

Mr Peter Watson; Ms Andrea Mitchell; Mr David Templeman; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Fran Logan; Mr Ian Blayney;  
Mr John Quigley; Mr Mick Murray; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Frank Alban

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## PREMIER'S STATEMENT

### *Consideration*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR P.B. WATSON (Albany)** [2.47 pm]: Mr Speaker, before you so rudely interrupted me for question time, I was talking about Grange Resources, the employment of 2 000 fly in, fly out workers; the 100-kilometre slurry pipeline from the mine to the port; the construction of a new berth, filtration plant and shed at the port; the deepening and widening of the existing shipping channel; the construction of a desalination plant at Cape Riche, which has just received environmental approval; and the construction of a 288-kilometre, 330-kilovolt transmission line from Collie to the mine site. The definitive feasibility study is due to be completed in the first quarter of this year, and then \$2.57 billion in project finance needs to be sourced, but everyone knows that raising capital in today's financial markets is not as straightforward as it used to be.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, I would like to be able to hear the member for Albany in relative silence. I appreciate that sometimes conversations are necessary in this place, but I observe that there are some that are not necessary in this place; please take them outside. Member for Albany.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Speaker.

I am confident that a resource of this size with this ore quality will be developed, and hopefully there will be no lengthy delays. Cost-of-living pressures are hitting the people of Albany just as hard as they are elsewhere in Western Australia. Not a week goes by without someone contacting my office to say they are having trouble paying their power or gas bills. I am seeing this happen to more and more families on low to middle incomes; families who used to be able to get by but are now struggling to make ends meet and provide the necessities for their kids.

This will only get worse as we go into winter and, as always, will hit our pensioners the hardest as they are most vulnerable to any hike in power or gas prices.

The waiting list for the Albany dental clinic is also unacceptable. Why should people in need of dental treatment and who cannot afford private treatment have to wait for up to a year to get their teeth fixed? I have written to the Minister for Health on behalf of a constituent who has been told that the clinic is not taking appointments anymore because of the long waitlist and that the best he can do is to turn up at the clinic each day in the hope that another patient fails to show for an appointment. I will be interested to hear the minister's reply and I hope that the reason for such a long wait list is not simply that there are not enough dentists working at the clinic.

Although the Country Age Pension Fuel Card has been extremely popular and I commended it as a good use of royalties for regions funding, the complaints about the annual cost of living rebate not being enough are getting louder and louder. I urge the government to look at increasing the rebate so that it is more able to do what it is meant to do, which is to offset the increasing cost of living for our seniors who are on a fixed income.

Another area of concern is the difference in the price of LPG auto gas between regional centres. I have written to the Minister for Commerce with the concerns of Albany taxidriver who want an inquiry into this matter. Over the last three weeks, data from the FuelWatch website has shown that LPG is consistently cheaper in both Geraldton and Kalgoorlie compared with Albany, sometimes in the order of 9c to 10c a litre. There seems to be no apparent reason for this, as both Geraldton and Albany are a similar distance from Perth and, of course, Kalgoorlie is further. Taxidriver in Albany are doing it tough and get angry when they see such a price difference, as that can make a big difference to their profitability. They want something done about it, as do ordinary motorists who have LPG vehicles. It is bad enough every night seeing the difference in price between Albany and Perth or Albany and Bunbury, let alone regional centres that are a similar distance to Perth as Albany. Another complaint they have is that the flag fall per kilometre is the same as in Perth. In Albany the LPG price is 20 per cent more than in Perth, but the majority of fares are a far shorter distance than comparable fares in Perth. This means that it is much harder for a taxidriver in Albany to make any sort of a decent living compared with those in Perth.

I again urge the Minister for Transport to make sure that in this year's budget Albany schools are included in the electronic school zone program. Despite lobbying from me, the City of Albany and school community groups, Albany has missed out in the last two years and people are getting increasingly frustrated that the Liberal-National government cannot find the money to roll out the 40 kilometre-an-hour electronic speed signs in Albany, yet we see them being installed all over Perth with the government boasting how quickly it is rolling them out.

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[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 22 February 2012]

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Recently the Albany Speedway Club hosted a round of the World Series Sprintcars championship. That is the highest level of competition for sprintcar drivers and is the equivalent of hosting an Australian Football League game. The committee of the club, president Kevin Theyer, Jeff Baker, Cameron Newbold, Jodie Bovell, Leanne Dowsett, Dave Trewern, Rob Wolfenden, Tanya Hanbury, Henk Hart and Keith Kinnear took the brave leap of faith to have a go at hosting it. The club had been offered a Wednesday night round previously, but they declined. It was then offered a Friday night round, because the World Series Sprintcar Association saw that the club was going places. The committee then set about raising the \$48 000 needed to upgrade the facilities to host the event, and to their credit they found the money. Twenty-nine sprintcars nominated for the event and a crowd of 4 000 people turned out to watch, which ensured it was a great success. The event had a 10-metre long big screen to replay highlights of each race. Before the event, four different teams took their sprintcars and transporters to four of our local primary schools for the kids to climb in and out of.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** They also had a world series pit party, during which the pits were open for an hour so the kids could meet the drivers and get autographs. In three weeks' time they will be hosting the national Super Sedan Series championship. What a great performance by a voluntary sporting group in Albany.

The Great Southern Storm is a football development program that aims to give its squad of players elite training and intensive programs that will strengthen football in the Great Southern. It also tries to entice good kids to play footy as a means of reducing obesity and developing good citizenship and life skills within them, and to produce a number of quality players who can play for local clubs and thereby improve the standard of local football. The Great Southern is the recruiting zone for the Claremont Football Club, which has 11 players from the region who are playing for the Claremont Colts, eight of whom have come from the Great Southern Storm program. I also must mention that a girl's group also plays. I do not know whether they go down to watch the boys or the boys go down to watch the girls. It is great to see those young girls playing sport because, as we know, they do not always have the necessary facilities and obesity can be a problem. It is great that they are down there with the boys from Storm. Under the guidance of the football operations manager Darrell Panizza and coaches Phil Gilbert, Dean Prouse and Raymond Joy, Storm has developed a team that showed a great deal of commitment and skill in a recent game against the Claremont Colts, despite the Storm boys being a year younger. The relationship between Claremont and Storm is also growing well as they prepare players for the Colts team, with the recent announcement that Claremont has increased sponsorship to \$10 000. Storm players such as Jessie Laurie, Angus Litherland, Jerry McGovern, Marley Williams—Marley went to play for Collingwood and kicked two goals the other day—and Josh Bootsma have all been listed with AFL clubs. Brendan Abbott is another young player benefitting from the Storm program, having been the captain of the WA under 16s. He is now starting to show his full potential.

During the year we have had issues with the Albany Police and Community Youth Centre. I had an opportunity to catch up with Karl O'Callaghan last Friday night when he and his band The Filth were in Albany to play at the PCYC ball on the following night to raise money for the PCYC. It is not a bad band for a mob of policemen! They were very good. I do not know how much we raised on the night, but I know that it cost me a lot at the auction. I talked to Karl on Friday and organised a meeting to look at the way the PCYC and the Strike Program work in Albany. On Friday night there were 80 young people there who were being looked after at the PCYC. At 9.00 pm two busloads of kids were taken home. The kids who go there feel protected because the police are around. It is a safe place for them to be and they get taken home afterwards.

I had a meeting with Terry Eaton, who is an award-winning police officer with the PCYC, and he explained to the commissioner just what the PCYC does. I think the commissioner now has a much better understanding of what is happening down there. He said that Terry can stay in the PCYC. I said to Karl that we must look at these things on an individual basis. We cannot say that some PCYCs do not need the police to be there. I was umpiring a basketball match the other night and asked one of my young Nyoongah friends, who I am teaching to become a basketball umpire, what he does on Friday nights and he said that he goes down to the Strike. I asked him why he goes there and he said that it was because it is safe. There were 80 kids there who otherwise probably would have been walking the streets. When the kids go to the PCYC they feel safe because Terry is there. My friend told me that Terry is his mate. This is what we should be getting the police officers to do. They should get out there and get the confidence of the people so that they know the police are good people who will provide them with a safe place.

The Fairy Slappers are back in action again. The Relay for Life event will be held later in the year and they also have a golf day coming up soon. I have explained to the house on a previous occasion that the Fairy Slappers are a group of women in Albany and that a friend of theirs died from cancer. I am the only male Fairy Slapper but I will not tell members what they call me; they have given me a nickname but I cannot use it in Parliament! The

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Fairy Slappers have raised over \$30 000 in the last three Relay for Life events. They are a great bunch of women but I cannot mention in Parliament some of the things they get me to do!

We had a great Olympic fundraiser in Albany with Andrew Vlahov and Kim Mickle. Graham Moss was one of the organisers and we raised \$15 000 on the day. It is funny: I was very good friends with Andrew Vlahov's mum and dad, Eva and Len, and during the event I let everyone know that I used to pick up this little fat kid at the athletics and cart him around while his mum and dad were competing. Today, he is not a fat kid; he is about a six-foot-seven Olympic and basketball legend. Both he and young Kim Mickle, who told me that she had been taught at school by the member for Mandurah, were at the fundraiser.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** A great kid!

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** She is. If anyone is an Olympic role model for young people, it is Kim. When I look at her throwing the javelin, I think about the pressure that puts on her body. I used to say, "I don't know how you can throw a candlestick; you are so small!" Then I watched a show on Foxtel in which they showed her weight program and her training schedule. When I was a runner, we used to watch the javelin throwers and the shot putters, so that they did not spear us! I saw the work that Kim puts in and her dedication. I think that she finished sixth in the world titles two years ago. She is a tremendous person and she is what the Olympics are all about. We hear all this stuff about drug taking and the Olympics. But the Olympics are about the youth of the world getting together to compete.

Go through, member for Collie—Preston. I am talking about the Olympics and seeing you has put me off!

**Mr M.P. Murray** interjected.

**Mr P.B. WATSON:** That is very funny. The late Paul Andrews, MLA, always introduced me to his friends visiting Parliament as "the Olympic runner; and, by the way, he and I have won the same number of gold medals!"

I must congratulate the state government on securing a round of the athletics for Perth. It was great to watch people such as Sally Pearson run. I had seen her run and was standing up to watch the start of the 400 metres when all these young kids, all athletes who just need someone to take an interest to make them go forward, rushed up to get her autograph. Sally just stood there signing and it was tremendous to see. It was great to see all the athletes. With the Olympics coming up, I know the tension that will be going through their bodies. I know about their training and their diet. I know that if someone coughs near them, they will be getting out of the way because they will not want to get a cold as they approach the final hurdle before the Olympic Games. I wish them all the best of luck in the next three or four weeks and hope that their dream of going to an Olympics will come true.

We have a little athletics group in Albany and we will hold the regional little athletics carnival in Albany. I am sure that everyone, from right throughout WA, will be coming to Albany later in the year and I will be down there to make sure that everything goes well.

I move on to third party appeals. I was very disappointed by the City of Albany last night. Albany was unique in that it was the only council or shire in the state that had third party appeals. Hon John Day sent a letter to the City of Albany saying that the government wanted the council to get rid of third party appeals, and the council rolled over. It rolled over! A little while ago in Albany, there was a plan to build some units at Little Grove. The third party appeal was available for the community of Little Grove. The community did not win, but during the case was able to find and change the things that the City of Albany and the developers had made mistakes on. Now that right has been taken away.

We had the Earl Street issue. Someone was going to build a huge number of flats and units and block out the view for the people on the hill—completely out of sync with the Albany community—and third party appeals stopped. Now the Liberal—National government has said that Albany is the only place in the state that still had third party appeals and we will not have them anymore, and that the plan for Albany will be held up. We were therefore more or less blackmailed into agreeing to that, which I think is an absolute disgrace.

A constituent of mine has issues with the standards panel. Because of issues with the City of Albany an inquiry was set up by the minister so long ago that I cannot remember when it started. We all know that the City of Albany has had a lot of issues over a period of time with people suing everybody. Letters were sent by one of the councillors, Roley Paver, to the inquiry. Other people have been referred to the standards panel. Every time I ask the Minister for Local Government about what is happening with the inquiry—I asked him in budget estimates last year and the year before—I find that still nothing is happening. I want to know what is happening with the standards panel. The minister should not have an inquiry and just bury it, because he probably will not get the answers he wants.

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A waste levy was imposed by the City of Albany. The Minister for Local Government said, “No, it’s wrong”, so the City of Albany got a lawyer and said, “We are right.” The situation therefore in the City of Albany at the moment is that this lawyer says this and that lawyer says that. That is not the way to run a local council.

A resolution for businesses to trade seven days a week was passed by the Albany council last night. That will happen in Albany only if a resolution for Sunday trading is passed. However, the council said it would have to go out and consult with people before it takes the resolution to the minister. Instead of consulting beforehand with local business and with the community, the council made the decision. There was a recommendation from one of the councillors to ask people first and then make the decision, but they did it the other way around. I just cannot understand that.

It is great to see and I congratulate the Premier for getting the Katanning hostel inquiry well underway. There are issues about some of the people not having their names released in the public arena, but I think the judge just wants to get the inquiry over. I think at the end of the inquiry the names of these people will be released. I congratulate the government for initiating the inquiry and I congratulate Justice Blaxell for the work he is doing. I think there will be a lot of closure for the people who were abused over a large period of time.

**MS A.R. MITCHELL (Kingsley)** [3.06 pm]: I am pleased to rise to respond to the Premier’s Statement at the commencement of this 2012 parliamentary year. The reason I am pleased to respond is that the state of Western Australia is in a very, very good position. We are very fortunate that we have a strong economy. We have an economy that is much better off than most of the other states and territories. In fact Western Australia is in a better position than many countries, and that is a wonderful place for us to be at the moment. We also have a state that is experiencing growth in business and in the population. Yes, it looks like we might have some problems but we are planning and preparing for that. It means that people want to come to Western Australia because it is a good place to live and work and to make the most of the opportunities that are available here.

Another very good thing about Western Australia at the moment is that we are building infrastructure. I specifically mention the health rebuild, because it is a complete rebuild of health services. Those sorts of things are usually set up one at a time, but this is the whole lot going through expansion, growth and in fact new infrastructure.

The other good thing about being in Western Australia at the moment is that there are jobs—plenty of jobs. We have a very, very low unemployment rate, and that is great for all people within the community. I guess all this comes together because what is really good about Western Australia at the moment is that it is governed by a very strong government, and that is a Liberal–National government that is prepared to make these decisions. Many people in this chamber often say, “Oh yes, but not everyone is receiving the benefits of this boom and this economy.” Many of the benefits are indirect, but by setting a very good basis, we will ensure that there is a good future for the people of Western Australia, and we are planning for that future. The standards in this state are looked up to by people in other states who wish the standards in their state could be like ours.

Okay, so we have a strong Liberal–National government. What does that mean? We actually have a Premier and ministers who make decisions. They make decisions and they act on them. They know their portfolios and overall they make a difference. Another good thing that is very important is that they actually stand up against the federal government and do not get pushed into decisions that they know are not right for the state. It might be easier for them to do that—get pushed into decisions—but they know they are not right for the state or for the future of the state and they will not get pushed around. Often, once they have stood up for the rights of the state, other states tend to follow. So, we do have ministers and a Premier who are very strong in their convictions and who will stand up for Western Australia and make tough decisions. They could easily make the easy decisions, the ones that might get a popular vote in the short term, but that is not what they are about. They are making decisions for the good of Western Australia and the future of Western Australia.

The other very important thing about this Liberal–National government is that it has been consistent in its policies and its direction. We will not see changes of policy throughout this term of government like we have recently seen from the opposition with shopping hours. We will not see a change in policy on uranium mining, like we have seen from the opposition in recent weeks. We have been strong in our policies, we have been committed in our direction, and the ministers and the Premier are following that through.

What do these sorts of things mean to my electorate? I will start with education because it is an area that I am obviously very keen on. The independent public schools initiative has been very well received. It is wonderful to see. When we walk into a school that is involved in the independent public schools initiative, we see and feel energy and enthusiasm. I have walked into schools where I can feel a cloud hanging over the place like there is nothing they can do. They are sad places. Now we see more schools saying, “Gee, we can do this”, or “We can give it a go”. That is so exciting. Teachers know that they can do things differently. They do not have to do the same thing that someone else is doing.

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I have two secondary colleges in my electorate, which are both independent schools. One is linked with three other primary schools to form the Woodvale cluster. It is interesting that a fourth primary school is in the feeder network for that cluster, and it is not an independent public school. The schools that are in the cluster have said that they have to invite Halidon Primary School into the cluster because it is doing a lot of work with year 7s in the high school now, and things like that, and they do not want the students from Halidon Primary School to miss out. They have said to Halidon Primary School that it should be part of what they are doing anyway, because they want its students to benefit from what is going on. That certainly shows that this initiative has given confidence. They are not competing with other schools now; they are working collectively and cooperatively to get the best educational outcomes for the students. Another school in my electorate, Greenwood Senior High School, has just come on board. It has regularly worked with its closest primary school but also the others. Now it wants to show what is available to it even more.

Outside of the independent public schools program I see success in what the schools are doing in education. Woodvale Secondary College celebrated the presentation of the Beazley Medal for Vocational Education and Training to Nicole Kerr in 2011. What a delightful and humble student Nicole is. After talking with her and her parents, it is very refreshing to know that the future of education —

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Is she in a school in your area?

**Ms A.R. MITCHELL:** Yes, she attended Woodvale Secondary College. Another 12 students from the college received the certificate of excellence. Ten per cent of the graduating students from Greenwood Senior High School scored over 90 per cent in their Australian tertiary admission rank results. They are very high standards for schools in my area.

Air conditioning is being installed in schools throughout my electorate and will be completed by 30 June 2012. I congratulate many of the P&Cs in those schools for undertaking to arrange for air conditioning to be installed. Some are already completely air-conditioned.

There has been a lot of talk recently about transport and what has not happened and what is not going on. I am sorry that the member for Joondalup is not in the chamber. I am certainly proud of the proposed expansion of the Mitchell Freeway from two lanes to three lanes between Hepburn Avenue and Hodges Drive going north, as is the member for Ocean Reef and the member for Wanneroo. I say to the member for Joondalup that we have done it and he did not. He can complain as much as he likes but we have got it going. I am sure he will read my remarks in *Hansard*. What a difference it will make for people travelling home from work. It is difficult leaving the city centre at three o'clock in the afternoon. It is a slow trip home. I also want to see it picked up going into the city. We have made a start, and I am really looking forward to that expansion. I thank the Minister for Transport for listening to us on that.

Something else I am very proud about, which the minister has also mentioned, is a number of new bus services. My electorate has a new bus service that started on Monday. The Public Transport Authority told me that there could not be a bus service running east to west on Hepburn Avenue. For three years I have been talking to the PTA. The Minister for Transport said, "Yes, you will get it. That bus service will run from east to west. It can go into Greenwood train station. No, it's not going to be a bus interchange, but, yes, there will be a bus service." It started on Monday, 20 February. It travels between Greenwood train station and Kingsway City Shopping Centre along Hepburn Avenue. Seniors are happy and commuters are happy. Students who travel to St Stephen's School in Duncraig can catch a bus from Kingsway City. They do not have to be driven all the way because there has been no other way to get there. Guess what I hear, though? I hear people from other suburbs say, "Can't we possibly take that all the way out to Hillarys?" I tell them it is my absolute wish to run a circle bus route around that area, but I am very pleased at this point that for the first time in the northern suburbs we have a bus route that just goes east-west and not north-south.

Comments have also been made about the LED school speed signs. People query why they have not got them. Once again, we have a minister who has said, "Make more of them. Get them done. Get them out." Yes, they are fantastic; they are a wonderful security system for students in our schools. Parents are happy, teachers are happy. They do not do away with crosswalk attendants, because we still need those valuable resources, but it can be done—the school signs can be produced more quickly and we can get them out. It is occurring.

Many seniors live in my area. As I have explained to the house before, I have an ageing electorate because the group that built their houses are now moving into retirement. They have greatly appreciated the support seniors have received, particularly through the Seniors Card and the free travel arrangements for seniors.

Law and order is something that everyone knows is a problem and feels as though nothing ever really gets done about it. I am very proud to announce that police figures show that there has been a decrease of 47 per cent in the number of incidents of graffiti in the Kingsley electorate in the 12 months to 2011. In Woodvale it is down

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15 per cent; in Kingsley it is down 67 per cent; in Greenwood it is down 53 per cent. That is a great achievement. It is wonderful to drive around in the morning and not see tags and things going on. I certainly want to pay tribute to the residents of the electorate who call whenever they see something and the City of Joondalup, which has a great response time and gets out and cleans it up. I want to thank the residents who report the graffiti, the people get out and work on it and the City of Joondalup for taking such a proactive approach. Antisocial behaviour such as hooning and things such as that still seem to be perceived as a main issue. Once again, I am very pleased to report that incidents on the police records are not as high as people might think.

Over the last three years I have been in the habit of running an annual community forum. It was unfortunate that it had to start because of a specific issue in the suburb of Woodvale, but I have kept it going. Each year in February I invite police—my electorate straddles two police districts, Warwick and Joondalup. Other attendees include representatives from the City of Joondalup, school principals, student services people and pastors; they come to my office and we discuss matters. I usually refer to information that I have received from community surveys, the police refer to their records, the city has its own documents and the schools also have information. We share information. At the last community forum, which was held in February, we all had to say “What a change!” Over the last three years there has been a significant reduction in negativity. I am not sure whether it is because of police activity within the area, but it is a very positive thing. It is not something we can sit back on our laurels about, but it is certainly something that has made a difference, and people can feel it in the area. That is because there has been a concerted effort to make sure that issues that could have been and were once a problem are not now.

I mention Yellagonga Regional Park. Many people do not realise how large and how important it is. It covers 1 400 hectares. It is a park that has a significant environmental impact and many historical and Indigenous aspects to it. It is a unique feature, and I am very keen to develop some initiatives for the park. I have been talking to the Minister for Environment and the Premier. I think that as development moves further north, we need to retain and recognise the importance of these significant natural features, and Yellagonga Regional Park is certainly one of those. Once again, I am pleased to see the further investment in part of this park, certainly in Woodvale, with a spend of \$1 million dollars over two years for two walk trails, and for heritage work to be undertaken on Perry’s Cottage in Perry’s Paddock. The walk trails around the area are phenomenal—they are wonderful—and people use them well.

I now want to talk generally about my community. My community is a great community. The people in my community work hard. They contribute to the community well. Most of the people in my community have work. People are able to access the sort of work they like and the sort of work they want to do. I have a number of young people in my community. It is important to note that they have many employment and training opportunities. They can access those training opportunities, and certainly there is growth in training within the Joondalup precinct. Many of the people in my community are small business people; some are in retail, but many are in their own small businesses. The introduction of the Small Business Commissioner has been well received by these people, and they certainly will benefit from having that position available to them so that they will not need to go to the State Administrative Tribunal or to the court as quickly as they might otherwise have had to do.

I also want to mention the extensions to Joondalup Health Campus, which is not in my electorate but is a health campus that many people in my electorate use. The people who have been to that health campus recently cannot speak highly enough of the service that it provides and the standard of care.

I also want to talk a bit about the state, because we also need to recognise that part of the reason that Western Australia is doing so well is the many positive things that are happening around the state. It has certainly been noted that Western Australia is rated as one of the top locations in which investment should occur for mining. People have seen that because of our standards, our approvals processes and the opportunities that are available to them, Western Australia is a good place in which to invest, and mining companies are looking at that and seeing what opportunities are available to them. To go to the other extreme, I remember an earlier time when people were very concerned about the rock lobster fishery and about how we were curtailing it and it was falling apart and that would be the end of it. That fishery is now back and very strong once again. That is because tough decisions were made, but they have been worth it in the long run.

People in the state and people in my area are very keen about being sustainable and using renewable energies. People want to make a contribution to that, and the take-up has been outstanding.

We can see the infrastructure development that is taking place in this state. We have talked about the major stadium. Yes, it is important. Yes, we need it. Yes, we need to be visionary. No, we do not want to just redo something that we already have. I think that is what is going on. We are not just rebuilding. We are building and we are creating and we are looking ahead so that we are prepared for the future.

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I am not going to say that everything in this state is fantastic. A number of things still bother me. One of those things is the aggressive and negative culture that is often associated with drinking and drugs and crime. That is not something I like. It is certainly not something I am proud of. I get very concerned when I hear about people getting bashed. We need to somehow recreate a culture that is respectful of people and respectful of people's property. We also need a society that is prepared to give and to do some volunteering, not just to see what is there for them. Many people seem to have low self-esteem. Many people seem to think that they get friendship by having a Facebook page. I do not believe that is what we are about. We are social beings, and we need to make sure that we have good, positive social interaction.

I love Western Australia. I love living here. I love being part of it. I am very pleased that during this period of uncertainty that the world is experiencing, about which we read day in and day out, I am very much part of a Liberal-National government that is creating wealth and creating jobs; that is building infrastructure that will benefit the community both now and in the long term; that is setting a viable future; that is building a society in which education and training is important and is valued; and that is looking after our land, our country and its people.

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah)** [3.24 pm]: I would like to make a very appropriate contribution to the Premier's Statement debate, and I preface that with the Premier's clear indication yesterday during question time of what he thinks about the City of Mandurah and, indeed, the wider Peel region. In question time yesterday the member for Albany asked the Premier a question about the relocation of government departments to Albany. When the Premier said the state government sees Bunbury as the second centre of administration in Western Australia, the member for Cockburn called out, "What about Mandurah?" This is a key point because this now defines how this government, through this Premier, sees the City of Mandurah. His response was, "Mandurah is in the metropolitan area as far as I am concerned."

That is factually incorrect. I have mentioned in this place on a number of occasions that, according to the current acts of Parliament that define the metropolitan area, Mandurah is clearly described as being outside the metropolitan area. When people in this place and, indeed, the Premier say, as he did on the radio last week, that the only other centre outside Perth with more than 50 000 people is greater Bunbury, they are factually incorrect. The Premier is perpetrating absolutely incorrect information. The largest regional city outside the metropolitan area is the City of Mandurah. As I have said in this place before, until a government of any persuasion moves to amend the legislation—the act that determines the boundaries for the metropolitan area—I will stand in this place and defend my city and my region.

I found the Premier's comment yesterday clearly defined how this government sees Mandurah. His comment demonstrates that this government is bypassing my community and my region. I am sick and tired of the Barnett government bypassing my city and my region. Mandurah and the Peel region continue to be one of the fastest growing regions in not only Western Australia but Australia. The Peel region includes the vibrant towns of Pinjarra, Dwellingup, Boddington and Waroona and the growing communities in the Serpentine-Jarrahdale shire. Mandurah as a city, as the regional centre, is very proud of its identity and we will not take lightly any comment from any person from any party who seeks to define us without consulting us. I ask all members in this place, to recognise that until there is an amendment to the act it is the will of the people of Mandurah and the will of the people of the Peel region to fiercely defend—fiercely defend—our regional status. I will fiercely defend our regional status. I am sick of this government and this Premier bypassing the people of Mandurah and the people of Peel.

It was the Labor government in 1993 that defined the Peel region by creating the Peel Development Commission. In government we reinforced the regional status of Mandurah. I want to tell members how. We maintained and strengthened regional departments in Mandurah. We built the new government buildings to house the Department of Water and the Department of Fisheries. We established a water police unit there because of the need. What has the Barnett-Grylls government done in its three and half long years? It has watered down, eroded and now literally destroyed our regional status. How has it done that? Under Labor we used to have a Peel police district that had autonomy over the Peel's five local government areas. What has this government done? It has dissolved that and put us into the south metropolitan police region. What has that caused? It has caused a dissolving of the effectiveness of good quality community policing. That is not the fault of our police men and women. The restructuring has devalued what the member for Willagee was talking about yesterday—that is, good quality community policing with the police officers who knew and know the local families, who know young people in the community and who work with them on a day-to-day basis. That has been dissolved; the government took away the autonomy of the Peel police district and put us in the south metro. Now we have police officers from the Mandurah station having to travel up and back through to the Rockingham and Kwinana areas in communities that they have not known or do not know, and policing areas such as

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Singleton and Golden Bay, which are left in no man's land in terms of policing, as was very well highlighted by the member for Warnbro yesterday.

What else did this government do? Under Labor we used to have the Peel District Education Office with the Peel district education director—a person who was of senior status in terms of having the ear of the director general direct. I understand that this has also happened in Albany, member for Albany. What did the government do? It took away our own Peel district education director who understood the real issues affecting schools in my electorate and the Peel, and understood the peculiarities of the population catchment—their needs. So many schools in the Peel have catchments with low-income families. The government took it away and created a super director. I have great faith in, and respect for, Margaret Collins, but she is now responsible for 240 schools in her south metropolitan district. She is now responsible for 240 schools from places as diverse as Fremantle through to Cannington and the Canning area, and then down through to the Rockingham and Kwinana area and down into Mandurah and the Peel. She is responsible for 240 schools. That is ridiculous.

These are just two examples of how this government is downgrading our city and our region and making us the poor cousin of Perth and a community that is simply at the end of the line. I am outraged by what the Premier confirmed yesterday. We would have thought that we might have had the Deputy Premier, the member for Dawesville, make some comment about this issue and stand up for the region. We would have thought that other Liberal Party members who represent parts of the Peel would have stood up and said, "Hey, wait a second! We value our region; we value our identity." No; there were none. The Deputy Premier does nothing; he is missing in action. In fact, he is missing in action on a whole range of issues down in my electorate. We never hear from him. His people who contact my office say, "You can't get a meeting with him; you can't talk to him." He is missing in action. It is about time that he stood up for community, for our community, the community of Peel, because I am sick and tired of standing in this place defending my community, defending my region and defending my city. The person who could be doing the same, the Deputy Premier, who is quite happy to collect an allowance as a regional member of the Western Australian Parliament, when asked to stand up for his community has gone missing.

I want to go further. What did the Peel region, the third highest royalty generating region in Western Australia, get out of the \$900 million-plus royalties for regions money in 2010–11? It got \$8.6 million. Less than one per cent of the royalties for regions fund in 2010–11 went back to the Peel, even though it creates the third highest amount of royalties for the state. This is despite the fact that the Peel region, and Mandurah in particular, continues to house more and more of the fly in, fly out workers who travel to the north west, thereby creating those royalties. Nothing is being given back to those families. Nothing is being given back to the region that is the third highest generator of royalty income for the state of Western Australia. The government gave us a pitiful less than one per cent. It is unfair and it demonstrates the Premier's lack of support for the City of Mandurah and the Peel. Does he not know that this is an important issue for one of the fastest growing regions in Western Australia? When I ask the Deputy Premier, the member for Dawesville, to stand and support me, he is missing in action. I believe that the Peel, particularly the City of Mandurah, is well placed to be a place where we can consolidate and increase the number of existing government departments. We are, because of Labor governments, now well connected with road and rail infrastructure. The Labor government invested heavily in those particular projects in the southern corridor. But the Premier looks over Mandurah, bypasses the Peel and looks towards Bunbury. I have no problem with Bunbury being a great regional city in its own right; it is. Bunbury has the capacity to generate jobs, income and economy in its own patch. The Premier keeps looking over us; he bypasses us.

Because of our key transport links, we should be encouraging the expansion of government offices and departments that are already in the Peel and should be looking at ways of relocating, if possible, parts of other important government departments. One particular department I think of is the Department of Planning, because the Peel has been recognised and acknowledged by government as one of the key regions in close proximity to the Perth metropolitan area that will be required to take a significant proportion of the population growth of the state over the next 20 years. More local jobs could be created and supported. We could even take pressure off the current choked transport system in Perth if we looked at creating jobs in the Peel and stimulating and supporting the economy even more to make sure that our region is seen as a place where new jobs can be consolidated and created. I am disgusted with the Premier's comments, but he has made it very clear how he sees us. At the next election, the Labor Party will reaffirm its belief in the Peel. It will reaffirm that it sees the Peel as a vibrant region of Western Australia in its own right and that the City of Mandurah is an important regional city, along with those other towns I mentioned in the wider Peel region that already make a very strong contribution to the economy of Western Australia and have the capacity to make an even greater contribution to the state of Western Australia.

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I want to move on to public transport. Labor brought the rail to Mandurah. Labor brought the freeway and the connection road to Mandurah. Over our time in government, we expanded the public transport networks, particularly bus services. But in the past three and a half years, little, if nothing, has been added to the bus network in particular. I want to focus on a couple of key areas, one of which is the Lakelands community in the north of Mandurah. It is a vastly growing community with a mix of retirees and young families. A lot of fly in, fly out workers have called Lakelands their home but they travel to the airport in Perth to go to their jobs. I know that a lot of isolated young mums bringing up little kids live there.

I went to a meeting in January at the Lattitude retirement village in Lakelands. It is a great retirement village. Already a couple of stages are complete and there are three or four more stages to go. More than 300 people will live there in a few short years. The bus service in Lakelands is totally inadequate. After that meeting in January, I wrote to the minister and asked him a couple of key things. I said that I wanted to raise a grievance in this place and I hope to do that. One of the things that the people of the Lattitude retirement village and other people in Lakelands want is a more frequent effective connecting service. The people of Lattitude in particular want Public Transport Authority officers to meet with them and me on site to look at the current route 587. These are people such as Mr Knowles, who wrote me a very good email that highlighted the problem very succinctly; that is, that the current 587 route does not service people living at the Lattitude retirement village in Bellambi Chase in Lakelands. Many of them, because they are older people, have a significant walk to get to the current 587 service. A simple rerouting would not only solve the problem for them, but also improve the overall service. I have asked, through the minister, to please get the PTA people down there so we can meet with them on site at the retirement village and go through what needs to happen. I have not had a response yet, but I, on behalf of the retirees at the Lattitude retirement village in Lakelands and the future residents of that retirement village, will do everything I can to ensure that we get the PTA to understand the problem.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** As well as Mr Knowles, I congratulate Mrs Maddren, who originally wrote to me on this issue earlier last year.

We need a public transport link from Mandurah to Pinjarra. The member for Murray–Wellington—I will give him some credit—has been putting in petitions and things, but he has not been getting any action from the minister. The member for Murray–Wellington is the most disgruntled member in this Parliament, apart from the member for South Perth! He really is. I know he has been banging his head against a brick wall to get this bus service to Pinjarra, which should go via Ravenswood. By the way, Ravenswood is not in my electorate; nor is Pinjarra, but the communities of Furnissdale and Barragup along Pinjarra Road are. However, that service would allow the people of Pinjarra and the people of Mandurah to be connected by an efficient public transport service. It does not exist now. It should; that is where a significant part of the growth of the Peel region is continuing to expand.

The PTA, particularly through this minister, uses a ridiculous model, and I know the minister keeps saying the same thing to the member for Murray–Wellington: “Oh well, you don’t come on the radar because you’re considered country”. This is the problem that I started off with right at the beginning of my speech! For some, we are metropolitan; for some, we are country. I will always define us as “country regional”, until someone in this place moves a motion to change the boundaries. A bus service to Pinjarra is critical. It would be great for the people of Pinjarra and even Waroona and Dwellingup to connect directly to the train service if they need it. Also, it would have a reverse benefit; the people of Mandurah and the wider area could get out to Pinjarra. I can see some great tourism opportunities; people could come down on the train and jump on a bus and go to Pinjarra for the day. There is some beautiful stuff in Pinjarra and the Shire of Murray. Why should we not have that connection? It is a growing part of the world, a growing part of Western Australia and we are going to put more and more people there. For goodness sake, recognise us as a growing region! We are a growing region, not part of the metropolitan area.

I want to talk about another thing. The member for Dawesville and the member for Murray–Wellington have been lost on this issue—that is, the protection of the waterways of the Peel–Harvey estuary. We have just reached the end of an Appeals Convenor process with regard to the proposed channel and a marina development on Point Grey. Where are the local Liberal members representing their community? Where were their submissions to the Environmental Protection Authority report? Where were their submissions to the Appeals Convenor when I know that people in their electorates are up in arms about the threat this proposal poses to the health and wellbeing of the Peel–Harvey system? We cannot hear them. They are nowhere to be seen. Why are they not representing their community like I have had to get up and do? I have nailed my colours to the mast and I have said that the scientific, anecdotal and historical evidence shows that if this proposed development is allowed to go ahead, in my view, we will create the straw that breaks the camel’s back.

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We already know that the Serpentine River is now biologically dead. It was stated in a report released in late 2011. We know that the Murray River system is under great stress. We know that the Peel–Harvey system is the jewel in the crown of the waterways. One would think that even if those local members support the proposal, they would say something publicly. Where are they? They are deafening in their response. They must be held accountable to their electors. I am. If my electors think that I am talking rubbish, they will tell me. I am taking a stand, but I am the only one. The Liberal members for Dawesville and Murray–Wellington do not say a blinking word about one of the most important environmental impact considerations that the Peel–Harvey system faces.

I will give the member for Darling Range a bit of credit. He has come to a number of launches. We launched the Ramsar management plan late last year. I congratulate the member because he came down. He supports the Peel–Harvey Catchment Council and the people involved in that, as I do, but we do not see the other two members I mentioned. This is the most important environmental consideration since the Dawesville Channel was opened in 1993 and, of course, considered in the lead up to 1993. If it were Margaret River where all the wealthy people have land ownership, it would be a different story. There would be political influence and political influence attempts to the EPA and to the minister. But because it is Mandurah, because it is Peel and because this government keeps bypassing us, it does not rate on the radar. But if it were Margaret River and the Premier took a deep interest in it, do not worry; there would be a few calls going through to say, “Make sure that Margaret River proposal does not get up. Make sure that coal seam gas stuff does not get up.” That is the truth. I challenge anyone across the chamber to say that I am wrong. I reckon that that is what has happened with this particular proposal. Because it is not seen by this government as iconic like Margaret River—I do not have a great deal of respect for Margaret River—it is not given the due respect for the seriousness of what is proposed.

We already know how they have stuffed up and had problems down in Busselton and Geographe Bay at the Port Geographe development. Poor people have already bought there and cannot sell because they have this huge problem for which no-one wants to take responsibility. The government says that it is not its responsibility. The local government says that it is not its responsibility. The developers, who have now fallen over a couple of times, say that it is not their responsibility. That is the same problem that faces us in the Peel. The proposal is to put through this channel, which is 2.5 kilometres long and 50 metres wide. It has an interesting depth. The depth is deeper than one would normally expect. Why? Because it is a marketing tool. It will allow those huge vessels with a big draught to get across. They will be able to roar out from there to the ocean.

**Mr J.J.M. Bowler:** Member for Mandurah, is this off the Serpentine or the Murray?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** No, this connects the Dawesville Channel straight across to the other side of the estuary. It is probably the narrowest point of the estuary.

Where have those Liberal members who represent the area been in the debate? They have been absolutely gutless and have not been around at all. They have not represented their communities. I have had a couple of emails from lifelong Liberal supporters saying to me, “This is what I’ve written to Marmion; this is what I’ve written to Hames”, but those members have done nothing. I have nailed my colours to the flag. I have said that I am opposed to it. I live in this community. I have been there for 25 years. I have spent half my life there. I have four children, and I want them to grow up and enjoy in the future what the waterways of the Peel–Harvey system have delivered to countless residents and visitors. That is why I am so passionate about this proposal, why I think it is so wrong and why I think the Liberal members of Parliament, in particular, should be standing up for their communities. They have not even been in the argument. It is a disgraceful performance by the Deputy Premier, the member for Dawesville; and, I am sorry to say, the member for Murray–Wellington, for whom I have bit more respect. I get worked up about this because I am really angry about it.

I want to finish on a couple of other key issues. If we are supposedly seen by the Premier as part of the metropolitan area, why is it that every day I have really crook people from my electorate who have been diagnosed with cancer, if they can get on the buses provided by the Department of Health, travelling up to the various hospitals—mainly Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, but sometimes Fremantle Hospital, and even Royal Perth Hospital? Every day the bus is chockers. I have been down there and seen it leave. These are sick people. I saw Graeme Brown the other day. Graeme lost his eye and a significant part of his face to cancer, and he has got the cancer back again. I spoke to him on Monday when he rang me. He said, “I don’t know how I’m going to get to and from Perth.” People might say, “You’ve got a train.” Sorry; I am talking about a sick person who has just had chemotherapy or radiation therapy. To get them to sit on the train for an hour ain’t good. What did this government decide? It decided that these people are not included in those who are eligible for the pensioner fuel card because they are supposedly in the metro area. Rubbish! Do members know the number one benefit that that fuel card could have for many residents in my electorate, particularly the elderly, and particularly those who are doing as Graeme has to do—that is, go up to Perth and back for weeks on end? It would benefit those people if that fuel card was used to pay for the fuel to go into someone’s car to get them up to Perth, or if they were given another option. However, some of the people in this place simply wipe us off and say, “But you’re metro.

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You've got a train; you're looked after." That is rubbish. Graeme is one of literally hundreds and hundreds of people, and the situation is getting worse, because they cannot always get on the bus. I can tell members that the partner of a person who is 70 or 80 years of age may be the only one who can drive them up to Perth and back for appointments. I am sorry; if anyone has travelled up to Perth on the freeway from Mandurah in the mornings to try to get to an appointment, they will know that they have to put aside two hours at least. That is the absolute truth. The only other option for these old people is to drive themselves. So I am reminding members opposite that when they just brush us off, as the Premier did, and call us a city that is just part of the metro area and has all the services et cetera, they are dead wrong, and he is dead wrong. Extend the fuel card to the pensioners of Mandurah. That is something that the Deputy Premier should have been fighting for right at the beginning, and he has failed dismally.

Finally, I will deal with law and order. I am sorry, Leader of the House; Minister for Police, the hub system is not working. What the minister did by allowing the Peel police district to be absorbed into the south metro district is not working. People like Des McLean, who works in the youth maritime program, told me that he would have the police dealing with the young fellows that he dealt with and that the police would be there all the time. That does not happen anymore. Under the old system it did. I will continue to question the effectiveness of that, and I will continue to argue that this minister and this government need to recognise that with the growth that has occurred in the Mandurah–Peel area, it is policing, and more policing resources—in police stations, not in big hubs further north—that will do the important job. We have to support our policemen and women. We should support them by resourcing them appropriately and not making them drive ridiculous distances to attend call-outs, which is what happens in Peel. My message to the Premier is simple: we are not part of the metropolitan area. Premier, what we are is the regional city of the Peel region.

**MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands)** [3.55 pm]: Maylands' demographics include some statistics about the median age of my constituents, which is 37. About 62 per cent of my constituents have been married, divorced or widowed, so there are children involved in that statistic.

**Dr M.D. Nahan:** Is that older or younger?

**Ms L.L. BAKER:** I do not actually know the specific ages of the married, divorced or widowed constituents. If the member specifically wants me to find out anyone's name, that is up to him.

Thirty per cent of the people in my electorate hold jobs as technicians, tradespeople, labourers, machine operators and drivers, while 9.2 per cent of my constituents work in a very low paid part of the employment spectrum; that is, in community work or human services. Thirty per cent of my constituents have a mortgage, and another 34.5 per cent are renting. Back in 2006—which is, of course, when the last census was completed—the median family income was \$1 230 a week in my electorate. Let us look at 2012 and ask: what is happening underneath the slice of our state's economy that is amassing enormous profits from the mining sector? We find the truth of what the Premier's policies have meant for the average family living in my electorate. In September 2011, 56 families a day were forced to ask for help to pay a utility bill. The number of people applying under the hardship utility grant scheme has quadrupled in two years, going from 475 approved in 2009 when the Barnett government first took office, to 1 683 last year. Of course this actually hides what is really going on. Many families are too proud to ask for help, and they struggle on. Some make it; some do not. The Premier's policies have forced an extra 10 000 people to seek help to manage bills. At the same time, we hear this week that 23 financial counsellors—they are the people who help the most vulnerable members in our community actually stay out of jail and keep their houses—will no longer be employed in this state to help vulnerable people adjust to the stress of living under this government.

Families in my constituency pay more than \$1 000 extra in household bills under the Barnett government, and there is no relief in sight. The Premier is demanding that cost reflectivity be achieved. After a 57 per cent increase in the cost of electricity, he is going to continue to drive for another 30 per cent increase. Maylands has its share of fly in, fly out workers. Some FIFO workers and families tell me they have seized on jobs in the mining sector in order to maintain their standard of living—in other words, to keep up with the bills or the price hikes that we directly attribute to the government's policies. We should not be misled if we hear the Premier say that the pain being experienced over the past two years, which is now building to a crescendo, is in any way, shape or form relevant to the carbon tax—it does not start until July 2012. It is hardly comparable to the extra \$1 000 a year my residents are paying by way of cost-of-living increases.

Some of my constituents are working in fly in, fly out mining jobs to earn enough money to pay their mortgages; others tell me that they seek employment in well-paid mining jobs to afford to purchase a home, often telling themselves and their families that they will only work up north until they get on top of their bills or until they get their mortgage underway, and then they are going to come back into a normal family life. The problem, of course, is that they find themselves locked into these jobs, having taken out a mortgage, or if the cost of living

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goes up—mortgages, electricity, gas, water, other fees and charges blow up—and they cannot afford to get jobs in the city because they simply do not make enough money to meet those bills. Non-mining-sector jobs do not pay enough to keep them going. The problems of isolation, separation, alienation, exclusion and readjustment for families are characteristic of FIFO arrangements. The government does not seem to have started to calculate the social cost of this phenomenon yet. I know of many families who have been unable to cope with the lifestyle and the absence of support; these families have been torn apart. I had that view reinforced this morning while listening to someone talk about the impact of fly in, fly out workers and their children's need for early childhood services.

Although some families are earning big dollars from the mining industry, organisations like the Western Australian Council of Social Service can provide us with evidence that many low and middle-income individuals and families—especially those not in mining jobs—are struggling with the cost of living. Barnett's price hikes to utilities have increased pressure on community service organisations to meet the urgent needs of not only the low-income workers—the people they are used to dealing with—but also this new group of middle-income earners. For low-income and vulnerable Western Australians the cost of accessing essential services such as electricity, water and gas consumes a disproportionately high percentage of their incomes. As a consequence, many cannot pay their utilities bills and need help. They end up in debt, or, in the worst-case scenario, end up being disconnected from that service. Back in 2009–2010, 2 744 people were disconnected from their power supply for non-payment of accounts; in 2010–11, a staggering 7 631 people were disconnected. We do not have to be Rhodes scholars to figure out that something is going wrong when that level of escalation happens in disconnections. I remember, from my days with WACOSS, hearing many sad stories—two cases in particular—of families who, having found themselves unable to pay bills and having been disconnected, had lit candles that had caused fires in which those families had died. Utility costs between 2009 and 2011 increased by 17 per cent, and gas costs rose by 31 per cent. Household electricity tariffs rose, as I said, by 57 per cent between 2009 and 2011. The Western Australian government predicts an increase of about 30 per cent in electricity prices by 2015. In 2011–12, these increases will mean that an average household's utility bills will be approximately \$3 500—an increase of \$232 on 2010–11.

I mentioned housing and mortgages and rental costs in my electorate, and I would like to talk a bit more about that. Thirty per cent of Maylands residents have a mortgage, so let us look at the state figures around mortgages and loans. An average loan of \$325 000 at a standard variable interest rate of 7.56 per cent repaid over 25 years requires monthly repayments of \$2 414.10—I must thank WACOSS for their utilities figures and these figures, by the way. This means that a household would require a gross annual income of \$86 900 a year to avoid being in housing stress—remember, having housing stress means that 30 per cent of a person's income goes on their housing.

A person with an average mortgage has to make nearly \$87 000 a year or else they are in trouble. The average household income is well below that, particularly if we take the cost-of-living model that uses the household income but does not include purchasing items like a new fridge, washing machine or drier. Indeed, the Western Australian Council of Social Service household model says that the average household income is \$47 400 a year. There is a significant difference between the WACOSS model and the nearly \$87 000 a year that is needed to repay an average mortgage.

Last night I had some dinner guests, two of whom are lawyers, who were able to refer me to Supreme Court figures on repossessions by banks. One of them is a family lawyer, and she told me how distressing she is finding the massive escalation in home repossessions. As far as I am aware, she was not making a political comment; she was commenting on her experience. She said she has seen a massive increase in the number of families that are divorcing or splitting up, and parents were trying to reach a settlement at the same time that they were in court over the repossession of their home. She said that that had not been a characteristic of her work until the last two or three years. Indeed, the increasing number of civil property possession applications before the Supreme Court is a stark indication of the pressures on WA households. There were 461 repossessions before the Supreme Court in the December quarter of 2011—the highest number recorded. That was 68 per cent higher than in September 2009, a year after the Liberal–National government was elected. The Supreme Court figures for the last two quarters indicate that the situation this financial year is looking worse than in the last year. For the first half of this financial year, repossession applications have increased by 41 per cent. At present, repossession applications are at the highest level in more than a decade. We know that rental costs in Perth and across regional WA have increased by 5.6 per cent from June 2009 to \$380 a week on average, which is 42 per cent of the average weekly income, according to the WACOSS data.

In my opinion, housing, electricity, water and gas are essential services for an acceptable standard of living in WA. Access to these services is a right for Western Australians regardless of a household's capacity to pay. This right of course has to be balanced with the user-pays market, but this government has not got that balance right at

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all. The government needs to ensure that concessions and tariffs deliver a system for the provision of affordable essential services.

I want to talk now about another issue of great concern in my electorate; that is, public transport—or should I say the lack of access to public transport? I think it has been well debated in this house, not least in the last two days. My electorate has severe overcrowding on the buses and trains. I have tabled petitions in this house. I have had the media on the trains between Maylands and the city and, indeed, I have tried to shove people from behind to get them in the doors of train carriages. There is simply not enough rolling stock on the Midland line, yet I am getting no joy from our Minister for Transport to order more stock to help the situation on the Midland line.

I also refer to parking bottlenecks. Maylands is an electorate that, as members will know, is very close to the city, so it is very tempting for people to drive in from the outer suburbs, park in Maylands and catch the train or bus in. People still want to work in the city, so more people drive in from the hinterland and this creates a big problem; we end up with bottlenecks as people physically cannot get through Maylands and out to the other side. In places like Morley, which has the Morley bus station along Russell Street, logic would dictate—if this government had any sense of vision for the area it would be onto this—that the Morley bus station needs to be a Park ‘n’ Ride station.

I have had several emails about this, but I will mention just one. My colleague, the member for Morley, is aware of the situation. Renee Searle wrote to me either at the end of last year or early this year about this very problem. According to my notes, she said —

I have for the past year been parking at a car park near the Galleria, which was not signposted, and right next to the busport to catch a bus from the busport into the city for work each day. Today the car park was blocked off. I had no choice but to park in a four-hour parking zone. I am not going to be happy if I get fined for parking there as it appears I am to have to try and find a spot to park in that does not contravene parking restrictions, and that means I’ll have to walk for miles on torn ligaments in my ankle.

She goes on to say —

Maybe I should ask my employer for a change in working hours (that is not a great idea either).

This is a problem for not only Renee, but also many other constituents, and their number is increasing. The Morley precinct plan calls for large, high-density development up and down Russell Street. That will be an area of some interest and development. Because of the population growth in our state, it is incumbent upon this government to stop messing about and look at the value of a Morley Bus ‘n’ Ride. I have written several times to the Minister for Transport and have been told unequivocally to go away. I do not think that is acceptable, and neither do my constituents. I am sure that the member for Morley’s constituents who use that facility would agree.

There is also the small matter of the Perth Airport link. I am getting more confused about the airport train link because when I first started work in this place three years ago I did not think there would be an airport link. As far as I am aware, the transport strategy suggested that there might be a link by train from Perth Airport to Bedford in 2030, but then I read about the Premier doing one of those things we have heard a lot about—another thought bubble. He said that he did not see why it could not happen in 2015. I beg the government to show innovation and forward planning when dealing with the transport problems in my electorate, because it certainly is not doing that at the moment.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Ms L.L. BAKER:** We have heard members speak today about the rivers in their electorates. I, too, will speak about the Swan River. Scientific experts from around the world have warned that the Swan River is an environmental time bomb and that there is very little time left to turn it around. To say that this government is failing to take control of caring for the Swan River is an understatement. When the Minister for Environment, Bill Marmion, released for public comment the draft river protection strategy in December, I was reminded of Nero fiddling while Rome burned. The Swan River Trust and the task force appointed to produce the draft river protection strategy did an excellent job but the opportunity was lost as a result of Mr Marmion’s inability to move ahead with any of the vital actions that need to be taken, such as the immediate phase-out of water soluble phosphorus fertilisers. The mandatory phase-out of these fertilisers is the single biggest step that needs to be taken to improve the river’s health. Why? Because such an action has the potential to tackle nutrient pollution at the very source—the Avon and Ellen Brook catchments.

It was the number one issue raised by the 70 people who attended the Swan River forum that I hosted in 2009, and it continues to be in the top four priorities for people in my electorate. My constituents understand that when

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Labor was in government it was committed to the mandatory phase-out of these fertilisers. That is a major point of difference between the two parties. I am pleased to say that while the government seems paralysed and incapable of taking any real action to save the Swan River, the City of Bayswater and past Labor governments have not been incapable of action. In the 1990s, the Bayswater Integrated Catchment Management Group was formed due to community concern about the poor quality of water entering the Bayswater main drain, which is now called Bayswater Brook, and therefore ultimately the river. My predecessor Judy Edwards worked long and hard with that group over many years. In 2008, the Bayswater Brook Working Group was established, which included representatives from the City of Bayswater, the CSIRO, the Department of Water, Perth Region NRM, the Swan River Trust and the Water Corporation. I am pleased to say that they are in the final stages of completing an action plan for that brook. The plan will be the first time that a truly collaborative approach has been implemented within catchment management in Western Australia. A major feature of the plan is the research to be conducted by CSIRO to help better understand the sources and pathways between service and groundwater of all pollutants. The Maylands community eagerly awaits the release of that action plan.

I refer now to the local water quality improvement plan for the Bayswater Brook, which plays a major role in water quality improvement. That plan aims to ensure that a water quality target for a 30 per cent reduction in nutrients is reached by 2015. It seems that the Bayswater Brook is meeting its long-term targets in relation to phosphorous reduction, but the real problem is the long-term nitrogen targets that are not being met. The Bayswater Brook catchment is the fifth-highest contributor of nutrients to the Swan River. It produces—I had to check this figure twice—9.8 tonnes of nitrogen and 0.6 tons of phosphorus every year. That is amazing! The local water quality improvement plan for Bayswater Brook catchment brings local action and local commitment to reducing those inputs. An impressive 74 per cent of the actions identified in the plan to reduce nutrient inputs have been or are being implemented.

In September 2011, we very sadly lost a local hero, Mr Eric Singleton. The sanctuary that bears his name, the Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary, is an icon of my electorate and has tremendous social and recreational amenity for my constituents. I am very happy to support the proposed redevelopment of the Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary by writing a letter of support for the City of Bayswater's application for funding under the federal government's stormwater harvesting and reuse program. Precious groundwater is currently used to fill the sanctuary during the summer months, which is a very unstable practice. One of the main benefits of the project is that it will use water diverted from the drain into the nutrient-stripping wetland. I am pleased that the government has committed \$1.2 million towards the Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary redevelopment into a proper nutrient-stripping wetland. Water samples taken from groundwater in the Eric Singleton sanctuary show that the total nitrogen and phosphorus, aluminium and cadmium loads exceed ANZECC—the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council—guidelines. More recent water sampling undertaken by SERCUL—the South East Regional Centre of Urban Landcare—during the 2010 winter confirms these findings, which takes me back to my original point; namely, that the government and the minister are fiddling while Rome burns.

Finally, in the area of the Swan River, many would be aware that a young man died recently after colliding with a navigational marker inside the Belmont ski area. I am confident that WA Police and the transport department are thoroughly investigating the tragedy. What I know is that water sports such as waterskiing and wakeboarding are becoming increasingly popular in our state. People have the right to enjoy themselves in these sports as a recreational pursuit. What I am opposed to are bad, out-of-touch decisions, and law-breakers. In terms of the bad and out-of-touch decisions, the government is making a bad and out-of-touch decision by not relocating the Belmont waterskiing area to another wider, safer and more suitable section of the river downstream past Windan Bridge.

In terms of law-breaking, it is well and truly going on in the Belmont ski area. I quote from a Facebook page set up by Perth skiers and wakeboarders. This entry was posted on 12 February 2012 and I am happy to give the name of the Facebook page, which is "Major Changes to Perth Waterskiing and Wakeboarding Areas". The entry reads —

Went down to Belmont and Deep Water Point today educating people about the changes, the facebook page and getting people to sign the physical petition. Still probably 90% of people don't know about these changes. We witnessed so many people breaking the rules at Belomont and DWP from going the wrong way, jetski's freestyling, jetski's freestyling in take-off area, no spotter, no vest on a Jetski rider and boats racing each other.

This section of the river is simply too narrow to safely accommodate the boat speed needed for a busy waterskiing or wakeboarding area. I know that the proposal before government is to make the ski area for skiers only—in other words, banning wakeboarders and biscuiters—but the people in my electorate tell me that it is

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 22 February 2012]

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wrong to have a ski area in the upper reaches of the river. The congestion of ski boats creates serious and dangerous problems as the area becomes used more. The wake from powerboats erodes riverbanks. People tell me that they certainly will not accept the proposal to extend the ski area and bring it further downstream. Wake from power boats, seen regularly going outside the existing ski area, also disturbs birds that breed in the rushes at Berringa Reserve. These birds include species that have become extinct locally or that struggle to find a suitable habitat in the metropolitan area, as well as species that are listed under internationally recognised agreements. Moving the ski area downstream will exacerbate the disruption already being experienced by bird breeding in the area. It will also cut 200 metres from Maylands Yacht Club's sailing area, which already sacrificed a large chunk back in the 1990s to separate for safety purposes the club's activities from skiers. Since this issue was raised, I have received many emails and phone calls. One resident, according to my notes, writes —

I believe the use of high powered boats for such activities in this area of Maylands should be banned outright. There are plenty of other wider expanses of water around Perth which would provide more suitable and safer ski areas.

I repeat: it is a bad decision for the government to ignore the community's views on this issue.

I would like to finish by talking about law and order. The 2006 census showed that over a quarter of my constituents were over 55 years old. It does not take much to add up the years and work out that that means quite a few constituents are now over 60 years of age. I am confident to say that people in my electorate, especially seniors, are growing increasingly concerned about the increase in crime. We have heard that some statistics have gone down. I would like to refer to the ones that have not—particularly the rise in home burglaries. Statistics taken from the WA Police website indicate that in December last year there were 3 277 burglaries in WA—a 15 per cent increase in the number that occurred in the same month of the previous year. The surge in home burglaries in WA is reflected in Maylands. In Bedford, for example, home burglaries have risen by a staggering 73 per cent over the past three years. In Embleton, home burglaries have risen by 48 per cent over three years. In Inglewood, where houses are very well secured with security doors, alarms and window security, the number of home burglaries almost doubled last year. In Morley, where over 600 households are in my electorate, home burglaries increased by 58 per cent in that time frame. In Bayswater, home burglaries rose 40 per cent over three years. When we convert the Bayswater percentage against the number of homes in Bayswater, it works out that one in every 15 homes in Bayswater was burgled last year.

I am raising that point because I am sitting in the chamber with people who try to tell me that Bayswater Police Station will not be closed down. Here is what I know about that. In July last year the *Eastern Reporter* reported that the City of Bayswater published a document reporting that the station would close on 1 August. A WA Police spokesperson was quoted as admitting that the station would close but not until 2012. We were told that stations in the district were being amalgamated as part of a capital works program, which involved the transfer to Morley of officers from the Bayswater station. Morley was, and I quote from my notes, “to become more of a hub”. In September, two months later, the member for Morley and East Metropolitan Region upper house member Hon Donna Faragher took out an advertisement in the *Eastern Reporter* claiming that Assistant Commissioner Gary Budge had, according to my notes —

Advised (them) that there are no plans, at this time, to close Bayswater Police Station.

I emphasise “at this time”. The ad then went on to refer to completion of upgrades to Mirrabooka, Scarborough and Morley stations in May 2013 and that they would —

... enable the merger of response staff across the West Metropolitan District.

The ad then went on —

Once building works are completed in May 2013, a decision will be taken as to the future need or function for the Bayswater station.

One thing is clear: this government supports the regional “hubbing” of police resources and we in opposition do not. As Mark McGowan said, we support localised community policing.

We respect the fact that people want to feel safe in their homes and their communities. A local police presence and visible police in local communities is the best way of doing that. To add to my concerns, the nearest station at which the hubbing would ostensibly take place is 14.5 kilometres away. Bayswater is 15 minutes from that police station by road. It is hard to believe that the police response time will remain at five to seven minutes when that station is closed. Indeed, the experience of Ballajura would suggest that it simply will not meet the standards set as acceptable response times.

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Let me finish on this subject by saying that it is my greatest wish that Bayswater Police Station remain open, but from the spin that we are being given by this government about law and order, crime going down and hubbing being good, I fear that this government will close Bayswater Police Station.

**MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn)** [4.26 pm]: I want to address a couple of issues today in my contribution to the Premier's Statement. First, I want to talk about an area for which I have responsibility as shadow minister, and that is the utility of water. I want to start with an examination of what has happened to water prices over the past three and a half years, and lead into the impact on families of the increases to household fees and charges, particularly for water, and what has occurred as a result of the government increasing prices in the way that it has.

Let us remind ourselves of what has occurred. Since the first budget in 2008–09, after the election of the Barnett government, water prices in Western Australia have gone up by 47 per cent. That is without compounding the effect of those increases, which we would normally do. When we compound those increases, we are looking at price increases to a family household budget of nearly 50 per cent for the cost of water and services. That is in three and a half years. As you know, Madam Acting Speaker (Ms A.R. Mitchell), electricity prices have gone up 57 per cent. Gas prices have gone up in the region of between 35 to 38 per cent over that period as well. All those increases in household bills have a dramatic impact on the ability of families to survive in this current economic environment. You yourself, Madam Acting Speaker, talked at length about how great everything is going in Western Australia, how fantastic the economy is, how it is booming and how people are doing well out of it. Some people are, but there are a lot who are not. I will come to that during my speech.

Water prices will continue to increase. We know that they will continue to increase because successive water ministers have told us that Western Australia has not reached the real cost of water. We have not achieved what the economists and the Economic Regulation Authority are arguing is the true cost of water; that is, the cost of the production, supply and transportation of water to our households and the cost reflectivity of the delivery of that water to our homes. I have been the shadow Minister for Water for the last three and a half years. We have had two water ministers over the life of the Barnett government. Both water ministers have been asked numerous times by me in this chamber to explain to this house and to the people of Western Australia what the true cost of water is, when cost reflectivity will be achieved, and exactly how much will we be paying per kilolitre of water once cost reflectivity has been achieved.

The former Minister for Water, the member for Eyre, had no idea of the cost reflectivity of water; if he did, he certainly was not going to tell this house, because he fudged his way through every question that I asked him about the true cost of water—that is, the cost reflectivity of water. Eventually, because of his own incompetent handling of the portfolio, he lost that portfolio, and it has now been passed to the member for Nedlands. I have asked the member for Nedlands exactly the same question, and the answer has been the same as I received from the member for Eyre—that is, it was a fudged answer that did not deal with the question at all, primarily because the minister did not know, in which case he should go out of his way to find out exactly what the true cost of water is, and it is not that difficult to find out. Alternatively, if he knows, he just does not want to tell this house and the people of Western Australia, because the price shock would be so great that it would cause further damage to the government.

We can get some idea about the true cost of water, to assist ministers and to give some clarity to the customers and the families of Western Australia, because back in 2010 the Economic Regulation Authority came out with some concepts and modelling about what the true cost of water was likely to rise to. The Economic Regulation Authority in 2010 indicated that in its view there would have to be a 42 per cent increase in the cost of water, over and above what the cost of water was in the 2009–10 budget period. Let us assume that the 2010–11 budget announcement of a 10 per cent increase in the cost of water is part of that 42 per cent increase; it does not take into account current inflation rates and possibly the current costs of the delivery of water over the current budgetary period, but let us put that to one side. If we simply go on what the Economic Regulation Authority said in 2010 and we take out the 10 per cent that water has gone up by this year, we are still likely to face another 32 per cent increase in the price of water. Compounded over that time, if that 32 per cent increase was likely to be applied, it would show that water prices had gone up by 90 per cent over the period of the Barnett government.

What is the impact of those price increases on the people who supposedly are doing so well in our economy? I have asked numerous questions about the response from the Water Corporation to those customers—those families—who cannot pay their bills. Two things happen if people cannot pay their water bill. The first is that the Water Corporation will negotiate with people over a payment plan. Whilst people may not be able to pay the quarterly charge, and that quarterly charge will accumulate to the next quarter, they would be able to pay in instalments the amount that they owe Water Corporation; that could be one option. If people simply have no money to make any payments whatsoever, the Water Corporation will restrict their supply to an amount that is

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basically enough to fill a kettle and effectively run a fridge. That is the amount of water that people would get from the Water Corporation if there was a restriction on supply.

In the first period of the Barnett government, between 2008 and 2009, because of the impact of that 47 per cent increase in water charges, the number of people who were on restriction of supply notices increased significantly. Because I highlighted in this chamber and in the media of Western Australia the impact of the dramatic increases in the cost of water for families in Western Australia, the Barnett government has now decided not to be so heartless in the 2010–11 period and has obviously encouraged the Water Corporation to reduce the number of times it restricts the supply of water to people. It is heartless. If people cannot pay their water bill, they suddenly find that only drips are coming out the end of their tap, because the Water Corporation has cut their supply. In the 2010–11 period, the very generous approach by the Barnett government has been to reduce the number of people who are on restriction of supply notices. The number of people on restriction of supply notices has been reduced by 1 000 to 54 000. That means that as of December last year, 54 000 Western Australians had had their water supply restricted to the point at which all they could do was fill a kettle. Fifty-four thousand of our fellow Western Australians were in that situation. The government has been very generous. That number could be a lot higher. But what the government has been encouraging the Water Corporation to do is not turn off people's water, but get them onto a payment plan. So the number of people who have had their water supply restricted has dropped by 1 000 from what it was in 2009–10.

I turn now to the number of people who have accumulated outstanding charges to the Water Corporation, because they cannot pay their water bill, and are paying off those charges through a payment plan. Last financial year, 72 675 Western Australians could not pay their water bill and were seeking time to pay. So far this year, 84 008 Western Australians have not been able to pay their water bill. That is a 15.59 per cent increase in the number of Western Australians who are struggling to pay their water bill because of the massive increases in utility prices by the Barnett government. In this lucky, lucky, lucky state that is doing so well, 84 000 people are struggling to pay their water bill.

If people have had their water cut off, they have tried a payment plan, that does not work, and they simply cannot pay, what happens is that the generous Water Corporation will set the lawyers on them and take them to court. The number of Water Corporation customers who are being pursued through legal avenues for recovery of outstanding moneys has jumped from 1 865 last year to 2 522 today. That is a 35 per cent increase in the number of people who have been taken to court by the Water Corporation because they cannot pay their water bill. Since Labor left office in August 2008, and over the life of the Barnett government, there has been a 168.8 per cent increase in the number of people who are struggling to pay their water bill and end up being taken to court by the Water Corporation. There has been a 168.8 per cent increase in the number of poor buggers ending up in court because they cannot pay their water bill. That is the legacy of the Barnett government and that is the legacy that we will highlight to Western Australians between now and the election next year. What legacy has the Liberal–National government left Western Australians? A massive 168 per cent increase in the number of people pursued through the courts because they could not pay their 50 per cent increase in water bills. That is the legacy of this government.

**Mr J.R. Quigley:** Are you extending?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I may.

I want to point out another issue in this tragedy that is unfurling for pensioners and the unemployed—the working poor in Western Australia—who are struggling to pay their utility bills. If people cannot pay their water bill, the Water Corporation will encourage them to go on a payment plan, as I pointed out in the figures I have just quoted. As I pointed out, clearly the government has made a policy decision to try to reduce the number of people whose water supply is cut off or reduced, so there has been a massive increase in the number of people going onto the payment plan.

What happens when people go onto the payment plan? For example, someone cannot pay their quarterly water bill; they may not be able to pay the bill before that either. It accrues. The Water Corp then says, “Okay, we will give you time to pay this off. When the next bill comes in we will accrue that and give you time to pay it off at a rate that you can manage.” Obviously they will have to agree about the minimum amount of money they can afford to start paying off the accrued water bills. But the Water Corporation does not do that for nothing.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** For accrued moneys owed to it as a result of outstanding bills, the Water Corporation charges 14.8 per cent interest—14.8 per cent interest is charged on moneys owed by people who cannot pay their water bill. This is usury. It is outrageous. The Water Corporation is charging credit card interest payments on water bills. To whom are they applying these massive interest rates? They are applying them to the poorest

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people in our society, people who are struggling; the people caught in this trap struggling to pay their water and electricity bills, but who in the Water Corporation's case are being whacked 14.8 per cent interest. The people who are in this situation are pensioners who have come to me and told me that they have thousands of dollars of outstanding bills they are struggling to pay off while they are getting whacked 14 per cent interest. It is single parents, whether male or female, struggling to keep their families afloat. It is the unemployed and the working poor. If people think there are not working poor out there, at lunchtime I addressed a fairly large gathering of them. These are the people the mining boom has forgotten. These are the cleaners in our society; these are the retail shop workers in our society. A person cleaning the office blocks in Perth gets paid \$16.78 an hour. That is \$636.50 gross if they were to work a full week, and a lot of them do not work a full week because a lot of the work is casual. If they have a family to support, that means they are taking home between \$480 and \$530 a week. That is 500 bucks a week. That is how much they are getting in their hand for a full week's work. And we are in a lucky state where people are doing well. No, we are not; a lot of people out there are really, really struggling. Therefore, when we come into this place and point out to Parliament how the increases in the prices of water, electricity and gas affect these families, we are not making it up. Those increases really do impact on them. The Premier, gloating about the fact that he can get seven-day-a-week trading through, said in the press today that he believes retail workers working on Sundays are paid too much. They are paid \$17 an hour—17 bucks an hour. Therefore, when they work during the week, they get \$646 gross and they are taking home probably around between \$530 and \$550 after tax. That is nothing; they are trying to keep a family, they are trying to pay a mortgage, pay these horrendous utility price increases, get their kids to school, keep the car running and pay their food bills. What do people think they have left the end of the day? Nothing; they owe money. That is why credit card bills go up, because people live on credit simply to survive from one week to the next. That is why when I say the impact of these utility pricing increases on the working poor leads to them being unable to pay their bills, it is true. These are the people. These are the working poor in our communities, and they are in all of our communities, not just in Labor electorates; they are in Liberal ones as well. We only have to look a bit and we will find them; they are there. They are the people who work in shops, they are the people who work behind a bar and they are the people who clean up when everyone else goes home. They are the working poor. They are not on \$150 000 a year driving a truck; they are simply trying to keep their families from going completely under and being turfed out on the street.

When they cannot pay their water bill and they go to the Water Corporation and try to find a way to pay it off over a period of time, instead of the government actually understanding the situation and being at least sympathetic to the plight of these people, it allows the Water Corporation to behave in the way in which the banks behave. There are not too many members in this Parliament on either side of the house who would have a great deal of time for banks because of the way in which banks have behaved and the way in which banks charge interest to all people in Australia, whether to small business owners or to ourselves as credit card holders. But here we have a government organisation, a government institution, the Water Corporation, behaving in exactly the same way as banks do to their customers and charging 14.8 per cent interest on outstanding bills—but not to everyone, unlike banks to credit card holders. As we know, a significant number of people have credit cards and most people can pay them off. In this situation, that usurious interest is only being charged to those people who are poor anyway, who are at the bottom rung of our society and who are struggling to pay their water bills. It is only them who get hit by this horrendous interest rate. That can be compared with electricity. Synergy does not charge this type of usurious interest. People can have a payment plan and pay off their electricity bills, and they will not get hit with 14.8 per cent interest. It is only the Water Corporation.

I have previously raised the behaviour of the Water Corporation with the minister, and his response was that it is commercial practice. No, it is not commercial practice. It is not commercial practice across government. He will not take on the Water Corporation. He will not go to Ms Murphy, the CEO of the Water Corporation, and say, "That is enough. Finish it. Stop this practice. It is unacceptable, it is un-Australian and it is unfair to people who are struggling to pay their water bills in Western Australia. Just cut it out completely and we will do the same as Synergy." He will not take on the CEO. He feels that he cannot interfere, because it is a government company that is separate from government. The Water Corporation tells every minister that. What a load of rubbish! It is a monopoly provider of a service. That is why it is government owned. It is a company with one shareholder—the Minister for Water. The Minister for Water—as the previous single shareholder of a number of large government companies, I do know this—could go to the CEO of the Water Corporation and say, "I think it is in your best interests that you stop doing this, because you do not want an order from me, and I will give you one." He could order the company to stop behaving in this outrageous manner. He could table that order in this place and I would stand and congratulate him. I put that on the record. I would stand and say that the minister has done a very good job of standing up for working people, the unemployed and pensioners in Western Australia. But he will not do it because he believes he does not have the power to do it. I do not think he has the backbone or the ticker to do it either.

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There will still be a further increase in water prices in this year's budget. It means that the price of water will have increased by way above 50 per cent since 2008. The number of people struggling to pay, which I have just quoted, will increase. The number of people seeking payment plans will increase. The poor people who are on these payment plans will never get out of those payment plans because they will accumulate interest at a faster rate than they can probably pay off the bills in the first place, so they will just spiral further into debt. Of course, when they spiral into debt and cannot pay it off, the Water Corporation will pursue them through the courts, as we have seen. In only one year there has been a 35 per cent increase in the number of people being pursued through the courts by a government organisation that has a monopoly control over water. It is an absolute disgrace. This is the legacy. These people are hurting as a result of utility price increases. This is the real face of the people we talk about when we say in this place that people are hurting because the government has put up the price of water, electricity and gas. The statistics for the outrageous legal challenges through the courts for the non-payment of bills will be the legacy of the Barnett government when it gets turfed out of office on 9 March next year.

**MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton)** [4.53 pm]: I would like to make my reply to the Premier's Statement. Geraldton and the midwest continue to move steadily forward, with developments in the Geraldton regional city complemented by developments in the wider region with the emergence of the mining industry. However, one of the most anticipated developments in the region is the pending decision on the location of the Square Kilometre Array either in the Murchison on Boolardy station or in South Africa's Northern Cape province. CSIRO will soon have in place 15 or 16 of the 36 intended dishes for the Australian Square Kilometre Array Pathfinder, as well as the central building. Most of the roads and trenching for cabling for the central area have been done. The provision of these services is basically the same, whether the site carries the full SKA or just the pathfinder. The pathfinder itself will be the most advanced radio telescope in the world when it is built. I attended the most recent SKA forum in Banff, Canada, in July last year and gained some valuable knowledge of the project. I found the last two days on the engineering challenge of the SKA very interesting, and I was the only MP there for the full five days of the conference. I came away with the conclusion that the project is quite achievable technically, but the data processing ability does rest on assumptions inherent in Moore's Law and Kryder's Law. Our site already has a fibre connection to Perth. It provides a 3 000-kilometre baseline in one politically stable country. It will contribute to the development and attractiveness of the area of science as a field of study. One of the more interesting things that I learnt at the conference is that the study of astronomy tends to attract bright students who then drift into areas such as engineering, so it is a good hook to catch good students. Of course, the Murchison is one of the most radio quiet areas in the world. The proposal would have phase 1 operational in 2020 and the full SKA phase 2 operational in 2024. Our bid also includes New Zealand, which actually extends the baseline to 5 000 kilometres.

Our region continues to develop as Western Australia's next iron ore province. I note the pending end to Crosslands' hematite mining operations at Jack Hills. This has been one of the longest haulage operations in the world with 32 road trains carting the product some 570 kilometres to Geraldton port. Since 2006, the trucks have carted some 6.8 million tonnes. I pay credit to the people who run this trucking operation and the drivers of the trucks. Feasibility work is continuing on the work for stage 2 of Jack Hills, which will be a 25 million tonne per annum magnetite operation served by rail.

The Karara mine continues to go ahead at full speed. The project will go in three stages to 30 million tonnes per annum at which rate the current reserves will last for 30 years. The first two stages—stage 1, eight million tonnes per annum will be done in 2013 and stage 2, 16 million tonnes per annum in 2015—will go to Geraldton port and switch to Oakajee when it is operational. I thank the members who recently made the trip to Karara with me, particularly for paying their own airfare, which was very good of them. Expenditure at Karara so far is coming in at somewhere around \$2.6 billion including a rail unloader at Geraldton port, a new 250 000-tonne storage shed and a new berth—number six—which includes a 5 000-tonne ship-loader. I noted in the local paper that parts of the ship-loader started arriving yesterday. The road and the powerline to Karara have been built and the railway line to Geraldton is being upgraded by Brookfield Rail, which is more expenditure in the region of \$500 million. Brookfield is also building a 12-hectare marshalling yard south east of Geraldton Airport. Karara hopes to produce its first magnetite in the September quarter of this year. The mine is currently producing some hematite, which lies over the top of the magnetite. I visited Anshan, the city that is home to Karara's major shareholder, in May last year with my wife. I think there are some 30 blast furnaces and the mill produces steel for car bodies such as Audi, BMW and Mercedes Benz and 100-metre lengths of rail for the Chinese high-speed rail system, the CRH, among many other things. I thank Anshan for its hospitality.

I also represented the Premier at the ground breaking for Asia Iron at its Extension Hill mine, which is some 90 kilometres south east of Karara, on 6 December last year. The 60 per cent shareholder in this project is the municipal government of Chongqing, which was represented by its deputy mayor, Mr Lin Yueming. The ore for

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this project will go upriver some 1 500 kilometres from Shanghai and the first stage 10 million tonnes per annum is permanently committed to Geraldton port and will be transferred there from the mine by slurry pipeline. I previously visited this steel mill at Chongqing as part of a parliamentary delegation.

Another interesting fact that points to the security of the development of the midwest iron ore industry was the little-noted fact that last year China passed the point at which more than 50 per cent of its population resides in cities. This has never occurred before in China's history. It takes six tonnes of steel to build one apartment for a family. Therefore, I have confidence that our region's iron ore industry is built on solid foundations.

Other mining projects that are feeding into the midwest economy include the new open-cut mine at Golden Grove, which recently marked 20 years of underground operation. I would like to thank the Minerals and Metals Group for showing me around during my recent visit and I am pleased to report that the company has recently been able to resume export of its high precious metals product at Geraldton port following the introduction of new environmental guidelines.

I would like to congratulate the opposition on its acceptance of uranium mining in Western Australia. I urge the opposition to fully accept the industry and not have a half-pregnant solution of good mines and bad mines. I think we were all shocked at the Fukushima reactor accident in Japan, but the drivers for nuclear power are still there and in many cases it is a simple choice between coal and nuclear. Of the two, nuclear is probably cleaner.

The first stage of the 330-kilovolt powerline is now committed to Three Springs and it has been budgeted for. ERM Power has also received planning and EPA approval for its \$500 million proposed 330-megawatt gas-powered power station at Three Springs.

The most exciting development in the region, however, is the Oakajee port, which is moving closer to a viable business model. I would like to thank the people of Geraldton for their patience with this process. A great deal of work has already been done by Oakajee Port and Rail, which, with the move to total ownership by Mitsubishi and then a probable sale of shares to a new Chinese partner, should continue to develop the project. The development of Oakajee, which is needed in the region, will be in large part due to the patience and skills of the Premier.

On a recent visit to Geraldton on 6 December, the Premier announced the go ahead for a new primary school at Wandina, in Geraldton's south. This will be the first new state primary school in Geraldton since Waggrakine Primary School opened in 1979. Another exciting development has been at Geraldton University Centre, which has expanded its offerings to include Bachelor of Business, Bachelor of Accounting, Bachelor of Learning Management (Early Childhood Education), Bachelor of Learning Management (Primary), a university bridging course, Bachelor of Communication (Journalism) and Bachelor of Psychology. The centre is considering introducing courses in engineering, science and Indigenous mental health in 2013. I would like to congratulate the board and management of GUC for their hard work and foresight. I would also like to congratulate Jacinda Harries, who was awarded my \$1 000 scholarship last year to help with her studies at GUC. The scholarship has helped her to achieve a life-long ambition to be a teacher after having returned as a mature-age student.

Other highlights of last year included the seventieth anniversary of the sinking of HMAS *Sydney* II and the opening of the pool of remembrance at the *Sydney* memorial overlooking Geraldton to commemorate the event. I acknowledge the work of the Geraldton Rotary Club and other Rotary clubs in Geraldton for creating the memorial. I represented the Premier at this service, which was also attended by the Governor of NSW, the Chief of Navy, the Chief of Air Force and the Minister for Defence.

A good development by our government was a decision to deregulate the air service to Geraldton. I would like to thank Skywest for many years of service to Geraldton. The airline's commitment to the region now includes services to Bali via Port Hedland, to Melbourne via Kalgoorlie and to Karratha and Perth. We now have twice-daily services from Qantas. It is good to welcome the airline to Geraldton after its 90 years of operation. Hopefully, the services will spread out over the day. Currently, we have something like the parallel scheduling of Ansett and Trans Australia Airlines in the 1970s.

Geraldton was again a clipper port last year with 10 68-foot yachts calling into the city in early November on their journey from Cape Town to New Zealand. A highlight was the fact that we had our own yacht, *Geraldton Western Australia*. The yachts are currently approaching Qingdao in China and I think *Geraldton* is coming second. I would like to recognise the City of Greater Geraldton, the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry, royalties for regions, Eventscorp funding, the Geraldton Yacht Club and many other supporters.

A highlight of last year's budget was the "2011 Mid West Investment Plan"—again, under the royalties for regions program—which provides for \$220 million over four years for essential infrastructure in the midwest.

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The local rock lobster industry appears to have adapted well to becoming a quota-based fishery, which was always the logical step to take. The ability to produce a fixed quantity at a time that suits fishermen and when the price is attractive is a much better situation than what existed before, which was a race to fish and a resulting glut at the opening of the season. It is good to see that the fishermen now seem to be focussed on fine-tuning this system. Farmers in the midwest last year produced a record crop. The previous record was in the region of 2.6 million tonnes, which was surpassed by the production of 3.3 million tonnes. Again, I would like to acknowledge the way in which the record tonnage was able to be transported safely and efficiently.

Although now no longer a state issue in the main, industrial relations being mostly a federal issue, I would like to state concerns about how the Fair Work Act is operating. With a high dollar, a harsh international environment and a bipartisan commitment to open trade, recent disputes at Qantas and Toyota make it clear that this act is not contributing to these industries' chances of survival. A return to 1970s style industrial relations will cost a lot of people their jobs and the departure of many more industries from Australia. I endorse the comments of former Australian Council of Trade Unions vice-president Anna Booth that our industrial relations system is adversarial and outdated, and institutionalises conflict rather than building productive relationships.

The other issue federally that is starting to impact is the carbon tax. The effect of this tax is starting to impact and factor in company decisions. I point to the state of our aluminium industry, the steel industry, the oil refining industry and the car industry and their projected job losses. These are in large part due to the value of the Australian dollar, but a carbon tax set at the high rate chosen and the deteriorating industrial relations climate are also contributing.

I would like to acknowledge 2012 as the Australian Year of the Farmer, my profession for some 25 years, and also 2012 is the International Year of Co-operatives. As a farmer, I was a shareholder in the Wesfarmers cooperative, the United Farmers Co-operative and Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd. CBH is almost alone now as a cooperative in the world of grain handling, and I applaud its decision to stay with the structure.

Year 2011 was a positive year in Geraldton and the midwest. At the end of 2012, I expect we will have progressed further to our transformation into a new mining province, as well as a major fishing, farming and service centre. It is an exciting time, and it is a privilege to serve as the member for Geraldton and as a member of the Liberal–National government.

**MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Mindarie)** [5.07 pm]: I stand here as, of course, the member for Mindarie, which has, under the electoral redistribution, been renamed Butler, by which name it will be known after the next general state election. The effect on the electorate of the changes to the boundary will not be great; it is just that the suburb from which the electorate derived its name, Mindarie, will be excised from the electorate because we are over quota and become part of Ocean Reef, and Banksia Grove, a community to the east, has been added to it. So there is not a great change to its geographical boundaries, but it now takes its name from the principal suburb in the middle of it, Butler.

As the member for “Mindarie–Butler”, the first thing that I would like to address in this chamber is the access to this Parliament by the constituents of my electorate. I note with some concern the changed security arrangements at the front door of this Parliament, which I believe need some review or rethinking, and I hope that that is undertaken by the Procedure and Privileges Committee. I notice the Deputy Speaker nodding in furious agreement. It is harder to gain access to the Parliament of Western Australia than it is to gain access to the federal Parliament of Australia. Although I believe that there should be good security at this place, the idea of every constituent coming here having their photograph taken and then the photograph and the name being electronically logged in a computer is off-putting to some people in the public.

I note that the federal Parliament and other organisations in which security is high, including the police department, do not go to this extent. They do not have our old fluoro sticky bits of paper that are untraceable; they have numbered, laminated security passes that do not bear the person's name. However, when a person goes to a security desk, they sign a book, they are issued a numbered pass and their name remains not published, unlike in this Parliament where the name is published to everyone. However, should any event or occurrence happen in the federal Parliament whilst the guest is on the premises, they have a numbered pass so that who they are can be easily tracked through the guest book. I do not have a problem with scanning, but I do not like the idea of these great big passes being worn around the neck. I am very encouraged that the Deputy Speaker appears, at least through his body language, to express the same concern. That is encouraging to me. There are people in the community—for example, people in local government—who might not be of the same political persuasion as me but who want to come and see me anyway to talk about a sensitive local issue and who will be put off by the fact that at the front door they will be photographed and logged into a computer as being my guest and required to wear this name tag around their neck. I cannot see that there is any difference in security if the person is issued with a numbered, laminated badge to wear and if, as I say, any incident occurs, security

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identifies that person via the big number, such as a person wears if entering a News Corporation building or the police department. The number on the laminated badge is used to track the name in the book kept at the front desk, in which the security pass number is also recorded. That, together with scanning, would seem to achieve the same purpose. I note that one member invited a guest here yesterday who had a slight accent —

**Mr M.W. Sutherland:** South African!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** It was not South African; I think it was Scottish. But when that person announced himself at the security desk, the security person misheard or misunderstood what was being said. The wrong name was typed out. When that person was in the dining room, it was remarked, “I notice you’ve had a name change!” He said, “No, that’s what security gave me downstairs.” All these new security arrangements just fall over on the basis of identification, because no identification is required anyway. A person could come along here and say, “Joe Black to see John Quigley” and the photograph that is taken is taken as Joe Black. It is off-putting. I think members of the public should be allowed to come along as guests and have a laminated tag with a recorded number on it, which should be recorded in the guest book as “Joe Black to see Mr Quigley, pass number 4,” along with the time the person came in. I cannot see how that would in any way denigrate the security measures.

I know I am speaking here today and giving voice to the concerns of members of both sides of the chamber, because there have been discussions outside the chamber. Although I encourage good security, if we leave it to security experts they will undertake fingerprinting, iris scanning, the whole way —

**Mr A.P. Jacob:** Microchipping!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** That is right; microchipping, member. This is the public’s Parliament. There has to be a balance between good security and those measures that might deter people coming to this place to see their elected representatives. I hope that the privileges committee reviews this situation.

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** I think you are right. How will the whistleblowers get in to have a meeting about something very serious?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** Exactly. I hope that *Hansard* got the member for South Perth’s interjection.

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** We like whistleblowers, if we are in opposition!

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** That is right. There are people out there in the community who will feel intimidated coming to this place, when they should not be. Enough said; that has taken the first few minutes of my speech in reply. I think it is an important point to be made.

I have described the geographic changes to my electorate; it lies on the very northern coastal edge of the metropolitan area. At the moment it stretches from Mindarie—but soon from Quinns Rocks—to Two Rocks, and just east of Wanneroo Road, taking in Nowergup and Banksia Grove. What are our and the community’s concerns out there? I notice that in his statement the premier states that by the middle of the next decade there will be an increase of 750 000 in the population of Western Australia. Tens and tens and tens of thousands of those people will come to live within the electorate of what will be known after the next election as Butler. The area of Alkimos, which is populated by display homes at the moment, will just explode, and it will have tens and tens of thousands of people, as will the Butler area, and there will soon be solid roof lines all the way to Yanchep, where I know one of the members lives and so could attest to this.

The real question for the electorate of Mindarie–Butler is the delivery of infrastructure to support families. Which infrastructure am I talking about? The only mention in the Premier’s Statement of any infrastructure in my electorate did not even rate one full sentence. There was certainly no commitment to any infrastructure in the electorate of Mindarie–Butler, and it did not rate one full sentence. It was just a throwaway line at the bottom of page 19 of his speech, where he referred to other places, and then stated —

We will continue to look at ways to address issues affecting freeway users, including the extension of the Mitchell Freeway further north and options for a light rail system that will provide an alternative for the estimated 30 000 people from the central northern suburbs who currently drive west to get onto the freeway.

He is talking about places like Ocean Reef, Hillarys, and all those places south—the central north coast; he is not talking about the electorate of Butler or all the people who live up there in this exploding area. The only mention is eight words, saying, “We will look at a freeway extension”; he has not committed to it and he is not planning for it. The community knows what it needs; it needs that northern extension of the Mitchell Freeway from Burns Beach Road through to Hester Avenue, and it needs it in this budget and it needs it now! I appreciate that people from other parts of the metropolitan area rarely go to this lovely northern stretch of the coast because it is mainly housing. There is not a lot of tourist infrastructure or industry there, so it is mainly people just going for a float

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up the coast to Yanchep and back. Not a lot of people from this Parliament would have driven north along Marmion Avenue to Yanchep in the past year. Mr Acting Speaker (Mr A.P. O’Gorman), for 30 years you have lived in, and represented for 10 years, the electorate of Joondalup, and you are only a little way from it, but people from Bassendean and Cottesloe do not go up there. The Premier might have driven through there once in the past three years, but that would be the limit of it. But anyone who visits that area on a daily basis realises that there is virtually one road in and one road out, and that is Marmion Avenue. Marmion Avenue is just chock-a-block. Marmion Avenue is so heavily used—the member for Wanneroo would share this concern—because the only other way out of the electorate is to try to work one’s way across to Wanneroo Road and south down a single-lane carriageway. I have worked out that to try to get into the Wanneroo CBD from the suburb of Butler takes every bit of 25 minutes, as they are cheek by jowl up there. When people travel east on Hester Avenue in the morning, the traffic jam on Hester Avenue, which terminates on Wanneroo Road and which does not have traffic lights, is interminable. It is a dangerous intersection because more cars come down Wanneroo Road and people are trying to make a right-hand turn. What do we need? We need the freeway extension! When do we need it? We need it now—to use the old chant of the protest movement.

What else do we need out there? I think health services are crucial. We have a whole population of spouses of fly in, fly out workers who have their own particular challenges. I see a lot of people out there trying to access mental health services. I see a lot of grandparents who have had to take over the full-time parenting of their grandchildren whilst they struggle to get their own children into mental health services. The Premier pointed out that we have the first Minister for Mental Health, which is true, but it has not shown up in increased services for mental health patients in the north. This is a real problem, especially with the growing tide of amphetamine abuse in the community. With both prescription and non-prescription drug abuse and alcohol abuse, there is a screaming need to bolster mental health services in the far north.

Here is one out of left field that came from the doctors out there. In the north we have an exploding population of young mothers who are left to themselves because, as I say, the husbands are fly in, fly out workers, and that number is only going to get greater. We need the services of a Ngala centre—that wonderful organisation down in Kensington that offers support to new mothers. It is very, very important that we nurture these infants to the optimum to give them a chance and to give our community a chance with our greatest asset—our children. I plead with the authorities in the health area to try to encourage the establishment of a Ngala mothercraft facility in the northern suburbs. That comes from one of the leading general practitioners in the north—not in my electorate, but a bit further to the south—a wonderful doctor, Dr Nick Forgione, who has pointed out that this is something that the northern suburbs really need.

The Premier talks of rail, and it is true that a contract has been let for the extension of the Clarkson line to Butler. Had there been a Labor government, it would be open by now. Time was lost with the election of the Liberal–National government and the announcement of the cancellation of the extension whilst it did a 20-year review into rail. This provoked a large public reaction and a series of public demonstrations, resulting in the government announcing that it had changed its mind and would proceed with the Butler station. However, what the government did, which I have pointed out in the chamber before, was a bit of sleight of hand, because it never reinstated the Butler station, it just called the next station along—which was the Brighton station—Butler. What is the significance of this, one may ask.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** The Public Transport Authority had a couple of hectares at Butler for parking. When the government came back and said it would build the Brighton station and call it Butler, I thought that the ministers at the time did not understand the difference between Butler and Brighton. Brighton was a name given by the developer, Satterley, to a locality in the greater area of Butler. The real significance is that the Butler station in Brighton is to be located adjacent to the Brighton Village Shopping Centre. Brighton station was only ever meant to be a small station near the shopping centre that people would use local transport to get to. The Department of Transport has had to do a deal with the Satterley corporation whereby in the short term it has leased land from Satterley to provide parking. However, there will not be a station on the acreage that the department owns at the old Butler station where the Butler train station was meant to be, which is near all the schools and where the population is. In 20 years it might be an infill station. That is where all the parking for the community was meant to be but that will not happen. There will be no relief at the Clarkson station. If commuters are not at the Clarkson station by 7.00 or 7.15 in the morning, they can forget parking their car because it is impossible. They are parked on the pavements, in the trees and on the top of shops! They cannot get parking there. They were going to be provided relief at the next station where the transport authority had a couple of hectares of land and could have built a big car park that would have serviced everyone. People in Butler will have to head the wrong way, which is counterintuitive. To get to town they will be expected to get in their car and drive further north to Brighton, and when they get there they will find only a handkerchief-sized car

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park. Alternatively, they can travel south, which they do at the moment, to Clarkson, and endure the morning bumper-to-bumper fight to try to find a car park. We are very disappointed that the Butler station proposal has gone and that not in this term of government will any tracks actually be seen. The earthworks and everything like that are being done, but when will the trains run? They will not run until the next term of government. The former government built the railway line to Mandurah in the length of time it has taken this government to build only a few kilometres of rail. It is a go-slow project.

Yanchep is at the end of my electorate. I suppose it is Two Rocks. When I speak of Yanchep, I should speak of Yanchep/Two Rocks. There are many people up there but just one football oval that must service the seniors and the juniors. We are losing children from junior sports because of the lack of facilities in the Yanchep/Two Rocks area. They urgently need another football oval. I have tried to do everything. I have been to the Two Rocks Primary School but it turns out that the Two Rocks Primary School oval is just a few metres too short for an Aussie Rules football oval. The community had planned to enlarge the Two Rocks Primary School oval so that the children could play junior footy there, but that plan fell foul of the Department of Education, which I thought was meant to help nurture children but which is not helping to get children onto the park. We urgently need sporting facilities in that area but there is no mention of them in the Premier's Statement.

Yanchep has the wonderful Yanchep National Park. The only thing comparable to what has happened to the watertable in Yanchep is Perry Lakes in Perth. More members would have seen Perry Lakes and the paucity of water in that lake system. As a child, and indeed during my young adult life, we would go to the Yanchep Inn and have a few drinks or have a picnic on the lawn. People could hire a boat to row on Yanchep Lake. Today running tracks could be laid for people to run on where the lake used to be. There is no sign of water there because of the draw on the watertable through the Gngarara mound. There are a couple of ovals in Yanchep National Park but, of course, they are not watered and there is no sign of them being watered in the future. Usually, although not on event days, an attendant sits in a box and charges people a fee to get into the park. Can you imagine the hue and cry there would be in Perth if they put an attendant at Kings Park and the people of the western suburbs had to pay to get in? That is what we have to do up there. There is a nine-hole golf course in Yanchep; I am not talking about the St Andrews course, but there is actually one in Yanchep. There should not be a fee on the Yanchep park; it is ridiculous!

**Mr M.P. Murray:** What about Rottnest? Is there a fee to go to Rottnest?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I do not want to buy into that one at the moment, because it involves ferry fees and all these other provisional services. However, we are talking today, in the twenty-first century, about encouraging people to get out and play sport and encouraging them to live an active lifestyle, and yet there is a nominal entrance fee on one of our big regional parks up there.

The next thing that we are really lousy about in our electorate—I know that the member for Ocean Reef shares this deep concern—is what is happening in Nowergup. Limestone quarrying has been approved right at the head of the Nowergup Valley. When driving north along Wanneroo Road—very few members will have taken the time to turn right into Nowergup—there is a secret, hidden little valley; a gorgeous little valley with Lake Nowergup in it that is quite unlike any other geographical feature along that strip. The member for Wanneroo would be very, very familiar with Nowergup. The City of Wanneroo and, more alarmingly, the Environmental Protection Authority has approved limestone quarrying right at the head of the valley. Of further concern—I found this out only when I wrote to the honourable Minister for Planning about 10 months ago—is that there were also two old lime kilns in the vicinity, which were not being used because the company that owned them was operating down in Balcatta. But every year the company paid its licence fee on the lime kilns, and now it is getting ready to fire up those kilns. Unless the government really takes hold here—I am not in any way confident that it will—we will have another Cockburn problem in Nowergup, because there will be not only limestone mining, but also kilns and concrete batching right there in Nowergup. I have spoken before in this chamber on a grievance, and the minister said that we have to have resources close to where all the houses are to be built. There is ample limestone through that country, further to the east, where there is no lake and no fragile environment from where the limestone could be sourced.

The next thing of urgent need in my electorate is the treatment of Wanneroo Road. I know that this is a concern that I share with the member for Wanneroo: that is, the dualling of Wanneroo Road further north from where it is, at least to Flynn Drive and, I say, to Hester Avenue. There are many trucks moving through that area, especially in the Flynn Drive area, which is south of Hester Avenue. I look at the roadworks to the south, the dual carriageways from Rockingham to Mandurah and the extension of the Kwinana Freeway to become the Forrest Highway, and then I look at Wanneroo Road—the number of deaths on it, the traffic congestion on it, and the danger of it. I met with the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Transport and the member for Wanneroo on the corner of Flynn Drive and Wanneroo Road to discuss the installation of traffic lights; but that

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would require a re-levelling of Wanneroo Road when it is ultimately dualled. The minister indicated that he would urge that the little section of road in front of Flynn Drive be raised to the right level and a tiny bit of dualling be put in so that traffic lights could be put in at Flynn Drive. Now we are told that there is not even any money for this lousy couple of hundred metres, and that if we want traffic lights at Flynn Drive, the City of Wanneroo has to go ahead and install them at the present levels of alignment and one day in the future. When the city gets around to putting in a dual carriageway, it will all have to be ripped up and done again. There is therefore a disincentive for the city to proceed now with installing traffic lights at Flynn Drive. Also, I cannot see anything happening at Hester Avenue. People say that I am a little loud and a little noisy, but from up north at Butler people have to be loud and noisy to even be heard on the issues that are affecting them.

The last issue is policing. We do not agree with hub policing—that has already been mentioned in other speeches. Clarkson Police Station should be open for at least as long as the licensed trading hours. The incidence of some really nasty attacks at both the Whale and Ale Tavern and the Merriwa Tavern at closing time has made statewide headlines—also at the CornerStone Ale House in Butler; I should not have forgotten the CornerStone. We are not asking for much—just one extra shift from 4.00 pm to midnight. There has to be a flag flying at the police station. We are being policed from Joondalup. At the last incident, the police got out there and said, “Sorry, we had to attend first at somewhere in Hillarys.” That incident was before the police could turn around and get to Butler. It is a disgrace. There are all these theories of police cars at every police station. It is not much good to us if a mobile police station is at Hillarys and there is a fracas going on outside the Whale and Ale, which is where a rugby player lost an eye. The Clarkson Police Station is only 60 metres away, but it is closed from four o’clock and there is no place for people to run to. I am therefore very disappointed that the government has not flagged more positive infrastructure for Butler.

The last issue, which I will fit in in the last 60 seconds, is that I heard the Premier talk about an ocean pool in Cottesloe, which is surrounded by six Olympic pools. We want an ocean pool in Quinns Rocks, and I have a petition to present tomorrow in that regard.

**MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston)** [5.37 pm]: It gives me some pleasure to stand tonight and thank a few people and also give a bit of an overview of what is happening in my electorate. Firstly, the WA Electoral Commission has now released information on the new boundaries. It is unfortunate for me in some ways and great in others that the Shire of Donnybrook–Balingup has been removed from my electorate and put into the Blackwood–Stirling electorate, which I think is called that at the moment. In doing that, the commission took away a lot of Liberal voters and put them down at the bottom end of the shire. At the same time I have made some great friends and I have been able to work with the people in that community very, very well. It has been a pleasure to work with the guidance of Steve Dilley, the shire president, and John Attwood, the CEO, and I will continue to do that into the future and certainly until the end of this parliamentary session.

In saying that, the focus in recent times has certainly been on what I would call my home turf; that is the Shire of Collie. The Collie shire has provided most of the construction jobs around the south west in recent times. In fact, at its peak there were some 3 000 construction jobs in the Collie region. That is something for which not a great deal of credit has been given by this current government. This government has allowed those jobs to be created, allowed that work to go on and allowed money to be earned by those people, yet what have they got back for that? They have got back very little. We have heard about the concept of super towns. Although we will look at the concept of super towns, it is certainly not a concept that is embraced by all in Collie. I will never turn my back on any dollar that may come in to enhance infrastructure in the Collie region. I would certainly not do that and in fact would look forward to it. However, the issues are about the time frames and the hurdles that have been put in front of the community and the fact that the community has not been consulted on these issues. I am getting these sorts of complaints all the time. It is also very disappointing when that sort of process is going on and the Minister for Regional Development comes into town and does not make himself available to talk to people. The last time he visited he spoke only to the shire president, made an announcement about a subdivision and left. The rest of the shire councils were extremely disappointed with that attitude. There is no reason why he has to sneak into our town and sneak out. He should be open and honest with people about what he is doing instead of being reported in an article in the *Collie Mail*. He should be making himself available in the town.

Another disappointing thing that members of the National Party do is they come into town and run a function and charge a fee for those wishing to go to the breakfast and talk to the ministers. If people went to the roadshow that Hon Col Holt ran, they were told that if they really wanted to talk to the minister, they could pay \$50 and talk to him at the breakfast. To railroad people into parting with their money to pay for services from a politician is well beyond anyone’s reasonable expectation of our Western Australian system. They are great disappointments. I am extremely disappointed about that sort of attitude; the National Party professes to be the voice of the country people, yet those people have to pay to talk to its ministers. That is something that I have not seen before and certainly hope I do not see again in the future. I will mention that as we come into the next

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election. I will certainly tell people that if they want to talk to a person from the National Party, they should put their \$50 on the table so they can talk to them. That beggars belief, to say the least.

We have spoken about jobs in the Collie region. The Worsley expansion project is now starting to wind down. At its peak, there were 2 000-odd construction jobs in that refinery along with a bit over 1 000 permanent jobs as well. We can look at the input into the south west and royalties for regions, which I support, but where is the refund for the jobs that will be lost there and the royalties that come from that alumina refinery? A huge amount of alumina goes offshore. The coal in that area also pays a royalty. Mineral sands and silica are also produced in that area. Nearly \$2 billion worth of product goes out, yet we are not seeing the return come back into the south west. It is very disappointing.

In his Premier's Statement yesterday the Premier spoke at length but omitted any reference to the south west. Busselton, with its hospital, got a small mention. It was all about the north west, the north west and the north west. That is starting to wear very thin in our area. We are still putting our noses to the grindstone and we are still producing revenue for the state, yet we are being ignored down there. In what areas are we being ignored? We just heard the member for Mindarie speak about policing in his area. I have the same problems in my area. The Collie Police Station is understaffed. There was a bit of a brag session recently because Australind and Bunbury got two extra police, which is nowhere near enough to cover that region. Capel, the fastest growing shire in Western Australia, does not have a police station. Response times of 20 to 25 minutes are considered normal. I do not think that is normal, especially if there is no police station in the first place. There is hooning and antisocial behaviour. People can do what they like. I can even go to my place and do a couple of "Audi rings" and a bit of a "smoke-up", and be gone before the police even get the first phone call or start to move. If police are not available in Bunbury, people have to ring Busselton. If Busselton does not have police available, people have to ring Donnybrook. If Donnybrook does not have police available, people then have to go back to Australind. What a system in what is supposed to be the fastest-growing area in the state! In the last 18 months over 2 500 new people appeared on the electoral roll for that area. That does not include many of the migrants. We heard South Africa mentioned a bit earlier; a lot of people in that area have come into the mining industry from South Africa. They are wonderful people, and I look forward to working with them. However, we need a dedicated police station in that Capel area. It is central, and it would be easy to farm people into the other areas such as Dalyellup, Gelorup, Boyanup and across to Dardanup and even to give a bit of backup to Donnybrook and Busselton. Policing in that area is going to be a huge issue running into the next election. Most people would have seen the story on the front page of the newspaper recently of a policeman in Collie who went into the armoury of a police station and ended his life. That shows the pressures that are on police today. It certainly disappoints me to see that numbers have only grown by one or two, and yet police are expected to do a lot more work and to put up with a lot more antisocial behaviour. The attitudes of some of the younger people have changed. Even when the police take kids home to their parents, the police get abused by their parents as much as they get abused by the kids. It is that sort of very difficult work that police have to do today. The whole south west needs a revamp. We need an overview about strategically placing police stations—I believe Capel will be one of those places—and having the police numbers to be able to cover things such as CHOGM and the extra work that people have to do. There are issues of sickness, long service leave, holiday leave; what has been expected is that they would pick up more hours—not more police but more hours. I really am disappointed with the way that the Minister for Police has handled that. I am looking forward to the next election. It will be an election issue so that people get their just deserts in that area.

Another thing that is happening with the growth, especially in the Dalyellup area, is that playing fields are becoming a must. The Satterley development is a very nice development, but one of the areas that is missing is greenery—somewhere that people can play competitive sports. There are plenty of walk trails and plenty of passive recreation areas. It is a beautiful place like that, but there is a shortage of playing fields. I have heard others speak about the same issue in their area. Our growth is great, but we must look at how we get children and adults outdoors. We need outdoor education so that people get the exercise. We will get a reward in the long term, because we will not have the illnesses or the obesity that causes illnesses along the way. We must look to the future. We must think about how we plan for the future. Playing fields are not always put on the subdivision plan. The plan may look good and have thoroughfares and the whole lot, but we must not forget our heritage. A lot of that heritage is built on sport. We must make the facilities available. I am sure that most people here will agree with that.

While I am on the issue of the Dalyellup area, what a disappointment it is to find that a new school is being planned and it does not have a gymnasium! The parents and citizens association and the school board there are very disappointed about a major expansion of the school that does not include a gymnasium where classes can be run on colder days or maybe where sporting-type ventures can be held. It could be used for the school ball or things other than just as a designated gymnasium. I believe it is really a missed opportunity. Something can be

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fitted in. There are no problems about buying land. There is room for it. But the government is being a bit tight on the money and not really finishing what should be one of the best schools in the south west, remembering that already there are around 1 000 students in Dalyellup

I must take my hat off to the principal, Mr Gary Quinn, who I have known for a long time. Gary is very well regarded within his community because he is connected with the community. Also, while I am thanking people in the education area, I want to mention Neil Milligan, who has been down there for quite some time as district director. I am not quite sure what his title is now after some changes by the government. Neil has been quite ill for some time and he has fought back and is looking well. What a pleasure he is to work with!

I ring him up, or we just have a talk if we bump into each other at school functions. He is very, very obliging and tries to do the best overall. There is no bias about Neil. He just tells people straight where they stand and where they sit within the system. I find that quite refreshing these days, when a lot of people are not game to speak up under the Liberal government because they might get their heads chopped off! I am very pleased that he is still one of what we would call the older-fashioned, older-style people who are willing to talk and willing to get the job done. I would like to thank both those people for what they are doing in the Dalyellup area.

I am also concerned about the 3 000 people whose jobs are winding down at the moment and about where those people will go and what impact it will have on the south west if they drop their rentals and move north, because the rental market will collapse if 3 000 people move out of the south west—believe me! The government is sitting on its hands and not doing a great deal to assist in the Perdaman Industries process. That project has been on the drawing board for quite some years now, but the company is having a legal battle with the coal suppliers. It is time the government stepped in and mediated in this area so that people in the south west will have jobs into the future. I believe that when the construction work is finished, there will be about 200 permanent jobs. In the south west, 200 permanent jobs is quite a significant number when we think about the fact that there are only 750 000 jobs in the whole of the south west. In the smaller Bunbury–Collie–Capel region, it will have a major impact if there are 200 permanent jobs in that area. I have brought this up before, but I beg the government to become involved and to move things forward so that there will be jobs for people to go to in the future.

The last thing we need is a downturn in our area. Fly in, fly out is not the answer. It is not the be-all and end-all. It suits some communities, but there are a lot of communities that it does not suit. I have certainly seen the carnage caused in families when the father is away or when partners break up because they have been separated for too long. If anyone does not believe that, they are living in a dream world. Although fly in, fly out works for some, it certainly does not work for everyone.

The other problem I have is the feather-bedding that is going on in the north west by the Minister for Regional Development and Lands. I believe the minister is trying to featherbed himself for a soft landing for when he makes his decision to go north. I am not sure when that will happen, but he is certainly featherbedding himself up north so that if he does go there, he will have a nice soft landing. He has certainly pork-barrelled that place to death. Yet he is going to run away from the people who put him into Parliament. He is going to desert those people and say it is for the good of the state. I do not think so. He was elected by those people in the Merredin area, and to me he would be a traitor within his electorate—as the one we had in our ranks who went to the National Party—if he ran away to further his personal interests, not the political interests of the state. For the minister to do that and to keep pushing money and pushing the north west for his personal greed is something that will bite him in the finish. He may get there, but the people in his electorate will bite back.

The other issue that I have spoken to the Minister for Regional Development and Lands about and asked many, many questions about is Lake Kewari.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** As I have said many times, Lake Kewari is a mine void, two kilometres long, two kilometres wide and about 75 metres deeps, with beautiful blue water, that has been promised and promised to be opened for skiing. We have seen the dreadful accidents that have happened in crowded ski areas, where people have been dodging each other or have run into pylons because they are trying to get the last bit of the run-up. Those skiers could have another area to go to if the government would come out and work hard with the mining company and get the lease issue over and done with and move on. The Labor government has already allocated moneys of \$3 million. Those moneys have been sitting idle for three years, or maybe three and a half years. Those moneys should be utilised to put in infrastructure so that this can become a ski area. Protests about this area not being available have been organised from not only Collie but also Busselton. I was out there one Saturday morning and 30, 40 or maybe even 50 young people were saying, "We need this as a ski area." The Bunbury waterski area has been taken away because of the rotting jetty there and the wood falling into the water, which makes it unsafe. When the sea breeze comes into the Busselton area, they cannot waterski there. This freshwater lake would certainly be very well received by not only the waterskiing fraternity, but also the tourist

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industry in Collie. Most of the people who go there would use X amount of fuel, buy their goods there and probably eat at McDonalds. The town would benefit from the spin-off of the tourist dollar that is spent there.

That brings me to another issue. For Busselton people who drive through the back of the Wellington Dam and through the Ferguson Valley, there are still six kilometres of gravel impacting on one of the best tourist roads in WA. If that road were sealed, people would be able to drive from the Busselton area, through the Ferguson Valley, out to the ski area and back. It is another issue on the drawing board that has not been done. It would involve the expenditure of a very small amount of money for very big and quick returns. I will be looking forward to that. As members have said, we are not that far from the next election. I would like to think that the government would jump up and down and do a few of these things to get back in the public's good books. At this moment it does not even look as though it is going to do that.

One of the other areas I want to talk about is the Shire of Dardanup and its new shire president, John Gardiner, a person I have known for quite some time. John is another one who has conquered an illness and moved on to become a shire president. John's offside is the CEO, Mark Chester. John, too, is a very pleasant person to work with; not that we agree on everything. On the weekend before last, a group of us from the Labor Party were able to talk to John, and he outlined very well his views for his district. John is a long-time dairy farmer and cattle breeder in the region. I think he said his grandparents or maybe even his great-grandparents grew up in that region. He is one of those people who has taken out and is certainly putting a lot back to the community.

I am sure that if people who have not been to the greater Bunbury area for six or seven months were to go there now, they would see the changes that have happened in recent times. John would be jumping up and down if he heard me calling Dardanup "Bunbury"! The passion of the people in the region around the greater Bunbury area about forced local council amalgamations is unbelievable. They want to keep their identity. They can see the growth in their town as a result of being close to their shire and maintaining a local identity, and having the ability to control and direct that growth. They are very, very proud of their area, and rightly so. They have a really strong interest in keeping their identity and being able to service the people there. Ninety per cent of people in the Shire of Dardanup definitely do not want amalgamations. They have made that very clear. It does not matter where I go, whether it be a social function or whatever; when the issue is brought up, they say, "We do not want amalgamations; we do not want to be taken over and run from the centre of Bunbury. We want people who are closer to the issues."

There have been a few disappointments, I suppose. It is a shame that the Minister for Agriculture is not here in the chamber. He has been very quiet on the agrifood precinct that is planned for Burekup. Planning has been done and the South West Development Commission has put some money into it, along with the Doral Mineral Sands firm. The minister has a great plan to build an abattoir two kilometres from a future subdivision that will house 8 000 people! It is just ridiculous. The people in the Ferguson Valley are trying to develop a large tourism industry up that way. Some of the best wines in WA are grown in that area. There is beautiful scenery. There are a couple of beer shacks, I suppose, or local breweries there. The people in Ferguson Valley are developing a very good Sunday drive. People who come out of Bunbury just love to go into that area, which could be absolutely ruined by putting an agrifood precinct in that area with over 100 000 cows going through there to be slaughtered in an abattoir. When the same thing happened in Northam, the Minister for Regional Development spoke against it and said that an abattoir in Northam next to an aged-care home was not needed. He has two standards, and that really concerns me. He is pushing an agrifood precinct that would have anything from rabbit skinning through to cows and chooks and food processing and he is saying that there would be no smell. It is two kilometres away from the beautiful little village of Burekup. If anyone goes down south there—they might not see it on the way down—it is worth calling in to have a look. Then there is a new subdivision between about two and five kilometres away that will have a population of 8 000 people in the future. It is just absolute madness to even think of that process. John Madigan has led the charge of the people up there and I take my hat off to the way he has conducted himself within all the laws and used the processes properly to be able to say no to this proposal, because it will ruin what could be the Kings Park of the south west. It is close to Bunbury, up in the hills; there are beautiful views and beautiful wines. We should not get carried away just because a dollar has been offered. That is what happened: a dollar was offered by the company so that it did not have to do the rehabilitation on its sand mine. We should rehabilitate it back into farming land and leave it at that.

With the last couple of minutes I have left I will talk about some unfinished business from the government. There is the Eelup Rotary. What a disappointment to have a roundabout at the entrance to Bunbury that will have stoplights on it—traffic lights on a roundabout! I thought the idea of having a roundabout was that there were no traffic lights. But now, this government, again doing things back-to-front from most people, will put traffic lights on the roundabout. First of all there was a plan for a slip lane. Then there was another plan to put the majority of traffic through East Bunbury, where there is no exit. If someone goes down past the Parade Hotel along the foreshore and out that way, they run into the end of the road and have to come back again. I am sure the people

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in that area would be absolutely livid—I know they would be—if the traffic was pushed down through their area, which is a quiet suburban street. But because of the cost, this government has reneged on the deal. It was a pre-election promise and now it has reneged, which is certainly not an uncommon event in the south west with this government.

There was the \$30 million water treatment plant out on Collie River East. Again, the government reneged on the deal. At this moment it would be great for the jobs that are drifting away from construction in other areas and people could pick up the jobs and be working out there. I suppose we have been spoilt talking about billions, but a \$30 million job certainly has a lot of merit in the country areas. That is another election promise that has been broken. Again the National Party, through the Department of Sport and Recreation, promised \$1.6 million to the Collie Motorsports Complex. There is no sign of it and I believe that there have been some moves out there and they were thinking about shifting it away from a drag strip and finishing off what is a very, very well run and looked after motor sports complex where they have race cars or motorbikes racing there nearly every weekend. It is a great tourist attraction not only for the Collie region, but also for people along the South Western Highway and the Forrest Highway who will be picking up business when people have to fuel up in the four-hour round trip from Perth and back. It is a beautiful two-hour drive down and two-hour drive back, so there are certainly no problems getting there.

Tourist ventures have been stymied by this government because it will not back the infrastructure; it will not open its purse to allow that to happen. At the same time, the balance is out of kilter because money is going north. It is time that that balance was brought back into the equation. We need to move on, not just stall while the north west goes forward. When that flattens out in the future, we will need the south west infrastructure, because there will be a change of focus when people start to move back from the construction jobs in the north. We will need other jobs to fill the void for people.

The last issue, which is dear to my heart, is the Collie River running through the town. Seven kilometres of river are now choked. In my younger days, it was a very nice river. I certainly have fond memories of riding from pool to pool through the towns, catching up with mates, going for a swim and doing all the things that country kids do. But the whole river has been excavated to stop the flooding within the town. Over time that has been shown to be wrong in one sense. Certainly, there is no flooding, although it flooded in, I think, 1987. There is none of the general flooding that we used to get, but the excavation has turned the river into a drain and now it is choked up with nardoo weed. The weed is just overpowering the river; it is choking and killing everything in the river. It also looks terrible. People ask what is being done about it. The shire is putting funding into projects and looking at what it can do to help revitalise the river. The people of Collie are very passionate about getting it back to an acceptable standard in today's community. At the moment people cannot even canoe in some of the areas along the river because of the amount of nardoo weed. The shire has tried to kill it with black plastic by using a solar system. It tried some sprays that it got permission to use and also an excavator in recent times to pull out the weed, which, unfortunately, was a failure. A lot of money will be needed to upgrade the river to an acceptable standard, instead of leaving it to act as a drain.

The last issue that will be a big election issue is the forest management plan. In recent times, people have tried different methods to keep people out of the forest. It will be a huge balancing act to get that right in the future. "Sustainability" is a word that must be used in all cases. Climate change has happened. How far can we go with logging? We have seen in today's press that the Northam forest is under huge stress and should be addressed immediately. That will be an election promise. I look forward to that debate in the future.

**MR J.C. KOBELKE (Balcatta)** [6.08 pm]: In my contribution to this debate, I wish to talk about some aspects that flow from Fiona Stanley Hospital. I am pleased that the Minister for Health is in the chamber, as he may be able to assist me with some information as I go through some of the issues with what will be a fantastic hospital. Fiona Stanley Hospital, including the rehabilitation hospital, will cost approximately \$2 billion. It will be the flagship hospital in Western Australia. After the years of planning that have gone into it, it will have not only the physical facilities, but also, hopefully, the range of hard and soft services and clinical services that will make it the pre-eminent hospital not only in Western Australia, but also across the nation. Those people who have put in a lot of hard work over many years are looking forward to the fulfilment of the dream of Fiona Stanley Hospital opening in April 2014. However, the current government has contracted out the non-clinical services to Serco Australia in a 20-year contract. That amounts to approximately 30 different services—the facilities management and the hard and soft services that go to running the hospital. I think we all expect and hope that Fiona Stanley Hospital will live up to expectations and be a really great hospital. A great hospital is not just about having a wonderful looking building—we can see that taking shape already—it is very much about the clinical and non-clinical services that will be provided. I have confidence that that will be the case regardless of who provides the

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services at the hospital. But the question comes: are we getting value for money in contracting out the non-clinical services?

Recently I had the opportunity to talk to a lot of people in this area in the United Kingdom. What is absolutely clear there is that hospitals that were built under what are called PFIs—private finance initiatives—which are a type of public–private partnership and quite different from what we have here although there are some parallels, cost far too much. The conservative government in the UK is attacking the last Labour government because it spent too much in using the private sector to build and in some cases manage these hospitals. The wheel has turned there. That is not to say that privately run services cannot be competitive, but jumping to a position of “private will always do it better” has been shown in the UK to be an utter nonsense. In fact, one of the commentators there claims that people in the UK get one hospital for the price of two. What the government has been paying for hospitals provided by the private sector is just way over the top. That may go back to the early days rather than some of the contracts that are being written now. I will return to that a little later.

The real question is: how do we know that we are going to get value for money in this major contract for non-clinical services at Fiona Stanley Hospital? The Barnett government would have us believe that our existing hospital services are so inefficient that a private facility manager can deliver the same standard of service at a substantially cheaper price and still make a good profit for the company delivering that service. I think that raises questions about whether it can be believed that a private company making a profit will deliver the same quality of service and do so substantially cheaper. Will the numbers show that? Can the government make available the figures to show that we have not been duded and we are not paying above the odds for these services? We know that the Barnett government has a policy preference of contracting out and privatisation. We have to look only to the Midland health campus, for which the decision was made very early on that that would be contracted out. The current government also announced that the new children’s hospital would be a public–private partnership but then changed its mind. I do not know whether the minister is willing to interject on me but, minister, why was there a change with the new children’s hospital moving away from a PPP? The minister is engrossed and he does not want to answer the question. I suspect that when the government started to do some preliminary figures, it found that it would be more expensive, so it decided that the government would design it, contract a builder and own and run it. The government may at a later stage want to contract out some of the services, but that was a clear example of how this government’s philosophical commitment to contracting out ran into the reality of the costs. The government backflipped and now the new children’s hospital will not be privately funded, built and managed.

Fiona Stanley Hospital has a contract with Serco for 20 years—10 plus five plus five—which will cost the taxpayer \$4.3 billion. The problem is that the government carries most of the risk. If there are changes in medical procedures to improve health outcomes and it requires a change to the contract, the government will have to pay through the nose to change the contract. No-one believes that over 20 years there will not be significant changes in how we deliver health in our major hospitals. These are lessons that the government in the UK has learnt. A simple example that was given to me when I was there was that it wanted to really take seriously the spread of infection in hospitals. So they dictated a policy that required every ward to have the alcohol gel hand wash to reduce the cross-infections. Apparently it has been quite successful, but what did they find? It was not in the contract of those hospitals that had contracts for private providers. Therefore, the cost of installing those hand gel dispensers was astronomical. The extra costs had to be paid. The problem with a 20-year contract in this area is that the government carries the risk. If we simply had a 10 per cent cost blow-out on \$4.3 billion, the taxpayers would be hit for another almost half a billion dollars. This government does not have a good track record with blow-outs. The Premier wrote to the then Prime Minister and said that the Perth City Link would cost \$263 million. The cost has gone up nearly 300 per cent; it is now more than \$700 million. We could certainly expect that the contract with Serco at Fiona Stanley Hospital will blow out by at least 10 per cent in additional costs and the taxpayer will have to wear that.

The Treasurer was very fulsome in talking about how the contract will save taxpayers \$500 million. That is what the Treasurer told this house. From looking at the figures that he gave, that means that the Serco contract is about 13 per cent cheaper than doing it with government employees. That is a huge differential. I have looked at some other hospitals. The one public–private partnership I had some involvement with in Western Australia was the District Court and it really came down to a one to three per cent differential. If we look quite conservatively at the actual cost of providing the service with government employees as against a contract, we see that to get a contract that is 13 per cent cheaper really causes concern that the numbers have not been done very well. In talking to people in the United Kingdom, we found that there was no confidence in the public sector comparator—that is, the analysis that is done to try to determine what the costs would be to run the hospital in-house using largely direct labour. Many people told us that the public sector comparator is done only to ensure that the contract is let out. People know that the policy is that this is to be let out to a private concern, so they fix the public sector comparator to get it. There is a real onus on the minister and his government to release the

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figures, to be transparent and to show how the Treasurer was able to claim a \$500 million saving on this particular deal. It is not a position whereby the government needs to hide behind commercial confidentiality. The contract was signed some six months ago.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Haven't we released those public-private comparators to one of the standing committees?

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE:** If the government has, it was about now. We were told February, I think. We do not need only the headline figures; we need enough of the figures to see whether the books were biased to get the outcome the government wanted or whether the exact data shows that we got a good deal. I am very sceptical when the Attorney General claims a \$500 million saving.

As a caveat I need to remind the house that the Public Accounts Committee is conducting an inquiry into this matter and the information I am using does not relate to matters that are confidential to the committee; it is information that is on the public record. I did company searches and made phone calls to people whose names I found through those company searches. That is the basis of the contribution I will make to the house this evening.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE:** The real question is: how do we judge that this Serco contract is providing value for money? Another lesson that came out of the UK was the early attempts at contracting out to the private sector, which in many cases were quite disastrous. Over the years, because private finance initiatives have been running for more than a decade now, they improved their contract management, and it would appear now that there is a high level of satisfaction with quite a few of the hospitals at which the service has been contracted out. However, the early ones were just mind-boggling with the problems that they ran into. The parallel here is that this is a huge contract that is way beyond anything that we have done in health in Western Australia before. In fact, I think it is way beyond anything that we have done in any contract for services in Western Australia. So, based on the United Kingdom experience, it is likely that we have not got the best possible contract—another real risk for the government regarding whether we are going to get value for money out of this Serco contract.

So how do we judge whether the contract is value for money? The government is contracting out the facilities management and the hard and soft services for roughly 30 services, because I still do not know whether one or two have been tied down. As I have already indicated, this is the biggest such contract that the government of Western Australia has ever entered into in health or anywhere else. We have some long-term road maintenance contracts that go to \$1 billion, but I am not aware of anything that goes to \$4.3 billion in a single contract. Therefore, the government decided that it would use Infrastructure Australia's public-private partnership guidelines to help guide the process, and to me that makes sense. However, I make it absolutely clear that this is not a PPP, even though the approach, the guidelines used in its assessment and the techniques drew heavily on the processes that would be used if a public-private partnership, or PPP, was being established.

So how was the public sector comparator done? How do we know that the costing that supposedly would be there if we did it in-house really is genuine and a fair measure of that process? Big national and international companies do this regularly, whether it is KPMG, Deloitte or PricewaterhouseCoopers. Therefore, we would expect that there would be a process in which one or more of those companies might be involved. However, that is not the case. The contracts went to Paxon or Paxon Consulting Group. So again I did a company search to find out what I could about Paxon. Paxon is a one-dollar company owned by Mr Michael Palassis. It may have a good reputation in Perth, but it is a small company. That company previously had the name Stamfords. There are a number of companies with the name Stamfords on them, so again I searched through those Stamfords companies, and I actually got hold of the Australian Securities and Investments Commission company extract done by Dun and Bradstreet for a company called Stamfords Advisors and Consultants Pty Ltd, one of the Stamfords companies. On the first page of that Dun and Bradstreet extract, it says that the registered office for Stamfords Advisors and Consultants Pty Ltd is Paxon Group, Level 5, 160 St Georges Terrace, Perth WA 6000, and the start date for that was 15 December 2010. So we see that Paxon, the company that got this contract to advise the government on the biggest ever contracting out, is closely related to Stamfords Advisors and Consultants and uses the same office in St Georges Terrace. However, Stamfords Advisors and Consultants Pty Ltd has a single director and owner, Stan Michael Palassis, who is the father of Michael Palassis, the owner of the Paxon Consulting Group. But the Dun and Bradstreet report really starts the alarm bells ringing with respect to this Stamfords company, because the D&B dynamic risk score is "severe", and the D&B dynamic delinquency score is also "severe". The relative risk is "severe" and it recommends cash on delivery. Dun and Bradstreet say this company is not one to do business with if it does not actually pay cash on delivery. This is the same office out of which Paxon is delivering these services to government. Just under the Dun and Bradstreet report, it is stated —

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A Score of 1135 indicates that the subject has a Severe risk of experiencing financial distress during the next 12 months and has a score that is the same as or better than 1% of all records in the Dun & Bradstreet database

It is at the bottom of the pile in terms of companies ranked by Dun and Bradstreet.

There were pages of court actions included in that Dun and Bradstreet research. Some have actually been determined; that is, judgement has been handed down. Others involved the company simply making claims. I rang a few of the contacts I could find through that. They really did not have a very good picture of the Stamfords company or group of companies. Amongst those claims was the Deputy Commissioner of Taxation. A search of the Administrative Appeals Tribunal and the Federal Court showed there were matters arising out of the Australian Taxation Office against Mr Palassis. The Administrative Appeals Tribunal, in *The Taxpayers v Commissioner of Taxation* [2011] AATA 33 dated 21 January 2011—which has the number 2007/1955—says a few things about Mr Stan Palassis. It actually uses “Mr P” in here, but because Mr Palassis then took it on to the Federal Court, the Federal Court references this. That is how I know it is referring to Mr Stan Palassis. I will not use the names of the particular Stamfords companies that are there. This particular matter before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal was over a bill to the tax office of almost \$3 million, excluding interest. I will read a brief quote from the decision and reasons for decision by the Administrative Appeals Tribunal —

Overall, Mr P’s attitude in the conduct of the proceedings appears to the Tribunal to be reflective of his general attitude to his taxation and financial affairs: his failure to comply with his taxation obligations, his failure to keep proper records, his use of ST and SM funds —

Two of the companies —

for private purposes, his reckless attitude to “bouncing” cheques meant to pay the respondent for his many obligations and his habit of promising to meet deadlines which promises were seldom kept.

It is stated at paragraph 23 —

It is clear to the Tribunal that Mr P lacks insight into the relevance of his truthfulness and honesty. He did not understand that his integrity was in many respects at the core of the proceedings in circumstances where, as shown by the evidence here, numerous amended BAS and Income Tax returns with different figures had been filed for each of the entities and numerous unfulfilled promises were made to provide documents and substantiation.

Finally, it is stated at paragraph 24 —

The Tribunal finds that overall Mr P was neither honest nor frank in his dealings with the respondent and in the course of these proceedings and was not a credible witness.

That is damning. That is the Stamfords companies which Paxon came out of and which Paxon shares offices with. No wonder we are concerned about whether the process is one that we can have confidence in. The government really needs to show that the taxpayer is not paying well above what it should because this government has a philosophical commitment to contracting out. The issue is that we need transparency in all the processes so that people can look to see where cost savings are being made, if there are any, and we do not have a situation in which there has simply been a fixing of the public sector comparator by putting in amounts of money relating to transfer of risk that do not mean anything. Again, when talking to people involved in this field in the United Kingdom, they made it very clear that it is easy to put in the public sector comparator that the risk is being transferred, but to effectively transfer the risk is quite a different thing. We were told that it can be done, particularly at the construction phase. So, if there were builders who actually had a commitment to building on time and on budget, they drove the process, and if they came in under that, they picked up the benefits; if they went over it, quite likely they would carry the costs. The risk can be transferred at the construction stage if it is done well. But, again, the general discussion was that transferring risk for facility management and operation is quite different, and not so easily done, because once the facility is up and operating, the risk largely sits with the government; the owner of the facility is the one who is responsible. If things go wrong, then the government has to pay up. I can give numerous examples of this being the case in the UK.

We need to know how Paxon actually got this job. Was there open tender, so that the big national and international companies might also have been able to provide this advice? How was Paxon selected? It is very important that we fully understand that. Was there some sort of competitive tendering process to do the number crunching and provide this advice to government? As indicated, Paxon is a \$1 company; it might have some very good operators there, but it does not carry the same reputation as large national or international companies. It clearly is operating out of the same premises as Stamfords, which has more than one company, but, as we can see, if that is the sort of operation that is taking place out of this office that Paxon works from, what are we to

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expect of the quality of work it has done for the government? A full and open process is the only way we are going to know whether we are actually getting value for money or whether this government has made another bad decision, driven by its ideological position and not looking to provide the best benefit to the taxpayer to ensure that we have quality services at the lowest possible price.

The whole process is critical to knowing that we are getting value for money with the final outcome that we want for this hospital—a hospital which will be the flagship hospital in Western Australia. I am glad the Treasurer has now come into the house, because I have found out before that the Treasurer has not always been accurate when he has put these matters on the record. When he has come forward and said things about numbers, we have found that they have actually been misleading and that we have not been given the true and full picture. The Treasurer's suggestion that it will be \$500 million cheaper on a \$4.3 billion contract really does not sit with the experience in other places, which immediately calls into question whether the public sector comparator was accurate and valuable, or whether, simply, Paxon knew the government wanted to go this way, and so therefore a whole lot of extra numbers were put in to show that the government doing it with its own staff was going to be much more expensive than it really would be, and so Paxon loosely used this term "risk transfer" and put in, potentially, hundreds of millions of dollars of extra costs.

But we all know that the risk sits with the government. At the end of the day, the government cannot have the hospital closed down, the government cannot have huge inefficiencies in the hospital, and the government cannot have a hospital that is out of date and does not adopt new procedures. But it has a contract with a service provider, and so when it wants to make those changes, the service provider has much greater leverage over the government than the government has over it. One hospital in the UK was in an area where there was suddenly an increase in the birthrate, so it wanted to put in some more obstetric beds and operating theatres, but it had to work through the contract. It cost them an arm and a leg and was way over what it would have cost them to do it themselves. That is because they were locked into a contract and changing the layout of the wards and putting in the extra obstetrics rooms they needed would mean some changes, which then had to be negotiated with the people who had the contract. That led to a huge blow-out in the cost. There are lots of stories in the United Kingdom about hospitals being charged \$100 to change a light globe. One of the National Health Service trusts that ran a hospital had been able to do a deal with the contractor to have a small number of their own direct staff go around and fix a lot of the issues so that it would not have to pay an exorbitant amount through the contract. We have plenty of examples of where it has gone wrong. I am not saying that it cannot go right. The minister will find hospitals in the UK that are happy with their contracts. When I talked to members of Parliament in the UK, they were all very happy with their hospitals, but they acknowledged that on the whole they pay far more because it was through a private finance initiative, which is not the same as that which the government is doing here. I will take an interjection.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** Do not forget that while you were in government you reappointed that same company to manage our prisons.

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE:** That is not the issue. I am not attacking Serco. Serco is a private company that I believe can deliver efficiently and a good quality service. The issue is: are we paying them substantially more than it would cost if we had employed our own people to do the job?

**Dr K.D. Hames:** That is what the public–private comparator is for. If you were in government, who would you ask to look at that? You would ask the government officials who are involved in developing and managing the service; you would not do it yourself. That is exactly what we did.

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE:** In this case, it was contracted out to Paxon, and I just indicated that Paxon is not a heavyweight and it keeps bad company, so that causes me real concern.

**Dr K.D. Hames:** I understand the point you are making; it is the first time I have heard it.

**Mr J.C. KOBELKE:** The answer for the minister is to make sure that when the contract matters are released, they are not just a brief summary but contain enough of the data so that we can see with absolute clarity what sort of a deal we have here. Are we paying well above the odds or are we not? The government has contracted out the whole lot, and my concern is that that is a greater risk. I can understand the argument that might have been put that all these services have to be integrated and if we have one entity controlling them, the integration should go better. That was probably the argument that was put to the government. The risk is that we cannot get all the subcontractors to deliver at the price and standard we want. For instance, the UK has had such an incredibly bad run with their information and communications technology systems that they have a standard caveat that ICT cannot be bundled into the contracts for these facilities; they do not allow it.

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The government has bundled the ICT in, so it has a huge problem. It has a further problem that some of that ICT has to be developed by the Department of Health, but the overarching framework has been developed through Serco and its subcontractor, and if it does not work, the government will have a major problem. The government is carrying all the risk, having to pay huge amounts of money so the contractors can quickly put together the computer and control systems we need. They do not allow that anymore in the UK because they have had so many bad experiences, but this government has that in its contract.

We hope that Fiona Stanley Hospital will be the wonderful hospital that people have worked very hard for many years to deliver, but we need to know that it will give us value for money in the non-clinical services. We will know that only if this government is totally open and transparent. When the southern railway was built, Hon Alannah MacTiernan tabled in this place three or four boxes of every single detail. There is no reason the government cannot do that now for Fiona Stanley Hospital. The government can table every single detail of all the costings so that people will know whether we have a good deal or whether we are paying above the odds.

**MR F.A. ALBAN (Swan Hills)** [6.40 pm]: I take this opportunity in reply to the Premier's Statement to highlight my electorate of Swan Hills. My message will be positive. I have been a member of Parliament and the member for Swan Hills for three and a half years, during which time we have been in government. For me this is a time of reflection. If we were playing a game of football, we would call this the last quarter in the lead-up to the grand final. I want us to look at the scoreboard. I have sat here in silence and been pretty well behaved while listening to opposition members, who have made a lot of claims. I will contrast the three and a half years of the Liberal government with the seven and a half years of the former Labor government because the claims of members opposite are quite extraordinary. I played country football for about 16 years and I believe in fair play. I figured that I could not be fair unless I had proper documentation and so I traced down election campaign material for the Labor Party.

The document I have in front of me is very well presented. On it are two familiar faces—a passing parade—of the former Premier and a former upper house member. On this very well presented document is highlighted some of the Labor Party's achievements. I have no problem mentioning the former government's successes. The very first item under "Delivered by Labor" refers to \$3 million delivered for a police station for Ellenbrook. That station was there when I became a member. Perhaps alongside that, to even up the odds—remember that we have been in government for three and a half years and the former government was in government for seven and a half years—we can say that was a good win for the ALP, but we built the Ellenbrook fire station with an equivalent amount of money. Therefore the score is 1–1.

The Labor government had a pretty good record on schools, so I will mention its achievements. The Labor Party's figures are slightly less, but I will be fair and say that as the years pass, the cost of building a school goes up. The Labor government built a primary school in Bullsbrook for some \$7.5 million and a second in Ellenbrook for a similar amount of money. We can say that in three and a half years we have matched that. We built the Malvern Springs and Aveley Primary Schools, both of which were recently completed. Also under "Delivered by Labor" the election campaign material states that Labor delivered \$30.5 million for stage 1 of Ellenbrook Secondary School. Stage 1 was built by the time I became a member. However, stage 2 of the secondary school, which we built, was not. One could say that stage 2 offsets stage 1. We are well into building Bullsbrook, so the Labor government is way behind us on the list of schools built. I must acknowledge the other things that the Labor government delivered, such as the Swan Valley Planning Act to protect the Swan Valley for the future. That was a great initiative and I think the former Labor government should be applauded for it, and I have no problem doing that. There is a bit of an anomaly in the Labor Party's campaign material. Some headings are "Delivered by Labor" and others are "Labor—Delivering". The ALP claimed that it was delivering the \$25 million stage 2 development of Ellenbrook Secondary School, which was not built until a year after I became the member for Swan Hills. Of interest is the statement in the campaign material —

**Delivered by Labor:**

... site selection for new Mundaring drinking water treatment plant

We are in the process of building that plant now, but we will give the Labor Party some credit because it did choose the site. There is not a lot more in the campaign material other than that, so I thought I would compare infrastructure. I must admit that I should have washed my mouth out with soap because during my time as a councillor for the City of Swan I said that the previous Labor government did nothing for infrastructure for the electorate of Swan Hills. I was a little bit wrong so I will take that back; it did do something. What did it do? At a cost of \$3.8 million it built passing lanes and improved road safety along Toodyay Road between Red Hill and Gidgegannup. I drive along that road often and I know that it did do that. What have we done in contrast? The first thing that is well under way is the Roe Highway—Great Eastern overpass, or interchange. I acknowledge that half the costs are being met by the federal government, and so it should be. It does not matter to me whether

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it is funded by a Liberal federal government or a Labor federal government. I am very proud to be a Western Australian and the more we can get from the federal government to help our state, the better. The amount of money spent was \$112.6 million.

Another recent happening in my electorate was the Reid Highway extension in Middle Swan, which included a brand-new bridge. That project cost \$74.4 million and about 50 per cent was funded by the federal government. But there was more, Mr Deputy Speaker. There was a great —

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** Who committed the money for that bridge?

**Mr F.A. ALBAN:** I have a rule that I draw on and it may be different from that of the member for Balcatta. I believe that a government can claim what it built in its term. All consultation and planning, discussions and setting up of committees or feasibility studies stops when it is out of government. It may well be fair to claim ownership if something is partly built; that is, if the project has been started. I do not count paperwork or discussions as a part of the process—when a party is out of government, its time stops.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** Even if it is designed, constructed and paid for?

**Mr F.A. ALBAN:** The “paid for” is debatable. If the member were to be in government for the rest of his life, he might claim that. But the rule is the same for us. When our time is up, I do not believe that we will be claiming the thought bubbles or the things that we had planned.

I know that the opposition makes a big fuss about buses and trains, and asks what was happening when I got to Ellenbrook. The buses that I inherited were 20-year-old Renault buses—the oldest one can get. They were high-floor buses with no air conditioning and only made local trips. The furthest they travelled was to Morley. What do we have now? We have brand-new fully air conditioned low-step buses. And how often do they travel in Ellenbrook? They travel every 10 minutes in peak time and every 15 minutes off peak. Not only do they travel right throughout the electorate, which is predominantly made up of Ellenbrook, but out to the suburb of Aveley. By the way, I forgot that our government also gave the same time-free travel to seniors from 9.00 am to 3.00 pm so that we could take advantage of the new buses.

**Mr R.F. Johnson:** Fantastic! That is because of a good local member.

**Mr F.A. ALBAN:** A good local member!

The Ellenbrook buses make a circular route through Ellenbrook and Aveley, not only serving the outer community, but also allowing seniors in Ellenbrook and Aveley to get on a bus that stops at either of the two shopping precincts, do their shopping and return home using the same bus service. That is a service that the people of Ellenbrook now get that they were not getting before.

I will also say that the Ellenbrook buses running every 10 or 15 minutes, depending on the time of day, transport people to Bassendean, connecting them to the Perth–Midland railway line. People in my electorate are connected to Perth city by that railway line, and to Midland, if they want. In summary of public transport, this government put in new buses and the Labor government ran old buses. The former Labor government did not do much for Ellenbrook. I know that the Liberal–National government has been criticised for there being no train to Ellenbrook. However, it would give me the greatest pleasure, if the new opposition leader were to commit to a train to Ellenbrook, to know whether he was telling the truth in the first place. I am waiting to hear that.

What else have we done in the electorate of Swan Hills? One of the most outstanding achievements and the standout project for Ellenbrook was the commitment of \$8 million for the design and planning of the Perth–Darwin highway. This project has been talked about for as long as anyone can remember and almost every person in the state lays claim to having implemented the process. But it was this state government that only recently committed to the project. The Perth–Darwin highway will provide tremendous benefits. It will remove the truck traffic firstly from the struggling Swan Valley, and secondly from places like Bullsbrook that are struggling.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** When is it going to be completed?

**Mr F.A. ALBAN:** It has been started. As I said to the member for Balcatta before, if members of his party had started it, we would have claimed it as theirs. The planning and design are underway and, yes, like the member for Balcatta said, the money is in the budget. I will not go into any detail, but the fact is that the work has been started. On the alignment of the Perth–Darwin highway, at Reid Highway and Lord Street, shortly there will be a new set of lights that has been budgeted for.

**Mr J.C. Kobelke:** The alignment was done by the Court Liberal government.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 22 February 2012]

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Mr John Quigley; Mr Mick Murray; Mr John Kobelke; Mr Frank Alban

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**Mr F.A. ALBAN:** And another set of lights will be on that same alignment at Gnangara Road and Drumpellier Drive. On the alignment of Perth–Darwin highway, there will be two sets of lights within the next 12 months, so we can say that work has started. Not only have we done that, but also we are slowly, one by one, fixing up all the safety issues that existed in the electorate of Swan Hills when I became the member three and a half years ago. The member for Balcatta and I think the member for Mindarie complained—I think it is the member for Wanneroo’s problem also—that there was only one road, Marmion Avenue, heading north. Ellenbrook also had only one road leading into Ellenbrook. Who would design something like that? Who would design a potential regional district with only one access road? There are now two roads to Ellenbrook. One of the greatest benefits in my electorate is the recent announcement—it is not in my electorate, so I will not lay claim to it being in my electorate—of the about-to-be constructed new Midland hospital at a cost of \$360 million, and, again, I acknowledge that it has some federal government money in it.

I was, I suppose I could say, invited to a forum recently at Midland Town Hall with union boss Dave Kelly, about 100—not much more—of his faithful troops and a few general hangers-on who always hang around that sort of situation. It was a campaign that virtually predicted the end of the world as we know it in Midland and the surrounding estates and complained that all the poor people in my electorate would not have access to public beds. Mr Deputy Speaker, there will be 307 public beds. Yes, there will also be 60 private beds as well. The St John of God Hospital is one of the biggest and most looked forward to projects for Midland. Can I also say that the marching on the streets and the placards at my office appear to have stopped, particularly since St John of God has been announced as the management. My family personally has always been taken care of by St John of God Hospital. My youngest daughter, Lara, was born in St John of God Hospital and my wife recently had a foot operation there. We always let the care of our family to St John of God Hospital. I do not think they can be faulted and I do not think there is a better caring hospital operator anywhere in the state. It is rather interesting that all the marching in the streets and the placards seem to have died down—perhaps the No Privatisation of Midland Health Campus Bill 2011 will have the same fate as the uranium mining decision by the new opposition leader. Like his decision to change his mind about retail trading hours, perhaps all of a sudden the light has come on and he has said that maybe this is not a bad thing for Midland. There may be no votes in it because the member for Swan Hills certainly was not embarrassed at all by that decision.

Basically what I am saying is that after three and half years of a Liberal government, contrasted with seven and a half years of a Labor government, it is very clear who has been doing things and who has not been doing things. I forgot to mention, because my scribbling is quite ordinary, that Midland health campus will become part of a record \$1.5 billion hospital capital works program, which includes Fiona Stanley Hospital. We cannot do much better than that.

The record of the Liberal–National government on schools, roads and hospital infrastructure in its first three and a half years is quite spectacular, and my electorate of Swan Hills is a good example of this.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr R.F. Johnson (Leader of the House)**.

*House adjourned at 6.55 pm*

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