



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 16 August 2023

Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy) took the chair at 1.00 pm, read prayers and acknowledged country.

PARLIAMENTARY EDUCATION OFFICE — CHAMBER PHOTOGRAPHY

Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Alanna Clohesy) [1.01 pm]: Good afternoon, members. For your information, I have given approval to the education unit of Parliament to take photographs of the chamber from the media area for the purpose of using them for the Parliament's social media given the unusual bright-coloured nature of the chamber today!

RESCUE HELICOPTER FLEET

Petition

HON MARTIN ALDRIDGE (Agricultural) [1.02 pm]: I present an e-petition containing 1 046 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. We the undersigned ...

recognise the important role of WA's rescue helicopter fleet in providing lifesaving medical service, search and rescue operations, and critical care patient transport. We therefore ask the Legislative Council to: Note the Coroner's recommendations from the inquest into 4 deaths at Mt Augustus (2022–WACOR 29); Note the Chief Health Officer's Inquiry into Aeromedical Services in Western Australia, which found WA's rescue helicopter fleet is significantly under-resourced and there was a likely need for additional rescue helicopters in Geraldton and other regional centres; and Note that WA research has found access to rescue helicopters can significantly improve the chances of survival for severely injured trauma patients by almost 50 per cent. And support measures to: Immediately expand the Emergency Rescue Helicopter Service by one additional aircraft based at Geraldton to meet current demand in the Midwest; and in line with the Chief Health Officer's findings Increase the capacity of the rescue helicopter fleet across regional WA, to ensure all residents have access to critical aeromedical support when needed.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper 2443.]

HEALTH — MANAGEMENT

Notice of Motion

Hon Tjorn Sibma gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house —

- (a) expresses its deep concern for the Cook Labor government's continued mismanagement of the planning and operation of Western Australia's public health system;
- (b) laments the government's failure to appropriately fund child development services;
- (c) condemns the Minister for Health's dangerous decision to ignore the government's own business case into the new women's and babies' hospital, which recommends Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre as the preferred site; and
- (d) in respect of (c), urges the government to reflect on the advice of health experts, clinicians and advocacy groups and immediately reverse the decision.

SPORT — FEMALE PARTICIPATION

Motion

HON STEPHEN PRATT (South Metropolitan) [1.05 pm]: I move —

That the Legislative Council —

- (a) acknowledges the importance of female participation in sport, as highlighted by the FIFA Women's World Cup; and
- (b) recognises the investment by the Cook government into the new State Football Centre, along with other sporting facilities across the state.

How good is this? We get to spend the next couple of hours talking about a topic that is very close to my heart—sport—and, in particular, focusing on investing in women’s sport across Western Australia. This motion is taking place at the perfect time, with the Matildas playing in the semifinal of the FIFA Women’s World Cup this evening.

I am thrilled to stand before you today, President, especially at this exciting moment, when we are all eagerly awaiting the kick-off between our Matildas and England. It is a special time for Australian sport, and I am proud to be part of the Cook government’s efforts to support female participation in sports. It is not just about tonight’s semifinal; it is about giving more women the chance to shine in the sports they love. I look around the chamber today and I notice a few Matildas scarves in the room. I also note that some members have likely not been able to source any as they are sold out in most shops across the metropolitan area.

Perth has played host to five FIFA Women’s World Cup matches, thanks to the support of the Cook government and the hard work of Minister Templeman and Deputy Premier Saffioti. As the clock counts down to 6.00 pm, we are all getting ready to watch our Matildas take on England. Of course, I am hoping for a victory. But win or lose, the dedication of these players is truly inspiring. They are setting an example for our young ones, showing them that getting active and involved in sport is a wonderful path to take. I would not be surprised if record numbers of children decide to sign up at their local soccer club next season after this event concludes.

I note that, as highlighted by Ben Smith in today’s *The West Australian*, Perth and WA have a very strong connection with the Matildas side. Back in 2014, Sam Kerr, Caitlin Foord, Mackenzie Arnold and Alanna Kennedy all spearheaded one of Perth Glory’s most dominant seasons ever, and now here they are together at this year’s Women’s World Cup, all playing in what we hope will be a successful winning side.

I know that my two girls, Imogen and Phoebe, one of whom let me borrow their scarf—there has been a mix-up, because I got this from Imogen, but I notice that it says “Phoebe” on the tag, so there is something going on there—are displaying a strong interest in the world game, with regular backyard soccer matches, and I note that they are already quite competitive. I take this opportunity to say that I want them to have the same opportunities as their brother in playing sport as they get older—the same level of interest and the same level of investment and support.

With the growing popularity of women’s sports, there is a need to upgrade facilities right across Western Australia and the country. It is a good challenge to have. It means that more and more women are getting involved in sport. I know that the Cook government has a strong focus on delivering the infrastructure needs to meet the demands of the future—and it is a big task.

The guidelines of the community sporting and recreation facilities fund, which we all often refer to as the CSRFF, that focus on female participation reflect our commitment. Allocating \$1 million—up from half a million dollars—to enhance female facilities is a step towards making sport even more inclusive. I also note the eight women’s teams that received funding in January this year to assist with the cost of competing nationally. They include Hockey WA for the Women’s Perth Thundersticks; Basketball WA for both Perth Lynx and Perth Wheelcats; Football West for Perth Glory; Ice Hockey WA for Perth Inferno; Netball WA for West Coast Fever; Volleyball WA for women’s volleyball Perth Steel; and Water Polo WA for the UWA Torpedoes and Fremantle Mariners women’s teams.

The Cook Labor government also allocated \$400 000 towards sending the Australian national field hockey teams to Paris for the 2024 Olympics. This includes the women’s team, the Hockeyroos. That funding will also go towards the team competing in the Oceania Cup. In December last year, the government, Hockey WA and the Western Australian Institute of Sport were successful in their joint bid of \$135 million to maintain Perth as the host city of the Australian high performance program. Curtin University, where the program will be housed, will be transformed into a world-class hockey facility, with three international hockey pitches, a specialist goalkeeper training facility, an indoor hockey centre and gym and support facilities.

We are witnessing history in the making and it is a pretty special feeling. There is a buzz around town. Many would have heard from Matildas’ players during the FIFA Women’s World Cup that they all started playing soccer in boys’ or men’s teams. It is an exciting time to know that our daughters and the next generation of female soccer players will have the opportunity to play in all-female sides from a young age.

For me, sport is more than just a game; it brings people together and creates opportunities. Whether it is building skills, making friends or staying healthy, sport plays a big role. Our Matildas’ captain, Sam Kerr, is a prime example. Born and raised right here in Perth, she is inspiring young people, not just in our state, but across the country and the globe. About six weeks ago my two girls lined up for over an hour at Garden City just to get her signature on one of their books. It is a big ask for two young girls to line up for that long.

We recognise how important female participation in sports is for physical and mental health, as well as social wellbeing. On numerous occasions in this place I have touched on the important role that community sport can play as it brings a real sense of community and inclusion for people across the board. A report from SportWest tells us about the impressive impact organised sports can have, not just economically, but also on our wellbeing and communities. However, there is a lot more to it than just numbers.

As I mentioned, this motion comes at the perfect time to reflect on the strong investments the Cook government has made in soccer and sport overall. A prime example is the State Football Centre in Queens Park. Its \$46 million funding from both state and commonwealth governments, with close to \$30 million from the Cook government, is a clear testament to our commitment. It is not just a facility; it is a place where players can train, teams can strive for success and dreams can take shape. It is an investment in the future of sport right here in WA.

I recently had the pleasure of speaking at a citizenship ceremony in the City of Cockburn, where I encouraged new Australian citizens to support our Matildas, who were playing on the same evening. It is a small way to bring people together and share the joy that sport can bring. As a father of three, I see firsthand how excited my daughters are about sport, especially the women's soccer and their role model, Sam Kerr. I know many families across the country feel the same. We are giving our children more chances to be part of something positive, to learn important values and to lead healthier lives.

The support our country has shown for the Matildas during the FIFA Women's World Cup is truly heartening. On 20 July, the Cook government announced the FIFA Fan Festival at Forrest Place—a dedicated space where Western Australians can come together to enjoy the games, music and excitement of the World Cup. It is a wonderful initiative that brings people closer and lets us celebrate a historic moment for our state and our nation. I also note the initiative for tonight's match with the game being broadcast on big screens at HBF Park. I know this will be a very popular event.

I acknowledge the outstanding work of one of my colleagues, Jane Kelsbie, MLA, who played a vital role in building connections between the Denmark WA women's soccer team in her electorate of Warren–Blackwood and its FIFA counterparts, the national Denmark team. It is about unity and inspiration, giving regional women the chance to shine and inspire the next generation.

I take this opportunity to touch on some of the successful projects this government has funded over the previous few years, some of which I have been lucky enough to either visit or have seen in action. The good news is that a lot of these are in the south metropolitan region. In the City of Rockingham, a community sporting and recreation facilities fund project was to upgrade and provide female-friendly facilities at Koorana Reserve. The total project cost of over \$4 million was significant, but CSRFF was able to provide \$650 000 towards that.

Rather than rattling off a number of dollar amounts—they are substantial—I will note those that I am aware of and that have had a real impact in the community. In the City of Kwinana, money has been allocated to upgrade the Medina Oval change rooms and to the development of a pavilion at the local Honeywood sportsground. There have been upgrades to the toilets at Kardinya Bowling Club, and in the City of South Perth there were upgrades at Manning Bowling Club and Como Bowling and Recreation Club, and at Marmion Reserve in the City of Melville. I could spend a while going through the last list, but I know that other members would also like to contribute today.

In the end, this motion is not just about sport; it is about empowerment and unity and creating a better future through sport. Let us stand together, celebrate our Matildas, and keep working towards a more inclusive and vibrant sports community.

HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.17 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to make a contribution this afternoon to the motion that was moved by my friend and colleague Hon Stephen Pratt and to formally give the government's response to that motion. I will get to my formal response in a moment, but I just want to take some time to reflect on the significance of the event that will take place tonight. For me, it is probably one of the most exciting sporting events that I have looked forward to for quite some time. I say that as someone who is not usually a sporting enthusiast. I try my best to get involved and behind female sports teams, and I really want to promote female sports teams, because it is important on so many levels. I would not say I am a naturally sporty individual, but I am really excited about tonight's game. This morning, I was thinking back on something I could compare tonight with. I have the same sort of excitement and anticipation, and almost nervousness, that I had in 2000—I am sure many members did as well—when Cathy Freeman ran her 400 metres race at the Sydney Olympics. For me, I had the same sort of feeling then, and the anticipation of, "Is she going to win?"

I was looking at ABC online news this morning, as I often do over coffee. Patricia Karvelas posted an analysis this morning. Her article is much more articulate than anything I could deliver. I thought I would share it with members in the chamber before I turn to my formal government response. I think she wrote it this morning. It is titled, "The rise and rise of the Matildas is about more than one team. It's a feminist cultural reckoning for our daughters." It states —

The year 2000 was a year of magic.

When Cathy Freeman lit the flame at the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games, she lit something bigger in the national psyche, something intangible but transformative.

Ten days later she won the gold medal in the women's 400 metres, a moment seared into the nation's collective memory as one of the greatest and most pivotal points of pride and joy in our history.

The anticipation of that race, the weight we put on Freeman—that understated powerhouse athlete—to unify us and change our own story about who we were was unprecedented.

Her victory was a symbol of so much: it went beyond her relentless work ethic and talent—it represented the promise of a reconciled nation that could move past the pain of racism in our history.

Since then we've had other times, other moments of great Australian achievement and national unity in sport and beyond.

But it is hard to think of a greater moment to parallel the magic of 2000 than the one we are in—the year 2023, where we've witnessed the rise and rise of the Matildas in the national consciousness.

This is so much bigger than one team, at one point in time, in one FIFA World Cup. This is the story of triumph against a backdrop of toxic rhetoric about women and their capacity for sporting greatness.

The tropes have been put to rest. Women don't play as well, we've been told. They don't have as much physical power. They lose their competitive edge after pregnancy. The men are just better. These have not been fringe views—they have been said to women their entire lives.

For girls and women the rise of the Matildas is a feminist cultural reckoning. It is the evidence that what once seemed like a farfetched dream was achievable. It is evidence that we have the capacity to change habits steeped in sexism.

...

When Matilda Ellie Carpenter got emotional reflecting on the growth of women's football I cried. She spoke to the invisibility of women not only in sport but in other areas seen as the domain of men.

"I didn't have a girls team," she said. "I watched the Matildas when I was 12 and there were 300 people there."

Carpenter and her teammates are experiencing what Matildas who came before them didn't. They have been seen. They have been celebrated. They have been loved.

And so this moment is about more than this group of women, incredible as they are. It's about the generations—still with us—who had their dreams dashed by a culture that dismissed and diminished women's achievements.

And this is for little girls like mine who play in the local under 12 girls soccer team: If you back yourself and the girls around, magic can happen. Optimism is infectious.

And it can prevail over division if we choose to let it.

As I said, that was a much more articulate version of events than I could ever portray in this chamber, but I thought worth sharing during the debate on the motion brought to this house by Hon Stephen Pratt.

I also wanted to look at the different type of research that has been done over the years on the importance of investing in women's sport. If members google "the importance of investing in women's sport" or something similar, they will find numerous papers and reviews that have been conducted here in WA—I know Hon Stephen Pratt referred to a paper that SportWest put out not that long ago about the social and economic benefits of investing in sport—interstate and overseas from universities and corporations. We can take a lot of information from those papers because, as we all know, we can do so much more, even though as a government we are investing in sport, particularly women's sport, through investment in infrastructure—change rooms and the like.

One of the papers that I came across was written by the University of Victoria. I cannot quite work out the date that it was put together; I think it was 2019 or 2020, so it is relatively current. Some of the statistics may have changed since then but they are probably somewhat similar. I wanted to share some of those stats with members this afternoon. There are quite a lot of statistics, so I will not go through them all. One that stood out was that male sport makes up 81 per cent of television sports news compared with just 7.4 per cent of women's sport. I thought that was an incredible difference. I wonder whether that is still the case. I certainly hope it is not. Events like the FIFA Women's World Cup will hopefully change that television coverage. Under the heading "Reimagining equality in sport", the paper has a little box which states —

MYTH: Women's sport doesn't engage audiences, and therefore sponsorship, pay and coverage should not be equitable.

FACT: Demand for women's sport is growing worldwide. The US Women's National Soccer team's 2019 World Cup victory ranked was one of the most watched sporting events in history. Closer to home, the 2018 Women's T20 International cricket match saw a peak audience of 1.3 million and the 2019 Australian Open Women's final reached a domestic peak TV audience, a record attendance at the arena and became one of the most watched tennis matches, male or female, in history.

That is fantastic. I really hope that sporting events such as the FIFA World Cup enhance and encourage more people to tune in and support our female sporting teams.

Hon Stephen Pratt also commented on some of the social and economic benefits that occur when we invest in sport and the importance they play in our communities. The paper continues —

Communities benefit when more women and girls are engaged participants in sport. Millions of Australians volunteer their time to sport, creating a bank of social capital as well as improving community cohesion, wellbeing and connection. Studies show that children who participate in sport are more likely to return to education, go to university and become employed.

Sport is also a powerful catalyst for social change; it can help shape community attitudes and perspectives and plays a crucial role in advancing gender equality and challenging gender stereotypes. Sport teaches that women and girls can be strong, powerful and competitive, and paints these traits as healthy and normal, helping to redefine gender norms. Additionally, strong, powerful female role models increase the interest and participation of women in sport. For example, when Australian cricket star Meg Lanning was younger, she played on the boy's cricket team as there were no cricket opportunities for girls in her region. Meg's persistence and the success of the women's cricket team have ultimately led to a rapid expansion of interest from young women and girls, with Cricket Australia witnessing a 700% increase in community groups that offer an all-girls competition.

That is fantastic. I am really pleased that is happening so young girls and young children can play sport and be involved in games that they are really passionate about and love, whether it be at a community grassroots level or whether they aspire to be elite sportspeople.

It is fair to say that the FIFA Women's World Cup is probably the largest sporting event in the world, and one of the biggest events that Perth has been involved in. It is also safe to say that football fever has taken hold. The Matildas quarterfinal match against France became the most watched sporting event since the Sydney Olympics, which is just incredible; indeed, 7.2 million people tuned in to the quarterfinal win on Saturday, which is amazing for not only the sport of football, but also women's sport. Of course, we have all heard the saying that you can't be what you can't see. Our female football players, our heroes, are now on the front and back pages of every major newspaper across the country, which is so well deserved. Everyone is getting behind the Matildas, which is really exciting for Australia because it unifies us and brings communities together. I am sure that a new record will be made tonight with the number of people tuning in to watch the Matildas versing England. I cannot wait to hear about the viewing stats.

In WA, more than 40 000 women are involved in all forms of the game. There was consistent strong growth in organised women's football in 2021–22 and we expect that increased significantly in 2022–23. The state government recognises the importance of female participation in sport. It is committed to continuing to drive and grow the development of women's football in WA, which is why we have invested significantly in the State Football Centre, which will be a centre of excellence. It will help with the growing demand of people who want to play football in WA. We have to make that investment; we have to invest in infrastructure and make sure it is appropriate for girls and women to participate. It is a really significant driver to make sure that we encourage young girls to start a sport they want to become involved in and continue to play that sport. Statistics suggest that as girls turn into teenagers, they drop away from playing sport, for whatever reason. We want them to continue to play and be given all the opportunities to continue to play sport well into their teens. Australia's hosting of the FIFA Women's World Cup will provide a lasting legacy for women's football in Australia and will further boost participation in the sport, which is great.

The government also invested \$35 million in the Perth Rectangular Stadium, which is where the five FIFA Women's World Cup games were played in WA. I do not know whether members had an opportunity to attend those games. I was lucky enough to go to the Haiti versus Denmark match and the Morocco versus Columbia match. Since receiving upgrades to its lighting, pitch and player amenities, HBF Park has never looked so good. The facilities for spectators are quite incredible and added to the atmosphere of the games. There was a huge amount of excitement during both the games I attended. They were both packed; I believe 80 000 or 85 000 people attended the five games that were held in WA. That is a fantastic result for WA, and it goes to show that people do want to see women's sport. Both matches had a wonderful family atmosphere. I was very pleased to attend those two events.

I finish by saying that the government will continue to invest in female sporting upgrades to make sure that the right facilities are available for girls and young women. That is an important part of making sure that they fully participate in sport. I wish the Matildas the best of luck tonight. We are very proud as a nation to watch them in their exciting match versing England. Regardless of the result, we are super proud. Go Tillies!

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan) [1.34 pm]: I stand to make a few comments on behalf of the opposition. Normally when I stand, I use every opportunity to bring down the government, but because Hon Stephen Pratt is one of the good guys, I will not bother today! Having said that, the opposition pretty much agrees with the intent of this motion. It is not particularly enamoured with paragraph (b). I could move an amendment, but I will not do that. If a member wants to move an amendment to a motion, they should move their own motion. We should not amend motions on the notice paper. I will not be doing that.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Because you've never done that before!

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, I have never done that, and I will not.

Having said that, I have a confession to make. As an unapologetic compulsive obsessive, I almost did something sacrilegious last Saturday night—I was almost late to a function. I am never late; those who know me know that all too well. Sir Charles Court used to tell me, “If you’re not 10 minutes early, you’re late.” I could not draw myself away from the television; I had to watch the penalty shootout. I reckon I speak for all Australians when I say what an extraordinary moment in our history. It was absolutely compelling; I loved every second of it. I cannot put into words—articulate—how magnificent that moment was in our sporting history. I am not exaggerating. It was one of the most wonderful moments in our nation’s sporting history. Suffice to say, I got to the Joondalup Business Association’s Business Awards night just as people were arriving for dinner. I went with Hon Tjorn Sibma. I got there just in time for pre-dinner drinks. I think I winged it; I do not think anyone realised I was, in fact, pushing being late.

I have given this a lot of thought. Sport, primarily tennis, has been a part of my entire life. Over the last 20 years or so, I have dealt with the Western Australian Institute of Sport and others doing mental strength work with a number of athletes. I love it. Getting the best out of an elite athlete is a wonderful experience, particularly women athletes. A lot of the athletes I have dealt with have been women, particularly in tennis. There are three memorable moments in sporting history that I would like to reflect on; significantly, two of them involve women. The first is our America’s Cup win, which will be 40 years ago in about a month. I was in my second year of teaching; Hon Michelle Roberts and I had just started teaching together at John Curtin Senior High School. I stayed up all night to watch *Australia II* come back from 3–1 down to catch *Liberty* and win the next three races to win 4–3. That was an extraordinary and unbelievable moment. It even got people interested in sailing—I am not. All of a sudden, people knew what a winged keel was and a raft of other things. The second one is what Hon Samantha Rowe mentioned; that is, Cathy Freeman’s extraordinary 400-metre win at the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The whole nation ran that race. I promise members that no matter what else happened at the Sydney Olympics, such as the cauldron going up and becoming stuck, everyone will remember Cathy Freeman’s 400-metre race.

Do you know what I reckon, President? I reckon everyone will remember that moment last Saturday night of the penalty shootout. I really do. Believe it or not, in my heart of hearts, I am not that enamoured with soccer. I know that I am a sporting philistine, but I have never been really that stuck on soccer, but after last month, I am now a fanatic, and it is all because of the Matildas. They have done an extraordinary thing. They have done more than any politician could hope to do. Do members know what they have done? They have united the nation. The Matildas have united Australia; we are at one. The 23 magnificent young women who have made the cut and the 11 who will run out tonight or be substituted on, out of the 23, are magnificent for not just their sporting prowess but also their commitment to a cause and their relentless desire for improvement, day in and day out. The message they have sent to every young woman and to every individual, not just in Australia but globally, is that if you put your mind to it, you can achieve anything. That is just a magnificent—dare I say it—legacy for those young ladies. Congratulations, girls. This is just the start; the best is yet to come. I know full well what they will be thinking at the moment. They will not be talking about public holidays or the final or the cup; they will be thinking about one thing tonight, I promise you, and that will be being the best they possibly can be. That is what they will be doing: being the best they possibly can be. If they win, so be it. That will be good. Elite athletes do not focus on the outcome; they always focus on the process of being the best they can be. Good luck to the Matildas. They are magnificent.

I would quickly like to comment on a few things about other sports, particularly women in sport. Not just in Western Australia but also nationally, we have such a proud history. This tiny little island nation of 25 million people now beats the rest of the world at pretty much everything we aspire to. Everything we compete in, we win. We are magnificent.

Hon Dan Caddy: Especially the Poms.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Pardon? Yes, that is always good. It would be really, really good to beat the Poms tonight.

Everyone, let us not forget the Diamonds, the wonderful netball team. The Diamonds won the World Cup medal in Cape Town last week for the twelfth time. Let us not forget the Diamonds. Let us not forget our Opals, who are ranked third in the world. The team won three silver and two bronze Olympic medals. In world championships, the team has won silver, bronze and gold medals. Let us not forget the Opals.

Let us not forget the multiple world record holders and gold medal winners in athletics from this tiny little island nation of ours. Let us not forget wonderful women such as Marjorie Jackson, my beautiful friend Betty Cuthbert—may she rest in peace—Maureen Caird, Glynis Nunn, Debbie Flintoff-King, Sally Pearson and Cathy Freeman, of course. All are great champions who did our nation well and inspired athletes, particularly young girls, throughout our nation. In swimming, we are second to none. We are like dolphins when we get in the pool. I am not remotely negating the athleticism and the successes of men, but we are talking about women. In this instance, we have such a proud legacy. Dawn Fraser was a magnificent athlete. Just to name a few, Susie O’Neill, Ariarne Titmus, Emma McKeon, Kaylee McKeown, Stephanie Rice, Leisel Jones, Libby Trickett and Petria Thomas have won gold medals representing our great nation.

With that in mind, we have a great deal to be proud of as a nation. Tonight, we will just be a little bit better. If we win, that would be extraordinary—there will not be too much happening in Australia on Sunday night. If we lose, so be it. The magnificent Matildas will have done us proud. Good luck, girls.

I will mention a couple of things that bring it home to Western Australia. I acknowledge the comments of Hon Stephen Pratt and Hon Samantha Rowe about what has been occurring over the last six years of the McGowan–Cook government. I will provide a bit of sincere advice about ways we could perhaps further enhance and improve sporting opportunities for young girls in our society and our community.

Netball is a massive sport, particularly for young girls. The facilities here are very good. A former Liberal government built the Matthews Netball Centre in Wembley, which is a great facility, but successive governments to a large degree have not ignored but have not given sufficient attention to regional netball players. The six regional offices have three part-time roles each to try to assist, but the broad expanse of the state makes it very difficult. We went into the last election committing to increase the participation officers to full-time roles. That has not occurred, although in some instances they have been able to do it through other means. It is a way to try to enhance support for netball in the regions in Western Australia.

The Shooting Stars program for Aboriginal girls is a wonderful program. It is in eight communities at the moment. It would be really good if we could expand it to more Aboriginal communities and towns throughout the state to provide all Aboriginal girls with an opportunity to participate in netball.

Basketball is a very high participation sport with both boys and girls, but particularly with girls. Both sides of the Parliament need to commit to assisting our facilities so we can provide opportunities in basketball for young boys and girls. The Bendat Basketball Centre, which the former Labor government built in Floreat, still has six courts. The state basketball centre has had six courts since 1962, and it needs at least two more courts. Basketball WA tells us that, and that would provide an avenue for areas of excellence to be further enhanced.

A backlog of improvements and enhancements is needed to basketball facilities in Western Australia. Basketball WA has been calling out for a contribution from the community sporting and recreation facilities fund, which has now been increased. I would highly recommend that the government uses that new \$20 million. I take on board the fact, mentioned by Hon Stephen Pratt, that the amount was increased to \$20 million, but it was reduced to \$12 million for the entirety of this government. The Liberal government had it at \$20 million, the current government reduced it to \$12 million, and now it has been improved. I am pleased to see that, but now there is a lot of backlog from the \$8 million that was cut every year. This is not a criticism; it is a fact or an observation. The community sporting and recreation facilities fund is a very good program, and I know that Basketball WA wants that money to be used for the backlogged facilities.

Also, it would be really good to have some sort of working group with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, Basketball WA and the Department of Education on using the basketball facilities at schools. Some do, but there is no formal arrangement. It would be really good to have that to enhance the formal use of those basketball facilities. There is no formal arrangement.

Finally, I come to tennis. I have been on this for a number of years, and I will stick with it. As I have said on numerous occasions, I coached tennis for decades, right down from bubs and groups up to elite levels. I loved it. I coached for 25 years with Margaret Court and by myself, and I loved every second of it, including when I coached a number of elite Western Australian players.

We have a wonderful track record in tennis and the number of grand slams—both men's and women's—that we have won in Australia. We are probably second only to the United States, and that is about it. Just the number of grand slam singles won by Margaret Court, Evonne Goolagong Cawley and Ash Barty is extraordinary. At the local level, some members will remember my good mate Liz Sayers, who is now Liz Smylie. She won a few grand slam doubles titles. Has anyone ever heard of Storm Sanders? She is now Storm Hunter. Let me tell members who she is. She is 29 years old and made the final of Wimbledon doubles this year. You know what? At 29 years old, she is number four in the world. Isn't that fantastic? She is a Western Australian woman, but she really has to spend a lot of her time over east or overseas because of the lack of opportunities or, more so, facilities, here in Western Australia. I will go through that in a moment.

Some members may remember Brittany Sheed. Brit is a great young lady. She played on the tour for a few years. She did not quite make it, but she is a very handy player. Of course, she is Dom Sheed's sister. She did very well. There was a young lady named Jenny Byrne who I coached all the way through. That was a wonderful experience. She got within a quarter of an inch of winning a Wimbledon mixed title. I will never forget it. I was sitting there in the coaches box back in 1989. She was with Mark Kratzmann and they lost to Jim Pugh and Jana Novotná 6–4 in the third match. Do not coach tennis if you have a blood pressure issue; do not sit in the coaches box and watch because it does not do your blood pressure much good at all.

Having said that, we have done well as a society and state in terms of tennis. However, yet again, our tennis centre is in desperate need of repair at the moment. The government's minister will acknowledge that. As I said before,

the old tennis centre was at Kings Park. It was a wonderful facility. We used to have Women's Tennis Association tournaments, Davis Cups and Federation Cups there. There is a plethora of high-level tennis that we cannot really attract anymore because the tennis centre is dated. Our government put it there—we had bipartisan support, I am not having a go at the government. It has reached its use-by date. It has concrete cancer; the courts are sinking. It is stuck out there without a centre court. High-level tennis is not going to be attracted there, apart from the boutique tournaments over Christmas held at the arena. If we want to get circuit tournaments back here in Western Australia and give young girls an opportunity to show their wares and how good they are and provide good opportunities, a mix of services, some new indoor court facilities and a new gymnasium, we are going to have to put our hand in our pocket.

We went into the last election with a \$20 million commitment that, at the time, the federal government committed to. Tennis West was going to put in the rest. We were never going to win the election, so I like to think that I was going to flush out the Labor government going into that election to say, "We will match it!" I said to Tennis West, "See if we can try to get the government to commit to the new facility". If the government commits to the new facility, it could be at that centre there, but to be honest, I would really like to see it back at Kings Park. That is a wonderful area to put a good centre court. A good centre court is desperately needed to attract good tournaments. They are not going to do it anywhere else. Brisbane, Adelaide and Sydney have done it and now they get all the tournaments. We do not get any. I really implore upon the government to please encourage its ministers to go down that path. Under no circumstance must they still countenance the notion of Whiteman Park. Whiteman Park will kill tennis in Western Australia. I continue to ask questions on that every now and again and get non-answers, so I know it is still being considered, which would be such a shame.

Having said that, that was shooting the breeze a bit on sport, but it is not about that today; it is about acknowledging female participation in sport; commending those involved and encouraging young girls to get involved in sport, which really is a life-enhancing process, and saying to the mighty Matildas that they really have done our nation proud. Win, lose or draw tonight, they are magnificent. For each and every one of you, this is just the start. The best is yet to come.

HON SANDRA CARR (Agricultural) [1.55 pm]: I rise to support my friend, colleague and dad of three, including two daughters, for this beautifully timed motion. I do not think he could have timed it any better if he tried. It is fantastic that it has landed on the day the Matildas will be playing in the semifinal against England this evening. I cannot wait for the game. As has been suggested by other speakers this morning, it has been a significant moment for women's sport in this country. I would say that it is not just a game; it is a game changer. The number of people in this country who are so engaged, passionate, enthused and have perhaps even been converted to soccer or footy, as it is commonly known in the rest of the world, and to women's soccer, no less, has come as quite a surprise to me.

I will quickly relay an experience that I had of the last game that saw the Matildas make this semifinal. I was at a meeting. It was packed full of men. The game was on. The thing that I found really shocking was that all of them were wanting the TV on or they were on their phones watching the women's soccer. These were blokey-blokes. I was absolutely gobsmacked and I just was not expecting it. It was the first time I had really seen how engaged the men—who I would traditionally expect to be watching football and dismissing large proportions of women's sport, particularly women playing what they would view as a traditionally male sport—were, with my own eyes. They were engaged, enthused and literally unable to think of anything else. It was really quite an eye-opener for me.

However, I really should not be surprised, I guess, because soccer is the game that I could finally convince my son to play as a great team sport. He really did not enjoy many other team sports. He had quite a good few, but soccer is the one that really caught his heart and mind and continues to do so in his late teens now, as he is about to turn 20. I think I have mentioned this before when we have talked about sport in this place, but what really caught me was as a young player was that the teams were a mix of male and female players. They were also a mix of cultures from all across the town. I found that to be a really fantastic aspect of the game.

One of the teams that were playing as he progressed through the game and his years was a team of all girls who played against all the boys and mixed teams. They were formidable and a unified and disciplined group. In this group were some twin girls that I used to teach. Their surname was Kerr. Thinking about Sam Kerr for this motion reminded me of those two girls playing soccer. They were really intrinsic to the success and cohesion of that team. I thought that was an interesting parallel, which I noticed as I was thinking about this motion today.

I want to go back to this: it is not just a game; it is a game changer. It has really brought women's sport to the fore in terms of its value, spectator participation, the respect that it has garnered, women's participation, and the level of professionalism and skill it brings, as well as the national pride it can generate. If we look at some recent statistics about participation in sports across Australia, 41 per cent of Australians aged 15-plus will participate in some form of sport. Of that group, 50 per cent are male and 32 per cent are female. There is a significant disparity. It has not changed much. I suspect that that will change as a result of what we are witnessing—the interest generated by the great skill and sportsmanship shown by the Matildas, and also the way that they have captured the hearts of the nation. Women are under-represented in organised sport, as well as in other aspects of sport, not just as participants,

but as coaches, officials, administrators and board members when compared with the male cohort. There remains work for us to do. It remains an important motion if we are really going to harness the full benefits that sport brings to a community.

A variety of strategies are being implemented across a whole range of groups and organisations, but nothing really captures the market like putting out there the success that can be seen; it really captures the hearts and minds of people. Sport has a lot of benefits for people. It improves health and wellbeing and mental health. It improves social connection. It brings communities together through a shared experience, and that is what we are witnessing right now. It also improves social inclusion. When people are brought into and made a part of sport, no matter where they come from, what they do or what they believe in, it improves cohesion and inclusion. I am going to paraphrase Nelson Mandela because he said it particularly well. He said that sport has the power to unite people in a way little else can and that sport can create hope; it breaks down racial barriers, laughs in the face of discrimination and speaks to people in a language they can understand.

Women's involvement in sport, therefore, is crucial, because if we do not lift them up to the same levels of participation, we are not harnessing the full scope of opportunities that people's participation in sport brings to us as a whole community, as a whole state or, indeed, as a whole nation. Participation in sport has been shown to bring economic benefits. It improves work output for individuals. It results in decreased health costs to the whole community. It results in events like the Women's World Cup and has an impact on tourism. It provides employment for people. It prevents at-risk behaviours for people when they participate in sport. It also increases the uptake of green transport options like walking, cycling and scooting—all those things that get people out and moving. Therefore, it has roll-on benefits in reducing pollution and our overall ecological footprint. It increases our appreciation of environmental features, with people getting involved in hiking trails and that kind of thing. I note that the WA government has the *WA strategic trails blueprint 2022–2027*, which is a fantastic development for creating policy around sport and activities that can be appreciated and participated in by all people, if we really think about what that looks like structurally.

I am going to hit members with a little bit of feminism for a moment, but it is not something that I will delve into too much. I will paraphrase an important part of a text I read called *Invisible women: Exposing data bias in a world designed for men* written by a researcher named Caroline Criado Perez in 2020. She talks about what she calls a one-size-fits-men default in our research and data and some of the structural presentations in the way that we operate as a society. She looks at a range of data omissions that impact on both the lives and safety of women. One of the examples is the use of crash-test dummies in cars that represent the male physiology. Therefore, the safety design or engineering of the vehicle is already fundamentally flawed, because half of drivers are women. Their safety is not necessarily being provided for in the design because it is relying on a default biased set of data and records.

The same applies to sport. I would like to look at some of the ways that the Labor government is addressing this. It might not be with intent, but it is important. In the midwest in particular, we are investing over \$3 million in sporting upgrades and facilities. Firstly, I want to talk about lighting. Without lighting at sporting grounds, women do not feel safe. Without lighting, women cannot necessarily participate at the times of the day when they can be available to participate in sport. The Cook government has contributed amounts ranging from \$20 000 to almost \$200 000 to put lighting in places. Forgive me, but I am talking only about the midwest and some of the Agricultural Region, but significantly more funding for lighting has been provided. Funding has been provided for lighting at the Eighth Street precinct and the Woorree Park BMX Club in the City of Greater Geraldton; floodlights at the sports oval in the Shire of Quairading; lighting at the sports oval in the Shire of Coorow; and lighting at the tennis courts in the Shire of Wyalkatchem and at the bowling green at the Wyalkatchem community club. Lighting allows people to feel safe within the community.

Secondly, a lot of funding is being contributed for change rooms. Women cannot participate in sport if they do not feel safe. They need an environment in which to change, communicate, cry, yell or whatever they need to do; they need a space specifically designed for them that has the resources and things they need. That is why investment in change rooms is also really important. There are places where those facilities have not been available for women who want to participate in sport, so that is a really important investment and development. Considerations such as providing structural facilities to include women in sports need to be addressed. We have provided just over \$100 000 in funding for the Shire of Dalwallinu, nearly \$250 000 for the Rover Football Club, just over \$250 000 for the Shire of Koorda, and the list goes on. Funding is being provided across regional WA and the whole state to make sure that all women can participate in sport.

There have also been some significant contributions for netball. Perhaps this is something that Hon Peter Collier was not aware of: there is this place that exists outside of the City of Perth called regional WA. We have contributed amounts ranging from \$6 000 to over \$100 000 specifically for netball courts in the Shires of Coorow, Northampton, Mingenew and Morawa. I will also add that we have contributed \$3.5 million to upgrade and add additional courts at the Geraldton basketball stadium to provide for the vast number of young men and women who want to play basketball. There have been significant upgrades in basketball facilities; it is just that they are happening outside of Perth in this mythical place called regional WA, honourable member!

I would also like to mention one omission. It is always very telling when someone neglects to mention a woman. I will mention that other fantastic WA tennis player Casey Dellacqua. She was a Wimbledon finalist, made over \$4 million in her tennis career and also reached number 3 in the world at one stage of her career. It was a significant, and rather telling, omission from Hon Peter Collier.

In talking about the data and the things that we miss, I would also like to mention that women in sport leadership and governance roles is also important. This is not to deride this organisation in any way, because it is outstanding, but the Midwest Academy of Sport has nine men and three women on its board. There is work to be done here. There are efforts that we can continue to make to keep improving the outcomes for women. If equity and representation is not included, often some people in those groups are missed and the procedures and structural requirements that are needed to make sure that those people come along for that journey are forgotten.

The department of sport and recreation's *Women in leadership: Targets for WA sport bodies* policy is to have 50 per cent female directors in sporting groups. I think that is a fantastic development. I would also like to note that SportWest has the Women of Sport Network, which provides a network for professional development opportunities for women who are volunteering and working in the sport industry. I think that is a fantastic piece of work that that group is doing.

Before I finish—I have about six minutes—I would like to say that we often acknowledge the hugely successful people in sport, but none of those people gets there without all the grassroots sports opportunities that they are provided with. I am going to talk about some of the recent successes of midwest women in sport. Because we started the debate by talking about the Matildas, I will start with an amazing woman who has made some fantastic contributions to soccer. An awesome woman in Geraldton by the name of Tanya Amazzini was nominated for the administrator of the year award at the Geraldton and midwest sports awards in November last year. She was also selected to be the team support for the Australian Indigenous Roos at the National Indigenous Football Festival on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland so that she could use some of that knowledge and expertise to improve and develop the game of soccer in our region. Part of the coaching learnings that she came away with were imparted by former Socceroos player and coach Frank Farina. She was really lucky and brought back some amazing skills, and she continues to make incredible contributions to sport in the midwest.

I acknowledge Brooke Elward, Camryn McKoy, Lauren Newman and Holly Stubberfield, four of our women hockey players. These young women were part of a team that won at the State Hockey Championships and are now going on to represent the state. Congratulations to those legends. There is also Samantha Vanderford, a woman from Greenhead, down near Jurien Bay. She won the over-50 category in the twenty-fourth Whalebone Longboard Classics in Cottesloe. She is an absolute champion. Geraldton woman Sarah Butler is a boxer who won the state elite title. She will now represent the state in the national titles, an incredible achievement for a young woman who has only been boxing for two and a half years, but has shown really impressive prowess in a sport traditionally dominated by men.

I acknowledge two young midwest women competing in running. Both are school students who participated this year in the WA State Cross Country Championships. Christi Bestry won a silver medal for the 16-years 4 000 metres race in a time of 16 minutes and 35 seconds, which sounds impossible to me, but there you go! Christi managed to do that. Throughout the year, she also won medals in the National Junior Track and Field Championships, School Sports WA Cross Country Championships and the WA Open Track and Field Championships. This young lady is going places and we are really proud of her. Samaia Friesen is a young lady who ran in the 17-years 4 000 metres race, and finished with a bronze medal. This year, she has not finished outside the top 10 in any event. She is another amazing up-and-comer.

I mention a matriarch of the Geraldton softball community, their president, Denise Bell, who passed away earlier this year. She battled cancer for two years. Her contribution to building up the sport of softball in Geraldton was second to none. Women like Denise really drive clubs forward when they are placed in leadership positions, as she was for almost two decades. She also had a vision for a carnival in the region, and that softball carnival was hugely successful. Thousands of people were there; it was massive. This ongoing event is a legacy that she leaves behind as a fantastic contribution to the sport.

Lastly, I mention Mingenew farm kid Pippa McTaggart. Pippa plays in the NAB AFL Auskick. After submitting a video to them, she was chosen to present the medals to the winning football team this year. This quote from Pippa beautifully sums up what happens for young women when we highlight and celebrate women's success in sport —

“I'm a big Eagles fan, and when I grow up, I want to be a cricketer, a footballer or a scientist.”

Hand on heart, who can say honestly that they ever heard a young girl say that 10 or 15 years ago? It is an amazing development, and that right there says everything about the time and effort we are putting in to young women in sport. It speaks to what we see when teams like the Matildas excel and put themselves forward as great leaders. It is emblematic of how great women can be in sport. I will be watching the Matildas tonight. I have worn my colours today. I do not usually dress in such bright colours; I am usually a bit more conservative! I say to the Matildas that whatever happens this evening, from a woman's point of view, I feel we have already won. It is a significant win

for women's sport, and a significant development for women's sport and valuing women's sport. I thank the Matildas from the bottom of my heart for all they have done for women in sport and inspiring the nation. I cannot wait to watch the game!

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [2.14 pm]: I have a few brief remarks. I support this motion, and I thank Hon Stephen Pratt for raising this topical motion today. We have heard a number of passionate statements from members about how we can boost participation in women's sports on the back of the wildly successful Matildas team. I know one way in which we can increase physical activity for women and men—which includes increasing the participation in sport in Western Australia—and that, of course, is the introduction of daylight saving time in WA. Members do not have to take my word for it. There are two reports, one which is backed by the Department of Health, and another created by the Premier's physical activity task force. They conducted scientifically-backed research during the daylight saving trial period from 2006 to 2009. What they found was very surprising—or perhaps not that surprising when acknowledging and learning more about daylight saving time. One of the benefits was an uptake in physical activity across the board in Western Australia. Of course, if physical activity is increased in the population, there are health benefits and flow-on economic benefits.

As well as the physical activity uptake and the upside of that, the two reports also found a change in behaviour when people engaged in physical activity. Daylight saving is essentially mortgaging or sacrificing some of the daylight time in the morning—when most people are not really using it, as they are getting ready for work—and moving it to the afternoon. It gives the population more time in the afternoon to engage in physical activity, get outside, run, play soccer, or whatever activity someone wants to do. We changed that behaviour. There were fewer people engaging in physical activity in the morning and more people engaging in physical activity in the afternoon. Hon Sandra Carr spoke about the need for lighting for women to feel safe when participating in sporting activity. Members, the biggest lightbulb out there is called the sun! I think members might be familiar with it. Daylight saving allows more people to engage in physical activity in the afternoon, and for women to feel safer when they do so. For me, it is an absolute no-brainer. If the Cook government was serious about increasing participation in women's sport, I know one tried and true, scientifically-backed method, and that is introducing daylight saving in Western Australia.

HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.17 pm]: Firstly, I thank Hon Wilson Tucker for that excellent speech. It is really great to see daylight saving is at the top of his agenda, and I am intrigued to see him weave it into more conversations, similar to Hon Dr Brian Walker's ability to weave marijuana into absolutely everything that we talk about in this chamber!

I thank Hon Stephen Pratt for bringing the motion to the house. I will be the first to admit that I am absolutely not a soccer fan whatsoever; never have been. Quite frankly, I cannot understand how it is such a big sport. I am a rugby league supporter through and through. I am an Adelaide Crows AFL supporter. However, members, this is where the turn of events will happen. Something I like in sport is Australia competing on the world stage. It is something that I have managed to get behind for any sport, even soccer. I have to say, one has to go back to when the men's team qualified for the World Cup for the first time in, I think, a very long time. However, the Matildas have always been a team that I have heard about and watched closely when it comes to Australia competing on the world stage. The absolute insanity of this World Cup is very, very difficult to hide from. I have to admit that, like Hon Peter Collier, I had an event that I had to get to by seven o'clock on Saturday night. At a quarter past six, I had not even had a shower because the penalties were absolutely enthralling.

Hon Samantha Rowe interjected.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: I did have a shower after that, Hon Samantha Rowe, just to be clear. I managed to have a shower before the event.

The game was unbelievable. The intensity of that game had Australians yelling and screaming at the TV. When we scored that last goal, we were jumping and dancing around the lounge room like lunatics. I saw this motion appear on the notice paper. For me, the World Cup was another sporting event to watch and see Australians doing well in sport. But when Sam Kerr handed her jersey to the young girl in the crowd, that was something I had never seen in women's sport on live prime-time TV. It went viral. To see the passion on that young girl's face and what it meant to her and her future in sport in this country really hit home for me how important this game is. I will absolutely be behind the Matildas tonight; I will be racing home to watch the game as soon as I can, despite the fact that I am not a soccer fan. I am absolutely in awe of what this team has done for people in this country, particularly young girls, who probably are not soccer, cricket or AFL players. All sports will be invigorated by what the Matildas have managed to achieve in this country during the World Cup.

I take members back to a true story of what happened to my sister when we were in the Northern Territory. There has been talk about young girls having to play with boys if they want to play a certain sport. My sister was probably a little crazier than others back then. She wanted to play rugby union, which is quite a big sport in the territory during the rugby league off-season. I played rugby union. I was a big kid then, like I am now; and my sister was a small girl then and still is today. My sister ended up in the under-14s rugby union boys' team. An iconic photo that gets around our family every couple of years is of my sister getting lifted up by me in the lineout. Her arms and legs

were going everywhere. I look back at that now and think that although my sister wanted to engage in rugby union, there were no women's teams back then. It was a very physical sport, with players getting injured all the time. She played rugby union for only one season, but in the boys' team. The opportunities I had to play rugby league and rugby union were abundant. My sister did not get those same opportunities. During periods like this, I reflect on how women and girls are disadvantaged in the sporting space.

I would like to reflect on another sporting team that I am a huge fan of—the Australian women's national cricket team. I want to put on record that I think it is probably the greatest Australian sporting team in history. It has won every single trophy. It has absolutely dominated the world stage. For years, it was totally under represented given what it achieved. I want to thank the Australian women's cricket team for keeping my faith in Australian cricket after Sandpapergate. I want to put this on the record: Australian cricket was in turmoil after the men's team was caught cheating with sandpaper. The Australian women's cricket team was out there winning fairly and squarely, playing with integrity, which I believe the men's team has now garnered. Both teams recently returned from England, retaining the Ashes; the Australian women's cricket team retained the Ashes and the Australian men's team retained the Ashes. We gave the English men and women something to think about in Australian sport by winning on their home soil. Let us hope, as cricketer David Warner said today, that if the English want to change the soccer ball tonight, we should not let them because on day five of the Ashes, they changed the cricket ball and all of a sudden, the ball was swinging and they got 10 wickets. Be careful, Matildas; watch the Poms tonight because they have a sneaky way of trying to achieve their goals with some dodgy tactics. Let us not forget that the English keeper does not know the rules of cricket about staying in the crease.

Alyssa Healy is among the amazing cricketers in the women's team. They were called the Southern Stars before they were properly named the Australian women's cricket team. They have always done Australia proud in the Women's T20 World Cup and the 50 overs game. The biggest shame about the women's Ashes is that they only play one Test match. This disadvantages all women's sport as they do not get the same number of opportunities as the men. There are five Test matches, each played over five days, in the Ashes. The women's Ashes Test match is played over one five-dayer. That one five-dayer went down to the last hour of play. It was an absolute nailbiter. It was one of the first women's cricket Test matches that was not a draw. When we think about it, I think they play one Test match every two to three years. It was really good to watch. A lot of my friends absolutely love watching the Australian women's cricket team.

I saw something pop up for people in Perth today. I believe that cinemas are offering free tickets to see the Matildas play tonight. People should get on to Google or *The West Australian*. I had not heard of that before. Cinemas will be giving away free tickets to sit down and watch the Matildas play.

Hon Darren West: *Barbie* isn't going to cut it tonight.

Hon KYLE McGINN: *Barbie* and *Oppenheimer* will be outdone by the Matildas, which is fantastic.

I also want to talk about Kalgoorlie, and how proud I am that Kalgoorlie punches well above its weight, particularly in women's sport. One of the great teams in Kalgoorlie is the women's AFL league. The women who play are tough. The teams absolutely give it their all every weekend. I was down at the Railways Football Club cooking pancakes for charity a couple of weeks ago. The women's game was being played right in front of us. It was really good to see the women's team competing with a crowd because the game was on at the same time as the under-18s and the A-grade team were about to play. It was really good to see them incorporated. Kalgoorlie has been a real fast mover in that space.

The women's teams—Kalgoorlie City Football Club, Mines Rovers Football Club, Boulder City Football Club and Railways Football Club—are very competitive. The game that was being played in front of us went down to the last minute, and was won by three points, which was very impressive. Members would not see me out there because a lot of crutches and ice packs were being used after the game. The quality of the football was spectacular and well worth watching. I want to thank the Goldfields Football League for how it has incorporated the women's game into where the men's game is played. The advantage of the men's game is that it was established with the infrastructure that other members have spoken about that the women's game does not quite have yet. It is important to tie it all together because at the end of the day, we are passionate about watching football, and everyone should be given the same opportunity in that space.

I want to turn to some sporting facilities and clubs that the local member, Ali Kent, has done a spectacular job on delivering for local sporting clubs in the goldfields region. She is very passionate, not just about the Matildas—I have to say that she has been very passionate about the Matildas—but also about the Dockers and local sporting clubs, ensuring that they get the little things they need so they can cater to the wider community. Some of the projects that Ali Kent, the member for Kalgoorlie, has delivered since becoming elected in 2021, which I am very proud to see, include an upgrade to the Kalgoorlie Bowling Club, worth over \$25 000. South Kalgoorlie Primary School received a nature playground. The Kambalda United Junior Soccer Club got over \$2 500 worth of equipment. The Norseman Swimming Club received funding for training equipment. The Salvation Army's Youth Shed got artificial turf and its basketball court concreted. I think it is fantastic to have basketball courts scattered around the electorate. The Boulder City Football Club got a commercial oven to allow parents and volunteers to produce food and fundraise.

The Gold Rush Cheer mob got some equipment. They are very proactive out in the Goldfields region; we very often see them at events. We have seen over \$100 000 go towards basketball court upgrades in Leonora, a small town that really needs that sort of stuff. Leonora Bowls Club had a shed put onto its area. The Laverton Dirt Kart Association has a dirt go-kart track. It is awesome to think we could see people travelling out to Leonora to race go-karts around the racing track out there.

Other funding recipients include the Kambalda nature playground at the Harry Steinhauser Reserve, the Goldfields Tee Ball Association received over \$2 000 worth of equipment. There is the Nullarbor Links upgrade. The Nullarbor Links is an 18-hole golf course that stretches right across the Nullarbor. Players play the whole way across, ending up at Kalgoorlie Gold Course. There was some really good participation with that. I would like to give a big shout-out to the Eastern Goldfields BMX Club. Ali Kent worked very closely with the BMX club to ensure we could get an upgrade to its track. The BMX club has both boys and girls participating. It is very good for young kids. I have noticed that families get involved. The club has more than 20 parents running the organisation and holds state title events once a year during the WA Day long weekend. I want to give a shout-out to all of the volunteers at that BMX club who have worked tirelessly, advocating to Ali Kent and me to get upgrades to that track, which is now done. The club is steered by some very good leadership, so I want to give a shout-out to president Eddie and vice-president Nicole. They did a fantastic job lobbying Ali and me for as many things as they possibly could get for their club. The club has also started come-and-try days for women so that the women can get their confidence up without being in a big pack of men who have been doing BMX since they were kids. The club has found that mums are giving it a fair go. I have to say that mums are pretty much the lifeblood of a lot of sporting clubs in regional WA, and probably across WA. In BMX, they are the ones behind it, pushing it as hard as they can so their kids get the opportunity to participate in BMX the same way someone would in Perth. I give a big shout-out to them and a big shout-out to Ali Kent, who I know donates regularly for Indigenous rounds for football clubs, for jerseys and for catering events. Ali Kent does a fantastic job supporting the local sporting clubs in the Goldfields and I believe she will continue to do so. I know that she will be absolutely ecstatic tonight watching the Matildas, just like I hope the rest of Australia will be. This is a great motion by Hon Steve Pratt. I thank him for bringing it forward, and, just like everybody else—go Tillies!

HON SHELLEY PAYNE (Agricultural) [2.33 pm]: It gives me great pleasure today to talk on this motion. I thank Hon Steve Pratt for bringing it forward so we can acknowledge the importance of female participation in sport and also recognise the Cook government's investment in sporting facilities. More recently there has been investment in facilities to assist and encourage women to participate in sport. A couple of members have talked about the investments we have made in the lead-up to the World Cup. There was \$29.7 million for the State Football Centre and \$35 million to revitalise the Perth Rectangular Stadium. This is a really great investment for our state in order to be able to host these events. I am really looking forward to tonight's game. Many members have talked about that.

I would like to talk about a few people in the regions who are doing great things. I have wanted to talk about this girl for a while; her name is Dakota Watts. She is probably around 16 years old. She is from Pumphreys Bridge. If you go down the Albany Highway and turn off at Wandering—it is a beautiful drive through there—just to the east is a little place called Pumphreys Bridge. It is just north of the new Dryandra Woodland National Park that we announced last year, where visitors can go and see numbats, woylies, echidnas and other animals that you cannot usually see anywhere else. Dakota took up steer riding. Her goal was to become the first woman to win a title for steer riding. Sometimes we see women barrel racing or in rope competitions, but she decided she wanted to do steer riding. Last year she became the first woman ever to win a national title—that was for under-14s steer riding. She has a goal that once she becomes an adult she wants to go to national competitions. There have not been any women qualify for them yet. I wish her lots of luck. I guess a lot of these kids who grow up regionally, grow up pretty tough and can do these kinds of things. They have the opportunity to do things that maybe people in the city do not.

I found out about Dakota at the Western Australian College of Agriculture in Narrogin where she attends school. When I went there last year, I found out about what she is doing. I note that one-third of students at Narrogin agricultural school are now women, and that is increasing. It is a great school. It is possible to agist a horse there; spread the word for some of these city kids who might want to come to a really great ag school and experience a bit of rural life.

This weekend is the Coolgardie Rodeo, which Hon Kyle McGinn might know about. Interestingly, my daughter told me the other week, "I'm going to Coolgardie for the weekend." I said okay, and then later she said, "I'm going to the Coolgardie rodeo." She has her swag ready and she is going with a bunch of 20-year-olds from the city. I thought, "Great for you guys, getting out into the country." I told her to look out for Dakota.

There are other young women doing great things in sport in the great southern, particularly Aboriginal women. We know Aboriginal people are very talented with their sport, and it is great to see our government is doing a lot to support that. An honourable member spoke about the Aboriginal All Stars program run by Netball WA. It gives Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander girls exposure to the netball pathway and an understanding of the practice involved to progress to professional sport.

I would like to mention Caroline Minter, a proud Goreng woman from Gnowangerup. She was first selected for the under-14s All Stars program to go to Perth. I do not know whether members have heard about Gnowangerup and the great southern and the Horsepower Highway. It is a fantastic scenic drive. If members ever go to Albany and do the scenic drive from Gnowangerup through the Stirling Range, they have old, renovated tractors. Just south of Gnowangerup there are old water tanks that have been painted pink with portraits of women. Caroline is up there with her netball shirt. We went there to open the Bloom Festival with Hon Alannah MacTiernan in 2021 and checked it out.

Aboriginal people from across the regions are very talented, but there are a lot of challenges with some of these young girls, and the young boys as well, participating in sport. For example, Gnowangerup and Tambellup have high Aboriginal populations, with lots of kids who are really great at sport. Tambellup Shire is now working with the Tambellup Aboriginal Corporation to get a bus, because a lot of the girls travel to Katanning for netball. Many of the boys travel to Mt Barker for football. It is difficult for parents to transport their kids to allow them to participate in sport. Sport is important for people's mental health and making them feel good about themselves.

I will mention Katanning's Lara Rodney who has just been selected to play in the under-12s netball team at the upcoming national championships being held in Perth in September. Kira Phillips is an Aboriginal girl from Gnowangerup who has had a great football career. She was first drafted by the Fremantle Dockers and played for Peel over eight years in the WA Football League.

I also want to mention BMX racing; I am glad that Hon Kyle McGinn referred to BMX racing. It is a great sport. It is a sport that my kids have been involved in. Girls have always participated in that sport and have been treated equally. The facility in Kalgoorlie is fantastic; I am glad that Hon Kyle McGinn was able to get some money for that. It hosted the world BMX championships. Some great money has gone into other BMX facilities in Wanneroo and Bunbury. We all know of Lauren Reynolds from Bunbury, a BMX racer and two-time Olympian. That is a great outcome for WA.

Hon Peter Collier mentioned the regional athletes support program. I commend the government because between 2021–2023, it invested more than \$3 million in the regional athletes support program, which has helped regional athletes continue their development while they continue to live at home in the regions. The Great Southern Sports Talent Association in Albany, which is transitioning to the Great Southern Academy of Sport, has done a great job in not only Albany, but also the small towns of Katanning, Tambellup and Gnowangerup in the great southern to help students and young kids develop their sporting talent while they live in the regions. Most recently, the government gave \$30 000 to the regional academy of sport in Albany to help with the development of the netball pathway for young people in communities across the great southern.

Last month, Esperance hosted the great southern netball championships, which comprised 33 regional teams from Albany, Denmark, Narrogin, Katanning and other towns across the great southern. It was great because Esperance finally got an opportunity to showcase its new indoor sports stadium, which, thanks to our government, was built with the assistance of money from royalties for regions. The stadium is a great outcome. I remember when my daughter Emily started the netball program; the kids were using the same courts that their parents used when they were younger. For more than 40 years, there has been no funding for women's sport, whereas four football fields down there are maintained by the local government. A huge amount of money goes into maintaining those grass fields, but we could not get upgraded netball courts for the kids of the parents who had used the courts years before. It was a great outcome. Netball girls in Esperance are using this new sports stadium, which is a great outcome.

Hon Sandra Carr acknowledged all the people who are involved in organising sport for young girls. I want to acknowledge all those people like Melissa Rowe in Esperance who help to make sure that young girls in the regions get the same opportunities as people in the city.

Last week, the West Coast Fever Primary School Cup was held in Katanning. The competition involved 400 students from 20 different schools. The great thing about this netball cup is that both boys and girls played. Netball is becoming increasingly popular with boys, which is why so many schools took part in the competition. This was the biggest carnival in 10 years, with both boys and girls playing. It is great that boys can grow up knowing that it is okay to play netball. They do not have to play the stereotypical male sport. We have talked a lot today about women wanting to participate in sport, but it is great that males can participate in netball without feeling that they should not. Last week's primary school cup competition was great, with boys and girls playing netball and with boys knowing that it is okay to play netball.

I want to mention the Olympic Unleashed program. Hon Samantha Rowe is one of the conveners of the Parliamentary Friends of the Olympics. Earlier this week, two female Olympic athletes, Sally Hunt and Georgia Wilson, toured the wheatbelt, including Narrogin. It is great that these two women role models are inspiring young female athletes. Usually we see male football players going to the regions to talk about sport so it was fantastic that these female Olympians talked to our kids in the regions. That program is being delivered across more than 2 000 schools; indeed, more than 300 000 kids have had connection with the Olympic Unleashed program.

I turn to the state government's community sporting and recreation facilities fund. It is such a fantastic program for improving sporting infrastructure across the regions. As we came out of COVID, one of our recovery projects

was putting \$12 million into fast-tracking the CSRFF grants. One of the things we did was prioritise projects involving facilities for women—those that would make women feel more comfortable to participate in a sport—such as change room upgrades, lockable showers and more toilet cubicles in place of urinals. I note also our announcement in April to boost the CSRFF program with an additional \$7.5 million a year over the next two years and increasing the amount of the maximum grants, noting there has been quite a big increase in the cost of construction and things like that. We are doing our bit to streamline the application process and, most importantly, the amount we quarantined for projects that encourage female participation. In 2020–21, half a million dollars was quarantined; in 2022, the amount quarantined for projects that encourage female participation increased to \$1 million. Since 2018, the government has invested nearly \$30 million in projects to support women’s participation.

If members drive down Albany Highway to Albany, they will go through Kojonup. With the help of a CSRFF grant of \$309 000, Kojonup now has great netball facilities, with new courts and covered, all-weather courts. Regional competitions can now be hosted there, which is really good. I am currently working to help the Esperance Ports Football Club because it has had a massive increase in the number of girls who want to play football. It has no toilet facilities for females so I am helping it get its plans together to access some funding. CSRFF is a great program that helps to improve facilities across the regions.

Getting back to tonight, good luck to the Matildas! I note that this FIFA Women’s World Cup has broken attendance records; it has far exceeded expectations with ticket sales. It has been great for WA to be part of hosting the biggest female sporting event in the world. We can never forget that half of our population is women. There is so much potential for women’s sport these days. Interestingly, the Matildas victory over Canada was the most watched program on the Seven Network in 2023, with a viewing audience of more than 5.3 million people. I bet that record is broken tonight.

HON LORNA HARPER (East Metropolitan) [2.47 pm]: As a woman who used to play sport—I am glad that all members are sitting down—I am honoured to speak on this wonderful motion moved by my colleague Hon Stephen Pratt. It is amazing to be talking about it. As a young person a long time ago, I played football. I will say that again so that Hon Kyle McGinn knows that it is called “football”. Where I come from it is called “fitbaa”.

Hon Darren West: Did you have daylight saving?

Hon LORNA HARPER: Yes, we did have daylight saving.

Hon Wilson Tucker interjected.

Hon LORNA HARPER: I understand Hon Wilson Tucker’s comments about the sun. However, as a woman, I like to stay in the shade because I do not want to get wrinkles, and I like ceilings in changing rooms because it gets a bit cold. It was an amusing point.

As a young person in Scotland, I played football, badminton and hockey. We played hockey in the winter, in the snow, wearing knicker shorts, and we used a bright orange ball. That will tell members why I am not a big sports person now. I also played netball; my position was shooter. I used to take shots at goal.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon LORNA HARPER: Really! I was a shooter up until I stopped growing and everybody else kept growing. I then played the position of centre. I stopped playing when I was playing against Irvine Royal Academy, which we nicknamed IRA. The other centre threw the ball straight at my face and split my lip and I thought, “That’s it. I am too vain for this”, and I stopped playing. We were encouraged as young women to play sport.

Earlier this year, I was very excited when the Matildas played Scotland. Members knew I had to get up and say it. I am so excited for tonight and I was cheering and hiding behind my hands on Saturday, but when Scotland and the Matildas played and Scotland won that game, I was so excited. I thought, “Oh, Scotland is coming to Australia for the World Cup. I’ll get tickets.” Then I realised that Scotland was not in the World Cup and I was devastated. But I am so glad that tonight I will be supporting the Matildas.

What I thought I should talk about right now is the connections of members in the chamber to women in sport. Members in the chamber have strong connections to professional sportspeople. We cannot forget the wonderful Hon Ayor Makur Chuot who is away on urgent parliamentary business and her sister—apologies for the pronunciation—Akec, who plays for Hawthorn in the women’s Australian Football League. She comes originally from the wonderful mighty Swan Districts, a beautiful club in the great suburb of Bassendean. She has moved to Melbourne and she plays professional sport. That is just one. How about Hon Jackie Jarvis’s daughter Ashlee, who plays hockey? We have really good connections in this chamber to women playing sport. It is because some of the things that the Cook government is doing that will allow future women like young Phoebe and young Immy, to go forward and to play sport.

I stood today to say that tonight will be great; I am so excited, and it is a shame Scotland could not be there because it could have got there. I hope Australia absolutely hounds the English tonight. Again, I commend Hon Stephen Pratt for moving this motion.

HON DR BRIAN WALKER (East Metropolitan) [2.52 pm]: I will spend a few minutes speaking on the motion from a medical perspective. I have noticed with great interest the wonderful motion from my colleague Hon Stephen Pratt and I could not commend it more. I think everyone in the house shares that point of view, not just because Australia will be playing a wonderful game here against our archenemies, if you like, but also because it demonstrates the way for us as a people. We need sport at all levels for all people and we ought to be managing that better.

We could list the advantages of whichever government is in power and how much money has been given, but it really depends on the mindset of the people. I refer back to my childhood in Perth in the 1960s, when there was a very much stronger sporting tradition because we were outside all the time. We did not have our handheld toys or things that kept us at a computer or in a darkened room playing games. We were outside and engaging with our friends. In my sphere, I was doing surf-lifesaving and swimming a mile out into the ocean. I really ought to trial for the Rottnest Channel Swim, but I am a bit too lazy for that now. We did racing and small marathons to raise funds. Everyone was out playing in the sunshine. We were not that frightened of the sun so, therefore, we were doing more things outside, such as tennis and golf.

As a medical practitioner, I am very used to the idea of recommending nature and good food, of course, and having good mental health and engaging in good exercise, because as human beings we are designed to be exercising and moving. If we are not tilling the land with our hands, we should certainly be out having a good game of whatever we happen to want to play. We need this. I look at the benefits here for parents as they stand on the sidelines and cheer on their children developing themselves and learning not only the skills of the game but how to treat one another, how to treat victory, and how to treat defeat as a mental process for how we manage life.

We can also look at a state level at how we support those who are gifted at sport to receive the greatest rewards. One memory of mine is seeing a long time ago at the Munich Olympic Games the wonderful Olga Korbut receiving her score of 10 in gymnastics and the way she threw her body through the air doing what we thought was the impossible at the time. We have admiration for her skills, but then we look at how she is now. She is wracked with arthritis having damaged her joints and having been abused by the trainers to force her body beyond the limits of what a human could endure. We need to balance our pride in the nation with our care as custodians of our people. We are doing what needs to be done not only for pleasure for our country but also our wellness, and not driving this too far. Sport not only is useful for personal development but also serves as a way of bringing people together.

That may not be the case for Eagles and Dockers fans who fight over who is the better team. The bottom line is that they are both good teams—maybe in other years.

Hon Stephen Dawson: But the Dockers are better.

Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER: We could probably discuss that over a beer or two, I think.

But I am also thinking of those who go into sports who are less well known but also bring people together. Especially in light of the recent comment from my good friend the Deputy Leader of the House, I look at the work in Ireland and Scotland to bring together and combine the hurling and shinty teams. They are very similar sports. They have a blast at the time. They are just having a good time together. It is about two countries coming together and sharing a whisky or a beer after the game in the spirit of good fun, but all the while caring for a broken wrist or a banged head. One of the benefits of sport is that it brings people together not only within the nation but between nations. It should be a proxy for our discomfort with others. The need for wars with other peoples is perhaps something we could forget because sport could bring us together and let us share our common humanity.

We are not looking just at the beauty of the Matildas tonight, and may they win. I am hoping with all my heart that they do play at least a wonderful game, as I know they can, and if they win, so much the better. Of course, they are going to win, but should they not win, we shall still be proud of them for having done themselves and ourselves proud. I look at our gifts with sport. We ought to be blessed with supporting sport at every stage for every person. Whether it is team sports or individual sports, we are given the opportunity for developing ourselves physically, mentally and even spiritually, and thereby we may become a better society.

HON PETER FOSTER (Mining and Pastoral) [2.57 pm]: I did not intend to jump up and make a contribution but I will just make a short contribution on this investing in sport motion. I was particularly interested in the comments of Hon Samantha Rowe, who quoted Patricia Karvelas's article about women's participation in sport. It triggered a few memories in me, because last year for International Women's Day I spent some time with Ashburton Thunder, which is a women's football team based in Tom Price. The purpose of the catch-up was to understand the barriers that women in that team faced to participate each week.

Ashburton Thunder is a small team of about 20 women. Unfortunately, there are four strong men's teams so they often do not get the most favourable draw. They often had to play their games at four o'clock in the afternoon, whereas the men's games were at seven o'clock at night. This posed a problem for those women, because they were caring for their children. Often the team, unfortunately, had to forfeit a lot of games because the mothers in the team could not access babysitting or child care and were unable to play. It was ironic because the men who played in

the evening were always able to play. They would never forfeit because the children were always being cared for. An important thing that we need to point out in this debate is that a lot of women do not participate in sport because their sport is not prioritised. I acknowledge that was definitely my takeaway when I caught up with the Ashburton Thunder women's team in Tom Price. The team often had to forfeit games because they could not access childcare arrangements.

Not all women were in that situation. For some, their husbands came home early from work to accommodate them playing sport. For other women, their neighbours pitched in to help care for the kids as well. The women said that their number one barrier to participating was childcare arrangements.

I know that time is running out, but I wanted to also quickly talk about the pleasure I had to attend the Tom Price Netball Association presentation evening last Saturday night. There was one male—me—and 109 female netballers in the room. It was quite a unique experience. It was a fancy dress evening, so each of the teams got to come in fancy dress. I attach myself to a team called the Rookies. They went as Barbie and I went as Ken. If members are friends with me on Facebook, they will see a photo of that. It was a really great evening to celebrate netball. In Tom Price netball is quite popular.

I will just take another minute or so. It was a fantastic evening. It is really great to see that netball is so popular in Tom Price. We did the numbers, and we reckon that easily five per cent of the population of Tom Price play netball. I know it is only a small town, but five per cent is quite a large number. It was really great to see all the women at the event celebrating their games over the year.

I want to acknowledge the Shire of Ashburton and Rio Tinto. Earlier this year, they upgraded the courts in Tom Price. Tom Price is quite hot. Believe it or not, our courts were not covered. The shire, in partnership with Rio Tinto, embarked on a project to upgrade the netball and basketball courts—they are multipurpose courts. The courts now actually have a cover over the top, which is fantastic because now in the summer, the sun is out of people's eyes. They also have an electronic scoreboard now, which is really great. Previously, they had other systems. It is great that the courts have been upgraded so that both men, women and our children in Tom Price can participate.

That is my short contribution. I want to commend Hon Stephen Pratt for moving this motion. I think we should do absolutely everything that we can to encourage participation in sport, particularly for our women.

HON MARTIN PRITCHARD (North Metropolitan) [3.02 pm]: If I can, I will just take one moment. First of all, how can we not admire women's sport in Australia at the moment with the Opals, the Australian women's cricket team, the Diamonds and now, of course, the Matildas? I think Hon Kyle McGinn indicated that he had a preference for watching women's sport. I share that. By far, I think they are leading the guys in the way they play their sport in every way.

The other thing that I wanted to say is that I am wearing a jacket that is given to volunteers for the FIFA grounds. It was given to me by a young deaf lady who offered her services to some of the games in Perth. She needed some assistance, which I gave her, so she gave me this jacket. I want to commend all the volunteers who assisted. I know we have spoken about the people who organised the games and of course the Matildas. I wish them all the luck in the world. In Australia, most sport relies heavily on volunteers and I just wanted to give them a shout-out.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.04 pm]: In the time that is available, I would like to commend the member for the motion. It is one that we all agree with. It has been a fantastic month for Australian sport, particularly Australian women's sport. I wanted to take this opportunity while there was some time left to reiterate the comments of Hon Martin Pritchard, who is wearing a particularly loud jacket today—I am told it is FIFA approved. By golly, it can be seen from a long way away, member!

There have been some big winners from what has happened. The state government has done a tremendous job and I acknowledge the words in the motion moved by Hon Stephen Pratt. It has been a great week for women's football, or soccer—whatever people like to call it. However, I think it really has the greatest impact when it trickles down to the grassroots. There is not a young girl in Perth at the moment who would not want to be kicking a soccer ball around like Sam Kerr. I think that enthralls and inspires the next generation of players. In 20 years' time, this will have its greatest effect—whether that be in netball, women's Australian rules, rugby, basketball, swimming or whatever it might be. It is tremendous to see the Matildas inspiring young women and getting them involved in sport—the benefits of which have been discussed today.

On that point, to have children and young people playing sport there needs to be volunteers—thousands of volunteers. People across the state put up their hand every weekend to be engaged in women's or kids' sport. They get up early and cut the oranges. There are referees, people who prepare ovals and officials. Most of them do it out of their own time. Again, I want to reiterate Hon Martin Pritchard's point and say that this is going to create a lot of work for volunteers who will willingly and lovingly do it, because for someone who is involved in children's sport, there is no greater thrill than seeing them succeed, progress and grow. Well done to all the volunteers for helping to make our kids' sport and community sport happen.

Question put and passed.

COMMITTEE REPORTS — CONSIDERATION*Committee*

The Deputy Chair of Committees (Hon Sandra Carr) in the chair.

*Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission —
Seventh Report — Annual report 2021–22*

Resumed from 1 December 2022.

Motion

HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition) [3.07 pm]: I move —

That the report be noted.

I will jump in to beat the hirsute member who leapt to his feet with enthusiasm to talk about the CCC and make a few comments as the deputy chair of the committee. At the start, members' will note that this is the annual report for 2021–22. It is not the annual report of the last financial year; it is the annual report of the financial year before that. Discussing an annual report tabled at the end of last year, and is now some nine to 10 months old and largely out of date, is perhaps an indication of how slowly we are managing to get through the committee reporting process. Perhaps in the not too distant future, we as a house will take some time to consider how we deal with committee reports. I have a bit of sympathy, particularly for government members who have limited opportunities to make contributions to the debates of Parliament. I understand that it is not the easiest thing in the world to have quite limited opportunities, which is probably demonstrated by the number of members who leapt up to contribute to the last motion. It is understandable that everybody would like an opportunity. When there are so many members on one side of the chamber, it makes it a bit tough. However, the timeliness of debate on reports, and perhaps the length of time that is required for each report, is something for us to consider.

I have a few notes on what we as a committee did in the 2021–22 financial year. Obviously, I will start by acknowledging and thanking the members of the committee. From this chamber, there is Hon Klara Andric, who I understand is unfortunately away on urgent—but unwell—parliamentary business. These things are going around at the moment. From the lower house, Matthew Hughes chairs the committee. At this point in time, the other member of the committee was the Leader of the Opposition in the lower chamber, Shane Love, but he has since been replaced by Hon Mia Davies, so the committee has changed since this particular time. It is a good committee. I think the committee members work together remarkably well considering some of our initial stages and the issues that we inherited. I pay my respects, of course, to the committee staff, Suzanne Veletta and Jovita Hogan, who will note that I used the Spanish pronunciation of her name, not the English version. Call me a stickler for protocol in that way!

The year covered by the report included the early stages of the committee getting together. It obviously started at 1 July 2021, so that was basically at the beginning of our processes. We tabled a number of reports in that year and I do not propose to go through them in any detail. We re-tabled *If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force*; and tabled *'A good year': The work of the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission; The definition of 'public officer' in the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003: Parliamentary inspector's report*, and, in fact, the committee has had some results with that issue; *Police power of arrest: Parliamentary inspector's report* and *The Corruption and Crime Commission's unexplained wealth function: The review by the Honourable Peter Martino*. Some of those inquiries were quite interesting. As members will have heard me say as I tabled those reports, it was interesting that in terms of what was put forward by the parliamentary inspector, I not infrequently found myself agreeing with the government and the commission rather than the parliamentary inspector. It might sound a little unusual for an opposition member, but in those cases, and particularly with police powers of arrest, I think that the government and I found a degree of unanimity. I understand that sometimes the parliamentary inspector's role is to raise difficult questions. It may surprise members to know that I have never felt the need to agree necessarily with anybody from any side of politics, and I am usually pretty good at expounding my views on what I think is right—probably more often to my detriment than to my ultimate success, but I am getting a bit old to change now!

The most interesting and important thing in this annual report is the committee's own inquiry, which is called "What happens next? Beyond a finding of serious misconduct". This work has been incredibly interesting and obviously I am not about to pre-empt where we are likely go with it. It is absolutely the case that quite salacious CCC reports and findings of misconduct have, over many years, ended up imploding into little or no action. There are famous cases. I know the government likes to go back in history and talk about the previous government, but we can go back a bit further and see the actions of Hon Brian Burke in his time as Premier, the issues he had with the CCC, the time he spent in prison and the ultimate overturning of many of those issues. There is no doubt that no matter which side of politics is in government, there is an issue with the outcome following a finding of serious misconduct by the Corruption and Crime Commission.

The terms of reference indicate that the committee is looking at the hows and whys. Why is it that the commission can make a finding of serious misconduct that can have little or no outcome in the longer term, and can we do that better? Is it a case that perhaps some of those findings were not in the public interest? Is it the case that they were in the public interest but that the systems in place just could not accommodate the work that was done in order to progress them? I commend the investigation to members. The report is due by the end of this year, and the committee is working diligently on it. For a committee that has had its struggles in recent years, the current members are working together remarkably well. People can usually tell that that is the case because they are not reading about us in the newspaper. We are determined that we will get some better outcomes. In my view, the committee is doing very good work. Both the membership and the staff of the committee are to be commended for the attitude that they are taking to it.

I am more than happy to speak on each of the reports in detail when they come on for debate, particularly to answer questions, but I do not intend to have a second crack during the consideration of the annual report. With the notes I have made about trying to progress Parliament's review of reports perhaps in a slightly more timely manner, this is probably the sole contribution I will make on this report. I hope that the Legislative Council will note this comment as required and move on to something else.

Hon KYLE McGINN: I thank the honourable member for his contribution. I share some of his views on the time taken for reports to be considered. The member's comments instantly took me back to the WorkSafe report done by the Standing Committee on Public Administration in the last term of government. I think members got 20 minutes to discuss it prior to the end of the last term of government. I also note that it has been like that since I was elected in 2017. It has not really changed in this term from what it was in the last term.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: I blame whichever government was in charge at the time!

Hon KYLE McGINN: I am sure it was no different in 2015, but I would be intrigued to get the member's views a bit more when that subject comes up to see what he thinks would be a better way to have these debates on committee reports. Again, I was very disappointed that the WorkSafe report, which involved three years' worth of work, got about 20 minutes of debate in the committee stage.

It is good to stand today to have a chat on this report, but first I will touch on what Hon Dr Steve Thomas talked about. I picked up on his comments about what has been inherited. As a former member of both the Standing Committee on Public Administration and the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation, it always seemed to me that it was a new start in each term of government. I wonder whether the same applies for this committee or whether it is a continuation from the last Parliament and the committee just gets on with the same work. I know that the public administration committee starts afresh and decides its new agenda, rather than following on from the last term of government.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: The role of the CCC oversight committee is more constant than that of most others. It has more specific roles when it does its own investigation, but, for the most part, there is a carry-on effect. Much of the things that we do now would be the same things, but with a slightly different slant, that Hon Nick Goiran would have dealt with when he was the chair of the committee close to a decade ago.

Hon KYLE McGINN: That is what I picked up in what the member was saying. In the reports that have been debated in these sessions, it seems that it is very much an ongoing committee that continues to operate on whatever it was operating on before the term of government ended. That intrigues me because I have not been on a committee like that. It is interesting that the committee had to deal with issues that came from a different formulation of the committee, whereas when we walk onto other committees, it is a fresh start. It would be very interesting to experience that. It sounds as though the new committee got through some issues that were probably not as easy for the last formulation of the committee to get through. I also acknowledge that there has been a change since this report was tabled. Hon Mia Davies—I think she is “honourable”—

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Yes, because she was a minister.

Hon KYLE McGINN: Yes, she was a minister. Hon Mia Davies is now on the committee. I assume that came about not so long ago.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: She was also a member of this house previously, so she is only honourable.

Hon KYLE McGINN: I wonder about that. She only did one term in this house.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: It still lifts you.

Hon KYLE McGINN: Does it? That is something my mum still laughs at—that I am honourable.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: I hate to say it, member, but she might not be the only one.

Hon Stephen Dawson: It's because of that haircut.

Hon KYLE McGINN: I do not think the haircut plays into it as much as everything else. It was interesting to note that a new member is on that committee.

While reading the annual report about the public hearings, I noted the high level of importance of this committee, and the secrecy that goes with that, not to mention the ramifications that occur if information is not kept confidential. I found it interesting that a lot of the committee's functions are carried out behind closed doors, with a lot of closed hearings, not public hearings. The frame of mind of this committee is different from other committees that I have engaged with, when private sessions are only held when needed, whereas it seems that private hearings are generally the first go-to for this committee. That probably reflects on the smallness of the report, not having super detail, because a lot of what it does is probably done in private session. That would make it difficult for the committee to report back to this house wholly on what it has achieved.

However, I am very interested in reading the report of the “What happens next? Beyond a finding of serious misconduct” inquiry that the committee is working on at the moment, which Hon Dr Steve Thomas mentioned would hopefully be delivered by the end of this year. I think his comments were very appropriate, in that no-one really knows what happens after the reports are tabled. As the member notes, on many occasions, nothing happens. Sometimes it is reversed and it goes the other way. That is a bit disappointing because when I came to this place in 2017, the CCC committee was put as one of our highest and most important committees. It looks into one of the most important bodies to ensure that we do not have corruption in this state. I see that there is not much action from the committee. I can only speculate but members may have noticed that no work has been done in that space to follow up on things that have come out of the CCC. I assume that some speculation of the reasoning behind looking into that space is that what happens after the reports are tabled is probably not well reported, unless it is a very high profile thing that the media runs with and brings up every now and then, which keeps it active in people's minds. I very much look forward to seeing what comes out of the committee in that space, so much so that I found myself trying to find it, thinking I had missed it being tabled. I look forward to the report being tabled.

I note that the committee listed its expenditure, which does not include the salaries of the committee staff nor the cost of the administration building and lease costs to the committee, which is pretty normal. I note that, once again, the report includes a miscellaneous amount of \$237. I really want to find out what “miscellaneous” means.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: As I told you, I'd have to take drastic action.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: That is how it seems. When I read a report that includes “miscellaneous” with a dollar figure in it, I struggle to understand why we cannot name what it is. I am sure it is not due to the secrecy of the bulldog clips being one size or the other, but I would be intrigued to know what it may be. If someone in this chamber wanted to educate me on what is in the “miscellaneous” section, I would be open ears.

I was very happy to talk about this report today. I look forward to hearing other members talk about this report and make their contributions.

Hon LORNA HARPER: I, too, rise to speak on the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission's seventh report, *Annual Report 2021-22*. As noted, two honourable members in this chamber are members of the joint standing committee: the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Dr Steve Thomas; and Hon Klara Andric, who unfortunately is away on urgent parliamentary business today. I admit that I find the committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission to have one of the most intriguing titles of all the committees. When we are talking about corruption and crime, of course we all get very nosy, our spines tingle and we wonder what is going on. In reality, it is a lot drier than that and a lot more prescribed. As stated in the report, the functions of the committee are fairly clear. Legislative Assembly standing order 289 states —

It is a function of the ... Committee to —

- (a) monitor and report to Parliament on the exercise of the functions of the Corruption and Crime Commission and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission;

That is actually quite difficult to say, by the way. Also —

- (b) inquire into, and report to Parliament on the means by which corruption prevention practices may be enhanced within the public sector; and
- (c) carry out any other functions conferred on the Committee under the *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*.

We put a lot on this committee. As public servants ourselves in a way, it is really important that whatever we do is seen to be above and beyond. Anyone being paid with money from the WA government should see it in the same way. I have been in this country for quite a long time. Even I have missed some of the things that have been reported in the newspaper. But I have gone back and had a look. Yes, both sides of government—the two main parties—have had their moments but they have been dealt with in history, and dealt with very well. It is good to be able to deal with these things.

I also see that the committee held public hearings. As stated in the report, these were held —

To enable the committee to perform its functions and oversight role, we have the power to send for persons, papers and records. Due to the nature of the committee's work, hearings are often held in closed session (sometimes after a public session with the witnesses) and documentary evidence may remain closed evidence.

A lot of us in this chamber sit on committees. There are reasons we do things behind closed doors. We are not trying to be secret and we do not lack transparency. We are trying to get true, honest answers from people and ask them proper questions without them feeling that they will have the whole world judging them or everybody being aware of their answers because sometimes their answers may not be for general reporting and not something we want to see on pages 2 or 4 of *The West Australian*, or whatever editorial might be running that week.

The committee held five public hearings and took evidence from 22 witnesses. I see that on 8 September 2021, Hon John McKechnie, KC, and the Corruption and Crime Commission provided an update on the activities of the commission. Hon Dr Steve Thomas already mentioned the reports that were tabled for further discussion. We can look at the response to the reports, in particular, *If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force*. The government response to that report was tabled on 24 November 2021. All these government responses and reports are available on the committee website for people to read and look into.

Like Steve Thomas, I too am a wee bit nosy. I am very interested in the inquiry, “What happens next? Beyond a finding of serious misconduct”, which is mentioned in the report. To be honest, that reads a little like an Agatha Christie novel. I wonder, what does happen next? Are we going to see that in the cinemas on—what do you call that—the *Orient Express*? “Beyond a finding of serious misconduct” is actually quite a good title, so whoever wrote that, I thank them very much.

The committee has commenced its own motion inquiry. I am sure that I put a lot more excitement into it than the committee probably intends, but I am a member of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation, and we like to make things sound more exciting. The committee is inquiring into what happens after a public officer is found to have engaged in serious misconduct, including disciplinary and other sanctions imposed by government agencies, and criminal prosecutions arising from serious misconduct, agency rules and systemic responses. I really look forward to finding out later this year what this report will lay down. I do not think there is enough emphasis on how important it is to have this committee: the chair of the committee, Matthew Hughes; the member for Kalamunda; and the deputy chair, Hon Dr Steve Thomas. I see that a previous member was Mr Love, but he was replaced. There was also Hon Klara Andric —

Hon Pierre Yang: It was Hon Mia Davies.

Hon LORNA HARPER: Apologies. Great. We have two women on the committee. That is fantastic! I love to see equity in committees. That makes two females and two males. Mr Love was replaced by someone from the regions, which is good as well. It is better than having a north metro-centric type of committee.

A lot has been said in the past about the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission. When I was first elected to this Parliament, the committee was in the newspapers on a regular basis. There were some terrible contributions in the newspapers about the members of the committee and the person heading it. However, I have to say, from reading the reports, all I can do is thank the committee members and staff for the hard work and effort they put in, and for hopefully upholding the standing of this Parliament and the public service of WA. I will leave my comments there.

Hon DARREN WEST: Likewise, I make a few comments on the very important seventh report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, *Annual report 2021–22*. I note the difference we still have between our state and federal legislature. Western Australia oversees a Corruption and Crime Commission. Other states have various derivations of oversight bodies, such as the Independent Commission Against Corruption, that keep an eye on the public service and elected members; however, there is not one federally. Although we are moving in the right direction, with the Albanese government committed to that, it has always struck me as odd that we do not have a federal independent commission against corruption or a federal corruption and crime commission. When we think about the reach of the federal government and the amount of money that moves through the federal government, it has always struck me as quite odd that we do not have an equivalent commission in the federal sphere. That is about to change for the better.

In Queensland, New South Wales and other states, history is littered with serious findings, on both sides, of individuals who have taken the huge privilege of being elected members and using it to benefit themselves. I think that is shameful, and one way to help prevent that is to have an effective Corruption and Crime Commission. This committee that oversees, and reports and deliberates on, the activities and functions of the Corruption and Crime Commission is equally important. I take the point made by Hon Lorna Harper a few moments ago about the composition of this committee. It is particularly evenly balanced now. There are two regional members, two metropolitan members, two men, and two women—that is good. There are two from the conservative side of politics and two from the progressive side of politics. There are also two members from the Legislative Assembly and two members from the Legislative Council. I do not know how there could be a more balanced committee than that. It comprises the chair, Matthew Hughes, MLA; the deputy chair, our own Hon Dr Steve Thomas, MLC, regional member for South West Region; and the now Leader of the Opposition. He was here at the time, and he was replaced by the former Leader of the Opposition, Hon Mia Davies, member for Central Wheatbelt. Of course, who could forget Hon Klara Andric, MLC, member for South Metropolitan Region? She is a particularly

determined individual who I am sure will add greatly to this committee's deliberations. The committee staff includes Ms Suzanne Veletta, a very experienced staff member who has been at Parliament for a long time and provided a lot of great work; and Ms Jovita Hogan, the research officer.

Think back to the time of the 2021–22 report. It was in the height of COVID-19. We were spread out in this chamber, using the President's gallery as the floor of Parliament. We were wearing masks, religiously sanitising our hands and keeping our distance, while the state of Western Australia managed COVID-19 particularly well; it kept our economy strong and kept people safe. It was in that background that the committee deliberated and reported.

The report is a pretty standard affair. It is fair to say that the chair's words of wisdom make corruption the point of the stewardship of the Commissioner of Crime and Corruption, John McKechnie, KC; and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission, Matthew Zilko, SC. It is important to acknowledge those individuals. They are there to do important work and have done so for some time. I have tremendous respect for John McKechnie. Members may remember the lengths the government went to to ensure that he was able to continue working in that position. There was a push by a former committee to remove John McKechnie, but fortunately, the government stood its ground, stared down those who were determined to see him go, and retained the highly successful and perfect person for the job, John McKechnie, in that role. I am very pleased that he continues in his role, and the chair has made that point as well in this report.

I think this may have been pointed out already. I had to duck out for urgent parliamentary business, so I missed some of the earlier contributions from Hon Dr Steve Thomas and Hon Lorna Harper. As is clear from Legislative Assembly standing order 289 and the report, one of the functions of the committee is to monitor and report to Parliament on the exercise and the functions of the Corruption and Crime Commission and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission. It is also to inquire into and report to Parliament on the means by which corruption prevention practices may be enhanced within the public sector. The committee is always learning, always improving and always seeking to do better with these things, but there have been some very high-profile cases in the public sector. I will not mention them because I think some of them are still before the courts, but I think everyone knows what I am referring to. It is disgraceful when it happens. It is challenging for all of us when these charges are laid. I hope that if there has been any wrongdoing, the full force of the law is felt by those who have abused their position. It is also here to carry out two other functions conferred on the committee under the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003. As members can see by the report, the committee has been particularly active. A table in the report outlines the activities of the committee between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022. There have been 17 deliberative meetings, so almost fortnightly; five hearings in which formal evidence has been gathered; and 22 witnesses have appeared. There has been one briefing and six reports have now been tabled. I will go to that detail in a little while. The reports contain 56 findings and 16 recommendations, all of which have been tabled to WA Parliament.

Public hearings are held to enable the committee to perform its functions and oversight role. The committee has the power to send for persons, papers and records. Due to the nature of the committee's work, hearings are often held in closed session, sometimes after a public session with the witnesses. Documentary evidence may remain closed evidence. That is a good point about sensitive information. This committee has a particularly sensitive role to play. Obviously, allegations that may be made would be serious in nature and would need to be handled appropriately.

As I mentioned, the committee has tabled six reports: *Annual report 2020–21*, which is the predecessor of this report, tabled on 9 September 2021; *If not the CCC ... then where? An examination of the Corruption and Crime Commission's oversight of excessive use of force allegations against members of the WA Police Force*, which I note was debated extensively in this chamber; *A good year: The work of the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission* was tabled in both houses on 22 February 2022; *The definition of 'public officer' in the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003: Parliamentary inspector's report* was tabled in both houses on 24 March 2022, a month after the one before; and *Police power of arrest: Parliamentary inspector's report*, its fifth report, was also tabled in both houses on the same day, 24 March 2022. The committee was clearly very active around this time. It also tabled *The Corruption and Crime Commission's unexplained wealth function: The review by the Honourable Peter Martino* in this chamber on 24 March 2022.

Members, we had significant discussion in here about those very important reports. I want to acknowledge the hard work of the committee and wish it all its best in future deliberations. It is important that it has a clear run at its very important role. I note that the report refers to the formal budget. By the look of that budget, the taxpayer is getting particularly good value for money from this committee. Its oversight is important, the work is important, and stamping out corruption and crime right throughout the public service is important. I look forward to the day when we have a not dissimilar derivation of our CCC and committee of oversight in the federal Parliament.

Hon PETER FOSTER: I also rise to make some brief comments on the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission's seventh report, *Annual report 2021–22*. It is unfortunate that Hon Klara Andric is out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business, because I know she was super keen to make a contribution to the debate today. I acknowledge that in the future she might be in a position to be back in the chamber and to make a contribution. It is great to get up and talk about this report today. I will start by acknowledging the committee. Many

of us in this place are on parliamentary committees. Depending on the committee, there is often a bit of work involved. I acknowledge the chair, the member for Kalamunda, Matthew Hughes, MLA, and the deputy chair, Hon Dr Steve Thomas, who is here in the chamber. I acknowledge his contribution to this annual report today, noting that he did not want to talk about each of the individual reports mentioned in this annual report. He did a lot of great work on this report and judging by his contribution, he is very passionate about this committee and the great work that it does. I also acknowledge the other two members of the committee, Shane Love, MLA, and Hon Klara Andric, as I already mentioned. None of the members today have acknowledged the staff, so I acknowledge the staff.

Hon Darren West: You should have been listening, member.

Hon PETER FOSTER: I apologise for that. I was out of the chamber myself on urgent parliamentary business. I acknowledge the staff named in the report, Ms Suzanne Veletta, principal research officer, and Ms Jovita Hogan, the research officer. Many of us are involved in committees and it is really great that we have such a great team of staff supporting us. Whether it is organising the meetings, conducting hearings or helping us put together the report, it is very much appreciated and I acknowledge our great committee staff who support us in our jobs so that we can produce quality reports just like this one.

As some of the members noted today, there has been a change in the membership of the committee. The committee now includes Hon Mia Davies, MLA. She has now stepped onto the committee. I recall from Hon Darren West's contribution that there is now a great mix of country and city members, which is great.

Hon Darren West: It is eclectic.

Hon PETER FOSTER: It is a great mix, is it not? It is great to see a broad spectrum of representation on this committee that is doing great work.

The report summarises the activities of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022, the reporting period. The committee monitors and reports on the exercise of functions of the Corruption and Crime Commission and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission, and commences its own inquiries and carries out functions under the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003. The functions of the committee can be found in the report under the introduction, and it states —

Under Legislative Assembly Standing Order 289 it is the function of the committee to:

- (a) monitor and report to Parliament on the exercise of the functions of the Corruption and Crime Commission and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission
- (b) inquire into and report to Parliament on the means by which corruption prevention practices may be enhanced within the public sector
- (c) carry out any other functions conferred on the committee under the *Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003*.

We can see that this committee has done a lot of work over the past 12 months and it has summarised its activities in the report. It held 17 deliberative meetings and five formal evidence hearings; called 22 witnesses, which is quite a substantial number of witnesses, I would attest; held one briefing; and tabled six reports in the 12-month period. It is quite a busy committee. In those reports it tabled 56 findings and 16 recommendations. The report outlines its public hearings. The committee has the power to send for persons, papers or records. Due to the nature of the committee's work, which we understand can be quite confidential, many hearings are held in closed session.

I am on the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs. Last year, we held some public hearings. It was the first time I had ever been involved in a committee whereby I was the chair and we had to hold public hearings. It was quite an experience. People tuned in to watch, which was really great. It was an interesting experience. I know from other members who have been involved in hearings that there is a lot to learn. It is a great opportunity for members of the public who cannot be physically in Perth. Of course, COVID is still in our community, so unfortunately some people cannot leave their homes to attend business. We also have a lot of regional voters in our state who cannot travel to Perth for whatever reason, be it work, childcare commitments or the cost of flights, although it is great that we have capped airfares. It is great that the hearings are streamed online so that people can hear firsthand exactly what information the committee is seeking and what answers it receives.

As we can see from the report, five public hearings took place, with 22 witnesses called. We learn from the report what matters were discussed, including matters relevant to police misconduct within the oversight of the commission with the then Acting Commissioner of Police, Col Blanch, and the Western Australia Police Force. As has been mentioned, the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission tabled a number of reports. This report helpfully lists those reports and it also has hyperlinks to the reports. If members can access the electronic copy of this report, they can click on the hyperlink to take them to the report. A couple of reports have been considered by this chamber. In particular, a number of members talked about *The Corruption and Crime Commission's unexplained wealth function: The review by the Honourable Peter Martino*, which was tabled in this chamber in March last year. I was one of the members who made a contribution during that debate. It was interesting to hear

about the work the commission is doing to tackle the issue of unexplained wealth. The work it does is quite interesting. If members jump on the CCC website, they will see quite a number of media statements that refer to the work it is doing.

A media release from July 2023 refers to how the CCC delivered close to \$1 million in unexplained wealth. The Corruption and Crime Commission obtained two unexplained wealth declarations in the WA Supreme Court, which equated to the \$1 million. The cases related to investigations undertaken into the accumulation of unexplained wealth dating back more than a decade. This is great work; we need to tackle the scourge of unexplained wealth and how particular individuals gain that wealth. Do they engage in illegal activities? It is great that the CCC looks at these matters.

I note that I have less than a minute. I want to jump to the financial statement. Hon Kyle McGinn is out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business, but he was quite baffled by the “miscellaneous” line item in the expenditure table. Hon Shelley Payne and I wondered what the miscellaneous item could be. Those members who have attended committee meetings know that there is often tea, coffee and biscuits in the back corner. I will take a guess that this miscellaneous item refers to the tea, coffee and biscuits in the back corner.

Hon Darren West: And Fantales.

Hon PETER FOSTER: Fantales! I am not sure whether Hon Dr Steve Thomas can advise what the miscellaneous item is, but I reckon it is the tea, coffee and biscuits.

Noting that my time is almost up, I commend the committee members and staff involved in the report and commend the report to the house.

The DEPUTY CHAIR (Hon Dr Brian Walker): The question is that the report be noted. Hon Pierre Yang.

Hon PIERRE YANG: Deputy chair, thank you for the opportunity to make a contribution to the debate on the seventh report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, *Annual report 2021–22*. I acknowledge the previous members for articulating and reciting the terms of reference of the committee. It is very important that we have a parliamentary standing committee that provides oversight of the very important crime and corruption fighting agency in our state.

It is interesting that Hon Darren West talked about the time frame covered by the annual report, which was the financial year 2021–22. He said that we were religiously sanitising our hands and sticking to the protocols. I prefer the word “regimentally” as opposed to “religiously”. As a community, we were all doing our part to keep COVID out of our community. Looking back, we were able to live a relatively normal life during that period. We decided to open the state border in early 2022, but the new Omicron variant delayed the reopening by a number of weeks so that we could get the first-dose level up in the community. What a great decision by the state government at that time; it saved countless lives. Again, that decision was made notwithstanding the huge number of pressures from all fronts. The government demonstrated its resolve in listening to medical and scientific advice and provided guidance so that we could stick with our road map out of COVID, modifying it to suit the situation that we were in.

I want to talk about one fundamental element of our democracy and the need to have the Corruption and Crime Commission and its functions. I echo the words of Hon Darren West; the nation would be better served if we had a national crime and corruption agency. A lot of people in Australia were baffled when the former Morrison government went back on its promise to have a national corruption fighting agency. It is important that we, as a democracy, have the ways and means to fight those behaviours and the people who try to take advantage of the trust placed in our system and the people we serve. It is important that we have those mechanisms in place so that society can develop better trust in our system. People like us who are doing our part to serve will benefit in the end.

The founding fathers of the United States wanted the country to be a republic with a rule of law and a healthy dose of scrutiny on the executive powers, and that is why there are three branches of government—the legislative branch, the judiciary and the executive branch. It is the same for our democracy in Australia and Western Australia. We have a slightly different system. As opposed to the presidential system, we have a parliamentary system, with the executive government embedded as part of Parliament. The head of government in our state is the Premier and the head of the federal government is the Prime Minister, being the leader of the party with the majority vote in the lower house of Parliament. It is different, but the trust and fundamental rationale of that legitimacy of government are the same between America and Australia. If we look at the importance of trust, especially in the post-COVID world when there is a lot of distrust and misinformation in social media and certain circles of the community, the CCC not only plays a very important function in fighting crime, but also what it is doing can force a better trust in our system. I think we have talked about this issue time and again. It is important to have a very powerful anti-corruption agency, but who is helping us watch them? I think that is why it is particularly important that we have a Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission and the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, whose terms of reference cover not only the functions of the commission, but also the parliamentary inspector. These are all very important linkages to give us, as a parliamentary democracy, the ultimate decision-making power. It comes back to Parliament. Parliament established the Corruption and Crime Commission through a parliamentary act. The act also established a parliamentary inspector so that complaints about

the actions of the CCC can be made to the parliamentary inspector. At the same time, Parliament has a joint committee of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly that provides oversight of the functions and the actions of the Corruption and Crime Commission and the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission.

We have looked at the reports listed in the annual report in 2021–22 and Hon Peter Foster correctly pointed out that a number of them have been discussed and debated in this place. I want to note the report of the CCC committee next listed, which is the sixth report, *The Corruption and Crime Commission's unexplained wealth function: The review by the Honourable Peter Martino*. If I recall correctly, I have made a contribution or two on that report and I certainly look forward to seeking an opportunity to continue to make a contribution on that sixth report when it comes up. As for today, I appreciate the opportunity to talk about this report and I look forward to speaking again.

Question put and passed.

*Standing Committee on Public Administration — Thirty-eighth Report —
Consultation with Statutory Office Holders*

Resumed from 14 February.

Motion

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I move —

That the report be noted.

Question put and passed.

*Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations — Eighty-seventh Report —
Consideration of the 2022–23 Budget Estimates — Motion*

Resumed from 15 February on the following motion moved by Hon Peter Collier —

That the report be noted.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I am pleased that we now have the opportunity, once again, to reconsider the 2022–23 budget estimates. Members will be aware that we have recently had some budget estimates hearings and they will probably be anticipating a report from the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations shortly. I can say that the pattern of behaviour from the government and its ministers has not changed from the previous budget estimates hearings that we had to the hearings that we most recently embarked upon.

Members will recall that in the final week of June this year we held sessions across four days. During that period, we saw a staggering number of matters taken on notice by ministers who were either ill prepared for those hearings or refused to allow public servants in attendance as witnesses to take the questions on their behalf. We saw this pattern of behaviour very clearly in the previous year's budget estimates in 2021–22. This is not an example of responsible government. Responsible government sees executive government held to account by Parliament, and one of the processes under which we do that is budget estimates hearings. That can work only if ministers and public servants attend the budget estimates hearings prepared. Having gigantic files and lever-arch files for no particular purpose makes a mockery of the accountability process. There have been times when members have, tongue-in-cheek, asked why the minister does not simply table those lever-arch files if they are of such importance? One wonders the cost to the taxpayer of Western Australia for the preparation of these files that are essentially never really used or referred to. It remains a concern of mine that we continue to see year in and year out this display of lack of accountability and lack of responsible government from the members opposite.

Members also will be aware that there is an opportunity immediately after the budget estimates process for a number of matters to be responded to in the sense of having been taken on notice or, alternatively, because members have lodged supplementary questions. As a result, we then receive responses from the government.

Consideration of report postponed, pursuant to standing orders.

Progress reported and leave granted to sit again, pursuant to standing orders.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES

Seventieth Report — Standing order 5 — Days and Times of Meeting — Motion

Resumed from 15 August on the following motion moved by Hon Martin Aldridge —

That recommendation 1 contained in the seventieth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, titled *Standing order 5 — Days and times of meeting*, be agreed to.

HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan) [4.09 pm]: At the outset, I foreshadow an amendment. Before I move it, I perhaps might ask staff to circulate it for the benefit of members. It has only just been prepared at short notice. In doing so, I indicate that as it presently stands, the motion before us is that recommendation 1 from the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges be supported. In short, if it is to be moved without amendment, I will not support it. I explain why to members. The effect of the motion before us is to bring forward sitting hours on a Tuesday so that we start at one o'clock instead of two o'clock. Frankly, I do not care. The outcome of that is

that we would then essentially finish at 9.25 pm on a Tuesday, instead of 10.25 pm. Again, I frankly do not care. If that is the will of members—I think it is—I am entirely relaxed about that. I raised my issue at the time of the referral. I ask members to give serious consideration to the amendment, and I ask the government to consider it; it may need time. I respect the fact that there has been no opportunity to consider this amendment. Maybe caucus meetings and the like need to be held for different parties and all the rest of it. If in order to achieve this, we need to defer consideration and briefly bring it on tomorrow, I am, of course, also relaxed about doing so.

At the end of the day, for those members who have primary carriage of substantial legislation, the notion that we would start at one o'clock on a Tuesday and continue until 4.30 pm without adjournment, recess or change in proceedings is obviously, as we look at the schedule before us, unprecedented. It happens at no other point of the week. The maximum period is two and a half hours. At the moment, that happens on a Tuesday and a Thursday.

The extra hour to make it three and a half hours is not only unprecedented in this chamber, but those of us who have served in the legal profession know that courts do not operate on that basis either. When resuming from lunch or an interval in the court at 2.00 pm, the court adjourns at 4.15 pm. It may seem like a trivial matter, but I put it to members who have not experienced two and a half hours of either continuous questioning, either as the deliverer or responder to the questions, or to sit in full attention to debate in the house, whether it be second reading or otherwise, that to add an extra hour, to put it at its most charitable, is not desirable.

In my view, the solution to this, which I will put for the Leader of the House's consideration, is to simply move consideration of committee reports from a Wednesday to a Tuesday, and for it to happen one hour prior to the taking of questions without notice. It will have absolutely zero impact on any other proceedings of the day. Whoever is in government will not be impinged upon regarding the quantity of time for orders of the day. I might even put to the government that the additional hour allowed for may even make Wednesdays a more productive and fruitful time.

I put this forward in good faith. I acknowledge that members have not had an opportunity to hold caucus or discuss this. It is something that I thought of today, but I put it forward in good faith in the hope that we can achieve the end, which seems to be that members would genuinely like to start and finish an hour earlier on a Tuesday. Also, it would not put undue pressure on those with primary carriage of bills, particularly on Tuesdays, that would otherwise see a three-and-a-half-hour period without cessation.

Amendment to Motion

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I was just stretching my legs for a moment. Before I resume my seat, I move the amendment that I have foreshadowed and circulated to members in advance. I move —

To amend recommendation 1 as follows —

After “Tuesday 9.25pm” — To insert —

(3) That standing order 15 be amended as follows —

To delete 15(3) and insert —

(3) **Consideration of Committee Reports**

Consideration of Committee Reports shall be taken at 3.30 pm each Tuesday for a period of 60 minutes.

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [4.15 pm]: The government will not be supporting the amendment. The motivation we have been given regarding the reason the honourable member is seeking to move the amendment is the same argument that he gave the house at the time that I moved the referral motion. I take members back to *Hansard* of 21 June. In his comments at that time, Hon Nick Goiran drew members' attention to what he described as the material impact on those members who have primary carriage of bills. He essentially articulated the same argument that he has put just now. That is on the record.

The committee considered it at paragraphs 4.10 to 4.12 of the report. Under the heading “Members having carriage of bills”, the committee stated —

4.11 The PPC observes that from time to time ministers or parliamentary secretaries spend extensive periods of time at the Table while in charge of a Bill; often with little to no breaks or relief. On occasion, these members may require a few minutes to reacquaint themselves with the next item of business.

4.12 Without being overly prescriptive, however, the PPC is satisfied that the Council is capable of continuing to manage its business with the existing practice and mechanisms available to it, and without undue impact on members having carriage of Bills.

The honourable member put forward his case when we moved the referral. It was considered by the committee, which reached the conclusion I just read out. In my time in the position of Leader of the House, when there are proposals to change standing orders, even those as simple as the one we are now considering, the practice of the government has been to refer it to the PPC and ask it to look at it. Sometimes there may well be unintended consequences or flow-ons. I am quite surprised to see an amendment from a member who takes great pride and interest in following

due process; nevertheless, that is the member's choice to make. I will not be referring this to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges or seeking to defer the consideration of this matter. It may well be something that we consider doing at some point in the future; I am not ruling it out or making a judgement on its merit or otherwise.

I say two things. The PPC considered the specific point of the motivation for this change, not the actual change before us. It considered the motivation and arguments that the member has relied upon and set out its views in the report. The second point is that as a matter of process, I think it is appropriate that changes to standing orders go through the PPC; that is its purpose. I will not rule out considering a referral of this kind at some point in the future. Maybe that is something we want to think about. However, the purpose of the referral on 21 June was to change the start and finish times on a Tuesday by one hour, as was the view of people in the conversations that we had behind the chair. Over many months, I kept saying to members, "Can you tell me your party's position?" The response was that there were no issues going forward. People made a few comments, and the committee considered those comments and made the recommendation that is before us on the notice paper today. The government will not be supporting the amendment, but it supports the recommendation of the PPC.

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [4.19 pm]: I will keep my remarks brief. As a member of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, I am well aware of the cogitations of the committee. I stand by the report that was tabled, but I make the observation that even recommendations from a committee as august as the PPC are not completely infallible and incapable of being potentially further refined and improved. The amendment put by Hon Nick Goiran, in my independent judgement, makes eminent, good sense. There would be absolutely no loss to the chamber's processes and no encumbrance foisted on government. In fact, it would provide an elegant solution to what I would call the disaster that is the programming on a Wednesday afternoon, when we chop and change between different pieces of business and I do not think members necessarily maintain the most perfect or elegant continuity in focus. I think it is absolutely uncontroversial. I think it is sensible. Sometimes we need to admit that sensible ideas have their place even in this chamber. Without making any reflection on the quality of the report, which I stand by, I think it could be further refined and this might be the way to do it. I will be voting for the amendment.

HON MARTIN ALDRIDGE (Agricultural) [4.21 pm]: I have listened to the mover of the amendment and also the government response to the motion to amend the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. I want to draw members' attention to part 3 of the report, which refers to the approach taken by the PPC, because I think it provides important context. Paragraph 3.3 says —

The PPC notes that the referral was progressed on the basis of agreement and support amongst party leaders, therefore further consultation with members was not advanced by the PPC.

Paragraph 3.4 says —

Instead, the PPC has focused its consideration on the agreement reached by the party leaders, whether there are any adverse consequences to the business of the Council, and a recommendation to give effect to the leaders' agreement.

I think it is fair to say that the referral motion, which is recorded at paragraph 1.1 of the report, identifies the very narrow focus of the referral; that is, the PPC was to look at starting and finishing one hour earlier on Tuesdays. Paragraphs 4.10 to 4.12 of the report ventilate some of the concerns that were expressed during the referral debate, potential solutions and how the house has historically managed some of those concerns. I agree with the comments of Hon Tjorn Sibma that this would make Wednesdays more meaningful to the government. At the moment, I believe the government has about one hour and 35 minutes for orders of the day on a Wednesday. This would give it two hours and 35 minutes, so it would be a more meaningful period, particularly when senior public servants are brought into the chamber to advise on very technical bills. It would make the ability to transact that business more meaningful on a Wednesday, but also alleviate any potential concern with the three-and-a-half-hour block.

Some members will say that we would be shifting from only two and a half hours on Tuesdays to three and a half hours on Tuesdays. When we discussed the referral motion in June, I expressed my views on the impact that that would have on not just ministers of the Crown and parliamentary secretaries in charge of a bill, but also members of the opposition and non-government parties, who may be the only people invested in the passage of a bill, because they are committed to the chamber for that time—not to mention, as is often the case, the public servants at the table who advise the ministers and parliamentary secretaries. The concern that I ventilated in June was the potential impact that this could have on question time. Members can see that paragraph 4.11 says —

On occasion, these members may require a few minutes to reacquaint themselves with the next item of business.

I think this solution could address any potential concerns that might arise with the operation on Tuesdays and this three-and-a-half-hour block. It would keep us at a maximum of two and a half hours on Tuesdays. It would not diminish the time for the government's orders of the day by one minute. I think this would make the time for the government's orders of the day more productive for the government. In light of the process by which the narrow referral has been managed and brought to the house via recommendation 1, which I have moved, members should give this careful consideration. I think it would only improve the recommendation of the PPC.

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [4.25 pm]: I rise briefly to support the amendment. I think it is very sensible. I am doubtful that it will be successful in achieving majority support in this house. In much the same way as daylight saving involves a small amendment of one hour, I think the original motion is quite digestible in that it provides for a change of only one hour. It is probably borne out of an element of selfishness that I say that by eight o'clock on a Tuesday night, I feel my willpower waning quite a lot. From a personal perspective as a member of this place, a change of two hours would be much more acceptable. I understand that we are probably going to be dealing with one hour, but I just want to put on the record that two hours would be a meaningful change and would make it a much more family-friendly time and allow the majority of us to get a good night's sleep and wake up refreshed and ready for another day in this place.

HON DR BRAD PETTITT (South Metropolitan) [4.26 pm]: Very quickly, I want to add my comments, noting that I support both the original motion and the amendment. That said, I appreciate that the government will not support the amendment, but I will say that I think this is something that is worth considering. The arguments for how it would divide up our time are quite sensible. Although the amendment will not get up, it is certainly something that I would support going forward in further refining what we do in this place. I think it is a sensible amendment and would work well. On that basis, I will be supporting it.

Division

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (12)

Hon Martin Aldridge	Hon James Hayward	Hon Dr Brad Pettitt	Hon Wilson Tucker
Hon Ben Dawkins	Hon Steve Martin	Hon Tjorn Sibma	Hon Dr Brian Walker
Hon Nick Goiran	Hon Sophia Moermond	Hon Neil Thomson	Hon Colin de Grussa (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (18)

Hon Dan Caddy	Hon Lorna Harper	Hon Martin Pritchard	Hon Darren West
Hon Sandra Carr	Hon Jackie Jarvis	Hon Samantha Rowe	Hon Pierre Yang
Hon Peter Collier	Hon Kyle McGinn	Hon Rosie Sahanna	Hon Peter Foster (<i>Teller</i>)
Hon Stephen Dawson	Hon Shelley Payne	Hon Matthew Swinbourn	
Hon Sue Ellery	Hon Stephen Pratt	Hon Dr Sally Talbot	

Pairs

Hon Donna Faragher	Hon Kate Doust
Hon Dr Steve Thomas	Hon Klara Andric

Amendment thus negatived.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3842.]

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

SYNERGY — OUTAGE — COLLIE

855. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Energy:

I refer to my question without notice 746 of 22 June 2023 on the utilisation of diesel generators on the south west interconnected system relating to lack of reserve.

- (1) For the period 14 June 2023 to 15 August 2023 inclusive, how many times have diesel generators been fired up for power supply generation and continuity to the south west interconnected system?
- (2) On what dates and what time frames and in what locations were the diesel generators utilised?
- (3) For the period 14 June 2023 to 15 August 2023 inclusive, what generation capacity directives/dispatch advisories has the Australian Energy Market Operator issued in relation to the south west interconnected system?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Energy.

- (1) The following information has been extracted from the Australian Energy Market Operator's website. There have been 27 instances when diesel generation facilities have generated electricity between 14 June and 15 August 2023, noting that data was not available for the full day of 15 August but that no diesel generation facilities have operated in the month of August.

- (2) I have a table that indicates the facility name and location and generation in megawatt hours. I seek leave to have the table incorporated into *Hansard*.

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

Date	TESLA GERALDTON G1	TESLA KEMERTON G1	TESLA NORTHAM G1	TESLA PICTON G1	WEST KALGOORLIE GT2	NAMKKN MERR SG1 (Merredin)
16-Jun					1.927	4.009
19-Jun	24.669	27.534	29.23			237.204
20-Jun					5.725	
21-Jun	3.391	1.051	2.706	3.563		33.894
26-Jun	8.46	6.791	11.137	11.169		4.675
27-Jun	20.411	20.577	20.572	22.84		150.757
28-Jun						2.814
02-Jul						10.46
19-Jul					4.16	

Time frames can be provided, if the member puts that part of the question on notice.

- (3) Three dispatch advisories that relate to lack of reserve have been sent to market participants by the Australian Energy Market Operator between 14 June and 15 August 2023.

GREENBUSHES–BUNBURY RAIL LINE — FEASIBILITY STUDY

856. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the parliamentary secretary to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to my question without notice 748 of 8 August 2023 referencing the study into recommissioning the Greenbushes to Bunbury railway line.

- (1) What confirmed or fixed time frame has been established for the delivery of the study into the viability of recommissioning the Greenbushes to Bunbury rail line?
- (2) Will the commissioned study be a publicly available document or will the matched funding of Talison Lithium Pty Ltd to the state of \$3.3 million each preclude its release?
- (3) What funding allocation of the \$6.6 million study has been allocated to community impact and assessment and consultation on the proposed recommissioning of the line?
- (4) When will community consultation commence and in what structure and format?

Hon KYLE McGINN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Regional Development.

- (1) The feasibility study is expected to take 12 months to complete.
- (2) The feasibility study will contain commercially sensitive information that will preclude the document from public release.
- (3) The state's funding commitment will focus on community consultation, intermodal facilities and road safety requirements.
- (4) The community consultation has already commenced and will be delivered in multiple forums, including direct meetings with local government, community drop-in sessions, plus a newsletter and a telephone hotline and email. Drop-in sessions have already been held in Greenbushes and Balingup.

SOUTH COAST MARINE PARK

857. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the proposed south coast marine park.

- (1) Has the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions taken into consideration the locations of prospective facilities related to the export of hydrogen and other green energy products within the proposed marine park boundary?
- (2) When will the indicative management plan be released for public comment?
- (3) Given the delay in the public comment process, has the government revised the proposed release of the final management plan for the proposed marine park in February 2024?
- (4) If yes to (3), what is the revised date?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Environment, I provide the following answer.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Plans are expected to be released for public comment in the fourth quarter of 2023.
- (3)–(4) The release of the four final management plans will follow the amendments that result from the minimum three-month public comment period. It is likely that the final management plans will be released and the marine park gazetted in the first half of 2024.

JURY TRIAL COURTROOMS — FEASIBILITY STUDY

858. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:

I thank the Attorney General for his answer to my question yesterday concerning the progress, such as it is, of the feasibility study conducted by the Department of Justice concerning measures to overcome the growing and unmet demand for criminal trial courtrooms.

- (1) With respect, how is this work so complex as to take two years and counting without any tangible resolution in sight to address what is agreed to be an acute problem—indeed, a problem that was initially categorised by the Law Society of Western Australia in the 2021 calendar year as “a crisis”?
- (2) Has the Attorney set any expectations as to the date by which the finalisation of this feasibility study should be accomplished; and, if so, what is the date?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Attorney General.

- (1)–(2) Further to advice to the member during the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations hearing on 26 June 2023, the complexity of this work includes the operational requirements across numerous sites in the Perth central business district and how these facilities are currently used. Any potential solution put to cabinet needs to fully consider the movement of judiciary and all other participants in the criminal jury trial process. Of particular importance is the movement of persons in custody. The department is working to resolve this significant issue as a priority and continues to liaise with stakeholders.

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT HEALTH SERVICE — MIDLAND

859. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the proposed Child and Adolescent Health Service Midland community health hub.

- (1) Can the minister confirm whether any community child health centres will be consolidated into the new Midland hub?
- (2) If yes to (1), how many sites are being considered as part of this consolidation?
- (3) If yes to (1), which sites are being considered for closure?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1)–(3) The Child and Adolescent Health Service continues to consult on what delivery of these services will look like and how they can best service the community.

PRISONS — STAFFING LEVELS

860. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the numbers for custodial full-time equivalents for all Western Australian prisons provided at the budget estimates hearing on Monday, 26 June 2023 and to the numbers provided in response to question without notice 847 asked on Tuesday, 15 August. Why do the numbers between those provided at the budget estimate hearing and question without notice 847 not correlate considering they were a response to the same question?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

The Department of Justice advises that the total numbers provided in the response to question without notice 847 do correlate with the total numbers based on the following paper provided for the response on Tuesday, 15 August 2023. It should be noted that staffing level agreements refer to the total prison officer numbers, which includes custodial and vocational support officers.

The remainder of the answer is in tabular form. I seek leave to have that incorporated into *Hansard*.

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

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS 2023–2024 BUDGET ESTIMATES ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PRIOR TO HEARING

Hon Peter Collier MLC asked:

Answer:

- (a) The allocated staff FTE (per category) for each state operated prison in:
 - (iv) 31 May 2023
-

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL

861. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the minister representing Minister for Transport:

I refer to the business case and project definition plan for the women and newborn service relocation project and note that on page 63 it states that a number of clinical efficiencies can be achieved through integration and co-located services including effective use of specialists' clinical time by eliminating travel time between sites and a significant reduction in the resources required to support hospital transfers for unwell women and newborns through closer proximity.

Has the minister been asked to provide any formal advice on travel times between the Fiona Stanley Hospital precinct and the Perth Children's Hospital?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

Questions about this business case should be directed to the Minister for Health.

CORONAVIRUS — V-CHEK COVID-19 ANTIGEN SALIVA TEST

862. Hon JAMES HAYWARD to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the 2.9 million expired V-Chek rapid antigen test kits.

- (1) Can the minister confirm Health Support Services has 2.9 million expired V-Chek RAT kits in its possession?
- (2) Can the minister advise how these expired RAT kits will be disposed of, specifically if they are able to be recycled or if they will be going to landfill?
- (3) Is the minister confident that remaining brands of RAT kits that have not expired to date will be used before they expire?
- (4) Can the minister confirm the WA Labor government was overconfident in relation to V-Chek RAT kits and their utilisation before their expiry date?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I note that part (4) of the question asks for an opinion. Nevertheless, the minister has provided an answer.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Health Support Services is currently finalising a disposal strategy for expired RAT kits.
- (3) The WA government continues to execute strategies to distribute remaining stock before expiry. No stock leaves Health Support Services warehouses with less than eight weeks before their expiry date.
- (4) No.

PLANNING — DEVELOPMENT CONDITIONS

863. Hon BEN DAWKINS to the minister representing the Minister for Planning:

- (1) What is the process for enforcing developer obligations under guided development schemes and town planning schemes?
- (2) Who is responsible for enforcing developer obligations under guided development schemes and town planning schemes?
- (3) What is the time frame in which a person responsible is required to enforce developer obligations under guided development schemes and town planning schemes?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The following response has been provided by the Minister for Planning.

- (1)–(3) The process and responsibilities relating to a guided development scheme and local planning scheme will depend on the specific scheme. Approval granted to a planning proposal under a guided development scheme or local planning scheme does not amount to an obligation to undertake the proposal. As the member was advised in Legislative Council question without notice 808 asked on 10 August 2023, compliance with any conditions applied to a development approval rest with the respective decision-maker or responsible authority.

EXTINCTION REBELLION

864. Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to Extinction Rebellion and the 5 August 2021 incident when six members of the group sprayed chalk at a footbridge in the CBD.

- (1) Is Extinction Rebellion classified as a gang or organised criminal entity?
 (2) If yes to (1), what was the decision to classify it as such based on?
 (3) What was the total cost to the Western Australia Police Force for the investigation, arrest, charging and prosecution of those involved in the incident, if available?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

The Western Australia Police Force advises the following.

- (1) No. It is classified by police as an issue motivated group.
 (2) Not applicable.
 (3) A response to this question cannot be provided within the required time frame. It is requested that the honourable member place this question on notice.

RESIDENTIAL TENANCIES — NO-FAULT EVICTIONS

865. Hon WILSON TUCKER to the Minister for Commerce:

I note the minister's response to my question asked yesterday about the Cook government's position not to remove no-grounds terminations in tenancy agreements because it may be a disincentive to investment in the housing market and the tabled report that mentions —

Reforms designed to aid tenants might have the opposite effect if supply were to contract even further.

And that —

A thorough assessment of the reforms that would deliver a private rental system equitable for both tenants and landlords is required.

- (1) Given the report does not definitively support the government's claim, does the Cook government have any further evidence or basis for its position?
 (2) Has the government undertaken a thorough assessment to support its position, as the report suggests?
 (3) If any reports or further evidence exist, would the minister please table them.

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1)–(3) As per my comments in response to the member's question asked yesterday, consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders representing both tenants and landlords about the impacts that the proposed reforms may have on the rental sector. During consultation, a number of key stakeholders expressed the concern that removing no-grounds evictions may result in potential investors deciding not to invest in the rental market. In addressing the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government decided to act cautiously so that investors could continue to feel confident purchasing and managing their investment properties.

Given the outcomes of the national cabinet meeting today, we will continue to work with our state and territory counterparts and WA stakeholders on the matter of no-grounds evictions.

HEMP OIL — OBESITY

866. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer the Minister to a recent paper entitled *Foodomics reveals anti-obesity properties of cannabinoids from hemp oil*, published in the journal *Molecular Nutrition and Food Research*.

- (1) What portion of the WA population is considered to be medically obese? Has that figure grown over the last decade; and, if it has, to what degree?
- (2) Does the Department of Health recognise a socioeconomic correlation between families on a low income and instances of obesity?
- (3) What is the Cook government doing to tackle obesity and its related complications? Do those measures include consideration of a compassionate-access scheme for those unable to afford medicinal cannabis at current market prices; and, if not, why not?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) The prevalence of obesity in the Western Australian adult population has increased from 26.6 per cent in 2010 to 33.6 per cent in 2020.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) A range of measures are currently in place across the WA health system to prevent and treat obesity. Measures do not include consideration of a compassionate-access scheme in relation to medicinal cannabis. Mechanisms are already in place within WA Health that permit access to high-cost, unfunded medicines in exceptional circumstances. Government funding of individual independent or privately-operated compassionate-access programs for medicines is not supported.

There is a footnote to that answer: Epidemiology Directorate, 2021, *Health and wellbeing of adults in Western Australia 2020*, Department of Health, Western Australia.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS — REGISTRATION

867. Hon SOPHIA MOERMOND to the Minister for Commerce:

I refer to the statement on the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety website that the Western Australian government is introducing a statewide registration scheme in response to the 2019 parliamentary inquiry's report *Levelling the playing field: Managing the impact of the rapid increase of short-term rentals in Western Australia*.

- (1) What progress has been made on the establishment of the registration system?
- (2) Is the registration system on track to be introduced and operational in 2024 as is stated on the above-mentioned webpage?
- (3) What other measures, if any, have been taken at the state level to respond to the recommendations of the inquiry?
- (4) What other measures, if any, have been taken to contain or restrict short-term rentals in the interests of increasing the availability of long-term rental accommodation?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) Drafting of a bill to establish the registration scheme has commenced and is expected to be introduced into Parliament by the end of 2023.
- (2) Yes.
- (3)–(4) A public education campaign on short-term rental accommodation was implemented in the second half of 2020 by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety in conjunction with the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia and in collaboration with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. An interdepartmental working group was established in 2020 to collaborate on whole-of-government policy responses to short-term rental accommodation. The interdepartmental working group has undertaken consultation with government and non-government entities as part of its work.

PETRA WESTKEY — WORKERS ACCOMMODATION, KALBARRI

868. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the minister representing the Minister for Lands:

I refer to reports in the *Midwest Times* today that the state government's preferred proponent to develop workers accommodation in Kalbarri has ceased operations and comments from a state government spokesperson that state — ... no financial or contractual agreement has been entered into between Petra Westkey and DPLH ...

- (1) Noting that Petra Westkey was chosen as the preferred proponent 12 months ago, why were contract negotiations never finalised?

- (2) Is the minister aware that Petra Westkey is no longer operating in Western Australia; and, if so, when did he first become aware?
- (3) Has Petra Westkey advised the state government that it is no longer able to proceed with the project; and, if so, when was the government advised?
- (4) Given the preferred proponent is no longer able to construct and operate workers' accommodation in Kalbarri, when does the government intend to deliver on this election commitment?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following response is provided by the Minister for Lands.

- (1) This project is a private development with the state government providing land. Petra Westkey has been considering commercial terms for the project.
- (2) The advice from the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage is that Petra Westkey has not ceased its operation in Western Australia.
- (3) No.
- (4) The state government's commitment was to make suitable land available, and this commitment was delivered.

MORTALITY RATE

869. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the Australian Bureau of Statistics provisional mortality statistics that states —

There were 190,775 deaths which occurred in 2022. This is significantly higher than usual and is not considered to be a typical year for mortality in Australia.

- (1) Has the minister received a briefing on any spike in death rates in WA?
- (2) If yes to (1), when did this briefing occur?
- (3) Will the minister table any briefing notes or similar documents prepared by the department in relation to increased death rates in 2022?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No.

HOUSING DIVERSITY PIPELINE

870. Hon STEVE MARTIN to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the housing diversity pipeline and note that the state government has shortlisted offers on six sites.

- (1) How many applications were received for each site?
- (2) For each of the six sites, what is the number of social housing dwellings expected to be delivered?
- (3) For each of the six sites, when are the dwellings expected to be built?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following response has been provided by the Minister for Housing.

- (1)–(3) The housing diversity pipeline is still in a competitive procurement process. Final allocations of social housing are dependent on the overall site yield and include a minimum of 20 per cent social housing dwellings. The state government received 41 expressions of interest across the six sites. Following further due diligence, 12 proposals progressed to the next stage.

FOREST PRODUCTS COMMISSION — SOFTWOOD PLANTATION ESTATE

871. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to the government's commitment to invest \$350 million over 10 years to grow the softwood plantation estate. As at 16 August 2023 —

- (1) how many properties or parcels of land has the Forest Products Commission purchased, and what is the size of each parcel of land purchased;
- (2) how many new plantation management or farm forestry agreements has the Forest Products Commission entered into;

- (3) how many seedlings have been planted on land not previously owned or managed by the Forest Products Commission for plantations or farm forestry; and
- (4) how much of the \$350 million has been expended?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. Following years of inaction and lack of investment under the previous Liberal–National government, the Cook Labor government is acting and investing in the future of the state’s softwood estate. As at 16 August 2023 —

- (1) the Forest Products Commission has either acquired or is awaiting settlement on 4 263 hectares of land;
- (2) since January 2021, the FPC has established 10 profit a prendre, or sharefarming agreements;
- (3) 530 000 additional seedlings were planted in 2022 and a further 1.3 million additional seedlings have been established thus far in 2023; and
- (4) \$38 million of the \$350 million has been drawn down. This does not include costs associated with the 2023 plantation establishment or land that is awaiting settlement.

BANDY CREEK BOAT HARBOUR

872. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the Leader of the House representing the Minister assisting the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Bandy Creek boat harbour located in Esperance.

- (1) How many commercial pens are currently vacant and available for long-term lease at the boat harbour?
- (2) Are the current commercial pens wheelchair accessible?
- (3) Are commercial boat lifting facilities currently in operation at the boat harbour?
- (4) If no to (3), where are the closest available boat-lifting facilities for commercial vessels based in Esperance?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) There are five.
- (2) No; however, there are two universal access pontoons located in the centre of town.
- (3) No, the service is no longer in operation by the private company that leases the site. The Department of Transport is investigating options to ensure services are made available to commercial vessels based in Esperance.
- (4) In Emu Point, Albany.

RESOURCES COMMUNITY INVESTMENT INITIATIVE

873. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

This is a question from yesterday. I refer to the resources community investment initiative.

- (1) When was the RCII advisory committee established?
- (2) What is the membership of the advisory committee?
- (3) How many times has the advisory committee met and on what dates?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) The resources community investment initiative advisory committee was established by cabinet in early 2023.
- (2) The membership of the RCII advisory committee is Mr Reg Howard-Smith, independent chair; Ms Rebecca Tomkinson, CEO, Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia; Ms Emily Roper, director general, Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Mr Michael Barnes, Under Treasurer, Department of Treasury; and Ms Jodi Cant, director general, Department of Finance.
- (3) The RCII advisory committee has met twice, on 28 March 2023 and 20 June 2023.

COMMUNITY CHILD HEALTH NURSES

874. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to community child health nurses. How many positions are currently vacant for community child health nurses by FTE in —

- (a) the Child and Adolescent Health Service; and
- (b) the WA Country Health Service?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member. If I had remembered, I would have told the honourable member this before we commenced. An answer will be provided on the next sitting day.

BROOME REGIONAL PRISON — REPORT

875. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the 149th report by the Inspector of Custodial Services, on Broome Regional Prison.

- (1) What education services currently exist at the prison?
- (2) What rehabilitation programs exist at the prison?
- (3) What are the “quite significant recruitment activities” the department is undertaking to fill prison officer positions?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I think there was an error in the answer and I am seeking an update. If it is provided by the end of question time I will provide it today, if not tomorrow.

WILDLIFE REHABILITATION — LICENCE CONDITIONS

876. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the reported impact of red tape on licence conditions for small volunteer based native animal rehabilitation groups such as Fostering and Assistance for Wildlife Needing Aid and Native Animal Rescue.

- (1) Does the minister support the work of volunteer native animal rescue groups such as FAWNA and NAR?
- (2) Will the minister commit to assisting volunteer groups as they grapple with increasingly difficult licence conditions, which are reported to be putting the welfare of native animals at risk?
- (3) Will the minister provide support to ensure these vital volunteer organisations are respected, valued and supported into the future?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Environment I provide the following answer.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The implementation of regulation 35, fauna possessing (other purposes) licences, to rehabilitate fauna for release to the wild was a step the rehabilitation community requested the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions implement to raise standards, accountability and consistency across the sector. In implementing this licence, the DBCA has engaged extensively with the rehabilitation community and the groups mentioned contributed to the *Code of practice for wildlife rehabilitation in Western Australia* that forms the primary basis of the conditions of this licence. Notifications and recording of fauna rehabilitation information are some of the key conditions that will allow licensees to demonstrate the work they do and illustrate their important contribution to supporting sick, injured and abandoned fauna. This approach is consistent with other jurisdictions across the country.
- (3) The DBCA engages with regulation 35 licensees in good faith and with respect for the important work they do. The DBCA waives the fees associated with the licence in recognition of the importance of their activity. There are several state government grant opportunities available to wildlife rehabilitators, including the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Developments’ animal welfare grant program, state natural resource management community stewardship grants and Lotterywest.

MORTALITY RATE

877. Hon JAMES HAYWARD to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the answer provided to the number of deaths in Western Australia.

- (1) Is the minister now able to advise why there was a significant spike in the number of deaths in WA in 2022 compared with 2020?
- (2) Has a nationally consistent reporting approach been agreed to explain these excess deaths?
- (3) If no to (2), why not?
- (4) Can the minister rule out that the government’s COVID policy contributed to the increase in the number of deaths?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

Astonishing—absolutely astonishing.

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) WA's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic delivered some of the best economic, health and social outcomes of any jurisdiction—any jurisdiction, in case the member missed that. WA was nearly COVID-zero during the first two years of the pandemic and our COVID-19 fatality rate was the lowest of all the states and territories.

Follow the science, honourable member—the science.

MAIN ROADS AMENDMENT BILL 2023

878. Hon BEN DAWKINS to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer the minister to the Main Roads Amendment Bill 2023.

- (1) Will interests over a highway or main road granted by the commissioner be registered under the Transfer of Land Act?
- (2) Will the commissioner subdivide that part of a highway or main road over which they grant an interest prior to granting that interest?
- (3) Will the person being granted an interest by the commissioner have indefeasible title to that interest?
- (4) Is the Main Roads bill another example of bureaucrats using the government's control of both houses as an opportunity for a power grab?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

- (1) The legislation under which any interest is registered is subject to the tenure of the specific land.
- (2) This would be a case-by-case consideration depending on the nature of the interest being granted.
- (3)–(4) No.

COMMUNITIES — SERVICE DELIVERY HOUSING

879. Hon Dr BRAD PETTITT to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the Department of Communities tender for a review of service delivery housing, which closed on September 2022.

- (1) Has the review started?
- (2) Has the review finished —
 - (a) if yes, will the minister please table the report; and
 - (b) if no, will the minister please table any interim reports or issues papers and advise when the review will be completed?
- (3) Will the review consult with stakeholders outside of the Department of Communities; and, if yes, when and how will this consultation occur?

Hon JACKIE JARVIS replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following response has been provided by the Minister for Housing.

- (1)–(3) The Department of Communities has commenced the review of service delivery housing. The department will consult with external stakeholders when it is appropriate.

FISHERIES — NUTRITION

880. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer the minister to my previous comments in the chamber on hemp as a food for our fish stocks and to an earlier study undertaken in 2017 that showed that fish fed on cannabis oil, including THC, had noticeably lower stress levels and improved feed conversion.

- (1) What is fish husbandry worth annually to the WA economy?
- (2) Has DPIRD undertaken or encouraged any research into hemp or cannabis as a feed stock for locally farmed fish; and, if not, why not?

- (3) Will the minister, with his joint portfolios of Regional Development and Fisheries, encourage such research and innovation going forward?

Hon KYLE McGINN replied:

I thank the member for the great question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Fisheries.

- (1) The value of finfish aquaculture in Western Australia in 2021–22 was approximately \$17 million.
- (2) No. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has undertaken, and continues to undertake, significant research into fish nutrition in collaboration with industry and university partners. The current focus is on non-terrestrial protein sources to improve sustainability, which is a key industry priority.
- (3) DPIRD will continue to undertake world-leading research into fish nutrition in line with priorities identified by industry.

POLICE — FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Question without Notice 833 — Answer

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Emergency Services) [5.03 pm]: I have an answer to question without notice 833 asked yesterday by Hon Peter Collier.

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

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

Answer

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

Western Australia Police Force advise:

Incidents attended by the WA Police Force are recorded in the police dispatch system. Incident reports including offender outcomes such as arrests, are recorded in the police incident management system (IMS).

Police dispatch tasks cannot be linked with incident reports in IMS via an automated process, therefore the number of incidents attended to and the number of arrests should not be compared or combined.

Arrest outcome data extracted from the Incident Management System on 15 August 2023	
Year	Number of arrest outcomes for family violence incidents in Western Australia as recorded in the Incident Management System (IMS).
*2021–22	14,624
*2022–23	18,414
<p>*Note:</p> <p>(1) From 01 July 2017 a family relationship is defined by the WA Police Force for the purpose of recording incidents as immediate family, and involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Partner ex-partner; (b) Parents; (c) Guardians of children; (d) Children who reside, or regularly stay with involved parties. <p>(2) Figures in the table are the number of arrest outcomes associated with incidents recorded in IMS where a family relationship was identified between the parties and an offender was processed with an outcome of 'arrest' between 01 July 2021 and 30 June 2023.</p>	

VIOLENT SEX OFFENDERS — PAROLE

Question without Notice 842 — Answer

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Emergency Services) [5.04 pm]: I have an answer to question without notice 842 asked by Hon Nick Goiran. It is a comprehensive answer with a lot of detail attached. Normally, I would ask that the question be placed on notice given the level of detail required. However, I will be nice to the honourable member and provide an answer today.

Western Australia Police Force advises —

- (1)–(3) The total number of return to prison warrants currently outstanding with the rapid apprehension squad is 58 as at 16 August 2023. On receipt of those warrants, the WA Police Force assesses investigative opportunities, which includes seeking information from the public. This assessment is on a case-by-case basis. I will table the attached document, which contains multiple pages.

[See paper [2444](#).]

BROOME REGIONAL PRISON — REPORT*Question without Notice 875 — Answer*

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Emergency Services) [5.04 pm]: I now have an answer to Hon Peter Collier's question without notice 875. It is quite a long answer. If it is okay with Hon Peter Collier, I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

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

Answer

I thank the Honourable Member for some notice of this question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Corrective Services.

- (1)–(2) The Department of Justice is working to enhance Broome Regional Prison's education, prisoner support and rehabilitation services, which have been impacted by necessary COVID19 restrictions, staffing pressures and ageing infrastructure.

Work is underway to expand current arrangements with local service providers to increase voluntary courses and rehabilitation and support services for prisoners.

An Elder Working Group is also being established to support cultural in-reach at the facility and to ensure associated programs and services have a strong focus on cultural support, education and rehabilitative opportunities.

Funding is allocated in the 2023/24 Budget for infrastructure improvements at Broome Prison, which will assist with the delivery of improved education, rehabilitation and reintegration services.

- (3) The Department of Justice employs a range of measures to attract and retain staff at Broome Prison, noting the very strong WA economy and tight employment market.

The Department has run advertising campaigns for prison officer positions in January/February 2023 and April/May 2023. Planning is underway for a third Prison Officer Campaign in October 2023. Targeted advertising occurs through SEEK and general advertising is run via social media, digital advertising, and radio, including efforts to attract local residents.

In addition to the current GROH housing available to staff, the Department has committed funding for four long-term-lease houses through the Department of Communities, which are currently under construction and scheduled for completion in 2023–24.

PLANNING — GREENPATCH–DALYELLUP — ODOUR MODELLING*Question without Notice 755 — Answer*

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.06 pm]: Last week on 8 August, Hon Ben Dawkins asked question without notice 755, which, in fact, was directed to the Minister for Environment.

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

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

- (1) The Environmental Protection Authority's (EPA) 2011 submission to the WAPC referred to the inclusion of an odour buffer in the Structure Plan and offered advice on the Shire of Capel's Town Planning Scheme 7 Amendment 2 for the Dalyellup Development Zone. The EPA advised the WAPC that the size of the buffer should be justified by appropriate modelling and analysis, and deferred to the former Department of Environment and Conservation to provide further technical advice.

- (2)–(3) There are inherent uncertainties in odour modelling which mean it is informative rather than definitive, and is one tool in a suite of odour assessment considerations that are used to guide separation distances, planning decisions and regulatory responses.

Decisions by planning authorities to include odour buffers and special control areas in the Bunbury Region Scheme do not obviate industry, including the Water Corporation, from their responsibilities under the Environmental Protection Act 1986 to avoid unreasonable emissions, pollution or environmental harm.

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation actively monitors and responds to odour complaints through its Pollution Watch reporting hotline and takes regulatory action when warranted.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES*Seventieth Report — Standing order 5 — Days and times of meeting — Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON MARTIN ALDRIDGE (Agricultural) [5.06 pm]: I want to add a few remarks on the substantive motion, noting that I also spoke on the amendment. Members will note the reference not just in the referral debate, but also captured in the report at paragraph 4.15, which states —

The PPC therefore considers that a slight adjustment to the sitting schedule is a progressive step towards more family friendly hours, and an appropriate means to facilitate the Council concluding its business earlier Tuesday nights with no reduction in the time available to conduct that business.

I made the point in the referral debate—I will make it again—that that may well be more family-friendly hours for some but not necessarily all members, particularly those members who reside in our regions. A member returning to their hotel at 9.30 pm or 10.30 pm will not have a great deal of impact on the friendliness of their family. If Parliament were minded to consider how we might modernise our sitting hours—obviously, I reiterate the fact that we have in this Parliament created an extra hour of time for the government to conduct orders of the day—we

could simply consider reducing the sitting time by another hour on Tuesdays and still maintain the status quo for government time. We could rise closer to dinnertime on a Tuesday evening rather than what we have been able to achieve, which is rising at 9.25 pm instead of 10.25 pm. The other option that is obviously available to us but is outside the scope of referral is a reduction of sitting time on Thursdays. If regional members want to repatriate to be with their families by catching a flight back to regional Western Australia, perhaps starting an hour earlier and finishing an hour earlier on Thursdays could be considered—that is, a nine-to-five day on Thursdays. Certainly, the last option is outside the scope of the referral, but if members were minded to contemplate our sitting hours, these are the sorts of things to consider, along with the proposal advanced by Hon Nick Goiran about reordering the business, which might also help alleviate some of the unintended consequences of a 3.5-hour sitting block.

Now, as a result of a number of standing order changes, the Parliament is collecting a lot of data. I will start to collect some of my own data on the availability of ministers and parliamentary secretaries in question time and their ability to answer questions, particularly questions without notice. Members should be aware that question time is not questions-without-notice-of-which-some-notice-has-been-given time.

Hon Kyle McGinn interjected.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Sorry?

Hon Kyle McGinn: Parliamentary secretaries cannot do question time.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: No, that is true, but that will all be part of my data collecting, Hon Kyle McGinn.

Hon Kyle McGinn: I just thought it interesting that you mentioned parliamentary secretaries.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: If Hon Kyle McGinn would like to assist me, maybe we could share the responsibility of data collecting.

Hon Kyle McGinn: Just do not let the truth get in the way.

Hon Nick Goiran: I remember that Hon Ken Travers asked a question without notice to a parliamentary secretary once.

The PRESIDENT: Order! It is not cross-chamber chatter. It is actually Hon Martin Aldridge's opportunity to make a contribution.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Thank you, President. Hon Kyle McGinn makes a very good point that parliamentary secretaries cannot answer a question without notice because they are here in a representative capacity. Ministers, of which this house has only three, can. I think that number needs to be better, but that is not necessarily a criticism of this government; it is a criticism of governments of both persuasions. We should have more ministers for the Legislative Council to hold to account.

For the availability of ministers for question time and their ability to take questions without notice, I will be collecting data on the availability of members to answer questions and whether there will be any impact on the delivery of answers because a member is detained at the table and prevented from reviewing a question or an answer to a question and is unable to provide an answer on the day the question is asked. If the house will not do that, I will certainly be turning some attention to making sure that we do not see an impact on that 30 minutes or so every day that is a key transparency and accountability mechanism for non-government members.

The other thing to consider is, obviously, a situation like we have at the moment with the workers compensation bill for which we entered committee immediately on Tuesday, if I recall correctly. If we started at one o'clock, had a very short formal business of two or three minutes and went straight into committee, we would effectively have 3.5 hours from one o'clock until question time. The minister would be required, I hope, to be present for all of question time, so that would take it to four hours. Then, there would be another hour after question time before the dinner break. Five hours straight is the potential exposure for a minister who enters Committee of the Whole after formal business on a Tuesday, is required to be here for question time and then must commit to another hour after question time. Just so members are aware, that is what might be experienced with some bills in some weeks.

In its report, the committee pointed out in paragraph 4.12, if Hon Darren West is following along —

Without being overly prescriptive, however, the PPC is satisfied that the Council is capable of continuing to manage its business with the existing practice and mechanisms available to it, and without undue impact on members having carriage of Bills.

There are obviously mechanisms, not necessarily formal mechanisms but perhaps informal mechanisms. I know that there was an informal mechanism when we sat beyond our adjournment time for an unlimited period. If I recall correctly, we sat for two hours, and then we had a break for 10 or 15 minutes. The bells rang, and we came back and sat for another two hours. The other option is, if circumstances arise, that the chair could always be requested to vacate the chair until the ringing of the bells to allow for a short recess of the Legislative Council. These things are not written, but they have been the practice.

Keep in mind that it is not just us, members. Often other people—public servants—are here to serve the Council during the consideration of our business, and they will also be locked at the table, along with the minister or

parliamentary secretary, and they will have very limited opportunity for a break unless we have a recess or change advisers. On that point, it is not always that one adviser can simply be swapped out for another because they may be a senior officer or somebody with a particular level of skill or experience who is required to advise the minister, parliamentary secretary or any member in charge of a bill.

I will continue to observe the impact this may have on Tuesdays, particularly on the period of 30 minutes in which we take questions without notice. I will also continue to make observations about some other opportunities that might be available to the Council if members were minded to genuinely consider the cause of family-friendly hours.

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [5.15 pm]: The government supports the recommendation of the committee.

Question put and passed.

WORKERS COMPENSATION AND INJURY MANAGEMENT BILL 2023

Committee

Resumed from 15 August. The Deputy Chair of Committees (Hon Dr Sally Talbot) in the chair; Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Parliamentary Secretary) in charge of the bill.

Progress was reported after clause 93 had been agreed to.

Clause 94: Workplace rehabilitation fees and charges order —

The DEPUTY CHAIR (Hon Dr Sally Talbot): I draw members' attention to supplementary notice paper 99, issue 3. The question before the chamber is that clause 94 do stand as printed, and I draw members' attention to the fact that clause 94 is subject to amendment 5/94.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Before we get to the amendment in my name on the supplementary notice paper, I want to cover some things that are outstanding from the debate yesterday.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas asked for information relating to the number of working directors who opt to be covered under the workers compensation scheme rather than seek alternative insurance arrangements and the number of workers who receive extensions to the current medical expense cap of 30 per cent of the prescribed amount, which the government will be doubling to 60 per cent.

WorkCover WA does not collect data on the number of working directors who opt to be covered under the workers compensation scheme. This is because the process for opting in is an arrangement between the company and its insurer; however, WorkCover WA does collect data on all claims and can identify claims by working directors from this dataset. WorkCover WA confirms that working directors make, on average, about 170 claims each year, based on the previous five financial years.

It is not possible to quantify the number of extensions to the medical and health expenses cap under the current act because sometimes insurers will approve extensions without a formal application being made in the conciliation and arbitration services. This is particularly so in relation to the first extension.

To assess the potential cost impact of the government's changes to the medical expenses cap, the scheme actuary examined medical and health payment claim data and identified claims that received compensation beyond the current medical expenses cap. Based on that analysis, on average 281 claims a year received funds beyond the medical expenses cap under the first extension. On average, 46 claims a year received funds under the second extension. That represents around 1.4 per cent of total claims over the period. I hope that information is useful to the member.

The DEPUTY CHAIR: Parliamentary secretary, do you wish to move the amendment standing in your name?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I need to move that amendment, yes. I refer to supplementary notice paper 99, issue 3. I move the amendment in my name at 5/94 —

Page 82, lines 18 and 19 — To delete the lines.

For context, again this amendment is required due to the commencement of the Legislation Act 2021 on 1 July 2023, which, amongst other things, provides for publication of certain subsidiary legislation on the Western Australian Legislation website rather than in the *Government Gazette*. Note 1 currently contained under clause 94(7) refers to the publication of the workplace rehabilitation fees and charges order being published in the *Government Gazette*. Parliamentary Counsel's Office advises it is likely that the fee order will be prescribed under the Legislation Regulations 2023 because it is specifically identified as subsidiary legislation. Parliamentary Counsel's Office advises the simplest approach is to delete note 1 to clause 94. That is the explanation for why we are moving this amendment. As I say, it is technical in nature and will not substantially change the legislation. It will have effect only in terms of publishing certain things that were formerly in the *Government Gazette* but are now likely to be published on the website.

Amendment put and passed.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The other night, we started dealing with division 6, “Compensation for workplace rehabilitation expenses”. This is a change the government will implement in applying workplace rehabilitation expenses to employers rather than it being a part of the insurance claim. I am interested in that. Can I confirm that is a change, parliamentary secretary? I am also interested in the average cost. What is the transfer, if that is correct? It was in various submissions, including from an employers group. There was also concern, I think, from the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia. It came up with a figure of \$17 000 for additional costs. I do not know whether that is accurate because I have nothing to compare it with. The parliamentary secretary might be able to give us some more up-to-date numbers.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I think the submission the member is referring to was on an earlier draft of the bill. The provisions we have here now will not change anything of that nature. It will remain the same as it is under the current act.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: So it can be claimed under insurance?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Yes, and it will remain at seven per cent of the maximum weekly compensation limit. That will not change.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 95 and 96 put and passed.

Clause 97: Entitlement to lump sum permanent impairment compensation —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: We are still in part 2 of the bill and there are 15 parts. Once we get through part 2, I think we will make a bit more expeditious progress. We are now at division 7, “Lump sum compensation for permanent impairment from personal injury by accident”. There has been an ongoing issue under the current act about whether a schedule 2 permanent impairment lump sum should be paid for a personal injury by accident only or whether that should include the aggravation of a pre-existing condition. This clause seems to expressly state that compensation can be paid only if the worker suffers a personal injury by accident. It seems that this clause will then result in certain workers being worse off under the new bill. What is the justification for excluding other injuries that are covered by the act, which give rise to permanent impairment?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: The position of the government is that there is nothing in this clause that alters the current entitlements that exist under the act. Going forward, I think we have used language previously about whether there is a contraction of those entitlements. My advice is that, in this clause—I am not trying to use tricky language here—there is nothing that reduces the current entitlement. I suspect the member has more questions that arise from that. We will flush that out a bit more but that is the government’s intention here.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: If we compare this clause, clause 97, with clause 6 earlier in the bill where we have agreed what the definition of “injury” is, the parliamentary secretary will see that the definition comes in two parts. It is either from “a personal injury by accident” or “a disease, or the recurrence, aggravation or acceleration of a pre-existing disease”. Under clause 97, it is plainly the case that one will be able to obtain a lump sum compensation for any permanent impairment suffered for the first of those two limbs or types of injury. Will there be any lump sum compensation available for the second type—that is, “a disease, or the recurrence, aggravation or acceleration of a pre-existing disease”?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: My advice is that no, there is no provision in the bill for a lump sum payment in relation to a disease, or the recurrence, aggravation or acceleration of a pre-existing disease, but I am also advised that that is also the position under the current act. We have not taken away or created a new entitlement.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: The position of the government is that there has never been a lump sum payment under schedule 2 for a permanent impairment for a disease, or the recurrence, aggravation or acceleration of a pre-existing disease?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: My advice is that that is correct.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 98: Amount of permanent impairment compensation based on degree of permanent impairment —

Hon NICK GOIRAN: For the purposes of this round of questions, it really could take place anywhere under division 7. I will use clause 98 as the basis for the questioning, but if the parliamentary secretary prefers me to do it under a different clause in division 7, I would be happy to move there. The questions refer to the way in which one assesses a permanent impairment. What guides are used to assess permanent impairment?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I am advised that WorkCover releases guides for assessing the degree of permanent impairment and that those who undertake the assessments are obliged to use those guides. In terms of what happens on the commencement of this bill, those guides will have to be reissued because they will need to be updated to reflect the terminology in the new act. There is no intention to change the substance of those guides. Only the form will be changed to reflect the change in wording. As I say, no changes will be made to the—for want of a better word—test that the guides create.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is WorkCover that releases these guides. I know that once upon a time, it used to use the fifth edition of the *American Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment*. Is that still the case?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I am advised that the answer is yes, but with modification for our circumstances.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Do those guides also include a guide with regard to back injuries?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Yes, I think “spinal injuries” is the preferred reference rather than back injuries, but the member may want to expand on a different kind of back injury that does not relate to the spine, or be more specific in the terminology, but I think he was referring to spinal injuries.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Can I get the parliamentary secretary to turn to clause 101 that contains a number of tables. In particular, he will note at page 89 of the bill that one of the tables refers to “back, neck and pelvis”. I notice it does not say “spinal”. Nevertheless, I understand the point that the parliamentary secretary made on the advice that he received. Do the guides that have been provided include capacity for an assessment of back injuries? Is there some kind of percentage or threshold that is used with regard to back injuries, like some form of a range?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I do not know that we quite understand the member’s question, but I think I have an inkling of what he might be asking: is there a minimum threshold of impairment for back/spinal injuries that gives rise to compensation? As we understand it, the guide does not provide a minimum amount of impairment, such as a percentage loss of function or something of that kind. There are multifaceted criteria or guides that they have to adhere to and it is a clinical thing. Nobody at the table has clinical qualifications. Obviously we can describe the instrument and what it might contain, but getting down to the clinical-type stuff is probably beyond us.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: In this instrument—that is, the guides that are released by WorkCover based on the American guides—is there, for example, a guide as to how an assessment is done that determines that a person has 13 per cent permanent impairment? I specifically say “13 per cent” for a reason, which will become apparent in due course. Is that included in these WorkCover guides?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Hon Nick Goiran will tell us what the reference to 13 per cent is in due time. I am advised that the guides exist as a means to assist assessors to arrive at the degree of impairment. I am advised that the guides have provisions on a certain degree of impairment—I am going to be careful with the word “impairment” because that relates to the percentage. If a person is impaired in a certain manner, the guide will provide guidance that that is three per cent of total body impairment. There might be multiple factors that lead to a final assessment of 25 per cent of the body because the percentages are aggregated. It is not a threshold to reach to be entitled to compensation; it is a way of getting to the final answer on the degree of impairment.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: After using these guides, a medical practitioner might issue an assessment that a person has a 13 per cent permanent impairment to their back. The parliamentary secretary will see that item 39 in the table on page 89 states —

Impairment of the back (thoracic spine or lumbar spine or both)

It then provides a figure of 75 per cent. In the 13 per cent scenario, will it be the case that the worker will receive 0.75 per cent of 13 per cent of the lump sum?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I do not quite remember the formula that the honourable member put to us, but the formula to work out the amount is included in the bill. A note at clause 101(1) provides an example of how that might play out. The note states —

For permanent impairment of the sight of 1 eye, the Table indicates 50% of the lump sum limit. This is the amount of permanent impairment compensation payable for a degree of permanent impairment of the sight of 1 eye of 100%. For less than 100% permanent impairment (for example, 80%), the amount of permanent impairment compensation is calculated as 80% of 50% (to arrive at 40%) of the lump sum limit.

I will try my best to use Hon Nick Goiran’s example. A spinal injury is 75 per cent of the lump sum. This is the amount of permanent impairment compensation payable for a degree of permanent impairment of the spine of 100 per cent, so it would be 75 per cent of that amount. For less than 100 per cent permanent impairment—for example, 13 per cent—the amount of permanent impairment compensation is calculated as 13 per cent of 75 per cent, to arrive at 9.75 per cent. Obviously, it would be 9.75 per cent of the lump sum amount. I hope that we are in agreement.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: We are in furious agreement. I thank the parliamentary secretary. The parliamentary secretary can see the importance of being able to precisely specify the percentage. The guides that are released from WorkCover give the possibility of an assessment, in the example I have given, of 13 per cent. Of course, as the parliamentary secretary said, there is the possibility of 100 per cent, in which case the person with a 100 per cent back injury will not get 100 per cent of the lump sum; they will get 75 per cent. Why? Because as outlined in item 39 in the table at page 89, that is what this statute will say a person will be entitled to, compared with a person with 100 per cent impairment of both feet, at item 32, who will be eligible for 100 per cent of the lump sum limit. Are the guides that WorkCover releases from time to time, including the ones currently in use, capable of being tabled at this time?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: They are gazetted and we could table them; we just do not have them with us today. If it satisfies the member, we can table copies of them tomorrow. I think they are also available on the WorkCover website, but, again, I am not saying that is sufficient for the member's needs. We will produce them tomorrow.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I thank the parliamentary secretary. I think we might take up that opportunity. If I can foreshadow where I am going with this, it might be better taken up at a later clause of the bill, and particularly clause 187. However, it is useful to deal with this at the time that we are dealing with the percentages, particularly with the back, when we get to clause 101. I appreciate that we are on clause 98, which deals with the amount of permanent impairment compensation based on a degree of permanent impairment. That is to be done in accordance with the calculation under clause 101, so they are plainly interrelated. In terms of the guides that are used to determine back injury, we have used the example of 13 per cent. Do the guides also provide guidance on how one might make an assessment of 18 per cent impairment of the back?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I do not quite know where the member is going with 18 per cent. He has been very specific. I have a sneaking suspicion that I am going to find out very soon why he said that! All I can make are general comments about what I said previously about how it is going. So long as the aggregate of those things under the guide could add up to 18 per cent, it is theoretically possible. The guide provides for rounding to the nearest whole number. A person can have impairment of one per cent up to 100 per cent and, depending on the nature of the assessment, anything in between. I am sure the member is going to let me know something that I do not know.

The DEPUTY CHAIR (Hon Steve Martin): I think we are about to find out, parliamentary secretary!

Hon NICK GOIRAN: No, deputy chair. Rather, I think the best way for us to make the most progress at this point is to wait for the guides to be tabled, because then we will both have the same information in front of us, and we can work through this example, particularly when we get to clause 187. I am grateful for the indication that those documents can be tabled tomorrow, which I accept are readily gazetted, but for the purpose of this debate, we will need to have them in front of us. That said, I indicate through the deputy chair to the Leader of the Opposition that I have no further questions on division 7.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 99 and 100 put and passed.

Clause 101: Calculating permanent impairment compensation —

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: This is the table that my good friend Hon Nick Goiran referred to in the debate on clause 98. The explanatory memorandum suggests that none of the numbers have changed from the previous incarnation. I want to check and make sure that is the case, because we have a couple of different versions of this going on.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I can confirm that nothing from the current act has changed in the bill that is before the house.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 102 and 103 put and passed.

Clause 104: Special provisions for AIDS —

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: This clause deals with the special provisions for acquired immune deficiency syndrome; I think it is still a syndrome. I think it is fine; it is a 100 per cent payout in the case of an infection occurring at work. This clause is a repeat of the section in the existing act. Has this section been used; and, if so, how often have payouts been made under this section?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I am advised that the provision was introduced in 2004, and the advisers at the table are not aware of any claim being made under those provisions.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: That is interesting. I do not have an objection to that clause; I was just interested in the numbers. That being the case, I am happy to move on to division 8 and jump to clause 107. I will try to do a couple of things just to cross the whole of division 8.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 105 and 106 put and passed.

Clause 107: Terms used —

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: There is a breakdown of division 8. In fact, I might do it this way. From my perspective, this might be really quick. Divisions 8, 9 and 10 deal with specific circumstances: hearing loss in division 8, dust diseases in division 9 and injury causing death in division 10. Maybe this is the simplest question: are there any differences in this bill from what is in the existing act in those three divisions, or do these divisions, in effect, replicate those in the current act? From my perspective, that would probably negate the need to look into this much further.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I am not sure it is as easy as just dealing with it as a single thing, not because anything has changed in the negative. The entitlements essentially remain the same in those divisions, except for

perhaps an additional entitlement under division 10. There are no changes to the structure or quantum of compensation payable to the dependants, or to the claims process, and the bill provides minor drafting improvements and consolidation of provisions relating to death entitlements. However, the bill clarifies the status of an unborn child of a worker at the time of the worker's death. The definitions of "child" and "dependant" in clause 131 will ensure that a child of a worker conceived before but born after a worker's death will be eligible to receive compensation if they would have been dependent on the worker at the time of the birth had the death not occurred. That is a new entitlement that does not currently exist. That is at clause 131; I do not know whether the member wants to deal with that when we get to that clause. For the dust diseases, there is some streamlining of the processes of assessing those diseases, but it will not change the entitlements for workers. The process has just been streamlined, I think from a beneficial point of view. My understanding is that the procedures for noise-induced hearing loss are currently in the act, but under the bill before us, a regulation-making power will mean that they will be regulated and obviously can be adjusted over time. I am sure that gives rise to further questions.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Actually, that is pretty reasonable. I thank the parliamentary secretary. I was aware of the changes in paragraph (b) to the definition of "child", and in paragraph (c) to the definition of "dependant" at clause 131 and I do not think we have any issues with that. I might have another look at the hearing loss provisions, but I am happy to progress to the next clause. Hon Nick Goiran might also have questions on division 8.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 108 to 146 put and passed.

Clause 147: Deductions from wages towards compensation not lawful —

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: We are at division 11, on miscellaneous matters, if you will. Clause 147 deals with deductions from wages towards compensation. I am interested in the circumstances in which that occurs, because the explanatory memorandum repeats the wording of the bill. Under what circumstances will an employer or insurer deduct from the wages of presumably a worker, the worker involved in a claim or workers generally? Is it to prevent them taking that away from workers as generalised fundraising to cover the cost of their insurance, or is there a specific thing that the government is trying to prevent from happening with specific claims?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I am advised that it is in the current act and it will not change from that, but that was not quite the member's question. Essentially, it is a deterrent for wage theft and the circumstances when someone has received compensation for an injury, whether that be weekly workers compensation payments or some other kind, and a particularly unkind or nasty employer saying, "I'm going to deduct those amounts from your wages." If they were on weekly workers compensation payments for the full amount, because they were totally incapacitated, they might be drawing them down, for example, from their annual or personal leave entitlements or things of that kind. I am also advised that the advisers from WorkCover WA are not aware of any circumstances under the current act when it has needed to be prosecuted. One might say that could be because there is a sufficient deterrent in there, or more likely it is not a practice that is engaged in commonly. It is obviously there for any circumstances in which it might arise.

If members recall, and this is not about workers compensation, but some years ago there were significant legal proceedings against 7-Eleven for having practices in which workers were paid an amount in their salary or wages and then required to give cash back to the employer. On the books it looked like they were getting paid, but in fact they were being required to pay back parts of the money they had earned. That organisation or company was successfully prosecuted by the Fair Work Ombudsman and received quite significant fines and penalties. That kind of behaviour, not specifically in relation to workers compensation, can happen. We are trying to deter it and if there is an issue, it will provide for not only a penalty, but also a sufficient remedy at subclause (2) for the worker to sue, for want of a better word, for the recovery of those amounts.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I have no objection. I cannot imagine a circumstance in which, having been an employer, an employer would garnish either wages to cover the cost of workers compensation insurance or garnering it after the fact. Perhaps it looks unnecessary. I get the government's intent. I am always concerned about the potential vilification of employers without having an example. Can the parliamentary secretary confirm, as far as his advisers are concerned, that he is not aware of not just any prosecutions under the equivalent clause of the existing act, but can they also check to see whether they have been made aware of any complaints under the equivalent clause of the existing act?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: For both elements raised by the member, the advisers are not aware of there being any of those things.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I will take the parliamentary secretary at his word that the intent is reasonable. I might ask one of those questions on notice once a year to see whether there is any development in those areas. I will not oppose the clause on the basis that the provision has never been used, although Michael Mischin might disown me as part of that.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 148 put and passed.**Clause 149: Commuting compensation liabilities by settlement agreement —**

Hon NICK GOIRAN: We are now moving to the final division in part 2, having moved past division 11. It was rather triggering to hear that there are provisions that have never been used. It reminds me of the specialised retraining programs, but let us not reopen that can of worms after yesterday.

Division 12, “Settlement of compensation claim”, has attracted my attention. Has the government received any submissions or concerns from stakeholders about the settlement agreement process?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Submissions on the 2021 consultation draft of the bill raised concerns with the perceived constraints on settlement, notably the requirement for six months to elapse from the date of injury unless there are prescribed circumstances, and the requirement for liability to be accepted or determined for a settlement to be made. Concern was raised that forcing matters into conciliation and arbitration services would ultimately end in settlements that may not be in anyone’s best interests. Submissions suggested that more flexibility is required for the early settlement of complex claims. The government responded to those settlement constraints in the 2021 consultation bill relating to the six-month period and the requirement for settlement of only accepted or determined claims and they are not replicated in the bill before Parliament. This will facilitate settlements that will be subject only to the normal checks by the director of conciliation and arbitration services as specified in clause 154. I am advised that there is almost universal support from stakeholders for the position at which we have now arrived.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: It is the case that currently, a settlement agreement can include the discharge of a common law damages claim, but it appears that pursuant to clause 153 in this twelfth division of the second part of the bill, this will no longer be possible. What has justified this change?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: I am going to try to answer but, as I have indicated to the advisers, my experience in workers comp did not extend to the settlement of claims. I do not want to do a disservice to the advice I have been given or give the member a misleading answer. What I gather from the advice I received is that the justification for the change is essentially to close a loophole in which people, after settling a common law claim, have been able to settle the statutory entitlements as well. Essentially, that is putting the cart before the horse. What is happening is that the bill will provide for the settlement of statutory claims through this process. Common law claims will still be able to be settled, but if someone wants to settle a statutory aspect of their claim, they will have to use the process in this bill rather than going about it the other way, which is to have a common law settlement that effectively settles their statutory entitlements in reverse, if I can put it that way. The starting point is the settlement of their statutory entitlements under the statutory workers compensation claim. It will not stop people from settling their common law claims—it is not about that—it just means that they will have to do it in steps. I am getting a shake of the head. Let me leave it at that and the member can ask more questions. As I said, I might be doing a disservice to my advisers.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I am trying to get a handle on what is the mischief that we are trying to fix. If there has been historically, for quite an extensive period, an efficient mechanism for workers to be able to settle their claims—whether statutory or common law—the last thing we would want to do is to be putting in any extra barriers, hoops or hurdles for them to be able to settle those things. If it is routinely the case that, pursuant to a settlement agreement, workers are discharging a common law damages claim at the same time, it is not readily apparent what the concern is that the government has about workers doing that. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary can explain.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: The member used the common term “mischief” and asked what we are trying to address here.

Hon Nick Goiran: In the context, we mentioned a loophole.

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN: Yes. Under the current act, lawyers are filing writs in the District Court to, in effect, settle a statutory claim. That offers more flexibility because some of the constraints that exist under the current statutory process are not affected by the District Court process. We will be offering more flexibility—in effect, closing that loophole—by removing the constraints that exist under the current system that encourage people to go to the District Court to file their writ. They never pursue a common law claim. They are effectively using that as the vehicle to settle a statutory claim to avoid some of the time delays, and checks and balances—for want of a better term—that exist under the current regime.

I am advised that people are happy with what we are doing because it effectively will make the statutory pathway much more flexible and will not have the constraints that exist under the current act. It is a reform that they will welcome. One of the government’s concerns is that using the District Court to file writs is obviously a more expensive pathway, in and of itself, because it requires lawyers’ fees, but there can be other benefits for workers in going down that quicker pathway. We are just trying to meet where the market is—again, for want of a better term.

Progress reported and leave granted to sit again, pursuant to standing orders.

COSSACK*Statement*

HON NEIL THOMSON (Mining and Pastoral) [6.19 pm]: I am aware that people are concerned about the Matildas. It is nil all at the moment, so please do not be too anxious. I will update members on the score as we go.

I stand tonight simply because I have been asked to by some of my constituents, so I feel it is important to do so, notwithstanding some of the comments coming from others across the floor. I want to raise an issue in relation to the heritage settlement of Cossack. Many members will have been to Cossack and will no doubt be aware of the Cossack Art Awards. It is a very important heritage location in the Pilbara. It has a long history going back to the 1860s. Pearlsharers from Broome ranged down to that part of the world. It certainly has a long and deep history and also a huge connection. Historical buildings in the precinct are the location of the Cossack Art Awards, which the Ngarluma Yindjibarndi Foundation operate and play an important role in.

A number of landowners have owned land through their families for a very long time. It goes back a long time. Schemes were put in place back in the 1960s, when people wanted to proceed with some sort of development. In my role as assistant director general at the then Department of Planning, I spoke to the then director general, Eric Lumsden, who has sadly passed away, because he was very interested in seeing a resolution to that situation. A degree of broken dreams and sadness has affected people who own these blocks of land and have paid rates in good faith, thinking that at some point they may be able to develop them as part of their dreams for the future and leave a legacy, as there has been a long connection with the family.

In 2022, a news article summed it up quite nicely. Some scheme amendment work had been done to provide an opportunity to develop a tourist centre in that location. There was a fair bit of debate at the time at the City of Karratha, which had a role in it. It was summed up in some of the comments by the mayor, who said that he felt sorry for those people. Development at the former pearling town has been prevented by myriad issues over the last four decades, including a special control area provision preventing development not connected to power, water and reticulated effluent disposal. This was a big issue, but after some discussion, the City of Karratha made the recommendation that there could be some development there and said that it might be sympathetic to a tourist outcome, which could provide capacity for more engagement in the community. As the shadow Minister for Heritage, I note that in other jurisdictions around the world, heritage can often be enhanced by engaging people on site. I know that the original houses have all gone—there are only remnants there—but having people in that part of the world would not, in my opinion, be a bad thing necessarily. Of course, there is the issue of scheme water, power and sewerage. I understand that the commission has made its decision on this and is not allowing for that possibility without connection, which is very unlikely to occur at any point in the future.

The point is that maybe it is time for the Minister for Planning to have a think about it and go up there and have a talk. We have a new Minister for Planning. As I said, I remember the former director general, Eric Lumsden, coming into my office in about 2012 and saying that he would resolve this longstanding issue because he felt sorry for those people. He felt there was a degree of unfairness about the way in which they might have been treated, or at least the expectation that had been created.

Hon Kyle McGinn interjected.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I would appreciate it if I could be treated with silence, please, as I have been asked to speak on this matter.

There are many examples in our society where the saying “live and let live” can apply. Maybe there are ways of skirting around it with modern technology. Maybe under the right constraints and development conditions there is a way to provide people with the capacity to do some very light-handed development on that site, which might involve some residential development that allows people to live there permanently, particularly in support of tourism. That is my point. I am raising it today on behalf of those constituents. It is a sad case in which expectations and what has been delivered have been vastly different. Sadly, this is often a feature across our crown land system. In this case it is freehold land, but in some of those more remote areas in Western Australia, people have been strung along for a very long time indeed by bureaucracy. There might be an opportunity for the new Minister for Planning, Hon John Carey, who seems to be a very reasonable person, to get out there and meet and have a chat with some of those landowners when he is next in the Pilbara. The previous Minister for Planning had quite a capacity to make decisions on behalf of proponents when it so suited her, so I do not see why we could not see some engagement at least on this point. I offer that advice in the spirit of bipartisanship and in consideration of the very reasonable conversations that I had with many people about the future of Cossack. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

I hope that the Matildas do well tonight. Thank you very much.

Point of Order

Hon MARTIN PRITCHARD: The member should not be referring to his phone to get a score that we may not wish to hear.

The PRESIDENT: I am not clear on which standing order he is offending, so there is no point of order, but I call on members to demonstrate respect to other members in the chamber.

COST-OF-LIVING WAGE INCREASES

Statement

HON DR BRIAN WALKER (East Metropolitan) [6.27 pm]: Like other members, I am keen to be elsewhere, but this is important. Like many members, I am sure, I received an email from Owen Whittle, the secretary of UnionsWA, highlighting the very real problems facing those on declining wages across the Western Australian public sector. These impacts have been felt daily in our schools, our police stations, our firefighting stations, our hospitals and across other services vital to our wellbeing. It has to be said—I will make no friends across the chamber—that the WA Labor Party is failing our essential workers. Many of those key workers have seen a 10 per cent decrease in real terms over the past five or six years. If we look at the consumer price index and wages, our teachers have \$12 500 less than they would have had had wages kept up with CPI, child protection workers have \$13 000 less, firefighters have had a real reduction in wages of 13 per cent or \$10 300, and police officers are \$8 660 worse off. These are the figures that I have received.

Although we may take pleasure in seeing what the Matildas are going to do tonight, we also have to bear witness to the fact that people in our society are suffering because their wages are not keeping up to date. This is a simple statement on this matter this evening. The Legalise Cannabis WA Party stands behind those workers, behind the United Workers Union, the Community and Public Sector Union—Civil Service Association of WA, the Civil Service Association, the United Professional Firefighters Union, the WA Police Union, the State School Teachers' Union of WA, the Health Services Union of WA and other affiliated bodies. I stand with them in their coordinated call for a seven per cent pay rise now and a further five per cent in 2025.

Before members ask how we can afford this, we will give them an answer. Did we not point out that part of that funding could come from \$1.25 billion in the four-year forward estimates simply from legalising cannabis? Were we to carry on and have hemp available, free from concerns about THC, we would have about \$20 billion available to help us allow people to have a wage commensurate with the cost of living that would allow them to live decent lives.

We are showing the way—please follow. Will members not listen to what is happening just now? Members of the Legalise Cannabis WA Party believe in the public service and supporting the public service. I believe that the Cook government would also be able to say the same thing: will you not support this? We believe in a fair wage for those who set the standards for keeping our society safe. We have identified the resources necessary to make these pay increases a reality. Minister Bill Johnston stated today that the government could afford to be fair. I am sure all members share this point of view, so stand with us as we stand with the workers against this deliberate policy of wage suppression that, I hate to say, has been a hallmark of this government since it was first elected. We are in favour of an honest living wage in return for honest, much-needed work. Will you not stand with us?

House adjourned at 6.31 pm
