



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2023

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 22 February 2023

Legislative Assembly

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

PAPER TABLED

A paper was tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

REPRESENTING DIFFERENTS — EDITH COWAN GALLERY

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [12.01 pm]: Members, some of you have remarked on the fabulous artwork in the Edith Cowan foyer and corridor. I am pleased to advise that tomorrow there will be the launch of the inaugural art exhibition in Parliament's new Edith Cowan gallery and foyer—a space established to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of Edith Cowan, the first woman member of this Parliament and the first woman member of any Parliament in Australia. Very appropriately, the exhibition, called *Representing Differents*, draws upon artworks from the collection of an esteemed woman art collector, Janet Holmes à Court, AC. It features the artworks of 10 Western Australian women artists spanning the nineteenth to the twenty-first centuries. It is curated by a woman, Louise Dickmann, from the Holmes à Court Gallery; and it will be launched by Janet Holmes à Court. I am confident that Edith Cowan would have approved!

TEACHER REGISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

BILLS

Notice of Motion to Introduce

1. Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill 2023.

Notice of motion given by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)** on behalf of Mr M. McGowan (Treasurer).

2. Main Roads Amendment Bill 2023.

Notice of motion given by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)** on behalf of Ms R. Saffioti (Minister for Transport).

3. Local Government Amendment Bill 2023.

Notice of motion given by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)** on behalf of Mr J.N. Carey (Minister for Local Government).

STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL AREA LAND ALLOCATIONS

Statement by Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade) [12.04 pm]: I rise to inform the house of the recent strategic industrial area land allocations in the Pilbara that were announced last month. Recently, the McGowan government approved land allocation in the Boodarie and Ashburton strategic industrial areas for seven proponents, including Equus Energy, Fortescue Future Industries, POSCO, Fortescue Metals Group, Alinta Energy, Tees Valley Lithium and BP. The Ashburton SIA will support the production of ammonia and methanol, while the Boodarie SIA projects will support green iron ore, ammonia, hydrogen and lithium sulphate monohydrate initiatives. Land approvals are a critical key in transforming the Boodarie and Ashburton industrial areas into globally competitive multi-product precincts that will support the diversification of the Western Australian economy and assist in creating more jobs. The combined proposed capital expenditure for these projects is estimated at \$70 billion, which will see immense economic benefits for WA—from job creation to building up our advanced manufacturing capabilities.

Ensuring the supply of strategically located and well-serviced industrial land is critical to supporting the industries that will drive the economic prosperity of our state, from large resource projects and new technology centres to small businesses in regional towns. These projects will have a meaningful and profound impact on regional communities in towns such as Onslow, Port Hedland and South Hedland by creating more local jobs. Industrial land is instrumental in driving jobs and growth in Western Australia and, therefore, forms a vital part of the social fabric and economic prosperity of the state. Making it more efficient and affordable to access and develop industrial land in WA will ensure that business can continue to plan for the future, which will create jobs and encourage economic diversity

and growth. Western Australia has seen an explosion in interest from green industry projects over the past few years due to our abundant natural resources, renewable generation capacity and longstanding experience with natural resources production and export. The McGowan government is driving a process to unlock strategically located industrial land for project development, including at Boodarie and Ashburton. We look forward to updating the house on the status of these projects in the near future.

DONNY WOOLAGOODJA — TRIBUTE

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [12.07 pm]: On 19 September 2022 we lost someone who was highly regarded by many people—Worrorra man Donny Woolagoodja of the Kimberley region. Born in 1947, Mr Woolagoodja was brought up in two worlds, learning about traditional culture from community elders and about Western culture at the Kunmunya mission. He continued to move between both worlds for his entire life, engaging with the national and international world of art and culture, but also living for long periods at Yaloon, visiting and looking after Wandjina sites on his traditional country. After his father's death in 1979, Mr Woolagoodja took on a greater community leadership role and more responsibility for passing on cultural traditions to younger generations. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Mowanjum Artists Spirit of the Wandjina Aboriginal Corporation in 1988, and later the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre, in addition to the Mowanjum Festival. The centre and festival celebrate and share culture with both local communities, and also with the many visitors who go to this region in the Kimberley, looking to understand more about Aboriginal cultures.

Mr Woolagoodja went on to establish a national reputation as an artist and cultural custodian. He worked tirelessly with young people to pass on his cultural knowledge, art and joonba, or cultural dance, and to keep culture strong. Mr Woolagoodja was a critical part of the move to successfully establish native title for Yaloon, which was officially recognised in 2011. He also set up Wandjina Tours and took visitors out to introduce them properly to country and culture, and as a means of taking young people out on country. Mr Woolagoodja loved the ocean and boats, playing music, travelling and meeting people all over the world, and was involved in making books and films. The documentary feature film by Tim Mummery, *Namarali*—creative spirits—is currently in cinemas and features Mr Woolagoodja sharing the traditions associated with the Namarali Wandjina with his extended family, including repainting Namarali in the cave where he lived.

Mr Woolagoodja chaired numerous organisations, such as the Mowanjum Aboriginal community, Mowanjum Artists and the University of WA Centre for Rock Art Research and Management. However, who could forget the moment when the Wandjina Namarali rose from the ground in Stadium Australia, at the Sydney 2000 Olympics opening ceremony? It is an image still carried by many people, that unmistakably brought Aboriginal culture to the forefront of Australian international identity at a moment when it really mattered.

Dedicated to his family, his community and his culture, Mr Woolagoodja's quiet dignity, gravitas and leadership will be greatly missed. We say thank you for the legacy you have left us all.

VOYAGER — EUROVISION AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPANT

Statement by Minister for Culture and the Arts

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [12.10 pm]: This is great news for Western Australia and Australia. Today, SBS Australia announced Perth synth metal band Voyager as the official Australian participant for the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest. Eurovision is an international song competition organised by the European Broadcasting Union. The 2023 contest will be held from 9 May through to 13 May in Liverpool in the United Kingdom. The contest is usually held in the country of the previous year's winning entry, but due to Ukraine winning the contest in 2022, a decision was made to move the 2023 contest to the UK.

For the first time, a Western Australian act has been selected to represent Australia. Voyager has been working towards inclusion in Eurovision since Australia first began participating in the contest in 2015, and narrowly missed out on being selected in 2022. A groundswell of public support has now secured it the ticket to Liverpool in 2023. The band is a well-known entity in the WA contemporary music scene and has released seven studio albums to date, with an eighth scheduled for pre-sale at the time of Eurovision.

Voyager's participation in Eurovision presents a significant opportunity for Western Australia to be showcased to a televised audience of five million for the semifinals and up to 185 million for the grand final. Eurovision is also partnering with TikTok on live streaming the event, with almost six million viewers tuning in for the last grand final and the hashtag #Eurovision2022 amassing over a billion views last year. Contemporary music is a strategic priority for the McGowan government under its current election commitments. Voyager's participation in Eurovision aligns directly with the objectives of the contemporary music fund, which are to capitalise on opportunities for the contemporary music sector; contribute to the development of markets for Western Australian music locally, nationally and internationally; ensure strong representation of musicians and music professionals from Aboriginal, regional, cultural and gender diverse backgrounds; and accelerate the recovery of the Western Australian contemporary music sector following the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The band's management has an international promotional and touring strategy in place to maximise the opportunities created by its inclusion in Eurovision 2023. This includes a headline tour in Australia, as well as a European tour later in 2023. Tourism WA has assisted the band with the shooting of the music video, which was shot partly in the Naval Store in Fremantle and partly in iconic WA locations such as Kalbarri and Hutt Lagoon. This promotional music video has gone live to five million subscribers on the official Eurovision social media channel this morning, so get on board, everyone, and check it out! We wish the band Voyager every success in representing Western Australia on the world's stage at this year's Eurovision Song Contest.

GUARDIANSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT (MEDICAL RESEARCH) ACT — REVIEW

Statement by Attorney General

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [12.13 pm]: I rise to table the *Review of the Guardianship and Administration Amendment (Medical Research) Act 2020 (WA): Final report*, as required by section 110ZZE of the Guardianship and Administration Act 1990. The medical research act enables medical research to be conducted on people who do not have the capacity to consent. There are two circumstances in which an incapacitated person may participate in medical research—with the consent of their decision-maker, or, in urgent situations, without prior consent.

The medical research act contains various safeguards to ensure that enrolling an incapacitated person in medical research is subject to independent oversight and review. Because of the urgency of the legislation—it was passed in April 2020 during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic—a sunset clause was inserted that would end the ability to enrol represented persons in medical research without prior consent on 8 April 2024, a mere 13 months from today. The Department of Justice has assisted me with this review, which has also benefited from the expertise of a project reference group comprising representatives from the Department of Health, the Office of the Public Advocate and the Department of Justice. The department consulted with a wide range of stakeholders, including medical researchers, patient advocacy groups, and mental health, disability and aged-care sector representatives. The review took into account those stakeholders' views, given their practical knowledge of the legislation.

The final report recommends that the definition of "lead researcher" in the medical research act be amended to permit a broader range of non-medical health practitioners, such as paramedics, nurses and physiotherapists, who are the lead researchers in a medical research project to enrol represented persons in their study. The final report has found that the sunset clause has had a detrimental impact on the medical research community. The final report has recommended the deletion of the sunset clause. I am pleased to advise the house that a bill to achieve these two recommendations has been drafted and will be introduced into Parliament. The bill will ensure that represented persons continue to be protected by the provisions of the Guardianship and Administration Act and that they will benefit from participation in medical research trials conducted by a wider range of those health professionals who are experts in their respective fields. I commend the report to the house.

[See paper [1828](#).]

PETER BRADFORD — TRIBUTE

Statement by Minister for Mines and Petroleum

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [12.17 pm]: I rise today to acknowledge the contribution of the late Mr Peter Bradford, who passed away suddenly on Saturday, 15 October 2022. It was a privilege to be invited to speak at Peter's memorial service at the State Theatre Centre of Western Australia in December last year, which was attended by many members of the mining industry. He made a significant contribution to Western Australia and its mining sector, particularly the development of its battery and critical minerals industry, which is vital to clean energy transition, and the state's move downstream in the battery value chain.

Peter's vision for the state saw IGO partner with Tianqi Lithium Corporation in the Greenbushes lithium mine—the world's largest hard-rock lithium mine—and to develop the Kwinana lithium hydroxide plant. The facility is the first of its kind in the state and the first to achieve commercial production of battery-grade lithium hydroxide. He grew IGO's nickel interests, establishing it as a significant nickel producer, initially through the Nova operation and more recently by the acquisition of the Forrestania operation and the Cosmos development project. Combined with IGO's proposal to develop precursor cathode active materials at Kwinana, Peter leaves a lasting contribution to the future development of Western Australia's critical minerals processing and battery manufacturing industries. Peter was an active member of the Future Battery and Critical Minerals Industries Ministerial Taskforce over a number of years, contributing to the implementation of the state's future battery and critical minerals industries strategy to grow Western Australia's participation in global battery minerals supply chains. He also led the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies as president since 2019. He was an active mentor for Women in Mining Western Australia, a committee member of CEOs for Gender Equity, a former West Australian Mining Club committee member and vice-president, and a passionate alumnus of the Western Australian School of Mines.

Peter's passing was a great loss for Western Australia and its mining sector. We send our deepest condolences to Peter's family and friends and his colleagues in the mining industry here in Western Australia and around the globe.

RESOURCES SECTOR — PERFORMANCE*Statement by Minister for Mines and Petroleum*

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [12.19 pm]: I rise today to inform the house of the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety's *Western Australian mineral and petroleum statistics digest 2021–22*, which highlights the record-breaking performance of Western Australia's resources sector during 2021–22. The records include \$231 billion of resource sales and all-time high employment of more than 157 700 workers.

Iron ore continued its stellar run, with sales of \$137 billion, the petroleum industry recovered to record sales of \$52 billion, and gold also hit record sales of \$17 billion. The growth of Western Australia's battery and critical minerals industries continued. Lithium moved to Western Australia's third-highest mineral by sales value, with a record \$6.8 billion, while nickel sales of \$4.9 billion were at the highest level in almost 15 years. Mineral sands sales were a record \$1.3 billion, rare earths sales were valued at \$779 million and cobalt sales were at an all-time high of \$522 million.

The future also looks bright with mineral exploration expenditure in the state reaching a new high of \$2.5 billion, with strong levels of spending targeting gold, nickel, copper, rare earths and lithium. The McGowan government continues to support the exploration sector, with applications for round 27 of the exploration incentive scheme's co-funded drilling program and series 5 of the energy analysis program open until 3 March. The competitive grants program offers refunds of up to 50 per cent for innovative exploration drilling and EAP projects, capped at specific amounts. Successful applicants from earlier rounds of the EIS are achieving great success drilling remote and underexplored areas along Western Australia's eastern border. Meanwhile, interest in new resources developments remained strong, with \$24 billion invested during 2021–22. There were also around \$57 billion of resources projects under construction or committed, with major developments in not only iron ore and liquefied natural gas, but also commodities for the future in lithium and rare earths. These results are just the latest supporting a strong period of growth for the resources sector under the McGowan government.

KIMBERLEY FLOODS — WATER CORPORATION RESPONSE*Statement by Minister for Water*

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Water) [12.22 pm]: In the wake of ex-tropical cyclone Ellie, the McGowan government and the Water Corporation have been working hard to assist those affected by the devastating floods through financial support, the maintenance of a safe drinking water supply and vital repair works. In response to the unprecedented flooding impacting the Kimberley, the McGowan government announced a range of financial support measures to help those impacted with the costs of water and power. The support that has been made available to customers includes waiving water use and service charges for 12 months for those who have lost their properties. In addition, all customers in Fitzroy Crossing and Camballin will automatically have water use and service charges waived for two billing cycles.

As a result of damage caused in the wake of ex-tropical cyclone Ellie, the Water Corporation team has also been working in difficult conditions to repair the damaged wastewater pipeline in Fitzroy Crossing. The crew was able to commence works on Wednesday, 15 February and repairs were completed on Sunday, 19 February, with waste no longer being discharged into the Fitzroy River. The work was originally hindered by heavy rain on 28 and 29 January, which caused river levels to rise, re-flooding the worksite and rendering it inaccessible. For work to safely restart and not present a danger to crews, water had to first recede. Main Roads was then able to commence work to restore access to the site on Wednesday, 8 February.

Going forward, Water Corporation is investigating a permanent solution to reduce the risk of this happening again. I thank the Water Corporation crews for their considerable efforts in maintaining safe drinking water supplies during the flood and their work to repair the wastewater main as quickly as possible. I would also like to acknowledge all the agencies, organisations and volunteers on the ground. They have been working in some extremely tough conditions, battling the heat and humidity to complete these repairs, but they got the job done. To the community, for its ongoing support, I say thank you.

ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICES — TRANSITION CARE PROGRAM*Statement by Minister for Health*

MS A. SANDERSON (Morley — Minister for Health) [12.24 pm]: The McGowan government, in a national first, has partnered with Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations to pilot culturally appropriate community-based care to support older Aboriginal Western Australians leaving hospital. The transition care program, jointly funded by the federal and state governments, is a longstanding program providing goal-oriented care to older people for up to 12 weeks after their hospital discharge, including social work, nursing support, personal care and allied health care. The pilot ACCHOs each have an initial state investment of approximately \$1.8 million, of which up to \$1.26 million could be subsidised by the commonwealth government. The commonwealth has also contributed a further \$1 million towards an evaluation and small capacity building grants.

I had the privilege of announcing the inaugural pilot in February 2022, through which the South West Aboriginal Medical Service delivers culturally appropriate care services in Bunbury and surrounds. The WA government subsequently supported services through the Broome Regional Aboriginal Medical Service, or BRAMS, and the Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service—GRAMS. BRAMS has led the way in the Kimberley as the first and only service provider of transition care in the region. In April 2022, it was the only active discharge pathway for older people from Broome Health Campus, with other Broome-based residential and community aged-care services closed to new admissions.

The pilot is an outstanding example of the WA government's commitment to delivering equitable care for all Western Australians, strategically aligning with the recommendations of the sustainable health review, priority reform areas of the National Agreement on Closing the Gap and the *WA Aboriginal health and wellbeing framework 2015–2030*, and supporting Aboriginal-led place-based decision-making and service delivery to support better health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples. The pilot also supports a reduction in inappropriate extended hospital stays and readmissions, leading to better outcomes for patients while ensuring that hospital beds are available for people who need hospital care. This work contributes to a national evidence base on improving the accessibility of transition care and is building a foundation for ACCHOs to develop other culturally appropriate aged-care services. The Western Australian government continues to pursue opportunities for ACCHOs to deliver culturally appropriate care, and I look forward to updating the Parliament again soon on the expansion of this successful work.

STATE DISABILITY STRATEGY

Statement by Minister for Disability Services

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Disability Services) [12.27 pm]: I am pleased to provide the house with an update on the McGowan government's *State disability strategy 2020–2030*. Launched in December 2020, the 10-year whole-of-community strategy was designed with a vision to protect, uphold and advance the rights of people with disability living in Western Australia. The strategy is supported by an action plan that outlines specific commitments to help realise the objectives of the strategy. The commitment was made for the action plan to be reviewed every two years to ensure that the initiatives being undertaken are contemporary and responsive to the needs and priorities of people with disability. Despite the unforeseen challenges of the past two years, 11 key actions were delivered from the first action plan, including the establishment of Western Australia's first Office of Disability, the launch of the autism alert card, the NDIS worker screening check, increasing the number of behaviour support practitioners for people with disability, and the addition of accessible infrastructure projects like the Kids' Bridge—Koolangka Bridge—connecting Perth Children's Hospital to Kings Park.

I am incredibly proud to inform members that the second action plan to support the strategy was recently launched. The new action plan contains 142 actions and includes commitments from not only the state government, but also industry, the community and the disability services sector. Partnering with business, the community and people with disability is central to changing attitudes and achieving greater inclusion in Western Australia. Some highlights from the new action plan include: the RAC committing to inclusion and diversity objectives in all leaders' performance goals and partnering disability employment providers to find candidates for all advertised positions; the Department of Communities will offer discounted commercial leases at the East Perth and Mandurah Common Grounds to social enterprises that target employment of people from vulnerable backgrounds, including people with disability; the WA Museum will provide free specialised tours for visitors with dementia who are also blind or vision impaired; and Perth Airport will deliver a sensory room for people with hidden disability at the international terminal.

Members, more than ever, it is important to make our communities, businesses, places and spaces more accessible, inclusive and welcoming to all, and raise the standards we set for ourselves and for others. These committed actions are just a few examples of this and I look forward to supporting the stimulation of creative thinking that will build upon these commitments.

CRIMINAL LAW (MENTAL IMPAIRMENT) BILL 2022

Attorney General — Personal Explanation

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [12.30 pm]: I rise under standing order 148 to make a personal explanation to clarify remarks that I made yesterday during my second reading reply on the Criminal Law (Mental Impairment) Bill 2022. During my second reading reply speech, I conflated the consultation briefing with the then shadow Attorney General with the stakeholder consultation during the development of the bill. I would like to correct the record. The former shadow Attorney General was provided with a consultation briefing, at which he presented a range of questions that were answered by my office. This did not occur during stakeholder consultation for the development of the bill.

MAJOR EVENTS BILL 2023

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr R.H. Cook (Minister for Tourism)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Tourism) [12.31 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The primary purpose of the Major Events Bill is to establish a framework to facilitate and regulate the holding and conduct of major events in Western Australia. Major events deliver significant economic, tourism and social benefits to the state. They attract business investment, high numbers of interstate and international visitors, create local employment opportunities, and add vibrancy to the destination. Major events also create opportunities to promote the state to national and international audiences.

It is becoming increasingly common for international bodies to require potential host cities of major events to provide certain protections or guarantees for their events. The existence of major events legislation may therefore be a determinative factor in the state's ability to bid for and host major events. Most other jurisdictions in Australia have major events legislation in place. This bill will enhance the state's competitiveness in bidding for major events by providing greater certainty to major event organisers and venue operators. The bill will provide for the safe and orderly running of major events, the streamlining of appropriate approval processes, and protection of the commercial interests of major event organisers.

The legislation will apply only to an event that is prescribed as a major event. This could be a sporting, cultural or other event, such as a political or economic event; however, it is intended that only significant events will be prescribed as major events. Part 2 of the bill outlines the mechanism for prescribing an event as a major event, and the relevant criteria. The minister must be satisfied that the event is a large event of state, national or international significance and that it is in the public interest for the event to be prescribed as a major event. A range of matters may be considered by the minister when considering whether to recommend that an event be prescribed as a major event. That includes the size, prestige and likely social and economic benefits of hosting the event. Before prescribing an event as a major event, the minister must consult with other ministers and relevant persons. Examples of past events of such scale and scope that they might attract declaration as a major event include the ICC Cricket World Cup, the Rugby League World Cup, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting and *The Giants*, which was held in 2015 as part of the Perth International Arts Festival.

The regulations that will prescribe an event as a major event will outline key matters. Those matters will include details of the major event organiser, the major event period, and the major event area. For large events, the major event area might include a number of different locations. The regulations will also specify which provisions of the act will apply to the major event. This will enable government to scale the legislative protections to the particular requirements of an event. For example, the parts of the act that provide for traffic management will be enlivened only if required for an event. Similarly, the commercial protections in the act will be applied only if necessary to protect the commercial interests of the major event organiser.

The regulations may also provide that the legislation specified in schedule 1 be suspended or modified in order to allow for the operation of a major event. The bill includes a number of limits on this power, such as that suspension or modification is permitted only if it is in the public interest and necessary for the operation of the major event. For example, road traffic legislation may require modification for a cycling or motor racing event. In addition, the minister will be required to consult with the relevant minister who is administering the legislation, who must agree to this suspension or modification.

Part 3 of the bill includes provisions to facilitate the construction of temporary works required for a major event, such as grandstands, barricades and marquees. The minister may authorise temporary works for a major event and impose conditions on an approval. The bill also outlines requirements for restoration of land following an event.

Part 4 of the bill provides for the management of roads, waters and traffic in relation to an event. A major event organiser will be required to develop a transport and traffic management plan in consultation with relevant authorities and will have the ability to close roads and establish major event lanes for the purpose of an event.

Part 5 of the bill sets out comprehensive safety and crowd management provisions that are intended to ensure the safety of participants and spectators, and improve the enjoyment of an event. It outlines the standards of behaviour expected for entry, movement and conduct in the major event area, offences for breach of the requirements, and enforcement powers for authorised officers.

One of the objectives of the bill is to provide protection for the commercial interests of major event organisers. Part 6 includes provisions to prohibit unauthorised sale or distribution, ambush advertising, and unauthorised advertising and broadcasting. This part will also provide for offences for breach of the requirements and powers of authorised officers to request a person to remove or cover a thing or to seize items. Part 7 of the bill includes protections for official logos or titles.

Parts 8 and 9 of the bill provide for the appointment of authorised officers and outline the powers of authorised officers in carrying out their functions in enforcing the requirements of the act. Police officers also have the powers of authorised officers. The bill will also limit the liability of the state in relation to major events.

The Major Events Bill will put Western Australia on an equal footing with other Australian jurisdictions with similar legislation and enhance the state's capacity to bid for and host major events for the benefit of all Western Australians.

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

WORKERS COMPENSATION AND INJURY MANAGEMENT BILL 2023

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr W.J. Johnston (Minister for Industrial Relations)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Industrial Relations) [12.40 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The bill I am introducing today represents the modernisation of Western Australia's workers compensation laws. The current 1981 act has served the state well, but over time has become complex and unwieldy and now fails to provide sufficient clarity on fundamental aspects of the workers compensation scheme. The Workers Compensation and Injury Management Bill 2023 will modernise WA's workers compensation laws, while preserving fundamental aspects of the scheme. The bill is the culmination of an extensive review and consultation process dating back to WorkCover WA's legislative review in 2009, which recommended redrafting of the act, and the 171 recommendations contained in WorkCover WA's 2014 *Review of the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981: Final report*.

Some important changes have already been implemented by the McGowan government during the previous term. The government amended the act in 2018 to implement WorkCover WA's final report recommendations relating to increased entitlements and better support for dependants of workers who die in work-related accidents. In 2020, the government enacted other priority reforms through the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020. This amendment act provided for a presumption of work injury for healthcare workers who contract COVID-19 and removed a number of procedural barriers and constraints in the act highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including acting on WorkCover WA's final report recommendation to remove the common-law termination day.

This bill is a complete rewrite of the workers compensation legislation and although it is in large part a technical drafting exercise, it is underpinned by some key and important improvements to worker entitlements and elements of the workers compensation scheme, which I will now summarise.

In the lead-up to the 2021 state election, the McGowan government reiterated its commitment to modernise WA's workers compensation laws based on WorkCover WA's final report recommendations and announced additional election commitments for inclusion in the bill. One of these changes is to increase the cap on medical and health expenses compensation. The current act has a monetary limit for compensable medical and health expenses that is set at 30 per cent of the maximum weekly compensation limit. It is currently \$73 197 and indexed annually. Although this amount is adequate to cover the medical expenses of most workers, the entitlement can be quickly exhausted for seriously injured workers requiring long hospital stays or multiple and complex surgical procedures. The bill will increase the limit for compensable medical and health expenses from 30 per cent to 60 per cent of the prescribed maximum limit. This will result in an increase in the capped amount from \$73 197 to \$146 395. This will see seriously injured workers receive an appropriate level of financial support to cover the cost of medical and health treatment without the need for them to go cap in hand asking for an extension.

Another election commitment delivered in the bill will see injured workers who cannot work because of their injury receive an appropriate level of support for loss of income for a longer period of time. This will be achieved by extending the point at which income compensation steps down by 15 per cent. The bill will extend the step-down point from 13 to 26 weeks. The step down will also be subject to a minimum safety net amount to ensure that the step down cannot fall below a worker's base award rate of pay plus any regular additional earnings a worker received over the previous 12 months from the date of injury. This will ensure that award workers on base award rates of pay or who rely upon regular additional earnings to make ends meet are not disadvantaged after the step down, as is the case under the current act.

A no-fault catastrophic injuries support scheme for motor vehicle accidents was implemented in Western Australia on 1 July 2016. This scheme is administered by the Insurance Commission of Western Australia. This bill will provide for the scope of the catastrophic injuries support scheme to be extended to apply also to catastrophically injured workers who have a compensable workers compensation claim. By doing so, workers suffering catastrophic injuries at work who meet the eligibility criteria and who choose to participate will receive lifetime tailored care and support based on their needs. Catastrophically injured workers will retain the right to seek common-law damages should they prefer that pathway.

There will be no substantive change in the forms of compensation and the maximum amounts of compensation payable to workers, other than the entitlements I have just outlined. The entitlement improvements I have just outlined are

the areas in the bill that will have cost impacts on employers in the form of higher workers compensation insurance premiums. PricewaterhouseCoopers has actuarially assessed the bill and estimates a 2.83 per cent increase in premium rates resulting from these changes. If the increased cost was applied to the 2022–23 premium rating year, it would increase the average recommended premium rate from 1.822 per cent to 1.874 per cent of an employer's payroll. The government is cognisant of the economic challenges facing WA businesses and is not making fundamental scheme design changes or costly workers compensation reform. The cost impacts of this bill will be modest, fair and reasonable.

I now turn to the key technical changes of the bill.

The bill will continue to cover workers engaged under a contract of service or apprenticeship, but will modify the way that contractors are covered in a way that provides clarity and consistency with those in other states and territories. The bill is not expected to have any significant impact on the number of contractors covered by the scheme.

There is provision for regulations to declare or deem an individual of a specified class or description as a worker and to deem who is a worker's employer for the purposes of the act. This regulation-making power is important, as the nature of work and the relationships between parties are changing and the legal status of some of these arrangements is evolving. The bill will continue to cover injuries that arise from employment and will apply the same legal tests as the current act for working out whether a personal injury by accident or a disease results from employment.

It is important that insurers and self-insurers inform workers about the status of their claim and eligibility for compensation as soon as possible. It is acknowledged that insurers and self-insurers will sometimes defer or delay a decision on a claim while medical and factual investigations are being carried out. However, without clear statutory time frames, there is no incentive for insurers or self-insurers to carry out medical and factual investigations and respond to a worker's claim in a timely manner. The bill will require an insurer or self-insurer to respond to a worker's claim for compensation in a timely manner, with new obligations for provisional payments and "deemed acceptance of liability" if liability decisions are not made within prescribed time frames. This is an important change that will lead to quicker liability decisions by insurers and self-insurers and faster access to financial support for workers when claims are investigated for long periods.

Sometimes over the journey of a worker's compensation claim, workers and employers may decide that a settlement is in everyone's best interests. A settlement commutes to a lump sum the liability of an employer to pay compensation to a worker and discharges that liability. Barriers to settlement was a contentious issue in the consultation process that informed the development of the bill and the government has responded to those concerns by minimising barriers to settlement. In particular, the bill does not prescribe a time constraint before a settlement can be negotiated and registered, as the current act does. The bill also does not require that liability necessarily be accepted by the insurer or self-insurer as a precondition for a settlement.

Although the bill will provide greater flexibility for settlements to occur, there will continue to be safeguards. These include scrutiny by a WorkCover WA statutory office holder to ensure that settlements are genuine and workers are aware of the consequences of registering a settlement. When a worker is unfit for work, workers and employers are expected to work together to facilitate a safe and durable return to work as soon as possible. The bill clearly sets out the return to work duties and obligations of both employers and workers. The bill recognises the important role and functions of the worker's treating medical practitioner and reinforces a worker's right to choose their own treating medical practitioner. The bill will also prohibit an employer or their agent from attending a medical consultation when a worker is being physically or clinically examined by their treating medical practitioner. This will ensure that a worker's privacy and dignity is protected and will prevent an employer or agent asserting pressure on the treating medical practitioner when issuing a certificate of capacity. To prevent discriminatory practices, the bill will prohibit employers or recruitment agencies from asking any person as part of pre-employment screening to disclose information about whether they have made any claim for compensation. The bill will also prevent any person disclosing information about a workers compensation claim previously made by a worker for the purposes of pre-employment screening.

The bill will maintain the fundamental obligation on every employer to have a workers compensation insurance policy to cover their workers, although the penalty is doubling for noncompliance. Although the maximum penalty is seldom awarded in the courts, the penalty has not changed in many years and it is appropriate for the legislation to set an appropriate benchmark maximum amount for high-risk, recidivous offenders. The bill will maintain WorkCover WA's role in setting recommended premium rates for workers compensation policies, but the current requirement for insurers to seek WorkCover WA approval to charge 75 per cent or greater than the recommended premium is to be discontinued. Instead, a premium review procedure will apply when employers seek to challenge the premium charged by insurers.

The bill provides for a modernised framework for WorkCover WA to license and regulate both insurers and self-insurers operating in the workers compensation scheme and take appropriate action when performance and compliance issues arise. The special insurance policy that mining employers are required to hold with the Insurance Commission of Western Australia for coverage of certain industrial diseases will be discontinued, with these liabilities integrated into conventional workers compensation insurance policies. Savings provisions will address coverage of historical liabilities.

There is to be a single default insurance fund to provide a safety net for scheme and system risks. The bill will streamline and consolidate into the default insurance fund the administrative and funding arrangements for liabilities

associated with uninsured employers, insolvent insurers and self-insurers, and acts of terrorism. Payments from the default insurance fund will be met by a levy contribution from licensed insurers and self-insurers. The accompanying Workers Compensation and Injury Management Amendment Bill 2023 will authorise the levy in the event the contributions are considered to be a tax.

The bill provides for the continuation of the conciliation and arbitration services, without any material changes, as the dispute resolution framework in the current act was significantly amended in 2011, continues to work well and compares favourably with dispute resolution procedures in other jurisdictions. However, the bill will discontinue the regime for approving and regulating registered agents, and will transition the small number of non-legally qualified independent self-employed agents out of the scheme over a two-year period following commencement of the new act.

The bill will streamline provisions for dust disease damages claims. If a dust disease is terminal, the bill will enable the common-law action to commence before the worker is assessed by the Dust Disease Medical Panel and has registered an election, thereby preserving the worker's common-law rights. An important consequential amendment will also be made to the Limitation Act 2005 to place workers suffering silicosis on the same footing as workers with asbestosis. It will do this by ensuring that the three-year limitation period for commencing a common-law action applies to workers with silicosis only from when a worker has greater than 25 per cent whole-person impairment. The change will prevent a worker suffering silicosis with a low initial impairment from being time barred if the impairment has not reached the whole-person impairment threshold required for common-law damages within three years of the diagnosis. The common-law part of the bill will retain the 15 per cent whole-person impairment threshold and the requirement for a worker to make an election in order to pursue common-law damages. The common-law threshold requirements will apply to both the commencement of proceedings and the awarding of damages. This will mean a writ cannot be issued, and damages cannot be awarded or settled, without the impairment assessment indicating at least 15 per cent whole-person impairment and an election being registered.

The bill provides for the continuation of the WorkCover WA Board, staff and statutory office holders with no substantive changes from the current act. The bill will provide for the enforcement of the workers compensation legislation, including revised penalties for some offences, which have been set at the same value for many years, and will integrate the infringement notice regime into the framework under the Criminal Procedure Act 2004.

The bill clarifies the various circumstances in which information disclosure will be permitted or prohibited with a default position of confidentiality. A new provision will address discrimination in recruitment practices by expressly prohibiting disclosure of a worker's claim history for pre-employment screening purposes. The bill also provides that a worker cannot be required to disclose information about a compensation claim by the worker for the purpose of selection for employment.

At the end of this process there will be a single modern act covering workers compensation and injury management in this state. Savings and transitional provisions provide for a seamless transition from the current act to the new act and will allow for the current act and related statutes to be repealed. Savings and transitional provisions will provide for the treatment and status of pending matters such as claims and disputes at the time when the new act comes into operation and the current act and other related statutes are repealed. The savings and transitional provisions are drafted to minimise disruption to scheme stakeholders with approved or licensed service providers recognised under the new legislation without any requirement to apply.

This bill is a key pillar of the government's reforms to modernise the industrial relations system and follows the successful implementation of work health and safety and industrial relations reforms in 2022. The bill will deliver a modern act for the workers compensation and injury management scheme in this state, and the clarity and certainty that stakeholders need in the statute.

I commend the bill to the house.

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

WORKERS COMPENSATION AND INJURY MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2023

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr W.J. Johnston (Minister for Industrial Relations)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Industrial Relations) [12.58 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Workers Compensation and Injury Management Act 2023, when enacted and proclaimed, will modernise WA's workers compensation laws and become the only act providing for the workers compensation and injury management scheme in Western Australia. The act will provide for financial contributions to be paid by licensed insurers and self-insurers to WorkCover WA as the funding source for three distinct areas of the workers compensation scheme.

Firstly, licensed insurer and self-insurer contributions will be collected and credited to WorkCover WA's general account to fund WorkCover WA's expenses in carrying out its functions and administering the workers compensation and injury and injury management scheme.

Secondly, licensed insurer and self-insurer contributions will be collected and accredited to WorkCover WA's default insurance fund to fund liabilities associated with uninsured employers, insolvent insurers and self-insurers, and acts of terrorism.

Thirdly, licensed insurer and self-insurer contributions will be collected by WorkCover WA and remitted to the Insurance Commission of Western Australia for crediting to the catastrophic injuries fund to fund the costs of catastrophic workplace injuries covered under the catastrophic injuries support scheme.

The Workers Compensation and Injury Management Amendment Bill 2023 will amend the various sections of the main act in order to authorise a tax to be imposed to the extent that contributions required to be paid under each relevant section of that act are considered a tax. The amendments to the main act made by this bill will come into operation at the same time as the provisions being amended come into operation.

The second and separate bill is necessitated by section 46(7) of the Western Australian Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1899, which provides that bills imposing taxation must deal only with the imposition of the tax.

I commend the bill to the house.

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

LAND AND PUBLIC WORKS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading

Resumed from 23 November 2022.

MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.01 pm]: I rise today to make a contribution to the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill will establish a new form of land tenure for people in Western Australia, known as the diversification lease. It will support a range of uses to unlock under-utilised crown land to enable the expansion of the Western Australian economy and to contribute to the realisation of something that I hold very dear to my heart—a low-carbon future.

This piece of legislation is actually a piece of visionary legislation. It is government leading by example. It is a demonstration of how ministers and departments can work together to achieve a common goal. One of the things it also does is help advance the state government's climate change action plan. I was very excited that the Minister for Environment further expanded on that recently in January by giving us targets that we need to adhere to. Our action plan provides a robust and credible emission reduction strategy of net zero emissions by 2050. This bill provides an opportunity for the government and people who have leases on crown land to contribute to that effort.

We can see from some government organisations that we are looking towards this emissions reduction through a very serious lens. Synergy is transitioning out of coal-fired power by 2030 and is investing \$3.8 billion in new green power infrastructure, including wind generation and storage. The government has an emissions target of below 80 per cent. I did not write what year that was for, but I am sure I can go back and look at it.

I will talk about wind generation. Renewable generation for Western Australia just makes sense. We are potentially in the best place in the world to capitalise on renewable energy generation for not only wind, but also solar and, increasingly, hydrogen power. Wind generation is one of the fastest growing electrical generation sources in the world, and particularly in Australia. One of the reasons for that is that it is clean and renewable. It can be used to power on site and to transport power to the grid. This is a particularly important aspect of all our renewable generation because, as we know, Western Australia is a very large state with lots of consumers that have electricity demands. Our south west interconnected system can supply only so much energy in a connected manner to our main energy generation, and so we need to investigate and invest in other energy generating opportunities throughout the vast state of Western Australia. This renewable energy generation system, such as wind and solar generation, is vital to ensuring that we have equitable access to energy across the entire state.

Ideal conditions for wind turbines for generation are windy areas, particularly those that are coastal, with mid to high-latitude or mountainous regions. These are generally characterised by high, relatively consistent wind conditions with average wind speeds in excess of six metres per second in places, and more than nine metres per second is ideal. Western Australia is one of the world's windiest places, with the strongest recorded wind gust in WA recorded on Barrow Island at 408 kilometres per hour. That occurred during tropical cyclone Olivia in 1996, but that is not an isolated event in the wind gust records of Western Australia. The strongest recorded gust on mainland Australia was also in WA. It blew at 267 kilometres per hour and was recorded at a weather station at Learmonth south of Exmouth during tropical cyclone Vance in 1999. They are extreme wind speeds, but anyone who has ever walked down St Georges Terrace on a windy day knows that Perth is very windy. That is consistent throughout Western Australia. The average wind speeds in Western Australia rank between 18.4 kilometres per hour and 22.8 kilometres per hour, giving the ideal wind speeds for turbines of around five to six metres per second. We have the conditions that support a greater use of renewable energy from wind turbines. Anyone who drives in the regions, as I do regularly

because I have family members living in Jurien Bay, will see the wind farms popping up along Indian Ocean Drive. I know that Albany has a great wind farm there because I visit friends down there. That wind farm produces not only enough energy to power the town for a large percentage of the time, but also provides a tourist opportunity. People can trek to the viewing platform and see the wind turbines in all their glory in Albany, whether they are rotating or on the ground for maintenance. That is, apparently, also very exciting for a six-year-old boy to look at, which I found out a few years ago when I took my son and he was very excited that one of the wind turbines had been tilted over and maintenance was being done on it. We are very lucky in Western Australia that we have the conditions that support clean and renewable energy, and that can go on to support the burgeoning hydrogen industry, which I know the Deputy Premier is very keen on supporting in Western Australia.

The other thing we have an abundance of in Western Australia, besides wind, is sunshine. We are the sunshine capital of Australia. Sunny days in Perth average 8.8 hours of sunshine per day, compared with Darwin, which gets 8.5 hours; Brisbane, which gets 8.2 hours; and Adelaide, which gets 7.7 hours of sunshine in a day. That equates to around 3 200 of hours of annual sunshine. Perth gets 138.7 clear days annually. We get 138.7 sunny days, making it the sunniest capital city in Australia. But Perth is not alone in its record number of clear days in Western Australia. Broome has 190.2 sunny days, Bunbury has 126.8, Geraldton has 192, Kalgoorlie has 177.9 and Port Hedland has 232.4 days of sunshine every year. What does that tell us? They are interesting numbers. Of course, Western Australia is very sunny and we need lots of sunscreen, particularly people who are of my complexion, and hats. What it tells us is that we have an abundant energy source that we can utilise here in Western Australia. We do not have to work to create the energy; the energy is already there. What we have to do is ensure that we are harnessing that energy and using it, and this is something that Western Australians have already cottoned on to. We are very aware that we are in a privileged position to have sunshine here in Western Australia and that we can harness that with photovoltaics on our rooftops. In November last year, *PV Magazine* had an article that states —

The booming uptake of home PV systems has steered Western Australia to a new peak for instantaneous renewable energy share, with clean energy—including rooftop and large-scale solar—providing a record 81% of the total electricity generated in the state’s wholesale electricity market.

That is an astonishing number for anyone who has read anything about electricity generation and how our reliance on it has been, historically and traditionally, based on fossil fuels and non-renewable energy. For us to be able to produce 81 per cent of our electricity generation on a particular day is astounding. Households, particularly in Perth, have embraced this renewable energy technology, and we are installing PVs on our rooftops at a rate of 3 000 homes each month. There are 3 000 homes every month that are realising that we can use the abundance of solar energy that we have in Perth to not only lower our own household electricity bills, but also provide electricity into the system.

From my conversations with the Minister for Energy, I know that a lot of work is happening at the moment on how to store that energy, now that we are producing so much energy and have the capacity to move away from coal-fired power generation. But how do we store this energy, moving forward, so that we can use it during the peak demand times. For those people who have solar panels on their roofs, now is a great moment to take stock of how they program their lives around their PVs to make sure that they can do things during the day that use the energy they create on their rooftops so that we can reduce demand on the system between 5.00 and 9.00 pm, when we all get home and turn on our air conditioners, dishwashers and washing machines. We could schedule some of those things to happen during the day, when we are producing energy. I just received my new electricity bill and I can see that as we have made changes to our habits, our electricity bill is slowly decreasing every single bill cycle. When I receive my bill, it has a little graphic on it showing that this bill is substantially lower than the last bill, and nearly half of the bills we had before we started making these changes last year, when we had PVs put on our roof.

All this renewable energy generation obviously also contributes to our burgeoning hydrogen industry. The Deputy Premier is very keen to see this industry take off, and this piece of legislation will allow for this industry to diversify across Western Australia. This is a really innovative piece of legislation. The minister needs to be commended on the vision that he has had, and I am sure that the Minister for Environment has had some say in how we look at this. Obviously, diversifying the leases that we can use on crown land to allow for people to provide greater security for renewable energy in Western Australia will do only great things for not only our economy, but also our drive to get to net zero emissions by 2050.

One small part that I wanted to touch on before I sit and cede the floor to my colleague the member for Kimberley—I am sure that she will talk about this as well—is the ability for diversification on this land for Aboriginal tourism. I have been looking into this issue for a long time, and, in March 2019, I brought a grievance to the then minister about the lack of availability of and access to Aboriginal heritage and culture in the regions and the metro areas. At the time, visitor research conducted in 2017–18 indicated that 82 per cent of visitors to Western Australia wanted to have an Aboriginal tourism experience, but only about 26 per cent secured that experience. Therefore, I would like to commend the minister for also accommodating Aboriginal tourism in this bill, because it is an essential and unique part of Western Australia. It is something that we should celebrate. It is something that we should explore how to promote further. Aboriginal tourism is something that we could offer the world that people have never experienced before.

When I went to Kalbarri last year, the favourite thing that we did was an on-country experience where we cooked fish in a fire pit and learnt about all the different skin groups and why people could not marry between them. This was something that I had never known about and something that makes a lot of sense. In western culture we have written records and until we had written records, nobody understood that there might be dangers in intermarrying. But our Aboriginal culture has known this for thousands of years, and really strict rules have been in place to make sure that people did not intermarry. I did not know that until last year and I have lived in Western Australia for 41 years—minus a couple of years back in Ireland. I have lived in Western Australia since 1981, and I only learnt that in 2022. Therefore, I think that Aboriginal tourism is a great initiative of the minister and he should be commended for his vision on this bill. I commend this bill to the house.

MS D.G. D'ANNA (Kimberley) [1.16 pm]: As my colleagues have indicated, the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 will have huge benefits across Western Australia, especially in the Kimberley. The new opportunities for managing land, including through partnerships and allowing for diverse uses of the same land, will bring benefits for people across my electorate. I have sat here and listened to some of the ministers deliver their brief ministerial statements, and I acknowledge and thank those ministers who put the needs of the Kimberley up there, especially Minister Templeman. Thank you for acknowledging such a huge contributor to the awareness and importance of cultural tourism and cultural knowledge through Mr Woolagoodja and the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre. I would also like to acknowledge Minister McGurk for letting everyone know that the sewerage is fixed at the Fitzroy Crossing Bridge!

I will speak about the recent floods. This bill will allow for the Minister for Lands to prescribe a class of pastoral leases for rent relief, such as the leases up there that were impacted by cyclones, bushfires or this flood. Members have seen the impact of the flood on the townships and pastoral stations on not only the infrastructure, but also the cattle and stock. The Fitzroy River reached peak levels at Fitzroy Crossing, resulting in the destruction of the Fitzroy Crossing Bridge on the Great Northern Highway, which is the only sealed road connecting the East and West Kimberley. Many Kimberley pastoralists will have suffered significant damage, including loss of livestock, erosion and damage to pastoral infrastructure.

There are currently 434 pastoral stations in Western Australia, including 92 in the Kimberley. Thirty-one pastoral stations in the Kimberley are held by Aboriginal interests, and the remainder are held by individuals, families and corporate entities. Currently, the minister can only consider applications for rent relief on an application by a pastoral lessee and on recommendation from the Pastoral Lands Board in certain circumstances, such as a natural disaster or hardship caused by poor economic conditions in the pastoral industry. Once applications are received, the PLB will provide the minister with its recommendations on whether to grant rent relief and, if so, the form of the rent relief. It is impractical and administratively inefficient to require lessees to apply for rent relief individually, particularly when lessees are facing hardship. Many people in the Kimberley are struggling with the mental capacity to be burdened with such paperwork. Under the proposed amendments, the minister will be able to grant relief on the minister's own volition or on the recommendation of the Pastoral Lands Board. This will streamline processes while pastoralists and communities are facing hardship.

Another important part of the legislation relates to the diversification leases. Diversification leases will open up significant new opportunities, particularly for Aboriginal people and native title holders. These leases will mean that land can be used for more than one purpose. For example, land might be used for both carbon farming and tourism on country, which can be led by native title holders or local Aboriginal organisations. Diversification leases will assist traditional owners, through Indigenous land use agreements, to plan on how best to utilise that country. An example of this is El Questro station, as we saw last year. This ILUA places management and ownership of this incredible part of WA back with traditional owners, who were fighting with the Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation in partnership with the G'day Group. This was a personal moment for me as my own children come from that area. This agreement is the result of careful work and negotiations to get the best possible outcome. The agreement also demonstrates how changing attitudes towards partnerships and working together can deliver the best outcome for everyone. It also demonstrates how traditional owners can lead the delivery of incredible and authentic tourism experiences. Through negotiations and partnerships, diversification leases will mean that these cultural and tourism ventures coexist alongside other land uses. This means that maximum benefit can be achieved for everyone.

People travel to the Kimberley from across the world because we know that they want to experience authentic country and the living cultures of Aboriginal people. As my colleague said, it is a very eye-opening experience for those who have never taken part. Time and time again, surveys show that visitors to our state are coming to see the unique things that make WA so special. They come for the once-in-a-lifetime experiences they can only get far out west. The Kimberley offers many of the experiences that cannot be found elsewhere. In many ways, our ancient lands host some of the last truly wild and pristine parts of Australia. This is a huge selling point for our region and our state.

There is huge market demand for cultural tourism. Providing more opportunities to set up unique cultural tourism will bring economic growth and social benefits. Diversification leases will support this continued growth. Delivering cultural tourism and land management in partnership with Aboriginal people supports the continued living cultures of the Kimberley. Diversification leases support this because they provide for traditional owners to be involved in many forms of land use on crown land.

Today, pastoral stations are a big part of the Kimberley and other parts of Western Australia. Of course, in the long span of time, pastoral grazing is a relatively recent thing. Livestock have roamed on lands in the Kimberley for fewer than 200 years. During this time, Aboriginal people have always been linked with the pastoral industry. The success of the pastoral industry is important for the Kimberley and WA. We know that Aboriginal people working on pastoral stations on their traditional lands have not always been treated fairly. There is a terrible history of forced labour, wage theft and abuse. It is critical that Aboriginal people share in the success of the pastoral industry. Today, the expertise of Aboriginal people in caring for stock is widely recognised. This skill will always be linked to the deep knowledge that Aboriginal people have for caring for country. We see this in Aboriginal-owned pastoral stations, both in the Kimberley and in other parts of Western Australia. For example, in 2019, Myroodah station, which is about 100 kilometres south-east of Derby, was transferred to the Nyikina and Mangala people. The station is operated by the Indigenous-owned Kimberley Agriculture and Pastoral Company. It aims to eventually employ more than 200 local Aboriginal people.

More and more projects across WA demonstrate the massive benefits of Aboriginal people being at the heart of managing land. That is why the improvements for pastoral leases introduced in this bill will be important for my electorate. Planning for the future of pastoral leases with Aboriginal people gives everyone a great say, and greater certainty, in how grazing stock will deliver economic and social benefits.

The parts of the bill that support carbon farming will also assist Aboriginal people managing carbon farming on traditional lands. There is the global benefit of capturing carbon and the local benefit of having Aboriginal people caring for country. With climate change, we know that we need to manage land carefully. We also need to make sure that land brings social, economic and cultural benefits to local people and communities. The reforms in this bill mean that careful land management can be supported, including through the involvement of Aboriginal people on native title lands. Together, these parts of this bill will bring significant benefits for the Kimberley and other parts of regional WA. This bill is a big milestone in managing crown land and involving native title organisations and Aboriginal people in partnership to deliver economic activity.

Before I commend this bill to this house, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that this is the voice National Week of Action. In this week of action, it has been great to see so many people, both old and young, from many diverse backgrounds come together to learn how they can be part of a genuine move to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Now is the time for recognition of our First Nations people and for us to ensure that genuine positive changes are made to Australia's decision-making processes and systems in matters affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I stand here proud to say that I was part of dialogues that happened across the nation by the Referendum Council that came together in Uluru. The result of that gathering was this statement —

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a *spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty.* It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is *the torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a *rightful place* in our own country.

When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution. Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: *the coming together after a struggle*. It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

That was the Uluru Statement, which I am proud to be a part of; I was a signatory to it in 2017. I acknowledge the Albanese government for moving forward in 2023 with its election commitment to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice into the Constitution.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): I give the call to the member for Cockburn. That is a hard act to follow.

MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn) [1.32 pm]: Can I say what an absolute pleasure it is to serve in this chamber with the member for Kimberley. I am quite emotional after hearing from the member for Kimberley because she put so well what I think many of us in this chamber aspire to for our First Nations people. She is a woman of great steeliness, aspiration and ambition for her people and for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and indeed for all Australians. I really thank her for that contribution. I want to say personally and, I am sure, on behalf of the whole chamber, that we, too, want to walk with our First Nations people along the path to reconciliation. The work of acknowledging the traumas of the past started a long time ago. We have not made as much progress as we should have, but we have made progress and we need to continue to make progress.

I am a very strong supporter of the Voice to federal Parliament and I would also like to see a voice at other levels of government into the future. I am confident that we can deliver a yes vote in the referendum later this year. I will say on that note, though, that it is really disheartening to see the attitude that has been taken by the federal opposition on this issue. This should not be a partisan issue. This should be a simple concept, which is to recognise our First Nations people in the foundational document of our nation and to provide a mechanism for consultation so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a seat at the table and a voice in relation to matters that affect them. The case could not possibly have been put better than the member for Kimberley just did, and I thank her for doing so.

I will turn now to the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, which is the bill before the chamber at the moment. I will echo a couple of the comments that were made by both the members for Kingsley and Kimberley, and then it will fall to me, as it unfortunately does sometimes, to dive into some of the technical detail of the bill. I hope not to bore members too much, but I will get to that contribution later.

The first thing I want to say echoes the member for Kimberley in relation to the great opportunities for Western Australia in renewable energy, decarbonisation and the green economy. Western Australia has a long and proud history of being a resources-rich and successful mining state, particularly in iron ore and gold and now increasingly in critical minerals. The world is changing and is increasingly looking for low-carbon and zero-carbon options. That means there will be a change in our energy mix, but also a change in the requirements of industry in things such as steel fabrication, domestic power supply or the supply of electricity to very electricity-intensive industries such as smelting or electric arc furnaces in the manufacturing of steel. The world is changing and we have to keep up with that.

As the member for Kingsley said, we have enormous potential in Western Australia to capture both solar energy and wind energy. If we look at a heat map that shows the parts of the world that have the most abundant access to sunlight and to wind power, we see that Western Australia is one of about five hotspots right at the top of the list. If we combine that with our heavy industry and our modern, developed economy, we basically come out on top for opportunities in renewable energy generation and the capacity to transition that solar and wind energy generation into a green hydrogen industry, which this government is pursuing. Anybody who has been paying attention to the debates on the development of our hydrogen industry and our renewable energy industry will know that one of the things that has been putting a bit of a handbrake on the development of the industry is land tenure arrangements.

In Western Australia we have pastoral leases. If vast swathes of land have been given for a particular purpose—in this case, running cattle—that land can be used only for ancillary purposes. It cannot be used for another dominant purpose. We might have absolutely hundreds of thousands of hectares of land that are locked up for pastoral purposes that are perhaps under-utilised or completely unutilised. As a result, we have these vast swathes of land that are potentially available to be used for green energy or green hydrogen projects, but the land tenure is holding back our ability to attract industry and investment into that land. Coming up with a fix to that is extremely important. The fix, which is the diversification lease, is set out in this bill. It will allow for large amounts of crown land or land administered by the state to be leased for a diversity of purposes and it will allow for us to attract investment and encourage industry to invest in the development of green energy and green hydrogen projects. I am really pleased to see this bill come before the house. It is a step forward in this government's decarbonisation agenda.

The second thing that I want to reflect on briefly is the contribution of this bill to advancing the wellbeing and the self-determination of our First Nations Australians. The contribution of this bill was set out in quite some detail by the member for Kimberley and at this point I just want to reflect on the historic Indigenous land use agreement that was struck by G'day Group, the state government and the local Aboriginal corporation in relation to El Questro. El Questro is a beautiful property. It is a beautiful part of this world. I had the privilege of visiting it on a holiday with my wife about 18 months ago. It is a wonderful location and I encourage people to go there. When we went, we were surprised to find that the Aboriginal history of the place had been basically erased. There was really very little reference to it. There were very few, if any, Aboriginal staff that I could see. There was certainly no easy access to cultural guidance or education about property. That struck me as sad. However, one thing that is pleasing to see is that around the time that we visited there, the property had been bought by G'day Group, which administers a couple of caravan parks in my electorate and indeed different properties all around Australia.

Grant Wilckens, who is the CEO of G'day Group and with whom I have met, noticed the same thing. In cooperation with local traditional owners and the state government, G'day Group began a process of negotiating an Indigenous land use agreement, which means that Aboriginal people are now given a level of self-determination and control over land, which has always been their land. It allows an organisation like G'day Group to run a tourism rather than pastoral offering and engage the local traditional owners in the tourism experience. I really want to celebrate that, and I congratulate the Minister for Lands. I have congratulated him privately, but I congratulate him again in this chamber on the negotiation of that Indigenous land use agreement for El Questro.

I want to comment on two matters that go to the technical nature of the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. First, I would like to comment on how this bill makes a series of technical and administrative improvements to the way we deal with land tenure in this state, particularly, the transfer of land tenure. Members of this chamber might be familiar with the concept of an easement. An easement is a non-proprietary right placed over a plot of land that is attached to an adjoining, dominant piece of land. For example, a block that would otherwise be landlocked and could not access the street because another block of land is in front of it has an easement placed along the adjoining block to allow the right of way. That is a classic easement—somebody can put a driveway down somebody else's property so they can access the main road. The person on the back block does not own the front block, but they have a right of way. That is an easement.

The point with an easement is that it usually attaches to the dominant piece of land, but we have a type of easement under the Land Administration Act that is known as an easement in gross. An easement in gross is a statutory easement and a device of the legislation. An easement in gross is not attached to the land; it is actually attached to a legal person, and a legal person might be a company or corporation. An easement in gross may be provided under the Mining Act 1978, I believe, and if, for example, a business has a slurry pipeline that runs across land that is not covered by a mining tenement, under the Mining Act, an easement in gross is provided so the operator of the mine still has a right over the use of the land for the purposes of the slurry pipeline. An easement in gross is really important for diversification leases because if a business has large-scale infrastructure, solar arrays, wind turbines and that kind of thing, it may need to have easements in gross, if, say, transmission infrastructure, other types of pipelines or utility infrastructure needs to be connected across plots of land.

The difficulty is that at the moment if the land is transferred, the easement in gross does not transfer with the land because the easement in gross does not rest with the land; it rests with the owner of the land. What has to be done is, basically, the lease has to be transferred to a new owner, the old easement in gross has to be cancelled and a new easement in gross has to be issued for exactly the same purpose as previously. Obviously, that creates hesitancy for capital investment in projects because investors want certainty that when they take over an asset, like a solar array or a wind farm, they will get all the adjoining and necessary infrastructure that goes with it. One thing that this bill allows is the transfer of the easement in gross, rather than requiring it to be cancelled and issued again.

The second thing I want to point to is a technical but really important change. At the moment, the Minister for Lands has no power to hold and deal with freehold and conditional freehold land. If the Minister for Lands wants to transfer freehold land to a new lessor, the freehold land has to be revested into the crown estate, and then carved back out of the crown estate by the minister and given to the new lessor or leaseholder. That is an unnecessary piece of bureaucracy. This bill will provide the minister with the ability to simply deal with freehold and conditional freehold land by transferring it over to a new leaseholder who wishes to purchase the lease, rather than going through that complicated process of revesting the land into the crown estate and then carving it out again into new freehold land for use by the new leaseholder.

Those are just a couple of examples of how this bill will streamline the process. It is a very good bill. It is consistent with our commitments to decarbonisation and self-determination for Aboriginal people, and it makes sensible technical changes to facilitate that agenda. I commend the bill to the house.

MS K.E. GIDDENS (Bateman) [1.45 pm]: I thank the member for Cockburn for his contribution. I think I have learnt more about easements than I ever wanted to know in my life.

Mr D.A.E. Scaife: And still do want to!

Ms K.E. GIDDENS: It is an important consideration and they are important details, so his contribution is always well received here.

I would like to share with members in this place something that is already well known among us sandgroppers; that is that the eastern states are extremely jealous of what we have here. As somebody who grew up in Tasmania, I know that jealousy is rife throughout my family. In family conversations about our economy, we discuss our economy under the McGowan government and the surpluses we run. Of course, about our natural resources, the conversation typically runs something along the lines of “Western Australians have not had to do anything for this”. It is a wealth that belongs to all Australians and, although it was, obviously, found in Western Australia, it is a wealth that we have not had to do anything to derive. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. The preconditions for the contribution that the Western Australian economy now makes to our national economy were set many decades ago by former governments that set the legislative and regulative requirements to realise the potential of the state. Likewise, the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 will do exactly the same thing.

Climate change provides a severe challenge to mankind. It is predicted that 1.5 degrees of global warming from pre-industrial levels is what we should not exceed if we want our biological and ecological systems to remain balanced. Almost no writer of widely regarded scientific literature thinks we will remain under that 1.5-degree level of global warming. Beyond 1.5 degrees, scientists predict that our natural feedback loops could spiral out of control and release sea ice. We could even get to the point that the Amazon, that great carbon-capture resource, could begin to release carbon dioxide instead of capturing it. We could see mass kills of krill, seaweed and coral reefs and, of course, our ecosystems dying. That is the challenge and why we are transitioning to clean energy and net zero.

It is a moral obligation for governments to respond to this challenge, but it is also an economic opportunity. The transition to net zero, particularly around green energy, has the potential to generate significant jobs, particularly jobs in the regions. The McGowan government has been focused on jobs and diversification since day one of forming government in 2017. With the WA jobs plan and Diversify WA, the government has recognised and taken advantage of what we have here in Western Australia to create the kind of lifestyle that the next generation of Western Australians will come to expect and deserve.

How many jobs are estimated to become available during the green energy transition? The figures vary, but one that I read was that to reach net zero emissions by 2050, the world will need to create 14 million clean energy jobs. That statistic comes from the International Energy Agency.

An article titled “45 000 renewables jobs are Australia’s for the taking—but how many will go to coal workers?”, which was published in 2020, sets out really well not only the opportunities but also the challenges in green energy transition. Of course, last year we saw the election of the Albanese Labor federal government; however, prior to that, we had eight years of inaction and chaos in climate change and energy policy. This inaction not only caused harm to our goal of achieving net zero, but also cost the opportunity of jobs for Australians and Western Australians. The article that I have just referenced states that the carbon target set by the then Liberal–National government was reached in 2019. The article states —

According to the Reserve Bank of Australia this caused renewables investment to fall by 50% last year ...

That is, in 2019. The investment in renewables reached the target set by the federal Liberal–National government but then fell by 50 per cent compared with the previous year. The article stated that under that ongoing policy setting, over 11 000 renewable jobs would be lost by 2022. However, the reverse of that was that if the Paris climate change targets were committed to, renewable energy jobs in Australia would grow to 45 000 by 2025. The interesting and exciting thing is that from that point in 2025, renewable energy employment would then average around 35 000 additional jobs each year up to 2035. From a Western Australian perspective, even more excitingly, up to two-thirds of those jobs are predicted to be in regional areas.

We can see the impacts that a policy vacuum on energy, net zero and carbon targets has caused and can cause to our economy. Again, with a change of government at the federal level, we can see the types of opportunities that exist for Western Australia. An example of this is the program launched just this week, when Prime Minister Anthony Albanese was in Perth at our North Metropolitan TAFE for the program launch of \$100 million to support 10 000 new energy apprenticeships. This is real skills, real investment into our Western Australian TAFE system, and real opportunities in the regions and throughout Western Australia.

One of the things we know about green energy jobs is that they cut across multiple skill sets. We are talking about sparkies, boilermakers, construction workers and people in software, because we need the software systems to be sophisticated to interact with the energy grid. We are talking about people installing solar panels and wind turbine manufacturing. The whole supply chain benefits from the creation of these green energy jobs and from renewable energy.

Although those benefits are largely going to be benefiting regional Western Australians, of course, the benefit does not stop there. An example of that is ChemX Materials. I talked about ChemX last week in this place. It is developing

a novel technology to produce the high purity alumina that is required for the battery storage for our green energy transition. It is employing trainees in chemical engineering and chemistry. These are highly skilled, well-paid educated jobs that are available for Western Australians with our green energy transition.

Of course, Western Australians are not new to renewable energy; in fact, we overwhelmingly embrace it. Household solar is now the single largest source of generation in the state's largest network, which is the south west interconnected system. Our household solar generates three times more power than our single largest power station. We are familiar with it. I think the member for Kingsley said that something like 3 500 solar panels are going on to household roofs in Western Australia—did she say every week? It was quite extraordinary; it was a huge number. It is certainly not new to Western Australians, but there is an opportunity to take that even bigger, because with our solar and wind generation is the opportunity to generate the economic opportunity that comes from energy storage.

In Saul Griffith's book *The Big Switch*—a book I recommend reading—there are some very interesting stats about what we can do to reduce our carbon footprint just by electrifying our households. He comments, as has already been mentioned in contributions prior to mine, that almost nowhere in the world is as well positioned as Australia to take advantage of the economic uplift from the green energy transition. If Australia is again the lucky country in relation to the green energy transition, Western Australia is the luckiest state in the luckiest country.

Western Australia already has a record of delivering major energy projects. We already have a record of attracting the international investment that is required to create the jobs and build the infrastructure. We already have people who are working in tech. We have seen that Western Australia has more automation than any other jurisdiction, for example. We are developing the high-tech solutions. We have everything that we need here, in addition, of course, to the sun and the wind. But just like our resources industry all those years ago, and just like my family members and people from my home state of Tasmania are so vastly wrong when they say that somehow the economic uplift from our resources industry was achieved without any effort, the realisation of the opportunity from the green energy transition has to be laid down now in our legislative and regulative changes, and that is exactly what this bill will do.

The member for Cockburn went into some of the technicalities of this bill. Actually, the outcome of this bill will be to diversify the economy and set the preconditions for the investment, skills and training to create the jobs that can come from this opportunity. How will it do that? Currently, of course, it is a pastoral lease, so the use is restricted to exactly what the name suggests. Through this bill, we will now have the opportunity to diversify that land use without going through the red tape that was previously in place. I have talked in detail about the renewable energy opportunities, but, of course, it is more than just that. The member for Kimberley made a very powerful contribution about what this bill will mean to the uplift of economic opportunity for Aboriginal people and for traditional owners in her patch, the Kimberley, but, of course, that is true for traditional owners throughout the state. The opportunity to create cultural and economic development activities is a very important one. Likewise, conservation organisations will be able to preserve and rehabilitate their habitats and ecosystems, and economic uplift through tourism and other industries will be made possible by this bill.

Of course, this bill builds on other initiatives that the McGowan government has prioritised to ensure that the diversification of our economy and the jobs of the future are planned and prepared for right now. That includes, of course, the priority on hydrogen as an emerging industry for this state and the opportunities that that presents. We have a minister directly dedicated to hydrogen. I acknowledge the work of the former Minister for Hydrogen Industry, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, and note that the portfolio is now in the very good hands of the Deputy Premier, who, appropriately, has hydrogen with his other portfolios of state development, jobs and trade, tourism and science. In those titles alone we see the type of focus that is being given at the highest level of cabinet in the McGowan government to not only hydrogen opportunities, but also economic diversification and jobs creation more broadly.

What has not been mentioned in my colleagues' contributions is this state's location to Asia. Our existing trading partners will also be looking to transition to a green economy. That will provide substantial benefits to Western Australia.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 614.]

PARLIAMENTARY RESEARCH PROGRAM

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [2.00 pm]: Members, I have a brief announcement. The Parliamentary Education Office is running the very successful parliamentary research program again this year. The program produces consistently high results, with university interest increasing each year. Members have the opportunity to submit a topic for research or select a topic submitted by universities. Students are third year or above and drawn from all disciplines. The research project runs during the second university semester; however, members need to register their interest with the Parliamentary Education Office by the end of March. An email will be sent tomorrow with guidelines and further information on the benefits of the program. Please consider supporting this very worthwhile project.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

CRIME — FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

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

I refer to the commitment made by the federal government of \$250 million for Northern Territory communities to improve services in response to violence and crime as a result of the removal of the cashless debit card. Given that the Premier briefed federal cabinet recently, did he take the opportunity to stand up for Western Australia and ask for a similar commitment to be delivered to Western Australia?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Obviously, what you say in a cabinet meeting is not something you discuss publicly. That is the ordinary protocol around these things; it has been adhered to by governments of both sides for many years. What I can say is that yesterday I was able to announce \$560 million of federal commitments to an important infrastructure project in regional Western Australia. The Western Australian government added another \$98 million or so to this project, taking it to a \$660 million project to enhance economic activity in regional Western Australia and allow for the importation in particular of turbines and windmills for renewable energy production. That is a pretty important announcement and it dwarfs the other announcements that the member referred to. That was one of the benefits of this government inviting the federal cabinet to come to Western Australia and go to Port Hedland to hold a federal cabinet meeting, which is exactly what we did. We sat in the shipping tower, with the ships being loaded and leaving the port, as we were having our meeting. It might be news to you, member, but the contents of the meeting are, obviously, not something you discuss publicly.

CRIME — FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

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

I have a supplementary question. If the Premier's colleagues in the federal government will not put up the funds to help our communities that are in such distress, will his government be investing further into regional areas to ensure that communities are able to combat the rising crime situation?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

We announced recently the extension of the Target 120 program to another eight or nine communities. We also announced the intensive family support team initiative specifically in Carnarvon. We have funded an additional 1 100 police officers across Western Australia, many of whom are in regional WA. In fact, the other day the shire president was telling me how welcome the additional police officers are in Carnarvon and what a great job they are doing in Carnarvon.

It is not all about money, though; sometimes it is about the initiatives that we take that might be legislatively or regulatory. As I outlined to the house yesterday, on the alcohol problem, in particular in Carnarvon, which has been an issue, we are looking at what else we can do to reduce the prevalence of alcohol-related violence in Carnarvon. That will be uncomfortable for some people. Some people who make money out of it in particular will not like it. We need to look at what measures we can put in place for that community, which has not had measures in place in the past. Having measures in place when there is a funeral is not ongoing measures to curb alcohol abuse; it is not. It is commonplace across regional Western Australia that curbs are put in place when a major funeral is taking place. We will look at what other regulations can be put in place. Some people will not like it. I think that some of the people who complain about crime in a community like Carnarvon need to understand that when they complain a lot about it, governments sometimes will take action that they might not like.

HOUSING — PLANNING REFORM

69. Mr D.R. MICHAEL to the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to deliver more housing for Western Australians.

- (1) Can the Premier update the house on the measures being taken to unlock land for new housing opportunities in well-connected and vibrant communities?
- (2) Can the Premier advise the house how these measures will ensure that more people can benefit from having an affordable home?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Balcatta for the question.

- (1)–(2) Since taking office, we have relentlessly pursued our vision for a city with greater infill and terrific public transport linkages, predominantly Metronet but also major investments in roads across Perth. We have been advocates for density. We have understood the need for additional housing, particularly in proximity to train lines and proximity to amenity, such as hospitals and the like, and also proximity to the CBD.

Today, the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Local Government and I announced a series of reforms to help us create better communities, and to strengthen and streamline our planning system. First, we

will establish a permanent pathway for the assessment of development applications of state and regional significance. Over the last few years, although that has been temporary, it has provided billions of dollars of additional investment and over 14 000 jobs. We will make that permanent. We will also ensure that there is a 120-day decision time frame for the special development assessment unit.

Secondly, we will reduce the number of development assessment panels across the state from five to three—one for the inner metropolitan area, one for outer metro and one to service regional WA. The three-panel arrangement will be in place next year. It will be an opt-in process for proponents and will reduce the cost for a development that can access the DAP to \$2 million. There will be exclusions for single homes. Multi-unit developments will be able to access the DAP if the cost will be more than \$2 million. Alternatively, proponents can go to their local government.

We also announced the \$80 million infrastructure development fund—\$40 million for the city and \$40 million for regional WA. That is to help with headworks, regional workers' accommodation, and water, sewerage and electricity, all those things that are necessary and that might tip a project into activity when it might not quite make it otherwise, and provide additional housing out there.

We know that housing is a big issue in Western Australia. We know that providing additional opportunities and additional choice is very important. That is why we are taking real action, both financial and also legislative and regulatory, to ensure that we make it easier for proponents to get out there and provide additional housing for Western Australians, and particularly choice in housing.

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL

70. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Health:

Yesterday, the Minister for Health was unable to answer a simple question about upgrades to King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women and said that these works were no indication of a time line for the new women's and babies' hospital.

- (1) Given that it was an election commitment that works would commence in 2023, why was the minister unable to advise when construction will commence and be completed?
- (2) Why is there no funding in the budget across any year for the construction of this facility?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

- (1)–(2) The Leader of the Liberal Party might be interested to know that even the company that will be building the hospital does not know that it will be building it yet, because we have not actually put the project to tender. We are in the planning phase. The member may well know, or she may not, that we get a completion date when we issue the tender. We are in the planning and consultation phase of this project. I have made no issue about that. That is an important part of the project.

I can tell the member how much the upgrades to King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women will cost. I am happy to own that I cannot keep every single figure in my head. We have a record infrastructure program in Western Australia—a record infrastructure program—and I cannot keep every single figure in my head, because I am only human, but I have found out that information. I am pleased to tell the member that the former commonwealth Liberal–National government provided \$15.2 million—that was announced by Greg Hunt and former Senator Mathias Cormann—and the state government provided an additional \$19.5 million for those upgrades to King Edward Memorial Hospital. There was a lot of discussion at that time from former Senator Cormann and the former federal health minister about keeping King Eddy's in fit shape and tip-top whilst the women's and newborns' hospital was being built. These are important works. As I said, 5 000 babies are born every single year in our state's premier maternity hospital. It is this government that is investing in women's health, with \$1.7 billion in the budget to build the new women's and newborns' hospital. As part of that, we are looking at models of care and putting women at the centre of those models of care and ensuring that it will be the kind of maternity hospital that will not only deliver the best maternity services, but is also the centre for best practice women's health services in Western Australia.

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL

71. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. In December 2020, the minister's government announced \$1.8 billion would be set aside for this hospital. How is it that more than two years later, the government has managed to do absolutely nothing and commit to the current King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I pity the community if the Leader of the Liberal Party ever ends up being the Minister for Health with such a shallow understanding of what it is to build complex infrastructure in Western Australia on a site that already has infrastructure on the site. We are well progressed with the women's and newborns' hospital. Good execution is all in the planning. You can have the best idea in the world, with the new Perth Children's Hospital as an example, but

everything is in the implementation. We have the best people in the Department of Health, the Department of Finance and the North Metropolitan Health Service working through the planning, scoping and implementation of how we will deliver a world-class women's and newborns' hospital. We will not make the mistakes that you made, when you could not even open Perth Children's Hospital. We had to have a change of government.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Ms A. SANDERSON: I would like to see this opposition do its own job, do its due diligence and deal with legislation that comes into this house, let alone giving advice on how to build complex infrastructure.

HEALTH — WORKFORCE — RECRUITMENT

72. **Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's work to recruit more nurses, midwives, doctors and allied health staff to WA public hospitals.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house the important measures the government is undertaking to support and strengthen our health workforce?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how these measures are improving health outcomes in our hospitals?

Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

- (1)–(2) It is an excellent question. I thank the member for Bicton for her question and for the opportunity to talk about a range of initiatives running at the moment, in particular the nurse practitioner pilot that I announced with the commonwealth earlier this week. The first is GradConnect, a twice yearly intake in recruitment of newly qualified nurses. It is just one way that newly graduated nurses and midwives can connect with potential employers. We have connected aged care with GradConnect as well. A total of 1 130 grads were offered positions in the public health system last year, and 200 of those went to WA Country Health. It also supports nurses and midwives with transition into practice programs. These are funded by the government to support those new grads into transitioning into practice on the floor so that they get an opportunity to watch and learn and be paid before they get hands on. All that helps with retention and support for this incredibly important workforce. We had early feedback from our grads. With 137 graduate nurses employed in the east metropolitan region alone, I yesterday met 66; they are very excited. It was a great morning with lots of excitement and a bit of trepidation, but the early feedback was really good that they are feeling very supported, they are enjoying their placements and they are doing a range of placements, whether it is ICU, trauma, acute medical or geriatrics—they get a range of access to different clinical areas.

We also today launched the second stage of the Belong campaign, which expands on the original campaign launched internationally, that focuses on nurses and midwives who may not be practising currently, but are living in Western Australia. It builds on that first stage and highlights that the government has fast-tracked that cost-of-living payment to our nurses and midwives with a three per cent to 4.5 per cent pay increase. We have some of the highest penalty rates of any jurisdiction in the country, and we are importantly committed to implementing nurse-to-patient ratios. They are working, because we know that nurses are coming to WA Health to work, whether it is local or overseas. We are adding over 3 300 FTE. Since 2017, that is a 21 per cent increase in our nursing workforce. With 1 200 medical FTE, that is a 23 per cent increase, and the 1 400 allied health FTE is a 23 per cent increase. That is in contrast with the former Liberal–National government when FTE grew by one per cent in eight years in the public health system. That was over eight years of government.

I am very excited to inform the house of the nurse practitioner pilot launched early this week, funded by the commonwealth. National cabinet discussed some challenges around health occurring in every jurisdiction. The federal government put \$100 million on the table for innovation in health care. WA has come forward with the idea of providing nurse practitioners to deliver primary health care. These are highly skilled workers in our system, many of whom are not working to scope. We know that there are at least 60 employed in health care who are not employed as nurse practitioners. This is a two-year trial that will fund those nurse practitioners to prescribe, order pathology, order tests, interpret them and provide important care. This is just one of the many ways that the state government is partnering with the commonwealth government to provide an open access to health care for our community.

YOUTH DETENTION — SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM ATTEMPTS

73. **Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Corrective Services:**

I refer to the 37 juveniles who have been held at unit 18 at Casuarina Prison since being transferred from Banksia Hill Detention Centre in July 2022, and the shocking revelation that 25 of them have engaged in self-harm, including two incidents of serious self-harm, and seven attempted suicides.

- (1) Does the minister agree that his government is failing in its duty to keep these children safe?

- (2) Why does the minister continue to ignore the advice and concern of experts in children's health and justice, like the Telethon Kids Institute, a former Children's Court judge and Inspector of Custodial Services, and the Aboriginal Legal Service, that there is no place for juveniles in an adult prison and irreparable damage is being caused to these individuals?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

- (1) No.
 (2) I remind the member that she was part of a government that transferred 68 young people —

Ms M.J. Davies: You have been in charge for six years.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I cannot answer a question without them interjecting.

Let me go through this again. Sixty-eight young people were transferred to an adult prison and housed with adult prisoners. There are no juveniles at the moment held in any custody in Western Australia by the Department of Corrective Services who are not in a juvenile justice facility. I have explained this previously. Unit 18 is not currently part of the adult prison estate. It was declared, by me, separate to Casuarina Prison, and is operated, as I have explained dozens of times here in the chamber and elsewhere, as not part of the adult corrective estate; it is operated, maintained and managed separately. There is no interaction, unlike when the member for Central Wheatbelt held children in an adult facility with adults. This is a separate facility. It is a 128-bed unit, and there are 10 people in there today. It has been done. I remind everybody about this. There was a crisis of safety at Banksia Hill Detention Centre because a small cohort of young offenders was attacking the staff. If we do not protect the staff, there is no possibility of providing a rehabilitative environment. Until the staff are safe, no-one is safe. I do not understand why the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA are constantly criticising the staff of corrective services. They are doing a difficult job well. Generally speaking, they are doing a difficult job well to provide the appropriate therapeutic environment to get these violent offenders off their offending behaviour.

YOUTH DETENTION — SUICIDE AND SELF-HARM ATTEMPTS

74. **Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Corrective Services:**

I have a supplementary question. Can I confirm that the minister's first answer was yes, he believes that his government is keeping these 37 juveniles safe, despite —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! Members, I would like to hear the supplementary in silence. Short and sharp, please.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Can I confirm that the minister believes that his government is keeping these 37 juveniles safe, despite 25 of them engaging in serious self-harm and attempted suicide?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

What I have said is that we do not choose who comes into corrective custody. They are chosen by the courts. The courts tell us that these young offenders have to be managed inside the corrective services estate. It is unfortunate, in my view, that the courts determine that these young offenders are criminally responsible for their behaviour because, let me tell the member, it would be a lot easier to manage the corrective estate if they in fact decided that they were mentally incapacitated and then the Minister for Health; Mental Health would need to deal with these young offenders, but the courts determine they need to be managed inside the corrective estate. What we do is provide psychologists, psychiatrists, mental health nurses, doctors, Aboriginal support workers and education. We provide every service that anybody in the community has asked for. I remind members that we have hired a unit of eight specifically Aboriginal people—because the majority, 80 or 75 per cent, of the detainees are Aboriginal—to work with them on cultural issues. We are doing everything people have asked for.

I have a question for the member, and it is pretty simple. What has to happen here? The Liberal and National Parties say that the solution is to build a new facility. They say that that is the solution, but what should we do in the five years between now and then? This is how stupid the comment is. This is typical of the Liberal and National Parties. Their election commitment of \$250 million at the next election will not help their communities; they will be replacing Banksia Hill. Five years after they make the commitment, the new facility will be opened. What should we do in the meantime? We have to spend the \$100 million the Treasurer and Premier have allocated to the corrective services fund. We have to get Banksia Hill right now. We cannot wait five years for some nirvana—some world that will never exist—because we have to deal with the challenges now. I do not apologise, ever, for making my three priorities this order: priority number one, protect the community; priority number two, protect the staff; and priority number three, provide a therapeutic environment so that these violent young offenders can get off their offending behaviour and become citizens who make a contribution to the community. Every time I get attacked for those three priorities, it shows that the people who are criticising me are not in touch with the community.

SOCIAL HOUSING — GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

75. Mr Y. MUBARAKAI to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to boost social housing stock across Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the delivery of new social housing properties across Western Australia, despite the challenges faced in the construction industry?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house of the benefits of this government's record investment in social housing?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I want to thank the member for his question.

- (1)–(2) As we know, right now across Australia, there is incredible demand for housing. All states face a similar challenge, and we have responded to that challenge by making a record investment of \$2.4 billion in social housing and homelessness programs. We have driven that through a series of reforms. It has not just been a massive investment—the biggest investment in our state's history—it also has been backed in by a large number of reforms. We have created the modular program and the timber frame program that knocks out homes in 25 weeks from the concrete pour. We have cut red tape for smaller housing builds. We have created a new small and medium builders panel, again to cut red tape. We are creating the housing diversity pipeline to use lazy land. The Minister for Planning and I are aggressively identifying land that is surplus to government needs for housing. We are bringing in a bill to do with a rent tax incentive. We brought in the stamp duty rebate for affordable apartments. We have raised the property price cap on the Keystart loan. We have created a new urban infill product for Keystart. We have reviewed existing Government Regional Officers' Housing stock and brought across surplus stock from that for social housing. Today, we announced further planning reform to streamline approvals for the critical infill development that we need. We have also announced the creation of an \$80 million infrastructure fund that will fund both regional workers' accommodation and infill development around train stations, close to public transport, to create liveable communities.

All those reforms mean that despite the toughest construction market ever since our program started, we have delivered an additional 1 000 social homes, with another 1 051 under contract. This is a major achievement, particularly given the market and the constraints we face. Compare all those policy reforms and changes, including the ones we have announced today, with the record of the opposition, which is zero announcements—a policy vacuum for nearly six years. Hon Steve Martin is the “Where's Wally of politics”—we do not see him anywhere; he is missing in action. In fact, that is the feedback I get from stakeholders. He does not turn up to events, the most recent being the Urban Development Institute of Australia event. In fact, the only thing he has said to date about a policy solution is, “I think we need maintenance.” That is it from the opposition. Across there, this disorganised mess has not one policy announcement on housing. On our side, we have a very clear series of reforms that have delivered social housing for Western Australia.

TARGET 120 SITES

76. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Community Services:

I refer to the revelations from questions on notice that Target 120 is yet to reach a single household in Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Karratha, Newman, Carnarvon and Mandurah, seven of nine new locations announced in May 2022, now nine months ago. Why has the program, which the government has been trumpeting since 2018, failed to reach these communities?

Ms S.E. WINTON replied:

I thank the member for the question and for his interest in what is undoubtedly one of the most important and significant social programs of this government.

Since 2018, we have invested over \$31 million to deliver Target 120. It is a priority initiative of this government. Since announcing the original 11 sites, we have further committed through last year's budget to roll out the program to an additional seven sites. As I said yesterday, a very, very important aspect to remember about this program is that we are focusing on the majority of the Target 120 programs being rolled out into the regional areas. That is really important because we know that that is where we are facing significant challenges around youth crime and social dysfunction. It is being rolled out in the regions of Bunbury, Armadale, Kalgoorlie, Kununurra, Northam, Albany, Port Hedland, Mirrabooka, Geraldton, Rockingham, Midland, Broome, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Karratha, Newman, Carnarvon, Mandurah and Ellenbrook.

Registrations of interest for Aboriginal community-controlled organisations have been completed at the sites of Karratha, Newman, Carnarvon and all the new Kimberley sites. Community youth officers have already been onboarded for most new sites. I had the great pleasure, when I was in Geraldton recently, to meet with MEEDAC and Ngala which are rolling out the Target 120 program in Geraldton—to personally understand the significance

and complex nature of the program. It requires building relationships with high-risk youths and working together with various agencies, whether it is police or health, to make sure that we have wraparound communication and services for these young people. It is an important program but not one that will be rolled out quickly, as the member opposite suggests. It is about building relationships and building capacity for people to actively become part of the program. It is a program that this government is absolutely committed to and my department will keep rolling it out.

TARGET 120 SITES

77. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Community Services:

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister provide me with any indication as to when the program might commence in the Shire of Carnarvon?

Ms S.E. WINTON replied:

The recruitment and retention of staff in all sectors right around the state is a challenge, whether it is for small businesses in the north or government agencies. It is an incredibly challenging time at the moment. The department, like other agencies, including the police, is running very proactive programs to make sure that we can get people placed into the Target 120 program. But I repeat what I said yesterday: it is incredibly frustrating when all the opposition seeks to do is diminish people's desire to go to regional towns, with its constant and continual downplaying of these towns.

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FUND

78. Ms E.L. HAMILTON to the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's support for Western Australian artists through initiatives such as the contemporary music fund.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house how this fund is successfully supporting Western Australian artists?
- (2) Can the minister outline to the house what other initiatives the McGowan Labor government is undertaking to support contemporary music?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(2) Members, remember the name of this band: Voyager. The reason I want members to remember the name "Voyager" is that Voyager is a Western Australian band. It was formed over 15 years ago and has pure Western Australian content in terms of the musicians. In their third attempt to secure the nomination as Australia's entry to the Eurovision Song Contest, they have succeeded. They were announced today, by SBS, as the Australian representative for Eurovision 2023. Remember that this is a very important international music event that attracts billions of eyes and ears when it is staged. This year it will be staged in Birmingham, and our Western Australian band, Voyager, will be there.

The success of Voyager builds on the success of our contemporary music fund policy, which, of course, was a 2017 initiative. Over \$6 million has been contributed to supporting the contemporary music industry in Western Australia, and Voyager is one very good example of that investment. Be under no illusion of how important the music industry is to Australia in terms of commitment and contribution to the economy. It is a huge contributor to the economy. I also want to highlight, in the member's question, further successes.

One of the things that demonstrates success when we invest money in the contemporary music fund are outcomes like these. We all know that we proudly hosted the AFL grand final in 2021. There was Western Australian talent at the half-time show, who got huge coverage and huge applause for their efforts, and they were supported by the contemporary music fund. The Girls Rock! program, delivered by West Australian Music, received \$70 000 over three years. Girls Rock! is another very positive support program with a focus on young women in the music industry. Safer Venues WA is a grassroots organisation that seeks to improve the standards of inclusivity and safety in Perth's live music spaces and is supported by the contemporary music fund. The Regional Sessions received \$250 000 for a series of workshops and events in regional Western Australia, including Busselton, Albany, Bunbury, Broome, Karratha and Kalgoorlie. The Stomping Ground Festival, which I know the member for Kimberley was very, very excited about and was held late last year, received funds.

Speaking of Western Australian successes in contemporary music, the member for Kingsley also reminded me that three of the 12 *Australian Idol* finalists are from Western Australia. So we send our best wishes to Phoebe Stewart, Angelina Curtis and Sash Seabourne. Where was I? I did not try out this year, but you never know!

Voyager will appear on stage in Birmingham in May 2023 with great support from Tourism WA and the Minister for Tourism, of course. He and I were like absolute groupies down there at Kings Park as we were surrounded by the band members of Voyager. Tourism WA will film their music pitch, which will include

iconic Western Australian sites and backdrops like the pink lake and Nature's Window at Kalbarri National Park. All this means that, in May, when we have the Eurovision Song Contest, our Western Australian band is our entry and that is a magnificent support and entree and promotion of Western Australia, more broadly. Therefore, we will keep on supporting contemporary music in Western Australia. This morning, the bandleader of Voyager highlighted the importance of the industry and the health and wellbeing of the industry. He acknowledged the strong support of the government, particularly through the contemporary music fund. We will all be behind Voyager in May this year as they take on the world in the Eurovision Song Contest, and may they bring it home for Western Australia and for Australia for the third time, I think.

CRIME — CARNARVON

79. **Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Police:**

I refer to the contribution to the Premier's Statement by the Minister for Environment on 15 February 2023 whereby the minister argued that our state does not have a crime problem and claimed that the opposition was exaggerating the problem —

... the opposition has resorted to extreme, overblown, false language to describe what is happening in Western Australia ...

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! Just wait for order, please, member.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

- (1) If the position of the minister's cabinet colleague is correct, why did the Premier, only two days after the no-crime-problem assertions in Parliament, go to Carnarvon to discuss the community's concerns over the level of crime it is experiencing?
- (2) Are people from many other parts of WA expressing genuine concern over the lawlessness and crime waves they are experiencing, or are they all just indulging in extreme, overblown, false language over a non-existent problem?

The SPEAKER: Minister, before I give you the call, I just caution the member that that was a very lengthy question and it actually contained quite a lot of argument. Generally, yes, a little bit of preamble and a little bit of explanation that links to the question is in order, but repetitive argument in the question is not in order.

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

- (1)–(2) Thank you, Speaker. I have to admit that I kind of almost nodded off in the middle and may not have captured everything that the member was getting at, but I noticed "Carnarvon" in there, which offers me the opportunity to respond to endorse and back the Premier's observation that he made yesterday and again today quite powerfully. People in communities who are complaining vociferously about levels of crime may want to consider that when the government responds, the response may not be what they want. It may not be what they expected.

I was in Carnarvon a week before the Minister for Racing and Gaming was there. I spoke with some of the same people. We met with the shire president, community members and the police. I guarantee that the police said to me exactly what they said to the Premier. The liquor accord has been dysfunctional. There has not been a liquor accord in Carnarvon.

Dr D.J. Honey: That is the only problem in Carnarvon, is it?

Mr P. PAPALIA: What drives crime in Carnarvon is undeniably the harmful use of alcohol.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! Member for Cottesloe, you should get the opportunity for a supplementary but if you incessantly interject, I will consider that you have already had it.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Alcohol is behind a lot of the problems. The police brought that to my attention. The Premier referred to the fact that there have been restrictions at the time of funerals. The police made the observation that there is a dramatic drop in crime and presentations at the hospital whenever there is a closure of alcohol because of funerals. That gives the member a lead as to where a response might go.

Police officers in Carnarvon are doing a wonderful job, as they are right around the state. They are doing an incredible job. It is a difficult and challenging environment. They are doing a fantastic job. I wish the member would not undermine their efforts through continually coming in here and suggesting that somehow they are failing.

CRIME — CARNARVON

80. **Dr D.J. HONEY to the Minister for Police:**

I have a supplementary question. Who should we believe about crime—the community that experiences and witnesses the crime or the minister's colleague's questionable assertions?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I do not know what the member is trying to say. It is very difficult to discern.

Ms R. Saffioti: It's a cryptic crossword.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Yes, it is cryptic.

The SPEAKER: The call has been given to the Minister for Police to respond.

Mr P. PAPALIA: That is right. The member would be the winner of the cryptic crossword in *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

I have no idea what the member is getting at. I do know that the police are doing a wonderful job in Carnarvon, as are other agencies trying their hardest. It is really unfair that public servants doing a tough job are consistently undermined by the Liberal Party of Western Australia and the Nationals WA, too, in the region. I do know that there have been some requests from police in Carnarvon specifically around destocking of glass bottles, which, despite claims in the paper, has not been done, and also liquor restrictions. They viewed that as something that would be valuable and assist greatly in tackling some of the challenges they confront. I expect they were heard by a lot of people.

CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

81. Dr K. STRATTON to the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to keep Western Australian children safe. Can the minister update the house on the McGowan Labor government's significant investment in child protection services, including improved support for those who work with vulnerable children and young people?

Ms S.E. WINTON replied:

I thank the member for Nedlands for her question and for her longstanding commitment to child safety. It is absolutely wonderful to have professionals in the field amongst us. Nedlands is very lucky to have the member serving in this Parliament.

The McGowan government is progressing significant work to achieve better outcomes for at-risk children and young people in WA. Amongst our initiatives in 2022, our government provided \$2.3 million to support the establishment of the WA branch of the Australian Centre for Child Protection, known as ACCP-WA. Importantly, the centre conducts research and professional training to safeguard children through better child protection policy and practice. Recently, the government provided a further \$100 000 to ACCP-WA for specialised child trauma training programs. This funding will support 450 scholarship opportunities in 2023 for Western Australians working with children and young people with complex trauma. These amazing workers include child protection practitioners and other professionals who work with children and young people impacted by trauma, such as our police and healthcare workers. A total of 290 scholarships are currently open for applicants across two programs—first, a specially designed course on understanding childhood trauma; and, second, the updated and specially designed course on assessing childhood trauma. These training programs help WA practitioners better understand, respond, assess and, importantly, treat children and young people affected by abuse and abuse-related trauma.

Further scholarships will become available throughout the rest of the year. The scholarships reflect the McGowan government's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, especially the need for a high-quality workforce to provide evidence-based therapeutic services for abuse-related trauma. No child should ever have to suffer trauma or abuse, but that is what our child protection workforce face and respond to in their work every single day. These important opportunities for professional development will help them to better support and respond to the needs of children and young people.

Since 2017, we have also invested over \$136 million into early intervention in child protection, supporting families to keep their children safely at home or reunifying families when it is safe to do so. That includes \$23.9 million in the last budget to implement and expand the early intervention of family support services. Our investment in WA's child protection system and our support for its dedicated workers demonstrates the McGowan government's ongoing commitment to protecting vulnerable children and keeping families safe. Our child protection system in WA is underpinned by an amazing high-quality dedicated workforce. It has been my privilege to meet with them in Mirrabooka, in Joondalup—for a short while but I will be back there longer—Geraldton, Derby, Broome and Fitzroy Crossing. I look forward to continuing to advocate for them and make announcements because the McGowan government knows the important work that they do and the specialised skills that they need to work with our most vulnerable children.

BANKSIA HILL DETENTION CENTRE — PREMIER'S MEETING

82. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Community Services:

I refer to the 90-minute crisis meeting held last November to discuss Banksia Hill and the minister's recent ascent to cabinet.

(1) Given there were no minutes or public outcomes, has the minister been briefed on the discussion held?

(2) What action has the minister's department taken since the discussion was held under her predecessor?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please! I did mean to say before I gave the member the call that that would be the last question, just so everybody knows.

Ms S.E. WINTON replied:

(1)–(2) The state government understands the dual importance of community safety as well as breaking the cycle of crime for our young people. The challenges involving juvenile justice are complex, and easy answers do not exist. The Department of Communities works really hard to care for and support young people and deter them from involvement in the criminal justice system. If they do commit serious crimes and end up in Banksia Hill, a multimillion-dollar strategy is in place to address the challenges we face as a community. As the Minister for Corrective Services has outlined multiple times in this place, this includes infrastructure upgrades, expanded mental health and support programs, and staff attraction and retention initiatives. I can tell the member that the Department of Communities also funds a co-located senior child protection worker at Banksia Hill to provide further support to young people involved in the child protection system. This is a strong sign of the government's commitment to delivering good outcomes for the youth in Banksia Hill.

BANKSIA HILL DETENTION CENTRE — PREMIER'S MEETING

83. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Community Services:

I have a supplementary question. Will the minister table the incoming brief from her department that pertains to this meeting —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! It is for the opposition to ask a question and it is for the minister to respond. If I could hear the question, I could make some judgement about the question if necessary. As it is, you are drowning out the member.

Ms L. METTAM: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Will the minister table the incoming brief from her department in relation to that meeting to provide some assurance to the community that she is taking this decision seriously?

Ms S.E. WINTON replied:

I assure the member that I take my portfolios very seriously and I very much look forward to the Leader of the Liberal Party providing some contest of ideas and debates in this place in these very important portfolios.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Ms S.E. WINTON: I really look forward to the opportunity to hear some solutions that the member might have in what are challenging portfolios. I am up for it, so bring it on.

In regard to the member's question, can I say this: I was not at the meeting, so the member might need to direct her question to someone who was.

CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FUND

Question without Notice 78 — Correction of Answer

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Culture and the Arts) [2.51 pm]: I rise under standing order 82A. In answer to the member for Joondalup's question, I said that the Eurovision Song Contest is being held in Birmingham. That is not correct. It is in Liverpool.

The SPEAKER: Liverpool—yes, I knew that! Members, that concludes question time.

LAND AND PUBLIC WORKS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.51 pm]: It gives me great pleasure today to talk on the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. Just before I start, I firstly pass on my best wishes to our firefighters, all our people down in the likes of Ravensthorpe, Esperance, Munglinup and the surrounding areas, because I know they had some big fires there last night caused by lightning through that strip. Certainly to all the landholders, community members, firefighters and others involved, I pass on my best wishes.

I rise to confirm that the opposition will not oppose this bill. We will obviously have many questions on the way through, but we certainly will not oppose it. The bill has actually been long touted. I know from speaking to former Minister for Lands Hon Terry Redman that he certainly worked on this legislation in that role. Of course, the work

flowed on under Hon Ben Wyatt and Hon Tony Buti, now the Minister for Education but the former Minister for Lands. Now we have our new Minister for Lands, John Carey, taking it through. I think we have seen a number of ministers with carriage of the legislation, but I think that all of them have worked in a genuine way to progress what is a pretty important bill to this state.

Certainly, stakeholder feedback has been mixed. I note from speeches today that many of the government members are very much focused on climate change and methodologies to improve climate change targets. The member for Kingsley spoke about solar and wind. Obviously, wind is generally fine in the coastal strips, but I can assure the member that there are many places inland covering thousands and thousands or millions of hectares in which there are long periods with no wind. The member for Kimberley made an excellent contribution this afternoon. She talked about the cultural benefits for Aboriginal people and the potential tourism benefits. I thought her example of El Questro was very good. I think there will be many cultural and tourism benefits as this progresses. I certainly appreciated that contribution. Of course, the member for Cockburn spoke with his always balanced approach and the member for Bateman also reiterated the climate change scenario.

With my agricultural background, I stand on behalf of our pastoralists. I did not actually hear much mention of our pastoralists amongst those previous contributions. From my perspective, I would like to lay out not only a few things that our pastoralists will be up against, but also some of the things they will benefit from. As I said, we will not oppose this legislation, but we will be asking questions along the way. I will certainly take that opportunity at the consideration in detail stage, and I will probably raise a few questions for the minister during my contribution.

Most of our pastoralists appear to relish the opportunity to get involved in the renewable energy market. The new form of leasehold will provide for more flexible use of crown land, including for hydrogen, solar and wind power; carbon farming; as I said, tourism and Aboriginal land management; grazing livestock; and horticulture.

First of all, I would like to refer to an article in the *Farm Weekly* of Thursday, 20 October 2022. It refers to Tim Shackleton, who is the chairman of the Pastoral Lands Board and a former colleague of mine when he was the chair of the Wheatbelt Development Commission. Tim Shackleton is a quality person and a quality chairman of the Pastoral Lands Board. It was interesting to see some of the highlights that he pointed out in his address to the Pastoralists and Graziers Association conference were reported in the *Farm Weekly* article written by Bree Swift. She points out that Tim Shackleton highlighted that this is the most significant land tenure reform of the pastoral industry in decades.

The diversification lease is not designed to replace pastoral leases except when the pastoralist agrees to relinquish the lease. There will be an ability to transfer existing permits to the buyer when they sell their lease. Under the new reforms, the Pastoral Lands Board will also have the authority to cancel, suspend, renew or amend a diversification permit. That will be a significant change for pastoralists who are considering undertaking carbon projects. In conjunction with that, it will help to secure bank debt and third-party arrangements for those carbon projects. Also, the new pastoral rent methodology, which is based on CPI, will deliver more predictable and less volatile rental outcomes. I think that is a pretty important element, because it will give that little bit of extra security to those pastoralists who are worried about when their next rent will be reviewed, and a market-based review will be undertaken by the Valuer-General every 10 years, as opposed to the current five-year cycle.

Part of that article is a question-and-answer session, if you like, about some of the questions that pastoralists might have. The first question is —

How much diversification under an existing pastoral lease will make it null and void?

The answer is —

For a diversification lease to be issued over what is an existing pastoral lease, the pastoralist would have to surrender that portion of their pastoral lease.

Before doing that, the minister will ask the PLB whether the remainder of the lease is still viable as a pastoral operation ...

And so on and so forth. The next question is —

You put in an application for a diversification lease—does that guarantee that after you've surrendered your current lease you are going to get that?

The answer is —

We anticipate that people who want to transition to a diversification lease will want to enter into an option to lease with the government while they're tailoring the necessary approvals, such as environmental approval, negotiation of an indigenous land use agreement and so on.

The final question is —

What happens if you take out a diversification lease, and it's not working, and then you want your pastoral lease back?

The answer is —

You can ask for the lease to be surrendered if you don't want to continue with the diversified uses.

...

The minister would likely consider an application by the previous pastoralist as part of that process, but it is not guaranteed ...

We anticipate a lot of the diversification uses will be quite long-term.

I think it is important to point out some questions that are being asked out there by our pastoralists. I think it is my role today to point out some of those concerns. There has been mixed feedback. Certainly, energy security is one of those elements. A key component of this bill is to allow public works and diversification of pastoral leases focusing on hydrogen. As we know, there is still a huge lack of energy security across regional WA. There is no doubt—I think there is general recognition amongst the people of WA—that the current government is making a bit of a mess of the energy situation.

I look at the scenario with Western Power. The member for Moore and I have that grid system running right through our electorates. We look at Northampton, Perenjori, Chapman Valley, Coorow, Irwin and Dongara in the member for Moore's electorate. Then, of course, we go on to Ravensthorpe in my electorate. I mentioned those fires down there, but it is recognised as probably one of the most unreliable power scenarios in the whole of Western Australia. Lake Grace, Wickepin, Dumbleyung, Gnowangerup—the list goes on. That is a concern. Obviously, energy security certainly relates to this in our electorate, but energy security is a real issue for the whole state.

The other element I am very concerned about is land being used for greenwashing, I guess you could say, with carbon credits. The Labor Party introduced a Carbon for Conservation initiative that went nowhere. Now we are seeing prime agricultural and pastoral land being eaten up by mining companies to offset their emissions.

I recently had a scenario, not from a mining company, that is a real concern from a community of mine in Darken in the south west. We have the forestry scenario and the previous minister's announcements about a \$350 million land purchase due to the forestry industry being closed down. We now have a real issue with our farming sector and people in that community worrying about the purchase of this land. They are worried that no-one will actually reside on that land and they will lose the community continuity, if you like. These land grabs are causing people to worry about these sorts of issues. Another concern is the government failing to facilitate fair compensation for landowners. Those are a couple of points I wanted to make. Certainly, when we look at it —

Mr J.N. Carey: Excuse me, sorry, member, can I just put a point?

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Yes, certainly.

Mr J.N. Carey: But if they're purchasing it, that's freehold land.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: That is right.

Mr J.N. Carey: What role does the state have? I mean that is a commercial transaction. I'm not having a go at you, but someone is making a decision to sell that land for commercial gain, and if the mining company buys it to do carbon offsets, why would the state then get involved in that?

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I think the minister makes a good point. I am just trying to point out some of the concerns that are flowing through our communities. The minister is right—that is freehold land—but I think the minister needs to be aware of the feeling out there in our communities given the scenario that has played out recently, whereby the former forestry minister basically closed down that industry, and just some of the flow-on effects from this particular package that is coming along. Obviously, that does not really relate to this, because we are talking about leasehold and crown land.

I refer to an article from Peter de Kruijff from 20 November 2021, when some of the initial announcements were made. There are a couple of good paragraphs in here that certainly point out some of the changes. It reads —

Under the changes, proponents would be able to apply to the state for a 'diversification' lease over unallocated Crown land but would still need an Indigenous Land Use agreement if there was native title over the area.

Similarly, pastoralists could apply to undertake a more diverse range of activities outside of livestock on their leaseholds. Pastoralists would have to agree to surrender the area they were not running cattle, however, and negotiate an ILUA for any new diversification leases.

The question is: how will that work, and how will it work if they get, say, four different uses within that one lease?

The next paragraph here, which the minister might want to take note of, reads —

There would also be non-exclusive tenure options for conservation organisations and native titleholders wanting to undertake economic development activities like cultural tourism.

At some stage, I would like an explanation of how that will work. How does a non-exclusive tenure option work? I will talk about the challenges a bit later.

Mr J.N. Carey: Member, remembering there are also diversification permits, which are an alternative choice for pastoral leases. We are not forcing anyone to do a diversification lease.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Absolutely. I understand that, minister.

There are a couple of other interesting comments in this article. Conservation Council WA policy and legal director, Piers Versteegen, said —

“Currently, pastoral leases have to maintain a certain stocking rate and are not easily able to pursue other opportunities like renewable energy, carbon farming or conservation, even though they may be more sustainable and more profitable,” he said.

He went on to say —

“WA also has great potential for large-scale renewable energy projects, however potential conflicts between these projects and environment and conservation will have to be closely managed.”

I think we would all agree with that.

I will not make my contribution too long today because I know other speakers want to make a contribution, but I have some questions resulting from the minister’s second reading speech. The minister talked about some of the acts that will have to be modernised and altered, such as the Public Works Act, the Mining Act 1978 and the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967. It would be nice to have an explanation of the minister’s program and how he sees the modernisation of those various acts under this legislation playing out. Also, in his second reading speech, the minister pointed out that voluntary land management accreditation systems would be created jointly between industry and government. The bill will also introduce an ability for the Minister for Lands to approve such systems under which individual pastoral lessees may choose to obtain certification in order to better demonstrate the environmental sustainability of their business. I would like an explanation of how that would work in practical terms. What will be the voluntary land management accreditation system?

As the minister said, a very good element of the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 is that it will include an ability for the Pastoral Lands Board to renew an expiring permit that has been previously issued and transfer an existing permit to an incoming pastoral lessee upon the transfer of the underlying pastoral lease. That is a sensible inclusion. Also, the bill will allow for specific regulations to protect the confidentiality of information disclosed under these new arrangements. That is also certainly a good element. I applaud those.

One of the questions I will bring up in consideration in detail is: what kinds of operations will now be allowed on pastoral lands and crown land that would otherwise not have been possible? That is one I am interested in. Another question from my perspective is about local governments; they need to be consulted. How does the minister plan to consult with them? Will the local Aboriginal cultural heritage services be consulted by the minister or the Pastoral Lands Board, or will it be up to the local government to consult them? There are always concerns about local government. This government seems to have an ability at different times to override and bypass local government et cetera. Given that the Minister for Lands also has the role of Minister for Local Government, I am curious about how he plans to interact with local government and how much notice he will take of local governments, because we are seeing a pattern develop in which local governments are being bypassed.

Another concern from pastoralists’ and my perspective is about when it is judged that a pastoral lease might be unviable. In a scenario in which a pastoralist has a particular stocking rate and there is a diversification lease with three or four other uses, will the pastoralist still be required to maintain the property, limit fire risks and all those things, even if the pastoralist is covering only a certain percentage of the land leased? Where will the liability fall for fire control and other elements? Will it be spread between the three or four different sublessees on the diversification lease or will it all fall back on the head leaseholder or lessee? Will pastoral lessees be notified and given the chance to rectify any failure to meet any environmental or conservation requirements?

One other element I will ask about in consideration in detail is: how much of a bill shock will pastoral lessees receive when the CPI determination comes into effect? That has been discussed as an element of this bill.

They are some of the questions from my perspective. As I pointed out, local governments have concerns about management orders. Local governments expressed concerns about that in the various stakeholder submissions and so forth. The Aboriginal land councils have concerns about land grabs. The Pastoralists and Graziers Association is not opposed to changes, although there is disquiet in the pastoral industry.

I will be running through this much more closely in consideration in detail, but, in closing, the biggest thing that concerns me is the complexity. For someone running a cattle station on a normal pastoral lease, it will be great to have the opportunity to take up a diversification lease, but my question is: how will the government support that pastoralist? The complexity of Indigenous land use agreements and sublease agreements means that there will be so many different angles to cover that I expect a pastoral leaseholder would have to hire a lawyer for the next five

to 10 years to grind their way through all those complexities. That is probably my biggest concern. Where will the support be? Will the government supply something like the Small Business Development Corporation or something of that configuration to assist our pastoral industry, because some of the expenses in negotiation will be quite heavy? Obviously, there will be an opportunity to make more income from a lease, but there will be expenses involved. The other night, I was talking to the president of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association at the CBH Group AGM, and he was expressing some of these concerns to me. How will these commercial negotiations take place? Where will the support from the government be? Will it be too expensive and force pastoralists to continue on their merry way as they do now? These are some of the questions that I will be asking.

I am also curious about what the budget will be for the administration and staff to cover 93 per cent of the state, which is what we are really talking about. I am curious about whether the minister will put in any more resources. Will he talk to the Premier; Treasurer about putting more resources into the department to help? What does the minister perceive the time frames will be for these diversification leases, after the legislation goes through? How does the minister see it playing out in a practical, hands-on sense?

I will wrap it up there, Deputy Speaker, but they are some of the questions that I will raise during consideration in detail. I expect that will probably be tomorrow. I take into account the contributions of previous speakers. My contribution was focused on the pastoral industry and how we help it. It is an opportunity, for sure, but how will we give the pastoral industry backup and support, and make sure that it is not hung out to dry, I suppose one could say? Let us make the most of the opportunity and, certainly, the opposition will not be opposing the bill.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [3.18 pm]: I also rise to make a contribution to this debate. It is interesting to hear members on the other side talk about the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. We have heard the member for Kingsley and other members talk about the area of renewables and how important renewables are to the state. I have no doubt whatsoever that that is true; renewables will be an important part of our economy going forward. I might say that, as someone who is a supporter of that transition, there is undue optimism—I think that is the correct phrase—about the pace at which the significant percentage changes can be made in transferring directly to renewables. Nevertheless, it is a laudable cause, and some of the changes in this bill will go towards helping that transition.

One concern I have with the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 is its sheer complexity. We are progressively seeing more of these omnibus bills from this government. This bill covers six different acts. As a member of an opposition with limited resources, I can say that giving this bill the scrutiny it requires in the time we have available is difficult. I know that my colleagues in the other place will certainly be taking some extra time to go through and try to flesh out the various areas of this bill.

One area that causes me great concern—it was reinforced in spades today by the Premier's announcement—is the potential for the Minister for Lands to have arbitrary decision-making powers over managed reserves. Why do I say that? It is interesting. I talk to the development community, which, I might say, by and large does not want any government involvement in its planning decisions. Many in the development community would prefer to do whatever they want to do, make their profit and leave. There are good developers who have more genuine concerns about their communities, but there are too many developers who are concerned only about their profits. One of the reasons we have checks and balances through acts of Parliament and regulations is so that we can make sure that the concerns of communities about planning changes are taken into account.

This will be the third piece of legislation that, I believe, will substantially contribute to removing communities' ability to have input into planning decisions. We had the changes to the Planning and Development Act and then the so-called COVID changes. What did we hear from the Premier today? He was out there boasting that the government is going to completely gut our ordered planning framework by setting up three state development assessment units to deal with planning matters across the whole state. Just imagine that, members. We hear that these are important developments, but, basically, it means that any high-rise development in the state or any reasonably sized development in the regions will go to the SDAUs, and the communities will be completely bypassed. The Premier boasted about these changes today. This legislation will concentrate powers relating to that in the hands of the minister.

We also had changes to the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act 2006. I genuinely believe that the majority of government members sitting in this place do not understand anything about the bills that their caucus is agreeing to. I do not believe that the great majority of them have any understanding of what these bills actually contain. Do members know what the changes to the Swan and Canning Rivers Management Act mean? It means for members who have electorates that border the Swan or Canning Rivers that the Minister for Lands, of his own volition, will be able to excise portions that fall under the Swan and Canning development control areas. He can simply excise an area and say, "That's not part of that now."

We have a fair idea about what this relates to; it likely relates to the Tawarri Hot Springs decision in Nedlands. That could happen to the any of the river electorates. Members opposite might be sitting back and feeling satisfied that the western suburbs is getting hammered with utterly disgraceful, inappropriate development in residential areas. Some members think that is funny and that it is a bit of a joke, but it will apply to all members; they will all

have these changes applied. The McGowan Labor government has effectively dismantled ordered planning in this state. It has completely removed the ability of local communities to have an impact on planning decisions on developments of any significance in their areas.

Mr S.A. Millman interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I might say that the people of Mount Lawley are not very happy about this either, member.

Mr S.A. Millman: You wouldn't have any idea! Your opposition has no idea about the legislation that is being brought before the Parliament, which is exactly why —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr S.A. Millman: He invited the interjection, Mr Deputy Speaker.

Point of Order

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I was just enjoying listening to the member for Cottesloe in peace and quiet. Can the Deputy Speaker bring the member for Mount Lawley back under control, please?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member. There is no point of order. Yes, the member for Cottesloe did seek the interjection and responded to it. If you want to avoid it, direct your comments through the chair.

Debate Resumed

Dr D.J. HONEY: Thank you very much, Deputy Speaker. Can I say, I did not expect that vitriolic attack. It is clearly a sore point.

Mr S.A. Millman interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mount Lawley!

Dr D.J. HONEY: They have no idea. I would say that the majority of members here have no idea what has happened with the planning changes in the state of Western Australia. Their local councils have now been effectively removed from major planning decisions—completely removed.

Mr S.A. Millman interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Mount Lawley!

Dr D.J. HONEY: They have been completely removed from those planning decisions. It is an absolute disgrace and members opposite will pay the price because they will increasingly see that any areas on a waterway and any areas that have a view or are situated across from a park, a school or any open area will be subject to completely inappropriate developments going ahead. As I said, local planning schemes will be thrown out the window; they do not matter anymore. In my electorate of Cottesloe there is a local planning scheme that is current and was approved by the government, but we are now having decisions being made about Marine Parade that go completely outside the framework of that local planning scheme. That is this government's doing.

Members, mark my words: we are going to see this happening in every electorate. Every area that has a view or is situated by the river or the ocean will now come under this disgraceful destruction of —

Mr P.J. Rundle: Mandurah's gone!

Dr D.J. HONEY: Well, that will apply there. Anyone who has a bright idea that they can make a quick buck by ruining the amenity of an area —

Mr J.N. Carey: Member for Cottesloe, this is a genuine interjection. As you will be aware, for A-class reserves, that will have to go before Parliament. I note that the Tawarri Hot Springs issue you raised was a case in point.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Thanks very much, minister; I appreciate that. I know the minister actually has a genuine passion for good planning, so it must break his heart to see what is happening to the City of Perth at the moment.

The topic I was warming to earlier is that I hear from some developers that Labor “gets” business. I will tell members what Labor gets: it gets developer donations; boy, does it get developer donations! In parallel, the government has progressively gutted ordered planning and completely removed communities from planning decisions in their areas. I am sure that the member for Nedlands must get some solicitations in relation to this. As this progressively affects members' electorates, they should reflect on what I have said, because they have sat back and let this happen.

I return to the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. As I pointed out earlier, members opposite have made much of the issue of diversification leases as opposed to diversification permits. A while ago, before this came about, we went through an unseemly process in which section 91 was being used. Hon Alannah MacTiernan, in whatever guise she was working under at the time—Minister for Hydrogen Industry, or whatever it was—had a completely non-transparent process occurring with land being allocated to renewable energy projects. It was really just a land grab. I am a keen supporter of renewables, and I appreciate that any renewables project is going to require some acreage of land. There has to be an ordered process for allocating that land, but that is not what we saw.

My major concern with what was occurring was that people were being allocated land. It was very unclear to me that the people who were being allocated land had the capacity to develop renewables projects. If a proponent has capacity and means and a proven record, the government will assess that, but it will not pick a winner every time. However, if land speculators are allowed to come in and take these leases and then bank that land and sell it to the highest bidder, that will undermine the renewables strategy of the state government—a strategy that all of us in this place support. I support that transition, even if there is far too much optimism about the pace that it can occur at. That is valuable.

There are some issues with the bill, particularly the concentration of powers in ministerial hands. Why is it a problem? A government might sit back and think, “We just want to get on and get things done; we’re sick of people who hold things up. We want to get things done quickly.” That is a natural motivation or emotion in government, and that is why we have checks and balances. That is why ministers have checks and balances. That is why we formalise that if something is going to affect the environment, the minister has to consult and get feedback from another minister in a relevant area. That is why we involve local councils and others in decisions. It is to give a check and balance. It is to slow things down. The first decision that is made is often not the best decision. Getting thinking time allows ideas to be tested. The other thing is that if there is too much power in an individual minister’s hands—I make no reflection on current ministers in relation to this—an environment can be built in which corruption can occur, because a developer would simply have to curry favour with an individual minister to get their project fast-tracked and approved or to get access to land. That is always a risk. As I say, I make no reflection on the minister in charge of this bill or other current ministers, but we know that that has been a problem in the past. It will make it a greater risk in the future if we take the checks and balances out of this system.

The current law requires the minister to obtain the consent of a relevant management body in order to exercise power over a managed reserve. I would appreciate the minister’s feedback on some examples of managed reserves, because in the time that I had, I could not get a clear answer on this. I will ask the minister a specific question: is the Indiana site at Cottesloe a managed reserve? Other reserves are allocated and managed by councils, so I would like some clarity from the minister on what are managed reserves. There are some other issues with the bill, but that is the part that concerns me the most. I will go through this in a little bit of detail in the time that I have because there will be a significant change in relation to that. It would also be good to know why that needs to be the case. I have not heard a substantive argument. I am concerned that we will end up with individual ministers being pressured to make decisions. Despite the best intentions of a minister, if they are getting pressure from a number of areas, they may make decisions when there has not been proper involvement or, if you like, a proper veto by the local community. Proposed section 46A, “Consultation with management body”, goes through that. Clause 23 will amend section 50 of the act, which provides that any interest in or caveat existing on land will continue even if a management order is revoked by the minister. Section 50(2) of the act will be amended so that it states —

In the absence of agreement or non-compliance referred to in subsection (1), the Minister may by order revoke a management order if the Minister considers that the revocation is —

(a) in the public interest ...

Effectively, it means that the minister could do that for any reason, although it is couched in other words. It refers to the public interest. “Public interest” is a very broad term. We have heard in this place that the public interest is apparently building high-rise units in the western suburbs for millionaires or their kids. I struggle with that one.

Section 50 will also be amended to make it simpler to get rid of interests in or caveats on land. It will state —

- (3) Despite the revocation of a management order under subsection (1) or (2), an interest in, or caveat in respect of, the reserve to which the management order applied continues, subject to this Act, if the order revoking the management order specifies that the interest or caveat continues.
- (4) An interest in, or caveat in respect of, a reserve that is not continued under subsection (3) is extinguished on registration of the order revoking the management order.

It appears that this will be a significant change to the law; that is, existing caveats or interests that are registered on a piece of land will be able to be extinguished by the minister’s decision. That concerns me.

[Member’s time extended.]

Dr D.J. HONEY: We know that in a lot of cases, those caveats or registered interests are designed to protect a concern in the local community. It may be an impact on a neighbour or it may be an impact on an industry. We can see that that will be a significant change. Why is it necessary? What is the problem that will be solved, because it seems that it will put a significant power in the hands of the minister?

I can only do parts of this. Part 6A of the bill, which is the general part on diversification leases, seeks to insert proposed section 92A. A couple of members have spoken about renewables. A diversification lease could be for any purpose. I would be intrigued to know whether there will be a limit to that purpose, because a diversification purpose could be completely inconsistent with an ongoing pastoral lease. For example, other than road access and the like, windmills are very compatible with a pastoral operation on an existing lease. However, any members who

are familiar with solar panels will know that their performance is very susceptible to dust. If cattle mill around solar panels, that will have a high risk of putting dust on them and reducing their capacity. I suspect that people who have solar panels will not want cattle going near them. I do not know whether it will be a consequence of this, but my great concern with the push to get renewables on these leases is that the people who will be installing these facilities will not want concurrent use of the land; they will want to use the land for another purpose, so they will buy the land themselves. There are about two million cattle in the state. I could not find the figure quickly, but I suspect that probably half the cattle are on pastoral leases in the north of the state. I know that Yougawalla station has 130 000 cattle. If I multiply that, if it is not half the cattle in the state, it must be close to half the cattle in the state, that are there. If we are not careful in this whole transition, there is a very high risk that we will completely eliminate the cattle industry on pastoral leases in the north of the state, particularly those leases in areas that have good wind and good catchment.

It is not just about renewables; it is about any particular use. I think reasonable thought has gone into this provision on the non-exclusive possession of land. Perhaps the minister could outline the transparency of that process. I am very concerned with what has been happening to date. It has been a great concern to me that people have been obtaining a modification of a diversification permit, but it has not been clear that the people obtaining those permits were going to develop a project; it was more that they were going to be intermediaries. Why am I concerned about that? Renewables projects are not enormously profitable, and if an intermediary comes in and then effectively sells an interest that it has gained in land to a proponent, it will make those renewable projects less viable—less profitable. As I have said a couple of times, I applaud the government for encouraging the industry, but we need to make sure that projects can be done at reasonable cost. Otherwise, we will have intermediaries that do nothing reaping the profits and potentially making projects unviable. It is a good development but I would like to know the extent of those activities.

I imagine some activities could be incompatible. The explanatory memorandum mentions structures built in buffer zones around mines under a diversification lease. Members who know my history would know I am pretty interested in buffer zones around industrial and mining operations. I presume there will be some capacity to make sure that we do not have activity in those buffer zones that compromise the ability of the mine to operate. I do not mean by physically excluding the mines—I know that the changes in this bill will make sure that mining activity can occur—but sometimes activities may be sensitive to noise, vibration, dust and the like and then, all of a sudden, a conflict is set up between a new business, or a new activity, and the existing mining activity. I think all members of this place know that the considerably good and privileged lifestyle that most people in this state enjoy is largely underpinned by having a mining industry that can get on with its work.

I am interested for the minister to explain why the nomination of members for Pastoral Lands Board membership will be given to other ministers. For example, members will be effectively nominated, or recommended, by the Minister for Environment and the Aboriginal member will be nominated by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. In the second case, I do not share this concern. But I am concerned that nomination of a member by the Minister for Environment runs the risk that we end up with Pastoral Lands Board members who are on the board for other reasons. Previously, at least three members had to have pastoral experience. Why? It was because they could provide an experienced view on the decisions being made. All of a sudden, at the risk of sounding pejorative, we could have members on that board who are green warriors or against live meat export or animal husbandry practices and the like, and we could end up with conflict. I think the existing arrangement whereby the minister chooses those positions is sensible. It might not be a fatal flaw in the bill as long as the people coming into those roles recognise that the pastoral industry is very important to our state because it feeds people not only in Western Australia, but across Australia, and, as members would know, products from cattle in that region are exported all over the world.

There are some changes to the duties of Pastoral Lands Board members in relation to matters of confidentiality. Section 99 of the act states —

- (3) A member must not disclose any information acquired by virtue of the exercise or performance of any function under this Act unless the disclosure is made in connection with the carrying out of this Act or under a legal duty.
- (4) A member must not make use of any information acquired by virtue of the exercise or performance of his or her functions to gain, directly or indirectly, an improper advantage for himself or herself or to cause detriment to any person.

The explanatory memorandum says that that will be dealt with by other changes. But the act does not appear to be anywhere near as explicit in what it excludes members from being able to disclose. That is a concern because, obviously, the confidentiality of board matters is very important.

I will note a couple of other details. Pastoral leases were allocated for 99 years during the early part of the twentieth century. The previous Liberal–National government brought in some changes. I know some of my colleagues in retrospect think that they were very unfortunate changes. There was a concern in the department that most leases would fall due at the same time. To somehow even out the renewal of leases, what was effectively a lottery was used to allocate shorter periods of time—whether it was 10, 20 or 30 years or whatever. Some of the pastoral leaseholders

suddenly had very short leases, which meant they did not, or could not, make investments in the land because they were not certain the lease would be continued. I welcome the government increasing that time period. It is worthwhile. The 50-year time line is an improvement for some stations, but a longer period might be more appropriate.

Proposed section 112A, “Effect on rent if reduction in stock numbers”, on page 50 of the bill goes to the point that effectively decisions will be made to enforce maximum stock numbers. In relation to that, if there is a determination—I assume because of the way the land responds to stocking numbers—that a reduction in stock numbers is needed, will there be a process for compensation? I note that there will be a reduction in the lease, but, otherwise, pastoralists might need to get rid of a large number of cattle. Will the pastoralist be compensated in any other way if that happens? Again, this is not a major or fatal issue with the bill, but surely the focus should be, as it has been in the past, on whether the land is being managed properly. If there was overstocking and the fauna and flora was being irreparably damaged, the stock numbers could be reduced in any case. That is a minor detail.

I think there will have to be significant review of the bill in the other place. This is a complex bill and it will make changes. As indicated by the opposition not opposing the bill, there are some positive aspects of this bill, but I am concerned that if my worst fears about managed reserves are realised, we could see ad hoc planning decisions made whereby public reserve land is developed for the benefit of developers but will harm the interests of communities.

DR K. STRATTON (Nedlands) [3.48 pm]: I rise to speak in support of the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. I wish to focus my comments on a particular aspect of the bill; namely, that this bill will clarify that consent is not required for a reserve management body in certain circumstances, particularly when it is not appropriate that a management body veto a development that is required for a public work or a public interest. When actions are subject to parliamentary scrutiny, it is unnecessary to have a significant additional process in place for the management body to consent to a proposal when it will be laid before both houses of Parliament regardless.

The requirement for management body consent will be removed by this amendment bill and replaced with a consultation process. This will ensure that the reserve amendment can proceed and the management body cannot override that process, while the consultation process will ensure that concerns and interests can also be heard and considered.

The new powers to be created by this amendment will prevent management bodies from denying critical state infrastructure projects when they already have been or will be subject to parliamentary scrutiny. Further, the Public Works Act 1902 will be updated to reflect more modern terms and delete outdated concepts. The definition of “public work” as outlined in the original act has been falling behind modern practice and contains works that are no longer relevant to today’s modern society—for example, removing terms such as “mechanics’ or miners’ institutes” and updating terms such as “agricultural halls” to “community facilities”, and “places for bathing” to “recreational or sporting grounds or facilities”. This is a great opportunity to update old legislation and provide more clarity for businesses, pastoralists and the broader society on how we prioritise the use of our valuable land assets. New terms include cultural, sporting, tourism and community facilities, such as theatres, stadiums and interpretive centres; community residential facilities, such as aged-care facilities and refuges; and healthcare facilities, including hospices.

It is this last example of a hospice that demonstrates both the need for the changes in the terms used in the Public Works Act and the amendment regarding consent from reserve management bodies. This regards a development happening in my local community—a development that has already shown the compassion and inclusivity of the great majority of residents in Nedlands. The Perth children’s hospice, which will be the first of its kind in Western Australia, is essential for not just my local community but also the entire state of Western Australia. The Perth children’s hospice is a critical piece of state infrastructure that will support children at the end of their life journey. The hospice will provide services in four key areas. Firstly, the hospice will care for children who have a life-limiting diagnosis with little prospect of being well and who require 24/7 care. The hospice will assume care of these children for a period of time, allowing their families much-needed respite. Secondly, the hospice will provide end-of-life care for children, with the safety net of clinical care in the comfort of a highly respectful and supported homelike environment. Thirdly, the hospice will provide support to the families of these children. Lastly, it will provide statewide bereavement services for families following the death of a child. The location of the hospice in Swanbourne is important and based on best practice models of care that have been well researched and are evidence-based. The planned site for the hospice is surrounded by nature, close to the ocean and near enough to Perth Children’s Hospital. Design principles will ensure that there is an abundance of natural light to provide a sense of connection to nature and outdoor spaces. This location will mean that families have access to nature for their own wellbeing and respite.

I want to be clear that my local community is in full support of the hospice, and I want to share what some of them have said about it. It is a hospice that we will welcome. We will also welcome the families who will go through what we can only imagine must be the very worst of times. As I have said before, I invited the residents of Nedlands to sign an open letter in support of the hospice. One resident wrote —

As a resident of Nedlands and a health consumer representative I know how important supportive care and the natural environment is. Through my own cancer treatment it the Ocean that proved the best medicine

no money could buy. Access to living in proximity to the ocean must be shared with those who need it most. We are privileged to live where we do let's share it with those children and their families at their time of need. Exclusion is a cancer that will corrode our community and environment not preserve it. Let the Hospice go ahead.

Another resident wrote —

I have donated to the PCH foundation and agree that this is an excellent site for the hospice ... the site is currently a wasteland and I am looking forward to it being revived and used for such a worthwhile purpose.

Another comment was —

Such a beautiful proposed location for sick children in their final days, weeks and months. Why would anyone deny terminally ill children & their families this location? ... I support the proposed location.

Josh also wrote in support of the location, noting —

I myself discovered the exact site where the Hospice is proposed to be built during the Covid lockdowns—I was looking for somewhere close and uncrowded to take my young children for exercise. As soon as I saw this proposal I knew the site was perfect! Natural, secluded, with fresh air and greenery. It won't bother anyone ... once its there. The incredibly unfortunate children and their families who will reside there will be lucky in this small way to have such a beautiful place to spend precious moments together.

We are a wealthy community in so many ways and this site is just one of the many treasures we have. Let us share it with those who are suffering, it is such a small thing to ask of our community.

In a similar vein, a resident wrote —

Nobody ever wants to be in the position of having to saying goodbye to a child with a terminal diagnosis. The least we can do as a community is to provide a place of comfort, beauty and care so the families can make this saddest of times a special time.

Steven, who had lost a child to cancer a decade earlier, wrote —

Fantastic project. Long overdue for those children and their families facing the hardest of challenges. The unused and unremediated old bowling club site in Swanbourne is the perfect spot to create this fantastic new facility. Shame on the unrepresentative minority who oppose it.

Finally, Grant said —

While the individual and collective issues of some are important ... the needs of the children and families that will use the hospice are far greater.

This comment, to me, gets to the heart of the need for this amendment. There are times when an understanding of the bigger context and bigger plan is required, when an understanding of developments of state significance are required, and when compassionate leadership is required.

I want to turn for a moment to the public good of the children's hospice. There are approximately 2 000 children with life-limiting conditions in Western Australia, and for each of those children, there are numerous family members, including parents, siblings and extended family members, whose own lives will be affected. The important public good of this piece of land is again demonstrated by some of the stories that people have shared with me of their own experiences of illness.

One of those stories is that of my own family—a story that shows the impact of a family's experience of a child with a life-limiting illness, and that the end of a child's life can reverberate across generations. I never had the opportunity to meet my Aunty Gwen; she died of cancer when she was 16 years old. She died on my dad's fourteenth birthday. She was his big sister. They grew up in the wheatbelt, and my grandmother and Gwen would frequently travel to Perth for treatment, including towards the end of her life. Ultimately, the family decided that she would die at home. This frequent travel meant long periods of separation for my grandmother from her other three children, at a time when they needed her, too, as they had their own grief and fear from what was happening to their sister. My dad, who is also a Nedlands resident, has said to me how much this hospice would have benefited his family. It would have meant that they could have been together instead of separated. It would have allowed Grandma a rest and a break among all the travelling. Coming from a farm, being surrounded by nature would have meant that they felt at home.

Another parent wrote to me —

As a family who unfortunately has lost a child to cancer we believe this facility is decades late. Our experience was unimaginable. It would have been a much easier experience for us and in particular —

Their beloved child —

... to have had a place of comfort rather than a hospital. I hope this facility gets the support it deserves.

Mark has also had a lived experience. He wrote —

As a parent who has a young daughter in remission from leukemia and has spent a lot of time at PCH. This is a beautiful thing for parents and their children. The kids spend enough time in a hospital environment, looking out the window of their room to see other hospital buildings. Let them not see this in their last moments.

Of course, one does not need personal experience to understand why a children's hospice is an important public use of land and amenities. It takes compassion and empathy to understand this. As Arash said —

I cannot honestly think of a purpose more worthy of our support than that which has been proposed. Shame on those who for their own selfish reasons stand in the way of those needing our support.

As a local resident myself, having grown up in Nedlands and now raising my children there, I echo another resident's sentiments —

I would be proud to have the hospice in my 'backyard'—providing a sanctuary for children and families during a terrible time in their lives.

I will finish with a comment from Felicity —

I can't even begin to understand what it must be like to lose a child. I stand with you as I also want parents, children and staff to know that we welcome them with kindness and compassion.

The amendments before us are about much more than land administration. Through these changes, we will be able to address public need; create land uses that will allow us to achieve goals and visions related to climate action, as my colleagues have outlined; create fairer systems of land use; and, as in the case of a hospice, demonstrate that we are, indeed, a caring and compassionate community. I am pleased to commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

CRIME

Motion

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition) [4.00 pm]: I move —

That the house condemns the McGowan Labor government for its gross neglect of crucial services that has allowed crime to run rampant and exposed communities to unprecedented levels of criminality.

As we know, crime is well and truly out of control right across regional Western Australia. This was the subject of a matter of public interest yesterday that was roundly argued by us. Of course, the government did very little to convince the Western Australian community that it was taking the issue of crime seriously. We know that the crime situation is spiralling out of control. We know that communities do not feel safe. We know that police are leaving in droves, so much so that the Minister for Police has now resorted to poaching police from the United Kingdom and Ireland to make up for the fact that he cannot recruit enough officers here to keep the force at full strength. It is a complete admission on his part of a failure to attract Western Australians into the police force. He denies a problem with morale and resignation levels, yet the facts speak for themselves. Our population cannot actually replace our police force.

We know that violent crime has increased by 17 per cent since the Labor government came to office. Family violence is 34 per cent above the five-year average. We know that Banksia Hill Detention Centre and the associated mismanagement of the youth justice system is causing an immense number of problems in not only that centre, but also the community. It has been reported that children in the Kimberley are not concerned about being sent to Banksia Hill. They do not see it as a deterrent. The Premier seeks to blame others for all the woes that are occurring in regional Western Australia, whether that be local communities, local members or parents. I think that everybody in this house would accept that, generally, the parents of a child are responsible for their behaviour and for ensuring that their children are nurtured, guided and kept safe. But it is a well-established fact and well-established knowledge that within Aboriginal Australia, this is not always the case because of a well-known condition called intergenerational trauma that exists in many Aboriginal communities. It leads to an over-representation of Aboriginal people on welfare and in the justice system. I will quote from an article in the *International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy* that was written by David McCallum from Victoria University. He wrote about what that condition means for Aboriginal people who are affected by it and states —

In the cases experienced by Indigenous peoples, intergenerational trauma is produced and reproduced in the present, as what we might describe as 'war by other means', from the origins of colonising and its effects on later generations through the reproduction of similar traumatic events, many of which are experienced in the contexts of family, health, and everyday living. The effects include those detailed in the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reports down the years—Indigenous incarceration and deaths in custody, child removal, poverty, alcohol abuse, family violence, etc.

At the moment, what we see happening in many regional communities in Western Australia is very much as described by those lines.

We know that it will not be possible to have parents assume responsibility for their children when they are suffering from intergenerational trauma themselves. Very often, the parents are very young and might even be teenagers. We know that a targeted program is required to assist them to break that cycle.

I have asked questions of the Minister for Community Services around the Target 120 program. I have no issue with the need to have programs like Target 120, but I am deeply concerned that nine months after that program was rolled out in towns such as Carnarvon, it has not commenced and there has been no intake of children. We had an announcement that some people were, apparently, being sought, and positions were available, but are those positions being filled? What will happen if we cannot get people into those communities? How will we break the level of distress and cycle of violent crime that we see happening in some communities? How will that be addressed? When we talk to people in communities outside the major regional centres especially, it is clear that they have seen a loss of capacity and leadership in many local government services. They are outsourced from the metropolitan area or from a larger regional centre. Towns like Carnarvon have had key people taken out of the town with the services being provided from Geraldton. This situation is making it very difficult to implement meaningful change and meaningful programs like Target 120 that would represent a major step forward. I have no issue with the need for the program. I am concerned about its rollout and what other solutions might be looked at in the meantime to help to break that cycle of violence, abuse and alcohol and illicit substance use that we see happening in many communities.

There is nothing more stark a reminder of just how bad things have become in some communities across our state than the recent reports of a fencing situation in Halls Creek whereby people are actually putting razor wire around their buildings. I refer to an article titled, “Kimberley Hotel ordered by the Shire of Halls Creek to take down razor wire around pub”. In Perth, when we have a discussion about fencing, it might be about whether the fencing has to be closed or open or made of pickets, super six, Colorbond or what have you. But in Halls Creek the choice now is whether a person puts up razor wire or an electric fence. That is not a normal situation. These people are not putting razor wire around their properties because they like to have ugly and very dangerous fencing. They are now having to remove the razor wire because it is not allowed under the council by-laws and install an electric fence instead. We now see the need for an electric fence around the Kimberley Hotel rather than razor wire. The fence will cover around 70 per cent of the hotel’s boundary. I assume that some areas, perhaps at the front of the hotel where the cars come in, might have a different fence, but the rest of the hotel will be surrounded by an electric fence. I do not know how many volts that electric fence will put out. I assume that is going to have a very bad kick for anybody who comes in contact with it. I do not think that is the issue, but it is a symptom of a problem in a town when someone has to decide whether to have razor wire or an electric fence around their property.

Members in this place have been calling out the government for a very long time on its lack of interest in addressing these regional issues and the rising crime levels. In fact, in this place on 9 September 2021, the former member for North West Central raised a grievance on the issue. A motion was moved in February 2022 that this house condemn the McGowan government for taking only limited action on youth crime gripping our state and for failing to deliver the service WA expects after arrogantly dismissing concerns raised in this place. One year on and here we are in pretty well the same situation. We know that nothing has been done to make real meaningful change because we are here today debating the same issue. We are here today at a time when communities across Western Australia are calling out for assistance and calling out for help.

One of the major changes that has happened in the last year has been the federal election. We know that the Albanese government went in with an undertaking that it would remove the cashless debit card should it be elected. I am looking here at a report from *The Age* of 21 February 2023 —

The Western Australian mayors —

They mistakenly call them mayors, but they are shire presidents from the goldfields region. The article continues —

... goldfields region have called for the return of the controversial cashless debit card in a bid to stop alcohol-fuelled violence harming their communities.

Yesterday the Minister for Police said that the cashless debit card had not been effective in Laverton because people from outside of town could still come into town and use cash. If that is the case, why are the shire presidents of both Leonora and Laverton writing to the Prime Minister to call for millions of dollars in support programs aimed at reducing crime? They are saying —

... the surge in violence was directly attributed to the abolition of the card, saying his communities understood there wouldn’t be an overnight fix.

“We’re not going to just sit here, we’ll start yelling and screaming, jumping up and down because we need an injection of funding now to get programs up and running,” he said.

Mr P. Papalia: Member, you’re misquoting.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is all there. I will put it in *Hansard* later. It continues —

“The community was a safer place —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: Surely the minister can be patient enough until his response. He is going to get an hour.

Mr T. Healy interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms R.S. Stephens): Member for Southern River, I will listen to this in silence.

Dr D.J. HONEY: The minister will have an hour to respond later, and I can barely hear the Leader of the Opposition for his constant interjections.

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order. If members can cease interjecting, we will listen to this last 59 minutes in silence.

Debate Resumed

Mr R.S. LOVE: As I was saying, they are calling for an injection of funds. They are saying directly —

“The community was a safer place because of the cashless debit card.”

Today I asked the Premier whether he would consider injecting funds into the program and whether he had spoken to Anthony Albanese about funding Western Australia in the same way that that \$250 million of funding has been sent to the Northern Territory. What we heard was a nil response. It was not a negative response. It was a nothing response. I do not think I learnt anything about his plans for Western Australia. I do not think we heard anything about what future investments there may be in Western Australia. We know that the mayors, as they call them in this article, including the president of the Laverton shire council, had voiced their concerns about this.

But it is not only the local governments. I will read from a report by Jarrod Lucas of 8 February 2023 titled, “Alcohol restricted in Laverton as Aboriginal elder says pub has become ‘sacred site’”. This Aboriginal elder in Laverton has become so despairing that she thinks her community has replaced their old values, their old customs and their old beliefs with a love of alcohol and are making that their sacred thing. Mrs Scott says —

“The way our mob are going, alcohol has become their sacred thing—alcohol, drugs,” Ms Scott said.

“The Laverton Desert Inn has become their sacred site now.”

Ms Scott’s granddaughter ... said she had a great childhood growing up in Laverton, but her children were experiencing something far different.

“It’s pretty bad ... our kids can’t even go down town without being humbugged or abused by drunks,” she said, looking over at the mess in Skull Creek.

“How would they feel if we went to their community, sat around getting drunk all day and trashed their town?”

These are Aboriginal people from Laverton who are in despair and they are pointing out that their situation is dire. When she says “humbug”, I am sure many people know what that is, but I will explain. Humbugging is basically the practice of going to a person and demanding that they give their cash to that person. One of the benefits of the cashless debit card was that families could not be humbugged. They could not lose their money to demanding relatives, who were often male, and used threats of violence to take money from the family and spend it on alcohol. That is what the cashless debit card was helping to address, and in doing so, it was ensuring that food was being put on the table for the children instead of alcohol on the table for someone who was perhaps not even a resident of that household. That practice is common in Aboriginal communities. That is an Aboriginal elder talking about it there. That is not me. They are her words explaining what has happened.

The minister can deny that the cashless debit card helped in Laverton, but the shire president certainly does not hold his views. The article states that he —

... blames the recent unrest on the end of the federal government’s cashless debit card, which saw a mass exodus from the town in October last year.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am not responding to the Minister for Police. He can talk later, if he likes. The article continues —

Ms Scott has been painting the story of Laverton and the alcohol struggles of its Indigenous people in a traditional Aboriginal artwork.

I certainly feel that if I ever get the opportunity to go to Laverton, I will visit Mrs Scott and look at that artwork and talk to her directly about her experiences because I think, having read her words, that she is a very powerful representative for her region and I think one of those voices—we are talking about voices that must be heard—that government should be listening to instead of dismissing. We can see from the interjections coming from that side that they are not going to be doing very much listening in any form on this matter. We have explained that it is not as simple in the communities as the Premier may think. Parents cannot just take responsibility for their children when the parents themselves have been in some way affected by the trauma of colonisation and the aftereffects of decades of alcohol and other drug use and abuse.

We know that the children who fall into the justice system will inevitably move through other stages of their life affected by that interaction, especially if they go to Banksia Hill. A very high rate of children who go there end up in prison at a later stage of their life. It is something that we should be trying to avoid, if possible. We should be looking at solutions to make sure that those children do not get to that stage and do not have the experience that going to Banksia Hill will bring.

Today in question time, some shocking statistics were revealed of the children who have been moved at 18 years of age to Casuarina Prison. There have been seven attempted suicides in that cohort—seven. That in itself should be a wake-up call to everybody that this is not a situation of dealing with naughty children; we are dealing with people who have been seriously damaged and need an enormous amount of assistance if they are going to get out of that cycle. We need to get back into the communities to make sure that we break that cycle so that other children will not present to the justice system in future. We need to make sure that children are looking to go to school rather than onto the streets, and that they have homes that they can live in safely with food on the table and employment prospects and opportunities going forward. All those things need to be provided for those children who have nothing at the moment.

The Premier and the Minister for Corrective Services have done some polling here, and I think they think that they are on pretty good ground. They have gone out and said, “Do you think that those kids in Banksia Hill should behave? Do you think that they are the problem, and not the system?” The government is playing to the crowd now. It is dog whistling, instead of accepting the responsibility that it is the government of all Western Australian people, including those children.

I think I saw a statistic that over 20 per cent of children who go into Banksia Hill are, in fact, wards of the state. They are the direct responsibility of the state. They do not have parents who have any influence on their lives at this stage; they are actually wards of the state. The Minister for Community Services through her department is perhaps ultimately responsible for their welfare. What sort of direction are they being given if they are in the care of the state and they end up in Banksia Hill? Is that not a failure in itself? Does that not set off an alarm bell somewhere within the minister’s own department?

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Sorry, I just got disturbed by the noise over the back there.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister!

Mr R.S. LOVE: We know that police are leaving the system in droves. We know that they do not believe that the resources directed to the Operation Regional Shield response is a sustainable situation. The police discussed Operation Regional Shield at their conference. I also raised in Parliament that there were concerns from officers about that. The minister said that there were no such concerns.

Mr P. Papalia: Where was that?

Mr R.S. LOVE: In this report of 1 December 2022, we see that, at its conference, the Western Australian Police Union—I know the minister will say something about the changes in the composition of the union, but this is the conference, so this is the rank and file members of the union—actually discussed the sustainability of Operation Regional Shield. The police could not sustain that number of officers being sent into these communities in an emergency response forever. It was an emergency response, not a forever response. Something needs to be done to ensure that we have the services locally to tackle juvenile crime. We know that it is not all about the police; that is the point we are making. It is not all about the police; it is about a whole lot of conditions that exist in the community and in the region, a lack of resources to address many of those conditions, and a lack of effort, coordination and understanding from people like the Minister for Police that there is actually a problem.

The Minister for Police is presiding over a situation of dire circumstance and he refuses to take responsibility. When people highlight the issues, he says that they are denigrating the community, they are denigrating the regions, and they are running down communities. They are doing nothing of the sort. They are actually bringing to his attention the issues that people are suffering and the conditions that communities are experiencing. That was the police union itself calling out the sustainability of the current response of the government in Operation Regional Shield. When we have a situation in which a police officer is facing the risk of assault or of being hunted down by a LandCruiser, as is happening in many of those communities, it is no wonder that morale is so low and that they do not wish to sustain that type of operation going forward. We need to get to the root cause of the situation and address crime before it becomes such an issue.

The McGowan government announced a Kimberley juvenile justice strategy as an election commitment in 2017, and yet we are still seeing nothing actually delivered on the ground six years later. What do we have? We have communities in uproar, communities calling out for help, and a government that does not seem to be listening to the communities. The police minister is not listening to his own police. If he is not aware of why so many police are resigning, maybe he should make himself aware. I am sure it is not so that they can all go and become construction

workers; I am sure it is actually to do with the poor morale, the concern that officers hold for their positions and the pressure that they are being put under by a system that is not listening to them or the people from the communities in which they are trying to address the crime situations.

I go back to Banksia Hill. The minister has so often refused to take responsibility for the situation at Banksia Hill. He really needs to step up to the plate. When members of local government are re-elected every four years, they have to go off and do fresh training in their responsibilities and roles. I wonder whether the minister has ever done any training in his roles under the Westminster system of ministerial responsibility. It does not seem to me that he thinks he is responsible for anything at all. He does not seem to believe that anything that happens on his watch is an issue, yet his own Inspector of Custodial Services had this to say about Banksia Hill in a report of 14 November 2022. I quote from an article published by *The West Australian*. He said —

Our most recent report on Banksia Hill was an unscheduled inspection commencing in November 2021. We found a centre in deep crisis where critical incidents of self harm, attempted suicides, staff assaults, and roof ascents were on the rise. If I'm honest, it was keeping me awake at night and I could not hold out until our next inspection scheduled for 2023.

During that inspection a young person told us how his time locked in a cell made him think of self harm. He told us how he and his friends had created a "suicide pact", and that he watched one boy stop breathing after trying to take his life. Banksia Hill remains fortunate it has not had a death in custody. This is my greatest fear.

Twelve months later and only limited progress has been made. The transfer of some young people to Unit 18 at Casuarina Prison was not the solution to Banksia Hill's problems of a "one-stop-shop" that I or my predecessors ever advocated for, granting that years of inaction required some sort of circuit breaker. While Banksia Hill and Unit 18 have both stabilised somewhat recently, the situation remains fragile and staffing shortages continue to impact time out of cell.

We know that the situation has become so dire that the courts are now unwilling to send people into Banksia Hill. There was a recent case in which a young person who was on the cusp of becoming an adult was sent to an adult prison on the basis that it would be a safer environment than Banksia Hill. That is absolutely a sign of a complete failure from that minister to live up to his responsibility to provide a safe place. Again, he put out his hierarchy of concern. His hierarchy is community, then staff, then children. I do not know how he puts the life of a child at the bottom of his concerns. There have been seven attempts at suicide in unit 18, and the minister quite openly says that he puts concerns for the welfare of the child at the bottom of his level of concerns. I find that absolutely disgraceful and shocking. I think a minister who thinks like that should be stripped of his portfolio immediately. I think a minister who thinks like that probably has no place in government. I think that the Premier needs to take a serious look at the minister's role here and his workload in so many portfolios. He seems to be floundering. People's lives are at stake under that portfolio, and I think it is the portfolio that the Premier needs to act on first, by removing the minister from it immediately and replacing him with someone with more sensitivity who wants to take seriously his or her responsibility for the lives and the future of those children. The government needs to stop playing the blame game—blaming the kids, the parents, the local member or anyone except the government itself—for its own failures in delivering a safe community for all Western Australians.

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party) [4.30 pm]: I rise to support the motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition and underline the concerns opposition members have about the McGowan government's neglect of crucial services, which has resulted in very disturbing trends right across the state. We have seen, in many different communities across the state, extraordinary levels of violence, out-of-control crime, alcohol-fuelled violence and kids going hungry. There has been a 17 per cent increase in violent crime above the five-year average in Western Australia, and family-related violence is up by 34 per cent on the five-year average. Our services are being challenged and support for those services is also significantly wanting. I have spoken to people at many refuges and to people who are providing support for those services, and the government is effectively cutting services in the face of extraordinary demand.

As I have stated in this place before, the government can certainly use spin when it comes to talking about the rates of crime in this state. Drug-related crime and burglaries were down due to the COVID pandemic and the closing of the borders during that time, but we are seeing the severity of crime being reflected in the statistics, and it is soaring. I refer to the WA Police Union's crime severity score, which reflects the relative harm of offences rather than counting the raw number of felonies. It indicates some disturbing trends. Crime rates have increased by 15 per cent in the Perth city centre and by 22.2 per cent in regional WA. Four of the Western Australia Police Force's seven regional districts experienced significant CSS increases in severe crimes, the big ones being the Pilbara at 31.2 per cent; goldfields–Esperance, 35.5 per cent; midwest–Gascoyne, 45.1 per cent; and the Kimberley, 96 per cent. Over the past decade we have seen a rise in seven offence categories, including a 68 per cent increase in abduction and harassment, a 61 per cent increase in sexual offences and a more than 50 per cent increase in acts intended to cause injury. Quite clearly, there are disturbing levels of out-of-control violent crime on this government's watch.

Every day our news bulletins seem to be filled with ongoing and disturbing reports. Just today we heard from some small business operators in an article in *WAtoday*. Barrack Street Bottlemart owner Bhushan Raval told *9 News Perth* and *WAtoday* about the repeated shoplifting he is experiencing. He is quoted in the article —

“This is the worst I’ve seen in my life to be honest ... it seems like they’re not afraid of the laws.”

...

Raval said the store could not afford to pay \$55 an hour for a security guard and was pleading with WA Police to provide small business owners with more support.

He is quoted as saying —

“If we try defend our products, they’ll throw chairs, they’ll hit us,” ...

“I have to fight back for my products because I’ve got family to look after.

I state again that he said —

“This is the worst I’ve seen in my life to be honest ... it seems like they’re not afraid of the laws.”

He expressed significant frustration at the lawlessness he is experiencing on an ongoing basis.

Looking at other areas, as I said, there was a 96 per cent increase in the severity of crime in the Kimberley over the decade. In February this year we saw reports that vehicle thefts in Halls Creek were at a nine-year high, with 76 reports last year. There has also been an increase in the number of assaults on police in the Kimberley—an increase of 51 per cent since 2019–20.

It is clear from this that crime is out of control under this government. Members in this place have raised their concerns about Carnarvon and the issues there. It is good that the Premier finally visited Carnarvon, but that comes off the back of some very troubling reports and ongoing concerns raised by opposition members, particularly the member for North West Central. There has been a significant increase in all types of crime in Carnarvon: in 2017, there were 12 family assaults; in 2022, there were 51. Total crime figures have gone from 2 872 in 2017 to 4 080 in 2022. It is certainly out of control, and it is disappointing that it took so much for the Premier to visit Carnarvon, given the real concerns.

On Australia Day there were riots and brawls in Yagan Square, on the Rockingham foreshore, in Murray Street Mall and in Northbridge, at a time when families were coming together to celebrate. It was marred by violence and antisocial behaviour. Just today we saw more reports of children involved in car theft in South Hedland and five kids allegedly involved in the theft of a car in the Pilbara. In Albany, there is a police hunt on following an assault.

It is clear that our police are under extraordinary pressure. It is also clear that officers of the Western Australia Police Force do not feel that this government has their back; they feel there is a lack of support, and they are voting with their feet. We know that WA police officers are leaving the force more than ever before. Last year, 473 police officers left the job that they have loved. That is over three times the average number of police a year who leave that profession. Although we welcome the recruitment campaign for the WA Police Force, it is essential that more is done to retain our police officers. The 473 officers who left the police force over that 12-month period is the highest number by a significant margin in its 189-year history. I have referred to new figures that indicate that from the beginning of this year until 14 February, 61 police officers have resigned. That highlights the significant number of police officers who are voting with their feet because they do not believe that this government has their back.

I have referred to some of the challenges that our police are dealing with. I have talked about the severity of crime. I have also touched on family-related violence. It is worth pointing out that the incidence of family-related violence has risen by over 30 per cent since this government has come to office. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Western Australia has the highest rate of reported family and domestic violence assault offences against females recorded across all the states. In Western Australia in 2021, over 1 250 assaults were reported to police per 100 000 people, and more than 1 150 adult women were hospitalised with injuries related to family and domestic violence. First Nations women accounted for 68 per cent of all hospitalisations. That is the highest figure since 2005, when the figure was 72 per cent. The latest data is certainly very concerning. It is reported that 51 per cent of the 15 000 women who sought assistance from specialist homelessness services in Western Australia did so as a result of family and domestic violence. I have spoken in this place before about the cuts that many women’s refuges are having to make to the raft of services that they provide and about the number of women and children whom they have to turn away simply because they cannot keep up with the demand. That is a very real concern. According to the *Women’s report card*, 45 per cent of women and 40 per cent of men are concerned about being the victim of physical assault in a public place. That is no wonder, given what the public witnessed on Australia Day with the brawls and riots at Yagan Square and on the Rockingham foreshore.

Mental health is clearly a contributing factor to the number of resignations from the police force. In 2019, 777 police personnel sought mental health support. In 2021, this climbed to over 2 600, a 300 per cent increase. A recent survey of members of the WA Police Union showed that 64 per cent of police officers view the morale in the

Western Australia Police Force as very poor and 80 per cent believe that not enough is being done to support officers. There is a range of concerns. That fits into why our officers are leaving the force and the challenges they are facing, and the issues that are happening on the ground.

The Leader of the Opposition touched on the Prime Minister's visit to Western Australia. We have also raised in this place our concerns about the impact of the removal of the cashless debit card in Laverton without any alternative solutions being provided. I have spoken to both Pat Hill, the president of the Shire of Laverton, and Janice Scott, an elder from that community. They want to be heard. They have raised very real issues about the alcohol-fuelled violence in the town. They are very much concerned about what this will mean for the women and children in the town of Laverton. It is disappointing that although the Prime Minister made the time to visit Kalgoorlie, he did not feel it was important enough to visit Laverton.

Mr P. Papalia: When were you last in Laverton?

Ms L. METTAM: We are talking about —

Several members interjected.

Ms L. METTAM: Given that the Prime Minister was visiting Kalgoorlie, and that the community of Laverton was crying out for the Prime Minister to visit that town and had invited him to do so, and given the mess that has been created as a result of the removal of the cashless debit card, we would have thought that the Prime Minister would have visited.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Ms L. METTAM: We would have thought that the Premier would have urged the Prime Minister to give the community of Laverton his attention. Clearly, this community deserves the attention of the Prime Minister, given the damage that has been caused by that policy decision.

Mr T.J. Healy interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member for Southern River, you are not actually sitting in your seat either, so please do not interject.

Ms L. METTAM: As Janice Scott has stated, the violence is out of control.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: Acting Speaker, the interjections from the minister are simply repetitive.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms R.S. Stephens): Thank you, member. There is no point of order.

Debate Resumed

Ms L. METTAM: It is childish.

Several members interjected.

Ms L. METTAM: This is a government of poor service delivery. As has been revealed through question time today and questions asked in the other place, the lack of delivery that we have seen on the ground for programs such as Target 120 is extraordinary. Nine months on, there has been virtually no intake of children to that program. We only need to look at a range of government services that the state is in control of delivering, whether it is in the mental health space or health, to see that. I speak about that quite often, given my shadow portfolio responsibilities. When it comes to law and order, we see the exodus of police leaving the force, and the hike in violent crime. When it comes to the mess that has been created through the machinery-of-government changes in the Communities portfolio, we see that this government is good at making announcements but poor when it comes to delivery.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms L. METTAM: We see that also with police officers, who are crying out for support across the board. We see that with the number of vacancies across the state, in particular in the regions, where that is even more poignant. We see that also in the 300 per cent increase in demand for mental health support that I have pointed to. We have seen that in relation to some of the calls that our officers have made about the support that they require. Police have asked for more support to stop high-speed car chases. Twenty-six officers who have been involved in high-speed chases are now being investigated. The WA Police Union has written to the acting commissioner and called for support such as the dash cameras that have been provided as a resource in other states and for training, which we believe would be a reasonable approach. There have also been calls for a specific law against ramming officers. We know that on 10 February, two officers were hospitalised after being rammed by a stolen vehicle in Kununurra. We also know that in 2021, the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council released a report on this issue recommending that states follow the lead of Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory by including a specific offence of ramming. What has this government done? It has just sat on its hands on that issue. This is despite the

fact that we know that at least 15 police vehicles were hit by another car last year and 11 officers were injured as a result of their vehicles being struck. It is quite a clear report with recommendations. I would think that the impact on our officers would be enough to initiate some action by the government to support those recommendations, as supported by the union representing those officers.

Quite clearly, we have massive challenges in community safety right across this state. There has been a number of failures under this government's watch, including the failure to support our officers by ensuring that they have the mental health and wellbeing support that they require. A switch-off campaign has been led by the police union. It wants this government to support officers switching off their phones when they have finished work for the day and not responding to ongoing work matters that could wait another day. I can only imagine the pressure that that would put police under. Clearly, this is not a priority of this government. It adds to the list of concerns of our WA police officers about the lack of support that they feel they are getting from the McGowan government.

I have only touched on the community space, but I underline my disappointment in the Target 120 program, which was announced with much fanfare but, nine months on, little has been delivered in outcomes. It is quite sad to hear, given the importance of what such a program set out to achieve.

Many initiatives were delivered by the former government for vulnerable youth. It is important to point out that we opened 21 child and parent centres to assist the most marginalised in our community. We delivered 37 Aboriginal kindergartens. The former government had the first education minister to specifically direct funds to low socio-economic groups. We introduced Aboriginal cultural standards in schools and we also introduced Aboriginal elders into schools.

What we have seen on this government's watch is a government that is big on spin but poor on delivery. It is extraordinary that the Premier is ignoring the issues in towns such as Laverton and right across our community. It is disappointing that the Minister for Police is not giving our officers the support they deserve, which is clearly illustrated in the exodus of police from the force. It is disappointing that in the community services portfolio, women and children are being turned away from refuges because they are at capacity.

Ms S.F. McGurk: And that was never the case under you! You did nothing on domestic violence—absolutely nothing.

Ms L. METTAM: And you got dumped because of it!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Ms L. METTAM: There is so much to talk about on Target 120, but there has been so little on delivery. It is a shameful performance on what should be a priority. The role of government is to support those who are most vulnerable. While this government talks very big about what it will deliver, we have a community that is left wanting with those deliverables on the ground.

I will leave my comments there, but, quite clearly, we have seen a failure in police and community services, and a failure by the Premier to stand up for our most vulnerable in Western Australia.

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt) [4.57 pm]: I rise to support the motion that the house condemns the McGowan Labor government for its gross neglect of crucial services that has allowed crime to run rampant and exposed communities to unprecedented levels of criminality and to support the contributions of the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party. Under this government, over the last six years we have seen crime spiral to unacceptable levels, particularly from a regional perspective. A number of communities have been well canvassed in this place, and we have seen an interest from the government only in recent days—finally. I wonder why that is.

The Premier and the Minister for Police said again and again last year that there was no crime issue in Carnarvon: “There's nothing to see here.” They have finally decided that there is something that needs to be addressed. I wonder whether it is because the Prime Minister is heading to the north of Western Australia and they know that they will get asked difficult questions about communities in the north west and will have to have a response for communities that have clearly been neglected under this government, partly because of political retribution. There is absolutely no doubt that the community of North West Central supported and returned then member for North West Central Vince Catania. There is no doubt that this Labor government punished that community for that and ignored the community when he raised the issues in those communities on a number of occasions. That continued when the new member for North West Central came to this place and started asking questions. In the last week, all of a sudden, we saw a flurry of activity and the government recognised that there is a crime problem, there are dysfunctional families, and Carnarvon and other communities in the north west are facing a challenge that cannot continue to be swept under the rug.

I want to talk to the issue I raised in question time today in my question to the Minister for Corrective Services. The argument about Banksia Hill Detention Centre is intrinsic to how we make sure that we appropriately deal with those who create problems in communities. No-one on this side of politics believes that people who commit a crime should go unpunished.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: No-one on this side of politics believes a person should not be punished if they commit a crime. If that person is a juvenile, how they are “punished” is different. It should be with a restorative and rehabilitative focus. It is absolutely clear from not just my perspective, but also that of many experts. The government would have listened to those experts had it not found itself in this dire situation and unwilling to admit that the punitive system at Banksia Hill is failing. It has come about under this government’s watch that we are creating better little criminals.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: The minister will have an opportunity.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Minister! You will have a chance to stand up and make a contribution. Stop being so puerile and childish and allow us to put our case! You are a disgrace. I am not taking interjections from that minister; he adds nothing of value.

Mr D.T. Punch interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am not taking them from you either. A huge contribution you have made in your portfolio! The Banksia Hill issue has been well canvassed —

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I think the member for Central Wheatbelt has made it clear that she does not want any interjections, thanks.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms C.M. Collins): Members, the member will not be taking interjections.

Debate Resumed

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I do not imagine that the position taken by the Premier, the Minister for Police and other frontbench ministers in response to the treatment of juveniles at Banksia Hill and in this state over the last six years, particularly the last two years, would sit well with the vast number of backbenchers. But they are good backbenchers and they will sit and keep their mouths shut because they know what is good for them. They cannot complain in the Labor caucus or the Labor backroom. I do not understand how it has come to pass that a Labor Premier has essentially started dog whistling to the public by saying, “If you are a naughty little child, you deserve to be punished and go to Banksia Hill.” That is what he is doing. It is politically palatable but it is morally wrong, and government members know that.

The issue is far more nuanced and complex than what the Premier and others have put forward. The list of experts on this is lengthy, including Fiona Stanley, whom the Premier attacked for her position on how this issue should be dealt with; Denis Reynolds, a former President of the Children’s Court; a former Inspector of Custodial Services; the Telethon Kids Institute; and the Aboriginal Legal Service. These are people and organisations that the government would ordinarily listen to and respect, but their opinions have been dismissed because the government thinks it is politically palatable to say, “These kids have been naughty. The community is not safe. We’ll lock them up and throw away the key. We’ll do the right thing.” That is what the government has done. It put kids into an adult prison, despite the fact that every single person on the government side of the chamber was absolutely and utterly opposed to it when it happened under the previous government. Government members are happy to point that out every time they stand up, but they have not done anything different. The government sent kids to an adult jail. Not one of the organisations I just mentioned would endorse that decision because the government is breaking those kids even more, and it is completely unacceptable.

I will read, as I have done previously, some quotes from those people and organisations. On 13 July 2022, the Youth Affairs Council of WA stated —

Children should not be sent to maximum security prison under any circumstance.

When the only option in our system to support young people with complex needs is to place them in maximum security prison, then it is the system that is broken.

In response to the treatment of detainees at Banksia Hill, Judge Hylton Quail put forward the view —

“When you want to make a monster, this is how you do it.”

President of the Law Society of Western Australia Rebecca Lee said —

“Sending children to the main maximum-security prison in WA is not the right solution and there needs to be a rethink. The WA Government needs to urgently look at how it can redirect funding to the programmes that work to reduce the root causes of crime before behaviour escalates, and how to house children appropriately when either bail is inappropriate, or a custodial sentence is to be imposed. The system is broken if juvenile detainees are being housed in conditions described as cruel and punishing, and as having no rehabilitative effect.

Don Dale royal commissioner Mick Gooda said —

Our answer can't be to just keep locking kids up. We've got a recipe for making kids worse.

Louise Giolitto from the Western Australian Council of Social Service said —

There is a clear choice before them: —

She is referring to the government —

listen to the voices of many, or dig in and try to ride out the bad press without any tangible change.

On the 90-minute summit the Premier was forced into holding, she said —

It is not a talkfest that the Premier is trying to avoid. It is scrutiny and accountability of our failing justice system.

That was overseen by the same minister. I asked the minister a question today on the number of self-harm and suicide attempts from July last year until now by detainees who were transferred from Banksia Hill to Casuarina Prison. Hon Peter Collier put the same question in the Legislative Council. He received the answer —

Thirty-seven distinct individuals have been held at unit 18 between 20 July 2022 and 15 February 2023.

His second question was —

How many of the juveniles referred to in (1) have attempted self-harm or suicide over this period?

The answer was —

Twenty-five distinct individuals have engaged in self-harm or attempted suicide over this period. Of 34 separate incidents, 25 involved minor self-harm, two involved serious self-harm and seven involved attempted suicide.

What a shameful record. If one government member stands up and says that this also happened under the previous government's watch and is indignant about that but supports what has happened under this government, they are a hypocrite.

This issue emerged in debates in this house last year. In January this year, a panel was formed with a number of the people I mentioned earlier, including former Australian of the Year Fiona Stanley. Fiona Stanley used strong words when she spoke about the Premier's comments and—in her words—his “hardline rhetoric around Banksia Hill Detention Centre detainees”. She pointed out that most children in detention have significant mental health issues that are exacerbated by poor treatment. I had a meeting with a number of people who have engaged at a very high level over the last two decades with children who have ended up at Banksia Hill. I think Fiona Stanley's commentary captured and aligns with all the advice. If we are punitive towards kids, particularly those with foetal alcohol spectrum disorder, who cannot regulate their behaviour and emotions and do not understand consequences—everyone in this chamber is clever enough to understand that—we will not get an outcome. We will only get an angry, caged child who responds in a way that will put staff at risk and affect their ability to leave their cell and undergo any rehabilitation that might be offered.

An article by Hamish Hastie on WAtoday posted on 21 January cites Fiona Stanley saying that the government's commentary on Banksia Hill ignored scientific evidence and —

“Nearly 90 per cent of kids in Banksia have got significant neurological problems, behavioural problems, that make it very, very difficult for them to obey orders, or to not be frightened or not to behave in ways that you might call antisocial,” ...

She pointed out that putting them in a high-security prison—an adult prison—without a rehabilitative focus would exacerbate the behaviours for which they were being criticised and punished. She said —

“You really do need to treat these kids in very special ways and it's still cost-effective, because you're going to prevent all those costs further down the track.

“I've been called a liar by the premier, I guess I can say the same thing about him.”

That was a direct quote from the article. I do not know how it has come to pass that the Premier of the state is in a war of words with such an eminent professional from whom we would ordinarily take advice on child health and development issues. It is a very sad situation and just goes to the arrogance of this government.

I understand the concerns that are raised by members of our broader community. They have a right to be safe and they need relief from kids or young people who are constantly breaking in and causing damage. That is the reality as well. This government has more money and more resources and has shown that it is prepared to push reforms through the Parliament when they suit its agenda, yet we see very little action from this government and very little attention from this minister on this issue. In fact, the minister said he was very happy today with the response from the government, and that he deserves to keep his portfolio and to keep rolling out the agenda that I think is perpetuating the challenges our communities are facing.

I want to go back to one last thing before I sit down and allow other members to have a say. If anyone is looking for some light reading, an opinion piece was published in *The West Australian* of 8 November last year by Denis Reynolds and Neil Morgan that outlined, I think very succinctly, how the transfer of juveniles to Casuarina is the result of departmental failure under this government. They said that although the Premier, the minister and the director general all claimed that they had no choice than to transfer the kids because of bad behaviour and extensive damage, they actually could have intervened far earlier and responded to custodial inspection reports and information that had been provided, firstly, to protect the staff, and, secondly, to protect the juveniles. They could have prevented what has turned out to be a very expensive situation that the state now needs to deal with. That difficult cohort could have had a very different story wrapped around it had the government not taken a sweep-it-under-the-table-and-ignore-the-situation approach. I recommend that members read the opinion piece by Denis Reynolds and Neil Morgan.

I want to return to what I started with, which is the new-found interest in Carnarvon by the police minister and the Premier, who have literally ignored it for the last six years. The visit by the Prime Minister to the north of the state was undoubtedly triggered by that, and I think also by the good advocacy of the local member up there in highlighting that this issue needs to be addressed. The crime issue in Carnarvon has spiralled out of control on the government's watch, but it has shown no care. It is playing the man and not the ball again when it comes to the member for North West Central, yet when the government had the chance, it failed to put up anyone at the by-election; it completely vacated the field. That is how much members on the other side cared about the north west—they could not even find a candidate to contest it! They did not put up anyone to bring those issues from those communities to the cabinet and the front bench. What an utter disgrace! You have no moral high ground when it comes to those communities—none whatsoever—because if you actually cared, you would have put someone on that ballot paper and given people a chance, and you did not. You turned tail and you ran. As a result, we now have a member for North West Central who has lived in that community, has lived experience of that community and is very well respected in that community and across the electorate. I point out that the behaviour of the Premier and the ministers in this chamber is grubby, politically motivated and unwarranted. It is a disgrace. You should have a red-hot think about how you speak about people and use this chamber for your insinuation and innuendo, because it is grubby. You are all better than that. Do something about the things you are in charge of. Do better when it comes to juveniles in our justice system in this state, because all our communities deserve better. Up to this point, you have failed miserably!

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [5.15 pm]: Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms C.M. Collins): Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Well, I am actually the member for Cottesloe, but thank you for the promotion!

Mr P.J. Rundle: He's coming back!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Apologies, member for Cottesloe.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Thank you very much, Acting Speaker; I can understand the confusion.

I rise to join this debate. It is fascinating to reflect on what has happened in this chamber since the last term of government, because the previous member for North West Central, the current member for North West Central, other members and I have been alerting the Premier, the Minister for Police and other ministers to the problems in Carnarvon all that time. Up until a few days ago, when the Premier did a trip there with journalists, we have consistently heard from the Minister for Police in particular that there is no problem—nothing to see. He has said that there are no statistics to support the argument, alluding to the fact that members are coming in here and not telling the truth or talking about real stories. Of course, this is not just happening in Carnarvon; it has happened in almost every regional centre above Geraldton, and now we see this problem coming down into Geraldton. Youth crime is having a dramatic effect on those communities. It is a horrendous impact.

There are many levels to this. The people who live in a good number of those towns live in fear. They lie awake at night because of children making noises in their yards. When they drive their cars down the street, depending on where they are driving, their cars can be stoned. Youths are engaged in extreme behaviour, making TikTok videos of racing cars, wrecking cars, attacking police vehicles and chasing police. This behaviour has escalated under the minister's watch. I have heard the debate in this place. The Minister for Police and others have said that there have been issues in these communities for a long time. That is true; there have been issues in many of those communities for a long time. But no-one I speak to has seen anything like the level of disorderly criminal behaviour that we are seeing now. It is utterly horrendous.

What are the arguments we hear in this place? First of all, the Minister for Police in particular tells us that the statistics just do not support it. We can go back to *Hansard* again and again to find the minister telling us that the statistics are wrong and there has been no increase in crime, yet the people on the ground in those communities know that it has been escalating. What is the response? I will carry on from what the member for Central Wheatbelt was dealing with at the end of her presentation—the absolutely disgraceful and disgusting treatment that I will also call out. Members on that side like using the phrase “call out”. I will call out the downright bullying of the member for North West Central. I have been in this place for only six years, but there is a general protocol here that when a member comes into this place for the first time, they are treated a little more easily and not subjected to the full

force of the other side. Everyone knows that when a new member comes into this place, they are finding their feet. It is a difficult thing for people to get used to. When the member for North West Central got up to talk about crime in Carnarvon, from the very get-go I observed her being attacked by the Minister for Police and subsequently by the Premier in a really vicious and unpleasant way. The minister said that when a person comes into this place, they have to tell the truth. The allusion was that somehow or other, the member was lying. I tell members what: I have got to know the member for North West Central. I did not know her well before the by-election other than by reputation as the electorate officer in the previous member's office. I then got to know her as the candidate running in the by-election, and I have a deep respect for that member. She is a passionate representative of her community who deeply understands her community and is committed to business in her community. What I have heard in this place, I honestly find disgusting. If members on the government side, particularly female members, were treated like this, they would be absolutely pillorying us on this side, yet government members are doing that to the member for North West Central. Fair criticism is fair criticism, but what is happening is absolute bullying.

The member is not here at the moment, which is perhaps fortunate because I can talk more forcefully about this without her here. It has been disgraceful behaviour by the Premier, the Minister for Police and the Minister for Environment—surprisingly to me, because I did not think that he was someone who would stoop to this level. They have made assertions and allegations and talked about innuendo and the implication that somehow or other the member for North West Central and her husband, who owns a hotel in that town, are part of the problem and they are not solving it. Stop it! It is disgraceful when those members come in here and do that to a member in the way that it has been done. It is disgraceful. I might say, furthermore, that if the police minister, the Premier and the Minister for Environment—why he would involve himself in this disgraceful behaviour is beyond me—think that making some changes to the alcohol-serving rules in that town will somehow or other solve the problems of Carnarvon, they are deluded fools. Yes, alcohol is a symptom of the problems in Carnarvon and it exacerbates some of the behavioural problems, but that is not what is causing youth crime in Carnarvon. It is not the root cause. Members opposite should not think that they can come in here and somehow or other bully the member for North West Central, and bully the publicans and the bottle shop owners in Carnarvon, which they have done. It has been publicly said in this place. The Premier has blamed them and said that that is the problem. If government members think that they can solve the problem by putting in place more restrictions on alcohol, then, as I said, they are deluded fools.

I have spent a lot of time in the north of this state since becoming a member. I have visited the Fitzroy Valley four times. I have visited Carnarvon more than half a dozen times. I have been to other centres—Newman, Tom Price and the rest. I do not see these problems in Tom Price, but I have seen exactly the same problems in East Newman, all through the Fitzroy Valley and from Broome, Halls Creek and Fitzroy Crossing through to Kununurra. I was prevented from getting to Derby by a storm just a few weeks ago, but Derby has even worse problems. I have very reliable reports about this from the president of the Shire of Derby—West Kimberley and others in that community. We cannot visit these areas because if we were to drive a car there, it would be stoned daytime or night-time. The police minister has denied that these horrendous issues exist, but suddenly he has discovered that they do exist. These problems will not be solved by alcohol restrictions. Alcohol restrictions will help, but why will these problems not be solved? Because I have seen firsthand that if people have cash in their hand or if there is money in those communities, alcohol will find its way there. I saw it happen in the Fitzroy Valley during the COVID pandemic. Sometime ago, the community around Fitzroy Crossing had introduced alcohol restrictions that led to the first generation of children to be born without foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. I spent a lot of time talking to the various communities there and they were so proud of that, but when that flush of money from JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments came into those communities, particularly the community around Fitzroy Crossing, which happened under our federal government's watch, the sly groggers came out. I literally saw mountains of spirit bottles and full-strength beer cans piling up in that community. The alcohol was still coming in. This government can put in place restrictions and I have no doubt that those restrictions will have some limited effect. But I might say that particularly for Carnarvon, alcohol is very accessible because Carnarvon is only five hours away from Geraldton, so alcohol will continue to find its way into those communities.

I do not pretend that the minister's job is simple. The new Minister for Community Services has picked up an enormously onerous task. She has already shown in this place that she is taking it seriously and studying or whatever, but whatever this government is doing is insufficient. It will not deal with the issue. I have heard again and again in this place about what this government has been doing in Carnarvon. We have heard about the Target 120 program. I like the intent of and the philosophy behind that program, but it is a voluntary program—people have to access it voluntarily—and, of course, it needs staff. We have heard from the Leader of the Opposition and others that that program has not commenced in many of the places that need it. That might be happening in Joondalup or Bunbury, but, to be very frank, the problem is not there. My sister lives quite near to Joondalup and, yes, there are some issues in that community, and, yes, there are some issues in Bunbury, but I can tell members that anything in the metropolitan area and the south of this state pales into insignificance compared with the issues faced in these other communities.

Just before Christmas, I visited an Aboriginal community in the industrial area of Carnarvon. One of the elders there spent two hours with me, taking me around just to houses. There was no fanfare. We were just visiting and

talking to families in that community. He was a really gorgeous man who was desperate to help his community get ahead. All the people I met in that community were just trying to get by and get on. There were families who were trying to make sure that their kids went to school and their health was looked after and so on, but I can tell members this—as I say, I have been all through the north and I have seen these communities—during that walk around, I could not comprehend the level of sickness and illness in that community. This community is literally a walk away from the centre of Carnarvon where, we are told by government members, all the government agencies are working. I saw darling little children. I know that members all love kids. I love kids. They are the meaning of life and I have six of my own. I know that all members have deep empathy for them and I do, too. I saw the most darling little kids, one and two-year-olds, with scabs in their ears and discharge coming out of their ears and nose. It is absolutely certain that they have glue ear and that they are functionally deaf and cannot hear anything. If they are not treated in the first couple of years, there is a high probability that they will be deaf or have profound hearing difficulties for life and they will never be able to learn.

I observed multiple young mothers who were young teenagers. The Premier made a comment—this is another form of dog whistling, members—that parents have to parent. I did not speak to Ngala directly, but a colleague of mine did. The information that I received from Ngala was that a dozen mothers were under 14 years of age. How in God's name does a 14-year-old girl parent their child? How can the Premier in this place hold those dear young girls, who love their little babies, to account for not parenting? For goodness sake! How can they possibly parent? When I was in Fitzroy Crossing, I spoke to a delightful young Aboriginal man who was working in the medical centre in Halls Creek. He told me that one of the problems is that we have a third generation of mothers who are 16 years or younger. How do any members expect those mothers, who did not have a mother and whose mother did not have a mother, to parent these children? What a ridiculous statement to come into this place and make: parents can parent. Yes, I expect to be held accountable if I am not parenting my children properly. I have no excuse. I had loving parents who put everything into raising me and, hopefully, I am doing a reasonable job with my kids and my kids can go on. But how can those parents? That is the problem. When I was walking around that community in Carnarvon, which was just a stone's throw or a comfortable walk from the centre of town, I saw dear little children, two or three years old, and every single tooth in their mouth was black. Every single one—black. Gum disease is caused by bacteria that breed in children's gums when they do not clean their teeth. It infects their brain and effectively has the same impact as foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. It causes permanent cognitive harm to those children.

It was not only the odd one or two children and it was not only children; it also affected adults in the community. I met the most delightful people, older gentlemen and ladies in the community trying to get by, and almost all of them had serious and clearly visible untreated illness or medical issues. Why am I talking about that? The reason I am mentioning it is that the government's programs are failing. Its programs are not reaching those children in that community. Its programs are not reaching the adults in that community. Until we are dealing with it, until those kids are going to school, until those kids' hearing problems have been resolved and fixed in the communities, we will not see any different. It was heartbreaking to look at the little children in that community—I have seen it in other communities—and to realise that the chances of them ending up in Banksia Hill Juvenile Detention Centre are substantially higher than the chances of them going on to have meaningful and productive lives. If members want to know why the member for North West Central comes in here and talks about this passionately and why we talk about this passionately, that is why.

The Premier has come into this place and blamed parents for not parenting. There has been an unseemly and disgraceful attack on the member for North West Central pretty well since she has come here. Then somehow the Premier thinks alcohol controls are magically going to solve this problem. That all tells me the government is not taking the problem seriously. I have said it in this place before that I know the former Minister for Community Services is a compassionate person and she cares. I am absolutely certain that the new Minister for Community Services is a compassionate person and she cares. But government members come back to this place again and again and tell us the government has all these programs in place.

[Member's time extended.]

Dr D.J. HONEY: If government members tell us that those programs are working, they are betraying the future of those children. They will not solve the youth crime —

Mr M.J. Folkard: Will you take an interjection, sir?

Dr D.J. HONEY: No, thank you very much.

The government will not solve those youth crime problems in that community, because it starts with the little kids and working individually with the families. As I said, I applaud the concept of Target 120, but the simple truth is that when it relies on, first, having the resources in place, and, second, people voluntarily participating, it will continue to fail to deliver the outcomes that it can. We have heard in this place some statistics on people going into that program who have done well, and why? It is because, to be frank, they are probably not the real hard-nut problems in the first place. We see children who cannot go home because of the dysfunction in their houses. Until government services are delivered directly into those communities and into those households, we are not going to see a change.

The government is relying on young mothers in their teens to avail themselves of the various government services in town. As I said, the reason I mentioned that example in Carnarvon is that we could not have a starker example of a modern prosperous community of around 3 000 people, yet within a short walking distance there is deprivation that I think the great majority of Western Australians and Australians could not comprehend. I make it very, very clear that I do not blame the people in those communities. The people I met were trying to get by and do the right thing. They want to do the right thing, but the services are not being delivered in a way that is making any difference.

Do not come back into the debate attacking and saying that it is an exaggeration. There is no exaggeration. The member for North West Central has only ever told the truth about what she is seeing in Carnarvon. I have seen it firsthand on a number of occasions and people whom I deeply respect and trust in that community see it again and again. They do not feel safe in their own homes. If they see something untoward happening and they try to intervene in the gentlest of ways, they run a high risk of being physically attacked and beaten up in those communities. The police are doing what they can. I want to tackle that.

Again, one of the arguments we hear constantly in this place from the Minister for Police—the Premier likes to pull the same stunt—is that when we are talking about this, we are criticising the police. The minister knows that I have not worn a uniform; I respect the fact that he has and I respect his service to our community in that regard. Nevertheless, I have worked closely with the police for six and a half years.

Mr M.J. Folkard interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: For goodness sake! I and we have the deepest respect for the police. I know they face an enormously difficult task. They have been tasked with reducing Aboriginal incarceration. Again, that is a noble goal, but the simple fact is that part of the problem is looking the other way on things. Why? It is not because they want to. It is because they are told to.

Mr M.J. Folkard interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Burns Beach!

Dr D.J. HONEY: It is because they are told. There is pressure from above. That is why. That is one of the problems that has exacerbated this issue. To get back to my core theme with the police, I have deep respect for the police. I know how hard their job is.

Mr P. Papalia: What did you just say?

Dr D.J. HONEY: Read *Hansard*, minister, if you want to catch up.

The ACTING SPEAKER: *Hansard* will find it very difficult to record if we keep shouting.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I know how hard their job is. I know how dedicated the police are. In fact, I spent a plane journey from Broome to Perth not so long ago with a partner of a police officer who was telling me about this officer's experience in Halls Creek and what they had to live with and put up with and so on. I know how dedicated they are. I know how much they care. I know how much they agonise over the fate of, especially, those children in those communities who could go on to have productive lives but, because of their circumstances, probably never will and will probably suffer premature death because of various health issues and the lifestyle that they are going into.

This is not an attack on the police. We and I admire the police and the job they do. This is not an attack on the public servants. We and I admire the public servants. I admire those staff who work in the Department of Communities. I have thought about the role. I do not think that I would have the emotional resilience to go in and do that job day after day, week after week, month after month, year after year. I have the greatest admiration for the job they are doing. But the simple fact is that although members opposite stand and just defend what the government is doing and say it is doing everything right, it is not. It is six years in. It is not one year in. It is not two years in. It is not a few months in. It is six years into its term of government. It has had a chance to see whether what it is doing is working. But what is happening in those communities? What is happening in those communities is that month on month, year on year, crime is getting worse, dysfunction is getting worse, and, dreadfully, the fate of those people, especially those dear kids, is getting worse in those communities. What the government is doing is not working. Please do not stand up in response in this place and just tell us we are fools and we do not know, and whatever, and we are attacking. Please tell us what the government will do differently.

The minister may not value my opinion on any of this, but I am happy to sit down with him and work through it because it is not a problem for the government's side and it is not a problem for our side; it is a problem for us as a Parliament, as elected leaders in this state. This is getting worse and worse and what the government is doing is not sufficient. It is not enough. It does not mean we need more dollars; it means that the programs have to be reviewed. It has to come back. If the government just keeps doing what it is doing, the outcome will keep going in the direction it is going in now, and that is deterioration.

It is devastating for the communities generally and it is devastating for people's mental wellbeing. It is devastating for businesses in those communities; crime is one of the reasons that those communities cannot get staff, even in government agencies. Worst of all, a whole generation of children—I have heard others use the same phrase, but

I have used it for some time now—is effectively being abandoned. It may not be the government’s intention, but those children are effectively being abandoned and there is a high certainty that too many of them—obviously, not all of them—will end up being involved in criminal activity, going to juvenile or adult prison, and dying prematurely because of health and lifestyle issues. That is a dreadful outcome. The government needs to do something differently. It cannot tell us that what it is doing at the moment is working. Thank you.

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Community Services) [5.40 pm]: I would like to make a contribution on behalf of the government. We will not be supporting this motion; I put that on the record first of all. I noted the member for Cottesloe’s contribution and to a certain extent I believed he was sincere when he said that the issue of juvenile crime in various parts of Western Australia is a bipartisan problem. But if that is truly the case, we have had more than an hour and a half of contributions from opposition members, and there has not been one single alternative suggested. The member for Cottesloe sat down at the end of his contribution saying that he wants to work with us and that it is a joint problem, but I did not hear one suggestion for an alternative approach. Not only have we not heard any suggestions over the last hour and 45 minutes that I have had to sit through, but also I do not think we have heard much over the last six years from the Liberal Party in opposition about what it would do about the issues we are debating. I do not ever hear any alternatives being suggested.

From my perspective, politics is a contest of ideas; that is how we get good policy going. We actually need the opposition to step up, pick up the bat and come up with solutions. To be fair, earlier this week or last week, the Leader of the Liberal Party suggested that the opposition would inject \$300 million into the community services sector, but that is just a cash splash. There was no detail about which parts of the sector require funding or which targeted programs the Liberal Party had identified that are working; it was just, “We’re going to give everyone \$300 million”, and that would miraculously solve the problem. When members opposite come up with ideas, they actually need to be targeted and strategic, and talk about real initiatives.

I know other members want to speak tonight, so I will try to keep this brief, but I really want to take the opportunity to speak briefly about the important work that is being done by child protection workers throughout the state and the thousands of people who work in the community services sector, delivering extraordinary services right around the state. I value them, I recognise them and I think they do an incredible job. There are also hundreds of Aboriginal groups right around the state that do extraordinary work, whether it is in schools or in targeted programs through the health system. They have been doing innovative, great work for many, many years. I know that to be the case, because I taught in Fitzroy Crossing for three years. Somehow, though, when I listened to opposition members tonight and their suggestion that the government has failed, it sounded to me that they were, by extension, suggesting that all the people who are currently working in this space or have worked in this space over many, many years have also failed and that they are not working. I find that offensive and disrespectful of all the people who work in these important sectors.

As I have mentioned before in this house, the McGowan government has made record investments into the child protection portfolio. Since 2017, we have employed 250 additional FTE; that is a workforce increase of 35 per cent. We support the important work that child protection practitioners do. In fact, earlier, during question time, I highlighted the important work we are doing in providing targeted professional development opportunities to make sure that child protection practitioners can be the skilled workforce we need when we are increasingly dealing with children with backgrounds of trauma. I find it extraordinary that opposition members can just stand up and say, “You’re not doing enough; it’s not working”, and have no recognition for the things that are happening.

I have met with the Western Australian Council of Social Service; it was really wonderful to be able to attend its new year breakfast, an event it holds every year to celebrate the sector, bring everyone together, network, set goals and inspire each other to do the good work that will happen in 2023. I have also met with representatives since then to understand their needs and priorities going forward as they represent a sector that is one of the biggest employers in the state. In last year’s budget we provided some \$450 million for community sector organisations to do their important work. Additionally, there was \$160 million of new funding for all the organisations that are working in the regions with vulnerable people and families in need, doing that important work.

I want to briefly talk again about Target 120. It is really good to hear that the opposition supports that program. At its heart it is a partnership between families and juveniles at risk. It has been rolled out across 20 locations in the state, the government has committed \$31 million to it, and it is making an impact. It is diverting young, vulnerable people away from the youth justice system. It is working, with nearly half of the people engaged in it being diverted from the juvenile justice system. This is the kind of intervention strategy that we need to keep working on. In fact, early intervention is a key priority of this government, and we are delivering programs worth \$136 million to do just that.

It is also interesting that more than 200 of the children and families who have been involved with Target 120 have been successfully steered away from the youth justice system. However, we know that families, children and youth are complex, so it is an ongoing process. It is not something we can just throw some money at, provide a program and solve the problem. These problems are ongoing, generational problems, and Target 120 will have a continuing impact on those areas. As well as Target 120, we are piloting another program called Target 120 Plus. That program

will provide culturally appropriate and tailored programs for young people's individual needs. It will be a wraparound approach to dealing with at-risk youth. It will include in-home components to help parents develop parenting skills and promote healthy child development.

I want to briefly talk about the domestic violence portfolio, because that was addressed by the Leader of the Opposition. I want to take a few moments to emphasise the work that the state government has done in this area. All members would know that domestic violence has a direct impact on children and young people in families. Therefore, when we are looking at providing programs to support children and young people, we also need to support what is happening at home. We know that too many kids are placed in a situation whereby family and domestic violence is a daily occurrence. This is the government that created the first-ever prevention of family and domestic violence ministry. That shows the priority that we place on this important area.

I want to outline to the house some of the things that we have done. Since we have come into government, we have committed over \$160 million to make sure that we have strong laws that will keep victims and families safe and hold perpetrators to account. I want to highlight one thing in particular. Last week, I was in Armadale to announce that a contract has been awarded to Hope Community Services and Yorgum Healing Services Aboriginal Corporation to jointly run the Armadale family and domestic violence hub. That will be the third hub that this government is rolling out, after having successfully rolled out hubs in Mirrabooka and Kalgoorlie. The Armadale hub is going ahead and, hopefully, will be open at the end of this year or the beginning of next year, as the services go through the important co-design process of what that hub will look like. In real terms, that will mean that women who are victims of family and domestic violence will have one safe place to go to tell their story. They will not have to go to the doctor. They will not have to seek legal advice. They will not have to go to all these different places. It will be a wraparound service that will provide housing, legal advice, financial assistance, counselling and medical support in one place to support those women. That will make a huge difference. We are getting great feedback from the women, and their children, who have utilised those new hubs in Mirrabooka and Kalgoorlie. We will also be establishing the fourth of those hubs in Broome as one of our election commitments. I know that the member for Kimberley is pretty happy about that.

I want to highlight a couple more things about the family violence legislative reforms that we have undertaken, because these things are part of the story for families, particularly in some of the places that I have lived and worked in. They include specific things like making sure that we keep perpetrators accountable. They include better protection of victim-survivors with shuttle conferencing in court so that victim-survivors do not need to face their abusers, automatic recognition of violence restraining orders from other Australian states, the creation of the new offence of non-fatal strangulation and the creation of a new category of serial violence offenders for those who have two or three convictions. They also include, importantly, amendments to the Residential Tenancies Act to support victims to leave their abusive environment. We know that victims of domestic violence find it difficult to leave. Statistically, it takes a woman about seven attempts before she has the strength, I suppose, to do that. Once a woman has made the decision to leave, it is really important that we provide all the supports to make sure that the violence is not repeated or the same cycle is continued by her returning to the perpetrator.

I will finish on this note, in the way that I began. I know that the challenges that my department is facing are extremely difficult. But I can tell members that the work that those people in the department do is quite extraordinary. People do not go into this line of work, working with our most vulnerable children and families, unless they care about kids and families and want to make a difference. I commend every single one of them. We will continue to support them, and we have supported them, with our continued investment into the child protection system of over 250 extra full-time equivalents. I also want to acknowledge again the extraordinary work that is being done by the various providers in the community services sector. We value them. We invest strongly in them. We provided over \$450 million in the last budget to support them in the extraordinary work that they do.

What we need to do, to go back to the contribution of the member for Cottesloe, is be careful about how we debate these sensitive subjects. Not all the crime that is happening in Carnarvon or anywhere can be referred to all of the kids in that town.

Dr D.J. Honey: I didn't say that.

Ms S.E. WINTON: I did not say that you said that, so you might want to listen to me. You are supersensitive.

When we talk about these towns, we need to be careful that we do not paint all the kids who live there as "those kids". There is a real danger that that is what is happening. Likewise, I am also concerned when opposition members keep talking down the lack of progress. In doing that, they are talking down the very important heroes who are at the coalface and get up every single day and do the most extraordinary work. If you keep saying that nothing good is happening out there and that no-one is making a difference, what are you saying about those people and the commitment that they are giving? I would caution the opposition on doing that.

In summary, I will say this about my portfolio. I appreciate the opposition acknowledging that it is a difficult portfolio, and it is, but it is the most important work that anyone can do. When I was a teacher for 27 years, and particularly in Fitzroy for three years, I found that the best way to solve problems was to work with people and

come up with joint solutions. I assure the house that is what I will continue to do. I am not going to politicise these issues, but I will call it out when other people do it. That is why I keep calling it out. If members really care about what is happening, come up with some solutions, because I will listen to them.

MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.59 pm]: I rise to also speak against the motion. I would like to address a few of the things that have been said by opposition members. I would like to concur with the comments of the Minister for Community Services. I also look forward to the contribution from the Minister for Police.

I am very proud to have been the local member of Parliament for my community for the last six years. It has been a great honour. I first of all want to commend the Speaker, the former Minister for Police, Michelle Roberts, a very experienced member of both the previous and current government, who oversaw a great period of growth and did great work during her time as police minister. Our current police minister is one of the most decorated and longest serving ministers. There was a veiled compliment from the member for Cottesloe for the police minister about his service to the community and Western Australia.

It is also worth recalling the chaos. When I came to this chamber, my seat was a safe Liberal seat; I was not supposed to be elected. I was elected because of the frustration of my community with the former government's police ministers and the bungling of the meth crisis and the regional and metropolitan police districts. I want to acknowledge Rob Johnson and Liza Harvey. Bless their cotton socks, but they caused a lot of damage to the Liberal Party brand and to the Western Australian community, and I am thankful that the adults are in charge now.

Metropolitan policing and regional policing in particular were abandoned by the previous Liberal–National government. Access to policing is very important for all members of our community—when people can walk into a police station and see a police officer or make a call and connect with a local service. The systems implemented by the previous Liberal government made that harder. I also give a particular shout-out to the Gosnells, Canning Vale, Cannington and Armadale Police Stations, which look after all the members of my community. As many people will know, we increased the operations at a number of stations to 24-hour access. Just about every one of our police stations is a 24-hour station in terms of the walk-in counter hours. That was very well received by the community and the community responded very well. I acknowledge that extended hours came to be at the Armadale, Cannington and Ellenbrook Police Stations. Members will be aware that hours were extended at the Gosnells and Canning Vale Police Stations, as well as at a number of other police stations, and the number of police—human bodies—available in our districts was also increased. The resources available to them were also increased, be that technology or vehicles. I commend both the previous minister and the current minister for those things.

There are new police stations at a number of different sites. I do not want to go into too much detail to allow my other colleagues to speak. We know that there has been a great focus on regional police and regional communities. I look forward to being at my first police graduation with the minister tomorrow night. As is often stated as a failure, we are supplying 950 additional officers. It will be my first graduation tomorrow, but the minister has told this chamber many times that he is continually at the graduations of our fantastic new serving police officers. He will be off on Friday morning to recruit even more from overseas. This is a government that is committed to increasing police numbers and ensuring that we have the most experienced and supported police officers.

I will give some acknowledgement to the Nationals WA. I will talk about some of the speeches in a moment. The Nationals WA used to be the party of the regions. It is, of course, the Labor Party that continuously looks after metropolitan and regional communities. There are better work facilities. I know the minister recently went out to Beverley and saw the new police facilities there. There have been refurbishments, maintenance and investment in infrastructure and technology. A number of police officers speak to me about the benefits of body-worn cameras in protecting the work that they do. I am not sure whether they make paperwork easier, but we are certainly getting very positive feedback about the interactions that happen after incidents. There has also been the addition of personal issue mobile smart devices.

I will briefly speak on a couple of contributions to the motion. The Leader of the Opposition, the member for Moore, spoke incorrectly, but I will allow the minister to correct him completely. He told us that crime rates were out of control and that there were cycles of crime. Again, he did not reflect on what was inherited by this government, the scourge of meth and what has been done in the past six years. I commend the police, the police ministers and the police commissioners for their leadership. A number of inappropriate things were said about the current police minister. The member did misquote, but I will allow that to be corrected.

The member for Vasse did not clarify whether she had been to Laverton or Leonora. She spoke about a number of things, including her good mate Peter Dutton, who I believe did go there. I am not sure whether she stated that he invited her or he did not.

The member for Central Wheatbelt is still quite angry about a number of internal party matters. I have to commend her, though. The Leader of the Opposition struggled to make a 30-minute contribution. I do not think there has ever been a challenge that the member for Central Wheatbelt, the former Leader of the Opposition, could not meet.

It is always wonderful to hear the member for Cottesloe speak. I love to hear his advice about how we should speak to women. That is always a great thing. I always like to write down some quirks from Margaret Quirk. They are always wonderful comments. You could write a book about the quips and quirks from the member for Landsdale. I think there could be a second volume. I appreciate that *Hansard* will one day assist me and all members of this chamber in how the Liberal Party talks to women.

Just in closing, I interjected several times on the member for Cottesloe. It drives me a little nuts that the member for Cottesloe has not read the standing orders. For future use, if the member for Cottesloe would like to raise a matter, he can use standing orders 95 to 97. When he stands and talks about interruptions or says that he cannot hear or is unhappy about the content, standing order 95 or 96 might assist him to close that case.

MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn) [6.07 pm]: I rise to speak against this motion. I will pick up on some of the comments that the member for Southern River has just made. In my response to the Premier's Statement last week, I congratulated the people who have been promoted to various positions as part of both the government's cabinet reshuffle and the opposition parties' reshuffle. But it seems to me that even though we have new leaders, we have the same energy in this room as we did last year. The Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party come in here and lecture us for almost an hour and 45 minutes in a way that has no energy and no real engagement with the issues and would be better placed in a boring university lecture hall. It is not clear that the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party really care about the issues that they are raising. It does not seem to come from a place of sincerity. I can say that the member for Central Wheatbelt showed some fire today, and I welcome that. I do not necessarily agree with the member for Central Wheatbelt, but I welcome some robust debate.

Mr P. Papalia: And energy.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Yes, some energy and some real engagement with the issues. Even if I disagree with the member for Central Wheatbelt, I believe that she cares about these issues and has something of value to say. I struggled to engage with what the Leader of the Opposition or the Leader of the Liberal Party were saying. It seems to me that they do not have the fortitude for it.

I want to pick up on something that the member for Cottesloe apparently said earlier today. He criticised government backbenchers for voting on bills that they had not read or did not understand. Member for Cottesloe, the saying about throwing stones in glass houses springs to mind. If we want to talk about members of this chamber who do not understand the legislation they are debating, members opposite do not need me to give them a speech; they just need a mirror. I have seen many examples of members opposite asking ministers questions, including during consideration in detail, when the answer they are searching for is literally in the bill. It is literally in the clause that they are asking a question about. You know what, if the bill is too complicated for members opposite, there is a thing called an explanatory memorandum. They have been around for a long time. Members opposite can go and read one of those. I thought that was pretty rich coming from the member for Cottesloe. It underlines that the opposition does not have an effective team that is working together on these issues; we have fragmented contributions from different members of the chamber.

On the topic of teams, the Minister for Police posed an absolutely fair question to the Leader of the Liberal Party during question time yesterday. The Minister for Police asked whether the Leader of the Liberal Party in this place supports Ian Goodenough's views on banning high-powered firearms. That is a legitimate question to ask on an issue of community safety because the genesis of the ban on high-powered firearms was a request from the Western Australia Police Force. It was a request.

Dr D.J. Honey: Is that the problem in Carnarvon?

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: The member for Cottesloe cannot have it both ways. He cannot come in here and say that the opposition supports the police while his federal colleague is not just debating the issue in Parliament or writing opinion pieces, but provocatively posing with a high-powered firearm in a video to make the point that he does not agree with the Western Australia Police Force. That is the reality—the member cannot walk both sides of the street on it.

Dr D.J. Honey: Fix that and we'll see—no relevance to crime in Carnarvon.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: From the member for Cottesloe's interjections, it sounds like he does not support the request from WA Police for a ban on high-powered firearms. He says it will not make a difference.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Those are literally the words that he just said. He is not interested in the fact that a true approach to community safety means we have to take a range of measures. The Liberal Party comes in here bleating about how it supports WA Police, but members of the WA Liberal Party are running around actively and provocatively campaigning against a ban on high-powered firearms that was requested by WA Police. Members do not have to take my word for it because I have the photo of the federal member for Moore, Ian Goodenough, on top of a ute with a high-powered firearm. It is not something asinine like an opinion piece; it is a video he posed for to make his point.

It raises the question of whether the Leader of the Liberal Party supports the federal member for Moore. He is the only Liberal federal lower house member who represents the metropolitan area in Western Australia. It is a fair question. Do members know what the response was from the Leader of the Liberal Party? I think this was extraordinary. She interjected on the Minister for Police and said, “He’s not on our team.” I tell you now, *Hansard* will prove me right on that point. She interjected to say that Ian Goodenough is not on her team. That is curious. It is a shame the Leader of the Liberal Party is not in the chamber because I wanted to fact check whether Ian Goodenough is on the same team as the member for Vasse. I went on the WA Liberal Party website.

Ms M.M. Quirk: A different faction.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: It is different faction, but it is the same team. That is the question, member for Landsdale. Those are the words that were used—“same team”.

I went on the Liberal Party website. Handily, there are only four buttons across the top of the homepage. One says “Our party”. The second one says, “Our team”. It is a drop-down menu. I went to the drop-down menu under “Our team” because I thought that would tell me who is on the team the member for Vasse is on. I clicked on it. Lo and behold, members, number one on the page is Ian Goodenough, MP, the federal member for Moore. There is a real question about the member for Vasse’s interjection. She said Ian Goodenough is not on her team, yet the Liberal Party’s website says that he is. I then printed out the next page with the rest of the team. It does not get any better, members; I tell you that! Going back to what I was saying before about the opposition having fortitude on debates, looking at the intellectual capacity of the team that the Liberal Party has been reduced to in the lower house federally, it is a pretty sad state of affairs. Members only have to read the quality of debates to see that that is the case with the Liberal Party’s federal lower house members; it is also the case with Liberal members of state Parliament.

It seems to me that Ian Goodenough is incontrovertibly on the same team as the Leader of the Liberal Party. If he is on her team, she needs to take some leadership on this issue and get him off her team. I assume that if he is not on the Leader of the Liberal Party’s team, maybe he is in some other team called “The Clan” or something like that, and she should take action. It was pretty disgraceful to see the lack of action from the Leader of the Liberal Party in New South Wales when it came to one of its members of Parliament, and I would hate to see a weak response like that in Western Australia as well. If the Leader of the Liberal Party wants to be taken seriously on supporting our WA Police, she should tell members of her team who oppose a ban on high-powered firearms to pull their head in.

I want to go to some of the comments made by the member for Central Wheatbelt. As I said at the outset, I was pleased to see the member for Central Wheatbelt freed from the shackles of leadership and showing some fire in this debate. I welcome robust debate in this place. Unfortunately, we do not see enough of it.

There were sentiments in what the member for Central Wheatbelt said that I agree with. Community safety is a complicated issue. I do not think anybody denies that. It requires a whole series of responses. It requires a penal response because that is what society expects. A penal response is required for specific and general deterrence as well. But, yes, we want one of the aims of our criminal justice system to be rehabilitation. We cannot achieve rehabilitation just through our corrections estate; we have to provide additional community services including child protection; in some cases, alcohol controls and restrictions; drug and alcohol counselling; and other family support services. We have to provide a whole suite of community services. We have to take a nuanced approach to community safety, particularly when it comes to dealing with juvenile offenders. They are vulnerable people and we should aim to rehabilitate them to the maximum degree possible because they have their lives ahead of them and we should want them to be contributing members of society.

I really take issue with the criticism made of the Minister for Corrective Services. He was very clear in question time today about his three priorities. I do not think it is at all controversial that the Minister for Corrective Services’ first priority is community safety. I do not see how that is contentious at all. He then said that his second priority is the safety of staff. That is the second priority because staff have to be confident to do their job in order to protect the young people in their care as well as the community. It sits above the third priority, which is to protect those young people and make sure they can become contributing members of society. The second priority is necessary to reach the third priority. I do not think the hierarchy of priorities is at all contentious. The point the Minister for Corrective Services has made time and again is that we cannot simply have fantastical solutions to the issue of juvenile crime and we cannot treat all juvenile offenders the same. The reality is that a small cohort of mainly older offenders was causing significant disruption at Banksia Hill Detention Centre. That disruption was a safety risk for not only the staff, but also the other offenders who were being housed at that facility. It was disrupting their access to education and therapy, and it was putting their personal safety at risk. If somebody could simply wave a magic wand and make that all better, the government would have done that by now, but the reality is that we need a nuanced approach to this. That is what this government is doing. The Minister for Community Services outlined a whole range of initiatives that this government is implementing. Is there more to do? Obviously, there is always more to do. We in the Labor Party know that more than anybody else that there is always more to do, but we are getting on with it.

The single biggest mistake of the previous government that we were lumbered with was the closure of Rangeview as a juvenile remand facility. The problem with that decision was that there is now only one juvenile facility in

Western Australia, so it is very difficult to separate problem cohorts from the general cohort. It also means that the remand population is mixed in with the general population. One of the challenges with the remand population is that because they are generally in there for only a short time, we do not have the opportunity to do the interventions with them that we might do with the general population, who are in there for longer. Because they might be in there for short sentences of weeks or months, there is not an opportunity to give the educational programs, therapeutic programs and all those sorts of supports to that population, so that population can become incredibly problematic. The Minister for Corrective Services has been up-front about that. He has been clear that that is a problem. He has even said that he would be willing to advocate for a youth remand facility to be built. But, as members can imagine, it is pretty hard to find a local government area that is willing to make the land available to build a youth remand facility. Once that kind of facility is lost, which it was under the previous government—it was its decision—it is very hard to get it back. That facility cannot be put out in the middle of nowhere; it has to be built within 100 kilometres of the metropolitan area. If there is a local government that the opposition is aware would be willing to accommodate a youth remand facility, it should stump up and say it. So far, I have not heard it. I am not surprised that I have not heard it, because the Minister for Corrective Services has clearly placed on the record that it is an issue that vexes him. It is not an easy problem to solve.

In the absence of a separate facility, the Minister for Corrective Services gazetted part of Casuarina as a separate facility. Sure, it is not ideal, but it is a standalone facility. It is not like what happened to Banksia Hill detainees under the previous government, who were put into the general facility at Casuarina; this is a separate standalone facility for those juvenile detainees. Sure, it is not perfect, but it was the best option that was available to the government. From what I can tell, although there will always be ups and downs, it appears to be making progress in terms of allowing the general population, who were not causing major issues, to access the therapeutic supports they need. I congratulate the Minister for Corrective Services for doing the work of government, which is to not let the perfect get in the way of the good, and to make the hard decisions that lead to progress.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: I turn now to the range of initiatives the state government has been implementing to protect our communities. As I said earlier, community safety is not an issue that is amenable to simple solutions or a single solution; we have to have a range of initiatives. I have to say that this Minister for Police and his predecessor have been hard at work on policing and community policing, and have ensured that our police force is resourced with not only the laws, but also the resources they need to combat serious crime. I point to the example of Operation Regional Shield, which is an initiative of the WA police that ensures that we put extra support into regional areas that are experiencing increases in crime, like what members have been talking about in terms of car ramming or rock throwing. If regional communities have been experiencing that, this government has put resources into a dedicated operation to make sure that we address those issues; it has resourced the WA police to do their job in dealing with those issues.

In the metropolitan area, the government introduced protected entertainment precincts, which I know have been very well received by the communities that surround those entertainment precincts. I am sure the member for Hillarys would agree, as would the members for Mandurah and Dawesville. That has been very well accepted because the police now have the tools they need to keep violent offenders out of those entertainment precincts, so they are not in Northbridge, Hillarys or Scarborough on a Friday or Saturday night causing more problems. That is a preventive measure; that is a good thing. I commend the minister for it.

We also passed our anti-consorting laws, an initiative that both the Attorney General and the Minister for Police were involved with. They are really important laws to tackle organised crime. Many—not all—of the problems that we face in community safety can be linked to organised crime, such as the drug trade and its knock-on effects in terms of crime. The unlawful consorting laws and anti-insignia laws are already being used by our courts to disrupt the activities of outlaw motorcycle gangs. I welcome those laws. Constituents have written to me in favour of those laws. They have been a great tool to put in the toolbox of the WA police.

The last thing I want to point to is something that we did during our last term in government, which was to ban online sexual harassment in the form of sharing explicit imagery. The opposition often wants to talk about media-grabbing examples of crime in our communities, which are actually generally in decline, but I never hear any conversations about the types of crime that happen online that can be absolutely devastating to people, and particularly women. This government took nation-leading action in legislating against what is colloquially termed “revenge porn”. I do not call it that; it is sexual abuse. That is plainly what it is. We took nation-leading action in outlawing that. In fact, a friend of a friend of mine was one of the first victims to benefit from those laws, after her partner had distributed explicit images of her in retaliation for a break-up. The perpetrator had to face the consequences of his action. That sent a message to not only him, but also others that that type of behaviour is totally unacceptable in our society.

Those are just four things off the top of my head that cover a broad spectrum of things that this government is doing to ensure that our community is kept safe.

I want to focus on one last general area. I have spoken about how we have equipped our police with the laws that they need to tackle serious crime, but I want to talk about how else we are supporting police to tackle serious crime.

It is not enough just to have the laws; we also have to support our police to act on those laws. This government and this Minister for Police have absolutely backed our force to the hilt. We are the government that in our last term introduced stab-proof vests. We are the government that introduced a workers compensation scheme for sworn officers that had never existed before and we are the government that is running the largest recruitment campaign for police officers in the history of Western Australia. I know that all sorts of comments have been made about morale in the force. I do not think that those comments from the opposition are based on any real-life intelligence. They may get the occasional email from someone who is disgruntled, but I do not believe that those members have spoken to police officers en masse to find out their views about this. I can tell members that I know that the police minister has. Between all of his work, both in this place and in his ministerial capacity, he has been travelling all over the state visiting police stations and police districts. He visited Cockburn police district with me and my friend the member for Jandakot just before the Christmas break. I was very impressed by the police minister because he stayed and made himself available to the police officers on duty at that station for probably an hour to answer questions. Given that the Western Australian Police Union is engaged in negotiations with the government at the moment, at times the debate was robust, as one would expect it to be.

Mr P. Papalia: That was the only time in more than the 100 stations that I have been to that it was like that. It must be you, mate!

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Yes, or the member for Jandakot! I did say that as a former union delegate, I am always willing to see a bit of debate, but the point is that that is to be expected. That happens under any government at any workplace when enterprise bargaining agreement negotiations are going on. The police minister spoke at length with those officers about their concerns, and he had the answers on everything as well. I can tell members now that even though the debate was robust, the overwhelming sentiment from Cockburn police is how proud they are of the job that they do and what a good job they do. As a local member, I am grateful that they do their job. They also give the government credit for the fact that it is working furiously to recruit more police officers and for putting in place these protections for officers that I just outlined. That is the bit that the opposition does not get. Its members neglect the fact that in talking about crime, they are constantly talking down police officers and the work that they do. That is not consistent with the view that police officers have of themselves or of the type of leadership that they want to see in government. If members opposite want to be the government, they are going to have to sharpen their tools, because this government is clearly rising to the challenges before it and we have a minister who is very much dedicated to improving safety in our communities. I will certainly back him and this government any day of the week.

MS J.L. HANNS (Collie—Preston — Parliamentary Secretary) [6.33 pm]: I rise to make a very small contribution to this debate today. I want to place firmly on record my complete and utter disgust with the opposition's motion today. I would like to give some very clear examples of how well this government is tackling crime within Western Australia. I want to pick up on the comments made previously by Minister Winton in her community services portfolio. She issued a word of warning to the opposition around the fact that to reflect on kids and their communities in a negative way is a really dangerous position for the opposition to take. I am going to give members the perfect example of where this really does not do communities any justice.

When I first moved to Collie about 17 years ago, I was working at the high school in my first year when, really sadly, a young year 11 student was murdered by two other students at the school. I would like to still send my condolences to the family of this young person—I will not name them today. It was an incredibly traumatic time for the staff, school students, and, obviously, parents of not only the victim, but also the children who committed the crime, because those families also suffered. The most compelling thing to happen in that community at the time was that all those young people were painted in the light of young people in Collie being murderers and not fit to be respected as young people doing really positive things in that community. That really shook the whole community to the core. The media descended on Collie because it was a big news story on that night's news, and maybe for the next couple of nights, and then they all disappeared and moved on to the next headline. But the community of Collie could not move on. There were ramifications right across the community. Young people in Collie rallied because they were being painted as criminals. Yes, this terrible thing had happened, but that was not what the community or its young people were about.

The young student was studying ATAR history at that point in time and her classmates, who had lost their class member under tragic circumstances, decided to pay tribute to and honour her memory and make the point that young people in Collie were not what the media or parts of the government—or the opposition in this case—may have said was going wrong in Collie at that point in time. As a community, they decided to fundraise and send a large number of those students who were in that class at the time to Gallipoli and the Western Front sites to commemorate Anzac Day. Those young people decided that they wanted to show that they were worthy citizens of their community and that the community of Collie was not riddled with crime, despite the media wanting everybody to believe that that was the case.

My word of caution to opposition members is that when they start painting communities in a negative light, the people in those communities really feel that and suffer from it. I would like to reiterate Minister Winton's caution to the opposition around doing that in this particular case. We all know that the communities that experience crime often do so as a result of things like alcohol, which we have discussed at length during question time since returning

to Parliament this year, family and domestic violence, the breakdown of families and the inability for those families to have a wider support network to call on during particularly troubled times. I speak from experience, having taught in schools for nearly 30 years, when I say that sometimes those young people are doing it tough because their families are doing it tough. The thing that really irks me about the opposition's reference to all these things is that it continuously raises the fact that Aboriginal young people and Aboriginal families are over-represented. We appreciate that, but there are some really complex problems that programs like Target 120 are trying to actually address. The member for Cockburn mentioned how complicated, layered and nuanced the approaches to solve those things are and how difficult it is. This government, through the Target 120 program, is trying to work with those families, whether they be Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal families, to get them to gain trust in government, because, I guess, in the example of Aboriginal people, they have not necessarily trusted governments over the last 200 and something years in Australia, and rightly so.

It is absolutely about building relationships with people in those communities, and that takes a long time—to gain people's trust, to appreciate people's circumstances and to work out some people's family circumstances so that they can be in a position to accept the assistance and support that is being offered. As the member for Cockburn said, that is not something that can be solved with a magic wand; it takes time and commitment, and it takes people to back those communities. Without doing that, there is constant criticism of communities across Western Australia that are doing it tough with crime, undermining the confidence of people living in those communities and the people who are working in police services, in the social work sector and in the hospitals to support all the things happening in those communities.

I urge the opposition to listen to the reflections of the minister today and really take them on board. It should work with the government and not criticise us because we are doing more than it ever did when it was in government.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Police) [6.40 pm]: I thank members for their very thoughtful and valuable contributions, particularly those on our side, most recently the member for Collie–Preston. I learnt a few things this evening from the contributions made by members from the other side. They said nothing relevant to crime and crucial services in the community, of course. Nevertheless, I learnt a few things. Principally, I think the new Leader of the Opposition is going to struggle. I timed the member's speech. I think he spoke for 29 minutes. As lead speaker, he had 60 minutes in which to speak. He had a big opportunity to come in here swinging and tear the government apart and expose failure. He lasted for 29 minutes, and I think 20 minutes of his speech was repetitive. That is a little concerning for the future and does not augur well.

I also learnt that the Leader of the Opposition does not like to take interjections. I think that reflects a fear of being exposed for his incapacity to respond while he is on his feet. The reason I was trying to interject on the member for Moore and to make a contribution was not to ridicule what he was saying but to point out that he had made an error. He claimed in this place during the first part of his speech that yesterday I said that the cashless debit card had not worked in Laverton because of money or something; I cannot recall the exact words. He did not repeat what I said. I pointed out that the people who are coming from the lands into Laverton and indulging in harmful use of alcohol and causing a lot of the problems that have been complained about by shire president Hill were not subject to the CDC—the card that all the debate was about in Laverton. The federal opposition flew its leader from Canberra all the way to Laverton to talk about the removal of income management, and those people had not been subject to that card. I pointed that out yesterday by quoting shire president Hill from 2019 when Hon Peter Dutton was a member of the federal government of the day. He was saying almost identical things to complaints now about the behaviour of people with regard to alcohol that he was saying then, except the card was in play. It was not applicable to those people but the comments were identical. I pointed out that obviously the problem is not related to that. It is a serious issue and an extensive one that has been going for a long time, and it is unchanged with respect to the card. I am not saying whether that card works. It was an interesting ploy or act by Hon Peter Dutton to go to Laverton.

We learnt another thing from the opposition's contribution. I am not sure whether the Leader of the Liberal Party has been to Laverton. Having stood in this place and criticised the Prime Minister of Australia for coming to Western Australia nine times since he became Prime Minister and travelling to the regions, including Kalgoorlie and Port Hedland and, for the first time in history, taking cabinet to a regional town and sitting in a tower watching all the wealth-generating activity, the Leader of the Liberal Party in Western Australia came in here and attacked Prime Minister Albanese. I suspect that she has never been to Laverton. She was asking, "Why didn't he go to Laverton?" We might well pose exactly the same question to the Leader of the Liberal Party. I have been to Laverton lots of times but I have also been there as police minister, most recently on 11 September last year, I think. I met the officer in charge of the police station and talked about the challenges that they confront. I have been to Leonora and done the same thing. When I get the opportunity, I constantly visit police in not only the regions, but also the metropolitan area, seeking their advice. It was really interesting to have witnessed the Leader of the Liberal Party's formulaic attack on the Prime Minister that had been run by the federal Liberal Party across the country. Maybe the member has been to Laverton, but it did not seem like it when I asked her the question, and that is pretty embarrassing.

Other things were revealed in contributions from members on the other side. The member for Cottesloe made a claim about what I said about statistics. I do not talk about stats. I do not like them because invariably crime stats

have a natural tendency to go up as the population increases. It is not something that I particularly talk about. With respect to Carnarvon, I did say that the police reports that I receive and the comments from police do not support the member's claims. Claims were made in this place and elsewhere about Carnarvon. I talk regularly to senior police officers and police officers on the ground. In particular, I sought advice from the assistant commissioner for the regions, who is the most senior police officer responsible for all the regions in Western Australia—Darryl Gaunt. He is a great guy. He is a very good police officer. He is incredibly experienced. Member for Cottesloe, I am talking about you, in particular, so you might want to listen to this. Assistant Commissioner Darryl Gaunt probably has more experience in the regions than just about most people in Western Australia. I asked him about the specific claim that crime is out of control in Carnarvon. He provided me with a response. He said there is crime in all parts of the state. That is historical. It is about people. With people in communities across the nation and around the world, there is crime. He said there has not been any extraordinary flare-up in crime. That is what I was saying to the member. It was not borne out by the advice that I received from the police. The member might be interested to know that in my office last week, I met with the member for North West Central, Assistant Commissioner Gaunt and Commander Rod Wilde, the commander of region south, which covers that area. We talked to the member about the challenges that she believes confront the community. I am pretty disappointed with the member for Cottesloe's claims that we are bullying or the inference that some sort of misogyny is going on with respect to the member for North West Central. We spoke politely in my office about the issues.

Dr D.J. Honey: I didn't say "misogyny"; I said "bullying".

Mr P. PAPALIA: The member said it was bullying. It is not bullying to say publicly that alcohol is the cause of a lot of issues in Carnarvon and that some people who are complaining loudly about that are the ones delivering alcohol to the community. That is the truth. That is not bullying. With respect to the member for North West Central, I had Assistant Commissioner Gaunt and Commander Wilde in the office sitting with her to talk about the issues.

I will say this, and I have said the same thing in here before: since I have been Minister for Police, I have been to Carnarvon four times—three times in the first 12 months, and once in January this year. When I went there most recently, I sought advice from the local police about their concerns about the challenges they are confronting and how they might be addressed. They told me two things that they would most benefit from. The first was the destocking of glass. I note there was a claim in the media today by one of the people in Carnarvon who sells alcohol that they have destocked. That is not true. The police said to me that the destocking of glass was necessary. If we drive around town, we see locations where there is, unfortunately, harmful use of alcohol going on in great quantities, and there is broken glass everywhere. That was the first thing the police asked for. Just about all the alcohol that is sold to people in takeaway glass bottles can be sold in cans, so that is a pretty simple thing. They are saying that to me because they want the liquor accord, which did not really get together until last week, to voluntarily destock glass.

That was the first thing. I turn now to the second thing the police asked for. The member for Cottesloe, with his vast experience of the regions and the challenges confronting people, ranted in this place about how alcohol is not a major driver of crime.

Dr D.J. Honey: I didn't say that; I said your ban won't stop it coming into the regions.

Mr P. PAPALIA: He said restrictions—not bans—would not have an impact. That is what he said. He said we would be dreaming if we thought that.

I talk to the police when I go to these places. In Carnarvon, as I said earlier today, the police said that they are enabled to put in place limited alcohol restrictions and shut takeaway liquor stores under the Liquor Control Act, which gives them the opportunity to do so in response to things like funerals or concerns about impending trouble in the event that there are large amounts of alcohol available. They say that every time they do that, there is a substantial drop in crime and in presentations at the hospital. There is a direct correlation between a reduction in alcohol and the damage that is being done in the community that police have to deal with. It is not just me saying that, but for the member for Cottesloe to suggest that he has some greater knowledge is just laughable.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: How many times has the member been to Fitzroy Crossing?

Dr D.J. Honey: Five times in six years.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I have been going there since I was elected in 2007. Does the member know what happened in 2007? June Oscar and Emily Carter campaigned for restrictions of takeaway full-strength alcohol in Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek. Does the member know what happened? There was a dramatic reduction in crime and attendance at schools increased. At that time there were Royal Flying Doctor Service flights from Fitzroy Crossing to Broome at least twice a month, taking people to hospital. That changed overnight.

The member made the suggestion that there were piles of alcohol; I think he may be exaggerating a little. I have been there, and I was there at the time the member was talking about. It is true that there is sly grogging. When I was Minister for Racing and Gaming in the last government, we amended the Liquor Control Act to give police greater powers to intercept sly grogging. There have been floods recently, and before that we had COVID; the Kimberley

was cut into four and it was very difficult to get around, so it is difficult to see whether it is still happening, but prior to that, I was concerned that there was sly grogging that was having an impact on the communities that had voluntarily gone dry as a result of powerful arguments by strong women. I think, over time, the impact of that has diminished as a consequence of sly grogging. We have to focus on that. It is undeniable that the harmful use of alcohol is a key element; it is easily the biggest thing. It results in children being brain damaged at birth and high rates of foetal alcohol spectrum disorder. It is incredible that the member would question that; I do not know why he has.

That aside, I can tell members that since the end of the major impact of COVID at the start of last year, every jurisdiction in Australia and just about every modern jurisdiction around the world has experienced an escalation in family and domestic violence and assaults. I do not think that is unrelated to the fact that we have gone through a pandemic and that there is extraordinary anxiety, with all the attendant consequences of that on people's health. It doubtless has something to do with the harmful use of alcohol and other drugs, but all of that is true, and we are responding to it. We are responding to community safety and we are growing the police force by the biggest numbers in the history of this state. There will be 15 per cent growth.

We are recruiting police from overseas, but not because no-one in Western Australia wants to volunteer. It is actually offensive when members opposite say that. When members of the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA say that Western Australians do not want to be police officers, it is offensive. I can tell members right now that there are 180 recruits at the academy who have all stepped up. I am going to a graduation ceremony tomorrow night. These good, young people—they are all young to me; some of them are a bit older, but they are all still young compared with me!—are stepping forward and volunteering for service before self in the interests of the state, and they are doing so in huge numbers. Over the last two years, we have recruited and graduated bigger numbers of police officers than ever before in WA history, and that is going to continue. Thousands of people are continuing to express interest in joining the Western Australia Police Force.

The year before last year, before there was any attrition story, I asked the police to prepare a plan to recruit overseas and interstate because I could see on the horizon lower and lower unemployment rates in Western Australia and greater and greater employment opportunities, and I could see that there would be a need to seek further pastures with regard to recruiting. That is not in response to last year; that was in advance of last year. I am not desperately going to the UK; I am going anywhere we need to go to help the police with the resources, numbers and capabilities they need. We will deliver on recruiting people, and the officers who come from the UK and Ireland will have a minimum of three years' experience. They will not be coming in with the same need for training; they will have an 18-week course, and then they will be out there supporting people.

That is a good thing, not a bad thing. The member for Cockburn indicated earlier that we are very focused on organised criminals—the ones bringing illicit drugs into this state, predominantly meth, which does an extraordinary amount of damage and finds its way out into regional communities. We can disrupt that if we give greater, very targeted powers to the police, and we are doing that in a range of areas. We are going to make the community safer by rewriting the Firearms Act and imposing a more responsible regime on firearms in Western Australia, elevating community safety as a number one priority. That is not the case currently. The Minister for Racing and Gaming introduced the protected entertainment precincts bill; that is providing additional safety for people, and we are resourcing and supporting our police like never before.

It is kind of laughable to suggest that the police minister could in any way have too much of an impact on morale at a unit level. The people who drive our morale are hurt and damaged by the criticism of members of the Liberal Party and National Party. When they say morale is low, they are actually saying that the officers in charge of police stations are not doing their job. They are actually saying that the leaders of units in the Western Australia Police Force are not good leaders. That is not true. We have the best police force in the world, with some fantastic individuals. That applies particularly to some of those in leadership roles, from the top all the way down to the sergeants and senior constables. They are doing an extraordinary job and are world class.

I wish the opposition would stop this pathetic attempt to try to somehow attack us by attacking the police. It is not fair, and it is not right. Beyond that, we did not learn very much. I am very disappointed that opposition members would seek to perpetuate fearmongering and the like. They are a bit dysfunctional.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

House adjourned at 7.00 pm
