicle action plan, which is a plan to integrate electric vehicles within WA's power system. Additionally, federal and state government funding was secured for WA's flagship community virtual power plant, Project Symphony, and 13 community batteries were installed. Western Australians have enthusiastically embraced distributed energy resources, which include rooftop solar systems, batteries and electric vehicles. One in three WA households has rooftop solar, which is expected to rise to 50 per cent by 2030. The rapid uptake has created challenges and opportunities for the way our power system produces, manages and consumes electricity.

The *Distributed energy resources roadmap* continues to guide our progress towards a greener, cleaner energy future with more renewable energy at its heart. Energy Policy WA, Western Power, Horizon Power, Synergy and the Australian Energy Market Operator are working together to implement the road map. I thank them for their excellent work.

DONGARA–GERALDTON–NORTHAMPTON ROUTE

Statement by Minister for Transport

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [12.07 pm]: I rise to update the house on the Dongara–Geraldton–Northampton route alignment, which is a project that has been considered by various state governments over many years. Brand Highway and North West Coastal Highway currently form the coastal freight route between Perth and the north west of Western Australia, linking the major population centres of Perth, Geraldton, Carnarvon and Karratha. As these regions continue to grow, traffic volumes will increase, with safety continuing to be a focus for future roads. Over the long term, we are seeking to provide a safe and efficient transport route. Main Roads has been undertaking a planning study to identify land suitable to accommodate a high-standard, free-flowing route for regional and freight traffic that minimises conflict with local traffic in Geraldton and other built-up areas.

In October 2020, a draft route alignment was released for public comment and feedback for the proposal was generally positive, particularly to the north of Geraldton. However, it became evident that the southern section would impact quite a large number of properties and would potentially isolate sections of the Walkaway community. I visited Geraldton several times over the last 18 months, meeting with the member for Geraldton, our upper house colleague Hon Sandra Carr and some of those impacted community members. I am very pleased to announce today that, as a result of that extensive community and landowner feedback, a new corridor for the southern section between Mount Horner Road West and Moonyoonooka has been identified. The new proposal will see the route deviate eastwards around the main Walkaway town site before reconnecting with the previous alignment at Moonyoonooka, reducing impacts on homes and addressing access and severance concerns raised by the Walkaway community. Further work is still required to confirm the ultimate alignment; however, the number of dwellings south of Moonyoonooka within the investigation corridor has reduced significantly, from 10 to four. Main Roads will work with landowners in coming weeks to discuss ways to mitigate any potential impacts.

Given the positive community feedback on the proposed corridor north of Moonyoonooka and south of Mount Horner Road West, no changes are planned in these areas. Planning around Moonyoonooka has also highlighted the potential for a traveller centre or road train assembly area, presenting an opportunity to recognise local history and Moonyoonooka's role as a community hub. The alignment selection study aims to identify a 500-metre route corridor to accommodate a 100-metre-wide road reservation that will be defined as part of future planning. Once a final preferred corridor has been approved by the state government, Main Roads will include the route in strategic statutory planning documentation to provide landowners with greater certainty. Construction of this future route is subject to funding, although the section north of Geraldton is considered a priority. Construction of the southern section between Dongara and Geraldton is not expected until at least 2035. This time frame has been provided to give landowners certainty in the medium term. The Dongara–Geraldton–Northampton route has been talked about for many years and I am pleased the McGowan government is getting on with the job of planning for this important piece of future infrastructure. This new route will give more clarity and confidence to the local community and landowners moving forward.

TAMICA AND TED MULLALEY — APOLOGY AND PARDONS

Statement by Attorney General

The SPEAKER: Members, I want to advise that I have given approval for the Attorney General to give his brief ministerial statement remotely, as members can see on the screen. The Attorney General.

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [12.11 pm]: Madam Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to address Parliament so that I may provide a formal response to Tamica Mullaley and her father, Ted Mullaley, both of whom are in your Speaker's gallery today.

Tamica and Ted have endured the unthinkable. In March 2013, Tamica was the victim of a sustained and vicious attack at the hands of her ex-partner, who left her naked, bleeding and suffering from life-threatening injuries in

a street in Broome. When police attended the scene, they found an extremely vulnerable young Aboriginal woman. Although Tamica was hostile, that was unsurprising given the violence she had just endured. When her father, Ted, arrived at the scene, the situation continued to escalate, resulting in an altercation between Tamica and Ted and the police. This altercation culminated in Tamica being charged with assaulting and obstructing police officers. Ted was charged with obstructing the officers. Tamica was not treated by police at the scene as a victim of domestic violence.

The SPEAKER: Attorney, could I have your attention for a moment? The sound quality is not as good as we would like. I give you permission to slow down, perhaps, so that we can hear you clearly. Do not be rushed by the three-minute time limit. This is an important statement. Take your time and try to speak as clearly as possible because our sound quality is not as premium as we would like. You may start again if you would like; it is entirely up to you.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker; I shall.

Thank you for the opportunity to address Parliament so that I may provide a formal response to Tamica Mullaley and her father, Ted Mullaley, both of whom are in your Speaker's gallery today.

Tamica and Ted have endured the unthinkable. In March 2013, Tamica was the victim of a sustained and vicious attack at the hands of her ex-partner, who left her naked, bleeding and suffering from life-threatening injuries in a street in Broome. When police attended the scene, they found an extremely vulnerable young Aboriginal woman. Although Tamica was hostile, that was unsurprising given the violence she had just endured. When her father, Ted, arrived at the scene, the situation continued to escalate, resulting in an altercation between Tamica and Ted and the police. This situation culminated in Tamica being charged with assaulting and obstructing police officers. Ted was charged with obstructing the officers. Tamica was not treated by police at the scene as a victim of domestic violence. Tamica's 10-month-old baby, Charlie, was at the scene but was given to family friends. After her arrest, Tamica's ex-partner returned to the area and removed Charlie from the family friends. The following day he murdered baby Charlie. In just two days, Tamica had suffered a life-threatening assault and lost her baby in the most horrific circumstances. In the months and years that followed, the prosecutions against Tamica and Ted continued and they were ultimately convicted.

In a 2016 review, the Corruption and Crime Commission criticised aspects of the police response. The CCC found that various officers failed to treat Tamica as a victim of an assault. Police failed to establish who assaulted her, with little effort initially made to locate the perpetrator and charge him. The report is lengthy and I refer members to it. It is on the CCC's website.

Recently, Tamica and Ted met with me; Hon Simone McGurk, Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Hon Paul Papalia, Minister for Police; and the new Commissioner of Police, Col Blanch. Tamica explained that nobody from the government or the police had ever apologised for what happened. I have arranged for Tamica and Ted to be in Parliament today so that I can say what should have been said a long time ago.

On behalf of the government of Western Australia, Tamica and Ted, I am sorry for the way you were treated by the government and the WA Police both before and after losing baby Charlie. We have taken seriously the concerns you raised about those criminal charges continuing against you. In response to those concerns, I inform the house this morning that the Governor of Western Australia has exercised the royal prerogative of mercy so as to grant free, absolute and unconditional pardons to Tamica and Ted for those offences. The granting of such pardons is a truly exceptional step. It is so exceptional that I could not find a case in modern Western Australian history in which pardons of this nature had been granted. Tamica and Ted deserved compassion. Instead, the systems we thought we could rely on to support victims of crime failed and Tamica and Ted were dragged through the courts themselves. These pardons are a show of mercy, which for Tamica and Ted has been a long time coming. Although extensive work has been undertaken to prevent a tragedy like this occurring again, as a government and as a state, we must acknowledge that for Tamica and Ted, the response at the time was clearly deficient. Tamica and Ted, for that I am truly sorry. You deserved much better from the police and the government. We are sorry.

Statement by Minister for Police

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [12.17 pm]: I join the Attorney General in acknowledging the heartbreaking circumstances surrounding the tragic death of baby Charlie and how it has impacted the lives of the Mullaley family.

I attended the meeting with Tamica, Ted and the Mullaley family. Both I and then Deputy Commissioner Col Blanch observed that although there is always more work to be done, since 2013 there has been significant progress in how the Western Australia Police Force responds to family violence and how officers work with Aboriginal people. The Western Australia Police Force has established the family and domestic violence division to provide oversight of frontline practices and procedures, with a mandate for continual improvement in the way police respond to family violence. In addition to this, all WA police are now receiving training to improve their understanding of the complexities of and risks in family violence.

The Western Australia Police Force remains dedicated to contributing to the wellbeing of Aboriginal people across the state. Following the Commissioner of Police's historic apology to Western Australia's Aboriginal people in July 2018, there have been several changes implemented to build stronger cultural awareness and competency within the agency. These changes include the creation of the Aboriginal Police Advisory Forum, which comprises 12 Aboriginal leaders from across the state. In addition, cultural awareness training is delivered to all staff across the agency. This training is unique, as it is contextualised to policing in specific geographical locations and relates to the local Aboriginal culture.

The Western Australia Police Force has also undertaken a number of operational changes since 2013, including continued commitment to growing the representation of Aboriginal people in the force. As of February 2022, there were 183 Aboriginal police officers across the agency, which is nearly a 48 per cent increase since February 2013, largely in recent years; and, in fact, another two officers will graduate from the academy tomorrow evening.

To Tamica and Ted, who are here in the chamber today, I want to express my deepest sympathy for the terrible suffering you have endured. I would also like to say to you both that baby Charlie's legacy will be a commitment from this government to do everything in its power to prevent another senseless tragic death in our community.

Statement by Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) [12.20 pm]: I rise alongside the Attorney General and Minister for Police today in acknowledging the Mullaley family, and I thank Tamica and Ted for participating and travelling here to be with us today.

This tragic incident involving the Mullaley family is one that has stayed with me, and always will. It reminds us to do better and that we all have a role to play in understanding, responding to and preventing family and domestic violence. The events that unfolded over the course of that evening and the following day demonstrate how an inadequate understanding of family and domestic violence can have utterly devastating consequences.

Since I commenced as the first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence in 2017, the McGowan government has made significant changes to WA's family and domestic violence practices, policies and legislation. I have been working closely with my cabinet colleagues to ensure that we are taking a whole-of-government approach to better understand and respond to family violence. This includes improving our family and domestic violence response teams. These are multiagency teams that work together to provide an early, coordinated response to incidents of family and domestic violence. Officers from the Department of Justice will now also join these teams to ensure that the risk around perpetrators is understood and managed better.

Sadly, there are high rates of family violence in Aboriginal communities and we acknowledge that we have to do things differently. This is why we will be delivering an Aboriginal family safety strategy to ensure that all Aboriginal people in Western Australia live safe and healthy lives free of family violence, and that we are all part of that solution.

Tamica and Ted, I would like to pay my respects to you and acknowledge the ongoing strength and courage of victim-survivors like yourselves. I also pay tribute to baby Charlie, whose tragic loss shall never be forgotten. Although we cannot change the past, I sincerely hope that today's events can support you and your family's healing journey.

CONTAINERS FOR CHANGE

Statement by Minister for Environment

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldvis — Minister for Environment) [12.22 pm]: Recently, I announced a new initiative for Containers for Change to make recycling beverage containers in public places much easier. Communities across Western Australia now have an opportunity to have free container exchange points installed on public bins. These are marked baskets that can hold between six and 100 drink containers. Beverage containers placed in the container exchange points are then available for anyone to collect and return to a Containers for Change refund point. Three local governments are now taking part in a trial of the container exchange points—the Cities of Vincent, Fremantle and Wanneroo. We can see these exchange points operating in Hyde Park, on Oxford Street and on the cappuccino strip in Fremantle, as well as in parks across the City of Wanneroo. Another seven local governments have signed up to the program and will install the points in the coming months. Container exchange points are easy to install, low maintenance and allow members of the community to do the right thing by keeping their 10¢ containers out of landfill. Bottles and cans are the most common recyclables found in public bins, so these exchange points will help to increase our recycling rates by improving access and convenience for participating in Containers for Change.

After 18 months of operation, Containers for Change has recovered over 1.3 billion containers. The recycling rate of beverage containers has increased from 34 per cent to 60 per cent. This is a great achievement, and these container exchange points will help to save even more containers from landfill. In addition to the environmental benefits of recycling and avoiding litter and landfill, over \$4.3 million has been donated to community groups and charities, and over 730 jobs have been created. Upwards of 40 per cent of these jobs have gone to people with disabilities, Indigenous Australians and long-term unemployed people. Containers for Change has been designed to be the most accessible and most community-focused scheme in Australia. With refund points operating from Kalumburu in the far north to Esperance in the south, and new public access initiatives like the container exchange points, we are delivering on this ambition.

OWNER-DRIVERS (CONTRACTS AND DISPUTES) AMENDMENT BILL 2022*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Ms R. Saffioti (Minister for Transport)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [12.25 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Owner-Drivers (Contracts and Disputes) Amendment Bill 2022 will amend the Owner-Drivers (Contracts and Disputes) Act 2007. The act established a framework for the regulation of contractual dealings between independent contractor owner–drivers and their hirers. It promotes a safe and sustainable road freight transport industry in Western Australia. The bill will provide additional protections for those small businesses and will resolve some of the questions that have arisen concerning aspects of the act’s operation.

As we have all come to appreciate in recent times, our freight supply chains and transport industries are key to our economic success and are critical to meeting our growing and varied freight task. The road transport industry is crucial to freight delivery throughout metropolitan and regional Western Australia and, indeed, across the country. Owner–drivers play a vital role in our road freight transport supply chain, but there is successive contracting out of work at every step along that chain. Commercial power decreases with each successive step, and at the end of the chain are the most vulnerable and least protected sector—the owner–drivers. They bear the brunt of structural factors in the road transport sector. They are isolated, and driver turnover is high. This lessens their bargaining power in a highly competitive market for transport services. The result is often that equitable contractual arrangements are difficult to achieve. The relative unequal bargaining power between owner–drivers and hirers combined with fierce competition in the industry means they may be forced to accept work at below market rate or, indeed, to have no work at all.

The amendments proposed in this bill will grant greater protection for owner–drivers. The bill aims to enhance the legislation’s operational efficiency. The amendments are the result of several years’ work. In 2018, a review was commenced to consider the operational effectiveness of the legislation. Throughout the review process, extensive consultation was undertaken with industry associations and unions. The following suite of amendments in the bill is based on those discussions.

Minimum notice periods for termination: For contracts of greater than three months, there will be a 90-day minimum termination notice period, or payment in lieu of such notice. For contracts of less than three months, there will be a seven-day minimum termination notice period, or payment in lieu.

Unfair or unjust contract provisions: Clarification of the relationship between provisions using the terms “unjust” and “unfair” will provide that such conduct can be a matter that the Road Freight Transport Industry Tribunal considers when making determinations on unconscionable conduct.

Misleading and deceptive conduct: The notion of misleading and deceptive conduct is now well established in a number of other areas of life and the law. The act will now align with those areas, as such behaviour will be specifically prohibited.

A workplace right of entry: A workplace right of entry to investigate is well established in the Industrial Relations Act 1979. There will be a workplace right of entry power for an owner–driver’s authorised representative for the purpose of investigating suspected breaches of the act.

Discrimination is outlawed in many areas. This area will be no exception. Discrimination will be a form of unconscionable conduct under the act.

Noncompliance with guideline rates: The act provides for the Road Freight Transport Industry Council to publish guideline rates to inform industry participants when they bargain about rates of pay. Noncompliance with guideline rates will be a relevant factor when the Road Freight Transport Industry Tribunal determines whether there has been unconscionable dealing.

Changes to the tribunal’s powers and jurisdiction: A number of changes will ensure that the Road Freight Transport Industry Tribunal is better equipped to deliver just and efficient outcomes in dispute resolution. The tribunal will have the power to facilitate bargaining in joint negotiations by making circuit-breaker orders if all parties do not come to agreement. The tribunal is to be able to deal with multiple payment disputes, such as when there is continuing non-payment after a dispute is referred to it.

A number of amendments will resolve uncertainty about the tribunal’s abilities. There is currently doubt about whether a party to a contract can apply to the tribunal after the contract has expired. Through this bill, a party will be able to apply until 12 months after expiry. There is uncertainty about whether the tribunal has the ability to vary an owner–driver contract term, in addition to declaring contract terms void. Through this bill, the tribunal will be able

to vary terms. Finally, opinions differ on whether the tribunal can summarily dispose of payment disputes when no answering statement has been filed or when there is no defence to the claim. Through this bill, the tribunal will be able to do so.

In addition to the proposals already outlined, the government is committed to, in the future, introduce further amendments to WA owner–driver laws to broaden the scope of the act beyond the current 4.5-tonne gross vehicle mass limitation. Western Australian owner–drivers and hirers deserve the benefit of rights that many others now take for granted. Equally, I am sure that all members will support the measures that will facilitate the Road Freight Transport Industry Tribunal in the performance of its functions.

This legislation has been through significant consultation with industry through the Road Freight Transport Industry Council. I would like to thank the members of the council, including the Transport Workers Union, Western Roads Federation and industry representatives, for their work on these amendments.

I commend the bill to house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

CASINO LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (BURSWOOD CASINO) BILL 2022

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Dr A.D. Buti (Minister for Racing and Gaming)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Racing and Gaming) [12.32 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

Last year, the government established the Perth Casino Royal Commission to inquire into the suitability of Burswood Nominees Ltd as Perth Casino licensee and the suitability of Crown Resorts Ltd, Burswood Ltd and Burswood Resort (Management) Ltd as associates of the licence holder. The royal commission was also asked to examine the state’s regulatory framework and the functions of the Gaming and Wagering Commission of Western Australia, and to provide recommendations for enhancing future regulatory capabilities and effectiveness.

In its final report, which ran to nearly 1 000 pages, the royal commission made 59 formal recommendations, and found the Crown and Burswood entities were not presently suitable. The royal commission’s final report outlined the remediation journey required to make these entities suitable. The government is responding progressively and comprehensively to the royal commission’s findings and recommendations. This bill will implement a number of priority reforms.

The Casino Legislation Amendment (Burswood Casino) Bill 2022 will establish the role of an independent monitor to monitor remediation of Burswood Casino’s management and operations, including its necessary powers and offences for failing to comply; provide for the recouping of costs associated with the independent monitor from the casino operator; significantly increase several penalties under the Casino Control Act 1984; provide for the Minister for Racing and Gaming to appoint an independent chair of the Gaming and Wagering Commission; enhance the power of the Minister for Racing and Gaming to direct the commission on mitigating risks associated with the management and operation of Burswood Casino, as outlined in the final report of the royal commission; and enhance the power of the commission to direct the Burswood Casino licensee.

I will now provide a more detailed explanation of the bill. Part 1 of the bill sets out the short title and commencement. Part 2 of the bill will amend the Casino Control Act 1984 to implement a number of significant reforms. Under this part, proposed section 21I will establish a two-year remediation period within which the casino licensee is to remediate the management and operations of Burswood Casino.

There are also clauses to establish an independent monitor, to be appointed by the Minister for Racing and Gaming, that will monitor the casino licensee’s remediation. Proposed section 21O will provide the independent monitor with powers to require the casino licensee to prepare a remediation plan. Proposed section 21N will empower the independent monitor to approve the remediation plan. Proposed sections 21S to 21V will provide powers to monitor implementation of the remediation plan. Proposed section 21P will require the independent monitor to report to the Minister for Racing and Gaming and the commission on the status and efficacy of the remediation.

Clause 8, which will replace section 33 of the Casino Control Act 1984, will establish that failing to comply with a direction issued by the independent monitor will be an offence with a maximum penalty of up to \$250 000. Proposed section 21X will establish that hindering or obstructing the independent monitor, failing to provide information or answer a question, or providing false or misleading information will all be offences with a penalty of \$50 000. Proposed sections 21ZA to 21ZC will provide for the costs associated with the independent monitor to be recouped from the Burswood Casino licensee. I note that a similar approach is being taken in Victoria and New South Wales.

In addition to the new offences and penalties for noncompliance with the independent monitor, clause 5, which amends section 21B of the Casino Control Act 1984, will increase the maximum penalty available under the act tenfold, from \$100 000 to \$100 million. The penalty under this section will be a disciplinary penalty that can be imposed by the minister when it is in the public interest to do so, has the prior approval of the Governor and follows the procedural fairness process set out in the section. It might, for example, be applied in the event of fraud, money laundering or junkets linked to organised crime. This is in response to the royal commission's finding that the maximum penalties available under the Casino Control Act 1984 were manifestly inadequate to support the proper regulation of Burswood Casino. Victoria has also taken a similar approach and increased its maximum penalty to \$100 million.

The maximum penalty for noncompliance with a direction issued under the Casino Control Act 1984 will also increase from \$2 000 for an individual and \$5 000 for a body corporate to \$100 000 and \$250 000 respectively. Clause 8 will replace section 33 of the Casino Control Act 1984. These two reforms alone will send an unambiguous message that noncompliance is not an option. Integrity, good governance and proper gaming operations are to be the norm at the Perth casino.

Clauses under this part will also clarify and confirm the minister's power to direct the commission on the performance of its functions in relation to Burswood Casino and with regard to the final report of the royal commission, either generally or on a particular matter. Complementary amendments will also expand the commission's power to direct the Burswood Casino licensee on all operations of Burswood Casino, not just the gaming operations.

Part 3 of the bill will amend the Gaming and Wagering Commission Act 1987 to provide for the appointment of an independent chair of the commission and for members of the commission to elect the deputy chair. Clause 11 will amend section 12 of the Gaming and Wagering Commission Act 1987. This was recommended in the final report and will further enhance the regulation of gaming and wagering in WA. The royal commission recognised that the recently appointed director general and ex-officio chair has made inroads in reforming the commission's governance and culture. The government has also appointed new commission members with the relevant skills and experience identified in the royal commission's final report.

Members will be aware that the commission and I recently granted Western Australian regulatory approval for the Blackstone group to proceed with the acquisition of Crown Resorts Ltd, subject to a number of strict conditions. The commission has granted probity approval to relevant Blackstone group entities and associated individuals after extensive, multi-jurisdictional probity investigations. As Minister for Racing and Gaming, I have granted approvals regarding Blackstone's proposed and future shareholdings of Burswood Ltd and securities over the casino gaming licence, site and resort complex, in accordance with the Burswood state agreement and Casino Control Act respectively.

This acquisition is in its final stages. However, it does not affect the reforms I have set out today. Regardless of who owns and operates Burswood Casino, the government and the Western Australian community expect—indeed, require—remediation of the governance and operations of our state's only casino. Owning and running that casino, and employing its many hardworking and committed employees, is a privilege that warrants the highest standards of integrity, governance and operations.

The McGowan government is committed to bringing about wide-reaching reforms to ensure Western Australia's regulatory framework holds the casino to account. This bill advances that objective.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

BUSH FIRES AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr R.R. Whitby (Minister for Environment)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Environment) [12.41 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to support the Bush Fires Amendment Bill 2022. This bill is an imperative part of the government's response to the Royal Commission into National Natural Disaster Arrangements. Recommendation 13.1 of the royal commission stated that state and territory governments should expedite the development and implementation of the Australian Fire Danger Rating System. It should ensure that there is national consistency in the visual display of fire danger ratings and action to be taken in response to each rating. Recommendation 13.2 of the royal commission stated that state and territory governments should deliver education to ensure that the public understands the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System, the potential danger attached to each rating, and the action that should be taken in response to each rating. On 30 November 2021 this government responded to these recommendations in

the affirmative, noting that Western Australia was on track to implement the Australian Fire Danger Rating System in 2022. The purpose of this bill is to instate the nationally agreed and consistent Australian Fire Danger Rating System and corresponding fire behaviour index thresholds.

Climate change is influencing the frequency and severity of dangerous bushfire conditions in Australia and other regions of the world, including through influencing temperature, environmental moisture, weather patterns and fuel conditions. There have been significant changes observed in recent decades towards more dangerous bushfire weather conditions for various regions of Australia. The current rating system in Western Australia is based on science that is over 60 years old and does not contemplate this evolution towards more dangerous bushfire conditions that we are experiencing at an increasing rate. The new Australian Fire Danger Rating System will utilise modern scientific models to not only provide greater accuracy in predicting the way in which a fire is likely to behave, but also be easier to understand for government agencies, business and industry and, of course, the wider public. The Australian Fire Danger Rating System is a key component in addressing the lessons we have learnt in recent years. In particular, we know that consistent and straightforward messaging is key for the safety of our communities, because, after all, fires do not recognise state and territory borders.

This government is committed to strengthening the planning for and management of bushfires within our state and beyond. This new rating system is the result of several years of national collaboration and development to keep Australia and, indeed, Western Australia, as safe as possible in the face of the ever-increasing threat posed by bushfires.

I am sure that I do not need to remind honourable members of the devastation wreaked on the state of Western Australia by bushfires in the last 12 months alone, let alone the preceding decade. The 2019–20 bushfire season made international headlines with catastrophic conditions ravaging Australia, and, of course, the life-altering fires we solemnly refer to as the Black Saturday bushfires in Victoria in the summer of 2009 that led to the greatest loss of life from fire, in Australia, in modern history. This tragic event will forever be fresh in Australia's memory and has warranted a dedicated and determined response for change, now within sight by virtue of the new Australian Fire Danger Rating System.

The Australian Fire Danger Rating System aims to improve public safety and reduce the impacts of bushfires in four important ways. Firstly, by improving the scientific accuracy behind fire danger predictions. This will provide benefits such as more accurate fire danger information, increased confidence in predictions, improved management outcomes and reduced economic losses. Secondly, by improving the way that fire danger is communicated. This will provide benefits such as a more informed public, resulting in fewer lives lost, less property damaged and reduced community recovery costs. Thirdly, it will provide government and industry with better decision-making tools. This will provide benefits such as better proactive fire management, better firefighting outcomes, improved community safety and reduced over-warning costs. Finally, it will build a truly national system. This will provide benefits such as reduced development costs, better resource sharing, less chance of public confusion and improved national outcomes.

By passing this bill the government will ensure that Western Australia is a true contemporary of all other states and territories in the implementation of this new rating system. Western Australia will be better prepared for the threat of bushfires by being an active participant to this modernised system, which draws upon over 60 years of scientific advances in the field.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

FAMILY COURT AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Consideration in Detail

Clause 1 put and passed.

Clause 2: Commencement —

Mr R.S. LOVE: Can the minister explain when the provisions in this bill will come in? As he knows from the discussion we have had in this place about the urgency that the opposition places on this, we would like to see it as soon as possible. Perhaps the minister can outline how it will be addressed.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Part 1, which comprises the short title and the commencement provisions, will commence on the day that the act receives royal assent. Part 4, divisions 1 and 2, which relate to consequential amendments to the Duties Act 2008 of WA, will commence on the day after the act receives royal assent. The remainder of the act, which is, of course, the substantial part of the act, will commence on a day fixed by proclamation, and different days may be fixed for different provisions. Yesterday, we were talking about the various acts, federal and state. The date will accord with the commencement of the Family Law Amendment (Western Australia De Facto Superannuation Splitting and Bankruptcy) Act 2020. There are different time periods, but the substantial part of the act will come into play when the commonwealth act commences.

Mr R.S. LOVE: To explain the process, then, the commonwealth act is already in place.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is not proclaimed.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Is it not proclaimed?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Can I explain?

Mr R.S. LOVE: Yes, please.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is very complicated, member. Basically, they are trying to join it up. When our act is ready to be proclaimed, the commonwealth act will be proclaimed. It will happen at the same time.

Mr R.S. LOVE: There is now a new federal government. Does that in any way change any of the timing, or has there been any change of view or discussion there?

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, not at all. The commonwealth Attorney-General's Department WA officers have been discussing this over time. As I mentioned yesterday, the member raised a valid point about this being necessary legislation, but the reason there was such a delay was because our Attorney General in state government had been pushing the previous federal government to bring forward that piece of legislation that was needed for us. We could not enact our legislation until we had the commonwealth complementary legislation, which will take effect once they are both proclaimed.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 and 4 put and passed.

Clause 5: Section 7B inserted —

Mr R.S. LOVE: Thank you. I am glad I am the only one supporting the bill in the chamber at the moment! This clause will insert section 7B. Do the definitions in this proposed section align with other jurisdictions and the federal act?

Dr A.D. BUTI: The reason this legislation has been drafted in the way it has is it allows it to be more closely aligned with the same provisions in the commonwealth Family Law Act 1975. Obviously, this has been impacted, and it is complementary to the commonwealth legislation, so it was thought it would be appropriate to have our provisions based on the same definitions and language as the commonwealth legislation. That is the only legislation relevant because, as the member knows, other jurisdictions are under the commonwealth system.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 6 and 7 put and passed.

Clause 8: Section 205T amended —

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am just reading from the explanatory memorandum on clause 8, which states —

Clause 8 amends section 205T to delete the definition of “property”. The definition has been moved to section 5 and amended slightly to refer to partners and partner instead of parties and party.

Does that change in definition align with other jurisdictions? Is that change actually necessary, or is it just a matter of preference for wording?

Dr A.D. BUTI: As my previous answer, it will align more closely with the federal Family Law Act. I should add that such an amendment was put into the Family Legislation Amendment Act 2006, but that was never proclaimed. It is in line with the commonwealth legislation. Also, under the bankruptcy jurisdiction, we can now have parties to a proceeding, not parties and party.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 9: Section 205W amended —

Mr R.S. LOVE: Clause 9 will amend section 205W of the Family Court Act, “Property adjustment orders and maintenance orders”. Will this adjustment bring Western Australia in line with other jurisdictions?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I do not have a ready-made answer for the member. I imagine that it does fit in line with what we have at the commonwealth level. Really, the whole purpose of this clause is to ensure that a binding financial agreement cannot be used to defeat the valid claim of a bankruptcy trustee. That is the purpose. I do not have a direct answer, but I imagine, going on the way the bill has been drafted, it is trying to be as in line as possible with commonwealth jurisdictional legislation.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I appreciate that the minister is stepping in for another minister here. I am happy to accept that, but I would expect that, when this bill goes to the other place, the minister will be able to answer that.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 10 to 12 put and passed.

Clause 13: Section 205ZB amended —

Mr R.S. LOVE: Clause 13 relates to time limits. The time limit for a Western Australian standard application will be two years after a relationship has ended, or 12 months after a financial agreement or former financial agreement between the two parties was set aside or found to be invalid. Can the minister explain why there are two different time lines?

Dr A.D. BUTI: This amendment more closely aligns with equivalent provisions in the commonwealth Family Law Act as amended by the Family Law Amendment (Western Australia De Facto Superannuation Splitting and Bankruptcy) Act 2020. I challenge the member to repeat that without stopping! To answer the member's question, unless both parties consent to the application, the time limit will be within two years of the end of a relationship, but the 12 months will apply in situations whereby there is a financial agreement already in place that has then been set aside. That is why it is a shorter period. The longer period is for situations in which there is not a financial agreement that has been set aside.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14 put and passed.

Clause 15: Section 205ZCA inserted —

Mr R.S. LOVE: This clause will insert proposed section 205ZCA, "Powers of court in maintenance proceedings — FLA s. 74" and it has used the numerical "1" rather than the word "one". Is that some sort of convention of similar legislation or an oversight in the actual bill?

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is a question I cannot answer, and neither can my advisers. Maybe once this bill gets to the other house, we can look at whether that is an oversight. My view is that it probably has no significance, but I would rather be clear in regard to the member's question.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 16 to 39 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

[Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

Third Reading

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Finance) [1.01 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [1.01 pm]: I would like to speak just briefly at the conclusion of this rather brief consideration in detail on the Family Court Amendment Bill 2022. It was quite brief for a couple of reasons. Firstly, the Attorney General is not here and the Minister for Finance has been sitting in his chair in his place. I did not think it was necessary to interrogate the issues greatly, given that I am not a lawyer and barely understand what I am reading. It is very difficult to intelligently interrogate that. It will be better for this to be done with a couple of legal brains looking at the matters in great detail. As I said in my contribution to the second reading debate, the opposition is very supportive of this bill. Apart from a couple of little issues that have been looked at in this brief consideration, we see no reason and have no desire to hold up its progress any longer than necessary to get to the other place, where they can fully look at those issues and a couple of standing points that we discussed, which I accept can be asked again in the other house. I think this legislation will provide some relief to those people who have not been able to access superannuation splitting in the past in Western Australia. Hopefully, it will bring to an end a period of disadvantage for those people. As I outlined in the second reading debate, as did many other speakers, it is seen as unjust in a modern society for a de facto couple to be treated in such a way and we would like to see this bill proceed as quickly as possible, with, of course, due discussion around some of the more complicated issues that may be addressed.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Finance) [1.04 pm] — in reply: I thank the member for Moore for his cooperation at the consideration in detail stage of the Family Court Amendment Bill 2022. As he said, the opposition, in the second reading debate, supported the bill. It is a very important bill to very many people and goes towards removing some of the inequities as a result of not having this capacity in the Western Australian Family Court system. As mentioned yesterday by the member for Roe, this is an incredibly important bit of legal reform brought about by the Attorney General. Once again, I would like to thank the Attorney General for bringing this bill to the house. He was obviously delayed in bringing this bill to the house as we needed the commonwealth Parliament to initially move legislation. They are complementary to each other, but this is a very important bill. Thank you very much. This is very important legislation to be passed by this Parliament.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2021*Second Reading*

Resumed from 28 October 2021.

MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.05 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021. I rise bearing in mind that very similar legislation was passed by the fortieth Parliament. I spoke at length on that legislation, so there are a number of factors that I do not need to traverse in my contribution this afternoon. However, there are a couple of points worth making.

It is important to set a context in which the chamber understands the importance of an appropriate regulatory framework for a health system to operate in. I want to talk about what a good health system looks like. As residents of Western Australia, we are the beneficiaries of a world-class health system. This is a health system that delivers for people, whether they be in Esperance, Karratha, Mt Lawley or Cottesloe. It is a health system that with our per capita spend—being one of the highest per capita spends in the commonwealth and with the challenges that we face in Western Australia—we can be so proud and pleased of the efforts of our health professionals, doctors and nurses, allied health professionals and all the people whose coordinated efforts combine to deliver this world-class health system. In order to provide a world-class health system, we need those dedicated people. But we also need the right infrastructure. We need the right hospitals, the right health services and the right primary care, and we need a plan for revitalising and renewing that infrastructure and making sure that it is all in place. Then we need a vision for the future for what the health system needs to look like in the next five, 10 and 20 years. We need that vision to be one that is based upon a sustainable foundation. The fourth thing we need is good collaboration between the state government and the federal government. The reason I say that is that the way in which the provision of health services operates in Australia does not allow for one jurisdiction to be entirely responsible for the delivery of health services. There is a mixed bag. Gareth Parker recently made the point very clearly in an article in *WAtoday* that there is a mixed method of delivery of health services across Australia. That can often lead to difficulties in delivery and the shifting of blame and the shifting of responsibility. The final thing that we need to have a world-class health system, which I have spoken about frequently in the past, is the scientists, academics and researchers in those research institutes doing necessary, intellectually rigorous work to ensure that the quality of our health system remains world class, that we have the latest ideas, the latest developments and the latest technology. The final piece of the puzzle is probably good medical research.

What I want to talk about on the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021 is how it will create the legislative structure that is one of those four pillars of a good operating health system. The original version of this bill passed the house in September 2020 during the fortieth Parliament. Let me go back a step. The bill for the original Health Services Act was passed in 2016. That act was designed to modernise and reform the provision of the WA health system. That act has been successful in establishing the new governance model, which has led to greater levels of accountability and performance. However, a good government will not just rest on its laurels when it comes to making sure that the proper regulatory framework is in place. A good government will do the interrogation required to make sure that issues that are presented can be addressed in a legislative way and that those legislative amendments can be prosecuted through the Parliament.

The touchpoint that most people have with the WA health system is probably through their local hospitals. I will give the example of the constituents of the electorate of Mount Lawley. The metropolitan health services are divided into a number of different health service providers. People who live in the electorate of Mount Lawley have two relevant health service providers, the North Metropolitan Health Service, which runs both Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Osborne Park Hospital, and the East Metropolitan Health Service, which runs Royal Perth Hospital. People who live in the southern part of the electorate of Mount Lawley, in the suburbs of Mt Lawley, Coolbinia, Menora and Highgate, are in the East Metropolitan Health Service catchment area, and people who live in the northern part of the electorate, in the suburbs of Yokine, Dianella and Morley, are in the North Metropolitan Health Service catchment area.

I remember talking to people in Yokine, Tuart Hill and Dianella about Osborne Park Hospital. Osborne Park Hospital has great potential for the future because of its strategic location at the intersection of Karrinyup Road and the freeway. It is a terrific asset for the people of Mount Lawley. The government is currently investing millions of dollars into revitalising and refurbishing Osborne Park Hospital. That is in no small part due to the advocacy of the members for Kingsley and Balcatta. Osborne Park Hospital is a very important institution for the people in my electorate. Many people access the maternity services at Osborne Park Hospital because it is an intervening hospital between King Eddy's and Joondalup Health Campus. It provides a terrific service for families in the inner north. The same applies to Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. That is one of the premier tertiary hospitals in WA. It provides not only emergency services, but also a whole bunch of other services for people in the north metropolitan area.

We also have Royal Perth Hospital. Royal Perth Hospital is iconic for the people of Mount Lawley. When debate was had about who had the greatest affection and affinity for Royal Perth Hospital, both the government and the opposition tried to lay claim to looking after the future of Royal Perth Hospital. The people of Mount Lawley can

be confident that because of the number of investments that this state government has made into Royal Perth Hospital, particularly in the post-COVID environment, its future is in good hands. It has great future prospects. I want to put on the record my appreciation of the work that the CEO of East Metropolitan Health Service, Liz MacLeod, does at Royal Perth Hospital.

Although we have these fantastic existing hospitals and fantastic existing infrastructure, when we speak to people at both the East Metropolitan Health Service and North Metropolitan Health Service, they say that they want to see more time, energy, money and effort invested in infrastructure. That is why I am incredibly proud to be part of the McGowan Labor government, which has made a commitment to deliver a new women's and babies' hospital in Nedlands. The reason I want to talk about the new women's and babies' hospital is that it will complement both Perth Children's Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, which are already located at the QEII campus in Nedlands. Complaints or criticisms might be made of the government because of the challenges pertaining to the delivery of services in regional or remote Western Australia and in other parts of metropolitan Perth. However, one thing that people fail to remember when they make these criticisms is that these tertiary institutions and world-class hospitals are not there just to serve the people of Nedlands. I am sure the Labor member for Nedlands is incredibly pleased and proud that her constituents are about to get a brand new and world-class women's and babies' hospital. However, it will be a hospital for the people of not only Nedlands, but also South Perth, Yokine, Joondalup and Gidgegannup. It will be a hospital for everyone in Western Australia. It is just that from a clinical perspective, an infrastructure perspective and a planning perspective, that is the best place in the state to locate a brand new world-class women's and babies' hospital.

The planning and development of the new women's and babies' hospital will not happen in a rushed way. This government has demonstrated over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic that we will be methodical, we will be responsible and we will be deliberate. We will arrive at a conclusion for the women's and babies' hospital that will best reflect the needs and aspirations of the community of Western Australia. We will construct the new women's and babies' hospital in the way that will most readily provide a return on investment.

When it comes to building the new women's and babies' hospital, one idea that has been suggested to me is that it will provide a fantastic opportunity for us as a state government to look at whether we can recruit more women apprentices into the construction industry. What could be better than building a new women's and babies' hospital with a construction workforce that is based in Western Australia and has the experience of having built Perth Children's Hospital, and also recruiting new women into the construction industry to be part of such an iconic project? I have not raised this previously with the Minister for Health, so I hope I have not caught her by surprise, but it would be great to see more female apprentices.

Ms A. Sanderson: That has been raised with me.

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: Has it? Great. Even though it has not been raised with the minister by me, it would be great if we could encourage some programs to get more female apprentices to work in the construction industry. That is where the good infrastructure sits.

I turn now to another issue. I cannot understand why criticism is made of the government for not listening to the voices and opinions of the staff who provide our world-class health system. When this government was first elected in 2017, we implemented the Your Voice in Health survey. That survey, combined with our longstanding commitment to work constructively with the trade unions that represent health sector employees, like the United Workers Union, the Health Services Union, the Australian Medical Association and the Australian Nursing Federation, was a mechanism by which employees in the health sector could convey their hopes and aspirations, and their concerns, about the way in which the system was operating. That was a landmark development. I am flabbergasted whenever anyone says to us that because we have temporarily postponed the Your Voice in Health survey, we are not listening to what the clinicians, practitioners and health service providers are saying. That proposition completely fails to understand that we were the ones who implemented that survey in the first place. We want to hear what people who work in our health system have to say. We want to attract to and retain in our health system practitioners who are world class and of the highest quality. At precisely the right moment, that survey will continue to operate. It has been postponed, and I will come to the reasons for that shortly. Anyone who makes criticism of this government for not listening to health workers and wanting to hear what they have to say is completely wrong. They have no idea about what is going on, and they should stop their fallacious and baseless criticisms.

We need to pause the survey because we are in the middle of the biggest and most devastating worldwide pandemic we have seen for well over a century. No-one knows what the future may hold, but I am really pleased that the new federal Albanese government is committed to an Australian centre for disease control. I do not know whether as a result of climate change, globalisation or changed travelling patterns, we will see more pandemics like influenza, SARS and COVID-19. We need to make sure that we are in a position to respond to these, because we do not know when the next one might be coming. We do know that, with the right strategies, management, responses, resources and priorities, Western Australia is uniquely well placed to be able to deal with the circumstances of a global pandemic. It is hard work. The lockdowns that we endured and the vaccination mandates caused some consternation in the community, but when we think about the fact that 99 per cent of the population of Western Australia are

first and second-dose vaccinated, there is not a person who can disagree with the proposition that that is a roaring public policy success. More people have been vaccinated than wear their seatbelts in the car. It is an unprecedented success. It does not matter what one's ideological position is. It should not matter, although it seems as though it does, which political party one belongs to; and it does not matter where people come from, every single person should be able to agree and recognise that that is an unprecedented public policy success. It speaks to the strong leadership provided by the McGowan government as well as the strong community of interest in Western Australia. People in Western Australia took seriously their duty to get vaccinated, to protect their family, friends, loved ones, co-workers and colleagues, and they did it. We have an incredibly good outcome as a result.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: I have touched on the new federal government, and I have mentioned previously the mishmash of responsibilities. This has come up often during the time we have been in government. Until a couple of weeks ago, we were dealing with a Liberal–National conservative federal government that did not prioritise investment in aged and disability care. In fact, its attacks on the National Disability Insurance Scheme were shameful. In exactly the same way as the federal government was dragged kicking and screaming to a banking royal commission, so it was dragged kicking and screaming to a royal commission into aged care. The title of the interim report of that royal commission was so accurate and sublime—neglect; a one-word, simple title. During the time of the Liberal–National government, there had been chronic underinvestment in aged care, and a running down of the aged-care service providers and the aged-care sector by the commonwealth government.

A state government could quite readily say that it would not engage—that the aged-care area was a federal responsibility—and get into the blame game, the finger pointing and all the rest of it. In my view, that would be decidedly irresponsible, because there are consequences for the public health system if we lack a well-functioning aged-care sector, which I will come to in a moment. We need to be proactive, even though it is not our constitutional area of responsibility; we need to be engaged. We need to determine whether there are ways we can ameliorate the consequences of the neglect by the commonwealth government. This state government has worked constructively and collaboratively with local aged-care providers in the context of the effect of the global pandemic on the worldwide healthcare workforce and to try to ameliorate the consequences arising from the federal government's neglect.

One of our great successes is the relationship we have built up with aged-care providers. If aged-care providers cannot deliver the services necessary for their patients, that necessarily puts pressure on the state-based public health system, because those people then become patients in the public health system instead of being looked after where they should be looked after—in aged-care facilities by aged-care providers. By working collaboratively, we have tried to take some of the pressure off the public health system that has arisen as a result of the neglect of the federal government. The first reason for expressing my relief that we have a new federal government is that in the lead-up to the federal election, the Labor Party said that it would make aged care a priority, invest in aged care and ensure that proper levels of care were provided for people accessing that service. That can only be a good thing, because it will lead to reducing pressure on the WA public health system. That is the first way in which good collaboration between state and federal governments makes a difference to delivery of the health system.

The second area is the disability services sector. The Minister for Disability Services is in the chamber, and I want to commend him and the McGowan government for the work they have done with the federal government to provide some certainty and relief for the Activ Foundation and its workers. There are a number of great disability services and organisations in the electorate of Mount Lawley. The minister would be aware of the Ability Centre in Coolbinia, but he might not be aware of the Coolbinia Bombers Starkick football team, which is one of the best all-ability football teams for Auskickers in Perth. Its senior integrated team has won the grand final six times in a row. I mention that because the Leader of the House and I were able to go and see Matt from the Starkickers on Sunday. He was very excited that the minister and I knew who Mark McGowan was. But I digress. I have a photo and a card for Matt, which I look forward to giving him next time I am down at the Coolbinia Bombers.

Disability services were under attack from the former commonwealth government. Again, if disability services are not provided and funded by the commonwealth government, it puts unnecessary pressure on the state's public health system. I welcome the election of the commonwealth government and its commitment to reinvest in the NDIS. I am very excited to see that Bill Shorten is now the minister responsible. Like compulsory superannuation, Medicare and other institutions of Australia's democratic settlement, the NDIS will become one of the features we see making a material difference to people's wellbeing and livelihoods over the next 20 to 40 years. A commonwealth government that is committed to investing properly in aged care and disability will take pressure off the public health system.

I have just touched on this in mentioning Medicare, but the third area that the commonwealth government has an obligation to take care of is primary health—general practitioners. The number of times I have had people say to me that, faced with the prospect of going to a GP and paying the gap, they go to an emergency department to get the service paid for by the state government is phenomenal. It is a fundamental failing of the policy framework and policy setting when people are motivated to go to the most expensive option in the community to get treatment. Policies like having our urgent care clinics and encouraging GPs to be close to our tertiary hospitals—these sorts of things—and collaboration with a right-minded commonwealth government will only be beneficial to the people

of Western Australia because it will take pressure off our WA health system, aged care, disability care and primary care. That was the second point that I wanted to make—I suspect I am going to run out of time—in terms of the right framework. We need the right infrastructure, the right framework and the right staff.

The other thing we need is a plan for the future. We need a vision and an idea of what we want our health system to look like. Members opposite like to say that we inherited a rolled-gold health system. I do not know how many times I will need to say this, but I will continue to say it for as long as they maintain that we inherited a rolled-gold health system—we did not! What we faced was a spiralling problem that, had it been left unchecked, would have gone out of control. It would have had incredible fiscal consequences for the state budget, and it would have left gaps in the provision of services all over the place. Immediately upon forming government, the former Minister for Health initiated the sustainable health review.

One of the criticisms I have with the Gareth Parker article that I referenced recently is that in that article he said that the recommendations from the sustainable health review had not been adopted or implemented. I am sorry, but that is just wrong. Some of the recommendations have a time frame of between five and 10 years. The review was designed to put our world-class health system on a solid and sustainable foundation for the next 10 to 15 years, and one of the things that we need to keep in mind is that there was a great deal of energy, effort and enthusiasm placed into the formulation of the sustainable health review. Plenty of stakeholders, organisations, peak groups and health consumers participated in this process to say what they think our health system should look like over the next three, five, 10 and 20 years. The problem that we faced was that the *Sustainable health review: Final report to the Western Australian government* was handed down in 2019 and then in 2020 we moved into the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the context in which Gareth Parker criticised the government is completely unfair; we had started implementing some of the recommendations, but other recommendations are going to take a while to implement because we focused on our response to the global pandemic.

The sustainable health review, I believe, provides the government with a road map for moving towards a more community-orientated, patient-focused and financially sustainable health system. Part of the problem that members opposite have—it is a shame that they are not here—is that we are continuing to increase our investment in health. An incredible budget was handed down just over a month ago, with billions of dollars invested into health. What members opposite hate or do not understand or cannot grapple with is the fact that the amount of money we are spending on health continues to grow but it does so in a sustainable way, whereas the trajectory that we inherited was anything but sustainable. The trajectory that we inherited was a health system that was going to cost more and more yet not deliver outcomes for patients. We now have a community-oriented, patient-focused health system with a brilliant road map that is the sustainable health review, which so many people worked very hard on putting into place.

The final point that I want to make is that I want to give a shout-out to all the medical research institutes in WA. The Telethon Kids Institute, Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research, Royal Perth Hospital Research Foundation, Asbestos Diseases Research Institute—those guys are doing incredible, world-leading research that maintains our cutting-edge academic understanding of how best to provide health services to consumers in WA. We could not be in the place that we are in were it not for the fact that these research institutes are part of the WA landscape. They need our support and they also need support from the private sector. We need philanthropy, and we need support from the federal government.

One of the things that I would love to see from the new federal government is an equivalent proportion of funding coming to our institutes based on population. We have about 10 per cent of the nation's population; we should be getting at least 10 per cent of the medical research funding from the commonwealth government. This government—as I said in contributions made previously—has already made a significant contribution and will make ongoing contributions to our medical research future fund initiative.

Those four things of good framework, good infrastructure, good staff and good future research combine to provide Western Australia with a world-class health system. This legislation is a brilliant piece of the puzzle because it will bring the legislative framework up to date. I commend the government for this legislation, and I commend the Minister for Health for the outstanding job that she is doing.

MS E.J. KELSBIE (Warren–Blackwood) [1.35 pm]: I am pleased to rise to speak on the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021. I previously worked for the WA Country Health Service and was also a regional manager for the statewide telehealth service, and I understand the importance of contemporary governance models. Improving and updating the Health Services Act is important. The bill will amend the Health Services Act 2016, and, in doing so, it will refine and improve the act's effectiveness and create a contemporary and decentralised governance model for the WA health system. The bill will amend the functions and powers of the Minister for Health, enabling the minister to delegate functions to not only department CEOs, but also an employee of the department, a staff member of a health service provider, a health service provider or a prescribed person or class of person. I support these amendments that will remove administration burdens to enhance the agility of systems and provide greater flexibility within WA Health.

The bill also seeks to amend the functions and powers of the Department of Health's CEO and health service providers to improve the functioning of the WA health system. It will enable greater flexibility and improved effectiveness of certain functions and powers of health service providers. In my time at the WA Country Health Service, I worked

on the Albany Health Campus development project. I had responsibility for communications, technology and security portfolios. It was an enormous job that was complex and had moving parts. I worked across the health campus with most departments—from mental health to aged care and from maternity to the emergency department. We looked at creating a contemporary health service with contemporary models of service delivery and innovative technology, and I worked closely with the regional director on the communications strategies for the new health campus. I worked on the detailed design of mobile communications within the health campus setting, enabling technologies like computers on wheels, or COWs as they are called, for ED. I worked with management and staff on the new models of service delivery for security across the campus. We were based out of a donga at the back of the old Albany Hospital. I was part of a reasonably small but well-resourced team, working with the health executive, medical professionals and administration teams to create a secure, contemporary and tech-enabled health campus.

My time at WACHS gave me a profound appreciation for the importance of maintenance projects being run efficiently and effectively. This bill will establish a new framework for the delivery of capital works and maintenance works. The new framework will clarify the roles and responsibilities for the delivery of capital works at each level of the system and will provide for greater flexibility. The framework will also enable clinical commissioning to be carried out.

The act clarifies roles and responsibilities at each level of the system and ensures that each health service provider is held responsible and accountable for the delivery of health services within their designated areas. By abolishing some administration burdens, the act will now function with fewer hurdles and more impact than ever before. Changes to the act will also ensure that we provide a contemporary governance model for the WA health system and ensure the act can be relied upon to drive performance and accountability and bring decision-making closer to patient care.

Modernising and refining the Health Services Act is just one way we are improving health outcomes for Western Australians, and I am proud to be part of a government that prioritises investing in health services and puts WA patients first. As a government, we understand it is our role to have robust, efficient and well-resourced systems in place to allow our healthcare workers to put patients first and do whatever they can to ensure that, at times of often heightened emotion and at times of great challenge, patients and their loved ones can be cared for and supported.

I am proud to be part of a government focused on ensuring that the health and wellbeing of people in our state and those caring for them—doctors, nurses, midwives and healthcare providers—are put front and centre. Under the McGowan Labor government, hospitals and mental health services in WA received a record \$2.5 billion investment in the recent state budget. This is the biggest-ever investment in the WA public health system. It is something I am incredibly proud of. It brings the total new investment since the last budget to \$5.7 billion.

The investment includes: \$1.6 billion in new COVID-19 response and recovery measures to keep WA safe; \$630 million in additional hospital services spending; a \$252 million emergency department reform package, with a suite of 17 initiatives; and \$223 million in new health infrastructure investment, bringing the total to \$1.6 billion, in addition to the \$1.8 billion new women's and babies' hospital that I know many regional families and women will very much appreciate. There is \$181 million in additional investments in mental health, including \$47 million towards an immediate response to the report of the Ministerial Taskforce into Public Mental Health Services for Infants, Children and Adolescents aged 0–18 Years in Western Australia. There is also \$158 million for health and mental health initiatives in WA's regions. Over the past two years to March 2022, the WA health workforce has increased by 15.6 per cent, including an additional 1 456 nursing and 512 medical FTE, principally doctors.

Mental health, alcohol and other drug services have been bolstered with \$1.3 billion, which is an almost 13 per cent increase on last year's budget. As part of this new investment, the Mental Health Commission will be allocated an additional \$181 million for new and expanded mental health, alcohol and other drug services. This increase includes \$47.3 million to respond to recommendations of the task force looking into infant, child and adolescent mental health, including \$18.5 million to expand the child and adolescent mental health service frontline workforce across seven regions by 11.6 FTE; \$12.9 million for additional peer support workers; \$10.5 million to deliver a two-year virtual support service for at-risk children; and \$1.3 million for mental health workforce development initiatives.

Mental health services—in particular, services that support young people in our communities—are incredibly important. It is an area that I will always advocate for. Young people are our future. They deserve the best mental health services we can provide. These can come in many different guises. As the member for Warren–Blackwood, I am really pleased to support some of these organisations in my community, including the Community Mental Health Action Team—or CoMHAT, as it is called—with its development of the Boyup Brook youth zone. In collaboration with the WA Mental Health Commission, local government and local community groups, and with support from health and education providers and the local police, CoMHAT took a lead role in creating the Boyup Brook community wellbeing plan. I am proud to be supporting this plan with my election commitment of \$60 000 to help create a dedicated youth zone in the town.

The community wellbeing plan identified the significant need of youth in the area for a sense of belonging and connection. As we all know, for preventive mental health work it is critical for young people to feel connected. The investment of \$60 000 has gone towards creating a dedicated youth zone where young people in Boyup Brook can come together, be seen and heard and foster deeper connections within their community. The donga has just

been positioned, and a youth worker has been recruited to work in that space and run different programs for the young crew in the town. Fundamentally, young people are coming in and talking about what services they would like and how they would like those services to be delivered. It is an all-of-community support. CoMHAT also has a mountain bike initiative, which helps enable young people from Boyup Brook to travel further afield, get involved in outdoor exercise and maintain connections for positive mental health, particularly intergenerationally.

As I said, advocating for youth mental health is incredibly important to me, and telehealth has a huge part to play in the delivery of health services, including mental health, across our great state. The provision of services close to home by those in our local communities is also important to me. It is one of the reasons I am really proud to support the Blackwood Youth Action group, based out of Bridgetown. The group delivers services to young people across Warren–Blackwood, in Manjimup, Nannup, Pemberton and Northcliffe as well as Bridgetown. This group goes above and beyond to get kids engaged and to assist them to feel a sense of belonging.

I look forward to seeing kids use the vehicle that I was able to support with a \$50 000 election commitment. It will assist young people to get their driving hours up and improve their driving skills. Not everyone has access to a vehicle to enable them to gain these skills, nor does everybody have a role model to assist them with getting their hours up. This group recently called out for volunteers in the community to assist with this amazing community initiative.

We recently presented a \$28 000 Lotterywest grant to this group, which will go towards an organisational review to improve its service delivery to young people in the region. I will always be a strong voice for the youth in rural and regional towns in Warren–Blackwood. Youth are the heart and soul of our communities, and we want to do everything we can to ensure that young people have every opportunity to foster a healthy mindset and build on their sense of place and belonging.

The approach of the McGowan Labor government in prioritising investment in health services as well as modernising and supporting health legislation ensures that we continue to put the physical and mental health of people in our state first. I was very pleased to see a \$200 million investment in the redevelopment of Bunbury Hospital at South West Health Campus. When complete, this will be the biggest hospital in regional WA. It will be a healthcare hub for the entire south west region.

In April, the WA Country Health Service launched an award-winning midwifery group practice model in Margaret River. This provides expectant women with holistic care based on trust and relationship building, with women having the same midwife throughout pregnancy, birth and postnatal care. It is an amazing initiative. It is also the fifth to be delivered in the south west, joining Bunbury, Bridgetown, Collie and Manjimup, providing greater maternal and newborn care options for local families.

Having been a regional manager for the statewide telehealth service, I have a really solid understanding of the complex moving beast that is our healthcare system. I am now proudly part of a government that is able to ensure relevant changes are made to constantly improve operations within the WA health system. The Health Services Amendment Bill will provide updates to a broad range of matters, most amendments being administrative in nature. They include powers of inquiry, information use and disclosure, service agreements, notices of financial difficulty and delegation of powers. It will improve the management of health service provider employees through a range of amendments to the employment-related sections of the act. It will also establish a more comprehensive and effective scheme for the recovery of fees and charges for patients who receive treatment for compensable injuries. The WA health system's land management and ownership issues are complex. This bill will assist to rectify some of these complexities. The bill will clarify roles and responsibilities at each level of the system and is intended to ensure each health service provider is held responsible and accountable. I strongly support these changes that build upon the improvements made by the Health Services Act 2016 by refining the act's effectiveness and strengthening the operations of the WA health system.

I would like to thank the medical professionals and support staff of WA Health—WA Country Health Service staff especially—for working hard to help keep our communities safe, especially throughout a worldwide pandemic. This bill will also make consequential amendments to the Mental Health Act 2014, the Motor Vehicles (Catastrophic Injuries) Act 2016, the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre Act 1966 and the University Medical School, Teaching Hospitals, Act 1955. I commend the bill to the house.

MS C.M. TONKIN (Churchlands) [1.52 pm]: I rise in support of the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021. Many years ago, so long ago that it no longer features on my CV, I worked in the review division of the Public Sector Management Commission in Queensland. Our remit was to review the management of government departments and agencies, and to make recommendations for improvements that would increase their efficiency, effectiveness and performance. It is a fairly nerdy field, but very important because all the guts of the health administration and all the guts of the administration of public sector agencies are fundamental to them delivering the services that are required in the community. For this reason, the Health Services Amendment Bill is right up my alley. The amendments that are being made are intended to ensure the effectiveness of the act in providing a contemporary and devolved governance model for the Western Australian health system and to ensure that the act can be relied upon to drive performance and accountability and bring decision-making closer to the patient. It is all about improving the results for the patient and delivering a world-class system.

Our public health system is under enormous pressure. I have said this before here, but I think it is worth repeating—I know that my good colleague the member for Mount Lawley touched on all these issues—that the demand on our public health system has increased astronomically. There are a number of factors that contribute to this. It is a complex system and there is a complex interaction between our health system —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): Minister for Police.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you; I am sorry.

Ms C.M. TONKIN: There is a complex interaction between our health system here in Western Australia, the private health system and the system that is delivered through commonwealth government programs. However, demand on our system has arisen for a number of reasons and I think these are worth mentioning. There has been an enormous increase in demand on our emergency departments, and this is because of failures by the previous commonwealth government to adequately resource general practices. There are significant fee gaps for people visiting GPs. As my good colleague the member for Mount Lawley pointed out, that sheer cost has driven many people into the public system where they know they can get the best possible care and get it for free. That is a huge driver, particularly in the context of the rising cost of living. GPs do not generally offer after-hours care so people will go after-hours to the emergency department at the local public hospital. A lack of GPs in the system has also driven people to go where they can readily get care and get it quite quickly. The whole issue of resourcing of GPs is really a commonwealth responsibility but we have to respond here in Western Australia and do what we can to make sure that our emergency departments are operating as efficiently as possible in order to smooth some of that demand into the system.

Of course, a substantial number of aged and disabled people who are awaiting transition into more appropriate care facilities are taking up acute beds in our public hospitals. This, again, is the result of policy failure on the part of the previous federal government. Because those beds are not available to the general population coming through EDs, we end up with ambulance ramping, with people awaiting movement out of emergency departments and into beds. This is an Australia-wide phenomenon and is a result of funding failures in aged care and the National Disability Insurance Scheme. I am so relieved that Hon Bill Shorten is now the Minister for the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The federal government is well and truly stepping up to address the problems in our aged-care system and has made some solid election commitments around this.

Private health insurance is also becoming increasingly unaffordable for people. It means that we have many more people coming into the public system seeking elective surgery. This is another policy failure at a federal level that needs to be addressed.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, can I just indicate there are a number of members walking in front of the member for Churchlands without getting permission. If you could be considerate of your colleague.

Ms C.M. TONKIN: There are increasing numbers on the waiting list for elective surgery. That is because there are increasing numbers of people opting out of private health insurance and opting in to seeking elective surgery through the public system. Our system is responding. The Minister for Health recently highlighted that although we have lots more people awaiting elective surgery, the actual wait time for individuals for elective surgery has increased only marginally. This is a very important point because we are always responding to this increased demand on our hospital system.

We have had critical staff shortages in our public health system. In Western Australia, we have been very dependent upon medical staff and nurses from overseas coming into our state. That was entirely disrupted because of COVID and the restrictions on international travel imposed by the federal government. We are now embarking upon recruitment of additional staff from not only overseas but also within Western Australia, and we are employing record numbers of nurses and doctors. In this pandemic, which is ongoing, we are dealing with the diversion of our health workers to support testing, vaccinations and infection control in hospitals. This slows everything down and means we have less staffing resource in the public hospital system.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3071.]

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

TONKIN HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE — ELLENBROOK

408. **Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:**

I refer the Premier to the new \$100 billion Tonkin Highway interchange, north of Ellenbrook, announced on 8 May 2022 by the Minister for Transport. Given this new project is valued at \$100 million, was it assessed by Infrastructure WA prior to the funding decision being made?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The advice I have received from the Minister for Transport is that it was a commitment made by the Morrison–Joyce government.

TONKIN HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE — ELLENBROOK

409. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Legislation that was passed in this house requires any contract over \$100 million to be assessed regardless of the funding source. I ask again: has the project been assessed by Infrastructure WA?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition should probably ask the Minister for Transport about commitments within her portfolio. Infrastructure WA was established by this government; it was something we took to the 2017 election. It is working well and producing our state infrastructure strategy, which is the first component of what Infrastructure WA does. I understand the commitment the member is referring to was made by the Morrison–Joyce government.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Do you actually wonder why you are in the position you are when you ask me questions about commitments made by the Morrison–Joyce government?

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I realise Barnaby Joyce did not talk to you—for good reason—but you have come in here and asked me about funding commitments made by the federal government as though we should object to them. We actually welcomed them. The Nationals WA now do not support that. We get the commonwealth government to pay for things, and you object to them. I do not get you! Back when you were in government, Colin Barnett refused to talk to the commonwealth government. We got a federal Liberal government to fund countless billions of dollars of expenditure here, and you object when the federal government funds things here and say, “Why aren’t you stopping it?” We often have projects funded to the tune of 80–20 in regional WA—projects members opposite could not even dream of, including tier 3 rail lines. The National Party closed down tier 3 rail lines, but we got the new National Party, then led by Barnaby Joyce, the former Leader of the National Party, to fund things, and then you object to them. Is it any wonder no-one takes any notice of the Deputy Leader of the National Party!

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

410. Ms C.M. COLLINS to the Minister for Industrial Relations:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government’s commitment to supporting the health and safety of all Western Australian workers. Can the minister update the house on how the government is promoting the wellbeing of workers and strengthening protections against workplace bullying and sexual harassment?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

I thank the member very much. I appreciate the question. I know the member’s deep interest in advancing the rights of working people.

I am pleased to say that this government has put through Parliament and brought into law the Industrial Relations Amendment Bill 2021, one component of which is to provide jurisdiction to the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission to address workplace bullying and sexual harassment for all employees covered by the state industrial relations system. This is an important reform. It mirrors provisions in the Fair Work Act. It makes it clear that 85 per cent of businesses in Western Australia—employers and employees in Western Australia’s private sector workforce—are covered by the federal Fair Work Act, which includes all workers in the mining and oil and gas industry. But we want to provide benefits and protections for workers for whom we have responsibility in small businesses, so we have included in the legislation a provision that allows workers who suffer from workplace bullying and sexual harassment the opportunity to take that matter to the state Industrial Relations Commission. The legislation also provides for five days’ unpaid family and domestic violence leave. We note that the Fair Work Commission has now awarded a superior entitlement, and we are committed now to go back and examine whether we can improve on the provisions in this new legislation. I have asked my agency to consider whether it should be done by general order. As minister, I have a right to seek a general order from the commission that would apply to all workers covered by the state jurisdiction, rather than needing to vary awards separately or come back and amend the legislation. I have asked them to consider that, because at the time that we passed the legislation, five days’ unpaid family and domestic violence leave was considered a proper benchmark, but we now recognise that the community has moved on. We are seeing how we can improve on what has already been provided.

Noting that Western Australian employers have had no doubt since 1993, when the decision was handed down by the former Equal Opportunity Tribunal—now part of the State Administrative Tribunal—in its decision in the quite famous case *Horne and another v Press Clough Joint Venture* that employers have the sole responsibility to manage sexual harassment in workplaces. I congratulate the Australian Human Rights Commission, which has the principal responsibility in managing sexual harassment amongst employers, including all those in the mining industry and the oil and gas industry, as the regulator for incorporated businesses. In Western Australia, through the WorkSafe Commissioner, we have included a code of practice for workplace behaviour covering misconduct, prolonged

conflict discrimination and harassment, and sexual harassment and bullying; a code of practice on psychological hazards in the workplace, including violence, aggression, fatigue, burnout, stress and trauma; and a code of practice on violence and aggression at work that provides guidance for workers who may have been exposed to physical assault, verbal abuse, threats, intimidation and harassment to make sure that employers fully understand their obligations so there are no longer any excuses for employers failing to meet their responsibilities in those areas.

I also let members know that, along with the Minister for Women's Interests, we have announced the appointment of Elizabeth Shaw, a prominent person in gender diversity issues, to review the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety's protocols. I make it clear that in response to the increased responsibilities of the WorkSafe Commissioner when he became responsible for the Mines Safety Inspectorate on 31 March, we will now have that external review of the role of DMIRS in handling complaints that might be received.

I also note that in conjunction with the Minister for Women's Interests and the Minister for Mental Health, we provided funding to a range of organisations to support mental health best practice in workplaces. That includes the WA Centre for Rural Health, the South West Aboriginal Medical Service, Juniper, People Diagnostix and Pivot Support Services, which will share around \$500 000 a year over the next four years. That is in addition to the grants we have provided to Lifeline Western Australia for its Resourceful Mind program, to Steering Healthy Minds in the transport industry and to Mates in Construction.

We know that the work is never done in this space, but with a Labor government, workers know for the first time that they have a government that is on their side. We want to continue to stand with victims and will provide whatever resourcing and assistance that we can. It is always traumatic when employees are being bullied at work. I know many people on this side of the chamber, and on that side of the chamber, had prior involvement in assisting people who were harassed at work, as either trade union officials, lawyers or workers in the not-for-profit-sector. I am pleased that as a Labor government, and as a minister on behalf of the McGowan government, we are able to continue that good work that so many people have been involved with over their working life.

Visitor — Sam Moyle

The SPEAKER: I would like to welcome to the Speaker's gallery this afternoon a guest of the member for Scarborough, Mr Sam Moyle, who is the cofounder of Ocean Heroes Australia. Welcome.

LANDGATE OFFICES — SALE

411. **Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Planning:**

I refer to an article by Hamish Hastie in *The Sydney Morning Herald* analysing the sale of the Landgate offices in the Midland town centre that reported the property sold for \$17.3 million. Industry sources have indicated that the rentable area of 13 700 square metres of office space would normally be valued at around \$68 million. Even if we discount an estimated \$10.5 million in forecast building upgrades, the available information would indicate that the government has sold this office space at a discount of over \$40 million.

- (1) Will the minister table the financial analysis that supports the sale of this asset, including justification for the claim of a \$12 million saving over the course of the lease?
- (2) How does the minister justify the estimated annual rental cost of around \$5.7 million, given that normal rental yield of around five per cent for buildings of this value with a long-term government tenant, which includes a \$10.5 million upgrade, would normally be around \$1.4 million a year?

The SPEAKER: Minister, before you answer, I would like to give the Leader of the Liberal Party some guidance. That was a very long preamble that contained a lot of argument. Some of that argument could have been framed into questions. Of course, had you framed it into questions, you would have had way too many questions to make it a suitable question for question time. I ask you and those who assist you to consider that. That preamble was way too long; it contained considerable argument; and had you wanted to challenge some of that or ascertain or make a point, you could have asked those questions. You have now asked a long series of questions, but I think the issue you are raising is clear, and on that basis I will ask the minister to respond.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

- (1)–(2) This was a proposal that was put through the problem and opportunity statement process and assessed primarily by the Department of Finance. In the assessment, it looked at a number of different factors. It looked at the cost of refurbishing the Landgate building in the future, the cost of current accommodation for the public servants and the fact that the building was significantly underutilised. Through all that, it came up with an analysis.

Members on the other side of the chamber should not be shocked by these types of arrangements. In fact, the previous Liberal–National government entered into similar arrangements for the refurbishment of the Treasury building in the CBD. I am advised that the most costly accommodation across the entire public sector is some leases for the old Treasury building in the CBD. People could argue whether that was value for money. But if people look at the whole precinct, they will see the redevelopment that has occurred

and the reactivation of that place. The old Treasury building—I think it had Lands as well—was left dormant for many, many years. As I understand, a premium price was applied to the accommodation and taxpayers are paying a premium on accommodation in that building as part of the total redevelopment. Is the member arguing that should not have happened?

Dr D.J. Honey: No. I am arguing this is not a total redevelopment.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Is the member arguing that should not have happened, because I think he is.

In relation to all these types of projects, the most costly accommodation with one of the longest terms for lease costs is that building that the previous government entered into. Does anyone argue when looking at that building and say it should not have done that reactivation? Of course not, because the entire product is of benefit to the entire community.

A cost-benefit analysis was done. It was undertaken through the market-led proposal process, led at the time by the Department of Finance through a steering committee independent of ministers, and a recommendation was made. Where was the former government's analysis for the Treasury building? Where was its analysis?

Dr D.J. Honey: I wasn't here at the time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member was not here. As I said, the member makes a lot of comments about these types of projects, but the reality is, just as we saw with the Treasury building, which was empty, dormant and subject to graffiti and other impacts for many, many years—this is something we never did under our government—the former Liberal-National government entered into a relationship with a developer to pay a premium price for accommodation for a product that benefits the entire city and the entire community. That is what the former government did. The member needs to read the media statement on the Treasury building—I did that recently—because it states a premium price per square metre was being paid for that accommodation. The member is saying that Midland does not deserve any redevelopment. That is what he is saying: it does not deserve any redevelopment. I am saying what the former Liberal-National government put in its media statement was that a premium price was paid on that accommodation.

In relation to this property, it was done independently. The steering committee recommended it and then it was adopted. As I said, we looked at these factors: the age of the existing building; the fact that it was underutilised because of changes that have happened at Landgate; the price of accommodation in other areas for new agencies moving in; and the cost of redeveloping the building alone if it were undertaken by taxpayers. A number of different factors were put into play, and the recommendation and decision made at the time was that this project should be supported. It means that public servants will return to Midland. It means there will be greater activation of the Midland area. It means there will be accommodation for public servants in that area. It will support the whole Metronet precinct and the building of a brand new station. I think the idea of, again, revitalising a suburban asset for public servants and efficiently using space is actually a good outcome.

As I said, the member can explain the premium price that taxpayers are paying because of the deal done by the former Liberal-National government and then come back into this place.

LANDGATE OFFICES — SALE

412. **Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Planning:**

I have a supplementary question. Is the minister's refusal to release details just another example of lack of transparency by this government?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

Let us go to the issue of transparency. Members may recall that when we won government, we inherited two projects—the Perth Freight Link, which we soon made sure did not happen, and the contract for the Forrestfield-Airport Link. We sought copies of those two business cases, in particular for the FAL because we were building it! We wanted to know the assumptions underpinning it. We wrote to the opposition for two business cases. I have lost count of how many opposition leaders there were, but we kept writing to opposition leaders asking, "Can we have access to your business cases? You are no longer in government. They are proprietary of the previous cabinet and I am not allowed to access them; can we have copies of the business cases?" What did the opposition say? No. The Liberal and National Parties were no longer in government and we were delivering one of the projects and they refused to provide access to them. Why would they do that, given they were no longer in government and we were delivering one project? The opposition may have assisted us with those projects, but it refused to do that.

If members look at our website and the summary of project definition plans that we display, they will see we go through Infrastructure Australia and Infrastructure Western Australia. We have been operating under Infrastructure Australia for our entire term, because for most of our projects we have sought and received commonwealth funding—again, something the former Liberal-National government never did—and we had to submit significant business cases to get that funding through the commonwealth. We go through that process. We work through all the processes and we make good decisions on behalf of the taxpayers of WA.

CASINO LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (BURSWOOD CASINO) BILL 2022

413. Ms C.M. TONKIN to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's decisive response to the Perth Casino Royal Commission and the government's commitment to holding the casino operator to account. Can the minister update the house on how the Casino Legislation Amendment (Burswood Casino) Bill 2022 that was introduced today will address the recommendations of the royal commission, and outline to the house how the legislation will improve regulation and transparency and restore integrity to the state's casino?

Dr A.D. BUTI replied:

I thank the member for Churchlands for her question and interest in all matters to do with regulation and good governance.

As the member mentioned, and as everyone in the house would know, this government had the courage to launch the royal commission into the casino. The Perth Casino Royal Commission report came down earlier this year and it contains about 1 000 pages and 59 recommendations. At the time, I said that we would be responding in a comprehensive manner to all 59 recommendations. Some will take longer than others because we are serious about ensuring our response is measured and goes to improving how the casino operates and improves the regulation of gaming in Western Australia.

As the member said, I introduced legislation into Parliament this morning. That goes to addressing some of the recommendations of the royal commission report, improving the regulator in Western Australia and ensuring that we have an independent chair of the regulatory body, which is the Gaming and Wagering Commission. We will also appoint an independent monitor who will monitor the remediation plan for Perth Casino. That is very, very important, going forward. Once the legislation is passed, an independent monitor will be in place who will monitor the remediation plan. We have also put in the legislation cost-recovery measures for the cost of the independent monitor. The taxpayer will not pay for it; the casino operator will pay for the cost of the independent monitor, which I think is very, very important. Also, the legislation will give the minister greater powers to direct the regulator and give the regulator powers to direct the casino operator to ensure that it is operating in a manner that the public of Western Australia would expect.

The whole idea behind the legislation is to restore integrity to the casino operator in Perth to ensure that it is operating in a first-class manner. That is what we expect as a government and that is what the community expects. It will also have proper governance. Integrity, governance and proper gaming operation models are matters that are covered in the legislation that was introduced into Parliament today. I look forward to the debate that will begin when Parliament resumes after the parliamentary recess. It is important that this legislation passes as soon as possible so we can appoint the independent monitor and independent chair of the regulatory body. At the same time, we will progress the other recommendations and respond to them when we consider it is appropriate and when we have formed a considered view on the other recommendations. This is good legislation that was introduced into Parliament today, and I look forward to the support of the opposition.

EAST PERTH POWER STATION

414. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to the \$112 million being spent by the government on the East Perth power station and the Auditor General's recent report and recommendation that the government regularly report the status of projects to improve transparency to both Parliament and the public.

- (1) In light of the Auditor General's report, will the Premier table the full cost of works planned and undertaken by the state government at the East Perth power station site?
- (2) Will the Premier regularly report on this project as it progresses, as recommended by the Auditor General?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(2) The costs incurred by the state are in the budget. The cost of this project to remediate this site has been in the last few budgets. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to open the budget papers, she will find it. That is where the costs are contained.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am trying to answer the question, Madam Speaker.

All the costs are in the budget. To explain the project to the Leader of the Opposition, an expression of interest process was begun by the last government that we inherited when we arrived in office. I think it came out with around five potential proponents to redevelop the site. The site has sat there now for 42 years. It is an old power station in the middle of the city. Think about that. If this was New York, Sydney or Melbourne, it would have been redeveloped decades ago and something would have been done about the site. Nothing has been done for 42 years—42 years! The damage from the war in East Berlin was fixed in less time than that! It has sat there like that. Basically, the

Gallop government did some remediation work worth around \$16 million, I think, to make sure that the walls did not fall over and so forth. It is an amazing historic building. It is one of the only remaining ones in the world of its type. I think the Battersea Power Station in the heart of London, which is now some sort of gallery, and the East Perth power station are the only remaining ones of their type that were built back in the early parts of the last century; all the rest were demolished. The last government decided on an EOI process, this government continued with that and a proponent was selected. Obviously, it is a very, very difficult site because it needs remediation and all sorts of services, such as electricity and gas infrastructure on the site that needs to be moved, so it has a cost attached to it. That is the reality. But once that is done and the site is redeveloped, the total cost for the private sector to redevelop the site, I am advised, will be around \$1 billion.

We will get \$1 billion of spend on that site, including on office accommodation and public access to the old power station that will include all sorts of public art and amenity and so forth, and other activity on the site, whether it is residential or otherwise. At the end of the day, the government has decided—and I personally think—that is a great thing, otherwise that site will sit there for another 40 years, rotting and an embarrassment. People see it when they come in from the airport. It would not stand in Sydney, Melbourne, London, New York or wherever it might be, and it should not stand like that in Perth, and so we have come up with a process to resolve the issue. All the costs are contained within the budget. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to see the costs, open the budget.

EAST PERTH POWER STATION

415. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Thank you, Premier. Given that the Premier said it has been 42 years, can he advise when the sale is due to be completed and construction will begin?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The issues are being worked through. There have been some issues, obviously, because it is a difficult site. We have been working on it for five years now to get to a conclusion. I have indicated to the agencies involved that I want to get to a conclusion as soon as possible so that work on the remediation of the site in particular and the redevelopment of the power station can occur as soon as possible. The relevant agencies have been advised of that. I understand that they are working with the proponents to get to that position. Once it is done—it may well take years to get to completion—that site will be marvellous. It will be an adornment to the city. It will be a bit like when going to the heart of the world's great cities. People will be attracted to it and will want to experience and enjoy it. That will be a good thing. It is often quite incredible how appealing and attractive old buildings like that are when they are redone, particularly as it is on the river with access for cyclists and pedestrians and what have you, into a part of Perth that has been neglected. I personally think that is a good project, particularly as a state government investment, because it will enliven around 10 times the investment in private sector development. The value of the private sector development is around 10 times the state government's investment. That is not a bad thing. It is a relatively good investment for a state government to get that level of activity from building and construction and then accommodation and public access for its investment. Personally, I think that is a good investment. If the Leader of the Opposition has a different view, she should say so.

SURF PARK — JANDAKOT

416. Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE to the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to attracting world-class facilities to Western Australia and to unlocking economic and employment opportunities. Can the minister update the house on the progress of the new surf park in Jandakot, and can the minister outline to the house how this government's significant investment in local transport infrastructure will complement this exciting new facility?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

The member for Scarborough could have asked this question, too!

I enjoyed being out in Cockburn with the members for Cockburn and Jandakot a few days ago, when we announced a key milestone in the development of the surf park here in WA. This is a significant project. It will see investment of over \$100 million from the private sector proponent in that area. Aventura is progressing its planning and consultation and moving through the development approval process to build what will be the biggest surf park in the Southern Hemisphere. It is aiming to have it ready for the summer of 2025. There are a lot of different modes for surfers. I understand that there is a beast mode, members; I am not sure what that means! It will not only attract tourists from interstate and overseas, but also help Western Australians who want to learn to surf, or those surfers who just want a regular, reliable wave, who will be able to go to the surf park and enjoy the surfing. There are nearly 300 000 recreational surfers in WA. A similar project has been built in Melbourne that is now doing very, very well. As I said, this park will be bigger and hopefully even more successful than those over east.

The good thing about the location of this project, as members will know, is it is in very close proximity to the Cockburn train station. It will link in for those in the eastern, northern and southern suburbs, with both the Thornlie–Cockburn

rail link, of course, the rail links north and south, the new upgrades that we have just made to Armadale Road, and also the new Armadale to North Lake Road bridge, so our transport infrastructure is very much facilitating developments. That is very similar to what we are doing across the state—transport projects are facilitating developments.

On that note, I want to refer to a question that was asked by the member for Moore, the first question in this place, in which he referred to an investment for the North Ellenbrook interchange. Of course, that is necessary to help unlock homes for Western Australians. Again, with housing being such a challenge for all of us, we want to create new housing opportunities. I refer to the joint media release between the then Prime Minister, Scott Morrison, Barnaby Joyce, Michaelia Cash and Paul Fletcher, who announced the funding for the North Ellenbrook interchange in early March. They went out and announced their contribution to the North Ellenbrook interchange. I do not know whether that went through Infrastructure Australia, but they have given \$50 million to the state. There is also \$25 million from the private sector. The net cost to WA taxpayers will be \$25 million for a \$100 million interchange that will unlock land and housing opportunities for everybody. I know that the Leader of the Opposition went to Sydney to reconnect with Barnaby Joyce and the National Party in New South Wales. Maybe they have talked about this project—I do not know! But I support the investment that was made by the federal government and the fact that, again, as it has been in the past and will be in the future, we will be there fighting for federal government funds for our projects, because we believe that delivers the best value for money for Western Australians.

MEEKATHARRA HOSPITAL

417. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the dilapidated state of Meekatharra Hospital and note Labor's 2017 election promise to build a new and modern health facility for this community.

- (1) When will construction on this project begin?
- (2) When will it be completed?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

Madam Speaker, it was brought to my attention that I have been calling you Madam President a couple of times. I apologise for that.

- (1)–(2) Meekatharra Hospital is a priority for the government and, like almost every construction project across Western Australia at the moment, is experiencing cost increases. That is the reality of building anything in Western Australia, whether in the residential or commercial building sector. We are absolutely committed to the project. We will continue to work through those issues, and we will go through the proper processes of government to ensure that we have the appropriate funding to support that project. But what we will not do is just continue to throw money around irresponsibly, as we saw under the previous government, despite having record revenue, and a complete lack of rigour, particularly around health projects. We have a record capital infrastructure investment across our WA Country Health Service. It is absolutely expansive and there has never been such an expansive capital works program. Projects are under cost pressures. We are working through those cost pressures, and we will work through the proper processes of government, and that is the Expenditure Review Committee of cabinet.

MEEKATHARRA HOSPITAL

418. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. Minister, from that answer, can I take it that there is no firm start date for the construction of the Meekatharra Hospital, a commitment that was made by this government in 2017?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I am sure that the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, despite sitting in cabinet, probably does not understand the proper processes of cabinet process, and particularly proper budget processes. One of the first things that I did —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Ms A. SANDERSON: One of the first things that I did as cabinet secretary when we were elected in 2017 was to re-establish the importance of the ERC in all financial and budgetary decisions, instead of having what we had—a sham process, which was the ERC process under Colin Barnett, in which he made all the decisions, and then the shadow ERC process, which was the royalty for regions process, in which members opposite threw money around willy-nilly. We are absolutely committed to this process, but it needs to go through the proper processes of government. That is the Expenditure Review Committee. Once the money is allocated, then there will be a business case project definition plan and it will be out to tender. That is when the time frames are determined.

There has never been more investment in regional health care than under this government, full stop—never ever.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Ms A. SANDERSON: The member did nothing for Geraldton when she was in the Liberal–National government. It took a Labor member and a Labor government to deliver that and bring that home. We will continue to invest, we will continue to deliver on our election commitments and we will do it responsibly and through the proper processes of government.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

VOLUNTARY ASSISTED DYING

419. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's historic decision to introduce voluntary assisted dying, which, from 1 July last year, has provided eligible terminally ill Western Australians the opportunity to die with dignity. Nearing the one-year anniversary of this significant reform, can the minister update the house on the implementation of voluntary assisted dying, including the partnership between clinicians, patients and their loved ones, and can the minister outline to the house how access to VAD has provided terminally ill Western Australians with peace of mind?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I thank the member for his question. I also thank him for his commitment to this outcome and for serving on the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices with me, the member for Baldvis and other members of this place and the other place, some of whom are here and some of whom have since retired.

The introduction of assisted dying was the result of our committee recommendations. That was a very challenging but worthwhile process—I think that is the right way to describe it—in which we heard many, many accounts of people who had watched their loved ones unnecessarily suffer a very painful death. One particular account stayed with me and continues to stay with me. That was a young woman named Melanie, who was the same age as me. She had motor neurone disease and had to seek assistance in an aged-care institution. She could not find relief for her symptoms and starved herself to death. This unnecessary suffering across the community was very obvious to the committee; therefore, we made that recommendation.

The legislation itself is important. We are coming to the first anniversary of its operation. Although the bill was passed some time ago in the previous Parliament, the government spent 18 months on implementation to ensure that it was absolutely right, that the safeguards were in place, the process was clear, and that we had the right and safest possible framework. The framework is that the person has to be 18 years old, an Australian citizen and permanent resident, and have a disease, illness and medical condition that is advanced, progressive and will, on the balance of probabilities, cause death within six months, or 12 months if it is a neurodegenerative disease. Importantly, the bill was introduced with significant investment in palliative care, both metropolitan and regional, because we know that there is a continuum of care at end of life. If we are to have genuine end-of-life choices, it needs to be a genuine choice to have palliative care and/or voluntary assisted dying. It is overseen by a board that ensures that the proper processes are adhered to and is able to report back to me.

It is good to report to the house an update on how that process is going and how it is operating. Since the implementation and operationalisation of the act nearly one year ago, 68 health practitioners have completed all elements of the VAD-approved training, with 46 based in Perth, including the Peel area, and the remainder in the rural regions. A total of 171 individuals have accessed voluntary assisted dying to 31 May 2022. The average age was 73 years old, and 58 per cent were male and 42 per cent were female. A total of 65 per cent were diagnosed with cancer-related disease, 15 per cent neuro related, eight per cent respiratory and 11 per cent other. Geographically distributed, 79 per cent were in the metro area and 21 per cent in the regional areas.

I am very proud to be the Minister for Health in the McGowan government and certainly to be part of implementing and introducing this really important framework, as well as the important significant investment in palliative care.

MAJOR PROJECTS — STATUS

420. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:

I refer to the Auditor General's 2022 transparency report that finds the Tonkin Highway gap project blown out by \$230 million and the Forrestfield–Airport Link is two years behind schedule. Given the Auditor General's finding that progress on major projects has not been adequately reported by the government and given the Premier promised to govern with gold-standard transparency, will the Premier implement the Auditor General's recommendation to regularly disclose the timing, cost and status of major projects to Parliament and the public?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Firstly, on the broader issue about delays to projects and cost increases, that is not a situation unique to Western Australia, or even Australia. That situation exists around the world. There is a range of reasons for that, particularly related to the ongoing impact of COVID on supply chain delivery and the availability of relevant workforces. Governments

all over the world over the course of the last two years did a lot of capital works and committed to a lot of capital works. That has meant that there are shortages of relevant tradespeople and also materials. In a lot of the countries where some of the materials we use come from, a lot of their industry closed down for lots of time and supply chain difficulties have been extraordinary. There have been cost increases; steel costs have gone up 40 per cent and timber prices by 20 per cent. This is occurring all over the place. It is occurring in the housing market. It occurs everywhere. I do not understand why the opposition does not understand that.

The government has a record infrastructure program of \$34 billion, but we have had to smooth some of that because of the extraordinary demand, both public and private. Other states are going through exactly the same thing. New South Wales has massive rail projects. To build a 10-kilometre rail project there costs \$10 billion. Its rail project to build one of 10 kilometres is the equivalent of more than 16 projects here, including the actual railcar construction that we undertake. That is a situation that subsists in other states.

The sorts of things we have put in place to strengthen transparency and accountability for the delivery of major projects include the establishment of Infrastructure WA, which was a recommendation of the Langouant inquiry. We developed the state infrastructure strategy, which is currently with government, as required under the law, for comment before we finalise our position on it. We created the infrastructure delivery unit in the major projects unit in the Department of Finance. We established the major projects expenditure review subcommittee to have oversight of the cost and management of projects. We have put in place procurement reform, including the introduction of the Procurement Act 2020 and a consolidated procurement framework that reduces red tape and increases public commentary. We also allow for all the relevant parliamentary processes. We ensured the reappointment of the Corruption and Crime Commissioner, who the Liberal Party and Nationals WA blocked, members might recall, based upon the fact that he investigated the Liberal Party, so it blocked his reappointment. We had to deal with that.

Dr D.J. Honey: That is just an offensive statement.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is a true statement.

Dr D.J. Honey: No, it is an offensive statement.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Let us go into that. I am glad the member interjected; now I can go into that.

We had Mr Chown. Remember Mr Chown? He was on the committee. What happened? He had been investigated by the CCC, which found some pretty nefarious activities on his behalf. What did he do? He then blocked the reappointment of the CCC commissioner.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is exactly what occurred. That is actually corrupt. We had to legislate to overcome that corruption created by the Liberal Party. That is what occurred. Members might note that there are other investigations and other matters going forward, as we speak, publicly. I saw one on Channel Seven news the other night involving some members of the Liberal Party. That is an ongoing consequence of some of the actions of some Liberal Party members investigated by the CCC.

In any event, that is a range of the transparency initiatives we have put in place, but cost increases and delays have occurred all over the world.

MAJOR PROJECTS — STATUS

421. **Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. I go back to the Auditor General's report. Does the Premier not believe that the public has a right to know the status of these major projects; and why is he afraid to regularly update the public and the Parliament?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr S.A. Millman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mount Lawley!

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

We update the Parliament regularly on all these projects. We made an announcement the other day about Geraldton Health Campus. In the budget we announced that we had to put more money in because of the cost pressures on that project. That is occurring everywhere. That is a process that we go through as part of the budget and the midyear review process. We update regularly.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! Deputy Leader of the Opposition and Minister for Transport, order, please!

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Transport!

Mr M. McGOWAN: We update regularly, as part of the budget and midyear review process. I went through parliamentary estimates. I do not know whether anyone saw parliamentary estimates. It was pretty woeful, the performance of the opposition. We had to apply the mercy rule during parliamentary estimates, that is how woeful it was. It was one of those things whereby the opposition has the opportunity to ask all these questions. We provide all the information as part of the budget and part of the midyear review.

STATEWIDE BUILDERS' PANEL

422. Ms L.L. BAKER to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to deliver social and affordable housing across WA.

- (1) Can the minister please outline to the house how the newly announced statewide builders' panel is helping to drive delivery of housing projects in the state?
- (2) How will this support industry, local business and jobs?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I want to thank the member for her question and her strong passion for delivering social housing in her own local community.

- (1)–(2) There has been one consistent theme that I have spoken about, and it has been highlighted in this Parliament today; that is, I have been very clear on the public record and in this Parliament when discussing the delivery of social and affordable housing. It is very clear, as the Premier has also stated, that we face significant challenges with regard to construction across the board, in both civil construction and also social and affordable housing construction. Because of the factors involved in the global pandemic, we have seen significant supply chain issues and cost escalations. With the international borders closed, we have also seen a skilled labour shortage.

We are doing everything we can as a government to support industry to help deliver social and affordable housing. We have tackled that on both sides of the equation. We have tackled that in terms of training, not just with our record on reducing TAFE fees across 180 courses, but also with our announcement in the budget of a range of other measures. That includes \$14.3 million to boost the construction workforce and to support a construction accelerated apprenticeship scheme to get workers recognised for their skills. There is also a \$1.5 million targeted overseas marketing campaign to attract skilled labour to Western Australia.

The Premier and I have announced an additional support package, recognising the pressures that the home construction sector is facing at the moment. I want to remind members that this was very much welcomed by the Master Builders Association and it was worked through with that advocacy group. We announced a \$30 million financial relief scheme to assist head contractors with unforeseen cost escalations. We have supported progress payments for Keystart builds. We are putting rise-and-fall provisions into contracts when appropriate to assist in reducing the risk for tendering builders.

We are also, critically, creating a new statewide builders' panel to develop and grow the modular sector to deliver 200 modular homes in Western Australia. We are now creating a new panel that will boost access for small and medium-sized builders. We want to reduce the burden for them to be able to deliver on our housing program. We will be simplifying the process for qualification so that small and medium-sized builders will have the opportunity now and into the future to deliver social housing.

I am deeply proud that, despite the significant pressures and challenges we face in the construction sector, our state government is introducing a range of reform measures to assist the industry in these tougher times to continue to grow and to deliver social and affordable housing.

PUMPED HYDRO — COLLIE

423. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Energy:

Some notice of this question has been given.

I note the proposal to repurpose the coalmine pits and overburden heaps at Collie for pumped hydro.

- (1) What is the estimated cost of remediating the Collie coalmine sites when mining ceases?
- (2) Who are the proponents for converting this area to pumped hydro?
- (3) Who would be responsible for the long-term remediation of these sites if they are converted?
- (4) Has any government agency determined whether the mine sites are geologically suitable for pumped hydro?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

I draw the member's attention to standing order 75(1), which states that questions may be asked of —

Ministers regarding matters under the Minister's administrative responsibility;

None of the issues that the member has raised in his question are under the administrative responsibility of the Minister for Energy. However, I am happy to answer on behalf of the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, or perhaps the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, because most of the matters relate to the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, and there are a few that relate to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

- (1) What is the estimated cost of remediating the Collie coalmine sites when mining ceases? The government does not have an estimated remediation cost for the Collie mine sites. This is the responsibility of the mining companies. However, it is recognised that the remediation costs will be substantial.
- (2) Who has expressed interest in converting this area to pumped hydro? I understand that at least two proponents have put proposals forward to government for consideration. However, I am also aware that there are other proponents that are proposing pumped hydro not using Collie coalmine pits.
- (3) Who will be responsible for the long-term remediation of these sites if the area is converted to pumped hydro? Will the current mine operators retain responsibility for final remediation of the sites? Consistent with the state agreements that apply to the mines, and also the Mining Act, responsibility for remediation is the responsibility of the mining companies. Of course, it would be open for the parties to agree to a different arrangement should there be merit in conducting the business of government in that manner. I point out that I do not have any control over any of those matters because they are matters for the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade.
- (4) Has any government agency determined whether the mine sites are geologically suitable for pumped hydro? Some investigations have been made previously regarding the viability of pumped hydro at the Collie mine sites. I remind members that I talked about that in estimates three years ago. Some of that was about the question of geological suitability. I make the point that the government is not making any proposal in respect of pumped hydro in the Collie mine voids. There are companies that say that they can bring forward those proposals; and, if they do, the government will entertain those proposals.

PUMPED HYDRO — COLLIE

424. **Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Energy:**

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister reassure Western Australians that taxpayers will not ultimately be picking up the \$1 billion-plus remediation cost for those disused pits?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

This is the thing about the member for Cottesloe. He comes up with these stupid things. I have never heard anybody suggest that there is a billion-dollar liability. I have never had anybody say that. Where did the member get that information? Who gave that to him?

Dr D.J. Honey: It's published. I'll send you the reference.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: He sits there and invents a figure that no-one has ever said, and now he cannot tell me the source. Who is the source?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Who is the source? The member talks about accountability and openness. All we want to know is the name of the organisation that gave him the estimate, not of a billion dollars, but apparently \$1.2 billion. He sits there. He knows who told him that figure, but he will not share it, even with his own colleagues. Not even his own colleagues are worth it. He will not share that information with anybody. What an embarrassment! I can tell you this, member: one of the current mining companies down there has an estimated cost of \$40 million.

Dr D.J. Honey: For that whole site? You're joking!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am telling the member what it says. I am not saying it is accurate.

Dr D.J. Honey: As the minister for mines, you should check it out.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I am sorry. This is the problem with you. Firstly, you asked the Minister for Energy, not the Minister for Mines and Petroleum. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum's responsibilities are enlivened when the state agreement ceases, not prior to the cessation of the state agreement. You worked for Alcoa. Alcoa is covered by a state agreement. Surely you know that. You were a senior executive of Alcoa. Are you telling me that you did not know that your business was regulated by the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, not the Minister for Mines and Petroleum? How silly are you?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! That concludes question time.

MINISTER FOR MINES AND PETROLEUM*Mining Amendment Bill 2021 — Personal Explanation*

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [2.58 pm]: Madam Speaker, I rise under standing order 148 to address a query raised last Thursday in the lower house debate in consideration in detail of the Mining Amendment Bill 2021 regarding the transfer of program of works approvals from an exploration licence to a mining lease. The advice at the time was that administrative approval would be given to the activities that had previously been approved under the exploration licence or the mining lease. The advice was that they would not need to make a fresh application. At the time of providing that advice in response to the question from the member for Moore, I stated that if a correction was required to that advice, I would provide it.

Upon further information from the agency, I stand today to clarify that where an exploration licence is converted to a mining lease, a new program of work will be required to be lodged for those activities unless they have been submitted in a mining development and closure proposal and approved on an approvals statement. As detailed in the environmental applications administrative procedures, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety will administratively deal with and fast-track such applications. Subsequent approval is required because of the tenement-centric nature of the Mining Act 1978 and the need for the application to be reflected on the new tenure. Approvals cannot be carried over. In such circumstances, the applicant resubmits the program of work, for which DMIRS facilitates approval of the activities through a fast-tracked administered process. This is a different process from when an applicant lodges a fresh application that undergoes an assessment by an officer. From a legal perspective, a new application is recorded against the new tenement; however, the process is more administratively efficient than an application for new activities.

The SPEAKER: I encourage members to stay in the chamber for a few minutes for the tabling of the Procedure and Privileges Committee report.

PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE*Fourth Report — Amended sitting schedule for the Legislative Assembly — Tabling*

MRS.J. PRICE (Forrestfield — Deputy Speaker) [3.00 pm]: I present for tabling the fourth report of the Procedure and Privileges Committee of the forty-first Parliament entitled *Amended sitting schedule for the Legislative Assembly*.

[See paper [1226](#).]

Mr S.J. PRICE: The sitting hours of the chamber have been a constant source of people's conversations for many Parliaments now. For the majority of time, everyone has focused on sitting Tuesdays. The Procedure and Privileges Committee has been very mindful that the long sitting hours can be physically and mentally taxing for members of Parliament and parliamentary staff, and that the late nights are certainly not family friendly, nor may they be considered the best time for consideration of very important legislation. As members know, the sitting program for each year varies, but I have to say that the Western Australian Parliament probably has the most comprehensive number of weeks and days of sitting of any Australian Parliament.

When members read the report, they will note that the appendix contains a review of the sitting schedules of other Australian Parliaments. To give members a brief overview of some programs in other states, as we know, the Western Australian Parliament this year has a sitting schedule of 19 weeks, which works out to be 57 days; New South Wales has a schedule of 16 weeks, which works out to be 45 days; Victoria has a schedule of 14 weeks, which is 39 days; and the unicameral system of Queensland has 13 weeks, which works out to be 40 days. Obviously, we are the hardest working Parliament in the country.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr S.J. PRICE: As a result of the considerations of the committee, and through the research that it undertook, it observed that the Parliament of Western Australia is one of the few Australian Parliaments that still schedules late-night sittings, with the majority of other Parliaments concluding business by 8.30 pm. Based on research and feedback from numerous surveys conducted in this Parliament and in previous Parliaments, the committee came up with the proposal that this house sit one hour earlier on a Tuesday. That would mean that we would commence from 1.00 pm rather than 2.00 pm on a Tuesday and that, in the words of the report, we would “dispense” with the dinner break and that the house would conclude business at 7.00 pm instead of 10.00 pm. Collectively, overall, that would result in a reduction of one hour in the hours on that day. However, in recognising that, the Leader of the House and the government will still be able, when required, to extend the hours on a Tuesday. For example, if we want to sit late on a Wednesday, the Speaker makes an announcement, and a dinner break is scheduled, and we come back after dinner and carry on. The same sort of approach will be taken for the Tuesday. Question time would still remain at 2.00 pm. There are other considerations in the report on which the government and the Leader of the House can go away and think about before they come back to make a recommendation or a motion for some time in the future.

I should also highlight that the committee is made up of members of the government, the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA and that this recommendation has been unanimously agreed to by all members of the committee. The recommendation of the report is —

That the house adopts a Temporary Order for the remainder of 2022 to the following effect —

That the House amend its regular sitting hours on Tuesdays from 1.00 pm to 7.00 pm.

On that, I commend the report to the house.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party) [3.06 pm]: I rise to support the comments made by the Deputy Speaker. This Parliament assumes that members who are also parents have full-time carers who can take responsibility for caring for children. Many members, including myself, have childcare responsibilities. That is a social change in particular. Now, in the great majority of families, both parents work and both parents properly share those caring responsibilities. However, this chamber recognises only a time when, one, there was a great majority of male members in this chamber; and, two, those members did not have childcare responsibilities and had a partner to do it. As we see in this chamber today, there has been a dramatic shift. I think that this change represents the beginning of changes that we need to bring into our work practices, because at the end of the day, we are not only a Parliament, but also a workplace. I think that the recommendations for change in the fourth report of the Procedure and Privileges Committee reflect modern parenting practices and parental responsibilities. On that basis, I fully support the recommendation of the committee.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [3.07 pm]: I also would like to add a couple of comments to the tabling of the fourth report of the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Firstly, I thank the Procedure and Privileges Committee staff for the research done to cover all the different Parliaments across Australia. It is fairly clear that, apart from the federal House of Representatives and the Senate, when they are not in an election year during which they sit considerably fewer weeks, the Western Australian Legislative Assembly, and generally the Legislative Council, sit for about 19 weeks, made up of 57 sitting days. In fact, WA sits the most number of weeks and days in comparison with other jurisdictions. From that perspective, I think that we do our fair share of hours.

I take on board the comments of the Leader of the Liberal Party about modernising our work practices to some extent. Having been a member previously of the privileges committee, I know that surveys have been conducted during the last Parliament and previous Parliaments to which there was a relatively strong response to a suggestion to change the hours of sittings and other certain things. Somehow those suggestions did not make it through, but our new Speaker has addressed the matter of sitting hours and put it on the agenda.

From an opposition perspective, I guess the number one priority is to have the opportunity to hold the government to account. There will be one reduced hour, but we recognise that question time will stay the same, as will matters of public interest and the like, so there will not be any changes in that respect. We recognise that this is a trial and we reserve the right at the end of it to make our thoughts clear. The 90-second statements are a good way to end the day, basically by cutting off any business that might be overhanging at the time. As we know, the Speaker can extend any given day, as has been indicated amongst the papers here, with time having been extended or run over the 10.00 pm closing time. From my perspective, the trial is an opportunity just to see how it goes and how everyone adapts to it. As I said, the opposition will obviously be reassessing at the end of the trial period and reserving the right to make sure that we have those opportunities to hold the government to account.

HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MS C.M. TONKIN (Churchlands) [3.11 pm]: I rise to speak on the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021. Despite the huge pressures on our public hospital system, our government has not sat on its hands but has stepped up to improve the functioning and responsiveness of emergency departments and has invested in supporting the transition of older people and those with disabilities out of acute hospital settings into more appropriate care. The government has made a record investment in our public health system and is working closely with the new Albanese government to address years of neglect by the Abbott–Turnbull–Morrison governments. These amendments to the Health Services Act are a part of stepping up to address the pressures on our public hospitals and delivering a world-class health system for the people of our state.

Let me just get back to the Health Services Act and point out its key features before I talk about the features of the amendment bill. On 1 July 2016, the Health Services Act commenced operation, introducing a contemporary, devolved governance model for the WA health system. The act clarifies the roles and responsibilities at each level of the system and is intended to ensure that each health service provider is held responsible and accountable for the delivery of health services within their designated areas. The framework recognises that the minister is ultimately accountable to the Parliament and public for the performance of the health system and is therefore responsible for establishing the health service providers, determining the health service areas, making changes to their governance and appointing their board members.

The Health Services Amendment Bill makes some important changes. Following the commencement of the act, the Department of Health identified that certain parts of it were not operating as intended and issues had arisen with certain provisions that were unclear in their meaning. The Health Services Amendment Bill aims to remedy unintended operational issues that have arisen as a result of the act's provisions, correct drafting errors that were not identified prior to the act's commencement and give certainty to provisions that have been identified as having an ambiguous interpretation. The amendments cover a broad range of areas and some parts are quite technical; however, they are generally amendments of an administrative nature. I would like to focus on the amendments to the act that drive performance accountability and bring decision-making closer to patient care.

Some of the management imperatives embodied in good public sector administration include accountability, and that is accountability for upholding standards and delivering results. It includes discretion to make judgements, but these are controlled and contingent. It includes risk management and ensuring that risks are assessed and managed. It incorporates transparency—transparency of process, of standard setting, the basis of decision-making and, in the case of health service provision, a focus on patient care so that the management of the system is such that it delivers the best possible outcomes for system consumers. The final management imperative in any good public administrative system is performance management—a strong focus on ensuring that results are reported and management is made accountable for the performance of activities.

I mentioned accountability, and one of my passions in life is accountability. Whenever I look at the public sector administration of an organisation or a function, I dive straight into where the accountability is. These amendments in fact strengthen accountability. I love the principles of accountability that were put together by the Australasian Council of Auditors General, which provide a very simple understanding of accountability. These principles were put together by the Auditors General collectively. I think they are important principles and are what I look for when I look at any legislation for public administration.

Accountability is the cornerstone of internal control, and modern standards of accountability reflect the following principles: there is clarity as to who is accountable to whom and for what; the expectations of accountable persons are identified as objectives to be achieved; the accountable person has sufficient authority and resources at their disposal to achieve the objectives identified for them; the achievement of objectives by the accountable person must be reported to the person to whom they are accountable; the person to whom an accountable person reports has the right to verify information that is provided by the accountable person; it is a condition of accountability that the performance of an accountable person may be sanctioned through reward or penalty; and the accountable person may delegate responsibilities for tasks, but not the accountability, which remains with the accountable person. These are very, very important principles and are reflected in the Health Services Act and in the amendments.

Some of the key areas of amendment include: amending the minister's powers to allow the minister to more effectively delegate her functions and responsibilities to officers in the department and health service providers so that the day-to-day management of matters relating to the WA health system can be performed more effectively; amending part 6 of the act to ensure that HSPs can more effectively recover fees and charges from patients who receive treatment as public patients but subsequently receive compensation for the injury or illness that was treated by the health service provider; providing greater clarity for financial management of health service providers; rectifying the WA health system's complex land management and ownership issues—this is a complex system with complex land management and ownership within its purview; and strengthening the duties of board members under the act by clearly setting out board members' duties in respect of management of conflicts of interest and fiduciary duties to their health service provider and to the state more broadly.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms C.M. TONKIN: Further key amendments include: refining the director general's powers of inquiry to allow the inquirer to enter and inspect the premises of health service providers for the purposes of the inquiry rather than being limited to holding hearings; establishing a new framework for the delivery of capital works and maintenance works and the carrying out of clinical commissioning; and defining the role of the system manager more clearly and strengthening the system manager's powers to oversee and hold HSPs accountable—the director general, as department CEO, is the system manager of the health system and these are very important powers to hold the HSPs accountable for their performance through policy frameworks and service agreements. It means accountability performance is crucial. The final amendment is about improving the management of health service provider employees through a range of amendments to the employment-related sections of the act.

These amendments embody the key principle of accountability and will improve an already world-class public health system. These refinements are part of us, as a government, stepping up to ensure the very best public sector management principles and imperatives are embodied in the management of our very complex health system. I commend this bill to the house.

MRS L.A. MUNDAY (Dawesville) [3.23 pm]: I rise today to make a short speech on the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021 and give some personal context to what the bill means to me and my family. Firstly, I want to outline some of the key amendments that are included. The bill will amend the minister's powers to allow the minister to more effectively delegate their functions and responsibilities to officers in the department and HSPs so that the

day-to-day management of matters relating to the WA health system can be performed more effectively; amend part 6 of the act to ensure that health service providers can more effectively recover fees and charges from patients who receive treatment as public patients but subsequently receive compensation for the injury or illness that was treated by the health service provider; provide greater clarity for financial management of health service providers; rectify the WA health system's complex land management and ownership issues; strengthen the duties of board members under the act by clearly setting out board members' duties in respect of management of conflicts of interest and fiduciary duties to their health service provider and to the state more broadly; refine the director general's powers of inquiry to allow the inquirer to enter and inspect the premises of health service providers for the purposes of the inquiry rather than being limited to holding hearings; establish a new framework for the delivery of capital works and maintenance works and the carrying out of clinical commissioning; define the role of the system manager more clearly and strengthen the system manager's powers to oversee and hold HSPs accountable for their performance through policy frameworks and service agreements; and improve the management of health service provider employees through a range of amendments to the employment-related sections of the act.

An interesting thought that came to me when I was reading about these points was that it really brings me to the story of why I am standing here today. The story was built on health and mental health. When I grew up, I always wanted to be a nurse, but my lack of attention at school pretty much ended that because I failed year 12 and there was no uni without year 12 back in those days. I took the long road and became a bank officer, had children and ended up at Swan Taxis. Someone at Swan Taxis was applying to become an ambulance officer. I happened to overhear a conversation about how they were trying out. I was like, "Excuse me? Can you tell me a bit about that?" I said, "I thought you had to be a nurse or have a medical degree of some sort." They said, "No, they teach you in night school and you just turn up. You earn this much money"—which, back then, was like a man's wage, if we are looking at an equality agenda. I thought, "Wow, that is amazing for part-time work." It was two days and two nights, and four days off. I had to work for two days while I had two boys, and then for two nights my husband could look after them, so it was pretty much a part-time job in my head. It was a bit of a no-brainer. Long story short, I ended up being selected to be one of 35 out of 1 000 applicants. I remember the very first night, I was sitting there in night school with my shiny pencil case and my notebook ready to go, and he said, "All you people are here and we selected you all for different reasons—some because you are volunteers, some because you are scientists, some because you are nurses or doctors, and some because we just liked your smile." I thought that has to be me because I could not offer anything else.

A government member: You've got a great smile.

Mrs L.A. MUNDAY: Thank you.

That is how my story really started. I went through 12 years of ambulance work—dealing with people, seeing the best things and the worst things in people, and having to let people know about the death of their partners or their children. There were a lot of hard things. I got to about my thirteenth or fourteenth year and decided that I needed to do more. I went back to university because, by then, along the way through the ambulance world, it became university-based learning. I went and did some units and got recognised for credit, so I had a Bachelor of Science by the time I decided to go back to university to get a Bachelor of Psychology. I remember going to uni and thinking that there had to be a better way. We do not do mental health very well in the ambulance world. Everybody ends up in the emergency department and that is not really a great place for mental health patients. That is primarily because the doctors and nurses who are in emergency departments are there to treat fractures, heart attacks and chest pains. Their mindset is more for physical injuries. It is not that they do not care, but that is what the triaging is about in emergency departments. It is about caring for people who are acutely unwell, not chronically unwell. That is probably excluding imminent suicide; that is probably where people need to be cared for so they can be medicated. For the long journey of mental illness, an emergency department is not the place to go. I went back to uni with the idea that I would, firstly, be able to understand mental health patients better, including why people are anxious, depressed, suicidal and that kind of thing. That got me to the end of my Bachelor of Psychology.

From there I found a passion in positive psychology, which is working on positive conditioning and strength or resilience-based kinds of things. It found my heart; that was what filled my heart. It gave me my life back from when I was talking to people about death. It was a very exciting time for me to be going down that road. I started a business called Two Curious Birds with a girlfriend, Jessica Smith, who did yoga and did a lot of work with the men's cricket team, the Warriors. She did a lot of mental work with them and some golf players in mental conditioning. She travelled around the world. We teamed up and called ourselves Two Curious Birds and we started a positive psychology business. COVID came along, so workshops were not allowed and that business got parked up. When COVID happened, I remember going out to a job in Mandurah with my partner. COVID had hit, but it was before we had vaccinations or answers and we knew where we were going. It was quite a frightening thing. This was one of the first jobs we had then. Our comms called us and said, "Lisa, you're going to a man who's come off the *Ruby Princess* and he's tested positive for COVID and you need to transport him to Fiona Stanley Hospital." I thought, "Shit! Okay!" We had all our gear, and I had my respirator. We had been trained for this kind of thing, but in the back of my mind I thought, "Am I going to be okay? Am I going to be safe?" I put on the Teletubbies outfit, which is what we called it, and put the respirator on and went to the job. I was attending that day, so, luckily for Craig,

he got to sit out in the ambulance and I went in to get the gentleman. He was really unwell. It was quite frightening to see how unwell he was and how much he was struggling to breathe. Normally, you get two people to help you do everything; but because of the COVID rules, you were in by yourself and you had to manage by yourself. I had to get this gentleman out of his bed, onto a wheelchair and out to the stretcher. Not everyone's house is set up for easy access. Normally people who are really sick go up four flights of stairs to the back toilet and around a corner and get sick or collapse there, so we have to deal with that plus extricating a stretcher down flights of stairs. When we walk into a job and people say that he is upstairs in the back bedroom, we know he is going to be really sick! It is a bit of a measure we go by. This gentleman was out the back, up the stairs, around the corner and I thought, "Here we go." I had to manage him, and I got him down. He was really unwell and was really puffing by the time we got to the ambulance. Then I had to sit and tell his wife why she could not come with him in the back of the ambulance. That was because COVID was very isolating. People died on their own. I am not sure, as I am not in the ambulance world at the moment, but I know relatives and friends still do not get transported in the back of the ambulance. In the ICU or in hospital, COVID patients die by themselves; they might get a family conference call or whatever but it is quite a frightening thing. He knew this. I held his hand and talked on our way to Fiona Stanley, through my three layers of gloves, plastic outfit and respirator. He probably felt like he had leprosy—the poor man. I tried to reassure him the best I could.

Once the job was over, it really made me reflect. The Premier, Mark McGowan, was on the news. I did not know him then and I was not in politics at all. He was telling us how he was making decisions in line with the Chief Health Officer and the Commissioner of Police to keep us safe and about the two-week lockdown we would have, and why he was doing it. I really believed, after seeing what I had seen, that he was making the right decision. I emailed my union, the United Workers Union, and I let them know that I thought he was doing a great job based on my firsthand account as a witness. From there, strangely enough, I got a phone call from the union saying they were looking for someone to run against Zak Kirkup in the seat of Dawesville. I had never really thought about making a macro change in my life. Normally my life is centred around helping the individual—the one person in the ambulance; or one person as a psychologist—and not about macro changes. That call gave me a lot to think about. I really believe that the Premier's decision to close the borders and to keep us locked in, and when I say that I mean keep us safe from COVID, has enabled us to have great health and economic outcomes. I said yes to the union so I could be a part of that. This is why I ran and pretty much why I am standing here today.

Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski: Which we are all thankful for.

Mrs L.A. MUNDAY: Thank you very much, member for Kingsley.

The Premier followed the science and made hard decisions to lock us down. Although it was not popular with everyone, as I said, the outcome of that was to give us the opportunity to do things now with the state budgets that are being handed down. One of the other things that came up in a conversation with the Minister for Health and the Minister for Mental Health, and what got me into Parliament, was the decision to allow presumptive PTSD claims for ambos, and I was told of the macro changes I could make being part of the process of amending legislation, and what that would look like. That is why I jumped in and worked so hard to be elected; it was so I could make even small changes. On 24 December, the Minister for Health gave me the best Christmas present I have probably had in a long time when the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Amendment Regulations established a presumption of work-related injury for post-traumatic stress disorder contracted by ambulance workers. Basically, that meant that when a diagnosis of PTSD is made by a psychiatrist, the ambo does not have to prove that they got PTSD in their job. It is just accepted that is why ambos suffer from PTSD or from bad things happening. I remember that within three weeks of starting my ambulance career in February, on Mother's Day of that year, I went to a baby drowning—a little boy called Raven. That has lived with me for 20 years and impacts me every Mother's Day. Being in the job four weeks, four months or four years does not give people a level of PTSD. A person now has to be in the job for at least four years before they can prove PTSD. When an ambo is fighting for that in a workers' compensation claim, and they have run out of annual leave and sick leave, and they are left hanging there waiting for an insurance company to decide whether someone has or has not got PTSD, it is not fair.

Quite a few of my friends struggle with PTSD, especially the older ones like me. Prior to that, there was a spate of suicides that were not directly based on PTSD, but were indirectly connected, because having to work to prove they had PTSD played a huge part. PTSD was not assumed. When the minister made that decision on 24 December, it was one of the best things and I really enjoyed being a part of it. Having the minister and the Premier hearing me about that issue has been one of those ticks in the boxes on the huge journey that will stay with me for the rest of my career. Unfortunately, it does not help my husband, who has diagnosed PTSD, and it does not help the older cases, because it only started from February, looking forward into 2022. It will help every new ambo who starts. They will not have to do the hard road that other people have endured. I know the Minister for Health has a brother who is a paramedic. It reaches out to all of us. Everyone loves a paramedic turning up to their house. Everyone says they could not do the job they do, and a lot of people probably could not. To be recognised for that and for our huge contribution and the work that my mates still do is phenomenal. I really appreciated that opportunity.

Some of the other things that made me run as a candidate was the upgrading of Peel Health Campus, which the Premier talked about. In light of the great budget turnout of 2020–21, the Premier announced that the government would deliver \$152 million to upgrade the existing Peel Health Campus. It was well and truly ready for an upgrade,

because the population of Mandurah and the Peel region has exploded. The emergency department at Peel Health Campus does a great job, but we need more infrastructure because the region is developing beyond itself. Peel Health Campus will hopefully become the Mandurah regional hospital one day. Part of the upgrade and expansion of services at the hospital is expected to include 63 additional inpatient beds, and 12 chemotherapy places, 20 new mental health inpatient beds, which will be exceptional for our area. The idea is that the emergency department will deal with acute injuries and the mental health section will be located off to the side. It will have more of a sensory side to it that will hopefully be looked after by psychologists, psychiatrists and occupational therapists—people who are really made for that kind of job—instead of getting a consultant to work out where to place these people, while there are people requiring beds for more acute care. There will be at least 15 palliative care hospice beds; more outpatient services; a new build of medical imaging services, which is truly needed; and the introduction, like I said, of a 10-bed mental health emergency centre.

On top of that, in the latest budget there is \$30.1 million for 18 additional paramedics and six ambulances across regional WA. Our volunteers do an amazing job, but they need extra support out there. Volunteers live and work in the community. These guys go out to their own family members. They go out to death. The different areas of my life—my family and friends and my ambulance work—have crossed maybe a handful of times in my whole life, whereas, with volunteers, probably every time they go out it is to Bob down the road or George the baker or something like that. I can only imagine what they must go through and the impact of PTSD, trauma and the memories that they live with. I think they do an absolutely amazing job. It would be good for them to feel supported, having a paramedic a phone call away, within 20 kilometres, and having a doubled-up crew of one paramedic and one volunteer. That is probably a better model than we have at the moment. But I acknowledge that this state is a huge place and it is going to take some time and a lot of funding. I really appreciate the work that the minister is doing at the moment to make that happen.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.A. MUNDAY: The \$18.5 million expansion of the child and adolescent mental health service across regional WA is also exceptional. I guess it is hard in a regional area with a smaller population, but having CAMHS available outside the metro area is great. I know parents will do anything to get their kids help, driving hours, miles. I used to live in Harvey, as the Deputy Speaker knows. A lot of times we would go to Perth for treatment. My mum would make a big deal about it. She would be standing there at the counter, saying, "I'm from the country", and I would be thinking, "It's only an hour down the road!" She would expect exceptional service because she was from the country. I would stand behind her or go and sit in the car because it used to get embarrassing from there! So, having extra adolescent mental health services across regional WA is also something that is really good.

There is one last short little story that I want to tell before I finish off. My husband, Steve, has been a paramedic for 24 years, and this story is something that probably still impacts him today. He and Margie, who is his permanent partner, went out to a job in Rockingham, where a gentleman who had mental health problems wanted to "suicide by cop". Basically, that means he wanted to come out and make enough of a scene that a police officer would shoot him, instead of him trying to kill himself. The police officers were standing there. Steve and Margie were standing there. This gentleman was beside himself. He had a knife in his hand and he was asking the police to kill him. The police were trying to talk him down, saying, "No, we can't do that." Long story short: this gentleman found that the only way out was to end his own life, so he slit his throat and then collapsed on the floor. That is where the police step back and the ambulance paramedics step in. So Margie and Steve, with the help of the police officers, managed to load the gentleman and stop his bleeding. Margie was in the back and Steve was going to drive. He took off his gloves to jump into the front of the ambulance and drive. As he did that, the gentleman stopped breathing. Steve had got into the ambulance and was about to pull away when Margie said, "He has arrested." That means his heart and his breathing had stopped. Steve jumped out and tried to get the gloves back on his hands. Part of the training is that you are only allowed off the chest for 10 seconds, so he knew that he was on a time line. Margie was trying to get pads on, trying to get a BVM on, which goes on the face to help the patient breathe. Steve's job was to do CPR—that is the job of the driver. He was trying to get his gloves on. His hands were sweaty because he had just taken the gloves off. In the end, he just thought, "You know what—too bad," and he started doing CPR. Eventually they got a police officer to help, so they changed over and Steve jumped in the front.

When they got to the hospital and handed over, the gentleman unfortunately passed away. After he died, they looked into his history. He had hepatitis C, and Steve had cuts on his hands from building a shed. It is pretty much standard across the board to have blood tests on the day, there and then. So Steve and Margie had a blood test, as did the police. That gives a baseline, to make sure that a person does not have hepatitis C, and then three months later it is checked again to see whether they have contracted it.

Three months later, Steve happened to be on annual leave. These things are logged; people have their blood checked as a matter of course. In December, which was about four months after the incident, the area manager told Steve he had to have a follow-up blood test, so Steve went and had the test. He had been feeling quite unwell, having night sweats and not realising why he felt so bad. Like all men, he did not want to go to the doctor and put it off. We were changing the sheets on the bed maybe twice a week because he was just sweating through. I thought it must be a change-of-life thing for a guy. He was in his 50s.

As it turned out, Steve tested positive for hepatitis C. Before then, my vague knowledge of hepatitis C had been that it was a death sentence—the liver has deranged enzymes, and people have to have a daily program of injections. But things have developed a lot since then. There are lots of different types of hepatitis C, as I have come to know. The other thing about hepatitis C is that the body can sometimes correct itself. Sometimes a person can be cured by their body working on it. Unfortunately for Steve, that was not the case. A person has to wait three months to see whether their body is going to heal itself. If it does not, it is considered to be chronic hepatitis.

We went to see the hepatologist, and he told us the medication would cost \$98 000 a month because it was not on the pharmaceutical benefits scheme. We were wondering how the hell we were going to find that money, and we were thinking of all the people who have these sorts of issues. As it turned out, it was Steve's lucky day, or lucky month. Within a month we had a phone call from the hepatologist, saying, "You are never going to believe this." It was going to be part of the PBS, and we would only have to wait a month. That did not really matter, because we had to wait a certain amount of time to establish that it was chronic hepatitis. So we waited an extra month and the bill went from \$98 000 a month to \$38 a month. I want to take this opportunity today to thank all the people—the scientists, the researchers, the doctors and the administrators—who help with the PBS, getting medications to people who really need them. I know that the PBS is a general thing and that a lot of people have to have an illness before a medication can be listed. But it really makes me appreciate Australia, our commonwealth, that we have these kinds of things. There are a lot of places where there is no opportunity to make life more livable and bearable for people who have cancers and other diseases and illnesses—things that not one of us would want to have to endure.

In closing, these amendments are intended to ensure the effectiveness of the act in providing a contemporary and evolved governance model for the WA health system and to ensure that the Health Services Act 2016 can be relied upon to drive performance and accountability and bring decision-making closer to patient care. I thank the minister for all her hard work, and I commend the bill to the house.

MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.49 pm]: I thought the member for Moore was getting up and I was going to sit down.

Before I launch into my speech on the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021, which will be very brief, I want to thank the member for Dawesville for the amazing speech she just gave. I was spellbound listening to her. I honestly cannot thank her and her former colleagues enough for the work they do. I count a number of ambulance officers, like the member, as my friends. I try not to talk to them too much about their job because I understand that many of them suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, and even if they do not suffer from PTSD "technically"—for *Hansard*, that is in inverted commas—there is a lot of trauma that goes with being an ambulance officer. One of my good friends said to me that the worst thing is that people are fascinated by the job and ask them what is the worst thing they have ever seen. Although this particular ambulance officer never tells them what the worst thing they have ever seen is, they still have to relive it. Every time someone asks them that, they have to relive the worst thing they have ever seen. We have just listened to a horrific story from the member for Dawesville. I would hate the ambulance officer I know to have to relive that every time someone with a curiosity that is not intended to be malicious forces them to relive that horrible situation.

Mrs L.A. Munday: It is because it is macabre. People love that.

Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI: That is why we rubberneck car accidents when we are driving along the road and cause more car accidents, usually.

Mrs L.A. Munday interjected.

Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI: We do. It is understandable, but I plead to my colleagues in the chamber and anyone who is listening to this online or who reads *Hansard* later to please think about the impact they are having on ambulance officers when they ask, "What is the worst thing you've ever seen?", because that forces them to relive it over and again. That was a slight aside to the member for Dawesville. I thank her for sharing that very personal and impactful story with us about her and her husband. I also thank the member for her previous work as an ambulance officer.

I want to speak about the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021 in the context of everything that we have done in health over the last five years since we were elected to government. I am very aware and sure that people out there understand that the McGowan government is putting patients first. To do that involves a lot of different aspects. There is no silver bullet to putting patients first and making sure that we have the healthiest and most robust health system we can in Western Australia. We are obviously investing in health infrastructure and services in Western Australia, and we are delivering high-quality care across WA. Recently, we delivered a \$2.3 billion boost to health and mental health services for the delivery of additional staff, beds and services. In addition, there was a \$100 million boost to emergency departments, which is very important. In the midst of the pandemic over the last two years, people were not going to an emergency department because they did not want to run the risk of getting sick. They had the option to attend a place that did not have COVID-19, unlike our ambulance officers and the member for Dawesville, who had to do that. That has meant that a lot of things that could have been treated by GPs or other services are now being treated by emergency departments because people have left their conditions for so long that they no longer can be routinely treated; their conditions are acute and need to be treated in an emergency department.

We are very lucky in the seat of Kingsley to have two hospitals in close proximity to our residents. Obviously, we have Joondalup Health Campus to the north and Osborne Park Hospital to the south. I was very pleased to attend Osborne Park Hospital a little while ago with the former Minister for Health when we announced the \$24.9 million expansion of Osborne Park Hospital and looked at the construction that was being undertaken to deliver that expansion, which was aimed at enhancing the obstetric services and the neonatal nursery at Osborne Park. That is particularly close to my heart, as two of my nieces were born at Osborne Park Hospital. The expansion included a new rehabilitation unit with an additional 10 beds and the expansion of the specialised therapy hub at Osborne Park Hospital.

Looking north, we have the \$256 million redevelopment of Joondalup Health Campus. The full expansion comprises a new mental health building, including 30 new acute mental health inpatient beds, 12 emergency department beds and 90 inpatient beds. That is designed to meet future needs. Joondalup Health Campus is the most northern full-service hospital campus in the northern suburbs. Anyone who has driven to the northern suburbs knows that quite a few houses are going up north of Joondalup. Our little electorate of Kingsley is now inner north and it goes way north—all the way up to Yanchep. Joondalup Health Campus has to service that whole corridor of people. The full expansion also comprises six new coronary care beds, a new theatre, a cardiac cath lab and a specialised clinic to operate as a behavioural assessment urgent care clinic.

As we know, a lot of presentations at emergency departments are not for the standard broken bones or sickness, if it is a small child, or wounds or breathing or heart problems; a lot of it now is mental health presentations, so this is a really important aspect of the expansion. It would be remiss of me not to plead to the Minister for Health, who is sitting here, about the need for mental health services in the northern suburbs. I think that every speech I have made in this Parliament on health and mental health has included the fact that mental health is the single biggest issue for the northern suburbs and, I am sure, across Western Australia, particularly for our young people. Every time the members for Joondalup, Hillarys, Burns Beach and I talk to our schools, the single biggest issue that comes up in schools is the non-education-related issues they have to deal with in the schools around resilience and anxiety. That has become worse over the past few years. It has been an anxious time for adults, let alone children. I will continue to plead and make representations to the minister about the need for acute mental health services, and also the community mental health services that we need to stop people from ending up in our acute services.

As can be seen from the very large list of things that are happening at Joondalup Health Campus, quite a bit of expansion is going on there and at Osborne Park Hospital. That is a testament, as is this bill, to the McGowan Labor government continuing to put patients first. We are working on how we can address some of the biggest issues in our health system. Obviously, the most popular issue in the media is ambulance ramping. However, it needs to be to be acknowledged that this is an ongoing issue being experienced around the country and around the world. It links back to what I was saying before, which is that a number of issues contribute to that. One of those is that people were not seeking medical attention during the pandemic, and now those conditions have got to the point at which those people have to present at emergency departments rather than be looked after in the regular way by a GP or specialist.

I am also aware that there are some issues around our seniors going into hospitals and not being able to be released into the community because there is nowhere for them to go because of the lack of funding in our aged-care sector by the former federal Liberal–National government. I am very hopeful that some of these issues will be addressed under the new Albanese government. I know that the new Prime Minister has spoken about how he intends to address some of the issues by increasing the number of clinical nursing staff in our aged-care sector. I commend this type of work, because I feel that if we address the underlying issues, we will be able to address some of the issues that are being dealt with in the media, such as ambulance ramping. I think that the way the current opposition and some of the media have dealt with this issue is unfair. They have blatantly ignored what they know are the underlying issues of ramping and are trying to pin it on our Minister for Health and the Department of Health, knowing full well that there are very real, very complex issues contributing to ramping. I think that they have a lot to answer for.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — TRANSPARENCY

Motion

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition) [4.00 pm]: I move —

That this house notes the Office of the Auditor General’s findings of persistent transparency failures by the McGowan Labor government, including reporting of progress of major projects, and calls on the Premier to deliver on his promise of “gold-standard transparency”.

This is a very important motion; it is the last that we will move before we enter into the six weeks of winter recess. It comes off the back of another report that has been tabled by the Auditor General into the reporting and transparency of major projects. It is one of a long line of reports that this Auditor General has created. We could never accuse the Auditor General of shirking her responsibility. I think that she has been a wonderful servant of the Parliament and the people of Western Australia. I have to say that, when we attend briefings and read the reports, we can feel her frustration that these sensible and well-founded recommendations are being ignored by this government. That

is the plain fact of it: this government is ignoring the recommendations of the Auditor General. When reports are published giving recommendations and opportunities for improvements—because everyone accepts that they do not always get things right the first time—it is most disappointing to see that in subsequent follow-up reports, the same issues are being raised, and, in fact, have become more serious and more concerning. We will go through some of the detail of the Auditor General’s reports. Also, we have some information on how difficult it is to get information through the freedom of information process. There are certainly some concerning statistics in relation to section 82 of the Financial Management Act. Under that provision, if ministers do not want to provide information to the Parliament, they have to provide a reason, it has to be reasonable, and the Auditor General has to provide an assessment of that reason. Certainly, this government got off to a flying start with the number of times that it refused to provide information under that particular section of the Financial Management Act.

Let us go back and set the scene of how this government came to power back in 2017. The Premier made some very bold statements about the kind of government that he would lead, and, in particular, that he would be in charge of improving transparency and would make sure that he delivered a gold standard of transparency. He promised not just to improve functions and financial transparency, but a gold standard of transparency. That was his promise. Members opposite rolled into government and made the decision to commission the special inquiry into government programs and projects on the back of making certain assertions while they were in opposition on particular programs that we ran such as royalties for regions and others. They commissioned John Langoulant to create an inquiry into some major projects, and, as a result, he released a report containing a number of recommendations. I am on record as saying that I disagreed with parts of that report—I have been very up-front about that—but this government accepted those recommendations and said that it would go about putting in place all the recommendations that resulted from that inquiry.

It is very clear that that inquiry had nothing to do with transparency. It was more about demolishing the record of the previous Liberal–National government, particularly royalties for regions, so that the government could walk away from it, bury it and discredit the previous government. That is straight out of the Labor playbook, as is introducing and bringing machinery-of-government changes so significant that they have really thrown the cat amongst the pigeons in being able to find a common thread of comparison when we look at budgets and trying to understand where the lines of reporting are within the mega-departments that have been created. It all adds to the concerns that we see raised as part of the Auditor General’s report—that it is very difficult to follow what should be publicly available and reported to the Parliament.

With the machinery-of-government changes, the failure to act on the recommendations of the Auditor General again and again, and our experiences as the opposition in trying to tweak out information through freedom of information legislation, we have found again and again that we have to go back and haggle with the department. In some cases, we have to go right through to the Information Commissioner and ask for a ruling because these processes are stretched out for such a long time that it has become completely impractical and very obvious that there is something to be hidden that the government is unwilling to share. If we put all those things side-by-side with a government that is adhering to a promise that the Premier himself made to deliver gold-standard transparency, it does not add up. Alarm bells should be ringing.

There is a catchery. I will read exactly what the Premier said. He said —

“My government will continue to strengthen governance, accountability, transparency and the focus on the key economic and social benefits of government decisions when dealing with taxpayers’ money.

That was on 20 February 2018. Five years down the track, what has gone wrong? We have seen the Premier get more and more arrogant. Perhaps he thinks that he is above responding to the Auditor General and that his cabinet does not need to; perhaps he thinks that he is doing this in the best interests of Western Australians, so everyone should just accept it. Perhaps, after five years, that is how this Premier has decided to approach the role, but it certainly was not the promise that he gave to the people of Western Australia when he stood up. I think he has put it in the file labelled “I said it but I didn’t really mean it”, a bit like what he did when he said he was not going to pursue electoral reform, but then he did. That file is getting bigger and bigger. “I said it but I didn’t really mean it”. It is a big file.

A government member: You’re misleading the house!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Misleading the house? The Premier was asked multiple times about electoral reform before the election and he said that it was not on the agenda, but the first order of business when he came in was to introduce electoral reform. We will put that in the file of “I said it but I didn’t mean it”, along with “I will deliver gold-standard transparency”. It is not just the opposition saying this. We are happy to chime in, because clearly our experience is that there has been a lack of transparency and accountability, but also the Auditor General—the independent umpire; the person who is responsible to the Parliament and the people of Western Australia—is utterly frustrated. We can see that her reports, and they have been prolific, are scathing of how this government is dealing with the questions and recommendations that she and her office are making.

From our perspective, I think that this latest report is a big red flag for this government. In question time today, when the Deputy Leader of the Opposition asked the Premier a question on major projects and whether there would

be additional reporting on these major projects, as has been recommended by the Auditor General's report, there was a chorus from the minister and members opposite that said, "We do that through the budget. We answer questions in this house. We won't be doing anything else." Essentially, they were saying that there will be no consideration of what the Auditor General has put forward. If the Premier and government are planning on adhering to the Auditor General's recommendations and doing what she has suggested not once, but twice, I would be very happy to be corrected and see that come to pass. I have a feeling, given the response we saw during question time today from the Premier and the chorus behind him from his cabinet, that we will not be seeing the Auditor General's suggestions and recommendations taken up.

I wonder at the hypocrisy that we have to deal with. I go back to when the Premier was the Leader of the Opposition and moved motions regularly about transparency and accountability. He moved a matter of public interest and in June 2014 he used this exact line —

It is very important that, as much as possible, public money is not wasted. It is also very important that these projects have smooth and transparent approvals processes.

That was in the context of reporting on progress, and delays and approvals for major projects under the previous government. That hypocrisy, arguing for transparency, promising that gold standard and then doing the exact opposite is breathtakingly arrogant on behalf of this Premier. There really is nowhere to hide, because the Auditor General has been very succinct in laying those facts very bare. In 2020, the Auditor General released a report with this statement —

The State Government, often with joint investment from the Commonwealth Government, —

I am sure the member for Moore will have something to say about that, and a follow-up from the question that he asked in question time —

invests billions of dollars each year in major projects to build roads, hospitals, schools, prisons ... for the people and economy of Western Australia. Despite this significant investment of public money, Parliament and the public cannot easily access information on the progress of these projects.

This is the Auditor General. Let me read it again —

Parliament and the public cannot easily access information on the progress of these projects.

My Office has commented on this lack of transparency in a number of previous reports.

This was the first report into reporting on major projects. The Auditor General is referring to previous reports. This is the second time in a formal report on reporting on major projects, but she has raised those concerns across a number of different reports in the past five years. She said —

... it would be a simple matter for Government to regularly report publicly on the status of projects to improve transparency to both Parliament and the public.

It would be a simple matter. Three years after coming to office with those grand statements of gold-standard transparency, this government is absolutely in the crosshairs of the Auditor General, because we read the material that accompanies those reports and the speeches she gives in public forums and we can tell that there are serious concerns about the way this government is operating. This is an independent umpire. She has no axe to grind. She is not the opposition, nor a political party; she is an independent umpire reporting to Parliament. Her only duty, that we can tell she takes absolutely seriously, is to make sure that the people of Western Australia and their taxpayers' dollars are looked after, spent prudently and that decisions made by government are made appropriately and transparently. When the government responds we ask that these observations, recommendations and criticisms coming are noted but coming from that independent umpire. Of course, I expect that we will see an explanation or an explaining away of why these recommendations do not need to be adhered to, but we have already seen ministers in this government disagree when asked questions in this place about recommendations from the Auditor General.

The Minister for Housing was asked by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for a response on why he, as a minister, had presided over four of the worst performing COVID stimulus initiatives. A report was put out by the Auditor General about the COVID stimulus initiatives. Obviously, governments were moving fast to try to react and respond to the challenges of the pandemic. The Auditor General has been quite generous in acknowledging that all government departments operated under an enormous amount of pressure during that period, and that was a circumstance that could lead to poor decision-making or structures. That is the role of the Auditor General, who has been very accommodating of that. But there were some serious concerns about the initiatives within the Minister for Housing's portfolios. From memory, it was in relation to the fact that only a fraction of the money that had been announced for the stimulus packages had actually been expended. That is another pattern that we see from this government. There are big announcements and big dollars up-front, but when we delve into the detail, very little of it actually hits the ground. Work is still being done on those COVID incentives and the packages put together to see how much of it got to the people who needed it the most. The Auditor General's assessment on this particular matter in the Minister for Housing's portfolio was backed up by data provided by the government. The Minister for Housing specifically said that he disagreed with the Auditor General and her finding.

When I was a minister, there were uncomfortable moments when the Auditor General created reports, particularly in relation to some of the projects that our government was responsible for. When that criticism came, I stood up in Parliament and copped it. I said, “That’s a fair assessment”, and I moved on and tried to address it. I used to put it on the agenda for my department and also our ministerial office to say, “I want updates on how we are progressing against the recommendations that the Auditor General has made.” I took it seriously, because the Auditor General is independent. This was something they were doing to try to improve processes. Accept the criticism, even when it is uncomfortable, as a government and as a minister, and get on with attending to it. I do not think, and I cannot recall—happy if the government can dig up comments from me in the past—but certainly, from my perspective, when reports had concerns in relation to our portfolios, I was the first to say we need to get on and deal with it. We cannot argue with the umpire. If that response from the Minister for Housing is more broadly indicative of how cabinet chooses to respond to the concerns raised by the Auditor General, that is very concerning, because it is hardly the respect or adhering to the standard that the Premier has stated that his government should be trying to deliver. It is consistent with what we have observed and experienced over the past five years from this government.

It did not take very long for the rot to set in and the government refusing to provide information. I mentioned those section 82 notices earlier. I wonder: if we went back and asked another question, and we will do this, how many of those have now come to pass in the past five years? In the first 18 months of the McGowan government, it invoked section 82 under the Financial Management Act to avoid answering questions in Parliament nearly 40 times. The Auditor General has to assess whether that is reasonable or unreasonable. There is a mixture of both in there. There have been occasions over the past five years when the Auditor General has found that the minister was not reasonable in not providing that information. I will provide a comparison for the house, just to give context about why we think this is important and goes to the point of the transparency and accountability argument that we are putting forward today. In comparison, the previous government used that particular clause only 67 times in eight and a half years. In the first 18 months of this government, it used it 40 times. We will find out what it looks like now, five years in. I suspect it will be significantly higher, but over the entire eight and a half years we were in government, we used it 67 times. That is not a government coming to Parliament thinking, “We will be free and open with the information that we think the public deserves.” That is something that we as an opposition will continue to highlight.

The freedom of information process is a really important part of opposition for the media, the opposition and public scrutiny. It is very difficult to get information out of this government. It is quite frustrating when we eventually do get documents; quite often we get full pages of blacked out information. My colleagues sitting here have all had similar experiences of just entire pages blacked out. We might get the title page or a couple of sentences and the author, perhaps, and that is it. That is after we have gone back and forth to the department several times trying to negotiate or find out the parameters or whether it is reasonable. I have noted also that there has been a significant increase in the number of times that ministers, particularly in the Legislative Council, will come back and say, “We are not using government resources to answer that question; it simply will not be answered.” That is very concerning as well.

When it comes to freedom of information requests, we have had a quick look through our office. In the last 12 months, the longest time we have been waiting for an external review is for one that was lodged on 4 January, so at the beginning of this year. We are still waiting for that process to be completed. In the last 12 months, of the five external reviews that we have had to lodge because we have not been able to get an outcome from government, two are outstanding, and three have been received. We regularly get a request from a government department or the minister’s office for an extension of time to respond. Again, it is very frustrating when we are trying to seek information to assist us to do our role from an opposition’s perspective. I have no doubt that there are journalists in the media who experience that same frustrating processes. It does not add up when all these things are sitting alongside each other and we get a statement from the Premier that he is delivering gold-standard transparency in government.

Those are the overarching reasons that we have cause for concern about a government that has a \$5.7 billion surplus and is rolling out a significant major projects budget in conjunction with the commonwealth or private sector operators. There is a lot of money in Western Australia and the government is in control of a significant number of projects. It is not unreasonable for us to ask for what the Auditor General has suggested more than once—that is, a more open and transparent reporting process.

Let us go back and look at the Auditor General’s report *Transparency report: Major projects*, and the hard work that has gone into filling the gap, essentially. The Auditor General states in her report that she will fill the gap in reporting on these projects until such time as either the government makes the decision to come forward or another alternative is put forward. At this point in time, she has asked that that gap be filled; and, if it is not, she will fill it until such time as the government makes the decision to do it or is dragged into doing it.

The Auditor General makes this recommendation twice in that report —

... the Department of Finance should work to improve transparency through regular reporting to Parliament and the public on the cost, time and status of major projects.

That is a reasonable suggestion. There is precedent for that in other Parliaments. I am advised that one example is a major ICT project in Queensland. ICT projects are always complex and subject to cost blowouts when they are

implemented across government departments, and they are an area that quite rightly should be scrutinised. The Queensland government reports on ICT projects in a similar manner to what the Auditor General has suggested in her report. That is also the case with federal government defence projects, which is what we would expect, because they are major investments and involve national security. We do not have defence projects of that nature, although we do have many ICT projects because of the big push from this government for digitisation. We also have a number of other big infrastructure projects that would fit into that category. I do not want to see that suggestion dismissed just because we are not the federal government and we should not have to adhere to that. This Premier has set the standard. He wants the gold standard. The gold standard would be to work with the Auditor General to make sure that we adhere to that recommendation. I do not understand, and I do ask, why there has been a severe railing against these recommendations.

I turn now to the Auditor General's *Annual report 2020–2021*. The annual report outlines the work that the Auditor General has done over the year. The report contains a significant amount of information summarising the audits that have been conducted. I will go through a few of them. The Auditor General also has duties in relation to local government, but I do not need to bring that in because local governments have a different set of responsibilities. We are talking about the state government. The first report that we referred to was the *Transparency report: Major projects*, which was tabled on 29 October 2020. The annual report states, in the summary of that major projects report —

This limited assurance review provides information and a cost and time performance of 15 major State government projects. Of the 15 projects none publicly reported cost and time progress on a regular basis. However, all were being managed within their current funding. Detailed planning has resulted in increased funding for 3 projects and 5 have had their funding reduced. The Departments of Treasury and Finance and Infrastructure WA supported, in principle, the report's recommendation to work together to improve transparency through regular reporting to Parliament and the public on the cost, time and status of major projects.

That was in October 2020. We then we go to the seventh report from the Auditor General. That is about the financial audits of state government entities. The Auditor General looked at the financial year audits for 143 state government entities and reported that 26 per cent of the financial management control issues and 41 per cent of the information system control weaknesses that had been reported in the previous year were unresolved. There is a pattern in the reports that have been created by the Auditor General. The Auditor General is saying on an annual basis that her suggestions, recommendations and concerns have not been addressed and resolved. The annual report states that clearly in black and white on page 79. That is very concerning. If the government cannot look after that part of its business, how can we expect it to look after those massive projects that have a propensity to become complex, to blow out in costs and to cause wastage from a taxpayer dollar perspective?

Grants administration is always contentious. In the final sentence of this section of the *Annual report 2020–2021*, which was tabled on 28 January 2021, the Auditor General states —

We found that only 2 of the 8 entities displayed sound policies, practices and controls.

That to me does not marry up with gold-standard transparency. That is particularly the case when this is the government that initiated the Langouant special inquiry into government programs and projects. That report made a whole raft of recommendations. The government said that it accepted that report. However, in January 2021, as part of her inquiry into grants administration across a number of state government entities, the Auditor General found that only two of the eight entities that it had looked at displayed sound policies, practices and controls. This is a government found wanting in the expenditure of taxpayers' dollars.

I could keep going, members, because there is no shortage of concerns. I highlight the fact that what concerns us is when the Auditor General is not only making statements in the reports that she is creating, but also summarising that in her annual report. I refer to the report *Opinions on ministerial notifications—tax and funding information relating to Racing and Wagering Western Australia*, dated 24 February 2021. The Auditor General summarises that in the annual report by stating —

In this report the Auditor General found the decision by the former Minister for Tourism not to provide Parliament with 5 post-campaign performance reports in full and the number of people booking travel as a result of the Hotel Perth Campaign was not reasonable and therefore not appropriate. Some of the information was publicly known or not commercially sensitive and, in some cases, there was no obligation of confidence. The former Minister tabled redacted documents in Parliament however, the extent of redaction was not clear in the tabled documents. There were numerous undisclosed redactions, resulting in a higher implied level of completeness and transparency than was apparent from the tabled documents.

That is not marrying up with gold-standard transparency, members. It is certainly very concerning that it is not marrying up with the experience we have when we try to find information and get heavily redacted documents. The report dated 24 February states that the former Minister for Racing and Gaming did not provide Parliament with tax and funding information relating to RWWA. The Auditor General found that it was not reasonable and therefore

not appropriate because the information was not commercially sensitive and was later published. The government was just being belligerent because it actually published it, it became public, but the government would not provide it when asked. We go on. This government has clearly taken a position of secrecy, which is seriously concerning when we think of the state of our budget, the number of major projects that we have underway here in Western Australia and the confidence that this government needs to provide that it is not wasting taxpayers' dollars and is being open and transparent. It should not be railing against decisions and recommendations from the Auditor General as the independent umpire to Parliament on behalf of the people of Western Australia.

I would suggest that anybody who has not read the speech that Caroline Spencer, the Auditor General, made to the Institute of Public Administration Australia integrity and accountability conference on 28 April get a copy of it and read it. I can tell that she takes her job as a public servant incredibly seriously. She works through some really concerning statements, including saying that there are cracks emerging in the foundations of our public service and sometimes—on only a few rare occasions—ministers have refused to provide her with access to information to properly discharge her functions, which she considers a very serious matter indeed and one that directly contravenes the will of the Parliament and the spirit of transparent and accountable government. Any number of concerns are reflected in her official public reports, which she refers to in this speech. I would highly recommend that if this government is to find a pathway back to that gold-standard transparency that the Premier promised when Labor came to government in 2017, it starts listening to the Auditor General and starts being respectful of those recommendations. It is a serious matter when we see governments ignoring the independent umpire when it comes to the expenditure and accountability of taxpayers' funds.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party) [4.31 pm]: I rise to join this debate —

That this house notes the Office of the Auditor General's finding of persistent transparency failures by the McGowan Labor government, including reporting of progress on major projects, and calls on the Premier to deliver on his promise of gold-standard transparency.

Members, we do not need to go to the Auditor General's report to see a lack of transparency on the government's part. In question time today, I was appalled by the performance of ministers on the other side. I asked the Minister for Planning, who is responsible for market-led proposals in the government, about the sale of the Landgate building in Midland. The minister talked about the refurbishment of the old Treasury building in town—an iconic, historic building in the centre of Perth. I asked for the disclosure of the business case behind that deal, and the minister just waved it away; there is nothing to see here! I think this information is really important for this house.

Members and ministers opposite are competing for government money across their portfolios. We know that housing is a major problem. Money has been given to housing, but I am sure the Minister for Housing would like more. Hamish Hastie did a good analysis of the details of the Landgate case in an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* published on 20 June. Go and read it, members. The Minister for Planning should go and read it. I do not know how much the minister was involved in this before this was handed to her. She is a serious minister, and I think that if she looked at the details, she would be utterly appalled and disgusted by what she finds out about that. This refers to 13 700 square metres on three nodes of rentable area, and these are buildings are occupied. This is not an abandoned old government building; these are Landgate offices and the government is looking to move more public servants into government-owned property. These 13 700 square metres would conventionally sell for around \$5 000 a square metre. If a person had a property of that size out in Midland, that is how much they would sell it for. That property's valuation is \$68.5 million. The minister said that improvements need to be made to that building. The government has already flagged in the budget and other sources upgrades to air conditioning and other things of about \$10.5 million. Let us say that money will be invested by the company taking over that building; if we add that \$10.5 million to the \$17.3 million, that equals \$28.8 million. The amount that the government got for that building is still \$40 million less than the market value.

These are not pie-in-the-sky figures. There is another building in Keane Street, Midland, that is occupied by the department of works and sold recently for \$7.2 million. Given the area that is available in that building, that accords with the numbers that I have given, so these are not some pie-in-the-sky figures that I have made up. I have spoken to people who carry out these sorts of investments, and that is what they tell me. Members opposite might say if the government sold that building for a low cost, it would be getting a good rental arrangement. But for that building that I am talking about, it is paying \$300 a square metre, and, according to the information that is available, the government is paying between \$358 and \$440 a square metre for that building. That will average out to about \$5.6 million a year that the government will pay in rent for that building—if we look at the numbers the government has actually provided—which comes up with a total cost for that rental, assuming no escalation, of \$85 million over the 15-year lease of that building.

The government is known as a blue-chip customer; that is: it is the perfect customer. The government always pays its bills. This is a long-term lease. If a person had a \$28.8 million building and they wanted to lease it—I spoke to a major property developer in Perth who deals with commercial properties—they look for a blue-chip customer and a long-term lease. They look for around a five per cent yield on that investment. Let us assume that the government would pay \$10.5 million for refurbishment on top of the \$17.3 million, the annual rent would be only \$1.4 million.

The Minister for Planning has either been given bad advice or the facts I am stating are wrong. I would be disappointed if the information that is out there is wrong, but that is why I asked the minister today to please table the business case because there is something profoundly wrong here. Honestly, of all the commercial people I and my staff have spoken to about this deal, none of them can understand how it has come about. This is the deal of a lifetime for the company that has bought the building. It is absolutely the deal of a lifetime or the government has just gone mad with money, giving away a building at tens of millions of dollars below its real worth or otherwise it will pay massive rents way above the level of rent it should pay for that building.

I am always happy to be educated. Sometimes I might come to this place and I might get a bit embarrassed, but I tell members that I am always happy to learn. That is why I asked the minister whether she would table the business case. I think the public of Western Australia deserves to see the business case. There should be nothing commercial-in-confidence about that. The rental rates for this property are already publicly known. The price the government sold the building for is already publicly known; therefore, how does it add up? Who in Treasury did the numbers to justify this? Someone has made a monumental mistake in this deal that is going to cost the taxpayers tens of millions of dollars. Do not forget that the government owned this building, and, might I say, I get long lectures from members on the other side about how this government is opposed to privatisation. We hear long lectures about how we should not privatise X and Y, yet, in this case, the government has sold a building it owns for a fraction of its value, and it is going to rent it back at top value at a massive loss to the taxpayers of Western Australia.

Again, where is the transparency? Please give us transparency. If I were the minister, I would be asking my department and Treasury to explain to me how that happened. We never want to see this happen again when a public asset is sold. Table it so that the people of Western Australia can be satisfied. If there is a good reason or a good excuse—if the proponents are going to spend \$100 million on the building or something—let us know so that the public of Western Australia can be satisfied they are getting value for money. At the moment, on the facts to hand, there is no satisfaction.

Today, I asked the Minister for Energy questions about pumped hydro at Collie. I sent the questions to the minister two hours before question time. I had the courtesy of ringing his office to let him know. If he was the wrong person to ask, he could have done me the courtesy of telling me. In the past, other ministers I have dealt with have said, “That’s fine, member, but the minister you should be asking is X.” He did not bother to do that or to give me the courtesy of saying, “You should be asking someone else about that question.” He instead came in here and tried to score cheap points, but otherwise obfuscated about it. I will give members a bit of homework to look up. If members wonder why I am worried about pumped hydro at Collie and those mine pits filling up with water without proper remediation, they can look online. I will spell it out. Look up the failures in the rehabilitated pits at Nachterstedt in Germany. Google that and also the failure of a coalmining pit in Knappensee. Have a look at the videos to see what happens when coalmining pits are not properly rehabilitated. It is devastating. It was an area in East Germany that was taken over by West Germany when Germany was reunified. It had large coal pits that were not remediated properly. Now there are thousands and thousands of hectares where humans cannot go. When we are talking about pumped hydro at Collie, we are talking about potentially gigalitres of water being pumped from one place to another and the pits filling up with water. When I have driven along Coalfields Highway towards Arthur River from Collie, which I do not do infrequently, I have looked at some of the attempted rehabilitation of that area. I have seen that they have pushed some hills out and put a bit of grass on them. What I see in those hills is major erosion, major soil failure and slippage. That is why I asked the Minister for Mines and Petroleum about the due diligence that has been done. That is why I asked the questions about the estimates for the rehabilitation costs and whether he can guarantee to the public of Western Australia that they will not pick up the rehabilitation costs. That is why I asked him.

I have some experience in this area from my previous career. I do not believe the estimate of \$1 billion plus for remediation of that area is unwarranted. What I do not want to see, which is what we have seen from this government, is a headlong rush into a market-led proposal for pumped hydro that is going to excuse the miners of their rehabilitation responsibilities. Ultimately, the taxpayers of Western Australia would be left with that cost. That is why I asked the minister those questions. All of us deserve transparency. Look up those websites I have suggested and tell me that we should not have some level of concern about this being done properly, thoroughly and transparently. The taxpayer should not pick up a liability because people do something that is called renewable but it hides the fact that they are avoiding the critical remediation work that needs to be done on those sites. They are massive sites. I am sure it was a throwaway line, but the minister quoted \$40 million for the rehabilitation of that site, which is utterly farcical. I know that for a fact. I have some significant experience of these sorts of things from my previous life.

We heard the Premier today in response to the Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition went through and outlined the detail of the Auditor General’s report and the fantastic job that the Auditor General does. I have the utmost admiration for the fearless way in which the Attorney General does her job. I think she is an exemplar of a fearless public servant doing their job.

Several members interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Did I say Attorney General? I mean Auditor General.

A member interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I mixed them up. I love the Attorney General sometimes; sometimes I am not so keen. Thank you, members. I do mean the Auditor General. I believe the Auditor General is an exemplar of a fearless public servant. I think that is something that all of us, whether in government or opposition, really want and need. The Premier was asked a question today about the Auditor General's report and transparency. What did the Premier say? The Leader of the Opposition outlined this. When she was a minister and the Auditor General made a finding, she did not sit there and wave her hand. That is what the Premier did today; he basically waved his hand and said, "I don't care what the Auditor General says. I'm going to utterly ignore what she said." Even though she said this information is not available and even though this respected, experienced public servant has said that the government is not making this information available, the Premier, just with a wave of his hand, said that he was going to ignore that. He did not even answer the question from the Leader of the Opposition on that matter. I think that is utterly appalling.

We had a debate here a couple of days ago about the arrogance of this government, but it was an appalling response from the Premier to just dismiss, out of hand, the concerns that the Auditor General has raised. As we have heard, this is the second transparency report into major projects prepared by the Auditor General. Unfortunately, the report findings are exactly the same as they were two years ago. It is not just that the Premier has ignored the findings of the Auditor General on this report; for two years, the Premier and this government have ignored the findings of the Auditor General, who says that it is her responsibility to provide greater transparency in the way that projects are managed, but more particularly around the progress of projects. It is information that the public and Parliament are entitled to have.

It is not the government's money. It is not the Minister for Planning's money. It is not the Treasurer's money. It is the public of Western Australia's money. The government is not spending its own money. I hear from time to time that the government says, "We're doing X, Y and Z". No; the public of Western Australia is paying for all of those things. Members of the public of Western Australia are paying for that, and the government is doing it on their behalf. They have a right to know whether that money is being well spent and whether the projects are being well managed. It is not sufficient for government members to say that they know it is and they are satisfied it is. That is not how transparent government works. That is how a dictatorship works. Transparent government provides the information to the opposition, the media and the general public to allow them to interrogate and challenge the government. Sometimes, that will be embarrassing. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, yes, the government might be embarrassed, but it will learn from that. Ministers will go back to their departments and say, "How do we do better? How do we improve on that in the future?" That is not happening.

As I said, the transparency report on major projects was released in 2020. There are two important aspects to that report. One is the management of projects and the other important factor is the government's preoccupation with secrecy. I share the thoughts of the Leader of the Opposition on this. After many months, I recently received a freedom of information report. The amount of information in the justification for essentially not providing any information was about 10 times longer than the combined total of information that was sent.

[Member's time extended.]

Dr D.J. HONEY: The excuses went on for page after page, but, otherwise, I got essentially no information back. I got a bit of paper that has a title on it. It has "if", "and", "but" and "them", but every single other thing is blacked out. I know that for some ministers, this is quite clearly a sport. Their sport is that they will not give anything to the opposition. That is not something members opposite would have tolerated or thought appropriate when they were in opposition. The Auditor General's report states —

Our office's previous report on major projects in 2012 highlighted that publicly available information on major projects is disparate and inconsistent, making it difficult to get a full and accurate picture of progress and performance.

Those government members who are more alert will go, "Hang on! That's when you were in power!" Do they know what the former Liberal-National government did in response to that? It started providing detailed reports for the then opposition to interrogate and use in this place, and otherwise publicly. That is what the former government did in response to the Auditor General. That is why the Auditor General did not make another finding on that until the McGowan government came to power. The detailed reports on projects were available on the website. That was the former government's response to the Auditor General's recommendations. The government said yes and accepted that sufficient information was not provided, and it changed its practices to give the then opposition the information it required. The former opposition had that information available to it. That is why the Auditor General did not make another finding of that nature until 2020—after members opposite came into power.

What happened then? The McGowan government made grand announcements about the projects it would do and it made promises on costs. All of a sudden, the costs started ballooning and then we saw a complete lack of transparency on reporting on those matters. It requires the skills of Sherlock Holmes to go through all the different government papers to try to weed out the actual spend when the government talks about a particular project. Is it the same project the government talked about before? Is it another project? We constantly hear the government announcing a new program, whether it is for housing or health or another area. Even in the Collie announcement, the government said it will spend \$660 million on job-creating projects, but when we dig into it, it includes the

announcement the government made more than two years ago about the Collie recovery fund, the transition fund and so on. The government is deliberately confusing people by doing that; it is a deliberate lack of transparency by the government on that matter.

The Auditor General's 2020 report reminded us of the Labor government's own Langoulant report in 2018. It touched on this topic. I will quote from the Auditor General's report, which states —

Similarly, the Western Australian Government's 2018 *Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects* recommended that government 'provide information about major projects in an accessible and transparent way to the public.'

The Premier's chosen person made recommendations about capital projects. The perverse thing is that we know why that was done. It was done to humiliate the former Liberal–National government, to reinforce the then Labor opposition's view of how terrible and how incompetent the former government was in relation to capital projects. Premier McGowan's appointed person came back with recommendations, but what does the government do? It proceeds to ignore those recommendations. It ignores reports from an inquiry on transparency that it appointed! The McGowan government ignored the recommendations of the Langoulant report into infrastructure spend and it ignored the Auditor's General's recommendations in 2020. From the response we heard today from the Premier, it sounds as though he will ignore the recommendation by the Auditor General to the government in her latest report. The irony is that the whole process of the 2018 report was aimed at criticising the former Liberal–National government. If the former Auditor General came back today, he would have to say that this government has ignored two out of three of the major recommendations that he made about the management of major capital projects.

In 2020, the current Auditor General said —

... Parliament and the public cannot easily access information on the progress of these projects.

...

It is my view that Government should provide regular public reporting on the status of major projects to Parliament and the public ... It is my intention to periodically report and track a selection of major projects until Government fills the gap.

That reinforces the outcome of the Langoulant report. It is two years hence. The government has had two years to respond to someone who I think is an outstanding public servant in her substantive role as Auditor General. It is two years later and what does the Auditor General say? She says that Parliament and the public cannot easily access detailed or consolidated information on the cost and time performance of these projects.

As I pointed out, there was a criticism of the former Liberal–National government in 2012, but it acted. That is why this adverse finding was not made again until 2020 when the McGowan government was in power and it stopped adequately reporting information so that the public of Western Australia could properly see the progress or lack of progress, whether a project was on budget, over budget or under budget or whether it had changed the scope of the project. As I said, the government deliberately makes that as hard as possible to discover.

The Auditor General explained the need for the information. She states —

It is my view that Government should provide regular public reporting on the status of major projects to Parliament and the public. Public reporting will serve to satisfy public interest, promote accountability, and build community trust and confidence around the management of these major public investments.

As I said, that is the public's money—it is not the government's money—and it deserves some accountability on that.

We do not have to go back far in history to understand why transparency and accountability matter. It matters because if governments are not transparent, we will end up in the situation we had in the past with the government side of politics with the issues that arose around WA Inc, when there was not transparency around government dealings and public money was misused. It took some considerable time and effort to find that out. I would think, knowing that history, that this Labor government would make itself above and beyond reproach and be open and accountable.

The Auditor General said that she will follow up on this. We had a presentation today from the Auditor General on this report. She explained that, in fact, that is exactly what she will be doing. In the absence of the government being open and transparent and publishing readily accessible information around this, she will have to. Is that not a waste of her resources to have to do that? She sees that the only way she can get open and accountable information on the progress of these projects is to use her good officers to do that. This information is not hard for the government to provide. I have had some significant involvement in major projects. I can tell members about the management of major projects. These projects are not trivial. There is no doubt that many of them are complex. They consist of thousands or even tens of thousands of individual steps. Project managers track their progress every day—they have to! They track progress and costs every day. Fortunately, we have had computers for some considerable time and all that information is very readily consolidated. If I went out to people on those major projects today and asked where they were at with progress and expenditure, they could tell me that today. They could tell me whether the schedule was slipping. It is a simple matter for the government to provide this information. It does not have to introduce whole

new processes. As was pointed out by the Auditor General, this information is available within government. The government has this information. It is not that it does not have this information or that it has to invent a new process to explain or provide this information to the community and to Parliament. It can do that now.

Let us look at what the Auditor General found. I put a question on notice to the Minister for Transport asking for an update on the progress of a rail crossing project. It was a simple request. The minister replied —

Project timeframes, budgets and milestones are, and continue to be, detailed in numerous publicly available Ministerial Media Statements and the State Budget Papers. Updates will continue to be provided as projects progress.

As I pointed out, that information is not readily available. It is hidden away. It is confusing. Changes in scope are not detailed and changes in time lines are moved without any public explanation. We do not find out and we do not get that information. Either the minister had that information or she did not. To say that it is publicly available —

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: The minister will have her chance in a minute. To say that that information is publicly available in some form is simply not true. It is not just me saying that; that is what the Auditor General said, although not in relation to that specific case.

In relation to project management —

Several members interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: For God's sake; it is a peanut gallery!

Project information is not provided in a transparent and readily accessible manner. We see that constantly when we ask for information of that nature. I cannot understand why the government is so fearful of this. Is it scared to be embarrassed that it is over schedule on a project or over cost? We hear plenty of excuses in this place; the government gives detailed explanations of excuses. The simple fact is that it could provide that information. That information is readily available. The Auditor General made a reasonable request in two reports—in 2020 and 2022. If the government does not give a positive response and start providing that information in a readily available form, it is proving, along with the Premier, that it does not meet the gold standard of transparency that it promised when it came to power.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [5.02 pm]: I rise to speak on this motion because, to be frank, I could not tolerate listening to someone else lying and trying to deceive the public and the Parliament. What we heard in this Parliament was an hour of mistruths and lies. I will go through it.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr R.S. LOVE: The minister has accused the Leader of the Liberal Party and the Leader of the Nationals WA of lying to the Parliament. I ask that that be withdrawn.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms C.M. Collins): There is no point of order. Just be careful of using that kind of language.

Debate Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Just to clarify, I am the lead speaker, so I will be taking more than 20 minutes.

We listened to an hour of mistruths and an attempt to deliberately mislead the Parliament.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: It is absolutely outside standing orders to say that someone is deliberately misleading Parliament. I have been pulled up on that in this place.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms C.M. Collins): Member, if we can just be very careful how we use our language. Thank you.

Debate Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The opposition is misleading this place. I will go through a number of things that have happened today. I will start with question time because that is a good place to start. The member for Moore stood to ask why we allocated \$100 million to a project that did not go through Infrastructure WA. I think the member was trying to find some details, but that project was announced by the federal government—by Barnaby Joyce, a colleague of the Nationals WA—on 8 March.

The Leader of the Opposition is not in the chamber. That is what happens. I have never seen the Leader of the Opposition stay in this place for more than two hours at a time. She made some ludicrous claims and then disappeared. Maybe there is another conference over east. Maybe she is on her way to the Qantas chairman's lounge. She would stand up and say how appalling it is that not every member is in this chamber while she is on her way to the airport. I expect that is what is happening. If members are going to use private members' time, they have to stick around. If they are going to make ludicrous claims, they have to stick around.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I was not talking about the member for Moore; I was talking about the person who sometimes sits next to him.

Welcome back, Leader of the Opposition! It is really important to take in what the Leader of the Opposition said and compare it with the facts.

I want to go back to the former Auditor General's report *Opinions on ministerial notifications* of 2015, and his comments on the stadium. It states —

This report deals with three decisions by the Minister for Sport and Recreation, not to provide information to Parliament about the arrangements to design, build, finance and maintain the new Perth Stadium. The Minister refused to provide some information from the State's agreement with the Westadium consortium and refused to provide an unredacted copy of the contract.

Section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006* applies if a Minister decides that it is reasonable and appropriate ...

The report continued —

The three decisions to refuse to provide information to Parliament related to requests made to the Minister for Sport and Recreation on 10 September 2014, 3 February 2015 and 16 March 2015. In the time between the first and second question being asked, the Minister, the Hon Terry Waldron MLA resigned as Minister and was replaced by the Hon Mia Davies MLA.

In all three cases the Minister decided that the information sought was commercial-in-confidence and would not be provided.

I remember what occurred before the stadium was built. The previous government loved the stadium. We all love the stadium. The Liberal-National government never told us how much it cost. I remember what occurred. We saw media statement after media statement. We heard about the size of the cup holders. We heard about the size of the seats. We heard about the music that was going to be played in the toilets. We heard about every bit of the stadium, but the then government never told us how much it cost. It refused to provide a copy of the contract.

A news headline of 27 August 2015 stated "WA auditor-general slams Government's refusal to release Perth Stadium details over commercial in confidence concerns". That was about the current Leader of the Opposition. The Leader of the Opposition has said, "When the Auditor General used to criticise us, we used to stand up and say, 'Fair cop, we'll change our practices.'" That is exactly what the Leader of the Opposition said: "When the Auditor General used to criticise our government, we used to stand up and say, 'Fair criticism; we accept that. We will change our practices.'" Of course she did. She said that when there was criticism, she used to say, "Fair enough; you criticise us. I'll absorb all that and I will change my practices." In 2015, she was criticised for not providing information. In 2017, the Auditor General's report *Opinion on ministerial notification* found —

... decisions by the former Minister for Water —

The Leader of the Opposition —

not to provide Parliament with business cases for the Water for Food project were not reasonable ...

In 2017, in a report relating to the conduct of the previous Minister for Water, the current Leader of the Opposition, the Auditor General found that the non-disclosure of information was not reasonable. To stand in this place and say that somehow she took on board everything said by the Auditor General and changed her practice is completely false. She was criticised in 2015 for not disclosing information about the stadium, even though her government was talking about the size and orientation of the cup holders, the size of the seats, the type of material used for the seats, the music and the number of speakers in the toilets. I remember hearing about every single part of that project. Every bit of fluff the then minister could have done, she did, and she refused to provide information. The minister did not change her practices, because in 2017, she stood up and said, "I'm not giving you any information about the Water for Food project." In Parliament on 8 September 2016, Hon Darren West asked the minister whether a business case had been prepared for each Water for Food project. The minister responded, yes, but the business case cannot be released because they are cabinet-in-confidence documents. The minister was asked again and again and she said no, but the Auditor General found that those documents should have been released. The first point is that what the Leader of the Opposition said was completely wrong. She said that the Auditor General would comment on the former government and that it would absorb it, change its practices and release all the information. That is clearly not the case.

The second point I will make is on the question asked today about the North Ellenbrook interchange. A commitment was given for that in the federal budget. A media release by Barnaby Joyce of 8 March talks about how Western Australians will benefit from that significant infrastructure project, the North Ellenbrook interchange. Of course I went out there and supported the project. When the federal government gives us \$50 million and the private sector gives us \$25 million and we get to build a \$100 million project for \$25 million, that is a pretty good deal. Unlike the previous coalition government, which never used to seek federal government funding—maybe it did for one deal; the Perth Freight Link—and was not able to secure funding under Tony Abbott for public transport

or to negotiate cooperatively with any federal government to secure significant funds, we have done that and we will continue to do that. Even with Barnaby Joyce, a key member of the National Party, we were able to negotiate \$50 million of federal funding. Let us be clear about this: that federal funding is funded by the fuel excise that Western Australians pay. My duty always has been, and continues to be, to secure as much federal funding as we can for state projects in Western Australia. That was a case in point in the federal budget. I do not remember the member for Moore standing up and saying, “Shock, horror! Barnaby Joyce shouldn’t have given us \$50 million for the North Ellenbrook interchange.” I do not remember that at all. But today he does not want federal funding of \$50 million because he does not think it stacks up. I do not know what the member thinks stacks up, because I am telling him that if he is of the view that every project needs a benefit–cost ratio of more than one to get federal funding, he will find that many regional projects will never reach one. I will let him know that. Most regional projects do not go over a BCR of one, but if that is his approach to not fund anything with a BCR over one, fair enough.

I will make three other points. First, the Leader of the Opposition did not give the Parliament the truth today about her response to the Auditor General’s report. In 2015, the Auditor General said that the government should provide information but it did not, and in 2017 the Auditor General published another report saying that the previous Minister for Water should have provided the business cases. Second, we saw the Deputy Leader of the Opposition say that we should not have accepted money from the federal government for a project. He obviously does not understand how budgets work. The third point is that opposition members are somehow saying that when they were in government, they produced reports for all their projects on a monthly basis. I do not remember seeing them. The Financial Administration Act discusses what documents governments should produce. I remember studying it when I was in opposition. The Financial Management Act was replaced by the Financial Administration Act. I remember it. The first time I wrote an amendment to legislation was when I was working in Geoff Gallop’s office when he was in opposition and I made three changes to improve the transparency of documents provided in Parliament, and they were all accepted at the time, which was quite a big achievement. That was the first time I ever wrote legislation, the Minister for Finance would be happy to know. That legislation stipulates what we need to release. At the time of the budget, we release all the information that has been committed by the state government to projects and in the midyear review we update that information. By way of media statements, we also provide information when there are significant changes in scope and cost. That is what we are required to do, and that is what we do. I do not recall the idea that the previous government somehow produced a monthly report of asset investments. People might know that I used to spend a lot of time on the opposition benches. When I sat there, I think I would have seen the monthly reports of asset investments if they came through, but I did not see them. The idea that somehow the former government had improved reporting on asset investment is wrong. It is false. I do not remember seeing them. The reality is that the former government did not do much. Opposition members do not do much now, but in government they did not do much either. The former government followed a couple of big projects and it was obsessed with the PFL, but that is about it. The whole idea that I have to take up the time of the hundreds of people I have delivering projects to provide monthly reports to the Leader of the Opposition is not the way government operates, I am sorry.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The legislation requires that we provide information, which we do.

Mr R.S. Love: Take it up with the Auditor General. She’s not happy with the way you do it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Auditor General says that she wants to do this reporting, and that is her role. She is allowed to do that. If that is how she wants to use the resources, that is up to her. She is independent. I have read the executive summary, which is slightly different from the introduction in the Auditor General’s overview. I will go through the executive summary. I have gone through the conclusion of the executive summary of the report—I am now talking about the Auditor General’s report—and I have to say that it is not that bad. I am reading the report, and it is pretty good. The report might be a bit different from some of the presentations or something, but I am reading the actual report. After going through it, and given what is happening around the world, we are doing okay. The conclusion states —

In compiling this transparency report, nothing has come to our attention to indicate that, in all material respects, information provided in the project summary sheets within this report is not accurate and reliable.

...

All projects had adequate high-level financial and governance controls, including monitoring and internal reporting processes. We did not identify any significant issues for the 5 projects included in our detailed controls review. All entities were able to provide reasonable and substantiated explanations of cost and time variations when requested.

That is from the executive summary of the report. Like I said, if the Auditor General wants to assess how our projects are being delivered every year or every couple of years, that is fine. That is the Auditor General’s job. We are fine with that. If that is how she wants to use the resources, that is fine. Let us go through it: we report in the budget, in the midyear review and we have annual reports. When there are significant changes to the scope or cost or time frames, we make that public. I know that members opposite do not like the fact that there is a lot of activity

around the state. I know it must irritate them immensely that when they drive around, they see activity everywhere. The feedback I get is, “I can’t believe how much you’re doing.” I will be honest about that. No-one comes up to me and says, “Jeez, you should be reporting on these projects monthly.” They are admiring the work being done by Western Australians around the state. They all say, “I can’t believe how you keep across all the details of all those projects you’re delivering, because it is a record amount.” That is the case, and it is challenging. I have always said that in this place and I will not argue that it is not challenging. We have had COVID, labour shortages, supply chain interruptions, a storm that took out a rail line that shut the east–west train traffic for 27 days, and a war in Ukraine that is impacting on commodity prices and, of course, key production inputs. When we started our asset investment program, there are things that we honestly were not anticipating. We were not anticipating that we would be building the biggest ever infrastructure program amidst a one-in-100-year worldwide pandemic. We did not get that. We did not think that there was going to be a war between Ukraine and Russia, and we did not quite understand that a rail line would be swept away and there would be a 24-day outage, but we kept managing it and we keep being very honest about what we are doing.

I am going through the projects that members opposite have outlined today. I think they talked about the Tonkin Gap project. Members opposite do not understand what we are doing!

Mr R.S. Love: It’s in the report! Page 32.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will read it out, because I think the member has misinterpreted or has been misled on what it said.

Mr R.S. Love: I am not misleading anybody. That is in the Auditor General’s report.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Moore, thank you.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is because the project was changed to enable the Morley–Ellenbrook rail works, and we said that. I tell this to members and anyone who is watching. Do they know what we did? We had two projects. We had the Morley–Ellenbrook line, which will operate in the median of the Tonkin Highway, and we had the Tonkin Gap works. We thought, “You know what? We should combine that project into one, because that makes financial sense.” That is what we did, and that is what we announced in media statement after media statement. I am sorry that you guys do not do the work. I am really sorry about that, and I am sorry there are not many members opposite to do that work. It is partially our fault, but it also their fault that they do not have enough members. But members opposite should not come in here and criticise us on lack of transparency when they do not do the work, because I will point to the media statements that outline that. I will point to the budget that outlines that. I will keep pointing to documents that outline that. Members opposite come in and make false claims in question time that do not marry with the report. It is just not the case! Members opposite can keep going through all these projects. To be honest, if I go to page 5 of the Auditor General’s report, for all those interested who are playing at home, given all the shocks that are happening around the world, this is really, really good. We are progressing on these projects really, really well.

Mr W.J. Johnston: All the green!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: All the green says we are doing well. Again, I am sorry that members opposite want to pull some quotes that may have been said on the radio or in an overview, but I am actually reading the report, and the report seems reasonable. It says that there has been a two-year delay in the Forrestfield–Airport Link. Of course there has been; I have said it about 10 times. Members should remember that we intentionally delayed the project to make sure that workplace safety was a top priority. Initially, we were not happy with how it was being managed, so we said we want to delay this project to make sure that the workers’ safety is paramount and workers are protected. That was our number one priority. We intentionally did that. We intentionally delayed the project. More recently, COVID has also had an impact. Members stand up and say that the FAL is delayed—yes! We have said that. It is a complex project. We wanted to make sure that the contract was delivered well and in the safest possible environment.

The Auditor General’s overview notes that we intentionally spread out the pipeline of works. I will go through this. It says that projects were intentionally smoothed to basically ensure that they were going to be delivered more responsibly. We will continue to monitor the smoothing of the works to make sure that we can deliver our projects in the best possible way. I am reading from the Auditor General’s overview, which states —

We note the Government has responded to these market pressures by smoothing its pipeline of works through delayed commencement of some projects, particularly in the Transport portfolio. It is important the State Government considers predictable events, such as stimulus measures and the impact of closed borders on labour supply, when planning the delivery of its Asset Investment Program ...

I accept that. We will continue to monitor how we emerge from the COVID pandemic, because we understood the pressures of being in the COVID pandemic and the pressures of emerging from it are now becoming more transparent. We will continue to monitor the entire program of works to make sure that we can deliver it as responsibly as possible, and we will continue to do that.

As we saw, the Leader of the Opposition was found out today. She stood up and said, “We always accepted and agreed with the Auditor General’s reports and changed our practice.” That was completely false. We showed that the member for Moore was completely wrong when he outlined some of the interpretations of the Auditor General’s report.

I now want to go into, as I said, the reporting and accountability mechanisms. People may understand that as a result of getting federal funding, we have an obligation to report to Infrastructure Australia. I do not think the previous government did that at all. I do not think that it ever had to go through a four-stage process.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Barnett used to say he made the decisions. He wouldn't submit anything to Infrastructure Australia.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Exactly. When members opposite built the stadium, they were asked how they chose the location—"I drove past and saw an empty site."

Mr W.J. Johnston: Which was a site that had been allocated for housing development by John Day, the Minister for Planning.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is right.

That was the analysis undertaken by the previous government. The process now is that we submit a business case to Infrastructure Australia. Again, I do not think members opposite would even understand the amount of work that goes into preparing a business case for Infrastructure Australia. We have to identify the need. We have to go through an options analysis. I think, for the Ellenbrook rail line, we went through more than 20 options. We have to compare and contrast, for example, in this case, rail versus bus versus a different rail alignment. We have to look at different alignments and different modes of transport. We then have to go through a project development plan—a PDP—in which we look at the operation costs and all the other costs, and develop and submit a benefit-cost ratio. That is volumes of volumes of work and millions of dollars spent in preparation of these business cases. That is a process that we undertook for all major projects to secure funding. That is a very, very tough process.

Then, of course, there is Infrastructure Western Australia. When we prepare major business cases, Infrastructure WA has a role in endorsing and assessing them as well, whether they are submitted to Infrastructure Australia or are just state funded. I have to say that most of our projects—nearly all our transport projects—are Infrastructure Australia-approved projects, so that is a process that we have followed and will continue to follow. Infrastructure WA has a role in accepting the business case and passing it through to Infrastructure Australia, but we already have a very rigorous process. We have a much more rigorous process than ever before. We release the summary PDPs onto the website so that people can understand them. For all our works, just go to the website, such as Main Roads. We have all these projects on websites, which give people the current costs and the estimated completion. As well as the budget, the midyear review, annual reports and other questions, through our agencies, we also have a one-page summary of all our projects. They exist. Again, that is what we do and that is what we aim to maintain. Again, there is all that transparency.

The Leader of the Liberal Party stood up to ask questions today about the market-led proposal processes. I think the Minister for Finance has probably provided information to the media about that; he may provide some more detail. But, again, members opposite come in, make allegations and try to do a calculation when they do not understand the scope of the works. As the Leader of the Liberal Party outlined, I inherited one of these projects a bit late, so I went through the media statements to make sure that we explained the scope of the works properly. I read those media statements, in particular one from December last year about the scope of works, and they are much wider than what the member stood up and said. The member took this narrow interpretation that he does not believe it is cost-effective, but he did not incorporate all the aspects outlined in the media statement. Again, I ask members opposite to do their work.

We operate under the same FOI legislation as the former government did. The same people are doing the FOIs. I refer to fishing expeditions. Members cannot write in and say, "We want every document with this word in it for the last two years" and expect us to devote the resources to do that. That is why they have to narrow their requests. That is what happened to me in opposition; I narrowed my requests. Again, I do not know what opposition members want us to do. They want us to do their work for them, instead of actually reading the budget papers and asking questions in estimates. It could have asked about all these issues, including north Ellenbrook, in estimates. They asked for a shortened estimates time, because it was too taxing on them.

A member interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, you did. I was surprised: "We didn't want to be here until 10 o'clock every night." They asked for a shorter estimates process, because they did not want to be here until 10 o'clock every night. Now they are come in here saying, "You should guess what we want information on and provide it", instead of doing the work and asking questions.

We will continue to operate under all the legislative frameworks that exist for financial accountability and transparency. Members might have noticed that I do not do media stunts every week about the size of seats or cup holders. When information is available, we report on changes in scope and cost. That is the sensible and right thing to do. When decisions are made and contracts are changed, we will report that. That is what happens. We do that by way of media statements or statements in this place, but the opposition manufactures this outrage, like it always does, over something that does not exist.

I go to the range of works underway, because I would like opposition members to just one day give us some credit for all the work that we—and all those Western Australians who have been working over the past two and a half

years, through tough circumstances—are doing to deliver our projects. Over 10 000 Western Australians are working on Metronet. We are building railcars here for the first time and building rail lines that the opposition promised and failed to deliver when it was in government. We are delivering our election commitments and spending more on regional roads than any government before us. We are working on regional freight lines. I know that must be galling for the opposition. It sold them and shut them down, and there I am and we are working with the federal government and local councils investing in a rail line that the Liberal–National government sold and shut down. We are trying to help with that task of moving grain to port much quicker. We are spending a record amount on ports across the state, supporting regional communities. The opposition never comes in here and gives any credit to those workers who are out there delivering those projects. We will continue to invest. Opposition members come in here with false claims, and people can see right through them. They come in here without doing their research and without understanding projects. I do not understand how some of them sat around the cabinet table, because they cannot read a budget paper.

A member interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I tell members this —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Thank you.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am very optimistic that the member for Moore is claiming the next election.

We continue to invest around the state. When there are challenges, we make those challenges clear, and we continue to inform the public.

Like I said, we cannot do the work for the opposition. I read some key parts of the Auditor General’s report. It says that the financial management and governance of the projects is adequate. That is good. If members want to change legislation, they can go and work on it. If they want to change the reporting requirements of the Financial Management Act, they can go and do that. They can do a private members’ bill if they want to do that. The idea that somehow I have to sit here and report to the Leader of the Liberal Party with monthly or weekly project management reports of the over 100 contracts under my portfolio typifies the arrogance of opposition members. They do not want to do any work: “We’re the Liberal and National Parties. We don’t do work; you do it for us. You do the work for us to attack you”, because they are so lazy. Nothing better demonstrates it than what we saw last week with the Leader of the Opposition catching a plane to New South Wales during a parliamentary week to attend what was an intimate conference on climate action.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Moore!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am here. Today, the member did not want to ask me the question about the north Ellenbrook rail line. He asked the Premier. I was sitting here and was very keen to answer that question, but the member refused to ask me that question. Even when we are here, they do not ask questions.

It is the arrogance. When they were in government, frankly, I do not think they worked very hard. Now, in opposition, they want to keep that going. They did not work that hard in government, and now they want to keep that going. They are saying, “We don’t want to do the research. We don’t want to read the budget papers. We don’t want to access documents online. We don’t want to ask questions in estimates. We want a shorter estimates period. We don’t want to do any of that. We believe that you have to provide us a mountain of information that we will misuse and mistreat.” That is what they do, or they misinterpret it, because I do not think they have a very good economic background, and that is what they want us to do instead of actually doing the work.

I am proud of the achievements of this government. We are out there delivering in the most difficult of circumstances around the state. We are partnering with companies and industry bodies like CBH.

A member interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What?

Mr W.J. Johnston: In the regions.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: In the regions?

Mr R.S. Love: I didn’t say anything. The interjection was from over there somewhere.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Well, you are throwing your voice!

We are partnering with industry groups such as CBH. We are partnering with the federal government and with councils, delivering projects around the state, and all the opposition can do is come in here and make false claims. I read the Auditor General’s report. To be honest, when it landed on Friday, my office read it and said that it was quite fine. There were not any issues, because as we went through it, we saw that the Auditor General said that the governance and project management is pretty good. As I said, I was not involved in the IPA, but it is up to the Auditor General to do whatever the Auditor General sees fit. If she wants to do this periodically and assess how

we manage our major projects, that is fine; that is her job. I will not do something to prevent the Auditor General from doing her job. I cannot. I would not want to do that. If she wants to do this every six months, every year or every two years, that is up to her. We respect the independence. Is the idea that we would want to do something to thwart the role of the Auditor General? We do not want to do that at all. We will continue to provide the information.

Mr R.S. Love: Surely, you would have that level of information already? It is a matter of reporting.

Mr W.J. Johnston: We report exactly as we are required to do by law.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I do not understand. What does the opposition want? What else do they want?

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have read it. What do they want?

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms C.M. Collins): Leader of the Opposition, can you please stand if you would like to contribute.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: She cannot stand.

The ACTING SPEAKER: You cannot stand? Do not stand! Continue, minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will take the interjection.

Ms M.J. Davies: It is laid out specifically that the reporting is done internally in government. The minister is suggesting that it is reported through the Parliament.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: So what does the member want?

Ms M.J. Davies: I want the minister to adhere to what is in the Auditor General's report.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What information do they want? They do not even know what information they want.

Ms M.J. Davies: You are on your feet, minister. We have laid out what we want.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No. You tell me. You know what? They do not have any depth. They say that we should report more. They do not even know what they want.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Tell us what you want. We report the budget.

Ms M.J. Davies: I am not participating in you diminishing what the Auditor General has requested quite seriously. It is laid out in black and white. I have made my case. I have made my contribution. You are now just being vexatious, and quite revolting, actually.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What information do you want? Why do you stand up and accuse the Premier of not being here, and then catch a flight to Sydney and miss two and a half days of Parliament?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Transport, if you can please go back to the motion and not make it personal.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Leader of the Opposition makes accusations against us all the time. When we bring it back and hold a mirror to what the Leader of the Opposition does, she cannot handle it. That is why she walks out of the chamber, and that is why she does not ever look up, either. She says whatever she wants about us. But when we point out the facts, the fact is that she stood in here and made a political stunt about the Premier not being here during question time, but then flew to New South Wales for a conservatives for climate change intimate affair, so, yes, we are going to call that out. Again, the Leader of the Opposition comes in here and says she wants more information.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: She posted it only after people were aware. She did not post it the day that she was there. We saw the timing of it.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you, members. The Minister for Transport has the call.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Actually, on Thursday, because I was here, I asked the Deputy Leader of the Opposition where the Leader of the Opposition was, but no-one said anything. I remember saying, "Where is the Leader of the Opposition?", and no-one would say anything. I am asking the opposition what information do they want. It goes back to the core issue here. What information do they want? "Oh, we don't know." The basis of this whole private members' debate is that they say they want more information, and when we ask them what they want —

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Honestly! There is no credibility from the deputy leader at all. The opposition comes in here with false claims every day. They have no idea about the substance of their questions and no idea about how to ask relevant supplementary questions. Let us face it. We have asked what information do they want. We report the

estimated total costs in the budget and the midyear review. Any substantial changes are reported between those two financial documents. When there is significant change in scope or cost, we put that out through media statements. That is what we do.

Mr R.S. Love: Do you comply with the act?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We comply with all the legislation. The idea that somehow we would produce some sort of weekly report about the management of every component of every contract is false. We are the executive government. The opposition hates that. It believes that somehow we are not up to it. That is what opposition members think. They still cannot believe that we are in government and that we have these numbers. They still cannot accept that. This goes back not to any claim of arrogance on this side, but to the arrogance on their side.

Mr R.S. Love: The entitlement.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, the entitlement. The fact is that they do not believe they should do work. They do not believe they should sit up late at night, as we used to do, and go through reports. They believe that everyone else does not deserve to be here, but you guys do. They do not believe we should be occupying the Treasury bench. They do not believe we should be able to make decisions to deliver projects. That is the point of it.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Moore, you are repeatedly interjecting. Can I ask you to cease and let the Minister for Transport finish her remarks.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: This is more about the arrogance of the opposition, that it should not have to do any work. The member for Moore will stand up and make all these claims. I bet him that everything he said is in a budget document or a media statement. I have asked them what information do they want. They will not tell us. The Leader of the Opposition cannot tell us. What do they want? I do not get it. What information do they want? All they can do is read a paragraph. We do not understand what they want, because it is all out there. I am sorry that the opposition has to do work. But that is what oppositions have to do. They come in here and complain when they have to do work. They do not want to do estimates. They do not want to have to be in Parliament. They have managed to hold five members here. That is good. That is much better than normal. The five opposition members have been sitting here for a few hours. That is great. They do not even sit here and debate legislation. For all your posturing and claims about this side, you guys cannot even hold a proper debate on legislation. Many of you do not even speak on bills, or you speak for a minute on a bill. All this posturing —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am saying that opposition members should stop being so entitled. That is what I would like. I would like them to stop being so entitled. That would be great. They come into this place all the time with a sense of arrogance and entitlement. As I said, I spent eight and a half years over there. You know what? We had to work. The idea that I would stand up and say, “Premier Barnett, could you provide this information to us, because I want to go home and I do not want to do any work?”, or the idea that I would stand up and say, “Give us all the information; I want a monthly tracking of every expenditure and cost item on all your projects because I do not want to have to ask a question, I do not want to have to read an annual report, and I do not want to have to read a budget paper,” I would not have done that.

I cannot wait to hear the contribution from the member for Moore. This is yet another demonstration of an opposition that realises that it might need to do some work in opposition. We have seen what its response is. We are very, very transparent about our projects and we will continue to be.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.47 pm]: I am pleased to speak to this excellent motion put forward by the Leader of the Opposition today. We have seen today in question time a prime example of why this Premier and this government do not get the idea of what is true transparency. In question time today, I asked a question of the Premier about a particular piece of infrastructure, a roundabout on Tonkin Highway just north of Ellenbrook. I asked —

I refer the Premier to the new \$100 billion Tonkin Highway interchange, north of Ellenbrook, announced on 8 May 2022 by your Minister for Transport. Given this new project is valued at \$100 million, was it assessed by Infrastructure WA prior to the funding decision being made?

The Premier replied that it was a Morrison government announcement. I can assure the minister that it was also an announcement from Hon Rita Saffioti, Minister for Transport, because that is what I have right here. The media statement refers to a new \$100 million interchange on Tonkin Highway, with an allocation of \$25 million from the McGowan government, \$25 million from private investment, and \$50 million from the commonwealth government. I am well aware that it was not all Western Australian state government money. But the minister and the Premier do not seem to be aware that the wording of the act is that any major project worth more than \$100 million, no matter what is the source of funding, has to be put through Infrastructure WA.

Ms R. Saffioti: You don't understand.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I do understand. That is what the government's own legislation states it should do. Let us look at the Infrastructure Western Australia Act 2019. Division 3, section 19, "Infrastructure WA to assess major infrastructure proposals prior to investment decision" states —

- (1) This section applies to a major infrastructure proposal of a State agency, whether or not —
 - (a) funding for the proposal is or will be sought from the Crown or is to be provided by a State agency; or
 - (b) the proposal is intended to result in the infrastructure being held by the Crown or a State agency; or
 - (c) the proposal is a joint proposal.

Quite clearly we have a joint proposal here. It continues —

- (2) The major infrastructure proposal must be submitted to Infrastructure WA, and Infrastructure WA's report on the proposal must be received by the Premier, prior to the investment decision for the proposal.

The act goes on to define "investment decision". It states —

investment decision, in relation to a proposal of a State agency, means the decision by the Government or the State agency to implement the proposal.

Clearly, the minister's department will be implementing the proposal.

I turn to what actually constitutes a major infrastructure proposal in the definitions in section 3. It states —

major infrastructure proposal means a proposal, for an infrastructure project or for a programme of infrastructure projects, if —

- (a) the project has or the projects have an estimated capital cost of \$100 million or more, or another amount prescribed for the purposes of this paragraph; or
- (b) the proposal is nominated by the Premier ...

There are some exemptions that would apply under section 71 regulations, but no regulations have been gazetted for this; therefore, there are no exemptions. The Minister for Transport should have put that project through Infrastructure WA, and I wonder why she has not done so. We heard that it was because there was a funding opportunity. I am sorry, but we have an act of Parliament and that means that the government has to submit that proposal before it makes a final investment decision. That is the law that the government brought in, but it is not following its own law. It is not following its own legal situation. There is nothing in this act that would allow the government to exempt that particular investment decision from Infrastructure WA.

I had a discussion with the Premier, who made some disparaging remarks about the opposition in estimates. I had quite a lengthy discussion with the Premier about Infrastructure WA when the chief executive officer of Infrastructure WA was here. The member for Wanneroo, who will no doubt make a contribution later on, was in those proceedings as was Hon Mia Davies, Leader of the Opposition and I. We were here and I note that it looks like only one member of the government showed up to that estimates hearing—only one is mentioned here in *Hansard* anyway.

Several members interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: In *Hansard*. We were lucky to have a quorum.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr R.S. LOVE: Lazy government could not be bothered showing up.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr W.J. Johnston: That is incorrect because if the government wasn't here, there wouldn't have been a quorum; we provide the quorum.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I acknowledge that the government provided a bare quorum. But it would have been instructive for some of the government's other members to have been listening to the discussion because they might have learnt what Infrastructure WA is!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, one moment! I remind you that *Hansard* needs to be able to hear the recordings. Thank you.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Thank you and I am happy to receive the Acting Speaker's protection.

During the estimates, I said to the Premier —

The assessment of major infrastructure proposals on page 292 of the *Budget statements* reads —

Infrastructure WA assesses major infrastructure proposals with a capital cost of \$100 million or more ... and provides relevant advice to the Government to support informed investment decisions.

The Premier said, yes, "Infrastructure WA assesses major infrastructure proposals" as outlined in the act. He continues —

Under the act, it is required to assess major infrastructure proposals prior to an investment decision. This includes proposals with a capital cost of \$100 million or any proposal nominated by the Premier.

This is exactly what the act says; I do not dispute that. That is what the act says. This proposal clearly should have gone to Infrastructure Western Australia. He went on to say —

A summary of IWA's assessment —

Mr W.J. Johnston: Member, can I ask a question?

Mr R.S. LOVE: No; the member can have a say later on. I have only limited time.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent): Ministers, hold on. Member for Moore, are you taking interjections?

Mr R.S. LOVE: No, I am not because I have only very limited time, and I have a fair bit to say.

A member interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am answering the questions that were already asked. The Premier said —

A summary of IWA's assessment is required to be published within six months of the advice being provided to the Premier.

We know that this proposal has not been to Infrastructure WA because last month I asked the Premier how many projects had already been assessed. He went on to say —

The project that has been assessed to date is the Geraldton port maximisation project. Funding of \$332 million for that was announced in the budget.

Therefore, in May, there had been no such assessment of that \$100 million investment on the Tonkin Highway. One of the reasons why a number of projects have been exempted was the commencement date of the Infrastructure Western Australia legislation was in January this year, so projects that had already been announced before then were not subject to it—that is okay—as were projects that were part of a continuing project that had already been advanced. We discussed the work on the Armadale line, for instance, and the soon-to-be-discrete sections that were over \$100 million in value and had not been through that assessment. But because they were part of an overall package, that was deemed to be fair enough in the Premier's eyes. But this matter is clearly a new piece of infrastructure that has come onto the Tonkin Highway on what was NorthLink WA. We know that NorthLink WA had already been completed because on 23 April 2020, the Minister for Transport released a joint media statement titled "WA's biggest road project, NorthLink, open, finished and ready for business". Clearly, this was a new piece of infrastructure, not part of an expanded, existing or continuing NorthLink WA project. That project had come to an end, and that was announced on 23 April 2020. Therefore, there is absolutely no justification for the Premier, in responding to me, to ignore the fact that there is a requirement under the legislation for him to have that new project assessed.

If there is some technical reason in law that that is not the case—good! I am happy to have the argument with someone who actually understands the law well. But, on a plain reading of the legislation, it seems very, very clear that that project should have been assessed by Infrastructure WA. Why would the government not bother doing that? Apparently, the government took advantage of a gift of \$50 million from the Morrison government. That may be so, but many of the projects that the government is building are funded or co-funded by the federal government, so I do not think the government saying that it is just making use of an opportunity is the appropriate response. If we have a piece of legislation that requires the government to undertake an assessment, it should undertake that assessment.

Rather than explain why there was a technical reason that a \$100 million project that clearly should have been put through Infrastructure WA was not—instead of offering reasons—the Premier became quite nasty, which is what members on that side seem to do when they get a bit unhappy. He started referencing all sorts of irrelevant things to do with the former Deputy Prime Minister and the former Prime Minister and did not answer any further questions. I thought it was an opportunity for him to outline exactly how Infrastructure WA would respond when another entity comes forward with a large amount of money that is going to be a state asset, is on a state road and is a \$100 million asset. Clearly, it should have been assessed, but it has not been assessed. The government has failed to undertake the appropriate processes and has again chosen the easy path. Rather than going through a process of

transparency, the government has decided to take expediency over transparency. That seems to be what we heard from the minister today during her discussion point about it being too hard to provide the opposition with information and that it was not important. We are representing the people of Western Australia. We are the opposition. Members opposite might not like the fact that we still exist. We are small in number, but we are a mighty team. We do a lot of work. Despite what we have heard, I will bet members that no collective of six on the government's side has ever asked over 1 000 questions at estimates! Do not accuse us of not doing our work when you offer the feeble excuse that it is too hard to provide information. You should have that information at your fingertips. The member for Cottesloe has operated at a very senior level as an executive for building projects. He guided the development of projects that were hundreds of millions of dollars in scale. He will tell us that the information is available. It is monitored. We are seeing periodic announcements with projects blown right out of the water when the government can no longer hide the costs.

In Parliament on 17 March, I asked the Minister for Transport about divulging to Parliament some of the cost blowouts of Metronet. This was after the midyear review. A number of the cost blowouts that emerged in the budget were not in the midyear review, but they would have been known in March. At the time, there was an article about this in the newspaper, but the questions were going to be asked anyway. I asked —

- (1) Has the government adjusted its cost expectations for Metronet to reflect two years of ballooning steel prices, critical workforce shortages, and a surge in fuel prices placing upward pressure on the cost of construction?
- (2) How much extra does the government expect to spend to complete the suite of projects?

They were quite reasonable questions. I would have expected that the minister responsible could have given an answer. All I got was —

What we do is to keep monitoring the projects ... They have different styles of contracts and some of them have different levels of contingency too. There are a number of variable factors, and as I said today, we have had a significant increase in steel prices and some projects are quite vulnerable to that, particularly if a large component of that structure is steel.

She then goes into more fluff about rising prices and says —

... we continually monitor those. If cost pressures materialise and crystallise, we acknowledge that through the budget process and through midyear processes.

That had not been done in the midyear review. Those cost pressures were already there. We had been asking questions and we had been batted off with brickbats about it.

Today the minister asked what we wanted to know. We want the government to do what the Auditor General, an officer of this Parliament, had suggested. The recommendation is to be found on page 11. I invite members to have a look and read it. All we are asking for is for the government to follow the recommendations of the Auditor General. The Auditor General's recommendation on page 11 is quite short. The Auditor General's words read —

Similar to the recommendation in our 2020 report, the Department of Finance should work to improve transparency through regular reporting to Parliament and the public on the cost, time and status of major projects.

She said “work to improve transparency”, not accepting as sufficient what the government does now. The Auditor General is saying it is not sufficient. She is saying, “work to improve”; that is not an A-grade or a gold standard on transparency. She is asking the government to work to improve transparency similar to the recommendation in the 2020 report. It is necessary to go to the 2020 report for detail on what she is asking for. The 2020 report was released on 29 October. It says the same, really. I quote the recommendation —

The Departments of Finance and Treasury, and Infrastructure WA —

That is the body I mentioned before, which had been ignored on the \$100 million project on Tonkin Highway —

should work together to improve transparency through regular reporting to Parliament and the public on the cost, time and status of major projects.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr R.S. LOVE: The joint response from the Department of Treasury, the Department of Finance and Infrastructure WA was to, I quote —

... support the recommendation in principle. Factors that would need to be taken into account in implementing this recommendation include:

- establishing agreed parameters to identify priority projects for public reporting;
- establishing the appropriate format, function, timing and frequency of reporting that meets the needs of the intended audience;

- ensuring that the report is consistent with and complementary to other reports, with minimal duplication of information. In this regard, enhanced transparency in public reporting must deliver a balance between the public benefit of such reporting and the costs of providing that transparency;
- ensuring that the data and narrative provided in any public reporting is sufficiently clear to minimise (and, preferably, eliminate) the potential for ambiguous interpretation and inference;
- ensuring that appropriate protections are in place to preserve the confidentiality of information, where applicable ...

A fair bit of that is along the same lines. It continues —

- formalising appropriate governance arrangements for report development and approval and consultation with relevant agencies noting in particular the need for Ministerial involvement in any reporting to Parliament.

We suggest the Works Agency Council be consulted on the design of any report. At its most recent meeting, on 14 October, —

That is in 2020 —

members discussed publication of publicly-available information on the state's capital works program. There were some diverging views on the nature of the report, and the level of detail required. Overall, while members viewed the Council as having a role in developing the report, it ultimately concluded that projects related to economic and regional stimulus, and achieving Government's social policy objectives, should have a higher priority at this time.

At that stage, they were looking at doing it but nothing happened. There was maybe a minor change in some of the descriptions in the budget; I do not know. Ostensibly, nothing changed. That Auditor General's report is similar to the recommendation in the report we had a briefing on today. It continues —

Similar to the recommendation in our 2020 report, the Department of Finance should work to improve transparency through regular reporting to Parliament and the public on the cost, time and status of major projects.

It is virtually the same recommendation. It is asking for the same thing that was not given after the 2020 report.

I know you lot love to quote the Langoulant report. That report is also interesting because the special investigator asked for "continual disclosure". I think that was the term used—I could be wrong; I have lost the report I had with me—but certainly his view was there was a lack of transparency in government project reporting and that it needed to be improved. Today I asked a question to the Premier again on the Auditor General at the same sort of level about what could be done to make sure the public had better information. Again, I was batted off by the Premier with no commitment to improve public access to information on these major projects. These are very major projects. I am looking at the member for Bunbury; I might talk about one of the projects in his patch in a minute, just to illustrate how major these projects are. It is important for the state's budget and it is important for Parliament to be kept fully informed on some of these projects because of their size and the value, and the need to ensure the public is given that level of assurance that the projects are being well obtained. I found the quote from the Langoulant report. Recommendation 6 reads —

Information about Government programs and projects should be open for scrutiny. Based on shared principles, the Government should develop a transparency framework for reporting details of major projects. The framework must require continuous disclosure.

Clearly, that has not been done or the Auditor General would not have released the report that she did today. Some major programs are underway. I acknowledge that the state government has a large suite of projects. We are not disputing that. We are saying that the oversight of those projects is problematic. We have seen one such example in the transformation of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road project addressed in a press release on 9 May.

Yes, it is true that on 9 May the minister announced that the Bunbury Outer Ring Road had struck a deal of trouble and needed a bit more money to continue. It was very good that the minister did that, but why did it take until the project had blown out by \$400 million of additional funding to complete the project? The project was announced in 2018 and costed at \$852 million. The government has bumped \$400 million onto that project, so it has become \$1.25 billion, which is \$0.24 billion more than NorthLink WA, which at that stage was the most expensive piece of road infrastructure in Western Australia, which was half again as long and has many more flyovers than the BORR. The project cost had blown out from \$850 million to \$1.25 billion—but, wait, there is more! Included in that announcement was a reduction in scope, and there would be roundabouts. When this project was assessed by Infrastructure Australia, it was assessed on being a freeway but, now, there are four roundabouts instead of a freeway. I asked the Minister for Transport in the estimates hearings what savings resulted in that reduction in scope of those four roundabouts. The answer I got was \$250 million. In fact, the budget for this project is now \$1.25 billion, but if it had been delivered at the original scope, the cost would have been \$1.5 billion. Do the people of Western Australia not deserve a heads-up that these projects are going just a wee bit over cost? The budget has almost doubled! It would have cost \$1.5 billion if the government had delivered the project as promised. It is now

spending \$1.25 billion for a suburban road, because we are not getting flyovers; we are getting roundabouts. By the way, those roundabouts will by Main Roads WA's own admission suffice only for a fairly short time before traffic loads become such that it will have to build flyovers anyway. This is pushing that down the track and making it another government's problem in maybe 10 or 20 years. Eventually, those roundabouts will have to go and the project will be delivered in its original scope. Incidentally, we are two-thirds of the way through that project before it got environment approvals for the southern section. They only came through the other day! The project would have been in real strife if the Environmental Protection Authority had said no, or even the federal Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment, because we know there are environment protection and biodiversity conservation conditions that need to be overcome in order for that approval to be given. That project was either absolutely poorly costed in the first place or it was disgracefully delivered. It is truly frightening to have a cost blowout of that scale.

The minister spoke before about the Infrastructure Australia assessment process and how rigorous it is. Yes, it is rigorous. The evaluation summary of Infrastructure Australia is pretty interesting. It does not actually say that the business case is that strong. It states —

Our review found some limitations in the proponent's —

Either Main Roads WA or the government —

social cost–benefit analysis. Overall, we consider that the benefits of the project will marginally outweigh its costs.

The cost–benefit analysis in the report showed a net present value of benefit over cost of \$242 million. The project has blown out by \$750 million. I am not sure that the original analysis stands up at all. Infrastructure Australia probably feels there has perhaps been a little bit of an understatement of some of the risks in this project and excess costs. I raised this in debate in Parliament and I was told by the minister that a lot of sand had to be moved, so it was an expensive project. There was always going to be a lot of sand that had to be moved; the project did not change in that sense. The only real change in the delivery of the project has been a scaling back of the scope of the project for \$250 million in savings, which would have left the cost of the project at \$1.5 billion. That is a lot of money. I am not begrudging the people of Bunbury a road. I am disappointed they will have a road that will have four roundabouts and will cost \$1.25 billion, when the government said it would cost \$850 million. Someone will have to pay for this sooner or later. We see a lack of concern in this open-ended chequebook approach of, “Oh well, if it costs more we'll get more money!” instead of, “How can we deliver this properly?” That would not fly in private business. None of you people would survive in private enterprise. I am sure you would all be destitute and out on the street somewhere, needing help from the Minister for Homelessness!

Several members interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: You would be looking for the Minister for Homelessness! The government's project management is appalling. We heard the discussion —

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: I literally cannot hear the member speak for the interjections from the Minister for Housing.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent): He did go for the government, so I think it is only fair.

You only have a short amount of time left, so let the member for Moore finish his statement, please.

Debate Resumed

Mr R.S. LOVE: I want to talk quickly in the last couple of minutes left about the process of smoothing. The Yanchep rail line was one of the projects “smoothed”. Work started in 2019, when the project value was \$531 million. The expected costs on that Yanchep extension have gone up by \$175 million. We heard about this smoothing that took place on the Yanchep line. I asked questions about the changing status of that line—the failure to deliver the principal shared pathway that was originally proposed and who would get the recoup on that \$14 million being saved. Apparently it will go into helping to keep the project alive. That project was already in trouble. It underspent nearly \$100 million in one year. The project was virtually stalled and was not being delivered. Obviously, the choice to pick that one out to smooth papered over the fact that, again, the government was not delivering what it promised to deliver. I will sit down as I expect the member for Roe has something to say on this.

Mr P.J. Rundle: Madam Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Oh, dear, sorry. Minister.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [6.18 pm]: I am always entertained by the member for Moore, because apparently he does not understand what he is talking about. He picks up a report from the Auditor General—we all respect the Auditor General's report—but he does not seem to understand it. That is because the Auditor General actually finds that that the overwhelming majority of our projects are on time, on budget and well-managed. In fact, she finds that the governance arrangement for managing these projects is good. That is what she finds! She also made the suggestion, which apparently she has made before, that we should

increase the number of reports on projects from two a year to 12 a year. The Department of Treasury pointed out in its response to that recommendation that it values the independent assurance provided by the Auditor General in relation to the cost, time and status of major projects and would welcome the continuation of its existing program of transparency audits that are reported directly to Parliament. Treasury is saying that the Auditor General has the role of conducting these audits and bringing the matters to Parliament. She reviews these projects, finds that they are overwhelmingly well-managed and reports that to Parliament. That is exactly what the member for Moore asked for. I remind the member for Moore that after the budget comes down, there is a *Quarterly financial results report*, the *Government mid-year financial projections statement* and the *Annual report on state finances*. They are all required under the Financial Management Act and they are all adhered to by the government. The Auditor General has never once questioned our adherence to those matters, which is very different from what happened under the previous government.

I also point out that the member referred to a media release on a particular date in May and asked why there was no reporting prior to that. I point out to him that the budget closed on 10 April this year, I think—a month before the budget. It is the usual practice in every state and territory in the commonwealth of Australia that the budget closes about a month before it is published because Treasury has to go away and put it all together.

When we have cost pressures and whatever in the system, we have to get government approval for the extra money. That is the Expenditure Review Committee process, which is what informs the budget. The reporting of those decisions is the budget. That is the purpose of the budget. That is why it exists. I do not understand why the member would not read the budget papers and take out the information he is seeking from them. A further series of decisions are made post-budget, which are then reported in the midyear review. Again, when cost pressures or other decisions are made of government, Treasury is required by law to report those to the Parliament through the midyear review, and it does. The Auditor General might suggest that we should compile those reports more frequently, but the ERC does not meet for many months of the year, so the government does not make fresh decisions about expenditure. Whatever the cost pressures are, there is no approval from government.

The member for Moore is performing urgent parliamentary business elsewhere. He challenged the process involving the new works on Tonkin Highway and its relationship to Infrastructure WA. He obviously does not understand the words he read out because Infrastructure WA is required to review a project before an investment decision is made, not before a project is developed. There is no investment decision on that project. The government joined with the former federal government to commit to the project. There is no binding decision to contract the project. Infrastructure WA will deal with it in accordance with the law before that is made. Let us contrast that with a few things that occurred under the last government.

I refer to the Muja AB power station. I remind members that the Auditor General found, firstly, that the *Annual report on state finances* of the former Liberal government was wrong because a \$250 million loan was taken out by that joint venture, and the Crown provided a guarantee for that loan, which was not included in the *Annual report on state finances*. When I asked a question in this chamber of Hon Troy Buswell in his capacity as Treasurer, I remember that he was ashen-faced when he realised the consequences of the fact that the Liberal government had not properly reported all the liabilities of the state to the people. The *Annual report on state finances* was wrong. The opposition talks about transparency!

Then there was the question of what was described by KPMG as an asymmetrical risk allocation between the government and the private operator. The government guaranteed the loan and put in the asset. The other party put in \$82 000. When the project ended up costing \$320 million, the counterparty, which was the contracting party benefiting from the blowout in the costs, put in only \$82 000 and then walked away from the project with no penalty. None of that was ever reported to Parliament. It took us years to get all that information. There are so many things we could go through with Muja AB. What an embarrassment! Again, the Auditor General said that \$20 million had not been included in the budget for the project that was reported to Parliament. The former government justified that by saying that there had been \$20 million in revenue from the project and that was offset against the capital allocation. That is just disgraceful. The Auditor General said that. Hon Dr Mike Nahan said it was an argument between accountants when the Auditor General found that the government had hidden \$20 million of expenditure. It was deliberately hidden from the people of the state.

Let me talk about the Forrestfield–Airport Link project. Where is the business case? Can we please have the business case? We are building the project and the opposition is criticising us for being late delivering the project, but it will not give us the business case. It will not release the business case that is the property of the former government. What is so embarrassing about that business case that it does not want to make it public?

I now turn to the South Hedland power station. Let me go through this and remind members what happened. Horizon Power asked the former Liberal government for approval to build a power station, and it was denied. Out of recurrent money, it built a switchyard. Let me explain this to members. A switchyard is only used by a power station. The former government built a switchyard not out of capital but out of recurrent funding. That meant that it was paid for by Synergy customers because the extra costs of running Horizon are paid for by Synergy customers through the tariff equalisation contribution. Horizon took that money and built a capital item. It then put a temporary power station on the site to use the switchyard. Horizon said it needed that because it would run out of power. The

power station was never used because it did not get the huge volume of electricity that Horizon claimed it would have. It then contracted with a particular company on a 27-year capacity agreement under which the government does not pay for electricity. It does not buy the power station; it buys the use of the station. If we want to generate electricity, the government has to use its own gas in the power station. That power station effectively locks out renewable energy in the Pilbara until it is fully utilised. It is a 27-year agreement. I think the total value of the contract is \$550 million, which is more than the total assets of Horizon. Talk about transparency!

Then there is Perth Stadium. The contract for that stadium has never been released. In the *Annual report on state finances* there is a footnote about the treatment of financing leases because the stadium was partly funded through a finance lease. I asked what was the implied interest rate in the financing lease. It was seven per cent. At the time, one could get a house mortgage for 4.5 per cent but the government of Western Australia was paying seven per cent for the debt that the private sector has on the stadium. It was paying three times more than it would have if it simply borrowed the money. It did that so it could hide the debt so it did not have to be included in its net debt. Then, of course, the accounting standards body changed the accounting standard after we came to government, and we have to include it in our net debt. Then the opposition says that our net debt went up by \$700 million. Yes, that was the debt the former government hid and it made us pay seven per cent for! That is just one example of the crazy dishonesty we get from the other side.

Then we have Perth Children's Hospital. Where do we start on that? It was the biggest stuff-up in the history of hospital building. There were instances of asbestos, and lead was found in the water. The relevant minister—it was being handled by the major project section that answered to the Treasurer, not the Minister for Health—came into Parliament and said that the lead poisoning was caused by a pipe under a road. When I asked where the pipe was and which road it was under, he could not answer because we now know that the lead was caused by the tap mixers in the hospital, not by the pipe under the road because there was no pipe under the road. There were some other issues with the pipes in the hospital, but that was not the one. It was because they reversed the direction of the flow of water in the ring main and all the rubbish in the ring main, because it had all been going in one direction, was pulled out and put into the children's hospital. Members opposite talked about the recommendations of the Langoulant review. The Langoulant review was about recommending how to conduct reporting in government so that government can be more transparent and people can understand what is going into the *Annual report on state finances*. We implemented those suggestions.

In the lead-up to the 2017 election, the Liberal and National Parties proposed to sell Western Power. Thank God they did not get their way. They said that would have reduced state debt. It would have reduced state debt—the net debt figure in the budget—but not the debt service obligations of the state of Western Australia, because our debt service obligations do not include the debt serviced by the government trading enterprises. They pay their own interest and other matters. Even after the former government lost, its members still came here and said that if we sold Western Power, net debt would be \$12 billion less and therefore the government would save X amount in interest payments. That is completely untrue. The debt serviced by Western Power is paid for by Western Power customers. It is not paid for by the government and is not included in the budget report of debt service obligations. It is just wrong. That is an example of how that lot do not understand how the state finances work.

I remind members about the City Busport. Everyone loves a busport. I am not criticising public transport, but that is the most expensive busport in the world because the former government put it underground. Whenever anyone else wants to make new land available and move their busport, they put it on the first or second floor of a building so that there is a building above and a busport below. The former government built the busport underground and put a park on top of it. There is no revenue from the land above, but it cost \$270 million to build it underground. It is the world's most expensive busport. Why did the former government do that? When Kevin Rudd came to government, he offered to partner on the Northbridge Link project, which was the sinking of the rail line through the city. Instead of pocketing that as savings and reducing net debt, the then Premier, Colin Barnett, increased the scope of the project. He spent every dollar on want-to-haves instead of must-haves. It was the same with the Elizabeth Quay project. That is a financial disaster. Selling all the land down there does no more than return the expense that went into building the quay. It was a silly project at the time. A lot of people thought they would be able to use all the open space in the quay. They never realised that that is where the buildings were going. The largest single space after all the buildings are built there will be about 4 000 square metres, or the size of a large Berlin nightclub! The sum of \$350 million of taxpayers' money was used to give the land away for \$350 million, so there was no net benefit. It is some of the most valuable land in the state and it was effectively given away for free. It is just unbelievable.

Then there is the Metro Area Express. The member for Mirrabooka loves this one. The former government had animations and television ads for it, and there was the tagline “getting things done” or whatever it was; I cannot remember the specific tagline. There were pictures and animations of MAX going along the road. They had life-sized — Several members interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I know. It was too big to go through any of the malls, even though that is where it was supposed to run.

Ms M.J. Hammat: They had the Premier saying —

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: “Buy land in Mirrabooka.” I was about to get to that. The Premier said, “Buy land here now because MAX is coming.” The former government did costings for MAX in the lead-up to the 2013 election, and *The West Australian* FOI-ed those costings. Remember, the former government said MAX was a government announcement and that these were government costings, so *The West Australian* requested the costings under freedom of information. However, the freedom of information request was rejected on the basis that the costings had been done by the Liberal Party and therefore they were not government property and could not be disclosed to the public. How does that work? How does a government announce its costings with television ads that are paid for by government but the costings are done by the Liberal Party? The Leader of the Liberal Party should come in here and tell us about that the next time we have private members’ business. How is it that TV ads were made for a project, yet the costings were done by the WA division of the Liberal Party of Australia? That is ridiculous and disgraceful. I do not understand how people did not go to jail for that. That was unbelievable. Talk about financial management.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Every time I have an FOI, it is responded to. Public servants send them to me and I sign it. I once asked, through FOI, for the resignation letter of the Synergy directors who had resigned in protest at the interference of Minister Nahan in the internal matters of the board, but it was refused on the basis that it was a confidential document. The directors told me, “I’m not going to say what’s in the letter, but you should FOI it.” Dr Nahan said that he could not give out that information because it was private. I asked him again in Parliament whether he had asked the people who signed the letter whether they thought it was a confidential document, but he would not answer that because he had not talked to them. Talk about FOI.

Again, there was not a single business plan or business case for the Verve and Synergy amalgamation—nothing. The former government put two assets worth multi-hundreds of millions of dollars together with no plan or business case. It was simply authored by the Premier. Again, Dr Nahan was the Minister for Energy. When he first got the job, he was asked in an interview whether he supported that and he said no, but two weeks later he said that it was the best idea ever. I asked a question on notice about what information he got that changed his mind, but he would not answer.

A government member interjected.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Clearly. He was very convinced. He had deep convictions about driving a big, white car. Talk about transparency.

As I say, I welcome the Auditor General’s report. It is a useful tool that shows that the Labor government is managing our projects well. In table 1 she sets out her findings about how well the projects are being run, and she says that herself. She also thanks the government for its cooperation in her audit.

The Auditor General does important work. Last year there were quite a number of annual reports from government agencies that were late because the audit reports were not complete by 30 September when we are obliged to table them. I had to write to Parliament last year and explain what was happening, as I am obliged to do under the Financial Management Act. I hope that the Auditor General can sign off on the agencies’ annual reports on time this year, given that she charges the departments for the work that she does, as she should. That is not a criticism. The departments, rightly, pay for their audits. That is what should occur, but I hope that she can complete them on time, because it would be very good for the people of the state. It will make sure that we are being properly accountable through the Parliament by tabling our annual reports on time so that people can review the reports and see all the decisions that have been made and all the information contained therein on the extensive reporting done by the departments, not by the ministers, on their activities over the year and on making sure that the departments stick to their budgets and all those things. Those reports contribute to the *Annual report on state finances*.

I look forward to continuing to be a member of a transparent government that is far exceeding the transparency that was ever provided by the Liberal and National Parties when they were in government. They deliberately withheld information from the Auditor General and the Parliament. They tried to be tricky and use accounting standards to hide debt. They paid too much for too many things, wasted money and led the state down the wrong path so that we would have \$42 billion of debt, which we are having to deal with.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [6.39 pm]: I, too, wish to rise to support the Leader of the Opposition’s excellent motion that this house notes the Office of the Auditor General’s finding of persistent transparency failures by the McGowan Labor government, including reporting of progress on major projects, and calls on the Premier to deliver on his promise of gold-standard transparency.

I think that motion sums it up. I have to say, every week when we come into private members’ business, the first thing that the Minister for Energy says is “You don’t understand!” That is the first line he comes out with every week, without fail. It does not matter what the motion is; it does not matter what we are talking about. The first line is “You don’t understand!” I am sorry, but what I plan to do today is explain what the role of the Auditor General is so that this government does understand. I also want to explain —

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: We sat here in silence on this side and listened to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum. I expect the same courtesy from the other side.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent): The point of order is not upheld. Member for Roe, you have the floor. Continue, please.

Debate Resumed

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. The other thing I want to explain is how the people of Western Australia are feeling about the arrogance of this government and this Premier. I think the Leader of the Opposition explained it pretty well at the start. Someone who googles “arrogance” and “Mark McGowan” can find many, many references. They can find reference to the Premier’s arrogance towards the New South Wales government, arrogance in relation to the Premier appointing himself Treasurer, we have the *Kalgoorlie Miner*, ABC news, and the Premier’s arrogance towards the new leader of the federal Liberal Party.

Ms S. Winton interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: The Australian Medical Association refers to arrogance from the Premier. Even the *Kimberley Echo* refers to the arrogance. The list goes on. To be honest, as I said, the people of WA are waking up to it. The media of WA are waking up to it. We see arrogance in the way the Premier refuses to answer genuine questions from this side. All we want is an answer to the question, but what we get is a diversion, a reference to what happened in the previous government, and all the rest of it. We never actually get a genuine answer.

Earlier on, the Minister for Transport made reference to the Leader of the Opposition. We expect the Premier to turn up. We have just had two weeks off Parliament. If the Premier wanted to make an announcement about Collie, he should have made it during those two weeks, not on the first day back in Parliament. I do not think that is unreasonable. The Premier is expected to be here in Parliament to take the opportunity to answer genuine questions from the opposition.

I must say, it was quite disturbing to me to listen to the Ministers for Mines and Petroleum and Transport say that it was a great report from the Auditor General. The conclusion is that there has been an increase of 11 per cent in project budgets since the original approval across all 17 projects reviewed—there we have it. That 11 per cent is worth \$560 million. I do not know whether the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Mines and Petroleum think that a cost overrun of \$560 million is a great result and there is nothing to see here. I think that is an important figure; \$560 million is a lot of money. As the member for Moore pointed out, the Bunbury Outer Ring Road is probably becoming the world’s most expensive ring road project with a cost overrun now at \$400 million. It is quite disturbing.

Mr R.S. Love: It’s actually closer to \$650 million.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: The member for Moore tells me that it is closer to \$650 million. We are seeing a cavalier attitude from the government to these cost overruns. We know that the GST scenario happened, the iron ore royalties are coming in and there is a \$5.7 billion surplus; the list goes on.

It was really interesting to read the statement from the Department of Finance in the Auditor General’s *2022 Transparency report: Major projects*. It said that the budget papers provide a level of transparency over the government’s major projects. We have just completed the estimates hearings in the Legislative Assembly. To be honest, the budget papers are not transparent. We asked over a thousand questions in the estimates hearings. The member for Moore asked well over 200 questions. An example is the special purpose accounts that were listed in the budget papers and that came to a total of 20 accounts.

I want to go back to a question asked by Hon Dr Steve Thomas on 6 April. He asked how many special accounts are currently operational and what was the balance of all current operational special purpose accounts. The response, provided on 10 May, listed 24 special purpose accounts, and stated that an update on the balances would be provided in the 2022–23 state budget papers that were to be released on 12 May 2022. If members do a short audit of both lists provided, there are only six special purpose accounts listed in both records. We have the response from Hon Stephen Dawson on 10 May stating, it would appear, that there are 24 special purpose accounts listed that are currently operational, but they are not all listed in the budget papers. The list of special purpose accounts in the budget papers includes 14 accounts that were not listed in Hon Stephen Dawson’s response. We have a variation in the lists of special purpose accounts, which, to be honest, are all over the place. We can look at the digital capability fund, which has a balance of \$421 million with a forward estimate of \$573 million in this year’s budget. Metronet was left off the list. Even more alarming is the fact that this special purpose account and the Metronet roads account was left off the list provided to Hon Dr Steve Thomas in May of this year. These are the sort of inconsistencies that are coming through. We can only wonder why the Auditor General picks up on the inconsistency of this government, of the \$560 million increase of those projects, and seven of the 14 active projects that have their dates extended by over a year.

I want to go back to the purpose of the Auditor General. I think it would be good for some of the members of this government to actually get an understanding of the role of the Auditor General. This is a quotation from the Auditor General's speech to the Institute of Public Administration Australia's Western Australian integrity and accountability conference. The first quote is —

It is important to understand that the government is not an end in itself.

I think that is what is happening here. This government is getting ahead of itself. The key principles for government are integrity, transparency and accountability, and the community needs to have faith that the public sector is serving it well for democracy to work. I have a couple of other quotes. The Auditor General said —

My office is an independent integrity office, not controlled by the Government. My clients are the Parliament, Western Australian state sector agencies, local governments and ultimately the people of Western Australia.

I report without fear or favour directly to Parliament, not via a Minister. I cannot be directed in what I audit, how I audit or when I audit.

A final quote, which I think is very appropriate, states —

Another unique responsibility, and one that I'm not aware an Auditor General anywhere else in the world has, is our 'section 82' function. Due to concerns arising from the WA Inc. era the 1995 Commission on Government conceived a new function to encourage Ministers to provide all ... information to Parliament.

As members of the opposition, we have all lodged freedom of information requests. Basically, all we get back is a miniature booklet of black text-ed documents. We cannot get any information. We might get a couple of lines, someone's address or something similar, but the black text is used in just about all cases. When I hear the Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Energy talk about the previous government and the like, it is quite concerning to me.

I want to raise a couple of issues, the first relating to the COVID scenario. We have all talked about the history. The people of WA did the right thing. There were certainly extraordinarily high rates of vaccination. Despite the grief and abuse directed to the opposition, every member of the opposition supported the vaccination scenario. One contributor to the letters to the editor in *The West Australian* in March this year referred to the fact that the people of WA had done the right thing. It was headed, "We have the brains to handle facts". That is really important because from our perspective, we could not get information from this government about what was going on behind the scenes. The constant deflection of requests to gain access to medical modelling was very frustrating. That shows another lack of transparency. We saw it again yesterday in the estimates hearing in the Legislative Council. A press release from Hon Martin Aldridge about the rushed procurement of more than 110 million rapid antigen tests states —

"The \$578.9 million investment bypassed normal tendering processes using the emergency provisions of the Procurement Act 2020 to fast track the acquisition," ...

As we know, the McGowan government dropped the ball on establishing supply chains and supplier relationships after prohibiting the use of RATs for the best part of the last two years. The government was prohibiting RATs in December 2021 and early January 2022; they were no good. Then all of a sudden, in they come with \$578.9 million of investment, bypassing the normal method. Now we have question marks against the saliva testing RATs. Hon Martin Aldridge raised that yesterday. The people of WA are paying a high price for the significant number of tests that the government has procured.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Several members interjected.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: It is not irrelevant. It is very relevant, because the government bypassed the normal procurement procedures and spent \$578.9 million—half the cost of the Perth Children's Hospital—and now we potentially have a large number of tests that are not getting the job done. They do not have the efficacy. Hon Martin Aldridge wrote to the state Auditor General to request that she probe this significant financial transaction to ensure probity and transparency. Once again, transparency was not being followed.

The Minister for Energy can get up all he likes and say that the opposition does not understand, as he does every week without fail, and falls back on the line. We do understand. We have lodged our freedom of information requests, and have received information with the black texta through them. With the cutting back of the native timber forestry industry, we have seen \$200 000 paid to the Australian Workers' Union to provide advice and support. What is that? The Australian Workers' Union is providing advice and support to the government. I would like to see the Auditor General look at that. I find it quite bizarre that \$200 000 was paid to the Australian Workers' Union. No-one believes the sentiment behind a grant to a union that supports the WA branch of the Australian Labor Party and no-one really believes that timber workers will receive much of anything from that payment. Considering the recent announcement of the \$662 million support package for Collie, where is the equity for the forestry workers? Where is the transparency for them? That is another disappointing element.

The other issue that I want to mention is the \$6.6 million paid to Huawei for breaking the Metronet contract. The contract was broken. The \$6.6 million payment was signed off in December last year, but the minister decided that the public did not deserve or need to know that information.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: The only thing I can surmise is that the minister is dealing in such large amounts of money that \$6.6 million is just petty cash. Sign that off. Write that off. The people of WA do not need to know about that! Then, sure enough, it was revealed during the estimates hearing. What else is hiding behind the closed doors of the government?

I know Metronet is the flagship election promise of this government, but I imagine that in years to come the Auditor General will have a good close look at many of the facets of the Metronet project. I guess what greatly concerns me is the attitude of this government when we talk about transparency. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out earlier, this was the promise that the Premier gave before the 2017 election. He even had commissioned an inquiry—the Langoulant inquiry—to validate the need for transparency, and stated for the record that —

“My government will continue to strengthen governance, accountability, transparency ... when dealing with taxpayers' money.”

The Auditor General has already picked up on that one. Members need to be careful what they promise if they do not intend to follow their own objectives.

The final issue that I want to raise that was picked up in estimates yesterday is the transport executive and licensing information system, which holds the private information of WA taxpayers. There is a concern that information relating to more than 3 000 people who are authorised to use TRELIS has been used illegally. We saw what happened with the SafeWA app. We need to expect that individuals' privacy is protected by this government.

The \$182 000 spent by the Auditor General on the cost of the transparency report is well spent. I expect that the Auditor General will have to spend a lot more money in the years ahead checking on the transparency of the government. We need to stop making a mockery of the parliamentary process.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — TEMPORARY ORDER

Standing Orders Suspension — Notice of Motion

Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House), by leave, gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That the following temporary order applies for the remainder of 2022 —

- (1) The House will meet on Tuesdays at 1.00 pm.
- (2) If the House is required to sit beyond 7.00 pm on a Tuesday evening, such as to require a dinner break, the Speaker will advise the House of this before Question Time on that Tuesday.
- (3) Standing Orders are suspended accordingly to the extent necessary to effect these arrangements.

House adjourned at 7.01 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

HOSPITALS — BED CAPACITY**458. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to all public hospitals (including public hospitals with private operators) in the Perth metropolitan area and WA Country Health Service, and ask for each of those hospitals:

- (a) How many beds are there in total (broken down by hospital);
- (b) How many single bed rooms with ensuite are there in total (broken down by hospital); and
- (c) How many ICU beds are there in total (broken down by hospital)?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

- (a)–(c) Please refer to Appendix 1 for beds broken down by hospital.

Appendix 1

Region	Hospital	Number of Beds	Number of Single Bed Rooms with Ensuite	Number of ICU Beds
Perth Metro	Joondalup Health Campus	524	211	9
Perth Metro	King Edward Memorial Hospital	229	124	0
Perth Metro	Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital	696	191	30
Perth Metro	Osborne Park	200	28	0
Perth Metro	Graylands Hospital	147	18	0
Perth Metro	Selby Lodge	32	0	0
Perth Metro	Perth Children's Hospital	298	146	20
Perth Metro	St John of God Midland Public Hospital	307	200	6
Perth Metro	St John of God Mt Lawley	24	12	0
Perth Metro	Armadale Health Service	284	85	10
Perth Metro	Kalamunda Hospital	31	8	0
Perth Metro	Royal Perth Hospital	619	113	36
Perth Metro	Bentley Health Service	226	27	0
Perth Metro	Fremantle Hospital	293	74	0
Perth Metro	Fiona Stanley Hospital	787	456	40
Perth Metro	Rockingham General Hospital	217	57	10
Perth Metro	Murray District Hospital	20	0	0
Perth Metro	Peel Health Campus	155	34	0
Goldfields	Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital	131	25	0
Goldfields	Other sites in region	81	11	0
Great Southern	Albany Regional Hospital	137	35	0
Great Southern	Other sites in region	175	92	0
Kimberley	Broome Regional Hospital	67	12	0
Kimberley	Other sites in region	101	25	0
Midwest	Geraldton Regional Hospital	93	28	0

Midwest	Other sites in region	151	82	0
Pilbara	Hedland Regional Hospital	128	16	0
Pilbara	Other sites in region	85	31	0
South West	Bunbury Regional Hospital	184	31	8
South West	Other sites in region	332	93	0
Wheatbelt	No Regional level hospital	N/A	N/A	N/A
Wheatbelt	Other sites in region	491	235	0
	Total	7,245	2,500	169
		<i>Note 1 & 2</i>	<i>Note 3</i>	<i>Note 4</i>
1. Bed numbers exclude: surgical tables, recovery trolleys, delivery (labour) beds, neonate cots, emergency stretchers and beds designated for sameday non-admitted patient care.				
2. For WA Country Health Service (WACHS), the beds are provided for each of the Regional Level Hospitals with the rest of the beds consolidated per region.				
3. For WACHS, this represents an indication of single bedrooms (overnight and Aged Care). An audit of each site would be required to more accurately determine the number of single rooms and determine how many of these single bedrooms have ensuites.				
4. Excludes Neonatal Intensive Care Units and High Dependency Units.				

