

SOUTH WEST RESCUE HELICOPTER

**623. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Emergency Services:**

I refer to the south west rescue helicopter which, under the previous Liberal–National government, was only funded —

Several members interjected.

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** Mr Speaker, may I repeat the question?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, you may.

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** I refer to the south west rescue helicopter which, under the previous Liberal–National government, was only funded until June next year —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** — providing deep uncertainty for my community.

*Point of Order*

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** The member has attempted to ask the question twice; he is still unable to do that. I ask you to call the relevant interjectors to order.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes. Thank you. Can you start your question again, member for Bunbury, I want to hear it please.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** I refer to the south west rescue helicopter which, under the previous Liberal–National government, was funded only until June next year, providing deep uncertainty for my community. How has the McGowan Labor government provided certainty for the people of Bunbury and the south west and ensured this vital service is properly funded?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:**

Mr Speaker —

**Mr A. Krsticevic** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members! Member for Carine, I call you to order for the second time. You do not learn.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members of the National Party, I am sure you want to hear this because it is a regional issue.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I would have thought he would. Can I first of all thank the member for Bunbury for being such a sterling and forthright advocate on behalf of Bunbury and all the people of the south west. He has done a great job. I was very pleased yesterday to be in the company of the Premier and the member for Bunbury at the Bunbury RAC helicopter base to announce funding into the future that has been properly secured by the McGowan Labor government. That funding announcement provides certainty and security for the people of the south west of Western Australia. For the first time it will provide certainty and security. In the 2016–17 financial year, that helicopter had 400 missions. Nearly 80 per cent of those missions were for road crash trauma, so it serves a very, very important emergency service in the south west. While I was visiting the base, previous to yesterday, not long after I had arrived, the helicopter took off to attend —

**Mr D.T. Redman** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Warren–Blackwood, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** — a motorbike accident on Caves Road, so I saw in front of my eyes exactly what it does for the people of the south west. It is a very important service. I am very, very pleased to be able to have supported the Premier and cabinet in ensuring that the helicopter is funded into the future, unlike the previous government's action.

The straw man campaign, led primarily by the National Party with some support from the Liberal Party, about the funding of that helicopter was a disgrace. It upset and misled the people of Bunbury and the south west because it was just wrong. A media release from 2016 was put out by the then Minister for Regional Development, the member for Warren–Blackwood, saying quite clearly that that helicopter was funded operationally for four years. That was not true. When we broke down the funding for the helicopter, the \$29 million allocated to the helicopter included \$7 million for the construction of the helicopter base.

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 7 November 2017]

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Mr Donald Punch; Mr David Templeman; Hon Fran Logan

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**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** There was only two and a half years, member for Cottesloe, of actual operational funding.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** That is right. There was nothing in the forward estimates. There was only two and a half years of actual operational funding. The National Party has runs on the board for misleading people. It misled the people of the south west with regard to the actual funding of the helicopter and now it has misled the people of the south west in terms of our approach to funding the helicopter. We have given certainty and security to the people of the south west, unlike the government of members opposite and I am very, very pleased that we were able to do it.