

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Division 14: Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation — Services 1 to 7, State Development; Jobs and Trade; Hydrogen Industry; Tourism; Science, \$636 461 000 —

Ms A.E. Kent, Chair.

Mr R.H. Cook, Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade; Hydrogen Industry; Tourism; Science.

Mrs R. Brown, Director General.

Dr P. Gorey, Deputy Director General.

Ms S. Spencer, Deputy Director General.

Mr R. Sansalone, Chief Finance Officer.

Mr A. Dolling, Executive Director, Science and Innovation.

Mr J. O'Hare, Executive Director, Industry Development.

Mr A. Sutton, Executive Director, Hydrogen and New Energies.

Mr S. Dawson, Executive Director, Project Facilitation.

Ms D. Pope, Executive Director, Invest and Trade WA.

Mr A. King, Executive Director, Strategic Policy.

Ms C. Turnbull, Managing Director, Tourism WA.

Ms A. Last, Executive Director, Events, Tourism WA.

Ms S. Underwood, Acting Executive Director, Strategy and Engagement, Tourism WA.

Ms R. Lowe, Executive Director, Destination Development, Tourism WA.

Ms M. Forbes, Executive Director, Marketing, Tourism WA.

Mr N. Fergus, Chief of Staff, Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: Good morning. We are being proudly Australian this morning, Deputy Premier.

Mr R.H. COOK: I have the Matildas announcement today, chair, so I am very excited!

The CHAIR: That is great. The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is limited to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with those details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by noon on Friday, 2 June 2023. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

I give the call to the member for Cottesloe.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I thank the minister for taking our questions today, and to what can only be described as a phalanx of advisers from various areas—but obviously very important.

The CHAIR: It is a massive portfolio.

Mr R.H. COOK: We want the member to have all the information he needs.

Dr D.J. HONEY: The minister always manages very well and I am always grateful for that. I will start at page 189 on spending changes. We will obviously go into a bit of detail on this, but perhaps if the minister could give us a bit of an overview of the table at the bottom of the page, “Climate Action Fund” and the line items “Climate Adaptation”, “Collie Industrial Transition Fund” and “Green Energy Approvals”. What are the major components of that?

Mr R.H. COOK: As the member knows, our response to climate change and how we manage our own impact on climate change is a very important part of the work that we are doing. We are trying to—the member will see, for instance, the reference to the Collie industrial transition fund—make sure that as Western Australia goes on this energy transition program we do so in a way that preserves jobs and lifestyles to the extent that we can.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

We also want to make sure that we continue to welcome and play our part in that energy transition to decarbonise our economy.

On 6 December 2022, the government announced the establishment of a cross-government green energy approvals initiative to drive timely approvals for green energy projects through clear fit-for-purpose assessment pathways that deliver strong environmental outcomes for the community. The first key aspect of this is making sure that we have the approval processes in place that are necessary for those green energy projects. That is obviously a piece of work that involves coordination by the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, integrating the work of the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, and other regulators to ensure that these projects are brought onstream as appropriate.

The green energy approvals program is colloquially referred to within government as the “green berets”. Its job is to identify blockages and assist companies navigate the regulatory pathways that are in place for a range of reasons and make sure that we get those new energy projects up as a matter of priority. As I also mentioned, we are in the business of reducing our impact on the environment, and the climate adaptation strategy is about working with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation to make sure that we can improve our work in this particular space. That involves delivering on the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation program around the small to medium-sized enterprise sector adaptation plan, as well as accompanying a climate adaptation program for SMEs. The 2023–24 budget provides \$3.3 million to undertake that work. Of course, we also need to make sure that we are doing our part in working with heavy industry to identify what the government needs to do to put the right policy mechanisms in place around the sector emissions reductions process, or SERS. I will invite the director general and the appropriate officers to make some further remarks on those points.

Mrs R. Brown: It is fair to say that the green energy approvals team is an important part of the department. It works across the public sector with other approvals teams to find innovative ways to bring projects to Western Australia and to ensure a smooth pathway through the approvals system. Certainly, the focus on renewable energy and decarbonisation is a high priority for the department. We are seeing enormous interest coming into the department from a range of industry players, some existing in Western Australia and some new to Western Australia, some in the technology space and some in existing industries seeking to decarbonise. We are also seeing enormous interest from Western Australia’s key trading partners around the opportunity for Western Australia to be part of that renewable energy transition, particularly in South-East Asia.

Mr R.S. LOVE: On the green energy approvals that were spoken about, can the minister explain how that interaction will operate, because last night we were having a discussion with the Minister for Environment about the establishment of the approvals team within the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, and he stated that the department has a role in that as well. I note a reference on page 145 of budget paper No 3 to the green energy major projects team being established. Can the minister explain how the department’s approvals process works in practice? I have asked for a briefing on this from the Minister for Environment but maybe the minister can outline how it will operate in the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

[9.10 am]

Mr R.H. COOK: JTSI’s role is to coordinate. That it is a concierge is probably a good way to describe the role. Obviously, we already have a capability that we utilise to work on major projects. We work with the key players to assist them to navigate government processes as they relate to different departments. Drawing on the principles of the green energy approvals program, we play a coordinating role to assist companies to understand their obligations and meet the regulatory requirements, which, as the member observed, are significant to the work of DWER.

I invite the director general to provide specifics on the work of that team.

Mrs R. Brown: As the minister outlined, it very much draws on the existing work of JTSI, including its role in providing case management and facilitation to a number of projects, including large-scale projects, very much under the existing well-established lead agency framework. The unit will focus on the additional coordination we need to provide in partnership with DWER, which is obviously the lead agency for approvals, for these new and emerging green energy projects that differ from some of the previous types of projects we have facilitated into this state. It is very much about looking at coordination and case management and taking a concierge role to facilitate infrastructure or land requirements. An important part of the partnership with DWER is finding ways to support projects through the approvals process, bearing in mind some of them are new to the state and some are both emerging projects and emerging technology. It is a very important part of changing the way we do business for these different really important projects coming to Western Australia.

Dr D.J. HONEY: How will this process be different? State Development has always had a function of coordinating projects between departments. Having been on the other side of the fence, as a customer, one of the frustrations was that State Development was extremely helpful and benchmarked on wanting to put an arm around one’s shoulder,

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

if you like, but the individual departments were dogged in maintaining their own turf; they were not going to be pushed around or cajoled into doing things outside the way they normally do them. Although there was really good intention and the first interface was really good, it fell away after that.

What will be different with this process? Do we really expect to see an acceleration or will the problem still come up of departments holding things up? As a bit of further information, yesterday we were examining the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and all of its approval times have blown out quite significantly—by 25 per cent for licences and the like. I wonder what is different now. I appreciate that it is a very good intent but is there some new mechanism in place or a direction from, for example, the Premier to those other ministers and departments to whip things into shape?

Mr R.H. COOK: I will ask the director general to make further comment.

Mrs R. Brown: I think there are two things. First, the state government has already heavily invested in the initiative to streamline approvals more generally, and there has been significant progress in a number of areas, with additional resourcing to meet both the volume of projects coming into the state and some of the changes potentially at a commonwealth level. I think there is a very strong existing focus on streamlining approvals. What is different about this initiative is that it was established as a partnership between our agency providing case management and the approvals agency, DWER in particular. Noting that some of these projects will bring new opportunities and challenges to the existing environmental approvals framework, the very strong focus from government to the two agencies is to find innovative ways together to case manage these projects that have quite different aspects from some of our existing infrastructure projects in Western Australia. It has been resourced and given priority to find some of those innovative solutions, particularly as they do have different characteristics, particularly around land and infrastructure requirements. It comes with both resourcing and a remit to find innovative solutions for new projects that have not been through the approvals process previously.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Will officers from other agencies be participating in this approvals team? I anticipate that would be the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety and the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage. The director general indicated access to land would be an issue. Will there be cross-pollination between officers in teams because that facilitates that communication?

Mrs R. Brown: Certainly there is a cross-sector working group with the other key regulatory agencies, particularly DMIRS, DPLH and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, but there is also strong engagement with some of the other parts of government and an understanding of requirements, whether that is land or infrastructure assembly. JTSI also plays a critical role in supporting access to our strategic industrial areas. I think there is a real joined-up focus on finding innovative ways to establish these really important projects in Western Australia.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I indicate from the outset that I do not expect the minister to deal with the substantive issue of the new approval process, but the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act will introduce a significant hurdle for a lot of projects to get started. For example, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation now requires companies to prove that they have that approval before it will even consider their application for a licence. I do not expect that the department will be involved in the Aboriginal cultural heritage process but will assistance be set up for these small startup companies? The big miners are fine with Aboriginal cultural heritage; they have literally thousands of people in their approvals teams. But, for example, the new magnesium smelter proposed for Collie, which sounds like an excellent initiative, is a small organisation that is not used to having to get these approvals, which are quite complex and involved. Will some assistance be provided to companies starting up around the Aboriginal cultural heritage requirements? I think, as the minister indicated, these projects will require a lot of land and inevitably that is a major issue they will have to deal with.

[9.20 am]

The CHAIR: I am not sure if this is—it is up to you, Deputy Premier. I think it is stretching it.

Mr R.H. COOK: I was going to say that we are probably stretching the point of reference. I invite the director general to make some general comments around it, but I otherwise invite the member to be more specific about the budget line item.

Mrs R. Brown: It is important, as an agency that provides case management and support to industry and proponents, that we work closely with the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage, which is the leading agency on the implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act. We are across the implementation and will work with our partner agencies. It is a very important state government reform and we are committed to building our capability to support proponents through that process, particularly as an organisation having more dedicated resources to support Aboriginal engagement and economic development.

Dr D.J. HONEY: In that \$260 million that has been allocated, there is a reference —

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.H. COOK: Sorry, member —

Dr D.J. HONEY: I apologise, minister. I refer to page 189 of budget paper No 1 and spending changes. It references the climate action fund. Page 270 of budget paper No 3 refers to the climate action fund. I do not actually have it in front of me. There is a reference to support for native forestry. What involvement does the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation have in that or is that something that is the remit of another agency?

The CHAIR: Can you just specify where you are?

Dr D.J. HONEY: The climate action fund is in that table on page 189. What initiatives are there around forestry as part of that?

Mr R.H. COOK: I am not aware of specific details about the intersection with the native forests policy. I invite the director general to clarify that point.

Mrs R. Brown: The department has been supporting the state government's native forest transition package by supporting the Minister for Forestry, administering funding packages for workers and providing support for industry transition through the community development fund. We have been doing that since September 2021. The aspect of the inclusion in climate action is because, obviously, native forest logging is a big part of the state government's agenda on climate action.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 190 of budget paper No 2. On the table at the top of the page, there is money allocated to hydrogen hubs. Can the minister explain what programs are scheduled under that?

Mr R.H. COOK: Obviously, the renewable hydrogen strategy goal for 2030 is that Western Australia's renewable hydrogen will have a share of global exports similar to liquefied natural gas. We are particularly ambitious about our renewable hydrogen capability. Not only do we want to decarbonise our economy through renewable energy and hydrogen; we want to be a world-leading energy powerhouse to make sure that we can assist other world economies—particularly those in our region—to decarbonise as well. Part of that strategy is to identify hubs for the development of renewable hydrogen. The government has identified two hubs in the Pilbara and midwest as locations where additional focus and effort will be required initially. Planning will assist with hydrogen exports, noting that the domestic market is also developing in these regions. We have committed \$127 million to build critical infrastructure for these two hubs and develop market initiatives. The state also supports a hydrogen hub in the Kwinana area. When talking about these hubs, I do not want to detract from the incredible work that is going on elsewhere in this state. The area of Arrowsmith, south of Dongara, has some very advanced projects at the moment. I think it represents an exciting opportunity for our domestic hydrogen supply.

The Pilbara hydrogen hub essentially has four components that are guiding our activities. One is hydrogen and/or ammonia pipeline systems between the Maitland industrial estate and the Burrup Peninsula to assist with decarbonising existing industry on the Burrup. The second is the development of a clean energy training and research institute in Karratha and Port Hedland to develop key skills for our workforce. The third is road infrastructure upgrades to be considered for a general cargo facility at Lumsden Point in Port Hedland and the fourth is a hydrogen hub expansion study to consider the broader infrastructure requirements.

The development of our large strategic industrial areas is an important part of activating these cells. We need the companies to have the same ambitions and sense of urgency that we have. We see that a number of the proponents are keen to get the shovel in the ground and get their projects going forward. We are working to quickly activate the SIAs to ensure that we have the infrastructure for them to develop their projects.

Dr D.J. HONEY: As the minister knows, I have a keen interest in all of those areas, but a couple in particular. The first is the Oakajee strategic industrial area. On page 190 of budget paper No 2 there is \$7 million allocated to the Oakajee strategic access road.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes. There is \$7.5 million.

Dr D.J. HONEY: It is on page 190, on the middle of the table. It is an allocation of \$7 million for the access road. Can the minister explain who actually owns the land in that particular area? Is it crown land? I note that land was included as part of the Yamatji midwest native title settlement. It is not clear to me whether there was a transfer of ownership of the land to that corporation or whether the money is still in fact held by the Crown and there is some other benefit that the Yamatji group derives from that land.

Mr R.H. COOK: The \$7.5 million was part of our 2021–22 election commitment to develop an Oakajee access road and junction with the North West Coastal Highway. Oakajee is a project in the early stages of its development. We need to get moving on that because we are already starting to allocate land in that particular SIA. Indeed, I think we have entered into the initial lease.

Typically, strategic industrial areas are owned by the government through DevelopmentWA. For instance, in relation to the patch of earth in Kwinana that the member would be very familiar with, we like to maintain ownership and

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

deploy the land through long-term lease arrangements so that we can continue to have the capacity to develop that estate in a way that is strategic and economically important.

We are working with Main Roads Western Australia at the moment to prepare an estimate. That will enable discussion with the government about the available funding, the extent of works and the impact on the development of the Oakajee port. Oakajee is one of those SIAs that people are looking to be developed in the early stages. I think most of the proponents there will have some expectation that they can onshore equipment and offshore product through there as well. It is going to be subject to significant development.

I will ask the director general and/or officers to make any further comments and provide the member with more detail.

[9.30 am]

Mrs R. Brown: Thank you, minister. I think the additional key point is in regard to the land itself, as the minister said, as a strategic industrial area that is owned by DevelopmentWA.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I am keen to understand how that formed part of the south west native title settlement. What interest does the Yamatji native title group have in that land? It was mentioned as part of the settlement for that land. I thought it had at least some interest in that land.

Mr R.H. COOK: That is completely out of our wheelhouse. I cannot help the member with the Yamatji claim settlement, but I can assure the member that the Oakajee strategic industrial area will be unencumbered by that. Indeed, one of the reasons that we have these settlements is so that we can be confident about the development envelope.

Dr D.J. HONEY: In relation to Oakajee, I think land has been nominally leased to five proponents for projects on that location. The minister can correct me very quickly if I am wrong. What is the progress of those proposals at this stage?

Mr R.H. COOK: I can confirm that the companies that we are in discussions with for land allocation are BP, Fortescue Future Industries, Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners, Green LOHC, Kinara Power Systems and Projects and Blue Diamond Australia. They are the six proponents that have been allocated land. Those conversations are continuing to move forward. My understanding is that we have finalised the lease arrangements with one of those proponents. I will defer briefly to the director general to confirm that response.

Mrs R. Brown: An additional point is that we are working with all the industry players into Oakajee. We have an industry reference group that meets regularly, particularly as the development of all of Oakajee is as important as each of the proponents.

Dr D.J. HONEY: One of the keys to any industrial estate is all the enabling infrastructure, be it roads, services, communications, water, power and the like, but initially I will focus on the port. At the last estimates I asked the head of the Mid West Ports Authority when they saw a port at Oakajee going ahead, and the comment was that it was not in the foreseeable future. I think it was a date of 2037 or something like that, which was when its plans went out. Are there any active discussions or is government considering constructing a port at Oakajee as common-user infrastructure? Otherwise, what approach is the government taking towards that?

Mr R.H. COOK: I can confirm that we are now in discussions with those six proponents to understand their requirements for the entire strategic industrial area. That will inform the government on planning infrastructure and what other supporting activity we can undertake to suit their purposes. As the member knows, the renewable hydrogen space, in particular, is an emerging area and there are a range of different views about what form and scale the production should take place in. Indeed, there are a lot of conversations at the moment around the form of the export product, whether that is as ammonia or as part of liquefied hydrogen, compressed hydrogen, or chemically bonded as part of some sort of agent. The member would have more insight into that process than I do. They are early discussions at the moment, but they are active discussions. We are moving forward as quickly as those companies need us to.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Is the government's attitude for that common-user infrastructure—all those things I mentioned before—that it will be paid for by the proponents or that it is a state asset so the state would build that common-user infrastructure and then recover moneys from proponents once the facility is constructed?

Mr R.H. COOK: I do not think we are at the point of being able to determine that. Obviously, we made an election commitment around access roads to Oakajee as part of initial early works to activate that site. We continue to work with the proponents and the community up in the Geraldton area. The Leader of the Opposition will recall a forum we had there recently at which we talked about all these things, including the needs of the community and the industry, and what the government needs to do to be a good partner in that process.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to the hydrogen projects and paragraph 7.4 on page 192. The minister has outlined in some detail the Pilbara hub. Could the minister outline a little more the expectations for the midwest hub?

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.H. COOK: As the member would be aware—I know he has a keen interest particularly in the development of hydrogen projects in the midwest—a lot of work is being done around our renewable hydrogen strategy. In December 2022, we reached our first lot of targets for renewable hydrogen—that is, the export, transport, remote applications and blending goals for 2022 under that strategy. The strategy continues to be refreshed and the government has invested more than \$170 million in initiatives to progress Western Australia’s hydrogen industry. As I have just been discussing with the member for Cottesloe, we have hydrogen hubs in the Pilbara, midwest and—I am not prone to forgetting this!—another location that we are developing in Kwinana as part of some of the work there. In terms of the actual midwest region, with the member and the chair’s indulgence, I invite the department to provide general discussion around the midwest because that involves the Arrowsmith precinct as well as the Oakajee precinct. Hopefully that will fulfil the member’s requirements for an answer.

Mrs R. Brown: Thank you, minister. I will ask Anthony Sutton to provide an answer on the midwest hub.

Mr A. Sutton: In terms of the midwest hub, the main things we are doing at the moment are the background studies for the common-user infrastructure in the future. We are looking at water, energy, cultural heritage matters, land planning works regarding the access road and also market initiatives to stimulate demand. The main work we are doing at the moment is all those background studies in preparation for the large-scale projects that might be in the Oakajee area.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Does the department have any interaction with the major players of the hydrogen cluster in that area that is being organised through the Mid West Chamber of Commerce and Industry? Is the department dealing with them as a group? Is it discussing what their needs might be going forward?

Mr R.H. COOK: I invite department officers to make comments.

Mr A. Sutton: There are about five clusters in Western Australia. The aim of the clusters is to make sure the small to medium-sized enterprise in those regional areas have an opportunity to participate in hydrogen development as it moves forward. In the midwest there is a cluster. At the moment, the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation is looking at the future funding of those clusters to facilitate the groups in those areas so that they are involved from the grassroots right through to the development of the industry.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Further to the discussion on the developments at Oakajee and the development of roads et cetera, I know that the member for Cottesloe was seeking information around the Yamatji settlement. I might offer my understanding that a percentage of any lease will be returned to the southern Yamatji group. It is five per cent, from memory.

The CHAIR: Is this a new question?

Mr R.H. COOK: I think he is helping me out!

Mr R.S. LOVE: I was just making a point. A question was asked and I am answering it for the benefit of the room.

[9.40 am]

Dr D.J. HONEY: I have a further question on these hubs. The minister may recall that BHP took a different approach on its mining leases, whereby it put forward a large 30-year proposal on its carbon footprint and then sought to get all the approvals in place. It was a bit like the long-term mining plans that my former employer had, whereby they got them in place early and dealt with it. Is it a role of government, in those areas, to perhaps facilitate those broader questions about the environmental, native title and cultural heritage issues, or do we allocate an area and then leave it to the individual proponents to do that for their individual areas? The reason I am thinking about that is just in terms of facilitating the speed of a project getting up.

Mr R.H. COOK: It is an interesting question. As the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, I become engaged when we talk about the strategic industrial areas. I assume the member is alluding to the broader questions around wind farms, solar farms and things of that nature.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Or even those specific industrial areas, minister.

Mr R.H. COOK: In relation to strategic industrial areas, it really depends. Obviously, when developing a strategic industrial area like Kwinana, the approvals process is pretty straightforward, and one would probably be the second or third tenant on that patch of land anyway, so it is much more straightforward. In large part, it is a question of horses for courses. Maitland, which we are seeking to activate through the strategic industrial area process, is fairly new ground, so the companies will have a role to play in native title, for instance. The reason for that is that I think the native title holders will want to be able to eyeball the companies and understand their intentions, ambitions and processes. We will certainly stand by them to assist and guide them through that process, and to make sure that they have a realistic idea about their obligations as a proponent. From that perspective, we are again concierging their

work. Obviously, the companies have much more insight into their businesses than we do, so they are in the best position to respond to the questions about those approval processes.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I will return to a familiar theme, but I will not dwell on it for too long. In relation to Oakajee, one of the key enablers for industry is there is access to a 330-kilovolt line into the south west interconnected system. I thought I had heard the Minister for Energy mention that there was some consideration by the government to complete the Three Springs to Geraldton connection for the 330-kilovolt line. Is the minister aware whether the government plans to do that to facilitate the development at Oakajee?

Ms J.J. SHAW: He is on in three hours. Why not ask him then?

Dr D.J. HONEY: I will, but that is not the point.

Ms J.J. SHAW: Literally, the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade cannot answer questions totally outside —

Dr D.J. HONEY: Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you, member for Swan Hills. The member for Cottesloe has skated a bit close to the line on a number of questions on this portfolio. I am the chair and I am making that call. Can the member direct his questions specifically to the division that we are talking about. I will pass to the minister to decide whether he wants to deal with it or just leave it and go to the next question.

Mr R.H. COOK: I will just say that transport and utilities are an important part of developing any SIA. The member will be aware that the Minister for Energy recently released the demand modelling for the south west interconnected system. We are watching that program with great interest. The member will have ample opportunity to discuss that with the Minister for Energy, who I understand is going to be on in just three hours!

Ms J.J. SHAW: Three hours—I cannot wait!

Dr D.J. HONEY: There you go.

The minister would be aware that there is only one five-hectare area available for development in the Kwinana Strategic Industrial Area. The area is largely full. I certainly believe that that is a superb location for developing a hydrogen hub, but there will be a requirement for land. Are there any plans to increase the area available for that hydrogen hub development?

The CHAIR: Can the member just direct where the question is related to?

Dr D.J. HONEY: It was directed in relation to the strategic industrial areas and diversification of the Western Australian economy on page 190 of budget paper No 2. The Latitude 32 industry zone is obviously a large area of land that is available, and the northern portion of it is undeveloped. Will the government expand the boundaries of that industrial area to allow the development of significant new industry in the Kwinana–Rockingham industrial area?

Mr R.H. COOK: The member would appreciate that this is a particular body of work that I am very much engaged with. For the purposes of other people assembled, the Kwinana industrial strip is essentially made up of about three or four distinct industrial areas—that is, the Henderson industrial area, where we have the Australian Marine Complex; the main Kwinana industrial area; and the East Rockingham industrial area. Those particular parts are now being augmented with Latitude 32, which is the final piece of the industrial area puzzle for the Rockingham–Kwinana area. We have been doing some work on that area. A task force known as the Global Advanced Industries Hub, which is about understanding the future strategic needs for the Kwinana industrial strip, is guiding that work. What we are looking at, in particular, are the constraints around land, which the member referred to. I sit on the Industrial Lands Panel with the Minister for Lands, and we oversee the allocation of the land within the Kwinana Strategic Industrial Area. The member is right: it is highly constrained, so we want to make sure that we maximise the outcome for that land allocation. One of the things that we need to do is to make sure we allocate that land in a strategic way that will continue to diversify and decarbonise our economy.

We are focused on energy storage or future energy and battery solutions. That is why we are particularly pleased to see the development of the Tianqi Lithium plant; SQM developing its facility in partnership with Wesfarmers; and the well-established BHP nickel processing plant facility, which it now calls its battery development facility. Recently, we celebrated the allocation of a parcel of land to the Tattarang development involving Wyloo Metals and IGO Ltd—another precursor manufacturing proponent. We are making sure that we have the battery energy and hydrogen energy focus for the Kwinana industrial strip.

The member will be familiar with the development of Latitude 32, which is going ahead at pace. We are currently in the process of developing a general industrial area called Oracle, which is to the east of the Australian Marine

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Complex. We are also exploring what other industry we can place in the Latitude 32 area, working hand-in-hand with the Global Advanced Industries Hub task force to better design and further develop Latitude 32. It is a highly constrained site, but it is incredibly valuable, with over \$18 billion of output. It actually represents one per cent of Australia's GDP, so it is an incredibly important industrial area. From that perspective, we are making sure that we maximise the outcomes from it.

[9.50 am]

Ms L. DALTON: I refer to page 189, spending changes and the intellectual property policy. The WA government recently launched a new public sector IP policy. What is this targeted to deliver?

Mr R.H. COOK: It is an important question. One of the things that we have never done particularly well in Western Australia is understand the potency of the innovation discovery and development of new products, new procedures and new initiatives inside our public sector. Recently—in fact, on Monday —

Mrs R. Brown: Tuesday.

Mr R.H. COOK: The week is going fast! On Tuesday, I released the IP policy, which is an update of a collection of different approaches to IP across different departments. If we look right across the Western Australian public sector, we see that we have incredible innovations and discoveries taking place in the Department of Health, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and in mineral resource development, particularly around geoscience and other discoveries in that space. We want to do two things. First, we want to incentivise people to continue to push the envelope of innovation. Second, we want to make sure that the state, particularly the Western Australian taxpayer, benefits from the development of that IP. This new policy will guide government departments in working with their employees to ensure that we develop that IP, commercialise it and provide a return as an incentive to the employee, but also a return to the state. As a result of that launch, we are funding \$1.4 million over four years to implement the IP policy and support its delivery, including through better management and commercialisation of WA's IP. If we look across the public sector, we see some exciting work going on.

I want to highlight one in particular that I do not think the state has done enough to develop and commercialise, and that is the development of an artificial skull, which is taking place in the basement of Royal Perth Hospital. There they 3D print a matrix based upon scans of a person's missing skull following a fracture or an operation. They 3D print that matrix, place it back in the person's cranium and, as a result of that, develop the regrowth of that bone through that matrix. This is world-leading stuff and really exciting. We want to not only make sure that Western Australians benefit from those initiatives, but also continue to harness that IP and commercialise it so that everyone can benefit from that great initiative.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to page 190, spending changes and the subset "Climate Action Fund", specifically the line item "Hydrogen Fuelled Transport", for which there is a \$5 million allocation this year and the following year. I want to get an understanding of what initiatives might be funded through that allocation.

Mr R.H. COOK: I was very pleased to be part of an announcement in August 2022 to establish a renewable hydrogen transport initiative in the mighty electorate of Kwinana—all good things happen in Kwinana!—that will involve the setting up a renewable hydrogen production storage and refuelling facility at Woodside's H2Perth site in the Rockingham industrial zone by the end of 2024. The government's \$10 million hydrogen fuel transport initiative matched-funding program is designed to assist with hydrogen vehicle procurement costs as well as subsidise the costs of renewable hydrogen fuel for customers. What we are trying to do is stimulate early stage activity in the hydrogen fuel and transport refuelling space to continue to stimulate demand, which, in turn, will lead to further development of the renewable hydrogen industry. The project will also support the early adoption of heavy hydrogen vehicles, such as concrete agitator trucks, prime movers and waste collection vehicles. I might ask Dr Phil Gorey to provide more detail about that allocation.

Dr P. Gorey: Probably the bit I would add to that is that the hydrogen strategy the state published had a number of goals that we were looking to deliver; some of those were around generating domestic demand for hydrogen, which is very, very important, because not only does that create demand in the economy, it also creates those businesses, those technologies and that equipment that bring in and provide demand for training for small to medium-sized enterprises to support that. These local domestic demand initiatives, particularly around hydrogen, are quite important in supporting the overall adoption of hydrogen into our economy. The domestic refueller was one of them. It is one of the first facilities in Western Australia at which private and commercial vehicles can refuel. As was said, this relates to heavy vehicles for which the technology already exists. The partnership between Woodside and the parties—the vehicle owners—will enable the facility to be built, but also the example to be built into our economy, which will support those other SMEs in supports and skills.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.S. LOVE: As part of that, is there a plan to incentivise people to bring in vehicles that could use that fuel? How will that work?

Mr R.H. COOK: That is precisely the point of that particular sponsorship, member. It is true, though, that it is difficult to procure hydrogen-fuelled heavy vehicles at the moment because the whole world is beating a path to the door of those vehicle manufacturers. The only word of caution in getting hold of these supplier chains in heavy vehicle hydrogen-fuelled manufacture is that it is particularly difficult, but I will ask the director general or one of her officers to provide further comment.

Dr P. Gorey: The context very much has been the short-term goals that have been delivered under the hydrogen strategy. The government, through JTSI, has initiated a process to refresh the strategy. The intent here is to deliver some tangible outcomes along the pathway to hydrogen uptake; we have achieved some of those. We are now going through the process of identifying what the next milestones will be. Those next milestones might relate to domestic demand as well as supply opportunities. We are working with that at the moment to identify the next steps to support refueller or other hydrogen supplies.

Mr R.S. LOVE: As part of that, I am wondering whether the government is working with the federal authorities because I am a little unsure whether there are any barriers to introducing those types of vehicles on our roads through things like the Australian Design Rules et cetera. That in itself could be a barrier and would make it more expensive to provide those vehicles.

[10.00 am]

Mr R.H. COOK: I am not familiar with anything that would block the import of those vehicles other than the fact that they are in high demand, but, as was observed, the member is not talking to an expert on this.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to the availability of hydrogen. Obviously heavy transport is one of the key opportunities for hydrogen. There is a chicken-and-egg situation: we do not have the heavy take-up or the refuelling facilities. Are there any proposals to look at hydrogen refuelling facilities outside of metropolitan Perth? For example, an enormous amount of heavy transport goes from Perth to Karratha and Hedland and the like. Are there any plans to look at establishing hydrogen refuelling facilities that would allow those sorts of transport routes to be opened up and, as I said, break that chicken-and-egg cycle?

Mr R.H. COOK: It is a great question. That is why my predecessor Hon Alannah MacTiernan set in place a range of goals whereby we could continue to demonstrate progress or stimulate demand to keep that momentum going. One of those was the adoption of the one per cent renewable hydrogen component of the natural gas pipeline to continue to increase that demand. The role of government in these early days is to provide those—not showcase projects, but early activities so that people have things to plan towards. The renewable hydrogen strategy set goals for 2022 and 2030. The 2022 goals were reached through the state government's financial support for the following projects that I will go through because it will give the member an idea about how we are continuing to stimulate activity. The first goal was to export renewable hydrogen, and that will be done through Yara's Yuri green ammonia project to export renewable hydrogen as ammonia, and it will also establish Australia's largest electrolyser at 10 megawatts. Another goal was to blend hydrogen, which is done through ATCO's Clean Energy Innovation Hub and blends hydrogen into a gas supply network for up to 2 700 customers. Another goal was to provide renewable energy in a remote location. That is being done through the Denham hydrogen demonstration plant. That is a renewable hydrogen microgrid run by Horizon Power to provide power for up to 100 homes. Another goal was to transport hydrogen, which is being done through ATCO's hydrogen refuelling station at Jandakot that can refuel up to 15 vehicles a day.

We will look back on those projects and say that they were very modest, early stage projects, but in the context of where we are at in developing these industries, these are important first steps to demonstrate how we can do this as a community. Further iterations of the renewable hydrogen strategy will include more goals to stimulate demand, as the member described. I ask the director general to ask one of her officers to provide further comment on the activity to stimulate demand.

Mrs R. Brown: Thank you, minister. I ask Anthony Sutton to answer.

Mr A. Sutton: To follow up on that advice, with regard to consultation with the Australian government, one of the things we are doing in the coming financial year is developing a business case for the hydrogen highway program, with a hydrogen highway between Kwinana and Port Hedland as a starting point. This year is about developing the business case for that.

Mr R.H. COOK: That underpins my point that all good things come from Kwinana.

The CHAIR: I disagree; there is another K in the mix!

Mr R.H. COOK: Kalgoorlie has a role to play, but all good things come from Kwinana.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Ms C.M. TONKIN: I refer to the Investment Attraction Fund under the headings “Spending Changes” and “Ongoing initiatives” on page 190. What were the outcomes of the inaugural round of the Investment Attraction Fund, and how is the fund governed?

Mr R.H. COOK: Thank you, member. I am particularly proud of the government’s work on the Investment Attraction Fund. One of the things we have always sought as a government in Western Australia has been to play a leading role in stimulating industries that continue to diversify and decarbonise our economy. The \$285 million Investment Attraction Fund seeks to encourage new investment that will create jobs, increase demand for local goods and services, and secure trade in new sectors and new markets. We have awarded \$156.4 million to support 42 industry-led investment attraction proposals following the inaugural round’s extensive two-stage application process. We received over 200 expressions of interest and undertook a rigorous process to make sure that we got best value for money for the Western Australian taxpayer. All 42 successful proponents operate within the eight priority sectors outlined in the WA government’s Diversify WA strategy. More than half of the 42 successful projects are in the regions, which is an important part of it, or have statewide operations, while the remaining 19 are in metropolitan Perth.

I have announced two of those recipients so far. The member for Geraldton was very pleased to accompany me, I hope, on 12 May when I announced that Burt Cooper Pty Ltd was one of the successful recipients for stage 1 of its Geraldton West End precinct, which will include the revitalisation of Geraldton’s Radio Theatre that will provide space for the creation and celebration of regional talent. I also had the opportunity to announce another successful proponent yesterday, which was ClearVue Technologies. It will receive funding to assist with the establishment of a WA-based photovoltaic and nanoparticle components manufacturing facility. This is an exciting project. That company has developed see-through photovoltaic windows. Essentially, members can imagine an office tower in the metropolitan that is surrounded by windows. Generally, they soak up heat, and time and energy is spent keeping the building cool. The windows developed by this company actually play the role of photovoltaic cells by using nanoparticles to redirect the light to photovoltaic strips that surround the window frame. It is incredibly exciting stuff. It is about backing those companies that are doing new and innovative projects that are creating jobs in Western Australia. The clever thing about what the company is doing is that it exports the products that are then incorporated into the windows by manufacturers both in Australia and overseas. The way the company described it to me yesterday was that under the United States Inflation Reduction Act, ClearVue Technologies is essentially building windows free of charge. It is incredibly exciting.

Obviously we have to guard this money carefully. It is really important that we get value for money for Western Australian taxpayers. Therefore, a governance board provides oversight for the implementation of the fund and provides informed funding recommendations to me as the minister on the allocation of those funds. The board is chaired by the director general, Mr John Van Der Wielen, who is also chair of Crown Perth and former CEO of HBF; Ms Ivy Chen, principal consultant, CSA Global; and Mr Larry Lopez, partner, Australian Venture Consultants. They advise other representatives on that board from government, including from Treasury, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, and Treasury Corp. The exciting aspect of the Investment Attraction Fund is that it leads, supports and stimulates the type of economic activity that we want to see, which is around diversification, decarbonisation and the creation of local jobs.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to paragraph 3.2 of budget paper No 2 on page 191, which states —

spending \$1.3 million to undertake targeted studies that will inform the Heavy Industry Sectoral Emissions Reduction Strategy ...

Can the minister please explain what effort is going into that and how the government is assisting industry in that space?

[10.10 am]

Mr R.H. COOK: I mentioned earlier the work we are doing within the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation as part of the general climate policy work of the McGowan government. As part of that work, we are responsible for working with heavy industry to understand the government’s sectoral emissions reduction strategies that are needed for that part of the sector. This includes the mining, oil and gas and manufacturing sectors. The SERS are anticipated for release at the end of 2023 and will provide robust and credible emissions reduction pathways for Western Australia, with tangible actions for reducing emissions consistent with the state government’s target of net zero emissions by 2050. If we are going to achieve that target, we need to work hand in hand with industry to ensure that it understands our ambitions and goals, and that we understand its challenges and needs in assisting the community to meet those goals. Last year, JTSI consulted with peak bodies of operators to understand heavy industry decarbonisation barriers and enablers. The initiatives coming out of this overall consultation process will be developed as part of SERS. As I said, this is about supporting heavy industry sectors because that is key to WA achieving significant emissions reductions.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

We also want to make sure that while we are on this road towards net zero emissions, we are not cruelling ourselves in terms of our global competitiveness. We want to make sure that our industries remain globally competitive, but at the same time we want them to adapt their businesses towards these new goals. In the 2022–23 budget, the government provided \$1.4 million for JTSI to develop the heavy industry SERS, and it established a climate industry action team made up of four FTEs to lead this development.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I believe that in that answer the minister mentioned that the target for the group looking at industrial effects was net zero emissions by 2050. I am not overly apprehensive about that particular target. The one that concerns me is the imposition of the federal government’s 43 per cent emissions reduction target, which also includes a substantial carbon tax if it is not complied with by 2030. Is that team looking at that 2030 target? I would have thought that was the immediate existential threat to some of our heavy industry.

Mr R.H. COOK: It is not so much a threat as a great opportunity. We are familiar with the government’s new safeguard mechanism. JTSI is looking for opportunities around how it can work with the commonwealth, particularly around co-funding, but also the co-design of the SERS policies and initiatives. The commonwealth has set a target and, as part of that work, we are keen to work with the commonwealth to understand what the opportunities are for Western Australia.

Dr D.J. HONEY: On the basis of this work, is the minister confident that we will not see some of our major heavy industries in the state—downstream industries—shut down because of their inability to comply with the 2030 target?

Mr R.H. COOK: I am confident that if we do not take decisive and informed action on climate change, we will destroy the planet for our children and our grandchildren. It is not a question of whether we take these actions around emissions to reduce our impact on the environment, but how and when. Everyone would agree that we have to take decisive action. One thing we could do is to simply ignore the impact of climate change, which the previous federal government did, and allow the planet to continue to boil. Alternatively, we can say that we are going to be part of this global movement and work with governments across the world to reduce climate change and to reduce our impact on the environment. The McGowan government will do that by working closely with industry to understand what its barriers and enablers are. It will stand by industry to help it overcome those barriers by accentuating those enablers, to ensure that we continue to remain globally competitive, keep jobs in Western Australia and meet our overall ambitions around reducing carbon emissions and the impact of climate change.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I am still interested to know whether the minister is confident that we will not see those industries shut down. We had discussion before from the chair about going into a broad area —

The CHAIR: I think the minister has answered the question.

Dr D.J. HONEY: This is a specific question, chair.

The CHAIR: Okay.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I am especially concerned about a large refinery in the minister’s electorate of Kwinana that is a substantial carbon emitter. Is the government confident that by working actively with that particular refinery, it will not shut down as a consequence of the imposition of this federal government policy?

The CHAIR: I am not sure that the minister can answer that question.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Why not?

The CHAIR: Well, I am sorry, but I am the chair. What can be asked during the estimates process is very specific. I do not believe that that question is relevant. I am sorry, member for Cottesloe.

Mr R.H. COOK: I do not know what refinery the member is referring to, but if he is asking whether I am confident with the McGowan government’s climate action plans, the answer is yes, I am.

Ms J.J. SHAW: The existential threat in Cottesloe is from the teals, when it comes to climate change.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Point of order, chair! We have had constant commentary from the member for Swan Hills, which is entirely inappropriate and does not sit within standing orders.

The CHAIR: I give the call to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I will move the discussion away from hydrogen and carbon to event tourism. I refer to the table of spending changes on page 190 of budget paper No 2. Specifically, event tourism shows a budget of \$18 855 000 for this year. I also refer to page 193 and the explanation around attracting major blockbuster events, for which there is an additional \$10 million. Was the recent announcement about the securing of Coldplay made possible through expenditure under this allocation; and, if so, how much money has been allocated to attract Coldplay to Western Australia?

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

The CHAIR: For the sake of *Hansard*, is the Leader of the Opposition talking about events tourism on page 190?

Mr R.S. LOVE: Under events tourism there is a subset of major one-off blockbuster events and attractions —

The CHAIR: Are we referring to paragraph 8.1 on page 190?

Mr R.S. LOVE: Yes, paragraph 8.1.

[10.20 am]

Mr R.H. COOK: I can confirm that we utilised the major events budget to attract Coldplay to Western Australia. Coldplay is a game changer for Western Australia; let me explain why. Western Australia is used to being on the tail end of a national tour by major acts. As a result, we usually miss out. We represent a significant cost burden to touring acts. It is a significant disincentive for them to bring their events or acts to Western Australia. We have sort of flipped the scenario and, in some respects, this is part of our Asian engagement strategy policy. We have decided to not think about ourselves as part of an Australian tour, but as part of an Asian tour with a Western Australian leg. That therefore provides us with exclusive content for these major events. That exclusive content provides us with the opportunity to bring significant numbers of people to Western Australia.

As the member will be aware, our major events strategy essentially revolves around three particular components. One, it is a great event. Western Australians benefit from these terrific events, and that makes us all feel good and makes Western Australia a great place to live. Two, we want to make sure that Western Australia continues to be promoted in the hearts, minds and eyes of people around the world. They see the World Surf League taking place in Margaret River. Sure, they might not have bought a ticket to Margaret River, but they look at the Instagram feeds of the surfers and the incredible landscape in which it is being filmed and they think, “You know what? I want to visit Margaret River in Western Australia”, and they buy a ticket and come as tourists. Third, it is around the direct visitor spend. That is to make sure that we bring people to Western Australia so that they can spend money in the pubs, clubs, cafes and hotels, and continue to stimulate our economy, particularly the hospitality and tourism economy. We talk about direct visitor spend, and that is an important part of it, but as the member knows, there is a whole bunch of economic activity of indirect spend as a result of that.

We attract these major events—I am coming to the member’s question—for those key economic outcomes and tourism activities. We try to work on a KPI of around two dollars coming into WA for every dollar spent. For instance, we spent around \$67 million in 2022–23, so we are expecting a return of between \$120 million and \$130 million as a result of that activity. Another aspect is that we have to engage with acts and entities to make sure that we can bring them to Western Australia, but everyone else is trying to get those acts as well. It does not matter whether it is a one-off piece like Coldplay, or regular events like Gather Round or Magic Weekend—things like that—we are competing against the rest of the world and we are competing against every other state. That means we have to make sure that we undertake these commercial negotiations in confidence.

With particular regard to Coldplay, they have a specific requirement that we do not talk about the transaction and the dollars involved. Also, in respect of our bids against other states, we want to make sure that we remain competitive, so in answer to the member’s question about how much we paid for Coldplay, we are not in a position to provide the details of specific events in this place, but I can inform the member that of the roughly \$67 million that we spent in 2022–23, we get somewhere between \$120 million and \$130 million as a result of direct, out-of-state visitor spend.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I will ask directly: how much total expenditure was required to attract Coldplay? That is not the same thing as asking how much they were paid, because I am sure there would have been other expenses involved. Perhaps the minister can enlighten me about how much expenditure was undertaken in total.

The CHAIR: I think the Deputy Premier has already answered that question, in total.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, I will just confirm that my first answer to the member was that I am not in a position to provide him with information on the commercial aspects of that particular major event attraction.

Mr R.S. LOVE: As a follow-up question, does the minister know the number of ticketholders who are not residents of Western Australia but will be attracted to Western Australia through the event?

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, I am in a position to inform the member that approximately 30 per cent of the tickets have been sold to ticketholders from outside Western Australia, which will drive millions of dollars in visitor spend in our economy. I do not know the actual number of people we can fit in Optus Stadium; I understand there were around 70 000 for Ed Sheeran. For each night, 30 per cent of the tickets sold were to visitors from outside Western Australia. Someone asked me this morning whether it was possible that anyone bought a ticket for both nights; I guess it is possible, but it would have been very difficult, because there was a lot of demand. However, we can safely say that 30 per cent of the people attending on each night will be from outside Western Australia.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.S. LOVE: I have a follow-up question on those numbers. Is there any indication of whether there were international ticket sales as well? What numbers can the minister provide for that?

Mr R.H. COOK: It would be a combination of both. In these situations, we do not actually have control of that transaction information, so I am not in a position to advise the member about whether these people are coming from outside Western Australia but domestically, or are international. For our purposes, we do not particularly mind; we know that pretty much everyone who comes from outside Western Australia will have to buy accommodation and dinner, they will go out in the evenings and they will travel.

Mr R.S. LOVE: At the start of the discussion the minister mentioned that there was a benchmark expectation of two to one in terms of return for every dollar expended.

Mr R.H. COOK: Around that, yes.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Around that. Is the minister in a position to provide some sort of indication of the expected return from the Coldplay expenditure in dollar-for-dollar terms?

Mr R.H. COOK: No, I will not, because then the member will ask, “Can you then confirm that half of that was how much we paid for Coldplay?” I am not in a position to do that.

Mr R.S. LOVE: If I can clarify, I am not asking for a figure; I am asking for a ratio.

Mr R.H. COOK: Is it whether we will meet the KPI of two to one? Obviously, I am always confident of the work Tourism WA does and I am sure we will meet that target, but we will just have to see what the wash-up is. When we undertake these events, we then go back and, through a range of survey techniques and metrics, we establish what we believe is the overall visitor spend so that we can have an idea about whether we are meeting our KPIs.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I have a further question on the publication of that information. When that work is undertaken and the metrics are studied, is it done for each event; and, if so, will the minister make that information available so that we can at least know whether the money has been spent wisely?

Mr R.H. COOK: I will invite the director general or one of her officers to answer that question.

Mrs R. Brown: Every event goes through a thorough assessment process, including assessments based on projected return on investment. I will ask the managing director to make further comment on that detail.

Ms C. Turnbull: In addition to what the Deputy Premier has just explained, we are anticipating 30 per cent of the tickets to be sold outside Western Australia. I think once the event has taken place, we will be in a better position to understand the clear results of those ticket sales.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Will that information be made available so that we can understand the value of the investment?

Mr R.H. COOK: We usually pitch that into our post-event announcements. We are not shy about talking about the successes of these sorts of events. I watched the hapless member for Collie–Preston trying to purchase her tickets to this event; she lamented that there were over 200 000 people in the queue ahead of her, so we know that this is a highly successful exercise! The member would be aware that we are bringing the FIFA Women’s World Cup to Perth and the Ultimate Fighting Championship came to Western Australia—if that is your thing! I talked about the Margaret River Pro and the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships. We bring events to Western Australia that are attractive to a variety of demographics and target groups. I think the Coldplay tour will shoot the lights out on its return on investment when it comes to visitor spend but will also really elevate Western Australia as a tourism destination.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Could I have a final question?

The CHAIR: Sorry; I am going to go to member for Churchlands and then, as requested, we are going to have a short comfort break, so could we please keep the question and answer brief, thank you.

Ms C.M. TONKIN: My question to the minister is worthy of the Leader of the Opposition. I refer to page 199 and item 6, event tourism. I note that funding for events in 2023–24 has increased to almost \$75 million. Can the minister please explain how that funding will be used to support smaller regional events around the state?

[10.30 am]

Mr R.H. COOK: We often get caught up in the excitement of the large events taking place in the city but we need to understand that some great events are also going on around the state at all times. I am very pleased to be able to work with the Minister for Regional Development on our regional events program and our regional events scheme. First, I will talk about the regional events scheme. It is an annual funding round that is administered by Tourism WA for smaller developing regional events that request funding of between \$5 000 and \$40 000. Put next to the million-dollar events we have in Perth, that does not sound like much, but it has a huge multiplier impact in small regional

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

communities. Under the regional events scheme, through Tourism WA, we awarded funds to 65 events in 2022–23 and we continue to look at more opportunities for that scheme. Let me give the member a flavour—pardon the pun—of the sorts of things that we fund. There is the Taste of the Kimberley. The member for Geraldton will be familiar with the Shore Leave Festival, although I think that is funded under the regional events program nowadays, which is for larger regional events. Backroads Gravel will be held on 12 August this year. I am thinking about getting to that one. There is the South West Festival of Japan, the 2023 Denison Foreshore Sprint, the Midwest Show 'n Shine, Reimagining Three Springs, the Northam Heritage and Multicultural Festival in the wheatbelt, CinefestOZ, the Great Southern Stage Run and the Red Country Music Festival. The Lake Argyle Swim in Kununurra is a great event. I participated in it. There were 700 people at the end of event dinner. That is 700 people who paid good money to go to that community. They buy coffees and food, dine out and pay for accommodation. They set these towns abuzz and everything gets a bit of a boost. From that perspective, they are a really worthwhile part of our events program. It is not all Coldplay and UFC; sometimes it is the small events that make a big difference in smaller regional communities.

The CHAIR: The committee will now take a short break and recommence at 10.45 am.

Meeting suspended from 10.33 to 10.45 am

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to page 193, paragraph 8.1, still relating to the \$10 million investment. The minister referenced before that he used some of those funds to attract Coldplay. Did Coldplay guarantee that they would not come if the funds were not there?

Mr R.H. COOK: This was not part of their tour. I want to make that really clear. We inserted ourselves into their tour. We have been working with the event industry for some time around the proposal that we secure content out of Asian tours as opposed to content out of national tours. I talked to Live Nation Entertainment, which I think is the promoter of this concert. It said that the reason this works so well is that when Coldplay does an Australian tour, it is a land-based tour—for want of a better term. They truck the equipment around. However, when they do an Asian tour, it is all by air transport. We were able to leverage the capacity to fly them into Perth. It was put to me that with a national tour, a band like Coldplay would require about 100 trucks at about \$15 000 a pop to come across the Nullarbor, whereas with this tour, we can fit in between Jakarta and Singapore. It is a coup for Tourism Western Australia, to be honest, because we are the ones that went to them and said “Hey, we have a proposal for you.” I think it is fair to say that they were pretty confronted by the idea originally, but then I think we caught their imagination and they realised it was a great opportunity.

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to page 198, budget paper No 2, which discusses the destination marketing around Coldplay.

Mr R.H. COOK: Sorry, member for North West Central, what number is it?

Ms M. BEARD: It is on page 198. It is the minister able to specifically say how much destination marketing money was expended for tourism campaigns targeted to individuals attending the major event over that weekend?

Mr R.H. COOK: I am very happy to provide some commentary on that, but I might invite the director general and one of her officers to provide more accurate information.

Mrs R. Brown: We will utilise destination marketing funds for a whole range of activities to align with international, regional and interstate events. It is probably not specifically part of the budget that we can identify, but I will ask the managing director to give more detail.

Ms C. Turnbull: What we can say is that in addition to our overarching major events budget, Tourism WA spends approximately \$1 million per year on marketing. Coldplay will obviously be a part of that, as a state funded event. As the Deputy Premier mentioned, this is a really unique opportunity for Western Australia and very much forms part of our new strategy around acquisition and business development. We have always allocated a certain amount of our budget to marketing events, and Coldplay is no different.

[10.50 am]

Mr R.S. LOVE: Just before we had a break, we were talking about the benefit that has arrived from state visitation. In the context of this promotion through Tourism WA trying to drive some of that, the minister mentioned that some metrics were studied on a person’s spend and that it does not really matter whether they come internationally or interstate. Have those measures been updated since we had the change of experience as a result of COVID to people’s travel and arrangements? Have there been any updated studies on average visitor spend in Western Australia?

Mr R.H. COOK: If I may clarify, does the member mean out of major events or tourism generally?

Mr R.S. LOVE: I mean out of tourism generally. I assume that part of that metric is in major events, so perhaps it could be both.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.H. COOK: It will be a global figure. We know that since the borders opened in March 2022, through to December 2022 we had a \$14 billion visitation spend in Western Australia. That contrasts with our previous largest spend from 2019 which was \$13.5 billion, so 2022 was a great year for us when we consider that the borders were shut for at least two to three months. That is off the back of significant domestic and intrastate tourism activity, but international tourism activity is coming back. We are seeing that even though we have fewer tourists, there is a higher spend. In order to provide the member with more clarity in relation to that, I will invite Carolyn Turnbull to make further comments.

Ms C. Turnbull: In addition to what the Deputy Premier has just explained, the latest International Visitor Survey and National Visitor Survey results for the year ending 2022 are compared with the year ending December 2019, enabling results to be equated against the context of the pre-COVID norm. In 2022, as the Deputy Premier mentioned, the visitor spend was \$14 billion. That represented a growth of four per cent or \$0.5 billion versus 2019. I must say that the industry has been very happy with those results, particularly noting that we were only open for a certain amount of the year, since March 2022. The national growth in comparison with the same period was only three per cent; Western Australia surpassed that. The growth in spend was mainly driven by the increase in daily spend. That was certainly seen by overnight visitors from the domestic, interstate and international markets. That is touching on IVS and NVS and the overall measures.

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to page 189 under spending changes and ongoing initiatives. The very bottom line is “Business Events Perth”. Why is that funding not starting until 2024–25 and what does that line refer to?

Mr R.H. COOK: It is a great question, so I thank the member for it. The \$5 million is a top-up of Business Events Perth funding. This is part of our \$15 million increase around events, with \$10 million to major events and \$5 million to business events. Business events are the unsung heroes of our tourism industry. Their role is to basically scan the globe, find conferences and bring them to Western Australia and, as a result, significantly stimulate activity. This is an activity that has been going on for the last 50 years. It used to be called the Perth Convention Bureau. It is a quasi-separate entity chaired by Bradley Woods who heads up the Business Events Perth team. I am looking at my notes at the moment.

This additional funding has resulted from original additional events funding being topped up coming out of COVID. That enabled us to secure events for the state which we otherwise would not have been competitive for, such as LNG 18, which is the largest business event the state has ever hosted. It attracted over 8 000 delegates and profiled Western Australia as a global LNG energy leader. In addition, other event examples include the Taiwan leadership seminar and the Perfect China thirtieth anniversary business exchange. They are two significant corporate incentive events. People are brought to Western Australia as part of an incentive scheme for their organisations. That will bring more than 4 000 international delegates from North Asia to Western Australia next year. We have a range of things in development at the moment, everything from industry-led events to, as I said, incentive schemes, sales conferences and things of that nature. The really cool thing about these conferences is that delegates come and they spend a lot. Their daily visitor spend is higher than average.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Corporate cards?

Mr R.H. COOK: Maybe, member. We know that they spend a lot in cafes, they all require accommodation and a lot of them, particularly those who come from further afield, then go on and sample other aspects of our tourism products. For example, they go down south to Margaret River for the weekend, or Rottnest Island, or some more adventurous will hopefully make their way to the Coral Coast and experience that incredible part of the world.

Ms M. BEARD: There is seemingly nothing allocated for 2023–24 for business events. Is there a reason for that?

Mr R.H. COOK: This is spending changes.

Ms M. BEARD: So it is increasing.

Mr R.H. COOK: It just has the \$5 million because it is an increase. With the chair’s indulgence I invite the director general to make some further comments on the base funding for Business Events Perth to provide the member with some context for those movements.

Mrs R. Brown: Thank you, minister. As the minister outlined, it is an additional \$10 million over two years, which provided annual funding of \$10.5 million through Tourism WA to Business Events Perth to attract events. It is that continuation of the boost that the state government provided through the Reconnect WA package. That continues that boost for the next couple of years.

Ms M. BEARD: What is the criteria for the funding based around? Is it a certain number of projected income? For it to be placed in the regions, is there a baseline for something to be considered as a business event?

Mr R.H. COOK: That is a great question. I will ask the director general through one of her officers to answer that.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mrs R. Brown: The first point is that these are highly competitive processes. We are bidding against other states and jurisdictions to land those events, so it is a fairly competitive bidding process. Each bid requires a detailed presentation by the state to try to win conferences. I will ask the managing director to provide more detail on what the construct is to win a bid.

Ms C. Turnbull: Thank you, director general. Just to further build on that, as the director general said, the bids are extremely complex, so every bid is very different. I think this boost will provide a significant ability for Business Events Perth to proactively go after additional business events for the state. I do not know whether our executive director of strategy engagement has further details on the construct of those deals that she can share.

[11.00 am]

Ms S. Underwood: The KPIs largely measure the direct allocated expenditure, so we are measuring the amount that those coming into the state spend. We also have higher KPIs tied to the diversification agenda of the state, so we try to encourage business to focus on events that encourage our diversification agenda through the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, and that brings in delegates that we can wraparound with services, tie-in missions, delegations, and investment and attraction initiatives as well. We purposely do not tie anything to the number of events, because our preference would be for fewer larger events than many small events.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 191, budget paper No 2, at the very bottom. Paragraph 5.6 states —
facilitating the development of major projects, including administering State Agreements ...

Recently, I heard some commentary from government around state agreements. I am wondering whether state agreements are something of the past in the government's view, or will we still see state agreements as the main way we progress major projects in the state in the future?

Mr R.H. COOK: It is an interesting question. I think our tendency is to avoid state agreements. They are, as the member knows, acts of Parliament that form a contract between the people of Western Australia and the proponent. State agreements tend not to be fit for purpose in a more nimble economic climate. As the member would be aware, occasionally we come back to the Parliament to seek a variation of a state agreement or something of that nature. I think, increasingly too, our regulatory regime is much more sophisticated so it is able to adapt to these complex projects. Typically, a state agreement has to involve a port and a railway line, because it is usually about connecting a project through a range of different pieces of infrastructure to facilitate the transport of that product to the port. Our tendency is to move away from state agreements, but that does not mean that they will not be used in the future.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Obviously, the minister would be aware that, particularly for very large-scale investments for industry for very long-term projects, state agreements provide a great deal of confidence to investors. For the major projects that are coming—there are significant projects in the pipeline—are those companies asking for state agreements, or are they comfortable with the government not providing them?

The CHAIR: There are two questions there, minister, but I am sure you can manage.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes. The member made the observation earlier and I thank him for that. JTSI has a huge reputation in the way it concierges proponent companies and assists them with their investments in the state. That remains the case today. JTSI is doing some terrific work providing lead-agency status to major projects, which it then concierges and assists through the various regulatory pathways. No company has come to me to say that they want one form of legal framework as opposed to another. In my experience in this portfolio, companies are just grateful for the work that JTSI does in assisting them to meet their obligations under the various regulatory pathways that we have.

Ms C.M. TONKIN: I refer to page 198 and services and key efficiency indicators, science and innovation. The government has signalled strong support in developing WA's space sector. Can the minister please provide an update on that activity?

Mr R.H. COOK: Thank you, member. I want to acknowledge the work that the member does in this space as well—pardon the pun!

This is an exciting area for our state. Since 2020, we have committed more than \$40 million to support space and space-related projects. Many people would not be aware that there are over 100 companies, both international and Australian, operating in space and space-related services in Western Australia today. It is really quite a thriving and important industry, and is one of those industries that we have identified as part of Diversify WA. We are supporting a range of key projects. One project is the Australia Remote Operations for Space and Earth, or AROSE, which is a consortium of different companies within the space ecosystem and which works together to realise more opportunities. We have the Australian Space Data Analysis Facility and Curtin University's Binar CubeSat space program. The Binar program provides an opportunity for young scientists to have space mission experience, which is a huge boost to their CVs. The space cubes are about yay big. We have launched one and I think another one is

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

going up in the very near future. I think the ambition is to have about seven launched over the next 18 months. It will provide an opportunity for students—postgraduate students in particular—but also for local industry to trial or put into the payload of the satellites whatever technology it is looking to test. That is a really exciting part of the development.

We also have the Space Automation AI Robotics Control Complex—I never realised it stood for all that—but we all know it as SpAARC. SpAARC is basically world-leading and is part of the new lunar projects taking place over the next 12 to 18 months. It is working with a company called Intuitive Machines, which is one of the major NASA subcontractors, as part of that program. The AROSE-led consortium has secured \$4 million from the Australian Space Agency, Moon to Mars trailblazer stage 1 mission to develop a moon rover. If there is capacity in a workforce to drive a remote vehicle a couple of kilometres under the sea to monitor gas pipelines, chances are that same robot can be run on the moon. We should never underestimate the capability that we have here in Western Australia and what we can do as part of the space industry. We are increasingly becoming the focus for global space industries. The member will be aware of the European Space Agency’s facility in New Norcia. That is being upgraded at the moment. I think the parliamentary secretary recently went over there.

Ms J.J. SHAW: I drove a satellite! It was a space radar.

The CHAIR: Member, you are being disorderly! Thank you.

Ms J.J. SHAW: It would not be the first time.

Mr R.H. COOK: It is incredibly exciting stuff. Space is going to be a key leading-edge industry for Western Australia as we diversify our economy. We have the capability amongst this incredibly skilled workforce, leading out of our strengths and resources—mining, oil and gas—to take those skills and apply them to this new industry.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I want to return briefly to the discussion on page 193, paragraph 8 and Tourism WA event support. Today the minister announced the snaring of the Matildas to Western Australia, so this might be a bit of a Dorothy Dixier.

The CHAIR: Do you want to rephrase that, member? It sounds painful.

Mr R.S. LOVE: All right. The successful attraction of the Matildas to Western Australia. Congratulations, minister. This is not, however, completely a Dorothy Dixier.

Mr R.H. COOK: No, I did not think it would be, member!

Mr R.S. LOVE: I just wanted to get an understanding of where that fits into the idea of attracting tourism into the state. Does the minister feel that that would be an attractor of international and interstate tourists? Can the minister give some indication of what the expectation is on the numbers of people who might be attracted into the state and how such a calculation is made?

Mr R.H. COOK: Thank you, member, and thanks for acknowledging the securing of that event. Many Western Australians were disappointed when we did not get a Matildas game for the FIFA Women’s World Cup, which is coming up in the next couple of months. I was saying to the media today that we have to be realistic; the Matildas are a huge drawcard in the context of that competition, so they would certainly be dedicated to the larger cities as part of that co-hosting process. But the opportunity to secure these Olympic qualifying matches is obviously a coup for Western Australia. Western Australians are saying, “We want to see Sam Kerr; we want to see the Matildas”, so I am very proud to say that the McGowan government has delivered on that request. The Olympic qualifier games will be played between 26 October and 1 November, with more than three days of back-to-back games. The pool comprises the Matildas, Chinese Taipei, Iran and the Philippines. The member is right: this is another opportunity for us to highlight Western Australia as a tourist destination—all eyes of the football world will be on Perth at that time. We often take the opportunity in the context of these things to run Western Australian tourism promotions to back up the commentary of the commentators, which is usually, “What a great place Perth is to visit.” In addition to that, the member would be familiar with our aviation Reconnect WA package. We recently introduced a Manila–Perth flight. Given that the Philippines is part of this competition, we are pretty confident that that will help fill the seats on that flight, and that will bring in extra tourists as people say, “That’s interesting. They’ve now got this new direct flight and the Philippines women’s football team is playing in Perth; I think I’ll take advantage of that.” That is a happy coming together of events.

A bunch of work goes into the modelling and understanding of what the visitation from these events might be and therefore the extent to which we bid for them. Different cities have different levers and buttons to press. We attract more international tourists from Singapore and Jakarta because it is such a short distance between those places and Perth. An event in Adelaide, for instance, attracts more people from the east coast because it is a shorter distant to travel. I will ask the managing director of Tourism WA to provide further commentary about how we judge visitation from these events.

[11.10 am]

Ms C. Turnbull: Thank you, minister. As a major one-off event, this Olympic qualifier presents an incredible and exciting opportunity for Western Australia for all the points that the minister just mentioned and not only for the relationship that exists between our international markets and our aviation partners, such as Philippine Airlines. In addition, other games that will be played, such as the Chinese Taipei game, present an opportunity to shine a light on Western Australia with emerging markets, and potential benefits will arise from that. As it relates to the KPI target for the 2023–24 events suite in total, direct expenditure is likely to be, as the minister mentioned, between \$120 million and \$130 million across many different major and regional events. This is just one of those events that forms the entire suite of major events in total. If I may, I will ask our executive director of events, Anna Last, to provide additional comments about visitor expenditure and direct expenditure that is anticipated from this particular event.

Ms A. Last: The only thing I will add is that in addition to the visitation that will come from tourists who will buy tickets to the matches, the travelling teams also bring multiple travelling parties with them, so when we calculate our visitor expenditure, we work off tourists who are coming as well as travelling parties. The games will be broadcast nationally and internationally, which will give us a huge global audience for Perth, HBF Park and Western Australia in general.

Mr R.H. COOK: As the member would be aware, Sam Kerr is the most significant woman footballer around the globe today; she will be a huge attraction to these games. It is a negotiation and an understanding about the impact of the broadcasts of these events. Interestingly, coming into sharper focus is the social media footprint of a particular event. For instance, the outreach of the Margaret River Pro is around 60 million people worldwide when we combine the followers across each of the social media platforms of the surfers and the World Surf League. All these things go into forming a judgement about the value of an event to Western Australia.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Further question.

The CHAIR: I cannot believe there is anything left to say!

Mr R.S. LOVE: There certainly is! In her final comments, the adviser—I am sorry; I have forgotten her name—mentioned the promotion of Perth and HBF Park when people watch the football. The promotion of HBF Park will probably not be all that powerful on the international stage, but it brings to mind that with all the analysis that is undertaken, would it not be worthwhile for the government to analyse whether it should buy back the naming rights of Optus Stadium and make it “Perth Stadium” as a marketing exercise to drive value from the attraction of events?

Mr R.H. COOK: I am really not in a position to make that call or to comment; it is for the Minister for Sport and Recreation, through his oversight of VenuesWest, to make that call. We obviously take every opportunity we can to promote Perth as an event destination. I think Perth could be one of the top three event destinations of South-East Asia. Hong Kong has gone off the boil as an event destination. We compete with Singapore, Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta perhaps, but we have a great opportunity to carve out a niche in the South-East Asian region to attract people for short-stay tourism opportunities as a result of these events. We continue to make sure that Perth, Western Australia and our Walking on a Dream brand are front and centre when we stage events. The member raises an interesting point.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am sure that if the minister undertook the analysis, he would be able to convince the Minister for Sport and Recreation.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to the spending changes on page 189 and specifically to the Collie industrial transition fund. Can the minister outline what that fund will be spent on over the years?

Mr R.H. COOK: The \$200 million Collie industrial transition fund is part of the government’s commitment to support the town of Collie and its community as it transitions away from coal-fired power generation through the activation of industrial land and the attraction of new industry. The fund will target large-scale green manufacturing, minerals processing and renewable energy projects. Companies are essentially invited to submit an expression of interest online to demonstrate how their project aligns with the target sectors, as well as how many jobs would be delivered for the transitional workforce. As of March this year, we have received more than 20 inquiries, with seven expressions of interest submitted. Of those, six companies have been invited to present their projects to the assessment panel in relation to the level of funding required. On 6 April, the first funding milestone was reached, with \$5 million in grant funding to support the establishment by Magnium Australia of a pilot plant in the Collie light industrial area—a project that I think the member would be familiar with. The pilot plant will deliver almost 30 jobs to the community and pave the way for the establishment of a commercial-scale facility in Collie that has the potential to deliver more than 350 direct jobs for the community, plus additional jobs in the construction and service industries. It is about understanding that in the Collie community we have a highly skilled workforce that we can redeploy to these green future energy-facing industries and making sure that we work with companies to incentivise them to

look at making Collie their home. The member would also be familiar with the fact that Collie is essentially at the centre of a very complex and sophisticated electricity network, so all those companies that are either looking to be part of that network or to drawdown from it recognise that Collie is strategically well placed as a future site for their proposals.

[11.20 am]

Dr D.J. HONEY: I think focusing on Collie as a major industrial centre is an excellent initiative for all the reasons the minister knows.

The CHAIR: Is there a question?

Dr D.J. HONEY: Yes. Obviously, the main area that the government is focusing on is replacing the jobs from the closure of the power stations. Given that the power station will be shut in 2029, which is relatively near, there will be some workforce decommissioning and the majority of the skilled employees will not have jobs then. Does the minister have a projection for the proposed new projects and the loss of the jobs in Collie?

Mr R.H. COOK: As the member knows, this is a whole-of-government project. The Collie industrial transition fund is part of my portfolio and, as Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade, I also have oversight of other aspects of industry in that area, but I do not have a handle on that workforce development issue. I assume that Minister McGurk would be able to provide the member with further information on that.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Does the minister think it is a project that his department could take on? I believe that the objective is excellent and the vision is achievable. My concern is the time line for achieving that vision and the possibility that we will lose that excellent skilled labour if we do not have a match between the new industries and the existing power station that is being shut down.

Mr R.H. COOK: I take the member's point, although I think that ultimately Collie will be importing a workforce rather than offloading its workforce. The industrial sites in that region include Kemerton, Shotts and Coolangatta. They all represent significant industrial opportunities. The member will have seen the recent announcement by Albemarle that it will double its capacity at its lithium hydroxide processing plant at Kemerton. That will literally double the workforce required, including 1 000 jobs in construction. I think it currently employs 350 under its current set-up and is going to employ 870 as part of that expansion process. For the benefit of the chamber, that will make Albemarle the biggest lithium hydroxide plant outside China. It is a globally significant development. As we look to activate all those industrial sites across that region, we will see an attraction of workers. I do not think finding jobs for those who are transitioning out of either coalmining or coal-related industries such as thermal power generation will be a struggle and that they will find further opportunities.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to the availability of land zoned for industrial purposes. Is there adequate land for the proposed projects going ahead? Obviously, this will become another major strategic industrial area for the state.

Mr R.H. COOK: There is certainly an availability of general industrial land in and around Collie. In terms of strategic industrial land for heavier industry, I think we will see further development of Kemerton in the short term, which, as the member is aware, is nearby. Preparing this land to make it project ready is the challenge for me and the department. We will work with industry partners to understand their needs for the land. A lot of work has been put into the development of Shotts at the moment and Coolangatta continues to be available. Kemerton will always play a key role in strategic industrial activity in the south west region.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I return to event funding on page 193. The eighth significant issue impacting the agency is about tourism. This is the last question I will ask about tourism. I will turn to something else after this.

Mr R.H. COOK: We can talk about tourism all day; I enjoy it.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am minded to ask this because I see that the member for Swan Hills is in the chamber. At the Moondyne Festival she told me that she was representing the minister because the minister was off to a much more prestigious event, apparently—the AC/DC High Voltage event. I understood that many ministers were going to that. The predicted attendance of ministers was quite high. What was the predicted attendance of other people at that event?

Mr R.H. COOK: I thank the member very much. I appreciate the question because it provides me with an opportunity to talk about a key issue we have been working on within tourism.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It was a specific question about the AC/DC High Voltage event.

Mr R.H. COOK: That is right, but I need to put it into context. Through Tourism WA, we have been developing what we call our homegrown product, which, essentially, is a product that represents a major event but is not something that we have to buy off the shelf or bid against other cities for to have in our state. This is inspired by events such as Vivid Sydney in New South Wales and Dark Mofo in Tasmania. Through events such as High Voltage, we are seeking to have a quintessentially Western Australian event that could not be picked up and taken anywhere else.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.S. LOVE: The Moondyne Festival would already qualify.

Mr R.H. COOK: It is a terrific event and is a good example —

The CHAIR: You have already distracted the minister. He has not addressed the question, which was about the predicted attendance. The more you distract the minister, the more he will wax lyrical.

Mr R.H. COOK: The member is quite right; the Moondyne Festival is a great example of an event that we hold not only in and around Perth, but also throughout regional Western Australia. We want to make sure that there is something for everyone, and the High Voltage event is one of those events that appeals to a particular demographic —

Mr R.S. LOVE: Yes, ministers!

Mr R.H. COOK: It appeals to those people who follow AC/DC, which is a quintessentially Western Australian rock band. That festival gives us the opportunity to celebrate that. That event attracts visitors and stimulates economic activity. We have to grow these types of events. The idea is that we do not put them on just once, but again and again so they become key points in people's calendars and people plan their holidays around them. We anticipate that rockers in the UK will think about that really exciting event that happened in Western Australia last year and will plan to go to it the next year. I did that with the Vivid festival. My wife and I travelled to Sydney as tourists to see Vivid, but that took about four years to get going. It was not until Lou Reed and Laurie Anderson were invited to be the creative directors that Vivid came into its own. Before that, it was growing year after year. We are looking to grow events like High Voltage, and High Voltage itself, year after year. People will come back to it year after year and it will become a quintessentially Western Australian event. This is the first year that this event has taken place; it was held earlier this month. The crowd attendance was estimated to be between 40 000 and 45 000 people who went to Fremantle to watch the 55 bands that were on show, providing their creative interpretation of Bon Scott and AC/DC songs. It is a great first hit out. I was really pleased with the atmosphere and the spirit in which it was staged. As the member mentioned on more than one occasion so far this morning, I was there. I thought it was a great event.

We will continue to develop that program to make sure that we can improve on those bits that were the success factors, and tweak it year after year to continue to improve it. One thing we will do, for instance—he said without actually talking or consulting with anyone—is hold it earlier in the year, closer to summer. It was just the first year and those were the dates foisted upon us. Even though the weather was a bit iffy, between 40 000 and 45 000 people attended.

[11.30 am]

Mr R.S. LOVE: I do not think the minister actually responded to the question: what was the prediction on attendance?

Mr R.H. COOK: I was told to anticipate anything up to 100 000. We had half of that. Given the weather, I thought that was pretty good.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Has there been any interaction with the business community in the nearby area, before or after the event, to either gauge expectation or measure what the economic impact was for businesses?

Mr R.H. COOK: I ask the officials to answer the question.

The CHAIR: Anyone in particular?

Mr R.H. COOK: I refer it to the director general. I am sure she can take us from there.

Mrs R. Brown: As a general practice, for each event there will be a post-analysis calculation of numbers and economic benefit. That is part of the rigorous process for each event. We are probably still in that phase for this event, but I ask the managing director if she wants to add anything further.

Ms C. Turnbull: We are still in that process, but as the Deputy Premier mentioned, the initial police report indicates somewhere between 40 000 and 45 000 attendees. Although that is half what we initially projected, given the time of year and the unpredictable weather that particular weekend, we were actually really pleased with those initial results. We are working closely with the City of Fremantle and the local businesses to obtain feedback to ensure that each year we hone and fine-tune that event to become bigger and better. It is great to recognise it. Almost 60 bands were present at that event, and it was a great celebration.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Does that information become available for others to read, or is it kept as internal information for Tourism WA?

Mr R.H. COOK: No; we make that information available.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to budget paper No 2, page 195, the outcome and key effectiveness indicators. One of the key activities the government has promoted is the idea of diversifying our economy. Looking at the line item,

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

“Share of Western Australia’s merchandise exports in key markets for diversification”, I think it would be fair to say we are seeing a flatline performance. Does the minister care to comment on whether we are actually getting benefit for our dollar in diversifying our state economy?

Mr R.H. COOK: The Diversify WA strategy is a deliberate focus by the government to broaden the base of our economy and make sure that we continue to produce high-value jobs for Western Australians. To provide some background, it targets the sectors of energy; tourism, events and creative industries; international education; defence industries; mining and mining equipment, technology and services; space industries; health and medical life sciences; and primary industries. A lot of those are recognised as industries that we have had traditional strengths in. We are now trying to leverage those strengths—particularly in resources—to make sure that we can continue to diversify the base of the Western Australian economy, and move us away from the boom–bust cycle, which is often anticipated when relying upon the volume and price of commodities for economic prosperity. We continue to develop our work in each of those industries through a range of measures, but of interest is the investment attraction fund to stimulate those particular sectors.

As a total proportion of the economy, we continue to see the dominance of energy and resources. This is consistent with the fact that in a post-COVID world and because of the Ukrainian conflict we are seeing a significant increase in the value of oil and gas, and the price of iron ore remains high. As a proportion of the overall economy, we are not seeing that diversification take place yet. We are seeing growth in those sectors, but when compared with the behemoth that is our mining sector, it is still early days.

Dr D.J. HONEY: This should have been my first question: can the minister please explain how that metric is derived?

Mr R.H. COOK: I will hand over to the director general.

Mrs R. Brown: For the share of Western Australia’s merchandise exports in key markets for diversification, the indicator is very much drawn from the Australian Bureau of Statistics trade data, which is used in measuring the share of WA’s merchandise exports to India and Association of South-East Asian Nations countries. As the minister has outlined, given the strength of the Western Australian economy and the continued strength of the resources sector, the diversification agenda—which is very much around the resources sector—plus the numbers relating to the strength of the Western Australia economy probably do not bring through the real efforts that are being made and the real growth in the diversification of new industries and new markets. The ongoing importance and role that certain commodities play in certain markets is really where the stability in those numbers comes from.

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to two line items towards the bottom of page 189 in the spending changes table. The first one under “Ongoing Initiatives” refers to the total solar eclipse, which we all enjoyed.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Some of us did.

Ms M. BEARD: Some of us did! I wonder whether the minister could advise us of the total amount of money allocated to actual advertising campaigns for that event.

Mr R.H. COOK: Member, I will speak to this for a period and then I might hand over to the managing director of Tourism WA to provide a bit more colour and movement.

It was an incredible opportunity to showcase Western Australia, because all eyes of the world were literally on Western Australia, and Exmouth in particular. There was a \$6.87 million commitment by the government for the total solar eclipse to support the project’s delivery of the three primary objectives of safety, participation and legacy. We wanted to make sure that the event was safe. In the end, roughly just over 19 000 people went to Exmouth for that event, which is pretty extraordinary for a township that usually enjoys a population of around 2 800. It was a particularly good outcome. We were very pleased to have the necessary impact of public sector workers and infrastructure to make sure that that was safe. That included State Emergency Service workers, health department workers, Main Roads Western Australia workers and upgrades to the highway in different aspects to make it safer.

We also wanted to make sure that it was a great experience for people to participate in. As the Leader of the Opposition, the member and I witnessed, there were around 2 000 people on the viewing platform that day to watch the event. It was an extraordinary experience. It was like a village at the United Nations. There were so many people from around the world, with their cameras and equipment, to participate in the event.

We also wanted to make sure that there was a legacy aspect to this event. A key component of the installation of infrastructure was the upgrades to Town Beach in Exmouth, which I thought came up really well on the day. On the last evening of the total solar eclipse event, I think we had 5 000 people on Town Beach to watch the drone show and participate in the festivities there. As I also mentioned, upgrades have been made to roads and other infrastructure that will be there forever. That was a great opportunity to do that work. The other legacy that we wanted to leave was the opportunity for people to see what a great part of the world the coral coast is and to really put it on their bucket list of places to visit. We always take the opportunity to highlight these features. For example, the member

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

will be familiar with the Walking on a Dream campaign and the iconic image of the whale shark, which is unique to that part of the world. We took the opportunity to highlight that in all our advertising capabilities. As part of that event, we took the opportunity to undertake a range of festivals. One that particularly struck me was the festival at Cardabia station, which was put on by the Baiyungu Aboriginal Corporation. The extraordinary drone show and the culinary opportunity and concept was really a highlight for me.

[Interruption.]

The CHAIR: Sorry, minister.

[11.40 am]

Mr R.H. COOK: We did not have Dave Brubeck there and that was disappointing. We could have done with a little bit of jazz. We could have done with a bit of *Take Five* as well while we were there.

The CHAIR: I wish you would take five instead of 15!

Mr R.H. COOK: As I was saying, those projects will continue into the future.

The CHAIR: I believe the question has not yet been answered: how much was spent on advertising?

Mr R.H. COOK: Is that for specific tourism advertising?

Ms M. BEARD: Yes.

Mr R.H. COOK: I will hand over to the director general.

Mrs R. Brown: To add to the minister's comments, communications were an important aspect of the overall project, particularly around safety. We had a lot of activity through government channels and our partners in local government, but also through the local chambers of commerce and industry for communicating important information around the event from a safety perspective. There was no direct marketing through Tourism Western Australia for the overall event, but we had marketing and communications for each of the festival-type events. We did not have an explicit marketing element to it, but within all the elements were important communications for providing information on safety, options for people to experience the region and, more importantly, public information about the events, particularly those in Exmouth. A large number of free events were held, so it was really about providing information on those aspects.

Ms M. BEARD: Is it possible to get an indication of what some of those legacy projects are? I guess they would be across the region and not just in Exmouth.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, absolutely. I will undertake to provide some supplementary information. We spent over \$800 000 on a total solar eclipse round of grants under the local capability fund. That provided a range of grants that local businesses and local government authorities could take advantage of. A classic example was the installation of a new pizza oven at Whalebone Brewing so that it could meet the needs of the people visiting. That will be in place forever. I will provide supplementary information on the legacy items made available for the total solar eclipse event, plus a list of the successful recipients of the local capability fund's total solar eclipse round of grants.

[*Supplementary Information No A6.*]

Ms M. BEARD: Did the department contract any interstate businesses to undertake work for the event?

Mr R.H. COOK: That is a great question. I do not think so. Most of our funding was for events and festivals. Of course, the local capability fund was involved, plus local contractors and government contractors as part of event management. I will ask the director general to make a further comment.

Mrs R. Brown: Where possible, we worked very closely with the local governments to use local contractors, particularly those that were working on other projects in the region—for example, with the assembly of the viewing site. Just as the state government has done with many elements of this event, we used local contractors from either the region or from Western Australia.

Ms M. BEARD: Were any from interstate?

Mrs R. Brown: I do not have that specific information. We very much hoped to use local content. For the Dark Sky Festival, we partnered with Mellen Events, an eastern states firm, but it worked very much with our local operators and providers in the region as well.

Ms M. BEARD: Was an amount allocated to that interstate work?

Mrs R. Brown: We do not have that information or that breakdown.

Ms M. BEARD: Has the department received data yet on the visitation, by location, to the event and satisfaction?

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, I have. An estimated 15 700 people were in Exmouth for the week, with an additional 3 000 travelling into the town for the day of the eclipse. It is estimated that 23 000 people visited the region over the total solar eclipse period, including the towns of Carnarvon, Coral Bay, Exmouth and Onslow.

Ms L. DALTON: I refer to the service summary table on page 195 and the fact that Prime Minister Modi is in Australia at the moment, strengthening Australian links with India. With regard to international engagement, trade and investment, what outcomes were achieved as a result of the Invest and Trade Western Australia mission to India in July 2022?

Mr R.H. COOK: I appreciate the opportunity to talk about what an incredible impact we are having around the world at the moment as a result of our international investment and trade network. Some great work is being done by our trade commissioners around the world. For the member's information—I am going to kill these numbers but here we go; I will give it a try—we have regions around the world in terms of our international investment and trade hubs based in London, Chennai or Mumbai, Jakarta, Tokyo and Shanghai—let us not forget China. We will soon be opening an investment and trade hub in Austin, Texas.

These hubs essentially provide a front door to Western Australia around the world. The teams at those hubs are able to reach out to investors and investors can also reach out to the teams to explore the opportunities that come with having that profile in market. One of the key ways for us to boost that profile in market is through trade missions. In July last year, I was joined by Minister Templeman, Minister for International Education, on the largest ever business delegation of investment and trade, which we took to India. More than 110 representatives from more than 70 Western Australian businesses and organisations joined the mission. We had representatives across six priority areas, including mining and mining equipment, technology and services; international education; energy; innovation hubs and smart cities; primary industries; and tourism, events and creative industries.

When we go to these places, we are competing for attention. We really draw attention to ourselves when we go over with such a big group, and it had a high-level impact. We went to four cities: Delhi, Mumbai, Visakhapatnam and Chennai. The opportunities that come from that mission are really about unlocking the investment, trade and demand that is there and seeing how we can continue to benefit from that as a result of these trips.

The mission resulted in the signing of more than 30 memoranda of understanding between Western Australian and Indian businesses, and government agencies across a range of industry sectors. These included Western Australian business Ultra Power Systems and the Chennai-based Hild Energy, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of Indian conglomerate Eagle Press Group. The advanced vanadium developer Technology Metals Australia Ltd entered into a non-binding MOU with Indian steelmaking company Tata Steel. The WA Technical and Vocational Education and Training Consortium entered into an MOU with the Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation; and the Future Battery Industries Cooperative Research Centre signed an MOU with the India Energy Storage Alliance.

These were all really important opportunities to build business-to-business, people-to-people and government-to-government relationships wherever we went. Going back to advocating for the space industry, I was particularly pleased that a great MOU was signed by Space Angel, which is looking to develop launch capabilities in the north and south of the state with India's Skyroot Aerospace, and that is going to be a great collaboration.

Also as part of that trip we took 200 kilograms of rock lobster to showcase our great primary produce. That was really successful. The Geraldton Fishermen's Co-operative and the Western Rock Lobster Council spearheaded that effort and it really highlighted export opportunities. We are now working, particularly in Tamil Nadu, to see whether we can secure a direct link for rock lobster going from Geraldton to that important Indian market. This will also continue to diversify our markets. As members know, our rock lobster market is particularly dependent on China, and that is subject to shocks from time to time, so that is another important part of the overall trip.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I want to ask about some of the items mentioned under "Spending Changes" on pages 189 to 190. I refer in particular to "Attracting Skilled Migrants", which is \$1 million this year and \$1 million next year, so \$2 million in total; "Digital Economy Strategy", which is several hundred thousand dollars; "Kimberley Flood Tourism Recovery Package" and "Affordable Airfares Program" —

The CHAIR: It might be better, member, to ask them separately, because I suspect the minister has different briefing papers for different pages.

Mr R.S. LOVE: No, if the chair could bear with me for a moment.

The CHAIR: For greater efficiency!

Mr R.S. LOVE: Bear with me please, chair; I am getting to a point. I am pointing out that there are many items, including those I have already mentioned, plus "Future Battery and Critical Minerals Industry", \$1.7 million;

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

“Invest and Trade Western Australia”, \$14 million; and “New Industries Fund”, at over \$9 million, that have a note attached that states —

Existing Department spending has been reprioritised to meet some or all of the costs of this initiative.

All those initiatives are simply funded from the ordinary operations of the department. My question is: What is not being done that used to be done? Which items are no longer viewed as priorities in order to fund the many millions of dollars in spending changes outlined in this table?

Mr R.H. COOK: It will not surprise the member to hear that I will soon hand this question over to the people with technical understanding. I understand that some of these are through re-cashflows as a result of programs that are either currently in the process of being spent, or that have not had particular stages of their expenditure realised. I will hand over to the director general.

Mrs R. Brown: Thank you, minister. In many areas where we have had previous underspends against programs because of lower uptake than we had anticipated or changes in strategy where we have cashflowed across the years, we will reprioritise to get best impact, or reprioritise existing funding. For example, under “Attracting Skilled Migrants”—a very important priority for the state government and for the economy—we have been able to reprioritise a small amount of money from our existing campaign expenditure or existing internal FTE resources. It is really about being agile with regard to what our priorities are, rather than non-delivery.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Would it be possible to get some more detail on what some of those underspent items were that are now no longer seen as being priorities?

Mr R.H. COOK: It is, but I think the member would have to put that question on notice because it is going to be a fairly complex question; the member mentioned about eight different line items on which he is seeking some clarity. I would be very happy to provide that information that way.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is not the line items I mentioned, it is the line items that are no longer funded that I am asking about.

The CHAIR: I think you have the minister’s answer, member.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, but maybe I can invite Mr Sansalone to make further comment.

Mr R. Sansalone: I can provide further details on the line items that the member has pointed out. Those spending changes are a combination of new funding and reprioritisation of existing funding. In the case of “Attracting Skilled Migrants”, everything from 2023–24 onwards is new funding, with the \$1 million for 2022–23 having been reallocated from existing funding. With regard to “Kimberley Flood Tourism Recovery Package”, \$2 million of that was new funding, with \$3.9 million funded from within the existing marketing budget that was already slated for spending in the regions, but was then targeted towards that recovery package. In the case of “Future Battery and Critical Minerals Industry” and “New Industries Fund”, those were funded from within the existing investment attraction funding across the forward estimates.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to paragraph 6.1 at the top of page 192, which states —

growing the Invest and Trade Western Australia global network, with \$10.1 million committed to establish a new Americas hub in Austin, Texas;

I am wondering how that location was lighted on. I understand that there may be a synergy between Texas and Western Australia because of natural gas —

The CHAIR: Maybe get the minister to answer the question. The question was: “How was that location arrived upon?”

Dr D.J. HONEY: I am just trying to make it a little more subtle, thank you, chair. I understand that link, but surely we are looking at renewable energy development and exports as our future. Los Angeles, California, for example, would perhaps be a better location. I am wondering how Texas was lighted on as the place to invest in America.

Mr R.H. COOK: I thank the member very much. I appreciate that we could explore this to our heart’s content, trying to work out the relative merits of different places. Some people have asked, “Why not Houston? Surely that is where you get the oil and gas tie-ups.” It is my understanding that it was decided to base the hub in Austin because that is where a lot of the new industries that sit at the back of energy transition programs are basing themselves. They are moving out of California to Austin for a range of reasons but the view is that the ecosystem in Austin is better established for these new energy industries. I might invite the deputy director general, strategy and international engagement, Simone Spencer, to provide some further detail.

Ms S. Spencer: As the minister noted, there are a lot of economic complementarities between Western Australia and Texas, more broadly, and a lot of existing partnerships with Houston and our traditional investment partners in the resources industry. Austin has become known as “Silicon Hills”. It is very much a shift from the Silicon Valley model to its own startup community, particularly in a lot of sectors in which we seek to diversify. It is the close

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

proximity to our existing partnerships, which are our resources or energy partners, and the technology, R&D and venture capital going into the energy transition story that is very much coming out of that Austin hub. It is not just about energy for us; it is about other sectors within the Diversify WA strategy. Austin is also a hub for the health and medical life sciences sector and a lot of the technology that we are looking to explore in things like the space sector. Our upcoming mission will visit partners in the Austin area connected to our diversification objective. In many ways it is for us about that new capital and new technology development in that Austin base.

[12.00 noon]

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to page 193 and significant issues impacting the agency. Paragraph 8.4 states —
addressing workforce challenges through the delivery of workforce ... as part of the \$3.9 million Tourism Workforce Development Program;

Does the minister have information on how many training workshops have been delivered, how many people have been trained and how many international workers have come to work in WA as a direct result of that program?

Mr R.H. COOK: The development of our tourism product of which the workforce is a key component is one of three central focus points for Tourism WA, and a range of programs were run in 2022–23 and 2023–24. With the chair's indulgence, I will ask Renata Lowe to make some comments on that program.

Ms R. Lowe: The \$3.9 million tourism workforce development program is delivered in four streams. Workshops are delivered in all of those streams. There is a stream to support local jobs for local people that provides short courses to encourage youth, the aged and others into the tourism industry. Over 400 people have participated in those job ready and upskilling workshops. We are also leveraging working holiday-makers, particularly for seasonal jobs in regional Western Australia. They like to follow the sun so there is a lot of activity. There was also activity to support working holiday-makers to participate in the Gascoyne during the total solar eclipse. We have had 34 000 international students return to Perth, and there have been upskilling workshops on responsible service of alcohol and bar and barista activity. We are collectively providing opportunities for upskilling and connecting individuals to employers. We connect them to employers through the WesternAustralia.jobs website that was developed with the Australian Hotels Association. Over time, individuals have been pushed to that portal and, up to 30 April, 4 752 jobseekers had registered for 2 283 jobs.

Ms M. BEARD: Can the minister let me know whether there is a list of the different regions and locations that have tapped into those training programs?

Mr R.H. COOK: I will ask Renata Lowe to answer that question.

Ms R. Lowe: I can explain where some of those activities have been happening. In particular, some were to upskill individuals in Exmouth and Carnarvon for the total solar eclipse. We also held some of those activities in Albany in November last year. We had some bespoke projects with Southern Regional TAFE. Bar and barista activities for 80 people were held with the City of Stirling between May and June. Going back to the Exmouth and Carnarvon workshops, 21 job ready upskilling workshops were held in March with 234 participants. Those are the ones I have at hand at the moment.

The CHAIR: New question anyone?

Mr R.S. LOVE: Yes.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Yes.

The CHAIR: That was a dead heat! Who is further down their text message? I give the call to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I am not reading text messages. I am actually quickly updating myself on the Western Australian future battery strategy. I refer to page 191, support energy transition and the future battery and critical minerals industries strategy. Part of the department's work is to continue to implement that strategy. I have the strategy open in front of me; that is what I have here. I am not reading texts at all.

The CHAIR: I am sorry; you are forgiven.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Could the minister outline the department's role in that particular strategy? I see the Minister for Mines and Petroleum seems to be the lead minister. Perhaps the minister could explain how that interaction works and how that strategy is structured in terms of time frames and how far it is down the track. I note that we are supposed to have downstream processing in this state by the end of 2025. Can the minister give an update on that?

Mr R.H. COOK: I thank the member. Prior to me coming into this role, Minister Johnston, as the Minister for Energy, was the lead minister in developing the future battery and critical minerals industries strategy. When I came into this role, the minister and I compared notes and decided that we would continue to work together on a lot of the policy settings and things of that nature, with Minister Johnston providing that leadership role to steward the strategy.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

The operational and functional aspects of the strategy fall to me and the department, although one would anticipate that Minister Johnston, as the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, will also have a key role in projects developed within the context of the Mining Act.

Essentially, the government is working with several proponents to bring projects online to attract investment, including IGO's proposed battery chemical manufacturing plant in Kwinana, which I mentioned earlier. In the 2023–24 budget, \$1.7 million has been allocated from the investment attraction fund to meet the cost of priority activities including identifying key barriers to investment, estimating future supply of critical minerals, investigating opportunities for battery procurement, co-funding business cases for downstream processing and hosting an international battery and critical minerals summit. In the 2023–24 budget, \$13.2 million of unspent funds from the previously approved precursor cathode active materials lithium ion battery project has been reallocated to enhance and accelerate WA's invest and trade activities, including batteries and critical minerals. The \$1.7 million allocation I mentioned is about value-adding with the processing of battery and critical minerals, identifying the key barriers to investment, estimating future supply of critical minerals, investigating opportunities for battery procurement and, as I said before, co-funding business cases.

I guess what we are trying to provide is a policy setting whereby people understand that Western Australia has all elements of a lithium and vanadium ion battery and so we represent a key player in the critical mineral space. We do not want to just benefit from that in terms of the mining and export of these products; we want to process them to move up the value chain and benefit from the value-add that comes from that. To give an example, if spodumene is converted—the precursor product to lithium hydroxide—the value of the product is essentially doubled in that single step alone. That represents a key opportunity for us. We are working with a range of companies around the Kwinana industrial strip that I mentioned earlier. Wyloo Metals and IGO are some of the key entities looking to develop precursor products for battery manufacture. We will continue to identify more opportunities for that.

To give the member an idea of the significance of this industry, Hon Madeleine King, the Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, allocated \$50 million worth of commonwealth funding for the development of our critical minerals and battery manufacturing industry last week. Of that \$50 million, \$30 million was allocated to Western Australian companies. That funding was across 13 projects, seven of which were in Western Australia and two of the last six outside Western Australia are actually mining in Western Australia. We play a crucial role and are a significant national and international player in the global supply chain for critical minerals.

[12.10 pm]

Mr R.S. LOVE: That is a pretty high level strategy. The minister has mentioned that there are barriers. Is the minister methodically breaking down the barriers or is he just noting the barriers and moving on?

Mr R.H. COOK: That \$1.7 million in 2023–24 will be used to complete work to identify barriers to investment in downstream processing, such as the management of waste from lithium hydroxide refineries. As the member would appreciate, this is a complex supply chain and production process. We need to work closely with industry while it informs us of what it needs from us. We are doing a lot of work in the goldfields at the moment because we want to see the processing of critical minerals and rare earth minerals undertaken in that particular region. We have also got the Lynas rare earth project in Kalgoorlie and Iluka Resources project in Eneabba doing work to move further along the supply chain so that we can continue to add value. We are doing intensive work with those companies to try to get their projects off the ground.

The CHAIR: I understand that we are not going to spend a lot of time on the Chemistry Centre, but there is one other division. Have I got any indication of how much longer you want?

Dr D.J. HONEY: We thought we would end at about 20 minutes to one.

The CHAIR: We will finish division 14?

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 200 of budget paper No 2, "Election Commitment—Wind Turbine Manufacturing", which discusses new works. What is the nature of the facility that the government is looking to establish? Will it be an assembly or manufacturing facility?

Mr R.H. COOK: Wind turbine manufacturing obviously represents a significant opportunity for us. A small renewable hydrogen project will have anywhere between 700 and 1 000 wind turbines and the larger projects will have 1 500 and above. The production, transportation, insulation and particularly the manufacture of wind turbines represents a significant related economic activity. The 2021–22 budget included \$10 million over four years towards the wind turbine manufacturing initiative that aims to identify, support and facilitate local wind turbine manufacturing, as well as verify opportunities for WA businesses and identify requirements for a potential manufacturing hub, including suitable industrial lands.

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

The funds will be resourced in the following two stages: stage one is a comprehensive independent full economic feasibility study undertaken by Aurecon Australia Pty Ltd to progress findings from a previous analysis that examined wind farm supply opportunities in WA. The second stage is the implementation of recommendations from stage 1, including \$8 million towards a future common-user facility and suitable industrial land for a manufacturing hub for wind farm componentry for onshore and offshore wind projects. I believe the work stage 1 of the project is starting to come to a conclusion. I will ask Mr John O’Hare, executive director of industry development, to make some further comments.

Mr J. O’Hare: The draft study from Aurecon has been delivered to the department and we are currently looking at the recommendations. It is still a draft and has to go to the Deputy Premier’s office. We will be giving a briefing there on 1 June. It has identified where there are opportunities for Western Australians to manufacture. The fabricators would obviously do the manufacturing of any of those components if there is a business case for it. It looks like there will be a good business case.

The companies would obviously have the infrastructure themselves and would have to work out some of their rolling capacity. As the Deputy Premier said, we are working to create common-user infrastructure for this. As the member may be aware—particularly around the offshore sector—these structures are getting larger at all times and some of the blade sizes are becoming incredibly large—around 200-odd metres. The infrastructure to have a laydown area to be able to put them together is critically important. The report has recommendations around that, but obviously at this stage, I am not at liberty to say anything further.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Thank you for that. If I am hearing correctly, perhaps it is going to be more about assembly than manufacture. What potential areas are being examined for the common-user facility—or if I am hearing correctly, the common-user facilities?

Mr R.H. COOK: Intuitively, we anticipate that we will move up the value supply chain of the wind farm as our capabilities develop. A wind turbine needs a big base and cabling connecting the base to other networks. It has a big stem, a blade and the actual turbine itself. As the member said, I would have thought that in the early stages we would be looking at the basic elements of a wind turbine, followed by the assembly. Members of the industry have encouraged me to keep our gaze high and that we really should aspire to both blade and turbine manufacturer in Western Australia.

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to page 195 of budget paper No 2, volume 1, “Service Summary”. At the top of the page are services 5, 6 and 7, which are destination marketing, event tourism and tourism destination development. I note that the actuals are lower than the previously budgeted amounts. What does that underspend, particularly in destination marketing, relate to? What might have contributed to it?

The CHAIR: There are four questions there, but do your best, minister.

Mr R.H. COOK: Sorry member, I am just having trouble locating it.

Ms M. BEARD: It is at the top of the page. There is 5, 6 and 7 —

Mr R.H. COOK: Destination marketing?

Ms M. BEARD: Yes. Destination marketing actually has the largest variance.

[12.20 pm]

Mr R.H. COOK: Before I hand over to the managing director of tourism, tourism has, essentially, three key components: firstly, destination marketing, building demand, creating reasons to visit and making sure we are stimulating the demand for the market; secondly, developing a product and making sure that when people come to Western Australia they have the services, facilities and attractions that they would anticipate as paying tourists; and, thirdly, access to the market, such as direct aviation and other transport links required to make it work. Destination marketing is obviously a key part of what we are doing. In September last year we launched the Walking on a Dream campaign, which is about targeting that premium market in Western Australia. We know that we cannot compete on volume with big jurisdictions such as New South Wales and Victoria, but we can provide people with a unique premium product when they come to Western Australia to enjoy that product. With the chair’s indulgence, I will hand over to the managing director to make some comments about those numbers in destination marketing.

Ms C. Turnbull: Further to expand on the explanation of tourism budget movements, over the forward estimates, specifically to the estimated actuals, Tourism WA’s budget for 2022–23 was originally \$167 million but has been adjusted to \$150 million, mainly because of the deferral of spending on some programs, which the member pointed out, to align with expected timing of agreements and sponsorships, in particular for the aviation recovery fund and events program.

Ms M. BEARD: Does the funding for destination marketing for regional tourism organisations come from the same bucket of money?

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes. The RTOs are funded by Tourism WA. I ask Carolyn Turnbull to make further comment.

Ms C. Turnbull: Thank you, Deputy Premier. The RTO funded partnership is outside the destination marketing bucket of funding.

Ms M. BEARD: Is there somewhere to identify what those amounts would be for each RTO?

Mr R.H. COOK: Ms Turnbull.

Ms C. Turnbull: Thank you, Deputy Premier. That is not highlighted in these budget papers.

The CHAIR: That is not what the member asked.

Ms M. BEARD: If they are not highlighted in the budget, are we able to obtain amounts that each RTO receive in marketing funding per year?

Mr R.H. COOK: I think the best thing to do is for the member to put that question on notice so that we can provide a proper analysis for her.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 189 of budget paper No 2 and in the table at the bottom of the page is the “Kimberley Flood Tourism Recovery Package”. Given that the area was flooded, will there be any continuing or carryover funding for that, or will there not be any moneys allocated?

Mr R.H. COOK: It was a devastating event that impacted the Kimberley. That devastation was felt acutely by the tourism industry, particularly in the East Kimberley and by those overland tour operators who require those east–west transport links to work properly. In particular, the flooding from ex–tropical cyclone Ellie had a devastating impact on not only the physical infrastructure but also the image that people have of the Kimberley. Obviously, the government had to move swiftly to stabilise the transport corridors. I want to commend Minister Saffioti and Main Roads for the work they did to resurrect some of those transport links. They did a very good job. The other part of the problem was to stem the flood of cancellations that came as a result of people seeing in the media how devastating those floods were. The government made an initial tourism flood recovery package of \$6 million. That package included 19 000 discounted airfares from Perth to Broome and Kununurra. We also launched an “open for business” national marketing campaign. That was as much working with people in the travel industry itself to make sure they are advising their clients that their bookings are still safe and they can still get a good tourism experience. We provided a 50 per cent discount on tours and incentive programs. The importance of that particular program was that it allowed people who were in the region to access good local tours. They were snapped up like hotcakes through the visitor centres and were highly successful. We also had financial support for impacted overland tourism operators, as I said, many who were devastated by the impact of the cancellations.

I am really pleased and proud that we can say that the tourism operators of the East Kimberley have a season. There were a lot of cancellations. One estimate put cancellations across the industry at around \$10 million, but at least they have a season. In Kununurra a couple of weeks ago I sat down again with people in the tourism industry and they expressed relief—I suppose; they were not excited, but they were relieved—that they had a season where they could at least move on. I indicated to them that we would continue to work with them to identify any needs or opportunities that they might have for further support. The member will not be surprised to hear that our Tourism WA people in that market are working with operators at the moment. It is early days in terms of the season. The member would be aware that the season starts around late April/early May. We are seeing how that develops over the next few weeks. We will continue to work with them around any sort of further supports that they might need.

Ms M. BEARD: Regarding the Kimberley and the timing of that event, people make their plans early and they go around the top and then come south. Has there been any analysis or numbers gathered around the impact further south of the Kimberley that might have happened with bookings and people not coming? Will there be any impact or analysis done on that?

Mr R.H. COOK: We continue to work with industry to monitor the impact of tourism on the way up, working with the Caravan Industry Association for instance and looking at those numbers regionally right up through that corridor. I have not received any advice that there has been a significant impact. As the member knows, people get to the Kimberley two ways: they drive or they fly. The indication we have is that our locals, who like to drive, feel that the corridors are now open again and they can get access into that market. I am stalling because the member was asking about another aspect. The other point I want to make is that when I spoke with a lot of the operators in Kununurra very recently, one of the points they wanted to make was that they will survive this season. The important thing we need to do is lock in early bookings for next season so they at least have an assurance that there will be ongoing sales and they can make decisions off the back of that. A lot of the work of Tourism WA

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

over the next few months will be about how we can continue to promote the regions so that we can secure the 2024 season, now that the 2023 season has started.

[12.30 pm]

The CHAIR: Before I give the call to the member for Cottesloe, I welcome Carey Baptist College students to Parliament today.

Dr D.J. HONEY: There have been two significant events in close proximity. The first event was the border closure due to the COVID pandemic and the next was obviously this flood. A lot of tourism is based on reputation, and the minister has already alluded to that. Is there any thinking around further advertising going into the next financial year, given that those communities depend heavily on tourism? Groups like Fitzroy River Lodge, which has a big impact on the local Bunuba Dawangarri Aboriginal Corporation, may need some extra support to re-advertise that they are indeed available and open for business.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes. This goes to the point I was making to the member for North West Central. I think we need to focus as much now on next season as we are focusing on maintaining business for this season. We want to make sure that the people who are starting to make plans now are being targeted with the right sort of advertising and promotion. We have a little bit more work to do in that space in understanding what the industry's key needs are both for the back end of this season, but also to promote for next season. As I said, that work is ongoing.

Ms L. DALTON: I refer to page 202 of budget paper No 2 and the line item "Aboriginal Tourism Fund" under "Tourism WA" in the controlled grants table. I understand that funding has been allocated to initiatives in the *Jina: WA Aboriginal tourism action plan 2021–2025*, which is now in its third year. Can the minister please outline what is being done in Aboriginal cultural tourism to support economic development opportunities for First Nations people and deliver cultural experiences that visitors are actively seeking out?

Mr R.H. COOK: I thank the member for the question. I am the incredible beneficiary of having had two amazing Ministers for Tourism prior to me coming to this portfolio. The work of Minister Papalia and Minister Templeman was amazing in establishing the Jina plan, which is the cornerstone of our Aboriginal tourism strategy. There has been \$20 million committed to the four-year plan, with 2023–24 being the third year of delivery. The Jina plan is about understanding and appreciating that there is only one unique feature of our tourism industry. Many jurisdictions have beaches, gorges and things of that nature, but that one thing that makes us truly unique compared with the rest of the world is our First Nations people and the culture that they bring to this amazing landscape. The Jina plan is about really enlivening that product. We know that 81 per cent of visitors who come to Western Australia have a strong interest in Aboriginal tourism experiences. Unfortunately, very few of them go away having had that experience. The Jina plan is really the beating heart of our overall tourism strategy to make sure that we can elevate Indigenous tourism product and continue to benefit from that.

The other great thing about the Jina plan is that it is a partnership with the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council. It is doing a lot of work around supporting its members and enhancing their work to build their products. In 2023–24, we will open the seventh Camping with Custodians campground at Lombadina community on the Dampier Peninsula. We will be undertaking work with the Wunambal Gaambera community in the Kimberley to establish visitor centres on Jar Island to enable the community to deliver cultural performances for expedition cruise passengers. We are looking to continue the partnership with the City of Perth and WA Museum Boola Bardip to provide weekly Nyumbi cultural dance performances and smoking ceremonies every Saturday morning.

The funding to WAITOC is a key aspect of it running its Aboriginal Tourism Academy, which provides specialist capacity-building support to elevate market-ready businesses. The funding to WAITOC will also deliver a smart program called Business Hub, which will provide support for new Aboriginal tourism businesses to establish their websites and online booking service platforms, which are obviously incredibly important, and assist them with bookkeeping and call centre support. All these things are about building up that Indigenous tourism capacity, which will be a key feature of our overall tourism product into the future. WA has in excess of 110 Aboriginal tourism businesses that contribute \$63.8 million to the economy and employ over 500 Aboriginal people in the industry. It is a really important part of the state.

I will conclude by highlighting that one of the features of the total solar eclipse was the cultural event at Cardabia. It was an outstanding event that I think will become a permanent part of our Aboriginal tourism calendar, as we invite people to travel north through that late summer period to experience dark sky tourism and cultural tourism. That will become a really important part of the coral coast opportunity.

The CHAIR: All right. We have got time for a couple of short, sharp questions. Member for North West Central.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I thought I was next!

The CHAIR: Okay, Leader of the Opposition. I love being bullied!

Chair; Mr Roger Cook; Dr David Honey; Mr Shane Love; Ms Lara Dalton; Ms Christine Tonkin; Ms Jessica Shaw; Ms Merome Beard

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to page 191 of budget paper No 2 and paragraph 4.5 under the support energy transition section, which refers to the decarbonisation initiative through the LNG Jobs Taskforce. That is about the decommissioning of the gas fields. What has the minister's department done to further the development of any industry after the gas fields are decommissioned?

Mr R.H. COOK: I know the chair is looking for a quick answer. It was a fairly broad question, though.

The CHAIR: You can take as long as you like, minister.

Mr R.H. COOK: I will do my best.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is a one-point question. I just want to know what has been done.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, that is right. The LNG Jobs Taskforce is an important opportunity for us to coordinate and collaborate with the industry around not only workforce-related matters, but also other important big policy questions. I have the honour of chairing that task force, and each of the chief executive officers of our major oil and gas partners sit on the task force with me. We are identifying a range of opportunities around the industry. Over the next 12 months, the LNG Jobs Taskforce will collaborate on opportunities relating to carbon capture, utilisation and storage, the decommissioning of offshore oil and gas assets, micro-credentialing, and the delivery of an expanded hyperbaric chamber and a testing and maintenance facility at the Australian Marine Complex.

The Leader of the Opposition asked particularly about the decommissioning aspect of that. The Centre of Decommissioning Australia was previously funded by National Energy Resources Australia, a commonwealth-funded program. The commonwealth defunded it, so we picked up that funding. The Centre of Decommissioning Australia has recently joined the LNG Jobs Taskforce to support the growth of the state's offshore oil and gas decommissioning industry. Decommissioning is predicted to be an \$18 billion industry over the next 10 to 20 years. It is going to be a huge opportunity for us, and that is when we consider just the oil and gas assets that sit off our coast. It does not include Bass Strait or the Timor Sea. This represents a huge opportunity for our industry. The Centre of Decommissioning Australia continues to work to identify sites for the decommissioning work. West Pilbara is emerging as a key site for that work to take place. It is also looking at what we need in capitalisation, a workforce and so on. In 2023, we committed \$5 million towards the Centre of Decommissioning over the forward estimates to assist in standing up that decommissioning industry. The member is right to identify it as an important part of our work; it will be a key industry into the future.

[12.40 pm]

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to page 693, significant issues impacting the agency, paragraph 8.1 —

The CHAIR: Page 693? That is a different division, member.

Ms M. BEARD: Sorry!

Mr R.H. COOK: Division 14 is big, but it is not that big!

The CHAIR: Does anyone else have a question? We have 30 seconds left.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Chair, with your indulgence, I was conferring with my colleagues and we wondered whether we can push through to 12.45 pm on this division.

The CHAIR: All right.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 193, "Enabling Science" and paragraph 10.1, which states —

building skills, engagement and understanding in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), including implementing the STEM skills strategy ...

Can the minister outline the major parts of that strategy?

Mr R.H. COOK: As a former STEM student, I know that the member probably cares a lot about this area. A lot of what we want to achieve in diversifying our economy will rely upon growing a workforce of young Western Australians who have the capability and skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. That will be absolutely crucial to remaining globally competitive. A large proportion of the actions articulated in the 2019 state skills strategy have been progressed and/or completed. A mission update to the strategy is currently being developed to report back. The strategy was launched in May 2019, and it included funding \$3.4 million from July 2018 to June 2022 to support initiatives, including a STEM awareness campaign in-market from June to November 2020; a STEM professional learning and mentoring program delivered in partnership with the Department of Education, benefiting teachers across 136 skills; and a digital and technology skills program, providing a total of \$738 000 in grants to eight skill-building projects for under-represented groups in STEM from 2019 to mid-2022. We will be able to step back to look at the success of those strategies. The member would also be familiar that the government, through the Department of Education, has undertaken a lot of work inside the school system to promote

STEM, and that includes the upgrade of classrooms to create science laboratories. We are looking at how we continue to encourage students to look at STEM as a learning and career pathway.

Dr D.J. HONEY: This question relates to the minister's last point. As far as I am aware, we are still seeing a decline in the take-up of STEM subjects in schools. Will work continue to encourage children to take up STEM subjects in our schools?

Mr R.H. COOK: I obviously cannot speak for the Minister for Education, but I can say that the government is committed to building our skills workforce in the STEM area. As the member knows, and as we have talked a lot about today, a tsunami of economic and investment activity will be a part of the energy transition—renewable energy, renewable hydrogen, critical minerals and battery energy storage. We will need workers from literally all corners of the world. One of the things we need from the Australian government is a skills migration program that is fit for purpose and able to attract the workers that we need for all these industries to grow.

Dr D.J. HONEY: The minister mentioned earlier the Karratha Jobs and Skills Centre. Can the minister briefly outline what that involves?

Mr R.H. COOK: I would love to, but I will put the member in the hands of the director general to provide some information.

Mrs R. Brown: In terms of hydrogen, I will defer to Anthony Sutton.

Mr A. Sutton: This is in regard to the Pilbara hydrogen hub, of which there are four components. It is an infrastructure corridor, training centre—which the member mentioned—port infrastructure and a broader plan. The training centre is very much about making sure the skills in both the Karratha area and Port Hedland are fit and ready for renewable hydrogen, but also renewable energy. At the moment, we are negotiating the final agreement with the commonwealth on the funding for that aspect of the project.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Is that in Karratha or Hedland?

Mr A. Sutton: It will have an aspect of both.

The appropriation was recommended.