



# Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION  
2022

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 23 June 2022



# Legislative Assembly

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**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** took the chair at 9.00 am, acknowledged country and read prayers.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER — PHOTOGRAPHER ACCESS

*Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [9.01 am]: Members, I have approved a media request for a photographer to take photographs from the press gallery this morning when the member for Vasse tables the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee's report on sexual harassment against women in the fly-in fly-out mining industry.

I have also given approval for the member for Southern River to use a prop in his grievance.

## PAPERS TABLED

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

## QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST — ARTS AND SPORT

*Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts*

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the House, what a lovely scarf you are wearing—again.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts)** [9.02 am]: Thank you. Go the Fever!

As the minister responsible for the culture and the arts and sport and recreation portfolios, it gives me great pleasure to advise the house of the remarkable Western Australians who have been recognised in this year's Queen's Birthday honours list. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge these individuals for their outstanding contributions to Western Australia's cultural and sporting landscape.

In the field of culture and the arts, I acknowledge Dr Carmen Lawrence, AO, for achievements too numerous to list, including distinguished service to both the Western Australian and federal Parliaments, as well as for her passionate advocacy for the arts and conservation. I acknowledge Diana Susanne Jones, AM, for her tireless commitment to the Western Australian Museum spanning four decades, as well as her individual work as a researcher and advocate for women in the workplace. I acknowledge Amber Hasler, OAM, for her directorship of Fringe World Festival, and her role in turning it into Western Australia's largest annual arts event, and the third-largest fringe festival globally. I also acknowledge Russell James Thomter, OAM, for his contributions to photography and for sharing Western Australian culture with the world. I acknowledge Diane Brennan, OAM, for a remarkable career as a drama educator and helping foster youth engagement with the arts. I also recognise Marilyn Phillips, OAM, for her role as the head of music with West Australian Opera and as chorus director for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. I acknowledge Dr Sally Murphy, OAM, for her work as a poet and an author, and for her contribution to our understanding of the benefits of engagement with the arts for children's early education.

In the field of sport and recreation, I acknowledge Geoffrey Stooke, AM, OAM, for his pivotal role in helping grow and develop Australian rugby. I also acknowledge Sharon Fekete, OAM, for her contributions to motorsport in Western Australia and tireless efforts to build the profile of dirt track karting. I recognise Murray McHenry, OAM, for his work at the WA Football Commission and his role in the early development of the West Coast Eagles. I acknowledge Bruce Wilson, OAM, for his decades-long career as an athletics officiator at both a grassroots and international level.

Congratulations to all recipients, and I hope they will continue to enrich Western Australia with their contributions to public life.

## STARKICK

*Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Sport and Recreation)** [9.05 am]: I am really pleased about this brief ministerial statement. I rise to inform the house about a fantastic program for children with disability. Starkick is an all-abilities Australian Rules football program that caters for five to 17-year-olds. The program is for all abilities and has a very clear message to kids and parents: if you want to play, we will find a way. Starkick has been going since 2015 and started down at the Coolbinia Bombers Junior Football Club. In the first year, there were 47 children involved. Now, in 2022, there are 15 Starkick centres, with new metropolitan ones starting up at Warnbro Swans, High Wycombe and Ellenbrook Junior Football Clubs. Regional centres in Manjimup and Albany have also joined this year. The program is now an official partner of the Fremantle Football Club's Purple Hands Foundation and the kids were invited to play at the Fremantle versus Brisbane game at Optus Stadium this month. Getting out on Optus Stadium, football's biggest stage, would have been an amazing experience for these children and their parents.

I had the great pleasure of visiting the original site of the Starkick program at the Coolbinia Football Club last Sunday with the member for Mount Lawley—a great member! The club is a great example of what sport should look like: the environment was welcoming and inclusive. The parents and volunteers work tirelessly across the Starkick and Auskick programs, right down to the sausage sizzle. The West Australian Football Commission now supports a full-time coordinator to expand the program across the state. Rob Geersen—what a great bloke he is, I might say; he is magnificent—who started the first Starkick, is now in that position and is doing a wonderful job. He really is great; Madam Speaker, you should meet him.

With 9.2 per cent of children aged five to 14 in Western Australia living with a disability, a program such as Starkick is pivotal in bringing families and communities together. I congratulate everyone who is involved in that program. It is magnificent.

### QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST — PUBLIC SERVICE MEDALS

*Statement by Leader of the House*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House)** [9.07 am]: On behalf of the Attorney General, I rise to congratulate two exceptional achievers who were recently recognised nationally by winning Public Service Medals in the Queen's Birthday honours. Ray Warnes, the chief executive of the Corruption and Crime Commission, and Joanne Stampalia, the executive director of Courts and Tribunal Services within the Department of Justice, were among the three Western Australians recognised with the prestigious medals this year.

Mr Warnes' citation was "for outstanding public service in leading significant operational reform of the Western Australian Corruption and Crime Commission" since 2015, although his contribution to public life goes back far longer—for more than 30 years in various senior roles, including two decades at the Department of Justice. Corruption and Crime Commissioner John McKechnie has publicly praised Mr Warnes as a "transformative leader" who embodies public sector ethics of accountability and integrity. Mr Warnes has been integral to the organisation becoming more nimble and capable through informed decision-making underpinned by improved information technology systems, among other reforms. Prior to that, at the Department of Justice, Mr Warnes steered the delivery of the new District Court building, the introduction of the State Administrative Tribunal and the development of the David Malcolm Justice Centre. As some members might be aware, Mr Warnes is currently on extended personal leave and we wish him well with his recovery.

Ms Stampalia's citation was "for outstanding public service in operational reform and modernisation of the Courts and Tribunals of Western Australia". Ms Stampalia is another quiet achiever providing vital backroom support for the administration of justice in this state. She was recognised as "an advocate for implementing a therapeutic approach to the justice system" and her work has "led to the development of a holistic, more collaborative and effective approach to the criminal and civil justice system."

On behalf of all members, I convey my congratulations to Mr Warnes and Ms Stampalia.

### COMMISSIONER OF POLICE — CHRIS DAWSON, APM

*Statement by Minister for Police*

**MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police)** [9.09 am]: On Thursday, 14 July, Commissioner Chris Dawson, APM, will be marched off the parade ground at the police academy in Joondalup as he completes his tenure as police commissioner. As this is our last sitting day before the recess, I would like to take this opportunity to recognise Commissioner Dawson's contributions to the Western Australia Police Force and our state.

Commissioner Dawson joined the Western Australia Police Force in 1976. Throughout his career, he has served in metropolitan and regional locations, working his way through the ranks. In 2004, Mr Dawson was appointed deputy commissioner and was responsible for all operational policing matters dealing with serious and organised crime throughout the state, as well as all emergency management events. Mr Dawson was recruited by the commonwealth government to lead the amalgamation of the Australian Crime Commission, the CrimTrac agency and the Australian Institute of Criminology, forming the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission in 2014.

During his time as commissioner, Mr Dawson has been instrumental in changing the culture of the WA police and experiences for victims of crime. Mr Dawson dedicated his time to achieving his vision for the agency of being an exceptional, trusted and valued police force for the community. The commissioner was responsible for the restructuring of the WA Police Force, moving from four to eight metropolitan districts, increasing the number of districts in Western Australia to a total of 15.

In July 2018, Commissioner Dawson delivered a historic speech during NAIDOC Week to commemorate the permanent raising of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags in front of every police station in the state, and apologised to all Western Australian Aboriginal people for past wrongs committed by the WA Police Force to Aboriginal people. Commissioner Dawson has remained committed to continuing to build and invest in his relationship with Aboriginal people, and was instrumental in developing the Aboriginal Police Advisory Forum. The forum first met in September 2018 and comprises Aboriginal leaders from across WA and members of the police executive group.

While I am not able to highlight all his achievements in my statement, Commissioner Dawson lists the rescue of kidnapped Carnarvon four-year-old Cleo Smith as the emotional high throughout over four decades of standing on the thin blue line.

I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Commissioner Dawson on behalf of all members in both houses of this Parliament and all Western Australians for his dedication to the people of Western Australia. As one of the three faces of COVID, alongside the Premier and Chief Health Officer, who led the state through the pandemic, the commissioner is one of the most recognisable people in the state.

On a personal note, it has been a privilege to work alongside the commissioner since my appointment as Minister for Police in March last year. The commissioner has been an outstanding leader through the extraordinary challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic and has been instrumental in efforts to disrupt and dismantle serious and organised crime. I wish the commissioner all the best in his new role as Governor of Western Australia.

### **LLOYD STREET BRIDGE — CITY OF SWAN**

*Statement by Minister for Transport*

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport)** [9.13 am]: I wish to provide the house with an update on the Lloyd Street bridge, which is being delivered by Main Roads Western Australia as part of the broader Great Eastern Highway bypass interchange project. By way of background, I remind the house that Lloyd Street is a local government road under the care and control of the City of Swan. For more than 20 years, the council has been advocating to have this bridge constructed, as it will provide a new southern entry to Midland and improve access to St John of God Midland Public Hospital, the Curtin University campus and an emerging entertainment precinct. Modelling undertaken by the City of Swan also indicates that the project will reduce traffic volumes through Guildford by around 15 per cent.

The council requested that the state deliver the bridge on its behalf, and we agreed to do that. When Main Roads agreed to take on delivery of this project, the bridge alignment was very much bedded down. The council had already completed construction of the northern and southern approaches for Lloyd Street around September 2020. The gap across the Helena River at that point is less than 500 metres. However, soon after taking over the project, it became apparent that there was quite strong opposition to the original proposal for the bridge and some significant design changes were made in response to feedback from traditional owners and local conservation groups. This included the incorporation of a continuous, single span to remove the requirement for supporting piers in proximity to the river channel; introduction of 1:6 batter slopes to maximise opportunities for replanting and revegetation; and modifications to the design of the embankments to introduce sections of gabion retaining wall to reduce the overall footprint and the clearing of remnant native trees. Inclusion of gabion retaining walls would allow approximately 20 trees previously earmarked for clearing to be retained.

Despite these changes, and all approvals that were in place, concerns were still being raised by stakeholders. More recently, traditional owners and conservation groups have proposed a new alignment for the bridge. The new proposal would move the bridge further west of the current alignment. The proposal is to have the bridge built at a narrower crossing of the Helena River, loosely following the footprint of the old Whiteman Road Bridge that was demolished in 2002. This proposal has been put forward as part of the mediation process under section 10 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act. The proposed realignment would be less imposing on the nearby environment.

The state government is committed to exploring a mediated outcome that will address the concerns of traditional owners and other local groups while meeting road network connectivity requirements. The proposed new alignment will be a significant diversion from the original proposal; however, I am happy for us to entertain it and we will see how it may work. While we undertake these discussions, the project will be placed on hold, and discussions with the contractors are underway.

### **COMMUNITY LANGUAGES PROGRAM GRANTS**

*Statement by Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests*

**DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests)** [9.16 am]: I am pleased to inform the house that the 2022 community languages program grants have been announced. In this round, 59 community language schools are being funded, which will see more than 7 271 students learning languages across the metropolitan region—an increase of more than 1 000 students in the past year. Between them, the schools teach no fewer than 37 languages, including Mandarin, Kiswahili, Greek, Hindi, Vietnamese, Hungarian, Korean and Dari. Fifty-one schools have been awarded grants to support students from kindergarten to year 12, as well as those enrolled in Western Australian Certificate of Education language courses. Per capita funding is awarded annually to eligible schools that have been operating for more than 12 months. Additionally, eight associations have this year received grants of \$3 000 per school to support the administrative costs of setting up new community language schools.

The McGowan government is committed to enhancing language and cultural learning in the community languages sector. Giving students the opportunity to speak more than one language is a great gift, enhancing social and family bonds. Community language schools give children the ability to fully connect to their cultures, embrace their heritage and communicate effectively with their grandparents and relatives.

The funding is awarded through the Office of Multicultural Interests, which supports not-for-profit community language schools to teach languages and support cultural maintenance after school hours. The community languages program also supports the Italian language in-school insertion program run by the Italo–Australian Welfare and Cultural Centre. The Italian language program enables the teaching of Italian language and culture in primary schools across Western Australia, including six regional schools. The McGowan Labor government is proud to have reversed the mean and unjustified decision by the Barnett Liberal government to defund this valuable program. Overall, the community languages program reaches more than 17 000 students each year. Learning a second language helps build intercultural understanding and cultural competency—important qualities in our vibrant multicultural society and interconnected world. I am sure members of the house will join me in congratulating our community language schools, all of which are not-for-profit organisations run by volunteers, on their commitment to maintaining language diversity and connection to culture in Western Australia.

***FRAMEWORK FOR UNDERSTANDING AND GUIDING RESPONSES TO  
HARMFUL SEXUAL BEHAVIOURS IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE***

*Statement by Minister for Child Protection*

**MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection)** [9.18 am]: I rise to inform the house about the release of the *Framework for understanding and guiding responses to harmful sexual behaviours in children and young people*. The McGowan government is unwavering in its commitment to fully implement the findings and recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The royal commission found that over 30 per cent of all survivors who shared their stories had experienced sexual abuse from another child or young person. In 2021, the WA government invested \$2 million over two years to build an evidence base and deliver a program of work that will inform the implementation of the royal commission’s recommendations about preventing and responding to children and young people exhibiting harmful sexual behaviours. With support from this investment, the Australian Centre for Child Protection recently launched the WA arm of its national program, the ACCPWA, focusing on supports, training and research for children who have been sexually abused or are displaying harmful sexual behaviours. We also recently announced an additional investment of \$2.7 million over three years to partner with the ACCPWA to pilot a specialist intervention program in WA to respond to children and young people who exhibit harmful sexual behaviours.

The framework is the first outcome from the collaboration with the ACCPWA and an essential first step in improving the way that we work. It will provide the foundation for improving our ability to intervene safely and effectively with children displaying harmful sexual behaviours and help us keep them and the children around them safe from harm. The framework was launched to state government agencies and the community services sector on 2 June this year and is now publicly available. Today I am pleased to table the *Framework for understanding and guiding responses to harmful sexual behaviours in children and young people*. A significant amount of work has gone into the development of this resource and its application across government, and the sector will see that, as practitioners and service systems, we can provide the right supports at the right time to children and young people displaying harmful sexual behaviour.

[See paper [1233](#).]

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT — FINANCIAL REPORTING — REGULATIONS**

*Statement by Minister for Local Government*

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Local Government)** [9.21 am]: I am pleased to advise the house that I have approved amendments to the local government regulations to deliver simplified local government financial reporting. These reforms are part of our substantial package of reforms to local government, the most significant in around 25 years. These particular changes, which are based on recommendations made by the Office of the Auditor General, will make financial reports clearer and easier to understand. These changes will be phased in to be in full effect for the financial reporting for the 2022–23 financial year, which starts next Friday.

Standardised templates, referred to as model financial statements, will be introduced to the local government sector before the end of 2022 and available for use by April 2023. Two new templates are being established. Smaller local governments will have more streamlined standard financial statements, reflecting the generally less complex operations of these governments. For larger local governments, there will be minor amendments designed around ensuring that reporting is complete and accurate, without being unnecessarily complex. These changes are being delivered now because they are based on the clear OAG recommendations; follow previous reports, including the select committee report; have been the subject of considerable work, including by expert financial reporting consultants and broad consultation with local government finance professionals; and has the wide support of the local government sector.

These changes will deliver significant benefits for ratepayers. First and foremost, simplified reporting requirements will support ratepayers to access clear information about the financial position of their local government. This will help the community access important financial information about their local government. Second, removing unnecessary complexity represents a direct cost saving. Financial reporting and compliance auditing is a significant task for local governments. Any opportunity to simplify the process delivers cost and time savings, which ultimately benefit ratepayers.

Other work is being undertaken on financial transparency and accountability. As part of these reforms, a new rates and revenue policy will be established to provide ratepayers with a forward forecast of the costs of operating their local government and for residents to understand what their rates will likely be in future years. We are also working to review financial ratios to ensure that ratios fairly and accurately represent the underlying financial position of local governments.

### **SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION — WA LEADERS CONNECT SERIES**

*Statement by Minister for Small Business*

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Small Business)** [9.24 am]: I rise to inform the house about a subsidised professional development program being offered to regional businesses by the McGowan government through the Small Business Development Corporation. As part of the WA Leaders Connect Series, the SBDC is providing the opportunity for 90 regional businesses to participate in the program by subsidising half of the cost of the yearlong program. The WA Leaders Connect Series is for businesses that are based more than 100 kilometres from Perth and have been operating for over a year. The small business owners who are accepted into the program can access strategic business advice, expertise, knowledge and support from WA business leaders and a community of peers. With a financial subsidy from the SBDC, these businesses will pay only \$500, plus GST, for the year's series, which is focused on upskilling the business founder or senior management to grow, innovate and uncover opportunities for their business.

Regional businesses, which account for one-quarter of Western Australia's small businesses, face a unique set of challenges. They often miss out on access to professional development opportunities available to metropolitan-based businesses. The SBDC already provides excellent free business advisory services and low-cost business skills development throughout regional Western Australia through its Business Local network. However, the McGowan government recognises that it is important and essential for more established businesses to have access to the support structures, industry expertise and peer-based professional development networks that they need to expand and realise new opportunities. This is what the WA Leaders Connect Series will provide.

I wish to acknowledge the continued excellent work of the Small Business Development Corporation and the Small Business Commissioner, who champion the interests of small businesses in this state wherever they are based.

### **GREENLIP ABALONE — RARE FOODS AUSTRALIA**

*Statement by Minister for Fisheries*

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries)** [9.26 am]: Western Australia's credentials for sustainable fisheries have been further enhanced with the Rare Foods Australia Flinders Bay hatch-and-catch fishery for greenlip abalone earning the Marine Stewardship Council's tick of approval for certified sustainable seafood. On World Oceans Day, Wednesday, 8 June, I joined representatives from the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council, the Marine Stewardship Council and the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to celebrate Rare Foods Australia becoming WA's twelfth fishery to achieve MSC certification. The state government has supported Rare Foods Australia to become the first Western Australian aquaculture venture to be Marine Stewardship Council certified as a hatch-and-catch enhanced bivalve fishery.

In 2009, the operators began trials of ocean ranching for abalone, which led to the creation of deployable Abitat reefs that are then allowed to colonise with algae so that they can be stocked with hatchery-raised juvenile abalone for growing in the ocean, with little interference and no supplemental feeding. Rare Foods Australia operates in Flinders Bay near Augusta, and in 2020–21, the company supplied 75.9 tonnes of premium greenlip abalone to markets in Australia, Europe and Asia. Achieving MSC certification has the effect of increasing the marketability of goods produced by certified operators and it is also an independent recognition of the government's effectiveness in the sustainable management of its fisheries and the aquaculture industry. This new Marine Stewardship Council tick of approval for Rare Foods Australia highlights not only Western Australia's commitment to sustainable fisheries, but also what can be achieved through innovation.

I have met RFA's executive, Brad Adams, on a number of occasions since becoming Minister for Fisheries and, indeed, I previously met with his late father, Terry Adams. The family's commitment to developing sustainable aquaculture operations in WA is outstanding. By supporting the growth of WA's aquaculture industry, the McGowan government is supporting key initiatives to help diversify regional economies and boost employment opportunities and economic development in regional coastal communities.

### **PUBLIC HOUSING — SECURITY**

*Grievance*

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [9.30 am]: I thank the Minister for Housing for taking my grievance. On 7 June this year, some two weeks ago, a report was published in *The West Australian* titled "Retiree's bloody hell". The story was about a retired gentleman who was the victim of a vicious beating stemming from an attempted robbery. The gentleman, Mr Christopher Hands, a volunteer with the Salvation Army, lives in

a Homeswest complex. Mr Hands was out doing what he regularly does—undertaking a security walk around the complex and surrounding area. Mr Hands does this because his complex is a target for criminals who know that many vulnerable people are there. It is a sad reality that the residents see too many break-ins in their complex and crime in nearby streets. In the weeks prior to being assaulted, his Homeswest complex had experienced repeated criminal incidents, including stealing and damaging of cars and an attempted home invasion. The day before Mr Hands' assault, yet another home unit had smashed windows being boarded up, waiting for repair. Some residents spoke to the media. June Field said —

It's open house. And we're all elderly people here. We're easy prey.

Another resident, Mr Bob Knight, felt that he was the initial target of the criminals who assaulted Mr Hands. The article states —

"This keeps happening," Mr Knight said.

"We're living in fear and we shouldn't have to."

I am certain that the minister agrees that Bob is right and that he should not have to live in fear. Mr Hands believes that security for residents would be improved by installing security cameras and possibly a security gate at the complex. As matters stand, there is no deterrent for anyone to wander into the complex and pursue their criminal activities. Although security cameras and gates will not guarantee safety, they would no doubt provide some level of deterrence, at least from opportunistic crimes. This is not an uncommon problem. The minister would note that I have significant social housing and Homeswest housing in my electorate. A few days after reading the article about Mr Hands, I was visited by a retired gentleman who lives in a Homeswest apartment in my electorate. He was very concerned about the constant fear that he and others experience because of the threat of crime and antisocial behaviour in their building. He told me about various highly troubling incidents at the apartments he lives in. He told me about a female neighbour who has a mattress up against the window to act as added security and protect her from broken glass, because she has had windows smashed before, and also as a noise barrier. He told me about brazen drug dealing that goes on in and around the apartments. The car park is a magnet for criminals and cars are regularly broken into and occasionally stolen.

I was informed that police turn up to make arrests for various matters at the apartment, but there is little response when crimes are reported. Most tenants in this gentleman's complex believe that cameras, gates and a secure car park will assist in reducing antisocial and criminal behaviour. The gentleman who visited my office expressed bewilderment at the routine dismissal of residents' concerns over crime and security and he has raised the matter with the building manager and Homeswest previously. Residents do not feel that Homeswest is taking their concerns seriously.

I do not know whether funding is available to provide additional security measures in these apartments, but it seems reasonable that minor capital improvements for the safety and security of vulnerable people in Homeswest complexes could be provided with security cameras and, where appropriate, gates. As I have said previously, although security cameras and gates will not guarantee safety, they would no doubt provide some level of deterrence. They will certainly provide some added peace of mind and security for the residents. Therefore, I respectfully request the Minister for Housing to investigate a program of upgrading security at Homeswest apartment complexes. The cost should not be too great, particularly if this reduces property damage and theft at the apartments. This is a major concern for my constituents and other Homeswest residents, particularly in larger apartments. I hope the minister can look favourably on this request for upgraded security at Homeswest apartments and properties.

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Housing)** [9.33 am]: I thank the member for his grievance. I have said previously that both I, as the minister, and the government, but also the Department of Communities, take very seriously any concerns relating to safety. We do not tolerate antisocial behaviour, whether it be Department of Communities tenants or otherwise. I have a genuine and sincere belief that everyone has a right to feel safe in their home. The government implements a number of measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of tenants across its properties. The member for Cottesloe has got to understand that our agency is responsible for the maintenance of nearly 50 000 properties across government, including social housing and community housing. I want to be very clear about the government's obligations. Firstly, the agency is required to adhere to security provisions set out in the Residential Tenancies Regulations 1989. This includes deadlocks on main entrances, compliant lockable security screens, external lighting at the main door, deadlocks or bolt locks on all other external doors, and lockable windows. That is what the department is required to do under the regulations. In addition, all designated seniors' accommodation includes barrier screens fitted to front and rear doors and adjustable, accessible windows. The department also provides consent for the installation of security cameras and other security measures for tenants at their own expense, ensuring the privacy of other tenants and no damage to the property, for example, so there are conditions on that installation. It is important to note that the state government introduced the safety and security rebate. That allows Seniors Card holders to claim up to \$400 a household for eligible security equipment, which includes closed-circuit television, home alarm systems and security. That important measure is available and can be accessed.

I want to address the complexities of both CCTV and security around complexes. I understand that it may sound very simple, but the reality is that often issues arise from tenants letting in other tenants, not tenants letting in other

guests or family members to that complex. That presents challenges in managing complexes if tenants—I am not blaming them—invite someone in, or have guests coming through the door. It is not as simple as saying that we march in with gates and security cameras. Many public housing complexes house a lot of vulnerable people, particularly those experiencing or escaping family and domestic violence, people with mental health concerns, or people who simply do not want to feel violated or videotaped. There has to be a very clear demonstrated need due to the significant cost involved of CCTV with the cost of monitoring, recording and servicing those devices.

It is important to look at Mosman Park. We have to be driven by the evidence. I say this respectfully to the member: between January and May this year across Mosman Park public housing stock, including complexes, 55 complaints were received by the department, of which 22 could not be substantiated as disruptive behaviour. That could be dogs, everyday noise or neighbour interpersonal disputes. Twenty-nine were related to noise complaints, which was loud music, excessive noise and yelling; four related to domestic arguments within households; one related to threatening behaviour. I appreciate that these matters are relayed to the member for Cottesloe, but the department has to be guided by clear evidence. Based on that, it is fair to say that CCTV could not be justified on the basis of what is provided to the agency and what is reported on.

I also note that we have to look at the crime statistics in the area as well. It did peak in 2015–16, but actually what we have seen is that overall crime or antisocial behaviour has trended downward substantially over the past few years. Non-family assault offences have decreased by 85 per cent, compared with the same quarter in 2015–16.

I want to assure people that we do take this seriously. There are a range of measures already in place, in accordance with regulations, for seniors accommodation. But there does need to be a very demonstrated need, and additional security measures such as security cameras are only considered by communities for complexes with ongoing serious, disruptive and criminal behaviour.

### NICHOLSON ROAD FLYOVER — CANNING VALE

#### *Grievance*

**MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River — Parliamentary Secretary)** [9.40 am]: I rise today on a matter of grave importance, with a grievance to the very hardworking Minister for Transport. I wish to convey to the minister the frustration of my community over congestion through Canning Vale and Southern River. I look forward to, hopefully, hearing some good news from the minister about what we can do about a key intersection in my community, the intersection of Nicholson Road, Yale Road and Garden Street. There have been plans promised for a long time, many by the previous Liberal government, which has a very poor track record on all things infrastructure in my community. I could rattle off the promised train lines that were never delivered, at Nicholson Road and Ranford Road. I could talk about the lack of expansion of the Ranford Road railway bridge. Those are all things that this minister has delivered on.

My community of Canning Vale, Southern River, Huntingdale and Gosnells trusts the Minister for Transport and Mark McGowan to deliver infrastructure in our area. My community wishes for us to build a Nicholson Road flyover bridge. There is support for it. The roundabout at Garden Street, Yale Road and Nicholson Road is a nightmare. I drive through it every day. It is a complicated intersection, and it is only going to get more complicated, because more and more people want to live in my community. There are only two main ways in and out of Canning Vale—Nicholson Road and Ranford Road—and the roundabout is key piece of infrastructure.

I formally ask the minister: Is there anything that we as a government can do? Are there any funds in the budget to build a Nicholson Road flyover? Is the minister able to confirm funding for it so that I can continue to consult and work with my community? We already have a trusted brand in Metronet. We have faith in Premier Mark McGowan and in the Minister for Transport to continue building the infrastructure that we need. Can the minister inform the chamber—and me, so that I can inform my community—how the federal government can work with us?

I would like to acknowledge that recently, in the last federal election, we lost a very good friend of my community, Ben Morton—a very hardworking member of the federal Parliament and a lovely man. I look forward to him standing in the Cottesloe by-election soon. He worked very hard for us, bless his cotton socks. Sam Lim, the new federal champion for my part of Canning Vale and Tangney, is also very hardworking. Sam Lim and Matt Keogh, on behalf of the federal government, also promised over \$35 million towards the Nicholson Road intersection at the last election. I was very appreciative that Ben Morton also made that promise. It was very good to go into the federal election knowing that. I have been working with our Minister for Transport for some time about this very important intersection. I ask: moving on from the federal election and the state budget, do we have funds allocated to the project?

Here is a little bit of history. The fact that the McGowan government is delivering on its promises actually complicates things for my community. The Nicholson Road train station is being built. There will be a thousand car bays. It is going to transform my community. But the station will be within metres of this complicated intersection. I want to thank one of my mentors, Chris Tallentire, for his hard work in putting through so many things in that regard, and I want to thank a number of the local Labor members who have delivered on their promises. It will be an important part of the area, but the intersection will be complicated.

As I mentioned, the Liberals promised the Nicholson Road train station at multiple elections. They promised road upgrades and major infrastructure upgrades for my community—this is the state Liberal Party that I am talking about. I am sure I do not have to tell the minister that the state Liberal Party’s promises to my community are often very shallow. I would even go so far as to call the state Liberal Party “custard guts” on those matters. The Liberals just do not have the ability to deliver on any of their promises to our community. Actually, I remember the term “custard guts” being used by the now Attorney General in reference to the member for North West Central about 10 years ago. The Nats and Libs are lovely, but they do not deliver on their promises in my community. They are yellow. Custard guts is one of their trademarks.

**Dr D.J. Honey** interjected.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** I am very happy to lay on the table the reference to custard guts and the member for North West Central. Is that okay, Acting Speaker?

**Dr D.J. Honey** interjected.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** It was on 11 August 2009. Was that your question to me, member?

A member interjected.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** I think it was. I will read it out.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A.E. Scaife):** Thank you, members! Leader of the Opposition! Member for Southern River, leave is granted for you to do so for the duration of today’s sitting.

[The paper was tabled for the information of members.]

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** Thank you very much. Just so we can move on, I greatly appreciate the work that the Minister for Transport has done in my community. My community has a lot of faith in this minister, and I look forward to hearing about the great plans to build this bridge and our train stations and the infrastructure that my community needs.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [9.47 am]:** I thank the member for Southern River for the grievance. It is true: there is a lot of activity happening around the member’s electorate and across those suburbs. There is no better advocate than the member for Southern River for his electorate. He is an outstanding campaigner, member of Parliament and advocate for projects throughout the area.

As he rightly points out, there is a lot of activity happening. The new Nicholson Road train station is being built. The Thornlie–Cockburn rail link is being built, and, as part of the associated works, there is also the Ranford Road duplication. That is a big project in itself. The Ranford Road project will see a number of new lanes, including dedicated bus lanes, being built. That will reduce congestion and remove the bottleneck in the member’s area, and that is nearing completion. So there is a lot of work happening throughout the area.

There is an issue with the Nicholson Road roundabout, on Nicholson, Garden and Yale. I think anyone who has been through that area understands exactly what congestion really is at those peak times. When overseeing transport projects, the goal is not just to move congestion but to try to fix it with an overall project. In hindsight, when the Nicholson Road Bridge was built, it should have been built a bit longer to deal with the roundabout issue—but it was not, so we have another project that we need to deliver. The member for Southern River has raised the roundabout issue with me a number of times in the corridors of Parliament. Sometimes I try to avoid the member for Southern River because he always raises issues with me, but he outruns me, which is a problem! He has raised the issue of congestion on the roundabout and the need for a plan to fix that problem on a number of occasions. If we look at the numbers, we see that it is indeed a very congested roundabout. Nicholson Road carries an average of 53 877 vehicles per day north of intersection and 32 141 vehicles per day west of the intersection. Garden Street carries an average of 23 000 vehicles per day, which is a significant amount, and Yale Road carries an average of 15 970 vehicles per day. In the five years from 2017 to 31 December 2021, there were 206 crashes at the intersection, giving it a state intersection crash ranking of three based on frequency. All the statistics show that it is indeed a problem area.

As the member for Southern River outlined, we are building a new Metronet station and car bays, and we are seeing a lot of activity in that area with a new small shopping precinct being built. There is a lot of activity in that area, which will only increase when that train station opens. This area is already congested but it will see more activity. We commenced planning a new roundabout and sought federal funding. One of the first major commitments made by the then Albanese opposition to WA was this roundabout, which was very congested on the morning that we took our federal counterparts to see it. I like it when the roads on which we want money spent are congested when they are shown to federal opposition members or federal ministers because it proves a point. That morning, member, I remember there was a lot of traffic in that area. I went out there with the then opposition spokesperson for transport, Catherine King, the federal Labor candidate at the time, Sam Lim, and your good self, member for Southern River. The federal Labor opposition committed \$35 million to upgrade that intersection. It was a very strong early commitment from the Albanese opposition and the then Labor candidate Sam Lim. A lot of people talked about the project, but federal Labor put money on the table straightaway. Planning that project has enabled us to have the full funding to deliver it.

The project scope will include the construction of a bridge connecting Garden Street and Nicholson Road over the existing roundabout carrying two lanes of traffic and modification of the two single left lanes to a two-lane connection with two lanes merging into one. It is pretty complicated. I suspect that we will need maps and further consultation to work through all the detail. The aim, of course, is to reduce network congestion and improve vehicle efficiency and road safety.

Another key part of the project will be pedestrian connectivity because there is the residential area, a major activity precinct being developed with a rail line, the police station, the shops and a baseball centre on the other corner. Just near that area is a big commercial complex that used to be the Coles distribution centre, where, after driving down the hill from Roleystone, I used to deliver fruit with my dad. That is where the Coles distribution centre used to be many, many years ago. I remember going to the Coles DC with my dad to drop off fruit.

I am really pleased to say that we have the funding to proceed with this project. We will be working with the member for Southern River and other local members to make sure that we consult well with the community to improve that pedestrian–cyclist access. One of the great benefits that we can achieve from this is making sure that there is uninterrupted access to the train station from the bridge. That is something that we can look at incorporating to make sure that all four corners of the roundabout—if there is such a thing—that are currently segregated can be joined to improve connectivity in this area.

I thank the member for his excellent advocacy on this issue. I know that we will continue to work hard to deliver the infrastructure that the suburbs in his area need so that people can move freely around the community, take their kids to school and get to the shops and work.

## HEALTH SERVICES — MURCHISON

### *Grievance*

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition)** [9.54 am]: I thank the Minister for Health for taking this grievance about health services in the Murchison. Members of this chamber will know that advocating for improvements to regional health services has been one of my priorities since being elected to Parliament, whether it is additional midwives to support families to have babies close to home, upgrades to hospitals in my electorate or the attraction and retention of staff to nursing posts in small country towns. I am firmly of the view that access to quality health services is a fundamental for government and should not be impacted by a person’s postcode. Like many country people, I am pragmatic enough to know that we cannot all have a Fiona Stanley Hospital in our backyard. Coming from a small country town in the wheatbelt that was home to a district hospital, I count myself lucky that when I was growing up, we always had a doctor in town or one just down the road in Kununoppin, and if something serious happened, we could go to the emergency department and someone would be there to meet us. That sense of comfort should not be only for people in our large regional cities and Perth, because if we want to attract and retain people to live and work in regional Western Australia, access to health services is fundamental.

Over the last five years, I have listened to the member for North West Central advocate for the communities of his electorate about health services, specifically in the Murchison, to the Minister for Health and the previous Minister for Health. Specifically, he has consistently raised concerns about staffing at nursing posts in the Murchison subdistrict and Meekatharra Hospital, as was raised with the minister yesterday in question time, and pressures on health services as the population in the communities of Exmouth and Coral Bay grows and swells over peak holiday periods.

In relation to nursing posts, as the minister would be aware, the Murchison subdistrict includes the communities of Cue, Meekatharra, Mt Magnet, Sandstone and Yalgoo. There have been ongoing challenges in attracting and retaining staff to these nursing posts. It is particularly challenging for the single-staff sites. The Shire of Yalgoo in particular has raised concerns with the Minister for Health and the Department of Health on numerous occasions, having experienced regular closures of its nursing posts. Its request, which has not been met to my knowledge, is to have at least one nurse present at the nursing post during the week and additional nurses for emergencies over the weekend. It is disappointing that the minister’s response, no doubt provided by the department, is to refer to the number of presentations at the site and say that the level of staffing is appropriate. Quite clearly, even if it is from a workplace safety perspective, single-staff nursing posts are not appropriate. I know that some progress has been made in this area, but I want an assurance from the minister that the department will continue to work to ensure that it reduces the number of single-staffed nursing posts across the state. When the only staff member is sick, on leave or attending another issue, the community is exposed. Using a formula to assign staff based on presentations fails to recognise other specific factors that impact access for patients in remote locations. Although it is one decision-making factor, isolation, safety, lack of alternatives within a reasonable distance and the cost of transporting patients should also be taken into consideration. I am afraid that I cannot agree that a mathematical formula works to provide services for our remote and regional communities, and I urge the government to reconsider allocating some of the budget surplus that is currently available to attract staffing numbers to these nursing posts.

In Cue, a community that I recently visited as part of the meeting of the “Cue Parliament”, there have been serious impacts in the past of not having staff or having only one staff member available. I will highlight an incident that occurred in the last few years to make the point. This happened a couple of years ago, but the community says that

there are similar ongoing issues. The shire CEO, who was also an ambulance volunteer, has spoken publicly of the trauma and emotional fallout for the nurse and volunteers who managed an accident with multiple casualties and a fatality. A week after that incident occurred, a very small pool of volunteers at an unmanned nursing post had to deal with another two very serious situations. Another example is when a shire councillor called for an ambulance due to breathing difficulties, but no ambulance was available and no-one was at the nursing post over the weekend. He had to call someone from a neighbouring town, which is a long way away when you are in the Murchison, to pick him up and take him to Meekatharra. There are number of other examples that I am sure the minister is aware of because it is a challenge in those remote communities without a doubt. I ask that the minister please outline what actions have been taken recently to address some of these challenges, specifically to resource, attract and retain nursing and medical staff in that Murchison subdistrict.

I want to touch briefly on the Meekatharra Hospital. The member for North West Central has raised grievances in this house previously and asked a question in the Parliament yesterday. It is an old hospital and the community has been waiting for confirmation on when that project will begin. The government made a promise before the 2017 state election that was backed up by the previous Minister for Health who acknowledged that work needed to be done. We are now in June 2022, wherein it appears that no outward action is being taken to progress this project. Therefore, there is an opportunity here for the minister to outline exactly what will be done, what the community can expect, and what the time lines are for the upgrades to that hospital given that we are five years down the track and there has been little information or confirmation that the project will be delivered at all. Back in 2017, there was a \$13.3 million commitment to start construction. I note that it was a commitment made to start in the government's second term, which was probably a little audacious at the time; nonetheless, that has come to pass. That time is now, and we have three years before we get to the end of this. We know that these projects take time. I think the community would very much like to have some confirmation on at least a commencement date and when it can expect to see light at the end of the tunnel.

The minister's answer in Parliament yesterday referred to the process, and we understand that there needs to be work done, but there has been five years for this work to be done, and the community is still struggling with an absolutely substandard building. Although improvements have been made to deal with some of the most challenging issues in that hospital, it is not a new service, and it is not the service that was promised by this government. I think that the community deserves to understand exactly what that commitment was and when it will be delivered.

**MS A. SANDERSON (Morley — Minister for Health)** [10.02 am]: I thank the member for her grievance, and I am happy to outline the actions that the government is taking to support regional health care. I will start with the Meekatharra Hospital redevelopment. The member for North West Central's question yesterday took me by surprise because it was not on my radar as a project that had a red flag. When I went back and looked, it was not a 2017 election commitment; it was a 2021 election commitment. I cannot find a record of it being in 2017, so if the member has that record, I would appreciate that information. All the information I have is that it was a 2021 election commitment, and it was a \$48.9 million capital funding commitment. Therefore, it is wrong to say that the project is five years out of date; it is not. It was a commitment from the last election and that project is on track.

The project's purpose will provide essential health service hubs for the Murchison district, and it is going through an implementation of service design. Essentially, to achieve this, we have to work through a whole range of service factors, including the acute care emergency service, Royal Flying Doctor Service and residential aged care. As the member knows, the WA Country Health Service is a provider of residential aged care in most regional areas. The approved scope will essentially support all those services including mental health. A project definition plan was commenced in the architectural team, along with the consultant engineers, and they will be going through the site on 1 July. The service planning project to develop the actual service models for Murchison out of Meekatharra commenced in December 2021.

The project has completed the community population profiles and is going through some of the modelling, including working through Murchison shires: Yalgoo, Mt Magnet, Cue, Sandstone, Murchison and Meekatharra. It is a very thorough process. WA Country Health Service has worked internally with stakeholders to date, including mental health, community alcohol and drug services, Allied Health Taskforce on Workforce Issues, child health, public health, palliative care, cancer services, regional and renal services, aged-care assessment team, regional assessment service and visiting specialists, telehealth and dental. External stakeholders were consulted, including the WA Primary Health Alliance—there is a whole bunch of acronyms here; I do not know what they are!—GPs; RFDS; St John Ambulance; and the shires of Meekatharra, Yalgoo, Mt Magnet, Cue and Sandstone. Consultation with the Shire of Murchison is planned for 16 June, which was last week. Also consulted were the Western Australia Police Force, Department of Communities, Yulella Aboriginal Corporation, Youth Focus WA and Geraldton sport. Therefore, broad consultation is occurring, and once that is complete, a project definition plan will be put to government, and it will be approved for commencement. Therefore, this project is on track. It was a commitment from the last election and is a priority for the WA Country Health Service.

On the member's other broader points around the workforce in the WA Country Health Service, there has certainly been, in the last 10 years, but more recently in the last five years, significant investment in WA regional and country health, with approximately \$1.5 billion over 80 projects in regional Western Australia. The regional areas are

a very challenging environment to deliver construction projects in, let alone the metropolitan areas. The WA Country Health Service provides outstanding care, and the staff in particular are very, very committed in their local communities. I thank the staff and all those people who hold multiple roles, including shire presidents, volunteers and State Emergency Service volunteers, who really keep those communities going.

There has been significant investment in technology, infrastructure and services. Regional and remote towns have more modern housing facilities, and new technology is currently being rolled out to bring care closer to home because staffing is challenging.

In the midwest, we have a number of significant capital works in planning and underway, including Geraldton Health Campus and the redevelopment of Dongara. The inpatient telehealth service has allowed many patients to remain in their home towns and be cared for locally by nursing staff, with medical care via the ITS. The virtual 24/7 stroke care service is also an important feature as is the mental health emergency telehealth service, which the previous federal government cut, and the state government has stepped in to fund that because it provides a really important service. Midwifery and obstetrics emergency telehealth service, tele-chemotherapy and virtual nursing backup service provides support for newly graduated nurses in regional WA.

On the matter of those particular nursing posts, I agree with the member that individual nursing posts are probably not fit for purpose. We are addressing that under the new work health and safety legislation passed by this government. The information that I have is that Yalgoo is the only site that has a single nursing post; those other sites have two posts. They are working very, very hard, too. WACHS is looking at more innovative ways to attract graduates who perhaps want to do their masters or people who already have those skills but they could potentially study as well as get paid while they are there. I appreciate and agree with the comment that it has to be more than mathematics. It the same with public transport; it is about the cohort that we are trying to service. But one of the issues with clinical practice is it has to keep up a certain amount of clinical hours to keep its practice current. That is a real challenge, particularly with obstetric care and midwifery. Carnarvon, with 100 births a year, is a good example of that; it is not enough births for a midwifery group practice to keep its practice current, so it has to keep cycling midwives through. There are a lot of factors competing in this area.

The government and the WA Country Health Service take the workforce issue very seriously. It is a standing agenda item on our meetings, and we work very closely to ensure that we fill those roles where we can and how we can. Sometimes we have to bring people from the health services providers in the metropolitan area, and we provide very generous incentives to do that.

## **STREET LIGHTING — CONNOLLY, HEATHRIDGE AND EDGEWATER**

### *Grievance*

**MS E.L. HAMILTON (Joondalup)** [10.09 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Energy on behalf of local residents across our Joondalup community, in particular the suburbs of Connolly, Heathridge and Edgewater. Residents in my community have significant concerns regarding a lack of street lighting in their area, and I have been advocating on their behalf for quite some time now. I first raised the matter with then Minister for Energy, Hon Ben Wyatt, in June 2018, who had Western Power conduct a site visit. I subsequently followed this matter up with you, minister, in 2020; in fact, this is my second grievance on this matter. It has now been four years since I initially raised this matter. I continue to hear from residents who are concerned about their safety.

The issue now stretches across several suburbs in my electorate and, in some parts of the suburb of Joondalup, residents can barely see where they are walking at night. Following my advocacy in 2020, the minister informed me that Western Power had found that although Connolly's major roads were adequately lit, several cul-de-sacs and no-through roads were unlit beyond the intersection. The minister also informed me that the City of Joondalup has full responsibility for the placement and number of streetlights and early upgrades. I understand that Western Power replaced approximately 90 dim globes in Connolly in September 2020; however, new lights were not installed and existing lights were not upgraded. My constituents and I would like to understand why there has been no real improvement delivered, and, quite frankly, it is a significant safety issue. Joondalup is a wonderful community with lots of great local amenities and more people than ever are out and about in their local community. They should feel comfortable and confident in doing so after dark.

I was astonished to hear that the City of Joondalup wishes to take over all streetlights in the city, with council requesting that officers complete an evaluation of this. The City of Joondalup's vision for the underground power program seeks to underground all remaining overhead power and bring all streetlights under the ownership of the city. The plan also includes upgrading streetlights to modern Australian standard LED lights. The city seems to believe it can do a better job than Western Power, but given its failure to increase lighting in Connolly, I think this is extremely problematic and not in the best interests of ratepayers. The council has a legislative responsibility to plan for our communities and has not done so. I understand that the ownership of street lighting has been discussed before, but the idea never progresses because of the impracticalities for local government. Streetlights are not a money-making asset for local governments; they are a liability that the city has no expertise in administering or maintaining. Why would the City of Joondalup consider investing rates paid by residents into infrastructure that

is already provided by the state government? Could the minister explain what benefits this could offer ratepayers and what is being done to deliver benefits under Western Power's ownership model? I would also like the minister to please explain what Western Power is doing to ensure that streetlights continue to evolve. I believe one of the key issues here is that streetlights in Joondalup were installed around 20 years ago and are no longer sufficient for a more densely populated community; however, the city is still pursuing more infill across its suburbs.

I have spoken on this matter on a number of occasions in this place and shared my strongly held views that any increase to density and infill needs to be done in strategic city centres, be of good quality and have adequate infrastructure that will not detract from the amenity of the suburb. I am of the view that the current street lighting arrangements are not suitable for current residents, let alone an increased number. At a recent meeting of the Connolly Residents Association, the Mayor of Joondalup, Albert Jacob, spoke about the city taking ownership and management of street lighting where there is underground power, and Connolly being an ideal example to use as a model to implement this. Mayor Jacob followed the point by noting the plan would require state government support. It also should be noted that Mayor Jacob, in his re-election campaign, spruiked the benefits of underground power and LED lighting upgrades for existing streetlights, but we know that additional poles are necessary to provide adequate lighting in our community, and it appears that the city has failed to come to the table in this regard.

I also note that the City of Joondalup seems to be dealing with street lighting upgrades in conjunction with a very different program, that being underground power. The city has been paralysed on underground power since its foundation. Several original residents of Heathridge have pointed out that underground power was promised when they purchased their blocks back in the 1970s and 1980s, but it still has not been delivered. If the City of Joondalup's track record on underground power is any indication of how it plans to own and operate streetlights and how this will turn out, I must say that I will be buying quite a large torch when I go on my night-time walks with my dogs. While the city dithers and delays on providing adequate street lighting to our local communities, it has undertaken multimillion-dollar splurges on streetlights in the Joondalup city centre—a vanity project perhaps to satisfy the ivory tower of Boas Avenue—all while residents in the suburbs wait for well-lit streets.

I wish to resolve this matter as soon as possible; it has taken too long. I seek the minister's advice on how we can come to a positive solution that ensures the best interests of residents are protected.

**MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Energy)** [10.14 am]: I thank the member for Joondalup very much for the grievance, and her constant advocacy on behalf of residents in her electorate. I know they are very fortunate to have a person of her capability and hard work advocating on their behalf.

Street lighting is obviously an issue that is more complex than the City of Joondalup seems to understand. The member previously grieved to me on this topic. I pointed out at that time that the city has an obligation to fix these issues. I understand that at the moment the lighting in Connolly is not to Australian standards, and it is the responsibility of the council to provide the lighting. I do not understand why the council mixes up the question of undergrounding power with its existing obligation to provide adequate street lighting. I urge the local government to meet this basic requirement to its residents in Joondalup and provide minimum levels of street lighting.

I note that the council has done a study into undergrounding power and it wants to take over the power infrastructure, but it has worked out it cannot afford to do that. It is probably right, because at the moment the overhead infrastructure in many of the suburbs in Joondalup is not currently due to be replaced. The WA government, of course, is the only government in Australia that has an active program to underground power infrastructure, and we continue with that active program. I urge the City of Joondalup to engage with Western Power on that. The City of Subiaco provided underground power for all its residents many years ago, not by taking ownership, but by funding the project and getting it done. That means the residents end up paying a higher cost. I am not saying that would be in the best interests of Joondalup residents, but that would be a solution.

I note we are currently going through the next process of reviewing the rules to apply to Western Power under access arrangement 5. I note that the Western Australian Local Government Association has made a submission to the current process, as has the Shire of Mingenew. It is the first time the shire has made a submission, and I am told it is the first time that any local government authority has specifically made a submission to the process of the regulatory rules that apply to Western Power, so I urge other councils to join that process. The City of Joondalup could do that already if it wanted to. I note, too, that the former Liberal government, I think in 2018, announced it would sell all the streetlight infrastructure, but it never proceeded with that because it found it too difficult to do that.

In the end, what the Mayor of the City of Joondalup appears to be doing is creating a straw man. He is saying that the problem is undergrounding power. Certainly, underground power is important, and the residents in Joondalup should be confident that over a longer period the government has a program to do that, but it is not going to happen soon. That is a separate issue from the council's current obligation to provide adequate street lighting.

I note the amount of money the council spent on poles in its CBD project. Very expensive poles are used to light the CBD. I do not think the member is asking for that high-cost solution, just an adequate solution. The council needs to step up. I cannot believe the council is still worried about things that might happen in the future, rather than worrying about what is happening now.

I will just make some other comments. LED luminaries are now the standard. Western Power replaces traditional failed luminaries only with LEDs. We have entered into an agreement with a number of councils to trial the replacement of the existing luminaries with LEDs to see how that goes. We are working with Canning, Melville, Armadale, Cockburn and Albany. The Western Australian government has put \$1.35 million into that project to cover 50 per cent of the writedown costs. The local governments are accepting the other 50 per cent of the writedown costs on that project, as well as the new investments. Western Power now has a much higher standard for new build streetlights to take account of newer technologies and lower energy use. Synergy has a special tariff for councils that use LEDs. I make it clear that streetlight tariffs are not a metered product; they are a calculated product. There is no meter that councils have their electricity go through. It is a calculated tariff so that if councils move to LEDs, they can get the benefit of the lower cost electricity at the same time. They will use less electricity and it will be delivered at a lower cost.

In the end, I would urge the Mayor of Joondalup to not grandstand but to solve the problem. The problem is that the people in the member's electorate are not getting adequate lighting today. The mayor has it in his power to solve that problem today. We can deal with what will happen to the future of underground power later. The idea that the mayor wants to wait for a decade to solve the member's constituents' problems today does not make any sense.

### EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

#### *Second Report — Making hope practical: Report of the inquiry into the response of Western Australian schools to climate change — Tabling*

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie)** [10.21 am]: I rise to present for tabling the second report of the Education and Health Standing Committee titled *Making hope practical: Report of the inquiry into the response of Western Australian schools to climate change*. I also table a copy of the open submissions received by the committee.

[See papers [1234](#) and [1235](#).]

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** This inquiry looked at how we can ensure that all students in the Western Australian education system can be properly engaged in one of the most pressing issues of our time. The committee inquired widely into how that can be done because that is something that our students deserve.

I will give members a little of the history of this inquiry. We were inspired by the work done in the health portfolio by Dr Tarun Weeramanthri, who was the inquirer who led the report that became known as *Climate health WA inquiry: Final report*, tabled in November 2020. In that report, Dr Weeramanthri set out the science behind climate change. Our committee did not seek to replicate that. The science is well established and well documented elsewhere. Our report goes to the various actions that are necessary in the Western Australian education system. It also goes to much of the great work that is already taking place. We looked at schools in which community members, teaching staff and volunteers were inspirational in the way they led their schools' drive towards sustainability initiatives. I think particularly of Dr Elaine Lewis at Coolbinia Primary School. Yes, she receives some pay—she is on the school's payroll—but she delivers so much more in the hours she spends in contact with students and in the various initiatives she organises and prepares at the school. She is an inspiration to us. We heard from many people like Elaine who we were inspired by.

These inspirational people have undertaken initiatives like retrofitting schools so that they are more energy efficient. They have sought to make schools more climate safe so that classrooms are not as hot or cold as they might otherwise be and are less reliant on mechanical heating and cooling. They have sought to make the schools more energy efficient and waterwise and to make schools better waste managers. These sorts of initiatives are not only desirable and beneficial from an environmental perspective, but also can have a dramatic benefit on a school's bottom line. They can constantly reduce a school's energy and water bills.

One of the committee's findings relates to the need to ensure that schools' corporate services managers are fully conversant of and literate in all the metrics around being waterwise and energy efficient so that they know how to ensure that when they receive a bill, it is not just something that has to be paid but is used as a means to drive down the school's energy bills. With the single-line accounting that goes on in schools, extra cash would be made available for expenditure on other practical things within the school community.

The committee saw a lot of co-benefits. This was a major theme of the inquiry. We saw many benefits to acting on climate change by being more energy efficient, waterwise and waste wise and ensuring that students are given the opportunity and encouragement to go to school under their own steam rather than by private vehicle. As I said, that is a major theme of the report. I still hear people on commercial radio say that this is a contested area. However, they cannot dispute that children being active on their way to school is beneficial and helps deliver enormous physical and emotional health benefits. We have seen research that says that students who are able to get to school under their own steam have additional opportunities to engage with their peers and develop a degree of self-reliance about how to get around the community. They learn to understand how bus timetables work and the road network. Most importantly of all, they develop good road safety skills because they understand the traffic code. These are some of the benefits that come from a student who is able to make his or her own way to school. It is also obvious that physical activity is highly beneficial. Additional physical activity can help people escape what has already

been identified by other inquiries as a most disappointing aspect of our education system, which is that as few as 20 per cent of students currently get to school under their own steam. We have to turn that around to what it was about 20 or 25 years ago when the majority of students—about 80 per cent—made their way to school under their own steam. We have to reverse that trend for the betterment of schools and the air quality around them and for road safety reasons because it would reduce the amount of congestion and traffic hazards and what have you. The committee identified all kinds of benefits that come from that single action that can be brought under this broad banner of actions to make schools climate friendly.

Interestingly, at finding 21, the committee noted —

The Department of Education's limited investment in supporting active transport to school is significantly disproportionate to the value of land sacrificed for parking at schools. A complete opportunity cost analysis may reveal that greater investment in active transport is justified.

That is just one area that the committee highlighted. Recommendation 1 of the report goes to the matter of co-benefits. We highlighted to the Minister for Education and Training that the co-benefits of climate action in schools promoted within the Department of Education's frameworks can have enormous benefits and deliver a whole host of advantages for students. I also note that the people from school corporate services need to understand and be trained on various bills so that they can be the champions who lock in the financial benefits received by a school when it becomes a climate-friendly school.

I move to another aspect of the whole report that was of concern and that is the increasing incidents of climate change anxiety amongst students and young people. We found there is a rise in the number of students who suffer from anxiety. That in itself is a grave concern, but they often nominated that climate change was one of the principle causes of their anxiety. Well-designed school climate action and sustainability programs can be beneficial in what they can practically deliver with measurable reductions of tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. They can have a hugely positive impact on the psyche of the school and on individuals to help them feel that there is, as our report title suggests, cause for hope and optimism. They can learn about how to bring about change and be optimistic that change is something that they, even as young people today, can help deliver upon. That is something that they deserve to feel is within their scope and is not beyond them; they are helping shape the future and they can do that now.

We also appreciated through the inquiry just how exciting inquiry-based learning approaches can be. We know academics who focus on various learning methods are always interested in different learning approaches, and inquiry-based learning, whereby students see a problem and then want to delve into the answers, can engage students who are perhaps not so engaged by the traditional standard delivery of education. For all students, it can mean a much deeper engagement with the matter that is at hand before them.

We also saw how multidisciplinary tackling the problem of climate change can be. It is quite striking when we consider the very broad range of aspects that are at the heart of the matter of climate change and its response. Students are learning about international institutions and various conferences of parties and meetings around the world. They are learning about the significance of Paris agreements, the function of a Glasgow meeting, how the United Nations is bringing together countries, and learning about how at a very high institutional level the global community is tackling a global problem. Then, at the other end, if you like, we have students learning very technical details about how many watts of electricity a solar panel can produce and how investment in expanding the solar array at the school might contribute to the school's energy consumption. It really is quite heartening to see how for young people this can have incredible appeal, and that they are able to see how the highest level of institutional international frameworks are helping deliver better outcomes. At the same time, they see very detailed practical applications and learn the physics and mathematics behind many of these technological solutions and things such as the quite complex cost-benefit analysis on the implications of extended use of a solar panel array might be. They then also learn about the shifts in the distribution of electricity across our networks and the role of schools as electricity hubs, distribution points and community batteries, and that schools could be the ideal location for community batteries. I acknowledge the work that the Minister for Education and Training and Minister for Energy have already done, with various trials underway. This is a fabulous opportunity to see the feasibility of various technological solutions. Students have a real thirst for this kind of practical real-life problem-solving and are very keen to embrace it.

This inquiry enabled us to see how much enthusiasm there is in various school communities and the passion with which various school P&Cs and other organisations are seeking to service and provide energy audits at schools. Some of my colleagues will touch on the tremendous work of Environment House in providing energy audits, and the work by Alan Benn, then the work done by groups such as Millennium Kids and its CEO, Catrina Luz Aniere. Some of the students we met who are involved in the Millennium Kids group showed how committed they are to bringing about change and how they are helping their peers understand just what sort of contribution they can make, thereby helping them learn about skills in advocacy. I think it is tremendous that young people are so engaged on this. Something we talked about in the inquiry that is detailed in the report is the fact that during the course of our inquiry, there were a number of school strikes on the front steps of Parliament House. Young people had been involved in organising themselves and their peers to come up to Parliament House, organising things such as putting slogans on signs, working out what their ideal messaging should be, and learning the value of their activity and to

whom they are advocating. These are incredibly valuable active learning opportunities that enable a young person to see just how we can bring about change in our community. For people of a young age to be engaged in trying to bring about change is really valuable to them, and it can fill the broader community with a great sense of optimism that the next generation is not shy or scared to delve into complex issues and is happy to be engaged to learn about things and make their voices heard. To do that, using the institutions available to them, they are appreciating the very valuable learning opportunity of being involved in advocacy of any form.

We were a very strong committee and I really thank my deputy chair, Lisa Baker, member for Maylands; Lisa Munday, member for Dawesville; Caitlin Collins, member for Hillarys; and Kevin Michel, member for Pilbara. The diversity of perspectives that each of us brought to the table, the backgrounds and life experiences, really assisted us in the way this report was put together. I also specifically thank for her fabulous work Catie Parsons, our principal research officer, and I thank our research officers, Rachel Wells and Sylvia Wolf. Their commitment and dedication have been absolutely essential to the success of the inquiry. I commend the report to the house.

**MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands)** [10.38 am]: I would like to start by congratulating Catie Parsons, Rachel Wells and Sylvia Wolf, our team from the Legislative Assembly Committee Office, and thank them so much for the dedication they showed in helping us to take evidence and get this report together. They are truly a force to be reckoned with. They looked after us very well. To my colleague and the chair of our committee, the member for Thornlie, I thank him for his leadership and for the passion that he brings to this topic. It has been a pleasure to get to know my colleagues the members for Dawesville, Hillarys and Pilbara a bit in this context. I look forward to working with them on future reports.

I would like to focus on a couple of aspects of this report. My colleague the chair mentioned the anxiety that climate change produces in a whole generation of our children. It is a salutary theme to think about in the context of COVID. It is another layer for an already anxious community that we see all over the world, but particularly in Western Australia. One of the solutions for this anxiety was mentioned by Emeritus Professor David Blair from the University of Western Australia, who said to the committee —

But you can only empower them with understanding. We give the understanding, the understanding gives the empowerment and the empowerment will prevent despair.

That is the central message of this report: that action gives everyone a chance to think that they can contribute to a solution, rather than continuing to contribute to a problem. Many of us in this house would have seen this problem developing over 30 years, with very limited government response, so I am very pleased that we have been able to do this report.

I want to focus on the contribution from my own electorate. A crew that I am very proud of is the Environment House team, which has been a longstanding advocate for climate action in my electorate, and much more broadly. I remember the likes of Alan Benn, who was an energy auditor when I first entered this place, a very long time ago, in 2008. Alan was part of a project called the hardship utility grant scheme, for which the now retired Christian Porter cancelled the funding. The entire program was meant to support the most vulnerable in our community to continue to have power in their houses. Alan was in that program. He lost his job at that point in time and went to work for Environment House. He has continued to do energy audits, most successfully, with schools in my electorate and across Western Australia. He has saved tens of thousands of dollars through going into schools and identifying the problems that contribute to their high cost of energy. I thank Rosemary Lynch, Rachel Roberts and Alex Ellis for presenting evidence to our committee.

I have already mentioned Emeritus Professor David Blair, another particularly significant contributor, from my perspective, but I would like to mention the Einstein-First project, which he also leads. To quote from our report —

Einstein-First (EF) is a UWA Physics Department education initiative to address the critical decline in teenage student attitudes to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Modular lessons and activities are being created in consultation with a small group of teacher volunteers, consistent with the current science curriculum.

The EF initiative introduces modern science concepts (e.g. atoms and molecules, heat, forces and light as photons) from an early age through toys, songs, models and games. From Year 6, students are introduced to the science of climate; evidence, explanation and consequences of global warming; and sustainable energy futures. High school modules cover energy (light, sound and heat); energy transfer, wave and particle models; and global systems, including the carbon cycle, and interactions with the biosphere, hydrosphere and atmosphere.

This is such an impressive innovation, and I am very proud to have heard more about that in the evidence provided by Mr David Wood, Dr Elaine Horne, Dr Jyoti Kaur and Ms Kyla Adams. It was very inspirational listening to the description of the Einstein project and the work it has done.

I go back a very long way with one of the other major contributors to this report, Ms Catrina Aniere and Millennium Kids. I have worked with them for probably over 20 years. They have developed a truly remarkable inquiry process. I am very proud to say that one of the things that Catrina spoke to me about outside of a hearing reinforced one of

the findings in our final report—that is, the link between the children she works with and their understanding of the important link between food and health, at all stages of their lives. She also supported some of the findings in this report from the work that she has done with Millennium Kids, in particular that healthy environments support learning and wellbeing, and physical health is very important. Sustainable diets need to be healthy diets in our schools. Our report states —

Up to 37 per cent of GHG —

That is, greenhouse gas —

emissions are attributable to the food system, from agriculture and land use, storage, transport, packaging, processing, retail and consumption.

“Food miles” is generally the term used for that cluster of impacts —

Therefore, the mitigation potential of dietary change is high. Supporting sustainable diets in schools can improve students’ overall health and reduce their environmental footprint.

One of the interesting things I found was that so many schools are totally across the wastage issue. They have really strong commitments to managing waste in their schools and canteens and the like. But they did not look so much at the front end; that is, what are kids eating, and what are the food miles in what they are eating? We know from the evidence that animal-sourced foods can be significant contributors to environmental damage. Livestock, in particular, is responsible for approximately half of food-generated greenhouse gas emissions. Therefore, encouraging students to adopt sustainable diets and reduce food waste at school may lead them to make similar behaviour changes beyond school and influence family decisions. All that is very positive in relation to how we move forward in this space.

Again, I would like to congratulate the committee and the people who came to present evidence about our schools, and to reinforce finding 23, which states —

There are significant opportunities for the Department of Education to increase focus on protecting green space and bushland, and promoting low climate impact diets in schools.

That finding, for me, as members would not be at all surprised to know, is highly significant. I absolutely endorse this report and commend it to the house.

**MRS L.A. MUNDAY (Dawesville)** [10.47 am]: I rise today to speak on the report of the Education and Health Standing Committee titled *Making hope practical: Report of the inquiry into the response of Western Australian schools to climate change*. When we used the word “hope” in our title, it is not the kind of wishful thinking, cross-your-fingers kind of hope. Hope is a strength that is actionable. It can have short, medium and long-term goals with plans from A to Z. It just needs people who are full of hope to lead.

I still remember when it became extremely obvious to this committee what our first inquiry was going to be. It was after listening to Dr Tarun Weeramanthri speak desperately about the need for greater climate action to be taken by everyone. Dr Weeramanthri was the author of the *Climate health WA inquiry: Final report*, dated November 2020. He and his inquiry team made it very clear that climate scientists are in agreement that the heating of the globe is being driven by human activities, and they emphasised the criticality of climate action in the next 10 years as essential to limit further warming. The title of this report, *Making hope practical*, is an ode to Dr Weeramanthri and his team, because during the hearing with us, he stated that they created their report around a quote, “Make hope practical, not despair convincing.” They felt that if they were going to raise people’s concerns about climate change, they needed to provide people with an opportunity to contribute to this action; otherwise, all we do is create fear.

The McGowan state government had already started working in WA towards making a contribution to reducing global warming by announcing, in December 2018, the development of a state climate policy to help guide the state’s transition to a low-carbon future. Also, in 2019, the Premier stated our commitment to achieve net zero emissions for Western Australia by 2050. Before we met Dr Weeramanthri, I thought, “Wow! That’s awesome; zero emissions by 2050”, but he explained that unless we start making some big changes before the end of this term of the forty-first Parliament, we will be sadly lacking.

Schools are a great place to start. Because our schools house, educate and nourish our children’s hearts and souls and help them build their dreams, we found concerning the evidence of the prevalence of climate anxiety in children and young people. Schools assume a social responsibility in educating staff, students and families more widely, so they are in a position to make informed decisions about issues outside our schools. This is strategically important to influencing individual behaviour change, as well as reflecting on the broader social and economic systems that are at the root of climate change. The wide social reach of Western Australian schools also places them in a unique position to influence individuals and communities to think and live sustainably.

The committee finding that I want to discuss and focus on today is the one that seeks to create action at a school level. Finding 12 states —

Support from school principals is essential to school engagement with climate action.

That will cost nothing, but create much action. Leadership is a strength that involves being committed to the goals of the group. It involves setting and accomplishing prescribed milestones, while enlisting effective help and building coalitions. Great leaders are able to provide a positive vision or message that will empower and inspire others to stand and act in accordance with their plans. Departmental leadership is certainly important in communicating to schools that sustainability is a priority and in supporting schools to take action. However, school leaders—principals, staff and school boards—will have the most direct impact on students. They are uniquely positioned to foster new levels of support for climate solutions and can help by becoming climate literate and vocal, model leaders within their communities.

The committee also heard from young people who made submissions and comments. One of those was Isabella Poll, who is a member of Millennium Kids, a not-for-profit environmental organisation. She said —

***I really see that schools can not only become educators in their communities, but they can also become change makers.***

Dr Aresh Anwar, the chief executive of the WA Child and Adolescent Health Service, is quoted in the *Climate health WA inquiry: Final report* as saying —

*“Children form 25 per cent of the Western Australian population but account for 100 per cent of its future”*

When we think of it like that, how can we not lean in and act to make a more sustainable future for our kids?

A supportive principal can facilitate enablers and overcome barriers for a whole-school approach, and lead teachers and the school community to sustainability and climate action. A disinterested or resistant principal can do the opposite. We heard the best and the worst outcomes, of both extremely engaged principals involved in climate action and a change of principal at a school that led to a change of focus and values, with a devastating impact on well-established sustainability actions that were already occurring in the school. Given the pivotal role that principals play in schools engaging with sustainability and climate action, introducing a measure of accountability would further communicate that this is an area of priority and encourage compliance. There is already a requirement in the principals’ statement of expectations that principals comply with departmental policies and initiatives. However, explicitly including sustainability in the department’s other accountability documents and procedures would take this further. This could include principals’ professional reviews, the independent public school delivery and performance agreements, and the public school review.

One example of a case study that was part of our submission is Lynwood Senior High School. That school works to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by reinforcing behavioural change and retrofitting equipment to reduce resource consumption. It allocated a sustainability program coordinator, who implemented innovations to engage and empower students and staff to make changes within the school, and then to take further climate action at home by engaging their parents and loved ones as well. This school uses ClimateClever, a data-driven program that has online tools to help schools measure, monitor, compare and reduce their carbon footprint. From 2015 to 2020, the school had total electricity savings of \$150 088. These savings have been reinvested into new sustainability initiatives. These savings were made despite an increase in reverse-cycle air conditioner installation. The school noted that behavioural change was the biggest impact. The school used air conditioning selectively, and it was run at recommended temperatures—not at 18 degrees as I would probably run it! The school also has a switch-off process that it implements at every school holiday and Christmas break.

For some time now, increasing school autonomy has been a significant aspect of the Department of Education’s long-term vision and strategic direction for public schools in Western Australia. This aims to shift more decisions to the local level and to empower principals and their staff to act with greater authority and responsibility for the success of their school. That is why my speech today is directed more to the principals and leadership groups of our schools. I think it is very important for principals to maintain control of their needs within their region. The main vehicle for this occurring has been the independent public schools initiative and its single-line budgeting, which gives schools increased flexibilities and responsibilities to make local decisions across a range of school operations. Similarly, Catholic schools in Western Australia describe themselves as having a system of connected autonomy, whereby principals lead their schools “with empathy for context”.

Climate change and climate action is an issue that requires a systemic response. That is a recognised challenge for decentralised systems, including education. Evidence to the inquiry was clear that the majority of current climate action in schools is led by individual champions at the local level. However, research has shown that systemic change is achievable only with top-down direction and communication about the importance of embedding sustainability in schools. Therefore, the department’s role in facilitating climate action in schools must be one of leadership. Practically, this means setting clear expectations and objectives in frameworks and policies, and providing expertise and support to achieve them.

I would like to thank all the government departments that gave their time for our hearings. To all the people who gave submissions, and to those whose passion and driving force is climate action, thank you for your views and insight. It was certainly an eye-opening experience for me. To our principal research officer, Catie Parsons, and her support team of researchers, Rachel Wells and Sylvia Wolf, a huge thankyou. To my fellow committee members, it was a pleasure to work with you.

In closing, I would like to leave with members the Greek proverb, “A society grows great when old men plant trees in whose shade they shall never sit.” This is what climate action and sustainable living is all about. We have to all work together to plant the proverbial trees now so that our children will be able to enjoy shade and life in their future.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk):** Before I give the call to the member for Hillarys, the research staff of the committee have been mentioned on several occasions. I understand they have all succumbed to COVID, so we wish them a speedy recovery.

**MS C.M. COLLINS (Hillarys)** [10.56 am]: “Making hope practical” was the overarching theme and thus became the title of our first Education and Health Standing Committee inquiry report, which looked into the response of Western Australian schools to climate change. The McGowan government has committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. We know this will require long-term investment across a wide range of industries in Western Australia. In March 2019, Professor Tarun Weeramanthri was appointed by the Chief Health Officer to conduct a climate health inquiry. His final report set out a blueprint for the next 10 years for the Western Australian health system’s response to adapt to climate change to reduce its harmful impacts and protect the health of the community. It also defined how health services can do more to reduce emissions and waste. The Education and Health Standing Committee had the pleasure of hearing from Professor Weeramanthri early in the term of its inquiry, and his enthusiasm, energy and passion for climate action was a huge inspiration behind our decision to pursue this line of inquiry.

Like the Western Australian Department of Health, the Department of Education has one of the largest workforces and budgets of all state government departments. Although schools are definitely not considered a high-emission industry, their physical footprint and use of resources can be large, given the number of people who utilise this service. But, much more important than that, the education sector has the ability to educate the coming generations of Western Australians on the very real impacts that climate change will have on their lives, and to encourage active participation in the protection of our shared environment. A UNESCO report published in 2016 stated that schools have a central role to play in helping learners understand the causes of climate change so that they can make informed decisions and take appropriate actions, and acquire the necessary values and skills to participate in the transition to more sustainable lifestyles, green economies and climate-resilient societies.

We discovered through our research that the education sector largely remains under-exploited as a strategic resource to help mitigate and adapt to climate change. That is why we pursued this inquiry. Our committee sought to collate evidence of the co-benefits of climate action in schools; provide evidence on climate change mitigation and adaptation actions that are currently being undertaken; identify barriers that schools encounter in undertaking climate action; and highlight what more can be done to support schools with this task. We received over 60 written submissions and engaged in approximately 13 hearings with over 50 involved stakeholders. I want to sincerely thank all the individuals and subject matter experts who took the time to give submissions to this inquiry. It truly was a privilege to hear from such passionate and knowledgeable educators and advocates, particularly the young people who emphasised how climate change will directly impact their lives. A special thanks goes to the Australian Association for Environmental Education for its very thorough contribution to this inquiry.

I would like to go through some of the findings detailed in our report. The committee was particularly concerned by the prevalence of the phenomenon referred to as “climate anxiety” in children and young people. Raised anxiety in any communal society is indicative of an imminent danger, with the implication that a collective course of action must be implemented to alleviate that danger. However, with an existential threat such as the global threat of climate change, societal anxiety can become intense and overwhelming when the crisis is so complex and there appears to be no concerted actions or a clear solution in view. One of the main desired outcomes of this report is that it is imperative to overcome this generalised feeling of societal helplessness and to make hope practical, not despair convincing. Therefore, improving access to a number of educational tools and encouraging individual and group involvement were key areas of focus of this inquiry.

The Department of Education’s present mission approach to focused investment in STEM subjects is an important tool to foster an interest amongst students in understanding the complexities around climate change. Practical applications of a departmental approach would be ensuring that school structures are attractive, with green-designed buildings with clean air, natural light and decent ventilation, all of which have proven to improve student learning and engagement. Active transport to and from schools should be encouraged, as this improves the health outcomes of students. This is already being pursued by the Department of Transport through the Your Move schools program. Implementing utilities audits has revealed numerous resource wastage points, and closing these off can offer substantial sources of savings to a school. As an example, one local school managed to achieve a power saving of over \$10 000 a year from the utilities audit process.

The committee found that school students’ engagement with school strikes for climate action were largely broadly positive. It must be noted that the Department of Education has done some great work in this space, and schools are strongly encouraged to implement the department’s frameworks. The Sustainable Schools WA framework is highly regarded; however, it was noted that its impact may have been limited due to lack of funding. Caring for Country Together is the department’s new sustainability framework and truly does offer hope in this space.

Much of the evidence given to us was around a mandate, and in Australia there has been a steady push for increased autonomy for schools to establish and create their own methodology for implementing a number of government initiatives. With this increased decentralisation, it is therefore proving difficult to implement a statewide climate action mandate. Schools might need incentives to try to pursue this climate action. Presently, there are many school action programs and education, but these are being driven by what we call “climate champions”. Implementation of a structured climate change program has been somewhat sporadic because of this if that individual leaves the school. It is crucial to support the principals, but the responsibility must be shared across all staff and positions of authority.

Waste handling, water management and energy efficiency are three areas that are well-established benchmarks, given that schools have concrete figures to aim towards. Something that I am particularly proud of in my electorate is the example of a green space that is being utilised at South Padbury Primary School. This school has its very own Miyawaki forest. This is a tiny forest. I was privileged to join students from the school in July 2021 to assist with planting the first trees and, a year on, the forest canopy has grown significantly. Something like this allows students to monitor the growth, air and soil temperature regimes, and biodiversity of the forest over time. Hands-on practical skills, such as planting, use of scientific equipment, measuring variables, data collection and so on, are very useful for young students and I encourage many other schools to look at this.

It is important to note that curriculum is an important building block. However, we noted in our inquiry that the ability to recommend amendments to the curriculum is limited because it is highly complex; we have an Australian curriculum, as well as a Western Australian curriculum. We recommended that there should be explicit references to climate change in the curriculum. At the moment, it falls under the broad banner of sustainability.

A lot of fantastic work is being done in this space by a young group of students at Duncraig Senior High School called the “climate crew”, and we were lucky to hear from a young student, Jasmina Nikolovski, about her experience with this.

To finish, this inquiry is just one small element in maintaining momentum on climate action in WA over the next decade, but dealing with the generations of students whose lives will be impacted by this global phenomenon is an important element no less. It was enlightening to understand just how passionate so many Western Australians are about this topic. It was very clear that climate action was the winner at the federal election. I really hope that this inquiry will raise awareness of the impacts of climate change, and I thank all my fellow committee members and research officers.

**MR K.J.J. MICHEL (Pilbara)** [11.06 am]: I would like to make a contribution on the second report of the Education and Health Standing Committee, *Making hope practical: Report of the inquiry into the response of Western Australian schools to climate change*. I would like to thank the chair, Chris Tallentire, member for Thornlie, and my fellow parliamentary colleagues, Lisa Baker, Lisa Munday and Caitlin Collins, for their hard work, interaction and support.

This is a great topic, as it sits high on the agenda for the future of mankind and the planet. It is this energy that we consider to be one of the co-benefits of climate action in schools. Climate change mitigation and adaptation actions are currently being undertaken in schools and they are achieving benefits. Barriers that schools encounter in undertaking climate action need to be addressed. What more can be done to support schools to respond to climate change? As discussed in this report, all students deserve an education that enables them to engage in the pressing issues of our time. The response by schools to climate change involves facilitating intellectual understanding, making material improvements and enabling individual schools. As discussed in this report, the co-benefits of climate action in schools can be achieved through department strategies and frameworks, action at the school level, school infrastructure and operations, and the curriculum.

We held 13 hearings and invited quite a lot of agencies, including the Departments of Education, Health, and Water and Environmental Regulation, schools and a few others to give evidence to our inquiry, and it was great to hear the response from every one of them.

I had the opportunity to visit Coolbinia Primary School and Bob Hawke College, and I was very impressed with the schools’ understanding of this issue and how serious they are about making a change for the better at the school in the future.

Education is crucial to promote climate action. It helps people understand and address the impact of the climate crisis, empowering them with the knowledge, skills, values and attitude needed to act as agents of change. As students and teachers learn about climate change, it is important that they can be readily involved in taking action to lessen its potential harmful impacts. Creating a more sustainable world for this future generation is very important. This can be described as transformative or action-based teaching and learning. When an educational institution allows for such growth, it helps students develop a strong personal connection to climate solutions as well as a sense of personal agency and empowerment. It can have a consequential impact on students’ daily behaviours and decision-making that reduces their overall lifetime carbon footprint.

Options such as worm farming, organic composting, using renewable energy, reducing, re-using and recycling, and travel smart actions are playing a significant part in reducing our greenhouse gas pollution and establishing a healthy real-world connection for students and faculty towards their impact on the environment around them.

Acting Speaker (Mrs L.A. Munday), as you are aware, my background is air conditioning and electrical. I always look for changes towards better systems in air conditioning and solar energy. We have come a long way to making changes in renewable energy. I was part of the conversation in regard to a 2021 election commitment for solar energy for schools in the Pilbara. One of the larger scale changes to schools throughout Western Australia is the implementation of renewable energy sources—more specifically, solar energy. The benefits of using solar energy can be championed repeatedly for a long time, and with a purpose. Utilising it to generate power can greatly reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by decreasing the demand for fossil fuels.

Horizon Power has partnered with the Department of Education to deliver rooftop solar systems to a further 32 schools across Western Australia's north west region as part of the second tranche of the solar schools initiative. The second tranche of the solar schools program will deliver systems to 19 schools in the Kimberley, 12 schools in the Pilbara and one school in the Gascoyne, starting with Broome North Primary School. An additional \$4.6 million will be invested in the program as part of the state government's \$45 million schools clean energy technology fund, which will see solar panels and virtual power plants installed at public schools across the state. Collectively, these 32 systems will reduce the Department of Education's greenhouse gas emissions by over 1 000 tonnes a year. That is the equivalent of taking more than 300 petrol cars off the road permanently. The program aims to reduce schools' electricity bills by around 24 per cent a year, allowing them to divert those funds into much-needed causes.

Another great focal point is offering students and faculty the option of plant-based meals for establishments that allow such. I am told that plant-based meals provide excellent nutrition, and they are rich in fibre, vitamins and antioxidants that boost students' health. Children who are raised on healthy vegan diets have a reduced risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and other conditions. Shifting diets from meat and other animal products to plant-based diets has a high potential for reducing our carbon footprint and mitigating climate change as well as improving human health. This does not necessarily mean that educational institutions offering food sources need to go completely vegan, but being able to offer a variety of healthier alternatives should be encouraged.

Acting Speaker, it was great to have some quick discussions, as you are aware, into introducing a meat-free day in schools. As someone who personally loves non-vegetarian and vegetarian meals, it is important that we have a choice for the benefit of everyone. I came from a country that is strictly vegetarian, and also a country that practices religiously on health and wellbeing by making sure that every part of their daily life is a natural life. We used leaves as plates and mud mugs as cups rather than using plastic or styrofoam cups. Most of the food we ate was grown organically.

I can go on and on but it is the Western society—I mean the First World and Second World countries—that could do more to stop sending dirty technology and industry to Third World countries. That will not only support change in health and education, but also look into recommendations for a better future of the whole planet in years to come.

I know that a series of changes are occurring with lithium batteries and hydrogen, to name a few, but when technology or inventions are made, it is important that at the same time, these materials are disposed of properly to reduce waste and contamination and are re-usable.

I would like to thank all those who gave evidence to this inquiry and my parliamentary colleagues for their speeches and their input. I would also like to thank the wonderful committee staff—Mrs Catie Parsons, Ms Rachel Wells and Ms Sylvia Wolf—for helping us every step of the way and being committed to making a change. I commend the report to the house.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND JUSTICE STANDING COMMITTEE

### *Second Report — 'Enough is enough': Sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry — Tabling*

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party)** [11.16 am]: I present for tabling the second report of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee titled *'Enough is enough': Sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry*. I also present for tabling the submissions to the inquiry.

[See papers [1236](#) and [1237](#).]

**Ms L. METTAM:** I would like to start by extending my deep gratitude to the brave women who came forward to make submissions as part of this inquiry. I also acknowledge Caitlyn Rintoul from *The West Australian* for her pursuit in exploring and exposing the horrific stories of the sector and bringing these issues to the committee's attention. Thank you to my fellow members of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee: the deputy chair and member for Burns Beach, the member for Bateman, the member for Collie—Preston and the member for Kimberley. I would also like to extend special thanks to the committee staff—principal research officer, Dr Alan Charlton, and research officer, Dr Sam Hutchinson—for their considerable work in developing this report. This report comes in a week when we are seeing another report of a sexual assault on a mine site, this time at Roy Hill mine. I sincerely hope that the employee is getting all the support she needs.

When we commenced this parliamentary inquiry into sexual harassment in the mining and resources industry's workplaces, I knew horrific stories would be brought forward, but I was shocked and appalled well beyond expectation by the size and the depth of the problem. We were told how sexual harassment is generally accepted or overlooked,

and we learnt of the abuse of positions of power, serious breaches of codes of conduct and the culture of cover-up. To hear the lived reality of the taunts, attacks and targeted violence, the devastation and despair the victims experienced, and the threats or loss of their livelihood that resulted was shattering, and it is completely inexcusable. It is simply shocking that this could be taking place in the twenty-first century in one of the state's most lucrative industries. This represents a failure of the industry to protect its workers and raises real questions about why government was not better across this safety issue. The only effective way to address this abhorrent behaviour is to bring it to the surface to talk about it, point it out, expose it, rail against it, prosecute it and punish it.

Again, I want to sincerely thank the brave women who came forward to lift the lid on this abhorrent and systemic pattern of workplace behaviour. With their permission, I give members a sample of the many horror stories that we heard. While driving for a contractor, one woman had a near-miss incident with the haul truck she was driving. She informed us that the site supervisor told her that he would make the safety investigation go away if she had sex with him. This same woman said that she was told she would have to get on her knees if she wanted to get her shirt; this meant getting a permanent job with the mining company. One woman told the committee how, after being knocked unconscious in her donga, she woke up to find her jeans and underpants around her ankles. She told us that she felt sick, ashamed, violated, dirty and very confused. Another woman told the committee that numerous times, a man forced his hand down her top in front of other workers but no-one did anything. One woman told us that a supervisor told her that sexual jokes and comments had been made about her by others. When she became upset, the supervisor's response was to force himself on her, kissing and hugging her. There were stories of sex dolls being put in front of women's dongas and sex toys hung on their doors and of unsolicited and unwelcome sexual attention, stalking, texting of explicit and lewd material and horrifying stories of sexual assault. We heard details of unwanted touching, sexual comments, provocative photo requests and grooming. We heard of power play behaviour known as shovelling, whereby iron ore is dumped on the cab of trucks operated by women after they did not comply with sexual requests. These stories and others illustrate the full range of behaviours that make up sexual harassment and sexual assault as well as provide examples of general incivility, which is well recognised as a precursor to worse behaviour. That someone was listening to their stories and taking them seriously was an important step in breaking the cycle of abuse and it gave many women the courage to come forward for themselves and others. Again, thank you to these courageous women who trusted our process and made submissions. Now it is up to the mining industry and the government to seriously address the recommendations in this report. It is time to come together to make the cultural system and legislative changes required to equip, prepare and educate the workforce, to move the culture of mining workplaces to one where understanding, preventing and appropriately dealing with incidents of workplace sexual harassment and assault is the practice norm and lifting the lid on sexual harassment is considered everyone's business and taken as a responsibility.

As part of the normal business of the inquiry, and to help us understand the many factors that enable sexual harassment to thrive in the workplace, we received submissions and heard evidence from a wide range of people and organisations. Mining companies were generally forthcoming and open in their approach to the inquiry, as was the Chamber of Minerals and Energy. Still, they expressed shock about the size of the problem and recognised the need to urgently address cultural change. As a committee we were shocked by the facts, but we were also surprised that these companies could be so surprised. Some pointed to matters they were beginning to address, such as improving physical security in camps and introducing new policies to limit alcohol consumption on sites. They admitted that there could be a reluctance to report sexual harassment in the workplace, although most felt that this was changing, evidenced by the increased number of incidents that have been reported in recent times. They also expressed the need for clear definitions and guidance from the regulator on reporting requirements and thresholds.

Many concerns were raised about the matter of reporting sexual harassment. We heard about the distrust and lack of confidence many employees have in the existing hierarchical management structures. A lack of trust is an obvious barrier to reporting these issues. Some companies had engaged external employee support agencies to provide an anonymous reporting system, and this was helping to identify pockets of abuse and victimisation. Overall, the inquiry found that because of the embedded nature of sexual harassment, a number of reporting options are required. This includes internal as well as external options, such as anonymous reporting and support services from unions and the Equal Opportunity Commission. Mining companies pointed to incidents in which they had taken decisive action, including dismissal, for workplace sexual offences. Individuals, however, pointed to incidents in which perpetrators had merely changed worksites or were re-employed in the industry by a different company. We considered the value of establishing a register of offenders that could be accessed as part of the employment process, something like the safety white card or a working with children card. Of course, we understand the concept of a register of sexual harassment offenders raises matters of confidentiality and challenges of natural justice, as well as the challenge of a threshold for inclusion. We have recommended that the industry explore options that can effectively and fairly prevent habitual sexual offenders who continue to be re-employed in the mining workplace. This is an important matter that could be effective as a deterrent as well as adding to site safety by the permanent removal of perpetrators. I appreciate that we would need to support this effort as well.

The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development provided submissions to the inquiry, as did WorkSafe WA. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum appeared before us as well as submitting written information

and we thank him for that. We also had a briefing from the Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Kate Jenkins, and the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity, Dr John Byrne. The submissions from DMIRS and WorkSafe referred generally to the now superseded Occupational Safety and Health Act regime, including the Mines Safety and Inspection Act 1994. We are pleased that the regulator now operates with the new Work Health and Safety Act 2020, which specifically covers psychological injury at work even if it does not contain a comprehensive definition of “sexual harassment”. We are concerned that the system still views cases of sexual harassment through the prism of physical workplace safety in which a 10-day loss time injury is required before reporting becomes compulsory. This adds to the concerns we shared as committee about the regulators core level of knowledge, with a low number of sexual harassment reports made to DMIRS over the last seven years under this same threshold.

More broadly, it is hard to obtain accurate or consistent figures on the extent of sexual harassment and sexual assault to enable industry-wide analysis. The figures provided by mining companies varied widely. Although the Western Australia Police Force informed us that it had investigated 23 reports of sexual assaults on mine sites over the last two year years, DMIRS recorded that it had received only 22 reports over the previous seven years. We have some recommendations to improve this. It is difficult to believe the regulator could have accepted this level of reporting as reflecting the true situation on the ground.

We are pleased that since we commenced this inquiry, WorkSafe WA has issued a new code of conduct that names sexual harassment as unacceptable behaviour and taken steps to enhance its data collection. This is a welcome addition, but it would be more effective with the introduction of a consistent and contemporary definition of “sexual harassment” in the WHS legislation or regulations. The Equal Opportunity Act 1984 is outdated, placing the onus of proof on sexual harassment victims, and I am pleased that there is broad support from stakeholders for a uniform and contemporary definition in the WHS act as well as the Equal Opportunity Act.

At the most senior levels of all organisations with which we spoke, there was a determination to tackle gender inequality and social norms that enable sexual violence and harassment to occur and implement effective measures in workplace or regulatory regimes. As one example of that effort, during the inquiry Rio Tinto conducted a comprehensive confidential survey of all of its worksites and made the resulting report public. This was a groundbreaking move, providing a strong baseline for measurement and a framework for action. We commend Rio Tinto for beginning the reform journey, and we encourage other companies to invest in a similarly strong foundation for change.

There are well-documented frameworks for addressing sexual harassment, from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the International Labour Organization through to the Australian Human Rights Commission’s *Respect@Work* report. In making recommendations, we considered these frameworks, and we are confident that all our recommendations are consistent with best practice. We hope to immediately see prevention actions in the workplace. I am pleased there is evidence that the industry and government have already started to move since the inquiry was launched, demonstrating motivation and commitment to stamp out sexual harassment.

Our recommendations cover many areas, including establishing industry standards for accommodation facilities, CCTV, lighting and other safety measures, as well as more moderate drinking standards. We also ask the sector to actively work to address the risks exacerbated by high rates of subcontracting, ensuring that the obligations and health and safety standards are consistent across all workplaces. It is important that the mining sector is proactive in addressing leadership within the workplace and that managers and employees are supported with effective human resource policies, procedures and practices. Clear guidelines and codes of practice must be developed by the companies and DMIRS. This will remove any ambiguity about what constitutes acceptable behaviour and provide clarity on appropriate support mechanisms for victims and clear guidance for reporting incidents.

It was clear that there was a gap in the required expertise, experience and training to deal with reports of sexual harassment and sexual assault. We call on the government to work with all stakeholders to establish a fully resourced culturally appropriate expert group to investigate complaints of sexual harassment and related offences in the mining industry. Allied to this, we have recommended more and better training for supervisors and employees. Training must be detailed, specific and accredited. Mining companies and DMIRS should look to raise the qualification and capacity of their specialist resources to deal with incidents of sexual harassment. We also expect DMIRS to work with the industry on bystander training on reporting incidents. All mining companies need to establish victim-centric procedures for dealing with incidents of sexual harassment. Victims must be able to maintain control of the process and of decision-making within it. This victim-centric focus must also be maintained by any external parties brought into the complaints process.

In any industry and in any regulatory system, preventing and responding to incidents are primary activities. Knowing what is happening and how well things are being dealt with is central to good management and good regulation, and getting that knowledge requires good reporting systems and good analysis of the information. We were surprised by how many of the people who made submissions to us were ignorant of the available reporting systems, or clearly mistrusted them. For this reason, many of our recommendations are targeted at gathering more reliable information on the prevalence of sexual harassment and using this information to drive workplace education and change.

It is clear there needs to be several reporting options available to victims of harassment, both internal and external. Many women who made submissions to the inquiry said this was the first time they had spoken of their experience to anyone. We are glad the inquiry process was trusted, and we acknowledge their courage in being prepared to share their experiences in the hope that it would improve the situation for others. Other inquiries and truth-engagement processes have demonstrated that there is a positive healing power for victims of trauma if their experiences are heard in a safe and supportive formal complaint handling process. Building on this—perhaps one of our most important recommendations—we recommend government establish a process to hear, document and acknowledge the experiences of victims of historical sexual harassment, including exploring opportunities for redress where appropriate, with a view to promoting recovery.

The key to change is embedding a workplace culture in all mining workforces that does not tolerate sexual assault or abuse and that empowers bystanders, like the culture change programs that have addressed physical safety with such success. This is a large task that will require commitment and change at all levels of the mining companies themselves and considerable resources. It is important that the Parliament, the government and the broader public become aware of the magnitude of the horrendous violence and abuse women are exposed to while going about their work. I present this report to them on behalf of my committee, seeking swift and urgent action.

I would like to take the opportunity again to thank my fellow committee members. It has been quite an extraordinary 11 months, and it has been challenging hearing those stories. I am so glad that I have been able to work with them throughout this period.

**MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach)** [11.36 am]: I rise to comment on the inquiry into sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry. Before I do, I would like to thank our principal research officer, Dr Alan Charlton, and our research officer, Dr Sam Hutchinson, for their outstanding patience and effort in relation to this difficult inquiry. I would like to recognise the member for Collie–Preston, the member for Kimberley, the member for Bateman and the chair of the committee, the member for Vasse. I would also like to recognise the bravery of the witnesses who gave evidence before the committee. Without their frank and forthright testimony about the depth and extent of sexual harassment in the mining and resources sector, our committee would have struggled to uncover what it found.

This has been a very difficult inquiry. It is arguably the most complex issue I have had to deal with while being a member in this place. We have heard evidence that has made my blood boil. To say I was angry is an understatement. For those who know me, I carry the anger within myself. I remember listening to one of our courageous witnesses who particularised the harassment and indecent assault she experienced. I was enraged! We heard evidence of women stacking furniture against the door to protect themselves from perpetrators entering their sleeping quarters uninvited. We heard evidence of women being forced to perform sexual acts or lose their job or be refused promotion or full-time employment.

One witness particularised the exercise of shovelling. This is where a loader operator would drop boulders of ore onto the driver cabins of a Haulpak to intimidate women and force them to become more compliant. I brought this practice to the attention of the CEO of one of the bigger companies in which this practice was disclosed to have occurred, and the matter was denied in such a way as to bring into question the credibility of the evidence that was presented by the company. From the outset, I wish to make it very, very clear: sexual harassment within the FIFO industry belongs to the companies that run the resources sector and no-one else; they own the workplace and they are responsible for the safety of all workers on that worksite. We heard evidence of sustained and deliberate courses of misconduct and deliberate perversions of and interference in the course of justice to cover-up criminal conduct and harassment. We heard evidence that 74 per cent of women in the mining sector have suffered some form of sexual harassment in the last five years. That is three-quarters of them. We heard evidence of the systemic victimisation of complainants and testimony that companies, on being advised of a complaint of serious misconduct, often promoted or redeployed the perpetrators and that the complaining women were sacked, black-banned and never employed in the sector again. There were inferences from the testimony that this may have been a contributing factor to the high rates of suicide in the sector, but the committee was not able to pursue those matters further.

I am of the belief that serious rape allegations, indecent assaults and assaults have been hidden from authorities to protect companies rather than protect the victims in the workplace. I am also of the belief that we have serious sexual predators hidden within the sector. They have been there for many years and still go unchallenged. We have heard testimony of organised prostitution in work camps that have exploited short-term contract workers. We found that a disjointed relationship between the police, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety and the companies was a contributing factor. We have found a continuing disconnect from what we heard from the company leadership across the sector that was reflected at the toolbox level. This was continuously reported by complainants, victims and the unions. We looked at whether the workplace characteristics and practices in the mining and resources industry provided adequate protection against sexual harassment. All the policies in the world are nothing more than pieces of paper unless the culture within those companies enforces those policies and practices.

The committee made 79 findings and 24 recommendations. To me, the first recommendation is the most important. If this recommendation is not followed, the work of the committee will end up on a shelf gathering dust. In our

first recommendation, we stated that the government should consider establishing a forum to hear, document and acknowledge the experiences of victims of historical workplace sexual harassment. My personal view is that this should be a royal commission. We have done it for seniors, veterans and kids, and we must do it for this sector. I cannot see any other way to attempt to unpack the previous injustices or to uncover the systemic misconduct that has occurred within this sector.

On listening to the testimony and reading the submissions of the victims, the companies, the regulators and the responsible supervisory agencies, both state and federal, it is my personal belief that there is a serious need for further inquiry. Unlike other members of the committee, I was a long-term senior police officer for many years, and after the evidence that I heard, I have serious worries and concerns that the conduct has been concealed in fatal workplace accidents and other conduct within the resources sector.

I would also like to recognise the work that the current minister has done to try to address the safety issues in this sector. I stand in awe of his efforts. The recent appointment of Elizabeth Shaw to assist the department is evidence of this. I would also like to recognise the new legislative regulatory changes that have occurred but have not had time to bed in.

It would be remiss of me not to state some of the good things that we have found occurring within the industry. The padres system that Fortescue Metals Group uses on its sites is worthy of mention and recognition. Also worthy of praise is the \$130 million door security project BHP has been implementing across its mining camps. Rio Tinto is also worthy of recognition for its own inquiries that it has made public. I have also heard that Rio is seeking to employ experienced police to investigate harassment complaints, which I think is a good step.

This report is titled *'Enough is enough'*. I hope this report will be the impetus for drawing a line in the sand. A wise man once said to me that if we do not learn from the mistakes we have made in the past, we are only going to replicate them in the future. We have got to change. The misogynistic practices of the past must end. These practices were seen as normal within the sector and the regulatory environment that supervised it. We have got to improve the reporting processes. We have got to protect the victims. We must allow third-party access to all resource environments. We have to get company management, unions and regulatory agencies in the same room together to really attack the culture and the perpetrators, so that we protect this important workplace and the women who work in it.

**MS J.L. HANNS (Collie–Preston)** [11.45 am]: I rise today to speak on this very important committee report titled *'Enough is enough': Sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry*. I would like to start by recounting a story, and I seek the chamber's indulgence for this. When I qualified as a young teacher in 1995, I travelled to Tom Price and worked in a fantastic community. It was probably one of the highlights of my teaching career, but I was young, vulnerable and away from support structures like family and friends, just like so many of the women who enter the FIFO mining industry today. I encountered a problem with a peeping Tom. He terrified and terrorised me and my housemate while we were living in the Government Employees Housing Authority housing provided. He was taking photos of us through the bathroom windows while we were using the shower. He entered the house while we were sleeping and he used to move things around in the kitchen cupboards. He entered the house by removing flyscreens and jemmying the windows open. He stole our underwear from the washing lines and knocked on our bedroom windows, knowing when we were getting dressed or undressed. It was a terrifying experience. I did not know where to turn at the time, so I reported it to a very supportive and approachable colleague who happened to be a union delegate at Tom Price Senior High School. She helped me report this to the police and to get some support from the education department, which provided us with employee assistance, security lights and security screens for our GEHA housing.

When I commenced this inquiry, sitting listening to the stories of these women who gave evidence, I was astounded. I refer to a fact the member for Burns Beach has already raised, which is that a 2020 report from the Australian Human Rights Commission found that 74 per cent of women who work in the mining industry have experienced sexual harassment in the past five years. That is three-quarters of the women who work in that industry. I sat, 27 years after my experience, listening to the experiences of these women. I thank them very much for bravely shining a light on this issue by coming forward with their experiences. I sat there listening to their experiences and I thought to myself: "I have a daughter. Would I want her to work in this industry?" Sadly, based on what we learnt as a committee, the answer is no. I asked myself why. The answer for me is not the laws that we can make as a government and it is not the role of Parliament, even. It is the very real risk to her personal safety and the risk of sexual assault and sexual harassment. That should terrify every parent of young girls and women in Western Australia.

I was saddened to hear the reports over the weekend that, again, another disgusting incident has happened within the FIFO mining industry. This is an enormous sector and an enormous contributor to the Western Australian economy. The sector generated \$208 billion worth of export income in the past 12 months and generated \$155 billion in sales of iron ore alone. This is a multibillion-dollar industry that earns billions of dollars from resources owned by the people of Western Australia. The industry has failed in its efforts to do what it must do: ensure a safe workplace for its workers. One woman recounted and gave evidence believing that companies were putting profits before people. Despite the assurances given by mining executives that this was not the case, this was the case for women and the reality for those women working in the industry. The women who gave evidence to us spoke widely of

problems with the appalling behaviour of co-workers and supervisors, the entrenched and often toxic workplaces in a male-dominated industry and clear problems with site-based middle management practices. I note that in the evidence given, much of this harassment and assault occurred on the clock on the worksite. Reporting the problem for these women should have been the solution, as it was for me 27 years ago, but this is where the core of the problem appeared to be. Evidence documented in our report includes —

Even though I worked for [company name] we directly reported to external contractors, and when I raised serious safety concerns, they would not be recorded as incidents.

Another witness gave evidence that states —

Management teams routinely protect the company by point blank lying to DMIRS and not reporting incidents and not managing bullying. Unfortunately, it is often managers who are the worst offenders.

Another states —

I unfortunately ... trusted in the company's HR team, I thought they were there to protect me. I would have been much better off elbowing the people in the face.

And finally —

HR are more concerned with protecting the company's reputation than protecting people on site.

This is damning. These women told us that when action was taken against offenders, it was commonplace for the offending worker to be moved from site to site with little or no trace for their offences, whilst the women suffered significantly, feeling it was easier to leave the worksite—in other words, to quit—than expect that action be taken on their behalf. They were labelled troublemakers for reporting incidents, had their contracts terminated and were subjected to additional harassment from co-workers for simply raising the issue. Additionally, bystanders who observed sexual harassment or assault and wanted to come forward also often experienced the same behaviours directed at them. Reporting inappropriate behaviours is what needs to be right in this system to make real change. People need a clear process for reporting and it cannot sit within the HR systems of these companies. I want to thank the relevant government ministers and the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety for the work that the government has already been doing, not waiting for this report to be tabled in Parliament. I note particularly the increase in the number of DMIRS inspectors; appointing independent expert Elizabeth Shaw to review the DMIRS protocols; developing codes of practice for the industry, in particular the code of practice on workplace behaviour; and the \$8.4 million commitment to the mental awareness, respect and safety program that was launched to address workplace sexual harassment and assault.

How do we fix this problem? For me, part of this sits with us as a society. We have seen in the past two years a very proactive movement to ensure that women are treated fairly in not just workplaces, but also society in general. We have all heard about the Me Too movement and I pay tribute to not only the women who have come forward to document their experiences to us as a committee, but also people like Grace Tame and Brittany Higgins who have highlighted these very critical and important issues. The job of fixing this problem for women in the mining industry cannot be the responsibility of the taxpayers of Western Australia. It has to be with the industry that earns billions of dollars; the industry must fund the initiatives required to fix this problem. It is the industry's responsibility to prevent sexual harassment and sexual assault on its worksites. It is the industry's responsibility to ensure that there are systems in place that manage inappropriate and often unlawful behaviours on its sites and report them to the relevant authorities if they occur, and to support the affected workers, putting people before profits.

I go back to my point about whether I would want my daughter to work in the fly-in fly-out mining industry and my answer would honestly be “not yet”. Today, we need to draw the line in the sand and say to the industry that enough is enough and make sure that our daughters have a future in the mining industry. I would like to again thank the brave victims who came forward and gave evidence of their experiences, my fellow committee colleagues—the member for Vasse as chair, the member for Burns Beach as deputy chair, and the members for Bateman and Kimberley—and the staff who worked on this report. I thank you and I commend this report to the house.

**MS D.G. D'ANNA (Kimberley)** [11.55 am]: I rise today to speak on the inquiry into sexual harassment against women in the fly-in fly-out mining industry. The Community Development and Justice Standing Committee was tasked to inquire into and report on sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry. The committee has, in particular, considered whether there is an understanding of how to report sexual harassment, there are workplace practices and cultures that protect against sexual harassment, and current legislation and policies are working to keep FIFO workers safe. It also considered what actions can be taken by industry and government to help improve the situation as a whole. It has been a privilege for me to be on this committee, my first, and hear from numerous organisations, businesses and survivors of sexual abuse in the industry who put forward their own personal stories in a public domain to make sure that what happened to them does not happen to anyone else. First of all, I would like to say thank you to all those who have shared those personal stories. It is not an easy thing to do. It is a brave and courageous act and I want to note that before I continue. Listening to those stories, as my colleagues have said, was at times uncomfortable, emotional and sometimes hard to fathom. More shocking were the

actual similarities from different individuals on the behaviour that created the pattern and the culture all over WA and indeed the country. We were all shocked when we started hearing horrible stories about the alleged rapes and sexual assaults at mining sites in our state.

All women deserve respect in their workplace. All women deserve to go to work without the fear of being sexually harassed. We know that sexual harassment starts with sexist attitudes. That is why it is also important that sexist culture is called out. It might seem fine to brush off as just a joke a mate's sexist comment about women not being able to do the same work as a man, but there is something deeper underneath statements like these. It is attitudes and it is respect and it all contributes to a culture in which women are not seen as equal to their male counterparts. When women are not seen as equal, women are not respected in the way they deserve to be. Some of the things we have heard in the hearings are absolutely appalling. Disgusting behaviour has been hidden for far too long and now a light has been shone on it. Some of these power plays and actions and stories reminded me of stories I heard from my grandmothers about the attitudes of old pastoralists.

This report calls out this culture that we cannot deny exists in the fly-in fly-out industry. It puts forward a number of recommendations to address it. I acknowledge the response since the start of the inquiry and the government's commitment to ensuring safe workplaces for all WA employees, including through implementing the 12 recommendations of the *Respect@Work: Sexual harassment national inquiry report* that apply to the state government and developing WA's first whole-of-government sexual violence prevention strategy. This includes a recent response by the minister to a new mental health awareness respect and safety program. That is a new initiative to address mental health, workplace culture, drug and alcohol use and mine safety issues. I would also like to note the appointment of a workplace culture expert to review the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety's protocols for responding to incidents of harassment and sexual assaults in the mining industry.

I want to note that industry has also started taking steps to address these reports. This includes Rio Tinto, which publicly released an external review of its workplace culture, which did not tell a nice story. This includes BHP, which pledged an extra \$300 million in security funding to make sure that the villages are safer for women working in the industry. That is an important step that goes to one of the recommendations found in this report. Further, the WA Chamber of Minerals and Energy has announced industry-wide guidelines that limit FIFO workers to four alcoholic drinks a day and zero shots on accommodation sites. Although I acknowledge this is a good move, I would also like to note my personal opinion that alcohol restriction helps to address some of the issues, but it is not the root cause of the attitudes on the mine sites, and nor is the infrastructure. That is my personal opinion. It is good to see the big players, so to speak, taking action ahead of this report and I look forward to all the players in the industry taking the recommendations of this report extremely seriously in working with this government to implement them as soon as possible.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the FIFO industry offers a lot of opportunities for our mob to earn good money to provide for our families. I hope that this report and its recommendations empower Aboriginal women to succeed in participating in the FIFO industry. When we are developing and implementing training reports, mechanisms and programs, they must be created in a culturally appropriate way. There must be Aboriginal people not just around the table, but with real and meaningful input when these decisions are made. Aboriginal people are not all the same; we come from very different walks of life. For those of us who practise strong culture in our ways, there are certain respects and rules that must be followed when it comes to women and men working and mixing together. Members will find references to the need for culturally appropriate considerations in the report and its recommendations, and I look forward to seeing these actioned.

This industry is one of the biggest industries that women are under-represented in, yet it was accountable for the employment on average of 156 238 onsite personnel or 123 132 in full-time equivalent terms during 2021. It is obvious that the culture that excludes women from being active participants is longstanding and much work needs to be done to address this.

There are many barriers that still exist for Aboriginal women to participate in the workforce and I would like to quote June Oscar, AO, a strong and inspiring Kimberley Aboriginal woman and Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner. In her report *Wiyi Yani U Thangani*, she explains these barriers for Aboriginal women to participate in the workforce —

Women and girls employed in both community-controlled and mainstream organisations and services have consistently reported barriers into and within the workplace. These barriers included intersectional inequalities, a lack of diversity across sectors and roles, impediments to employment and career progression, a lack of respect and cultural safety, and inadequate supports in the workplace.

I had a lot more to say, but I will have to wind up.

In concluding, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank the committee staff: Dr Alan Charlton and Dr Sam Hutchinson, Ms Franchesca Walker and Ms Marie Martin. I would also like to note the work of my colleagues on the committee for their contributions today: the chair, the member for Vasse; the deputy chair, the member for Burns Beach; the member for Bateman; and especially to my colleague and friend the member for Collie–Preston, thank you for sharing that story.

It has been a truly eye-opening learning experience for me to sit on this committee and hear the evidence from many different people. I again thank all those who have participated and I look forward to us working collaboratively together to make sure that women feel respected and safe at work in the FIFO industry.

**MS K.E. GIDDENS (Bateman)** [12.05 pm]: Eighty-seven written submissions, 44 testimonies, 79 findings, and 24 recommendations—this work has revealed what for too long has been hidden in plain sight within Western Australia’s resources sector. I came to WA to participate in the mining boom. I moved from over east for the promise of adventure and a healthy pay packet. I discovered an industry that dominates the cultural, social and economic fabric of Western Australia. Whether we work directly in the industry or not, we most certainly know someone who does, or has, or wants to.

The resources sector is a great contributor to our state and indeed our nation. It provides billions of dollars of revenue to our state and federal governments and supports thousands of Western Australian families through direct employment, training and career opportunities. Without doubt, Western Australia is one of the best mining jurisdictions in the world. This reputation is built off the long and hard work of Western Australians over many decades and is an industry we ought to be proud of. The report being handed down today demonstrates clearly how women in the industry have not enjoyed standards of employment, safety or wellbeing that is anywhere near approaching best practice. In fact, women, in large numbers, have been subjected to sexual harassment, assault and rape while working in WA’s resources industry. This is not good enough.

The committee acknowledges that sexual harassment and the drivers of gendered violence are complex and experienced across other workplaces and, more broadly, within society and the community. But there is a particular problem within the FIFO mining industry. Whereas in the general workforce one in three people, or 33 per cent, said they experienced sexual harassment at work in the past five years, in mining, 40 per cent of workers and 74 per cent of women workers in the industry reported being sexually harassed in the past five years.

We heard evidence from women of the process of “getting a shirt”; that is the requirement to perform sexual acts to move from a contractor position to a permanent company position. We heard from women who were told to “get on their knees”, from women waking up with no recollection of how they got back to their rooms, and from women truck operators who had complained of sexual harassment having loads of dirt dumped in their truck so that the truck shakes violently in an act called “shovelling”. We heard from women who would not use the gym, the wet mess or other public facilities of the camp because they felt unsafe and intimidated. We heard from women who would not do their laundry while on site because their underwear would be stolen. We heard from women who were told by their company’s HR team to have a cup of coffee with the perpetrator of sexual harassment to sort it out. We heard from women who were made to continue to work directly with their perpetrator and we heard from women who were “given a window seat”, which means terminated, after making a complaint of sexual harassment. Disturbingly, we heard from women who had been sexually assaulted and raped while at work.

Yet despite the prevalence and severity of sexual harassment within the resources sector, our committee heard from company after company that, while they acknowledged and even apologised for the problems within their organisations, gave evidence that they did not understand the extent of the harassment and assault of women in their workplaces, which begs the question: were they wilfully ignorant or woefully negligent? This is not an enviable choice, but it is one the industry must face as it starts the task of addressing its significant corporate failings in this area. In my view, finding 22 of our report that “the failure of companies to understand what was happening in their workplaces must be seen as a sign of corporate failure” is one of the most important and damning findings of this report. Companies consistently stated that safety was their number one priority, yet sexual harassment data was not widely measured by companies, and at least one major resources company had only just in October last year updated its procedures to include a direct policy on sexual harassment. If industry was capturing inadequate data on the prevalence of sexual harassment, the key government agencies responsible for regulation of the industry have likewise failed. The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety had only 22 records of alleged sexual assaults in the industry between 2015 and 2021. This is important, because we cannot fix what we do not acknowledge, and we cannot measure outcomes if we do not understand the scale of the problem.

Recommendations 10 and 11 of this report, which relate to improvements in measuring and reporting sexual harassment and sexual assault, are a critical step in tackling sexual harassment in the industry. I am pleased that the WA government and the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, Bill Johnston, have already acted ahead of this report to appoint an independent expert to review DMIRS’ protocols for responding to incidents of sexual harassment and sexual assault in the mining industry.

So, where to from here? The good news is that the committee found in finding 19 —

There is a broadly consistent set of recognised and evidenced-based principles, practices and reforms that organisations and industries can use to improve how they prevent and respond to sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment and assault must move from a principally human resources response to a health and safety response. Although there is a role for legislation and regulation in this move, and most certainly the new Workplace Health and Safety Act 2020 is a positive step in reducing complexity and ambiguity in this area, the reality is that for a long

time we have had in place legislation that makes sexual harassment and sexual assault unlawful. What the sector faces is deep, systemic and cultural failings that have placed women's safety as secondary to historic power structures and cultural norms within the industry. There is no silver bullet to address this. Work must be done across legislation, regulation, enforcement, reporting and investigating, and industry policies and practices, and, more deeply still, across society to address the drivers of gender inequality.

Measures to increase women's participation in the industry are welcomed, but, as one witness put it, an "add women and stir" approach is not a panacea for solving these problems. Women participating at the senior corporate leadership level is important, but so too is the participation of women across all levels of the industry. We heard stories of power imbalances at the pit crew and workshop level of mining operations, and this is where there are typically very low levels of women in roles such as crew supervisor.

Although not a cause of sexual harassment and assault, drugs and alcohol are nonetheless risk factors for assault; therefore, addressing alcohol-related harm in the workplace is also important.

Recommendation 8 of this report is also important —

The mining and resources industry must establish acceptable standards for accommodation facilities, including security and other safety measures ...

More needs to be done to prevent persistent perpetrators of sexual harassment from simply moving from one workplace to another. A register of sexual harassment offenders will raise some challenges, but I believe these issues can be addressed, as they have largely been by other registers such as the working with children register. Recommendation 3 of this report asks industry to explore ways in which it might address this.

Meaningful and fit-for-purpose education, training and induction processes are also important to begin the task of setting standards and shared understandings of what constitutes sexual harassment in the workplace and establishing clear sanctions for perpetrators. Many women told us they had no confidence in reporting systems, and that the system was onerous, traumatic and resulted in further harm. We must move from a system that places the onus of reporting on an individual to one where the entire workplace shares responsibility. Companies should invest in sound third-party reporting systems and training. Likewise, the committee heard evidence that limitations to third-party access meant that people did not always have access to the support they needed and to information on employment rights. I encourage the industry to work with unions as an important stakeholder in delivering the solutions called on by this report.

The legacy of this inquiry ought to be the safety of women from sexual harassment in the fly-in fly-out mining industry, but whether this is realised will be largely dependent upon the way in which industry, government and the broader community approach the recommendations of this report. Continued public scrutiny and accountability will be critical to this.

I would like to acknowledge the important role of media in this task, and in particular the reporting by *The West Australian* and Caitlyn Rintoul. I would also like to acknowledge the chair, the member for Vasse, and my fellow committee members. I am running out of time. They know who they are, so I will skip naming them!

When I began today, I spoke about what drew me to WA's resources industry. As I conclude, I add my voice to those women who appeared before our committee, and as one of the 74 per cent of women in this industry who have experienced sexual harassment. To the women who shared with our committee their often-harrowing personal experiences of sexual harassment and assault, you spoke with courage and determination, and with a clear view to a better future for yourself and the women who walk alongside you, and, importantly, those who will come behind you. Your message was clear, and we heard you. You just want this to stop. Enough is enough. I commend this report to the house.

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition)** [12.16 pm] — by leave: I want to start by acknowledging the work of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, chaired by the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party and member for Vasse, and the members of the committee who have spoken today. This has, no doubt, been a harrowing and very challenging task for committee members and staff, but also an incredibly important one. Of course, I also acknowledge the women who found the strength to come forward and share their experiences. It takes great courage for women to make a complaint when their job and livelihood may be at risk as a result of speaking out. It also takes great courage to come forward when it is clear that there are still real barriers to women being believed and complaints being taken seriously no matter what the industry.

What I have found truly shocking from listening to members speak today is the scale of the problem. It is concerning that the true figures about the number of women, and men, who have experienced sexual assault or harassment may be significantly higher than what has been reported. This is a cultural challenge for our mining industry and for the community that must be met head-on, and so, too, must government take responsibility for its role as a regulator. It is clear that a light-touch approach has been taken to regulating a sector that can no longer do business as usual. It is positive to see that action is already being taken on this front.

Every person has the right to go to work and be safe. Every person has the right to work in a respectful environment. It is clear that an inappropriate and harmful work culture has been allowed to persist—not isolated to just one worksite

or company, but across the entire sector. I have worked within this industry. This is a sector that prides itself on safety. However, somehow the normal social obligations that are upheld in our broader community have not been upheld in mining camps and on worksites. I simply urge every executive, every member, every manager and every person in this industry to do better and to support those who are championing this change. In 2022 in Western Australia, in a state that takes great pride in the role and contribution that mining makes to our local and national economy, it is disturbing that the behaviours and culture described in this report have been considered normal for so long.

I recently attended the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia's Women in Mining Awards night. That was an amazing event that celebrated the achievements of women in the mining sector here in Western Australia—smart engineers, cutting-edge scientists, technical leaders, and inspirational individuals working at the coalface or on the tools. This is a sector that has so much to offer. Imagine how much more could be achieved if we address this dark chapter and put in place the foundations to ensure that no other woman will need to ignore, put up with or be fearful, or walk away from a career that she wants, because she is afraid for her safety.

Members, it is no secret that the Nationals have long held views on the impact of fly-in fly-out on our communities in regional Western Australia and the workforce itself. We understand the imperative for FIFO camps in far-flung corners of our state and for surge capacity when maintenance or shutdowns occur. It is a part of our state, but we have never believed that it should be the default for the industry and stand steadfast in our views that government and industry should try harder to build residential workforces into their business models wherever possible. When you return home to your family every night, or reside in a community where you play sport, volunteer, participate in community activities and are making a contribution outside of a 12-hour work roster day after day, you are connected and grounded. Much the same as our federal Parliament, these workplaces are artificial and they are disconnected from the community.

Inquiry after inquiry into the mental health of FIFO workers and their families, and the development of government and industry policy, overtly acknowledge this fact. No-one will convince me that 12-hour shifts, living in a donga and eating in a cafeteria with a predominantly male workforce is a normal living environment. Regardless of this, change must occur for those camps that will remain and continue to exist as part of this sector. It is past time for the resources sector to draw a line under this disgraceful chapter and commit to ensuring that women can take their rightful place at work without harassment or assault. Likewise, the government must ensure internal vigilance and that it plays its role as watchdog and regulator.

There is no doubt that this is a dark day for our state. Once again, I pay tribute to those who provided evidence and who found the courage to come forward. I also acknowledge the reporting of this matter by *The West Australian's* Caitlyn Rintoul; the Chair of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, Libby Mettam, for her call to shine a spotlight on this issue by way of a parliamentary inquiry; and those committee members who have committed so much time and effort to making sure that this was brought to light and that the consideration of this difficult matter is considered more broadly.

I truly hope the recommendations and findings will not gather dust on a shelf. That would be a further injustice to those who were brave and courageous enough to come forward and share their experiences in the hope that change will follow.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [12.21 pm] — by leave: I welcome this report from the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, chaired by the member for Vasse, today. The impact that this has had on newer members is clear, and I can understand why. The reports that I have heard today are sickening and disgusting, and I think everyone will be deeply disturbed by them. Some members may know that I have a mining background. I worked for one mining company for 20 years and for another company for four years before I came to this place—the same company that the Deputy Speaker worked for for 20 years. I also have three daughters. I have found the stories told here shocking. My previous employer carried out a survey on sexual harassment and other harassment over the years and it identified a 20 per cent rate of sexual harassment of women in the workplace, as well as a 20 per cent rate of physical harassment of men in the workplace. Those rates are shocking enough, but to hear that three-quarters of all women working in the FIFO mining industry experience this indicates that there is a particular problem on top of what is already an egregious problem in the workplace.

FIFO has been a major enabler of the development of our globally leading mining industry. Almost 50 per cent of our gross state product, or \$170 billion, comes from the mining industry in Western Australia. Although FIFO may offer a work choice, and is certainly a convenience for the mining company, it is very clear that some serious issues come out of that particular lifestyle. Obviously, the very serious issue that has been revealed by this excellent committee work has been the sexual harassment that is occurring in the FIFO mining industry. All businesses must provide a safe workplace and, in the case of FIFO, that clearly includes all the accommodation and other work areas that are provided because of the necessity of workers having to stay there for extended periods.

This is very clearly a cultural issue, and the comments of the member for Kimberley on this issue resonate exactly with me. Yes, there may be some compounding factors, but this is a cultural issue. It comes from the top. The standard you walk past is the standard you accept. It is very clear that in this industry, people have either looked the other

way or been wilfully ignorant of a major issue that is occurring in this industry, particularly in the FIFO industry. The response to this landmark report must start at the very top. It cannot simply be an expression of concern or an expression that things have been done about this in the past. What is quite clear is that the response has been inadequate. There must be thorough and detailed reporting. As a former manager in the mining industry, I can tell members that there was an old mantra: what is measured is what is responded to and managed. In this case, it is quite clear that the reporting has been inadequate, and that there must be a strong response from the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety in requiring that there is adequate and proper reporting of that.

I will not go through all the recommendations. I have had a flick through the recommendations and I believe that all the recommendations of the committee are absolutely critical. We need to rapidly adopt the recommendations that have been developed by the committee. I congratulate the member for Vasse and all the committee members. I am deeply grateful for the work they have carried out on behalf of the people who work in the FIFO industry and also the people of Western Australia and this Parliament. This is a landmark report for this state.

### **BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — VALEDICTORY REMARKS**

*Member for North West Central — Standing Orders Suspension — Motion*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House)** [12.25 pm]: I move —

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

Obviously, the member for North West Central has indicated that he will be resigning from Parliament. We wish him well. Of course, as is convention, members who are retiring or, indeed, are leaving Parliament early are able to make a valedictory speech. I understand that there will be a number of guests of the member for North West Central present immediately after question time this afternoon.

Question put and passed.

### **BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — TEMPORARY ORDER**

*Motion*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House)** [12.27 pm]: I move —

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

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

Obviously, yesterday in the house, the Procedure and Privileges Committee report was tabled and spoken to by you, as Deputy Speaker of the Assembly. The Procedure and Privileges Committee reports on a range of matters and, in its fourth report, it has canvassed a range of issues, specifically the arrangements for the Legislative Assembly sitting times. It canvassed a range of issues relating to work–life balance and late-night sittings. The report includes a comparison of sitting weeks, and I was interested in the opposition Whip’s comments on the comparison of sitting weeks of Parliaments around Australia, including the federal Parliament and other state and territory Assemblies and Councils. We are, of course, particularly focused on the Assembly. It was interesting to note in the comparison of sitting weeks, which was drawn to our attention by the opposition Whip, the member for Roe, that we do, in fact, sit for many more weeks than other jurisdictions do. This year, as we know, Parliament assembled in this chamber post–the 2021 election with a substantial increase in the number of government members and a reduced number of opposition members. Interestingly, I have done some analysis on how much time we are spending on legislation. Some 54 bills—or something of that nature—have been progressed through this Parliament since the 2021 election. The debating time for bills varies. Of course, the opposition has precedence in speaking time, and I hope that the record shows that in terms of timing et cetera, the needs of the opposition have been accommodated during that time. The reality is that the carriage of bills is not being held up in this chamber. Therefore, one of the considerations that I will certainly be looking at is the programming of sitting weeks, particularly given the comments of the member for Roe and his comparison. We are not dealing with that in this motion; what we are dealing with is sitting times. As members know, the tradition of Parliament over the years, certainly during the time that I have been here, is that the Legislative Assembly sits from 2.00 pm on a Tuesday with a nominal finishing time of 10.00 that evening. History shows, certainly in this forty-first Parliament, that invariably we are not normally sitting to 10.00 pm. My analysis shows that during this forty-first Parliament, we invariably finish around 9.00 pm—9.30 pm at the latest. That has been the general thrust. We have dealt with a couple of urgent bills, but invariably we are concluding the business of the Legislative Assembly on a Tuesday relatively early.

In reading the Procedure and Privileges Committee report, the recommendation made is that we adopt a temporary order for the remainder of 2022 that would see the sitting hours on Tuesday amended. We would commence sitting at 1.00 pm through to 7.00 pm nominally as the hours set down for Tuesdays. As the motion highlights in paragraph (2), in the event that government business requires we sit past 7.00 pm—usually this would mean for an hour or more—there is provision for notice to be given to the Speaker, who would simply advise the house of the need for a dinner break and the business of the house would extend past 7.00 pm. Going by history, that would be very unlikely. I envisage that if we know in absolute advance that we would be sitting late, I would include that in the letter that I send on Friday to the manager of opposition business and the Leader of the Liberal Party so that all members would be aware that we would be likely to sit late on the Tuesday.

Question time at 2.00 pm will remain at the same time. These arrangements will have no effect on the other place. The other place, of course, makes up its own mind about its standing orders and operation. Essentially, members, if we adopt this recommendation directly from the Procedure and Privileges Committee report tabled yesterday, we will sit at 1.00 pm on Tuesday rather than 2.00 pm. Question time will remain at 2.00 pm on each day of the sitting of the house. The dining room will obviously be open as normal for lunch from 12 noon to 2.00 pm. I know that some members—I am one of them—traditionally use sitting Tuesdays to have guests and/or school students in for lunch. As the Leader of the House, I will need to amend my timetable. I am sure that members will still be able to have guests for lunch on a sitting Tuesday, but they simply will not be here when the chamber meets at the 1.00 pm start time. No other days will be affected by this temporary order. The timing for grievances and private members' statements will remain as is.

I took note of the member for Roe's comments yesterday. He highlighted that the opposition will reserve its right to consider the effect of the trial. The trial is for the remainder of 2022, and, obviously, at the conclusion of this year, I will be very happy to chat with the opposition about the effectiveness or otherwise of the temporary arrangements.

I commend the motion that I have moved. I note the comments made yesterday afternoon by the member for Roe and the Leader of the Liberal Party, who are members of the Procedure and Privileges Committee, and also those made by government members on that committee. I think this is a good arrangement that should be trialled.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [12.36 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution and reinforce the comments I made when the Leader of the House gave notice of this motion. We have custom and practice in this place, but that custom and practice assumes that members in this place do not have childcare responsibilities or other responsibilities in the evening. Invariably, the hours that we work here puts enormous pressure on our partners to deal with all family issues that need to be dealt with in the evening.

Other reforms need to be made in this place. I will say, Leader of the House, that I look forward to the suggestions that were made in the previous Parliament about adopting more family-friendly practices in this chamber, especially for mothers and their babies, coming forward again to make this a more flexible workplace.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** The Speaker's already ruled on that. The Speaker's already ruled on breastfeeding. It is allowed in this Parliament now.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Thank you for that. I had either forgotten about that or was not aware of it. I can blame the COVID fog for that. That is a positive move in this chamber to make it a friendlier environment for working parents. This is an important move, and I think other changes can be made in the future. This will enable us to carry out our other responsibilities. I do not see it as a major change. It is only a one-hour reduction in the total sitting time, which is not a major change, and, of course, the government has the option of extending time as required, as it does from time to time. This is a sensible move that will make this place a more family-friendly working environment. This is a working environment, regardless of how esteemed we think it is. Therefore, I support this trial, and I look forward to seeing the outcome over the rest of the year.

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.38 pm]: I rise to provide a very brief contribution in support of the motion. As we know, the member for Roe outlined yesterday the position of the Nationals WA. More generally, as the member responsible on this side of the house for the management of issues in the house, there is a degree of sense in the matter. It is a trial and, as the member for Roe said yesterday, if we are unable to keep to that schedule, we might need to revisit it in the future. I am quite happy to see the trial go ahead.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House)** [12.39 pm] — in reply: I thank members for their support. I thank the Leader of the Liberal Party and the manager of opposition business, the member for Moore. I want to congratulate the member for Moore. I have looked at the bills we have debated since the commencement of the forty-first Parliament. I must say that the member for Moore is carrying a huge load. I notice that the member, in particular, has spoken on most, if not all, of the bills that have been before this place. The member is obviously working very, very hard, so I congratulate him.

I thank members and I look forward to the trial, and assessing that at the end of the year.

Question put and passed.

**HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2021***Second Reading*

Resumed from 22 June.

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.40 pm]: I wish to make a contribution on the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021 that is before the house. I understand that the member for Cottesloe also wants to make a contribution, but that might have to be at a later time because we do not have much time between now and 90-second statements.

As we know, this bill deals with matters concerning the Health Services Act 2016. That act introduced the idea of health service providers, as we know them now, one of them being the WA Country Health Service. It is my intention to talk a little about the WA Country Health Service and some of the issues that I see within the WA Country Health Service that came about from the changes and the introduction of that group as standalone service providers. The WA Country Health Service has a very large remit. It covers everywhere in the state that is not within the metropolitan area. As shown on its website, this area spans two and a half million square kilometres, from Kalumburu in the Kimberley to Albany. I believe there are just over half a million people within that catchment. That is cumulatively quite a large population, but it is dispersed over a vast area, which the WA Country Health Service has to provide a level of service to. It does so in a variety of ways. There are six large regional health campuses in places like Bunbury and Geraldton and then there are 15 district health campuses. They are in the next tier down, and towns like Moora in my electorate will be in that boat. There are 46 small hospitals, such as the ones at Northampton, Goomalling and Dalwallinu. There are 43 health centres. These health centres are quite diverse, because some of them provide as many services as some of those small hospitals; indeed, they may even provide a greater number of services, because their communities are quite large.

In more recent times, there has been a move away from the old system of inpatient beds in country hospitals. Often there is very little need for inpatient beds in those hospitals and most services are delivered to people in an observation room or, in the case of somewhere like Dongara, there may be capacity to stay for one or two nights for observation and care. It is not intended that people be in those centres for a week, having operations et cetera. They are done at the larger regional centres or in Perth.

In my area, most people who need an operation of some sort will go either to Geraldton, which has visiting specialists, or to the metropolitan area to access tertiary services. Interestingly enough, the tertiary hospitals are required to provide people with discharge plans when they leave to go back to country areas. Often that does not work out and it has been a real issue for people who have been in a metropolitan hospital. That hospital does not understand that they are going to a place that may be two hours away from a hospital or a doctor. People can be relatively close to Perth—I am not talking about the very remote areas of the state—but if someone is unwell and they are out on a farm, a couple of hours from Perth, it is still an issue if the hospital does not understand their situation. There has not in the past been enough interaction. Maybe it is because there is that barrier with WACHS. When people go to the North Metropolitan Health Service, or whichever service, there does not seem to be a seamless integration, which I would like to see more of in the future.

I want to compliment WACHS. I am not here to criticise it in any way. It has a huge task. The staff, by and large, right throughout the state, do a fantastic job, often beyond the call of duty to ensure that their communities have services.

The two greatest issues facing WACHS are in the area of workforce attraction and retention, and being able to have sufficient workforce in their hospitals and health centres. It has to attract and retain staff. It is one of the critical issues that go back many years. It is not just an issue in recent years, with COVID and other matters; it has been a problem for WACHS for many, many years. It is not helped when, in my view, we are not getting the decent standards of accommodation that people need in those areas. They are often being put in substandard accommodation. I understand that people in the industry, the nurses et cetera, make approaches because their housing is not being repaired or is not provided at a standard that will attract staff and that there are insufficient incentives in many areas to maintain accommodation.

It is interesting that there was a grievance today about Meekatharra Hospital. I understand that Meekatharra is not classified as a remote area for incentives because it is below the twenty-sixth parallel. If I compared living in Meekatharra with living in Broome, Karratha or Exmouth, I would say that there are greater challenges living in Meekatharra and, in many ways, it is more isolated than those more developed towns with significant services, attractions, places to live and vibrant housing markets where people might be able to find a decent house if the one they have been provided is not great. Those are the types of things that need to be addressed if we are going to attract staff into those areas. I cannot imagine what it would be like to be a young graduate, for instance, going to Meekatharra to work. If the incentives are not there, why would they go there, unless they had some connection to the area? That is another matter I will briefly comment on. There is a need to ensure that country people have access to training and are aware of the career opportunities at all levels in the health service. I am referring to not just doctors and nurses, but all the other people in the health system who keep it going and make sure that patients and people in the community receive the care they need.

I do not think I will have a chance to contribute after question time, because I understand that there will be a valedictory speech and other matters going ahead, so I will try to wrap up at the 90-second statement mark. I want to finish on a plea, once again, while the minister is here, for the Mullewa community to see that its hospital is developed. I see on the WACHS website that there are a couple of projects. The Dongara health centre is going ahead, which is very welcome. It is somewhat delayed, but it is welcome and necessary; and, hopefully, that will be completed in the not-too-distant future. But Mullewa has been sitting on the books since 2016 and the people of Mullewa have not had access to a modern facility in all that time. Their old hospital has been allowed to fall into rack and ruin and parts of it remain closed. It is not suitable for Mullewa to have that situation with its health centre.

I once again ask the minister to do whatever she can to ensure that the Mullewa community receives the services that it needs. I am told on the website that when the Mullewa health centre is complete, it will be a contemporary emergency department with emergency telehealth services, videoconferencing facilities, group therapy rooms, an allied health consultation room and treatment spaces, and multipurpose consultation rooms enabled with telehealth, and it will have an ambulance bay. I also understand that there will be specific support for the health needs of the Mullewa community, which is a unique community.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3153.]

### MULLEWA MUSTER AND RODEO

*Statement by Member for Moore*

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.50 pm]: Earlier this month I had the great pleasure of attending the Mullewa Muster and Rodeo. This fantastic event has become a firm favourite in the midwest over the WA Day long weekend. This year's muster was much anticipated following the two-year hiatus due to COVID. With more than \$35 000 in prize money, the rodeo drew local and interstate competitors. It is an Australian Bushmen's Campdraft and Rodeo Association full-points event featuring bull riding, bareback riding and saddle bronc riding, roping, barrel racing, steer wrestling and junior steer riding. The CJ Swift Memorial Mid West Barrel Race is open only to those who live within a 100-kilometre radius of Mullewa. The organisers have carefully set the day's events to appeal to all ages and the event offers free camping. It is a great family day out with free activities for children, including pony rides, an obstacle course, a pet farm and face painting. As the sun sinks, the country music starts. This year's muster featured Monty Cotton, Scarlet's Way and the Craig Pickett Band. Ticket sales were capped at 3 500 people this year and the event was a sellout. I commend Mullewa Muster and Rodeo president, Carol Young, and her committee for their hard work in bringing this event to life. Rodeos take event management to another level, with consideration needed for competitors and spectators as well as horses and cattle. Congratulations to all involved in this year's Mullewa muster.

### CCTV CAMERAS — HILLARYS BOAT HARBOUR

*Statement by Member for Hillarys*

**MS C.M. COLLINS (Hillarys)** [12.52 pm]: I would like to take this opportunity to talk about a major win for my community. I am excited to announce that 21 CCTV cameras will be installed at Hillarys Boat Harbour to improve community safety. This commitment comes after over 1 000 local residents signed my petition supporting greater surveillance for the boat harbour. The increased CCTV coverage will proactively prevent theft, discourage late-night violence and help ensure that Hillarys Boat Harbour remains a fantastic family-friendly venue. I would like to thank the Minister for Transport for this important investment in public safety. I would also like to thank the harbour management staff at the Department of Transport and officer in charge at Hillarys Police Station, Mark Stoneman, for our productive conversations that have led to this positive outcome. The CCTV will be installed in a staged approach to ensure that the highest priority areas have camera coverage by this summer. Stage 1 will install two poles and six cameras in the highest priority locations and stage 2 will install an additional 15 cameras to ensure full coverage of the entire car park as well as high-foot traffic areas. Over recent months, local police have increased liquor licensing compliance policing, increased foot patrols and engaged in anti-hoon activities in this area. These efforts, along with these new CCTV assets, are going to make Hillarys Boat Harbour a safe and welcoming venue for all.

### CAT HAVEN

*Statement by Member for Cottesloe*

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [12.53 pm]: There is no institution in WA that is more synonymous with the welfare of cats and kittens than the Cat Haven in Shenton Park. In my most recent visit to the Cat Haven I saw firsthand the passion of the staff and volunteers who care for over 14 new cats every single week. However, the Cat Haven is so much more than just a shelter and its role in providing key community services should not be underestimated. This is seen through the Cat Haven's efforts to encourage the adoption of older, sedate cats within residential care homes. Regular contact with animals builds companionship and reduces isolation. By providing free food and health checks for cats adopted by aged-care homes, the Cat Haven has done amazing work to ensure that older Western Australians can access these mental health benefits. Importantly, this program also

provides a home for older cats. WA's rental crisis has forced many to put their beloved cats up for adoption as they struggle to find affordable, pet-friendly rentals. Because many people prefer to adopt kittens, the Cat Haven is struggling to find a home for these older cats. Although encouraging aged-care homes to adopt is one solution, I would urge all prospective pet owners, including members, to consider adopting an older cat. Thank you to all who work or volunteer at the Cat Haven for your patience and diligence in protecting the welfare of our furry friends.

### COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES

*Statement by Member for Warren–Blackwood*

**MS E.J. KELSBIE (Warren–Blackwood)** [12.55 pm]: I rise today to acknowledge the importance of community resource centres to our regional communities. Across my electorate, I am fortunate to have 11 CRCs that provide meaningful services, enhanced community connection and deliver a safe and inviting space for people. I want to personally thank and acknowledge the staff, volunteers and trainees at the Augusta Community Resource Centre, Boyup Brook Community Resource Centre, Bridgetown Community Resource Centre, Denmark Community Resource Centre, Greenbushes Community Resource Centre, Manjimup Community Resource Centre, Mt Barker Community Resource Centre, Nannup Community Resource Centre, Northcliffe Community Resource Centre, Pemberton Community Resource Centre and Walpole Community Resource Centre. I thank them for all their hard work and dedication and for their contribution to our communities. CRCs are not-for-profit organisations independently owned and operated by their local community. They work hard to make our communities richer places to live, providing access to much-needed local services. Services include videoconferencing and computer access; printing, copying and scanning; binding and laminating; providing water refill stations; operating recycling hubs; and running events that bring the community together, such as repair cafes, art exhibitions, soup kitchens and groups for seniors. CRCs also provide agency services such as Centrelink, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and the Department of Transport.

### QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST — CHRISTOPHER BRIEN, ESM

*Statement by Member for Roe*

**MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe)** [12.56 pm]: In the Queen's Birthday honours list 2022, Christopher Craig Brien of Esperance was recognised for 30 years of exceptional service to Surf Life Saving Western Australia. Mr Brien received an Emergency Services Medal. Since gaining his bronze medallion in 1991, Mr Brien has played a pivotal role in surf lifesaving in the Esperance region. He has served both in frontline operations and club management, including nine years as the club's president. Since 2007, he has served as duty officer and local coordinator of the association's emergency response team for the region, supporting marine search and rescue under the direction of water police. In this role he has responded to hazardous and prolonged incidents, including the recovery of people missing at sea, shark attacks and resuscitations. His work has not been restricted to on-the-water rescue efforts. Mr Brien has been instrumental in developing relationships, building capability, and educating the local community about coastal water risk. As a qualified trainer and assessor, he has dedicated time and effort to expand his club's core of qualified members, both as patrolling lifesavers and as being highly capable in the operation of rescue watercraft and marine search and rescue operations. His dedication to all dimensions of surf lifesaving and emergency service is outstanding. I take the time in this place to acknowledge the efforts of Mr Brien and the honour that has been bestowed upon him because of his selfless contribution to his community's safety and wellbeing.

### QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY HONOURS LIST — PROFESSOR MEREDITH BORLAND, AM

*Statement by Member for Nedlands*

**DR K. STRATTON (Nedlands)** [12.58 pm]: I congratulate Clinical Professor Meredith Borland for her award as a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday honours list in recognition of her significant service to emergency medicine, particularly paediatrics, and to medical research. Dr Borland is director of emergency medicine research at Perth Children's Hospital, a position she has held since 2004, with over 20 years' service to paediatric emergency medicine. Dr Borland's achievements include research projects and outcomes, including a specific pain medication becoming standard treatment in paediatric emergency departments globally. Her contribution to the medical research ecosystem in WA is significant, including building a culture of research at PCH; developing the emergency department research consumer group; overseeing multicentre, collaborative research projects; establishing a strong, formal network of paediatric ED researchers across Australia and New Zealand; and being a driving force behind the department's excellent national and international research reputation.

Dr Borland agreed to today's statement if I used it to promote the importance of medical research in assessing and improving the delivery of health care. As a researcher representing an electorate that is home to over 20 medical research institutes, I am happy to oblige. Medical research is a flourishing, growing industry in WA, providing significant employment, making important contributions to health outcomes and practice across our life span, including our bodily, mental and social wellbeing and, of course, protecting us during the COVID-19 pandemic. I thank Dr Borland and her colleagues for their contribution to the health of our children, and the health of our state.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*

**CORONAVIRUS — MASKS — PARLIAMENT HOUSE***Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [2.00 pm]: Members, just ahead of starting question time, I thank everyone for your forbearance in the first half of the year with the wearing of masks. You have all been fantastic and although it is not a general requirement in the community, your efforts have really helped keep our staff, largely, COVID-free. Thank you.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE***'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH': SEXUAL HARASSMENT AGAINST WOMEN IN THE  
FIFO MINING INDUSTRY REPORT — GOVERNMENT RESPONSE***425. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:**

I refer to the *'Enough is enough': Sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry* report tabled today by the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee.

- (1) Noting that more than 50 per cent of the recommendations are for government to address as a result of deficiencies of the regulator, will the minister table a time line of implementation for the recommendations the government is directly responsible for?
- (2) What oversight role, if any, will the minister's department have to ensure that the recommendations for industry are met and reported on?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:**

- (1)–(2) Firstly, I want to thank the committee for the enormous effort that it has gone to in order to put this report together. I know the hard work that the committee did and I know it must have been very trying to listen to the victims who have suffered so greatly. Having to retell their story once again to the committee must have been traumatic for the victims, so I thank the victims who came forward and put to the committee the experience they had.

The second thing I want to say is that I note the *Respect@Work: Sexual harassment national inquiry report* that was done by the commonwealth government and the recommendations for amendments, including amendments to the model work health and safety legislation. The government has already committed to implement the recommendations arising out of *Respect@Work*. I note that Safe Work Australia is working on the amendments that will be required to the uniform legislation. We look forward to Safe Work Australia finishing that work and coming up with the amendments that are required to the work health and safety legislation so that we can implement that here in Western Australia.

In respect of the report, it was handed down only this morning; we will comply with the standing orders and respond in accordance with the standing orders, so, of course, it is not possible for me to give the member a time line. I just want to emphasise, exactly as I said yesterday, there is only one organisation responsible for health and safety in each workplace in this state—that is, the employer. It has been the case in Western Australia since 1986, with the implementation of the former Occupational Safety and Health Act, and it is the case today with the Work Health and Safety Act. I do not want to give anybody the idea that somehow it is somebody else's responsibility and that somehow a lack of guidance notes or something such as that stops employers meeting their legal obligations. I have not read every single word of the report, but if the Leader of the Opposition is suggesting to me that the report says that employers are not responsible for their own behaviour, I do not agree —

**Ms M.J. Davies:** Don't put words in my mouth. That's not what I said.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I am not quite sure what the member is trying to drive at.

Let me make it clear: I have said I welcome the report. I have complimented the members of the committee for working so hard. I have paid respect to the victims and I have made it clear that we are already on a pathway for legislative change, based on the *Respect@Work* report because we have uniform legislation in Western Australia with the Work Health and Safety Act. I cannot tell the member anything more in respect of the report that was tabled a bit over an hour and a half ago, and we will comply with the standing orders in responding to the report.

*'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH': SEXUAL HARASSMENT AGAINST WOMEN IN THE  
FIFO MINING INDUSTRY REPORT — GOVERNMENT RESPONSE***426. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:**

I have a supplementary question. When the government's response is provided, will there be a public reporting process through Parliament to ensure that progress on the more than 50 per cent of the recommendations relating to the government and its responsibilities are reported on?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:**

I cannot speculate on what happens in the future because I have not read the entire report.

**Ms M.J. Davies:** You can give a commitment to report to the public.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** This is really interesting. Let me make this clear: the Leader of the Opposition was a member of the cabinet at the time of the Jacobs report into FIFO mental health challenges. I remind the chamber and the former minister, who was part of the decision about how the former government responded, that there was never a response to the inquiry. Let us understand that one of the most important inquiries into FIFO conduct in this state was done by Graham Jacobs and his committee and the former government ignored it. Talk about a reporting time line to Parliament. I have said, on behalf of the government and the other ministers involved, we will report to Parliament exactly as the standing orders require, something the member failed to do personally in her job. Perhaps the Leader of the Opposition can explain to me why she did not comply with the standing orders and why she did not provide a response to one of the most important inquiries that we have done?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

#### RECONNECT WA

**427. Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI to the Premier:**

Before I ask my question, on behalf of my colleague the member for Southern River, I acknowledge the student councillors from Caladenia Primary School who are in the public gallery today.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's \$195 million Reconnect WA package to attract more tourists, workers and students to Western Australia. Can the Premier outline to the house how the upcoming Reconnect WA mission to Italy, the UK, Ireland and Qatar will help to promote Western Australia, attract skilled workers to the state and diversify our economy?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I thank the member for Kingsley for the question.

The government is putting a huge amount of effort into diversifying our economy and recovering from the COVID period in particular with our \$195 million Reconnect WA package. Prior to COVID, of course, we had record tourism visitation. We had secured direct flights from a range of overseas destinations and we were investing in international education, and now we are going back into that field very, very heavily.

I will be joining the first direct flight to Italy on Saturday as part of our Reconnect Western Australia mission. This will be the first time in nearly three years that I have been overseas to promote Western Australia. The first direct flight, Perth to Rome, will be the first-ever direct flight between Australia and mainland Europe for commercial purposes. It is off the back of the direct Perth–London flights, which recommenced recently and which Qantas has said has been its most successful route ever. The Western Australian government has marketed and promoted the new Perth to Rome flight and return. I am confident, and we will work with Qantas to make it a round service. Indeed, we are working as part of our Reconnect package on other international flights.

Whilst in Europe, I will be hosting a series of tourism round tables with wholesalers, distributors and partners. I will be meeting with key energy players who invest in Western Australia and a range of large infrastructure builders who are engaged in projects in Western Australia. As Treasurer, I will be meeting with banks, financial investors and the financial industry about the Western Australian financial situation, which is, of course, the strongest in Australia. The demand for our bonds is very strong and I will be able to speak to those investors, as indeed the Treasurer normally does after each and every budget.

In relation to skills, I will be going to Ireland to promote opportunities to move to Western Australia to undertake work in our state, particularly in construction, mining, health care, hospitality and tourism. We have a record number of jobs available. As we know, it is a very tight labour market, and a lot of businesses, and indeed hospitals, are looking for additional staff. Ireland has always been a ready-made location to look for people who want to come to Western Australia to live and fill some of these positions.

Whilst in Ireland, I will be having a meeting with the President of Ireland, Michael Higgins, who came out here a few years ago. He has been re-elected to that role, and I look forward to seeing President Higgins again. I will be having a meeting with the Prime Minister of Ireland, Hon Micheál Martin, as well. This will be a very productive set of events to promote Western Australia and ensure that we continue on the pathway of being the strongest economy in Australia and probably the world.

*Distinguished Visitor — Nick Catania*

**The SPEAKER:** Before I give the call to the member for Roe, I would like to acknowledge my good friend the former member for Balcatta, Nick Catania, in the Speaker's gallery today, and also all the other guests who are here today, presumably for the valedictory of the member for North West Central.

## TAB — SALE

**428. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:**

I echo that. I just say that I will miss having the member for North West Central sitting next to me, which I have had for five years. Good luck.

I refer to recent reports of Tabcorp's attempts to renegotiate wagering licences across many states, including WA, which the company refers to as Project Midnight.

- (1) Does the minister rule out increasing the point-of-consumption tax or applying levies to corporate bookmakers to make the TAB more attractive to potential buyers?
- (2) Has the minister met with representatives of Tabcorp about the rate of point-of-consumption tax in Western Australia?

**Dr A.D. BUTI replied:**

- (1)–(2) I am not sure that the member is actually asking the right minister with regard to the sale of the TAB. It is actually being done by the Treasurer, so the member may want to readdress the question, but I will answer it in a general manner. As the member knows, the government is seeking and looking at the possible sale of the TAB. That is going through a process. I will not say anything in this chamber that might jeopardise that.

## TAB — SALE

**429. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:**

I have a supplementary question. As Minister for Racing and Gaming, can the minister outline to the racing industry and the people of WA when he expects the sale of the TAB to be completed, and when its conditions will be made public?

**Dr A.D. BUTI replied:**

I never cease to be amazed at the inability of opposition members to craft their supplementary based on the answer given to them by the lead. I have nothing further to add to my original answer.

*Distinguished Visitor — Dudley Maslen*

**The SPEAKER:** Members, I have also been made aware that we have another former member here, Dudley Maslen, a former member for Gascoyne, so I acknowledge Dudley Maslen as well.

## WATER CORPORATION — ALKIMOS DESALINATION PLANT

**430. Ms S.E. WINTON to the Minister for Water:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment in responding to the impacts of climate change on Western Australia's traditional water resources.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the new desalination plant in Alkimos, announced today, will help secure Perth and Peel's long-term drinking water supply?
- (2) Can the minister also outline to the house how that will help Western Australia meet its emissions target for government?

**Mr D.J. KELLY replied:**

- (1)–(2) Thank you very much, member, for this question. Yes, we made a very important announcement today. As members will be aware, because of the impacts of climate change, our two desalination plants already provide over 40 per cent of the drinking water for Perth and Peel, and all the way out to Kalgoorlie–Boulder and significant parts of the south west. Our ability to rely on rainfall has almost disappeared completely because of climate change. Had we not had those two desalination plants, a process begun by the Carpenter–Gallop government, we would have been in serious trouble here in Western Australia. We announced today that the preferred location for our third desalination plant is Alkimos. That will be a 100-gigalitre plant. It is a very significant investment. We have already set aside \$1.4 billion towards that project. The time line is that we plan to have the first stage of 50 gigalitres online by 2028. We announced that today, and that is very important.

What is also very important is that we announced that the plant will be powered by renewable energy. Desalination is very useful because it is very reliable, but it is also very energy intensive. The Water Corporation is the highest government greenhouse gas emitter, apart from Synergy itself. If we take away Synergy's coal-fired power stations, the Water Corporation is head and shoulders above all government agencies as a greenhouse gas emitter. In fact, it is one of the highest emitters on the grid. Therefore, it is essential that we deal with that issue.

We announced today that the new plant will be powered by renewable energy. The Water Corporation will be procuring 400 megawatts of wind energy. That will enable the Water Corporation to power with renewable energy not only the new desalination plant but also our two existing desal plants. In fact, the Water Corporation across all its operations is now on a pattern to be net zero by 2035. That is very impressive. The Water Corporation will go from being one of the largest emitters to being net zero by 2035. I want to commend the staff of the Water Corporation. Having been given that challenge, they have mapped out a plan that will enable us to do that. Of course, our announcement about the Water Corporation also fits very neatly with today's announcement by the Minister for Environment that all government agencies will have a target of an 80 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030.

I am really pleased about the work that the Water Corporation has done to be part of this government's drive to not only secure our water supply into the future in the face of climate change, but also make sure that we are addressing the causes of climate change, and that is greenhouse gas emissions. For the Water Corporation to secure our water supply and also be a net zero emitter by 2035 is a fantastic commitment.

#### AT-RISK CHILDREN — CARNARVON

#### 431. **Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Child Protection:**

Before I ask my question, I also want to recognise the pending retirement of the member for North West Central. I respect the commitment to his electorate that he has demonstrated, and also his good companionship and fellowship. He will be sorely missed in this place.

**The SPEAKER:** Member, I think you need to start your question now. Thank you.

Minister, during my visit to Carnarvon two weeks ago, I noticed many children who were not at school in the middle of a school day. I am also informed by members of the local community that many children are out on the streets late at night. I understand that there are night-time patrols for children. However, there is no dedicated safe house where those children can safely be cared for. Will the minister's government support the Carnarvon community and establish a safe house for at-risk children in Carnarvon?

#### **Ms S.F. McGURK replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

I do not know how much the member understands about the current child protection legislation; I imagine not a lot judging from the question that the member has asked. If there are concerns for a child or young person who is being harmed or at risk of being harmed, the police have the powers now to safely manage that child or young person. There is also an opportunity to contact child protection workers in the district; or, if they are not available after hours, there is a crisis line, which does come through to Perth but does the job, similar to an emergency line, where after-hours staff are then contacted and made available if they need to present and assist police with accommodation or any sort of care for those children or young people. There are after-hours options available in Carnarvon, as there are throughout regional Western Australia.

We have worked hard. In fact, I met with the shire president, Eddie Smith, and some other community representatives not that long ago in my ministerial office and they talked about some of their ideas and some of the issues they are trying to address. I think the title of their work is "Carnarvon intensive family and community intervention". I think they have met with a number of different ministers. We were happy to relay to them the announcement in the budget of the extension of Target 120, which is a juvenile justice early intervention program that has been very successful. That will be rolled out to Carnarvon. We now have our regional executive director of the Department of Communities located in Carnarvon and dedicated child protection staff in Carnarvon. At the moment, we are looking at how we will allocate the additional 36 FTE child protection staff that we committed to in the budget. Carnarvon is certainly a consideration for putting in more resources.

I do not doubt that there are issues on the ground in Carnarvon. A number of child protection and domestic violence incidents are reported to us in that area. I understand that it is an issue, but the member needs to understand that there are laws and systems in place to ensure that if children or young people are on the streets after hours and are unsafe, there are opportunities for police and other authorities to contact child protection staff.

#### AT-RISK CHILDREN — CARNARVON

#### 432. **Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Child Protection:**

I have a supplementary question. How does the minister respond to the fact that police in Carnarvon report that they are frustrated that they do not have suitable accommodation for children at night?

#### **Ms S.F. McGURK replied:**

I am sitting next to the police minister and he said to me that that is not true; that is not what police are saying. It is true that child protection staff are not rostered on 24/7 in the same way that police are. We do not have the same rostering system or the same 24-hour coverage in terms of people being located in offices and available 24/7, but if

the police or any other authority has concerns about children after hours, they can contact the crisis care line and staff will be contacted and make themselves available in Carnarvon, or anywhere else, to assist police, shire authorities or, in fact, even members of the community. Those options are available and are frequently used in regional areas.

*Distinguished Visitor — Wendy Duncan*

**The SPEAKER:** I would also like to acknowledge another former member and former Deputy Speaker in Wendy Duncan, who is in the public gallery. Welcome, Wendy.

#### CRIME AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR — NORTHBRIDGE

#### 433. Mr Y. MUBARAKAI to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's investment in putting an additional 950 new police officers on our streets. Can the minister update the house on the work of the WA police in responding to crime and antisocial behaviour in the Northbridge entertainment precinct, and outline how this is delivering greater safety within the area?

#### **Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for his question and his support of the Western Australia Police Force.

I am pleased to update the house and advise that we are currently in the midst of the single-biggest recruitment of police officers in a four-year period in the history of the state. That is 950 officers in this four-year period, but, of course, when combined with the 150 or so delivered as a consequence of our promise at the 2017 election, it is 1 100 overall. In the last 18 months or so, I have been going to graduations almost monthly, and there is one tonight—red and white squads are graduating tonight. That is another 54 or so officers who will be leaving the academy and joining the Western Australia Police Force. We have graduated some 530 officers since that program commenced, but we have actually recruited around 570 through the doors, so there are still some under training. It is progressing well.

As officers go into the police force, they go out across the state. One district that is receiving additional officers is Perth district, which has been the beneficiary of an additional 175 officers over the last 18 months—an extraordinary uplift in the number of police officers on the ground. They are employed aggressively at the moment in foot patrols—a high-visibility presence on the streets—to ensure that people not only feel safe but also are safe at all times around the CBD. Anyone who walks around the city at night-time now would understand and recognise that. If someone goes into Northbridge on a Friday or Saturday night at this time of the year when Operation Nightsafe is operating, they will probably see more police than patrons at some of the venues. It is not just foot patrols. The liquor enforcement unit is actively enforcing the responsible service of alcohol at venues to ensure that we get the benefit of those laws that require venues to act responsibly.

As I have said many times in this place, right throughout the previous term of office, and currently, WA has been leading the nation, if not the world, in adopting technology to enable better, more efficient and safer policing for police officers. That is happening all over the state. In Northbridge, we are seeing the benefit of these things right now. During the last term, we saw the introduction of body armour, digital access for police officers with the OneForce mobile phones, and body-worn cameras. Across the Perth district, but particularly in Northbridge, the police are trialling the livestreaming of body-worn camera imagery to the State Operations Command Centre, so there is real-time monitoring and support to police officers on the ground right throughout Northbridge. That area is significantly safer, better supported and better policed, and it will only get better because we are going to continue.

#### TAB — SALE

#### 434. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Treasurer:

I refer the Treasurer to recent reports of Tabcorp's attempts to renegotiate wagering licences across many states, including WA, which the company refers to as "Project Midnight".

- (1) Does the Treasurer rule out increasing point-of-consumption tax or applying levies to corporate bookmakers?
- (2) Has the Treasurer met with representatives of Tabcorp regarding the rate of point-of-consumption tax in WA?

#### **Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

- (1)–(2) To the second part of the question, I do not recall having any meetings with them recently, and certainly since the process recommenced, as far as I am aware. I am aware that Treasury is working on a process towards the sale of the TAB—that is an ongoing exercise—in conjunction with Racing and Wagering Western Australia, whose advice is being sought. That process is ongoing. The general view of Racing and Wagering Western Australia is that it would like the TAB to be sold. The main thing it is interested in is making sure that there is a significant return back to racing each and every year. That is the detail we are working through because we would like to see the same thing occur. That is the process we are going through.

I am not aware of any proposals to increase the point-of-consumption tax or levies or taxes on corporate bookmakers. I am unaware of any proposals in that regard. Obviously, a process is being worked through in conjunction with the racing industry to reach an outcome that is satisfactory to the racing industry.

## TAB — SALE

**435. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Treasurer:**

I have a supplementary question. Will the Treasurer rule out increasing the point-of-consumption tax?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I am not aware of any proposals in regard to that. I am unaware of any, and I have been briefed on it. I am unaware of anything. The main thing is that we have to get revenue back to racing. That is the main point here. The proposals I have seen, in my view, are very generous to the racing industry—very generous indeed. We want to make sure that we reach an outcome that will give the racing industry a long-term and successful future, and one that gives it certainty going forward, but at the same time ensures that we do not have a TAB in Western Australia that is small and diminishing. That is basically the outcome. We reached that outcome prior to COVID-19 arriving, but, unfortunately, COVID arrived and the successful proponent, or proponents as I recall, decided that they did not want to proceed with the purchase of the TAB, so we had to abandon the process and start a new process. This issue has been building for a long time—a decade—and we are the first government that has actually taken it on. We did have a solution, but, unfortunately, COVID came along and scuffled that solution. We look forward to another solution being developed.

## RUAH COMMUNITY SERVICES

**436. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Planning:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to ensuring that our planning system supports responsible planning for services and facilities for disadvantaged Western Australians, particularly women and children. Can the minister update the house on the status of the Ruah Community Services' change-of-use application and provide information on what role the state government can have in these matters?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

I thank the member for Thornlie for that question.

As we all know, Ruah Community Services is a dedicated service provider. It has supported Western Australians experiencing homelessness, family and domestic violence and mental health issues for more than 60 years. One of its first services was a homeless drop-in centre on Shenton Street in Northbridge, and it has operated on that site since the 1950s. Earlier this year, Ruah received development approval for a new Ruah centre for women and children on that site. The existing building will be demolished to make way for the purpose-built seven-storey building, specifically designed for the provision of services to women and children escaping domestic violence. In preparation for this change, and to ensure the continuity of homeless services in Northbridge, Ruah purchased an existing building around the corner on James Street and sought approval for a change of use of the building to re-establish its drop-in centre. The proposed centre will provide for people experiencing homelessness in the area. The community centre is proposed to open between 8.30 am and 2.00 pm.

Application for a change of use went forward to the City of Perth. The application was not a development application, but purely one for change of use. The responsible officer report said that the proposed use was not considered incompatible with the existing commercial uses in the immediate locality and could be managed appropriately to minimise any impact on residential properties on the northern side of James Street and within the wider locality. Unfortunately, the City of Perth Council resolved to refuse the application, and Ruah subsequently appealed that decision to the State Administrative Tribunal. Ruah has also written to me asking that I, as Minister for Planning, call in the application and that I determine that application for the change of use. I want to report today that I have agreed to determine the change of use application for that centre.

We know that the issues surrounding homelessness are difficult, and they are difficult to manage throughout the community. However, it is important that we stay strong and make decisions that benefit the entire community, and in particular those who are at risk and who need the services. Without this decision, and without this process, not only would the drop-in centre for the homeless be impacted, but also the application and proposal to build a seven-storey new dedicated facility for family and domestic violence. It is important that the overall package from the state government be considered from a strategic point of view.

## MAJOR PROJECTS — STATUS

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

I refer to the Premier's long answer yesterday about the Auditor General's recommendation that the Department of Finance should work to improve transparency through regular reporting to Parliament and the public on the cost, time and status of major projects.

- (1) Will the Premier accept the Auditor General's finding that his government could improve the transparency of major projects?
- (2) Will the Premier adopt the Auditor General's recommendations to promote accountability and build community trust and confidence in the management of the government's significant investment of public money in major public assets?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

(1)–(2) Yesterday I outlined a range of transparency initiatives that have been put in place. I do not know whether the member was listening. Ordinarily he does not, so I assume that he did not get the long list of transparency initiatives I outlined to the house yesterday to deal with these matters. I also explained to him that we have a budget each year and we have a midyear review. If there are changes in parameters or cost, it is in the budget and the midyear review. We had the budget estimates process. It was the most boring and useless performance by an opposition in the history of the Westminster system. In fact, the opposition asked for the hours to be cut back during budget estimates. It was really quite extraordinary, and had never been seen before.

We reveal those matters in the budget and the midyear review. What is happening in terms of major projects is exactly what is happening around Australia and around the world, which is that project costs are escalating because the cost of steel and products is growing—40 per cent or thereabouts in the cost of steel over the past year or so, and timber has gone up by 20 per cent. There is an escalation.

Fortunately, because of the state government's financial management, we are in the best financial position of any state in Australia and we have capacity to meet those increased costs, but we need to smooth out some of the projects so that they are built over a longer period of time and we do not cram too many projects into a short period and, therefore, put more heat on the private sector and people trying to build projects privately.

I outlined to the member yesterday, and I will do it again for him, the transparency initiatives that we have put in place.

**Ms M.J. Davies:** What have you got against the recommendations of the Auditor General?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I am reading them out to you—the establishment of Infrastructure WA, the development of the state infrastructure strategy —

**Mr R.S. Love** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order! Member, you have asked a question and there is an opportunity for a supplementary. Please let the Premier answer.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The initiatives include the creation of the infrastructure delivery unit in the major projects unit in the Department of Finance, whole-of-state reporting on the delivery of infrastructure programs and projects, the establishment of the major projects expenditure review subcommittee, procurement and reform, including the introduction of the Procurement Act 2020 and, more broadly, a range of initiatives following the Paul Whyte affair in the Department of Housing that went uncovered for 10 years to ensure that we have greater accountability and transparency with regard to government spend, particularly in procurement agencies.

That is what is occurring. I do not understand what the member is asking for. I do not think he knows what he is asking for. I think he just flails around looking for something to be negative about. The member yesterday was being negative and attacking the fact that we got the commonwealth to pay for 75 per cent of projects in WA. He made out that that was a bad thing. I do not think he knows what he stands for, what he believes in or what he is trying to do. The opposition is in a total state of discombobulation. It has been that way for five years, and I expect that will continue.

#### MAJOR PROJECTS — STATUS

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

I have a supplementary question. The Auditor General, as recently as this week, when she dropped the report at Parliament's steps, identified that transparency could be improved. Is she wrong?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I have outlined to the member the initiatives we have put in place. We are fully accountable to Parliament. I am standing here. The member can ask me any question on any of these projects—give me some notice and I will provide it. We have put in place all of the transparency initiatives I have just announced.

In the interests of transparency, I want to outline to the house some of the opposition's policies. The opposition went live today with the opposition alliance website, which is about the sorts of things it is up to. One of the parts of the opposition alliance website is "Our policies". When we click on "Our policies", guess what? Nothing! There is nothing there. Then if we click on "Our values", guess what? There is nothing there. In other words, it is a self-confessed no values and no policies opposition. Where are its policies? Where are its values? Everyone is looking for them; we cannot find them. I suppose the opposition is being completely transparent. There is complete honesty and complete transparency by this opposition! It is being totally truthful in relation to its policies and values; that is, it has none.

**The SPEAKER:** That was a little bit of a long bow in terms of an answer to a supplementary. Take it on notice.

## ROYAL PERTH HOSPITAL — MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

**439. Mr P. LILBURNE to the Minister for Mental Health:**

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Carine has been very keen to ask his question; I am glad he will at last have the opportunity!

**Mr P. LILBURNE:** Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record investment in our health system and its commitment to delivering an additional 530 beds into our health system. Can the minister update the house on the new 12-bed mental health unit at Royal Perth Hospital and outline how it is supporting people experiencing mental health issues?

**Ms A. SANDERSON replied:**

I thank the member for his question on this incredibly important issue.

The member referred to the new 12-bed mental health unit that recently opened at Royal Perth Hospital and began accepting patients last week, I believe. These 12 beds are an important addition to the hospital. They will also be able to accommodate involuntary patients, who are currently not accommodated at Royal Perth Hospital. As we know, Royal Perth, being a CBD hospital, experiences very high acuity presentations, particularly mental health and drug and alcohol presentations. The unit is called Dabakarn and has already accepted its first patients. Dabakarn is the Whadjuk Noongar phrase for "slowly, slowly", which reflects its commitment to being a holistic and healing space for people. It really is a beautiful unit. It is separate from the emergency department, with a completely separate entrance and a low-stimulus environment. It was developed in consultation with stakeholders and former mental health consumers. It is able to provide a really robust and effective recovery model for those people who are admitted, with support from psychiatrists, allied health, occupational therapists and social workers. It is based on world's best practice, having single rooms and en suites, and a dining and multipurpose space.

This is in addition to the St James transitional care unit that I announced in March, a number of months ago. It will begin taking patients from July. That is a 40-bed service of transitional care—a huge number of beds to come online in the system—that will support people with mental illness recovering in the community as a step to transition out into the broader community. This is a \$7 million repurpose of a former aged-care facility in partnership with Aegis Aged Care. It will help support patients to find employment, rebuild family relationships, build community relationships and get on their feet, get jobs and be self-supporting. Again, it will have a multidisciplinary team, led by a non-medical person, which is a fantastic step in this space.

These beds form part of the overall alcohol and other drug services that the government continues to be committed to. We continue to support our community in this area. I look forward to the opening of the transitional unit in St James.

**The SPEAKER:** I give the call to the member for North West Central with the last question.

## MEMBER FOR NORTH WEST CENTRAL — LEGACY

**440. Mr V.A. CATANIA to the Leader of the Opposition:**

This is my last question, my final question in this place as the member for North West Central.

I refer to private members' business notice of motion 9, referring to my electorate of North West Central and to the failure of the McGowan government to address critical issues across the community. Under standing order 75(3), can the Leader of the Opposition please inform the house when she intends to progress this motion?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES replied:**

Madam Speaker, I understand that I need to speak to the urgency of when we will bring on this motion and seek your indulgence.

I also briefly acknowledge Nick Catania, Dudley Maslen, AO, and Wendy Duncan, a former colleague, who are here as former parliamentary members.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** There are more former members than current members of the Liberal Party here!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Show some respect, member!

**The SPEAKER:** Minister for Finance!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I thank the member for North West Central very much for the question and for his service to the electorate of North West Central. I note that the motion on the notice paper refers to the member's efforts in delivering major infrastructure investment and his legacy of positive growth for his electorate. It is timely that we debate this motion. The opposition looks forward to bringing it to the Parliament when we return from the winter recess. The reason it will be timely is that we will likely be asking the people of North West Central to decide who will represent them after the retirement of this member. We know that it will not be someone from the Labor Party.

The timing of the debate is important. I will speak briefly to the content of the motion. When we return to this house to debate this motion, we will highlight the legacy of the member for North West Central and his 17 years, including a new aged-care facility in Carnarvon, which was hard fought for; the magnificent Ningaloo Centre in

Exmouth, which is wonderful tourism infrastructure for that community; the rebuild of Gascoyne Junction after major floods; and flood mitigation in Carnarvon. That is just to name a few and not to mention all the much smaller community organisations that have benefited from the advocacy of this member over a significant period.

We will also highlight the failures, as we have a responsibility to do as an opposition, of this government over the past five years to deliver for the electorate, including mothers who have to travel over 1 000 kilometres to give birth; the Carnarvon fascine, silted up so that people cannot access it, despite the fact that the community has asked the government again and again to address that particular issue; worker accommodation crises in Kalbarri, Exmouth and Coral Bay; the failure to deliver the upgraded facilities at Meekatharra Hospital; and ignorance and outright denial from the Minister for Police on crime issues.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please, members!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Thank you, Madam Speaker, I will sit down.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I am glad you are drawing your answer to a close.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I look forward to congratulating the member for North West Central for his advocacy and participation in this Parliament and his advocacy on behalf of the people of North West Central. He has been a fine servant of this Parliament and the Nationals WA and we wish him and his family all the very best as he takes on his next challenge.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, what was allowed then was quite unusual, but it is permitted under the standing orders. When any member puts a motion on the notice paper, they can be asked a question about that motion. You strayed far too much into attack as part of that response, Leader of the Opposition, so it did not strictly fit within the format. But just to explain, especially to new members, that is why the Leader of the Opposition was able to be asked a question, not because she is the Leader of the Opposition but because she had a specific motion on the notice paper.

#### **MEMBER FOR NORTH WEST CENTRAL**

##### *Valedictory Remarks*

**MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central)** [2.47 pm]: Madam Speaker, thank you for your friendship and guidance throughout your career and my career. I wish you all the best in your future career.

After more than 17 years in the Western Australian state Parliament, it is with mixed emotions and after much soul-searching and consideration that I made the difficult decision to call time on politics. I will step away in August this year. I would like to thank people who have sent the hundreds of messages that I have received from around the state, including many from my former Labor Party colleagues. Thank you.

Members, this will not be one of those tell-all speeches that divulges the secrets or hits out against MPs or suddenly tells everyone at the last moment what they really thought over the last two decades. I am not that politician. I always said how it is, wore my heart on my sleeve, was never afraid to make my opinion heard and backed my constituents in my electorate first.

At age 28, I was the youngest person elected to the Legislative Council back in 2005 as a Labor member for the Mining and Pastoral Region at that time. Having first joined the Labor Party in 1991 and holding many positions within the party, including three years as WA Young Labor president, and having grown up with a father not only being a member of this place, but also a member of the Australian Labor Party for 40 years, leaving the Labor Party was a difficult and daunting decision, knowing the response I would receive from my former party. But I have no regrets about leaving the Labor Party in 2009. After becoming the member for North West in 2008, it was a move I saw as necessary to be able to deliver the best regionally focused outcomes and allow me to truly deliver for my electorate, which the voters of North West endorsed not once but over three elections as a Nationals member.

It was an opportunity to be part of the implementation of the National Party's signature policy of royalties for regions, something that was talked about by regional communities for decades. With the majority of Western Australia's wealth coming from the regions, it was time for the regions to receive their fair share of the pie. It has been fulfilling to be a member of the party that has delivered critical infrastructure and amenities that have improved residents' lives and allowed regional communities to take advantage of better infrastructure to attract people to, and retain people in, the bush. There have been issues such as worker shortages, the need for workers' accommodation, health services not able to cope, not being able to have a baby in your home town, the escalating costs of doing business and pay not keeping pace with the cost of living and adding pressure, which is worse than the boom of the early 2000s. The royalties for regions program is desperately needed again to keep pace with demand. We know that teachers, nurses, police and other government agency roles are not being filled in our regional communities. This is often due to the lack of investment in our regions, such as government housing and basic amenities, coupled with the need for better regional incentives to offset higher regional costs and remoteness.

For almost two decades in Parliament, I have been passionate about, and committed to, my electorate. North West Central is one of the largest—at 860 000 square kilometres—most diverse, remote electorates in Australia, if not

the world. Ensuring all the voices in the area are heard is a consistent challenge. I have regularly clocked up more than 140 000 kilometres a year on the road—many in the air whilst trying to conquer my fear of flying. As many would say, “Why don’t you fly more?” Firstly, I would simply say, “Has your engine stopped over the ocean? Have you flown through storms or thermals, in what we call bug smashes?” But often it is simply that there is no connectivity or flights between towns, and you are not able to marry up what you need to do in your electorate, especially when towns are hundreds of kilometres apart.

With more than half a year of, quite literally, living out of my car, having become a father of five wonderful children during my time in Parliament; with my wife, Danielle, needing to take on the lion’s share of parenting; with our kids now becoming teenagers—I realise that I would like to be a more present father-figure in their lives. With the support of Dani, we have decided that I will look for a challenge that will keep the kilometres in the car to a minimum and increase my time with the family.

Reflecting on my time as the local member for North West, there is no shortage of humbling experiences to look back on. As I immersed myself in the electorate and the lives of the people who live there, I have, as much as possible, ensured that I have been on the ground to assist constituents faced with the challenges of cyclones. We have had two in my time—Owen and Seroja—and, as a local member, there is not much you can do but get your hands dirty. I remember Dudley Maslen, a former member of this place, putting up trees after they had been blown down by cyclone Owen to ensure that they could survive. Last year, with cyclone Seroja, my good friends the Morgan family who are here today—Colin, Rodney and Sidney—came down from Shark Bay at their expense to bring their equipment, and, in four days, helped out families at 75 houses by cleaning up their properties, making them safe and ensuring that they had a chance to rebuild. I thank immensely the Morgan family, who took that on themselves, and they are here today.

In 2010–11, we had one of the biggest floods in Carnarvon’s history. It basically took away Gascoyne Junction, which is 180 kilometres east of Carnarvon. The town was absolutely destroyed by the flood as was the plantation areas and much of Carnarvon. Yet again, the fast-thinking shire president at the time, Dudley Maslen, had prepared for this flood by stockpiling sand in town to ensure that the community could build a levy so the town would not get flooded. As a member of Parliament, dealing with the people who were devastated by the largest flood in Carnarvon’s history was one of the toughest situations I have had. We have also had bushfires cover the size of the south west. Natural disasters are experienced in a much higher rate than those Western Australians living in the south west of our state. My job as the member of Parliament was to advocate and call for the government to assist them, which I did on a regular basis.

I have given my best and have worked hard to significantly contribute to the growth and development of the region, within the parameters of the changing political landscape, including securing some big-ticket infrastructure items, facilitated largely by royalties for regions. I want to let members know that there is a bit of a list here, so sit back and relax!

In Carnarvon there is a new community college; heritage precinct museum and interpretive centre; a new 38-bed aged-care facility; 15 independent living units; the redevelopment of a hospital, public dental facility, renal unit and drug and alcohol centre; a new police station and courthouse; a new library and art centre; fascine redevelopment; a new boat ramp and marine upgrades. There are yacht club pens, new bore fields and a water pipeline; and, of course, after the devastating flood in 2010–11, flood mitigation to protect our horticulture, so everyone in this house has fruit and vegetables to eat.

In Coral Bay, there is new workers’ accommodation. In Onslow, there is a multipurpose centre with basketball courts and a water park, a new airport, a new hospital and underground power. In Meekatharra, there is the community resource centre; a new gym and oval lighting; a go-kart and dirt-kart club program. There is the sealing of 30 kilometres of the Wiluna–Meekatharra Road and the sealing and upgrade of Landor–Meekatharra Road, which is nearly complete.

In Exmouth, there is the town centre revitalisation, the Ningaloo Centre, the Exmouth Boat Harbour upgrade, flood mitigation for the light industrial area, the Exmouth water park and the community resource centre. In Shark Bay, there is the Shark Bay Recreation Centre, the Denham foreshore redevelopment and the Denham and Monkey Mia jetties. In Gascoyne Junction, there is the Junction Pub and Tourist Park, Killili Bridge, the community resource centre and a new mobile phone tower. Would members believe that before 2008 there was no mobile phone reception in Gascoyne Junction, which is 180 kilometres east of Carnarvon, and the first complaints that I got were that suddenly people’s phone bills had gone through the roof because they were able to use their mobile phone!

In Mt Magnet, there is a new skate park, pool revitalisation, a new visitors centre at the Mining and Pastoral Museum, the youth centre extension and a volunteer fire rescue service running track. In Yalgoo, there is the new community hub sports centre, the caravan park redevelopment, the youth centre, Paynes Find Airstrip. There was the sealing of the Yalgoo–Morawa Road, the nursing post and St John Ambulance upgrade, and a new mobile phone tower; again, Yalgoo did not have any mobile phone coverage at that time. In Cue, there were tourist park upgrades and a new community resource centre and water park. In Sandstone, there is a new administration and civic centre, shire staff housing, a water park and caravan park upgrades.

In Tom Price, there is the Clem Thompson Memorial Oval and Pavilion, the town centre revitalisation, a new community resource centre and the sporting precinct redevelopment of the pool and upgrades. In Murchison, there is the Murchison Oasis Roadhouse and Caravan Park, the airport upgrade and the Ballinyoo Bridge replacement. In Paraburdoo, there is the town centre revitalisation, the Paraburdoo Community Hub, swimming pool upgrades, a Men's Shed, a childcare centre and improvements for a motorcycle club. The list goes on, but I will not bore members. Those were pretty significant investments for those communities, and they have made a difference to the lives of the people who live in those towns and have especially helped the attraction of people to, and retention of people living in, regional WA.

Regional WA has had the challenges of not only upgrading outdated infrastructure, but also having the government understand the impacts of policy decisions—or, as I call them, ideology policy decisions. One major policy shift occurred in 2009 with the review of the district allowance. The district allowance is an important incentive for government employees to work in regional areas and was not reviewed for 15 years until royalties for regions funded an increase to assist with the high cost of living in regional WA; for example, in 2008, the Pilbara was losing police officers, teachers and nurses to the resource sector as the district allowance was around only \$2 000. Royalties for regions lifted this allowance to well over \$10 000. I would like to thank Jon Groves, former vice president of the Western Australian Police Union, for his strong advocacy to try to come up with solutions to ensure that the police could be kept and that people would still become police officers into the future with the district allowance.

Karratha was once in my electorate, and I am proud to be able to claim a small amount of credit for the success of Pilbara Cities, which resulted in the transformation of Karratha from a town into a city, but we all know that the credit must go to Hon Brendon Grylls. He is a great leader and a great mate, who always asked, “What’s the solution; how can it be done?” Everything new that we see in Karratha is courtesy of royalties for regions and the plan activated by the Nationals WA.

Much like the former Labor Minister for Health in 2007, who called the Royal Flying Doctor Service an “interest group” and tried not to fund the vital service for the regions, in 2017, the Labor Minister for Education and Training attempted to cut education for the bush, scrap the Schools of the Air and deliver this essential education service out of Perth. What a lack of understanding! One of my proudest moments has to be leading the charge to reverse that uneducated decision made just before Christmas in 2017. I was able to hold rallies in Karratha, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie supported by almost 1 000 Schools of the Air students, their families, past students, and those who appreciate that education is everything and know how critical Schools of the Air is and has been to regional Western Australia. This position was backed up by over 30 000 Western Australians, who understood that Schools of the Air not only supports and underpins many businesses and their families, but that education should be accessible to everyone, no matter where they live. There was an online petition demanding that the McGowan Labor government reverse this decision. We won.

Governments need to do more when it comes to closing the gap. One of the highest suicide rates in the country is in the Gascoyne, where there is low school attendance, poor housing, a need for family support, high rates of unemployment, high crime rates, high levels of drug and alcohol abuse, and kids are roaming the streets at all hours of the day simply because it is safer than going home. When we hear of budget surpluses of \$5.7 billion and how low unemployment rates are, it is disgraceful that we have this going on in our backyard. If prison is seen as a break from life, then we are not a rich society. What we are doing is not working, and change is needed.

Going forward, members, new and emerging industries such as hydrogen will play a critical role in reducing not only our emissions in WA and in Australia, but also global emissions around the world. These projects, which are centred on the electorate of North West Central, need to be supported by state, federal and local governments, as well as the need to bring along communities, the pastoral industry and traditional owners on this exciting journey.

Along the way, I have had the privilege of meeting not only some interesting characters around the electorate, but also a few that have been to the moon and space, such as Buzz Aldrin, the second man on the moon, and Gene Cernan, the last man on the moon, as well as our own Australian astronaut, Dr Andy Thomas. I not only had the opportunity to meet these truly amazing, pioneering astronauts, but also had the experience of spending many days with them, assisting the Carnarvon Space and Technology Museum, which was hosting their time here in WA. A huge thank you must go to Phil Youd, who brought to life the role that Carnarvon played in the world space race. He continues to work tirelessly to develop this important icon.

Here we get to the thankyou. I thank the Parliament House staff, who I have known for over 35 years. I want to say thank you for the work that you do for members of Parliament in this place. I am going to miss out a few people, but I want to thank Basil, Lance, Deb, Mark, Steve, Anthony, Maria, David, Roger, Tony, Enno, Rob, and especially the library staff, as I used to have my office near the library and go to the library every day to collect the mints that they would have on the counter. To the chamber staff, I thank you for your guidance and assistance over the time. I also thank the committee staff. They do an amazing job for members who are on the committees. I want to thank you for all your support and guidance. I also thank those who are no longer with us in this place who I have known for over 30 years—thank you.

Over the years, I have been blessed with loyal, passionate, tireless staff, who have been my backbone in dealing with all matters that one could imagine. More importantly, they never hesitated to tell me what they thought, and

provided the skills needed to cover for me. As members can imagine, I am only missing a few! But the biggest thankyou needs to go to Doriana Mangili, “Mem” Beard, Belynda Dixon, and Noelene Bassett, who has been with me for over 10 years on this journey. I thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have been a pillar of strength for me. Thank you.

This amazing journey could not have been achieved without the support of friends and family. To my mates who have been there since school days, Andre Feghaly, who is here; Tim and Michelle Fanowrios; Brad and Simone Hutchinson; Patrick Baroni; Sheldon Patrick; Brad O’Callaghan; Darren Evans; Charmaine and Dave White, I thank you guys. Friends who I have met along the way, from all walks of life, through my involvement in the political game at different points of time, are still right beside me. They are James Donnelly, John Little, Dave Wirrpanda, Tony Shaw, James Wishart, Peter Robins, Shelley Archer, Kevin Reynolds, Peter Kapsanis, Kevin Caton, Robbie Simms, Renae Isaacs, Bob Isaacs and Frank Paolino. To the friends I have gathered around the electorate over the years, they have been my rock. Paul and Belynda Dixon; Paul and Stephanie Kelly; Shane Aylmore; Lex Fullarton; Tessa, Lee-Ann and Peter Daly; Sandra Gane; Denis and Bobbie Holt; Alison and Chris Sentence; Terry Fleeton; Nick and Lisa Fardell—of course, in this place, we call him “Big Nick”; Gail Bellotti and her family; Lionel Quartermaine; Bernie Duffield; Cheryl Moncrieff; Sandy Clancy; Peter Clancy; Shane Van Styn; “Turk” and Lorraine Shales; Trevor and Jocelyn Clark; Larry Burkett; Ben Bellottie; Darren Capewell—“Capesy”; Lara Jensen; Tim and Ed Shallcross; Sean D’Arcy; Matt Niikkula; Bill Price; Gary Mounsey; David Gillespie; Alex Kailis; the Morgens—Jamie, Robbie, John and Lisa; Ashley and Debbie Dowden; Jorgen Jensen; John McCleary; Don Hammarquist; Lachie and Jane McTaggart; Chantelle King; Ross and Pix Pigdon; Greg Ridgley; Mark and Margaret Young; Kane Simpson; Raul and Ivonne Valenzuela; Peter Grundy; Jason and Helen Regan; Guy and Christine D’Costa; Cindy and Rodney Appleton; Melissa Finlay; Norm Trenfield; Harvey Nichols; Martin Walsh; Karen Williams; Horrie and Meecho from the Commi—thanks, boys, for looking after me there; John Spargo; Gary Hill; Phil and Liana Frzop; David Gooch; all the Kuzi boys; the Condo family; Bobo, Rossco and Emma Foulkes-Taylor; Scott Bourne; Glen Della; Dave Forrest; Jane and Gordon Pearce; and my mate, Robin Vandenberg, who took the plunge, leaving the Liberal Party to join the Nationals with me back in 2009; and many more whom I thank who are not here today. I thank those who have made the trip down from the north west. I look forward to having a beer with you later on, and also around the electorate as I say farewell. I thank my former National Party colleagues, and Wendy Duncan is here today. I thank you. I thank “Tuck”, “Woody” and “Redders”, who played a huge supporting role in me coming across to the National Party.

To my aunties and uncles who are here, Tony and Gail Catania, Suzi and John De Chiera, Vince and Lisa Iozzi, and all my cousins—thank you. My sister and brother-in-law, Sarah and Tim Phillips, and their kids; Molly, who is the only one who has actually taken an interest in politics. Who knows; I think you will make a great Prime Minister one day, Molly. Lucy, Jessica, Kate, Rich Haynes, Harry, Camila and Jack, thank you. To my mother and father-in-law, Dudley and Sue Maslen, who have provided support and guidance to me over the years, thank you very much. To my sister, Angela, and James Elder, and their kids, Hamish and Ben, and my brother, Stephen, and Jana Catania, Hugo, Allegra, Maxi, Marc and Sandra, thank you very much.

To mum and dad, Rita and Nick Catania. Without your guidance, encouragement, support and work ethic, this honour of serving would not have been possible. I now look forward to being around more for the family gatherings, of which I have missed too many. Thanks, mum and dad.

To Johanna, my good friend and wonderful mother of Nicholas, thank you for your many years of support.

To my beautiful wife, Dani, who not only works full time and runs her own veterinarian business while looking after our five amazing teenage children—Jack, Tom, Nicholas, Rosie and Isy—this day is for you. Dani would say that she has six kids, and I am sure the other kids are dreading me being around much more than I have been. Instead of annoying my colleagues in this place, I now get to turn my attention to you.

It has been an absolute honour to have represented the people of North West Central and regional WA—a real privilege. I will miss this job, but thankfully I will always have contact with my electorate and the wonderful people I have come to meet in the course of my work. I will always be connected to the north west.

I extend my very best wishes to the National Party WA and the Liberal Party, which have a monumental task of keeping the government to account, but I know that with the leadership of Mia Davies and her team—Shane, Peter, Colin, Marty—and the Liberals, David and Libby, this will be achieved.

To my colleagues on the other side, I wish you well.

To all my supporter constituents, I would like to say a massive thank you. It has been a massive pleasure and honour. I have worked to represent you, the people of the north west, for 17 and a half years. There are going to be challenges ahead for all of us, but if there is one thing I can pass on, it is that working together will get a lot more done and help our state reach its potential.

Good luck to my successor. Look after our electorate. They are all a pretty special bunch.

[Applause.]

**ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE***Inquiry into Western Australia's bilateral trade relationship with the Republic of Indonesia —  
Terms of Reference*

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [3.12 pm]: I have received advice from the Economics and Industry Standing Committee that it has resolved to inquire into matters relating to Western Australia's bilateral trade relationship with the Republic of Indonesia. In particular, the committee will examine —

- (1) The role of the state government within Australia's national trade and investment ecosystem, in relation to Indonesia, taking into consideration —
  - (a) the Team Australia approach to the national trade and investment agenda led by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Austrade; and
  - (b) how the state government could optimise outcomes for Western Australia by adopting a Brand WA approach to Indonesian trade and investment.
- (2) The current status of Western Australia's bilateral trade relationship with Indonesia, and implications of the ratification of the IA-CEPA, which establishes an economic powerhouse model of collaboration at the national level, with particular reference to job creation and economic growth into the future.
- (3) The work of Invest and Trade WA in facilitating Indonesian trade and investment opportunities and measuring the success of those opportunities, in particular examining —
  - (a) engagement with Western Australian businesses that —
    - (i) would benefit from the provisions in IA-CEPA;
    - (ii) are not existing companies or industries that trade with Indonesia; and/or
    - (iii) are looking to trade with Indonesia for the first time; and
  - (b) the facilitation of Indonesian foreign investment into the state.
- (4) Whether the state government is adequately developing a bespoke, proactive, and long-term engagement strategy with the Indonesia.

The committee will report to the house by 30 June 2023.

**HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2021***Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [3.14 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021. It is interesting how long this bill has taken to come back to this place. I had to retrieve my notes from my office this morning. I noted the date at the top of those documents is 12 August last year. The first line of the prepared speech on the bill is that the bill was introduced in a similar form in the last Parliament and the opposition maintains its support for the bill. I will not go through that entire speech on the second reading debate that was prepared at the time, but I do want refer to some various aspects of the explanatory memorandum.

I think there is a general point to be made here about government. As I say, the opposition supports this bill, but, collectively, on both our sides, there is not much time to reflect on the style of management within government, which is a highly hierarchical system. Essentially, we have fiefdoms in various departments, and certainly in the corporations, that do not reflect the way modern business is managed. Modern business is managed much more in a matrix style. For example, an area that I think the government could pick up on straightaway is financial management. All the major businesses, including all the big businesses down the Terrace, have a chief financial officer. That chief financial officer has direct line reporting to every senior financial manager across the entire business. I think that is something we are missing in government. It is a matter that I discussed with the Auditor General. Yesterday, we discussed some reports she was reporting to us on. Different departments in different areas have set up their own processes. We do not have in government the same level of coordination that we have in the corporate world, and I think we need that. If we look at the overall structure of the style of management we have in government, we can see that, by and large, it harks back to the 1960s. It is a very hierarchical structure and we are missing out on the matrix opportunity.

I will go through a few points. I will not go through this exhaustively, but the bill enables ministers to delegate responsibilities under clause 8, "Section 11 amended" and clause 10, "Section 15 amended". Those ministerial delegations are defined in the bill. I think there is sometimes a risk of having too much devolution and ministers losing contact with what is happening in their departments or, more importantly, the ministers losing control of what is happening in their departments. Clause 13 looks at the management of infrastructure by the boards, so

independently managing that area or those issues. I am interested in Infrastructure WA and how far the CEOs will be able to go in defining scopes for capital works and maintenance works and projects. Depending on the size of the board and its experience, that is an area that could be mismanaged. It is very easy for capital expenditure to get out of control. I know that the government has put in a range of controls around that, but this bill will delegate some significant authority down to boards in relation to that. Clause 15, “Section 26 amended”, relates to financial management and defines the matters that a department CEO may issue on policy frameworks and the like. Again, I think that is a real issue for government. If someone asked the government today what the cash flow or the financial position of the government was, they could not get an answer. Any of the major companies’ offices down the street, such as BHP, Rio Tinto, Woodside and the like, would have a chief financial officer who could give a cash flow position of that business on the day. We need to watch out for that with this delegation, particularly in the evolution of different financial management systems within those organisations. That is a common theme and concern I have.

Clause 18 amends section 35 of the initial act. It will provide a facility under its control and management to a person who engages in community work or conducts a service that has a community or charitable purpose. I have a bit of a concern that that will go too far. I understand that this is to allow some flexibility for the boards, but I would loathe to see boards engage themselves in activities that go outside the very strict scope. I would loathe to see, for example, hospitals and boards supporting causes that are not directly related to the immediate duty and function that they have to carry out. We also need to see transparency and ensure that process does not occur in secret.

Clause 20 will insert sections 36A to 36E, dealing with properties. When I initially read it, I was concerned that we would see property transactions that were not properly controlled by the government, but as I read further in that bill, certainly at least in the area of land disposal, I saw that it will require the minister to sign off for the disposal of that land. I would be very concerned if individual boards were transacting land that did not have the direct control of the minister on it, but the minister will have that control. That is controlled under clause 26, which amends section 49. Recovery of fees and charges is obviously positive and it is good to give the board the authority to do that so that we will not have unfairly imposed charges on the taxpayer in that amendment.

Clause 31 replaces section 58 and it is around compensation for pain and suffering, injury and the like for patients who have received treatment in hospitals. I am interested in whether there will be any limits to those payments. That is an area that we would want central control over to make sure that payments are not excessive and outside what government would normally pay in compensation. I am not trying to unnecessarily hold the minister up; I just want to look at a few of these points.

Clause 41 amends section 79 to place a number of express obligations on board members and committee members. That is certainly worthwhile, but it needs to be explicit. I am interested in where the detail of that is explained and how we will see the detail of those particular requirements.

Clause 54 amends section 121 and there are various requirements for the employing authority, the health service provider, to ensure that classification and remuneration of health executives is in accordance with the relevant policy framework. I am very pleased to see that control in there, because one of the things we see in many organisations is that executive salaries creep and grow, often at many times the rate of the people who are carrying out work in those departments.

Clause 66 amends section 177(1) to define “confidential information” non-exhaustively. The explanatory memorandum refers to it replacing a word. We can explore this at the consideration in detail stage. What information is allowed to be reviewed? In particular, could patient health records be included in that particular clause?

I do not have any other comments. As I said, we support this bill. This is an evolution of a journey started some years ago by the former government and this government has continued to improve that. As I said, not for this bill, there is a general opportunity for us to look at government overall and at less hierarchical management structures and a more matrix structure, but that is clearly not a matter for this bill.

**MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont)** [3.25 pm]: I rise today to make a contribution [to the Health Services Amendment Bill 2021]. This bill was first introduced in the fortieth Parliament. It passed in the Legislative Assembly but, unfortunately, did not progress through the Legislative Council because it came through prior to prorogation of Parliament. I acknowledge the work of the former Minister for Health and of course the current Minister for Health for bringing this important, comprehensive and enormous bill to Parliament. I also acknowledge and thank all the ministerial and department staff who worked tirelessly alongside those two ministers to reintroduce this important legislation. This bill is a really important step towards improving the performance, efficiency and ultimately accountability of our WA health system, which I do not think anybody in this place would see as anything other than truly commendable.

I would like to point out for the record that this legislation is another example of our government’s commitment to improving outcomes for patients. There are a range of key amendments to be made to ensure that the Health Services Act is effective. The bill will amend the minister’s powers to allow the minister to more effectively delegate their functions and responsibilities to officers in the Department of Health and to health service providers, or HSPs. It

is very clear that this government has always backed our health workers and we really appreciate their hard work and expertise that they bring to the job, and of course, more than ever, over recent years during the pandemic they have been at the forefront and done us all immensely proud.

This provision will provide greater flexibility to remove administrative burdens that slow down the day-to-day operations in hospitals and the health setting. The bill will also establish a new framework for the delivery of capital works, maintenance works and the carrying out of clinical commissioning. This bill is a really sound, sensible, effective set of measures that will improve the operation of our system. It forms part of a broader commitment that the McGowan Labor government has to putting our patients first.

Since we came into government in 2017, the McGowan government has embarked on bold legislative changes and ambitious projects that will truly change the landscape of our health system for the state. We have made incredible investments to continue to improve our health system every step of the way. This year's budget includes a record \$2.5 billion investment in health, and, importantly, in mental health. A key part of our investment is the emergency department reform package to continue to improve hospital emergency capacity and address ambulance ramping. We all know our community cares about health and our hospitals—we all do—and that is why this reform package is really critical. It includes funding to embed 24/7 registered nurses across 15 metropolitan and regional emergency department waiting rooms; for telehealth services, which provide patient care for people who do not need emergency department support; to reduce emergency department presentations; for real time data capabilities and programs to manage system pressures; to improve the flow of patients through ED and better triage for incoming ambulance patients; and to identify solutions for long-term improvements to ultimately reduce ramping.

Since the last state budget, an additional 342 beds have been added to the public hospital system, with a total of 530 beds to be added by the end of this year. That is the equivalent of building a brand new tertiary hospital, so that is really significant. I would like to take this opportunity to again acknowledge the work of our Minister for Health, because that is truly remarkable. If we look across the country, we see that a lot of other states and territories are in the same situation with ramping, but we are really showing our bona fides to putting patients first by committing to those additional beds. It is really critical. This investment, of course, complements a suite of changes and programs that we have implemented across health to make a real difference to Western Australians.

Of course, 5 December 2019 will be a monumental date etched in our state's history—certainly in mine. I believe it will be remembered as the day that our Parliament chose compassion. The Voluntary Assisted Dying Act 2019 is one of the most consequential pieces of legislation to have been passed in this place. It has been one year since dying with dignity became an option here in WA. The actions of this government and the advocacy of so many incredible members of the community have provided a compassionate end-of-life option for WA, and I am incredibly proud of that. I remember vividly that just before the bill came to this place to be debated, I held a community forum and I really was shocked at the number of people who came out to listen to what we had to say on the proposed legislation and, more importantly, to share their stories. I know the minister was there at that community forum. It was gut-wrenching because, previously, no dignity had been provided to people who were looking death square in the eye. We are now providing them with that option for dignity in their final months and moments. That is something that I think is certainly really monumental for our state and certainly our state should be proud of it.

The McGowan government's approach to vaccination is another example of a really strong track record of achieving health outcomes. I acknowledge our government's actions during the pandemic, but I think it is more important to acknowledge everyone who got vaccinated because that was one of the critical things that got us across the line in terms staying safe and strong. It was not an accident. We took those measures as a government—not only the Premier, but the Minister for Health. We have always relied on the advice of the Chief Medical Officer and our approach has ensured a soft landing from the Omicron wave. It also means that we have saved hundreds and hundreds of lives by closing the border and waiting for people to ensure that they are fully vaccinated. This government has achieved a third dose vaccination rate of more than 82 per cent. I think I heard the member for Mount Lawley comment that that is a higher rate than the rate of people who wear seatbelts in the community, which is quite frightening. Nonetheless, that is quite a staggering achievement. When I look at what is going on in the US, for example, I see they have had over a million deaths due to COVID. The correlation between the death rate and the vaccine rate shows that the vaccine's effectiveness is undeniable. I am really proud of our government for ensuring that we kept our borders closed while a vaccine was developed, so that people had sufficient time to have had at least the first dose; overwhelmingly, most had had the second dose as well. It truly saved lives. I think it is absolutely remarkable.

Our commitment to the health and wellbeing of Western Australians continues. We offered the free flu vaccine throughout the month of June. I know that many in my community took that up. We had the Premier out in Belmont and he got his flu vaccine at one of our fantastic local chemists, so that was terrific. We understand the importance of vaccination protecting against the flu, and that is especially important given the flu season is predicted, unfortunately, to be the worst that it has been. We encourage all Western Australians, where possible, to get vaccinated if they have not already been vaccinated. If they were not able to take up that opportunity for the free vaccine during this month, it is still a great thing to do over the coming months as we get deeper into winter. It is very important to protect ourselves and our community and I think that we as a community have shown that that is something that we really embrace.

Members may recall back in 2018 we also funded catch-up vaccination programs for children aged one to four years so that they could get a free meningococcal ACWY vaccine that protects against potentially deadly meningococcal infection. It followed the McGowan government's lobbying of the federal government to introduce the National Immunisation Program's one-year ACWY vaccine, meaning all infants are now offered this important protection at 12 months of age. That is again something that is literally saving lives. It is a life-saving vaccine and it helps protect all our children across the state from this terrible, terrible illness.

I am also really proud that our government is going to be delivering a new women's and babies' hospital. That is not to cast shade, of course, on the wonderful King Eddy's. That is where I gave birth to my eldest daughter, Bobby. It is a terrific facility, but I think this is a wonderful and much welcomed announcement that we have made. That will be a \$1.8 billion hospital. It will be a modern, world-class tertiary hospital providing the best care to women from across the state and, of course, to newborns. This will be terrific and I cannot wait to see what it looks like.

In closing, I thank our health professionals for their continued commitment and the outstanding work that they do, particularly during the pandemic over recent years. I also recognise the Minister for Health and the great work that she continues to do in this challenging role as we continue through this pandemic, and she should be commended. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**.

### ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

#### *Special*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House)** [3.37 pm] — without notice: I move —

That the house at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, 9 August 2022, at 1.00 pm.

I remind the huge number of members who are here of the 1.00 pm start. I also wish all members a safe break. Ensure that you all spend time with your families. It has been a busy first six months of this parliamentary year and I want to make sure that all members look after themselves and, of course, take time out to spend with their families. I also extend that, of course, to all staff of Parliament.

Finally, on this special adjournment, I wish the West Coast Fever all the very best for the Suncorp Super Netball grand final on 3 July. We are very much looking forward to West Coast Fever bringing home the national netball title in the next week or so.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 3.39 pm*

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