

Mr Ben Wyatt; Dr Kim Hames; Mr Mark McGowan; Acting Speaker; Ms Rita Saffioti; Mr Bill Johnston; Mr Nathan Morton; Mr John Quigley; Mr Frank Alban; Ms Simone McGurk; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Ms Wendy Duncan

PREMIER'S STATEMENT

Amendment to Question

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [2.45 pm]: I did not realise there were so many synergies between corrective services and environment, Minister for Environment. What was it—1800 44 WILD? I must remember that.

I will conclude the comments I was making on this amendment. The performance of the health minister, as I said, was simply to respond by slandering the Under Treasurer—we heard that—saying that the Under Treasurer had telephoned the member for West Swan and said, “It’s the last week I’m in this job. You’ve got to get me up there. Call me up there to the parliamentary committee and let me give evidence to the government.” That is what health minister said, and I am pretty sure Hansard picked up most of it. That is why ultimately the problem we face around Fiona Stanley Hospital is unlikely to be resolved. The Premier thinks the whole thing is boring anyway; therefore, the loss of \$330 million-plus, from the figures that the Treasurer gave, about another \$50 million at least—\$380 million—is an irrelevant consideration.

The Minister for Health has got by with a cursory knowledge of things because he has had a Treasurer, or Treasurers, willing to continue upping the cheque, and he has never really been held to account for the extra spending. That is the problem that the minister has to deal with now. That money has been lost, but the minister will say that it will not be lost because when the brass plaque goes up and the hospital is open, it will be a wonderful asset to the people of Western Australia. No-one disputes that. But if the minister is not now going to analyse the failures, particularly around the public sector comparator that I went through last night, he will repeat them because, as I said, the public sector comparator was flawed; therefore, the terms under which he entered into the contract with Serco were flawed, which is why the minister saying now that we will have \$500 million in savings over 20 years is simply based on a puff of smoke; it is simply not real or realistic.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Members, could you please stop the background chatter. Someone is on their feet.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.

DR K.D. HAMES (Dawesville — Minister for Health) [2.48 pm]: It has been a very interesting debate. I want to start with a little comment that was made about the opening of Fiona Stanley Hospital. I remember the Premier saying, “Will the Leader of the Opposition come to the opening and make some positive comments?” He certainly will be invited to do that, as will the shadow minister. The Premier was asked, “What about inviting Geoff Gallop? He was the leader at the time when this proposal was put forward. Would you invite him?” The Premier said no, we would not do that, and there was a bit of an outcry. I go back to the Mandurah rail line.

Mr P.C. Tinley: You opposed it.

Dr K.D. HAMES: The member was not even in Parliament. He was still running around in the paddock when that was being worked out.

Mr P.C. Tinley: What sort of paddock?

Dr K.D. HAMES: The member was cycling around his electorate.

Mr P.C. Tinley: How would you know that?

Dr K.D. HAMES: Because I was in Parliament.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! I have called for quiet in the chamber. We have someone on their feet quiet. The minister is responding to a motion. I think it is only fair that you give him the opportunity to respond. Minister, I remind you: please do not invite interjections.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I did not invite it, Madam Acting Speaker. It was given unto me. I did not even seek to find; it was given unto me.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, if you would address the Chair, you would not get into so much of this cross-chamber chatter.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Okay, Madam Acting Speaker, I will give it a try. I will try very hard.

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In the lead-up to 2001, when we were last in government, a huge amount of work was being done on the Mandurah railway. In fact, I was in cabinet at the time, when the then Minister for Transport, who I think at the time was either Murray Criddle or —

Several members interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: You see, it did not work, did it, Madam Acting Speaker!

Point of Order

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is an interesting piece of history. But the amendment to the Premier's Statement is specifically about the \$400 million in losses in the health portfolio in relation to Fiona Stanley Hospital. The Mandurah rail line in 2001 has absolutely no relevance to that, and I ask that the minister get back to that central question.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Further to that point of order, I would have assumed, given that the argument of the opposition was largely directed at what I did during that time, and that issues such as that were raised during the debate, that it would be reasonable for me to respond to the issues that were raised.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): My decision is that I will let the minister proceed with his response, but I remind him of the amendment to the motion, which states —

That this house calls on the Premier, the Treasurer and the Minister for Health to fully explain their roles in losing around \$400 million in the commissioning of Fiona Stanley Hospital and why they did not take action to mitigate the losses to Western Australian taxpayers.

So I ask the minister to come quickly to that.

Debate Resumed

Dr K.D. HAMES: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker. I have extensive notes of the comments that were made during the debate, and I will do my best to respond to each and every one of them.

During that time, we had the whole concept brought to cabinet and approved for a rail line. What happened was that the route was different.

Point of Order

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Madam Acting Speaker, the minister is misleading the house, because the route was completely different from what was ultimately constructed. So he did not bring the route to cabinet.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Member, that is not a point of order.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Madam Acting Speaker, that is clearly not a point of order, and so you have ruled.

Ms R. Saffioti: You are misleading the house.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I have not finished my sentence yet, so how does the member know that I am misleading the house?

The ACTING SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. Minister, will you please try again.

Debate Resumed

Dr K.D. HAMES: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Albany, I will call you.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Albany, I call you for the first time. Sorry, did I say Albany? It was the member for Armadale.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I want to make a very short and interesting point, if members opposite would stop interrupting me. That is why I am pointing myself directly at you during this debate, Madam Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Very good, minister.

Dr K.D. HAMES: We had it brought to cabinet to approve the line to Mandurah. It was approved. A lot of the work was done in clearing the reserve along the way to get that rail line to Mandurah.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

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The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Armadale!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I call you for the second time. The minister does not want your interjections. Member for Albany, you will be on the card as well. Please continue, minister.

Dr K.D. HAMES: It was approved, and a lot of the work was done to reserve the route for the railway line. When we lost government in 2001 and the Labor Party came in, the then minister, Alannah MacTiernan, changed the route from where it was going to go over the underpass. Remember that it was going to swing out towards Armadale and Cannington —

Several members interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Or wherever it was. I was not in charge of that. I was in charge of other things.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Madam Acting Speaker, he is very trying, but I am trying!

Alannah MacTiernan came in and changed the route. But there is still that little underpass that we built. So to say that we were not doing anything is clearly nonsense. We built that little thing under the road that is now not being used because Alannah MacTiernan changed the route. I have said many times good on her—great job. In fact, Richard Court said to me afterwards that he went to the engineers and asked whether it could be done with a direct route in, because he was not too happy—no offence to the Nationals—with what was being put up, and they said it could not be done. Then Alannah got in and she did it, and good on her.

The point I am getting to is that at the function at the end, I rocked up, without invitation. No Liberals were invited. It was Alannah MacTiernan's showpiece to showcase what a fantastic job she had done on the building of this rail line. The Labor Party had been in government I think for three to four years at that time, and it gave an award to a public servant for his dedication to that project and his seven years' contribution to getting the railway line to Mandurah. The Labor Party had been in government for three and a half years, and there was not one single word of credit —

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The minister perhaps needs to remember that the Mandurah rail line was in 2006.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Member for Cannington, you cannot introduce that information. That is not a point of order.

Debate Resumed

Mrs M.H. Roberts: In 2001, when we opened the Western Australian Police Academy, we invited Richard Court. He was no longer in the Parliament, but he was invited because that was something that the former government had worked on. It is my recollection that we invited Hon Kevin Prince as well.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Sure. I invited Jim McGinty to things at Rockingham hospital, and to Joondalup, and gave him credit. The point I am making is that no credit was given at all to the Liberal Party at that event. No Liberal Party members were invited. How coincidental was that? I do not remember what the exact years were. The point is that the government had not been in office for as long as that public servant who was given an award for providing the service. The point is that that project had been going on for a lot longer than members opposite had been in government. We will be inviting Jim McGinty to the opening, and it will be a fantastic event and I am sure everyone will be very proud of it. But the Labor Party has taken credit for other things along the way. I remember that this government did a lot of work—not a lot of work, but work was done—towards Geraldton hospital. There was no recognition of that whatsoever when the Labor Party came to power. That is the nature of politics. Members opposite need to grow up a bit. That is what happens.

Ms R. Saffioti: Did you acknowledge the member for Midland's role in Perth Arena?

Dr K.D. HAMES: I have acknowledged her role in the arena.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: The Premier did not even acknowledge my presence at the opening of the arena.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Nevertheless, the member knows that I have acknowledged her role in the arena and have said what a fantastic result it is.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Yes, you have.

Dr K.D. HAMES: It is an excellent piece of infrastructure.

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I will invite Jim McGinty to the opening of Fiona Stanley. Can I have an extension, Madam Acting Speaker? Just checking!

The ACTING SPEAKER: I do not think so, Deputy Premier. I think you should return to the amendment.

Dr K.D. HAMES: A lot of issues were raised during the debate. A lot of those issues were around timing and cost, particularly the \$400 million and why did we not mitigate the great blowout in costs along the way. Members need to remember a few things. The first is that the opening date of April 2014 was set in place back in 2007 or 2008. Sure, I have had a lot of opportunities to change that along the way and make the opening later. But I did not get the advice that I needed to do that until the start of last year. That is when I received that advice, and that is when we initiated the process of taking it to cabinet and getting the opening delayed.

Mr R.H. Cook: Did you seek that delay? There was plenty of public debate at the time.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Yes. I had had discussions with Kim Snowball, who was confident that it would be on time. There were a lot of issues around delays. The Birmingham study showed that it was well behind. Kim Snowball put a lot of changes in place, particularly around IT, in the lead-up over the next six months. Then we moved Dr Russell-Weisz, one of our senior best operators, from being in charge of north metropolitan to being in charge of Fiona Stanley, because we could still see the problems. Dr Russell-Weisz informed Kim Snowball—he told the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, which I did not know—that in his view it was late. After the election, when issues came up about the delay and I said, “I don’t believe there’s a flamin’ delay; I want you guys to prove it to me”, after he had left, I spoke to Kim Snowball and it was still his view then—when was the election?

Mr D.J. Kelly: March—when you needed to know!

Dr K.D. HAMES: If members talk to him now, his view is still—in fact if members look at his press release that he just put out, he said that the thing that caused the most problems was IT.

Ms J.M. Freeman interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I got into trouble for interjecting. The member is doing it to me constantly.

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I did get into trouble.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, I think we should return to the amendment.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I am trying, Madam Acting Speaker.

The issue of that knowledge did not come to me until the beginning of last year. Even then, there were people with different points of view. The view was that if the IT money had been forthcoming when it needed to be, we would still have been able to catch up that time and get back on track to open the hospital in April as proposed.

Members opposite talk about the blowout in costs. The member for Victoria Park has talked over and over again about the blowout in costs. Let us go through the costs of the hospital. The cost to construct Fiona Stanley Hospital was in the order of \$1.8 billion. It was completed on time and on budget—zero blowout in costs. Then there was the contract to Serco, which was \$4.3 billion over 20 years, signed in July 2011. If members opposite think that changes could have been made to that contract any time after that, having found out that it would be late at the beginning of last year, 2012, that somehow we could have retrospectively changed the contract that was signed in July 2011, clearly we could not. The risks identified by Treasury that were outlined in all those budget documents were discovered, identified and put forward in negotiation and discussion with the Department of Health. It is not as though Treasury thought there were risks and Health did not. It is a massive project. The health department identified there were risks—risks in getting a massive number of staff from different hospitals into the hospital on time for an April opening. It also identified the risk of IT, which was struggling at every step along the way. At the end of the day we had to have a contract in place with Serco that even gave us the remote hope of opening in April, to give it adequate time to do all the work it had to do to be ready for the contract. If we had delayed that more, it would have cost us more because Serco would have had less time to be ready. We put that contract in place in July.

As part of that contract we had a mitigation component. A couple of things could obviously happen. Firstly, the construction could be delayed. The construction company could have been delayed and there might have been a six-month delay because of that. Clearly that was not the case because of the risks we had identified that could make us late; that is, the risk in staff and the risk in IT. So a mitigation clause was put in the contract. It was not as though Treasury was the “you beaut” identifiers of these things; it was done in partnership. The opposition asks where Treasury was along the way. Alan Piper, who was on the committee overseeing all of the contracts,

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all of the development of the move and who is stationed at Fiona Stanley, was contracted to Treasury. He was Treasury's man; not ours. He was there from go to whoa. A contract worker reporting to Treasury was on that committee. That working group reported to a major infrastructure group. On that was Tim Marney. That group reported to him. They authorised the final decision to go with Serco, which was then endorsed by the Economic and Expenditure Review Committee on which Mr Marney sat. It was then endorsed by cabinet after a recommendation to support it from the EERC. It went back to contract. Mr Marney expressed his concerns with delays. He said he had only two weeks, but his people were involved leading up to that time. If he was unhappy, it was totally within his power to delay it, but his recommendation was to support it.

We went into that contract in July; that was the public sector comparator. I thought the debate by the member for Victoria Park, unlike the rest of it, was very good. In fact I have asked the health department to go through all his comments in *Hansard* and see how much is accurate and whether his assumptions are true. I thought that the member for Victoria Park made some very good points. I do not know if they are true or not but they are certainly worth looking into.

Mr R.H. Cook: You could look at the Public Accounts Committee report.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I did look at the Public Accounts Committee report. Did it criticise the contents of the contract with Serco? No, it did not. It criticised some of the things on the public sector comparator, on the way the contract was put together and the timing, but it never criticised the contract itself, nor has Tim Marney criticised the contract itself. The contract contained a mitigation clause. As soon as we were aware there was a need to delay, we had a meeting with Serco. Remember, it is a public company with shareholders. We activated that clause which said, "Now you have to mitigate." All these people that Serco planned to employ —

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Remember that the Labor Party's own former leader and former Treasurer supported the concept of going out to contract.

Mr D.J. Kelly: You know that is not true!

Dr K.D. HAMES: I know that it is true because I have read the report and I have read it out —

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Madam Acting Speaker, I am not being successful in talking to you.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean!

Dr K.D. HAMES: I have made the point that going out to the private sector was not my idea. It came to me through the Department of Health, as did in fact the Midland Health Campus come to me through the Department of Health.

Ms J.M. Freeman interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Please!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Isn't she on three strikes?

Dr K.D. HAMES: I think she is. Does she want to have another crack?

It is not that I have this philosophy of —

Mr R.H. Cook: So you were dragged kicking and screaming to privatise it?

Dr K.D. HAMES: No, I was not. The health department —

Mr R.H. Cook: "Don't make me do it!"

Dr K.D. HAMES: I did not say no. I clearly said —

Several members interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Madam Acting Speaker, you promised.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, I call you for the second time. Member for Kwinana, I think you have heard clearly that the minister does not want an interjection at this point. He has only five minutes left, so please let him finish.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I was not dragged kicking and screaming. The health department and Treasury as a combined unit—not one department on its own—put forward the case. It is not against our philosophy. As members know, it is something that fits very nicely within our philosophy. It was very easy for us to agree to it, particularly with

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regard to efficiency of service and saving to the government. I have five minutes left. The union representatives in this are kicking and screaming; I think with that loyalty in mind.

Mr P. Papalia: How well do you know Gary Sturgess?

Dr K.D. HAMES: I do not even know him. Who is Gary Sturgess? Is this a trick question? Do you know who Gary Sturgess is, Madam Acting Speaker?

The ACTING SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, I will just refer you back to the amendment.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Okay; not the interjection.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Unless you wish to accept it.

Dr K.D. HAMES: In terms of the dollars, the opposition says government has lost lots of money. The money we lost was the 16 point whatever million dollars, which was the end mitigation result that we had to pay Serco because of that delay. As the Treasurer said, we would have had to pay an amount ourselves anyway.

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: Oh, fair go! I have three minutes.

Mr R.H. Cook: You spent six talking about trains!

Dr K.D. HAMES: Madam Acting Speaker, you need to help me.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Kwinana, I call you for the first time. Please, in the last few minutes, just let the Deputy Premier finish.

Dr K.D. HAMES: If members go through the dollars that are listed: 16 point whatever million dollars was the extra cost because of that need to delay, largely because of the IT stuff. On top of that was roughly \$36 million, which took it up to about \$52 million. It was a separate decision to delay. It was a decision we almost certainly would have made even if we decided to start opening in April. Remember this project has gone on for over five years—it has not been a short period—so that is that additional money. Because of that decision there was an extra \$75 million for the transitioning. About \$150 million of that \$300 million to \$400 million has been added for IT, but there was \$360 million in the budget for IT over a 10-year period. Roughly \$250 million of that was taken out by Treasury because we did not know. So that \$150 million cannot be included. If that is done, \$250 million has to have been taken from the \$330 million that was taken out to be used for something else. That is totally unreasonable. If we do the maths, it shows that \$250 million has been taken away and \$150 million has been put back and so we have blown \$150 million. That is clearly a nonsense argument.

It is not all sorted out yet. Negotiations and work have to be done. IT stuff still has to be finished in the long run, but at the end of the day we have a fantastic facility. We have had nothing like the blowouts that were caused by the Office of Shared Services, which acted like it was building a children's hospital, burning it down and losing about \$1 billion. Although the arena is a fantastic facility, we are nowhere near 200 to 300 per cent over budget.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: This is not true.

Dr K.D. HAMES: What percentage is that? Without knowing the exact figure, it was a lot more than the one per cent that the government is paying for in its budget for a mistake over the time that the facility will open. Even with those additional costs, the variation on costs might be lucky to be up to five per cent. That is not a large amount for a \$2 billion project that delivers a world-class hospital. Sure, there are lots of ways to spend that money, but the decision to phase-in is a decision we would have made anyway and it would have cost most of that additional money anyway. Everybody changes their mind. Part of the reason for the extra cost on the Labor Party's blowout was the decision to build a car park underneath. It was a great decision, but a decision was made to change. These things happen. When you have a facility that is as big and complex as the Fiona Stanley Hospital, things change.

Division

Amendment put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Ms L.L. Baker) casting her vote with the ayes, with the following result —

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Ayes (20)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr M.P. Murray	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr P. Papalia	Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr R.H. Cook	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr P.B. Watson
Ms J. Farrer	Mr M. McGowan	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms J.M. Freeman	Ms M.M. Quirk	Ms R. Saffioti	Ms S.F. McGurk (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (35)

Mr P. Abetz	Ms M.J. Davies	Mr A.P. Jacob	Dr M.D. Nahan
Mr F.A. Alban	Mr J.H.D. Day	Dr G.G. Jacobs	Mr D.C. Nalder
Mr C.J. Barnett	Ms W.M. Duncan	Mr R.F. Johnson	Mr J. Norberger
Mr I.C. Blayney	Ms E. Evangel	Mr S.K. L'Estrange	Mr D.T. Redman
Mr I.M. Britza	Mr J.M. Francis	Mr R.S. Love	Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr T.R. Buswell	Mrs G.J. Godfrey	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr G.M. Castrilli	Dr K.D. Hames	Mr P.T. Miles	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr V.A. Catania	Mrs L.M. Harvey	Ms A.R. Mitchell	Mr A. Krsticevic (<i>Teller</i>)
Mr M.J. Cowper	Mr C.D. Hatton	Mr N.W. Morton	

Pairs

Mr D.A. Templeman

Mr J.E. McGrath

Amendment thus negatived.

Consideration Resumed

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan) [3.18 pm]: I thank the member for Forrestfield for the negotiations that have allowed me to jump up first. As I have said on numerous occasions, this government always gives me a lot of content for my speeches. What it continues to do in the electorate of West Swan is incredible.

Dr A.D. Buti: What they don't do.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Nice pick up, member for Armadale.

What the government does is break promises to my electorate year after year. It closes police stations and delays the prospect of their ever opening again.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: We are sourcing land for that. We are trying to identify some land.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Was that an interjection?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Are you accepting interjections, member for West Swan?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Then continue.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What was that?

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I was not talking to you, member.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You weren't talking, were you? The Minister for Police was saying something about the station that she said at the election was going to open in 2016.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: What year are we in?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is 2014. Why did the Minister for Police tell the Parliament in answer to a question that the government would not begin construction until 2015–16? Who is right?

Let me go back to the key point. The government closes police stations, breaks promises in my electorate and continues to not provide services throughout the electorate of West Swan. As has been highlighted by the Leader of the Opposition, this has been an incredible summer. Normally, I have content just about my electorate, but it would be remiss of me not to go through some of the huge failings of this government over the summer. Of course, the patientless—not paperless—hospital is sitting there, costing taxpayers millions of dollars a week. Frankly, there has been no clear explanation by the government about that and it has not taken responsibility for it.

There was also the shambolic, ill-thought-out media stunt turned public relations disaster that is otherwise known as the shark cull. Whoever advised the Premier to stand out there with that big hook should not be working in government now. When the member for Victoria Park showed us the picture of the Premier with the shark hook, the Premier could not believe it. He asked for a copy of the photo. I think he thought that the

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member for Victoria Park had tampered with it. No, that was the photo. If people google it, they will find the photo of the Premier with a massive shark hook.

This so-called tough-on-crime government is so tough on crime that it allows drug traffickers to walk the streets of suburbs with puppies! This program was launched by the former Minister for Corrective Services and, as we understand today, has been re-endorsed by the current Minister for Corrective Services.

Of course, there has also been the cancellation of the government's core election promise, the congestion-busting Metro Area Express light rail system. Members will recall this promise. It was going to bust congestion in the northern suburbs, particularly in the north east corridor. This project was aimed at reducing the congestion being faced by people living in my electorate and in the electorates of the member for Mirrabooka and the member for Maylands and by a lot of key representatives throughout the area. The MAX light rail was going to bust congestion. And the list goes on.

At the same time as promises have been broken and police stations have been closed, we have seen an absolute financial disaster in the loss of the AAA credit rating. The state that regained the AAA credit rating in 2003 has now lost it, even after massive increases in revenue.

Again, I will touch on the Fiona Stanley Hospital issue. Much has been said today about this issue, but how it has been handled demonstrates why we lost the AAA credit rating. Significant mistakes were made and things were put off until after the election just so the government could claim that the project was on time and on budget. Clearly, it was not. Earlier recognition of the late delivery of the hospital would have saved millions of dollars, and that was confirmed by evidence given by the former Under Treasurer. It was a rushed decision. As the minister just said, when the idea was put to privatise the facilities management services, the government accepted it because it agreed with the ideology. I do not think it sat down and really scrutinised the potential impacts and risks of having a large contract over such a long period. I have spoken before about the too-big-to-fail concept, and I think that is what is happening with contracting out in particular. The theory on contracting out has always been to contract out specific services for a short period to encourage competition and to allow competition constantly. Any perceived benefit of contracting out is lost through massive long-term contracts. It basically replaces one bureaucracy with another, and this bureaucracy becomes too big to fail. If there is any problem with the delivery of any service, or if the contractor fails to manage itself properly, it is very hard to replace it in the contract. When institutions that are as big as the government itself are created, the government is basically held to ransom, and we have seen that in case after case. When such a big and bureaucratic institution is created, any potential benefit from contracting out is lost, and I think that is what we will see through this contract.

I want to mention the shark cull. This demonstrates how policy is made currently under this government. It was a rushed decision based on a media strategy, not on a strategy to protect people's lives. Everything about it tells me that it was driven through the media office or through the media itself. Members may recall when the Premier did that very weird media stunt with the massive hook. He was obviously told that it would be popular. When he first announced it, he said that the silent majority would back him on it. He was banking on the fact that it would be popular. He also got confused. A lot of people were talking about sharks, but the mistake he made was to try to enter into the discussions being held in households. He tried to bring the solution, but it was only a media solution; it was not an actual solution. Yesterday he commented in Parliament that the hooks have to be removed when there are swimmers around the place. As we have said, the hooks have been out there over the past few weeks while swimmers have been around the place. Are we to say that this government is intentionally endangering swimmers?

Dr K.D. Hames: No, because they are one kilometre offshore. If people go out there and swim, it is their choice to go and swim out there. There are plenty of other places they can choose to go.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is their choice to go out there and swim near a hook!

Dr K.D. Hames: The hook is all that distance under water; you've said that already.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I know that the government is trying to justify the decision. It is not consistent policy. When the Premier launched the policy, apparently it had the silent majority on board.

Dr K.D. Hames: It still does.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Has the government done polling on it?

Mr P. Papalia: If you had polling and the majority supported it, you'd be releasing it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Exactly. The decision that was supported by the silent majority quickly turned to: "This was a tough decision. It was an unpopular decision, but I had to make it." That tells me that the government's polling

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suggests that it is not popular. I reckon the Menzies House research unit is telling the government that it is not popular. So how does the government frame it now? It frames it as a tough decision; it was a decision that was supported by the silent majority and now it is a tough decision—unpopular but tough. It was a media-run stunt that is turning bad. We can always tell from the demeanour of the backbench where these issues lie. When the member for Bassendean asked a question yesterday, they did not look happy. Everyone knows that this was a bad decision that was made in a rushed environment according to a media timetable and was not properly thought through or researched.

Mr M.H. Taylor interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am not going to take that interjection. I think it is very poor form.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): Member for Bateman, I call you for the first time. There has been enough interjecting that is not being accepted. The member for West Swan is on her feet. I will not tolerate any more yelling across the chamber. Member, if you want an interjection, accept it; otherwise, let me know.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will quickly go through the midyear review as the Leader of the Opposition outlined today. The midyear review was again an indictment on the government. It showed that many of the promises committed to by this government will not be delivered. Yesterday in his speech the Premier talked a lot about the election victory. However, he did not talk so much about the promises he made to get that election victory. While he stands there he accepts the results, and a year down the track he wants to talk about the results again, which is fair enough, but he must talk about what he said to get that victory. He cannot just say that he won without saying why. He won because he made some commitments. I am sure he would have won the seat of Morley and the seat of Perth due to the fact that he committed to building the Metro Area Express light rail. There was no recognition of that in his speech, just mention of the victory showing that he does not accept that he made promises that led to a victory. He believes that everybody supported this government because of the vibe, but no-one took into account the actual commitments. That is plain wrong. People in my electorate carefully studied the commitments and rang me to ask about the police station, for example. They asked about our commitments to particular projects and they compared the commitments from both sides. To say that people did not vote on commitments but simply the vibe is absolutely wrong and arrogant.

This government continues to neglect my electorate. I will outline some of the key promises that it took to the election that are now not being delivered. I turn first to the Malaga Drive–Reid Highway overpass, a big intersection for residents in the entire electorate, particularly those of Ballajura. It is rated by Main Roads Western Australia and through the RAC red spot survey one of the worst intersections. A significant number of rear-end collisions occur frequently and long waiting times, with people often waiting for three to four changes at the traffic lights to move forward. The overpass was a key election promise. On the website for the Liberal Party of Australia, Western Australia division—it really needs to take down some of these commitments—it states —

Green light for \$75 million project — Malaga Drive/Reid Highway overpass

12 December 2012

Ian Britza MLA, State Member for Morley, is delighted with this week’s announcement of a much-needed overpass to be built at the intersection of Malaga Drive and Reid Highway ...

He said the project would be finished by 2015. That was the promise.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: It must be nearly done.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will get to that matter in a minute. The Malaga Drive–Reid Highway overpass was given the green light to go ahead at a cost of \$75 million. If people are happy with this commitment, they can do a number of things on the Liberal Party website; they can volunteer or donate. The media statement says that the project will go ahead, and then people can donate. What a nice thing to do. At the time of the election, if people wanted that project to go ahead, they could vote Liberal and donate. There was a lot of other campaign material around at the time. A leaflet by my then opponent said that work would start in 2013–14 and be completed in 2014–15. We could expect those trucks to be there by now, bringing in concrete and building that overpass. What happened in August last year when the budget was presented? Unfortunately, this key overpass was one of the delayed projects and was kicked out to 2018. In the budget, it was again pushed back another year to 2019. A core promise from both my opponent and the member for Morley that the project would be finished in 2015 has now been pushed back to 2019.

Mr M. McGowan: From 2015?

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Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes.

Mr M. McGowan: That is another term, in effect.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: A planned upgrade for one of the worst intersections in that whole area has been delayed. It was a key broken promise to the people in my electorate.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will talk about MAX, the congestion-busting project. When we talked Metronet, the Liberals said we did not need Metronet because they had MAX, which would take thousands of cars off the road and allow people in the suburbs to drive to and catch this new light rail system. I remember the announcement: during last year's campaign, the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport had all the candidates there—the Liberal candidates for Mirrabooka and West Swan, the members for Mount Lawley and Morley, and possibly the Liberal candidate for Wanneroo. They all lined up behind Mr Buswell who announced this congestion-busting project. What has happened to that project? It has absolutely gone. Yesterday, the Premier said in his speech that they are still working on and planning it, yet it has been pushed back—I cannot even begin to figure out how many years—probably five to 10 years. I remember the information distributed to the households of Morley. If re-elected, Ian Britza and the Liberals would build the \$1.8 billion Metropolitan Area Express—the Perth light rail network—and commuters would be able to use this new service by 2018. What is worse is that the Liberals put out another pamphlet, as I recall, to every household that said that Labor would not build the MAX and it would kill off the project. How deceitful the Liberal Party was to the people of Morley and that region, saying that it would build the MAX and it would start taking commuters by 2018.

I will talk about the police station in my electorate—the Minister for Police wanted to talk about it before—and the commitments made to this police station and what is happening with it now. A commitment was made for a 24/7 police station in my electorate. It would have 21 officers and it would be operational in 2016. I have asked numerous questions of the minister over the past year. No location has been found yet. As I understand it, there has been limited interaction with the City of Swan about the location. In an answer I received just yesterday, the claim is now that construction will begin in 2015–16, and it will not be open by then as promised. That is yet another clear promise that has been broken. This government closed the police station and promised to open another one and, as I read in the *Eastern Reporter*, it committed to building it on a greenfields site and completing it in 2015–16. That has now completely changed. The government is starting to think about beginning construction, not completing it, in 2015–16—yet another broken promise. As I said, there are a lot of broken promises to go through, so I will just keep going.

I will move on to swimming pools and another key promise to the people of my electorate and the Ellenbrook community. Frankly, this is a community facility that is much needed in the Ellenbrook region. In surveys it is often ranked as one of the key priorities for the area. Again, a commitment was made by the government to build a recreation centre, including a 50-metre pool and a kids' pool. I repeat the commitment: a \$7 million commitment from Colin Barnett and the Liberals towards the new Ellenbrook recreation hub. That was to include a 50-metre pool together with a smaller recreational pool for children. I have asked a number of questions over the past year about the progress of this commitment. So far I cannot see any progress being made.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Have you asked me a question?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Well, what is the Premier doing about the Ellenbrook swimming pool?

Mr C.J. Barnett: You haven't even bothered to ask me a question.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What is the Premier doing about the Ellenbrook swimming pool?

Mr C.J. Barnett: It's a bit late.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You come in here and claim I have made a commitment. You haven't contacted me at all in the past 12 months. If you're serious about the project —

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am asking the Premier now.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You have had 12 months to ask about that project.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am asking now: what is the Premier doing about the Ellenbrook swimming pool?

Mr C.J. Barnett: If you are serious about the project, come and see me and I'll brief you on it. You're not interested.

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Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If the Premier is serious about it, he will give me an answer. What is the Premier doing about the Ellenbrook swimming pool?

Mr C.J. Barnett: I will be saying a bit about it soon. The point is you've made no effort over the past 12 months.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: He better go and do the animation. Get a picture.

Mr C.J. Barnett: We will. Do you want to be involved or not, member?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Honestly.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You don't want to be involved in the project.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You are—I cannot even comment on the way you conduct yourself and treat people—seriously!

Mr C.J. Barnett: If you don't wish to be involved in the project, that's your choice.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What is the Premier doing?

Mr C.J. Barnett: I'm giving you an opportunity to be involved in the project.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Honestly, he just comes in here —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr N.W. MORTON: I heard the member for Cannington audibly refer to the Premier as an idiot.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: No-one else heard that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I did not hear that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker): I am sorry, member; I did not hear that. I ask that if the member did use that word, he withdraw it.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am very keen to see what the government does with the Ellenbrook swimming pool, because I am a big supporter. If the Premier wants to involve me in the project, I cannot wait for the invite. I can see it being prepared now in the Premier's office. Okay, I will be involved; I accept his invitation. Invite me along to everything; I will come along to any meetings about the Ellenbrook swimming pool.

Dr K.D. Hames interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Is that a commitment to involve me?

Mr C.J. Barnett: Don't be silly. I asked you if you wanted to be involved. The invitation is there. You can't put conditions on that. If you want to be involved as a local member, I'm offering you that.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I do; I cannot wait for the invite. As I said, the Ellenbrook swimming pool is a key issue.

I want to talk briefly on the school cuts issue. There is no doubt that the school cuts issue is affecting schools in my electorate as it is affecting schools in a number of other electorates. A number of letters have been read out today from parents in the Ballajura community, as has information that Hon Sue Ellery got through freedom of information. There are a lot of great schools in my electorate. I think Ballajura Primary School has been on the front page of *The Australian* a number of times. What it is doing to lift literacy and numeracy standards and student achievements has been well regarded. A lot of its funding to run special programs that put that intensive effort into the children has been ripped away by this government. I think it has been poorly handled. I want to make a key point about the impact of not supporting children in our public education system. The result of ripping this money from programs and cutting literacy and numeracy and truancy programs will lead to adverse outcomes in the whole community, particularly for the kids and families involved. There is no use talking about justice reinvestment—I will not take the member for Warnbro's turn—or some of the programs the Minister for Corrective Services has been talking about if we do not get the education system right. Ripping out those services is a very short-term decision. It does not properly reflect that our community is a far more complicated community than we had 30 or 40 years ago. Our schools are dealing with far more complex problems than they were 30 or 40 years ago and I think everyone recognises that, particularly those who work in the education

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system and those who talk to principals and teachers in the education system. Teachers and principals are facing very complex issues on a daily basis. They need more assistance, not less. When programs that target some of our more vulnerable students are cut, it will result in a bad outcome for those families and for the community as a whole.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Excuse me, member. Could members passing between the Chair and the member on their feet please acknowledge the Chair.

Mr J.R. Quigley: I apologise, Madam Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: As I said, I think that decision was poorly handled. I am not sure, once again, that the government knows what it has done. It has led to some very significant funding cuts from schools that do not need those cuts, but need more support. If we can focus more on children in primary schools and some of our public high schools, we may not need to deal with wider community issues down the track. As I said, I think the school system is dealing with far more complex problems and issues than we have seen previously.

The last point I want to make is in relation to the grapegrowers in my electorate. The Swan Valley Planning Act is currently subject to review and we are expecting a government response over the next few months. Having dealt with many people who have lived in the valley for decades and who have been key participants in the local economy, I think it is vital that we take a proactive approach to the Swan Valley. I particularly raise the issue of the grapegrowers and some of the issues surrounding the industry over the past six months. With regard to the management of the importation of Californian table grapes, once biosecurity analysis got approval from the federal government, those grapes were on the shelves within three or four days. That did not allow industry participants to properly prepare. As I understand it, there is currently some discussion about, and the possible threat from, imported grapes from the eastern states. That has a number of local growers very, very concerned. As a state, particularly the Department of Agriculture and Food, we need to look at the Swan Valley area and what it can do to further both the WA economy and WA tourism. I think a lot can be done that would help our growers and the tourism industry and allow the Swan Valley to be a very vibrant and active place to live in and to visit for decades to come. I was upset that Hon Alyssa Hayden attacked me over my stance. I was surprised that someone would speak against the local industry and be pro-imports, in a sense. We need to do more to ensure that we sustain and grow our industry, including the grape-growing industry.

MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield) [3.48 pm]: I rise today to make a contribution to the Premier's Statement. Western Australia is by far one of the best places in the world to live. If not recognised as such by members opposite, it certainly was recognised by the editor of *The New York Times* in an article published over the summer break that listed Perth as the ninth in a list of 52 cities worth visiting in 2014. Clearly, on the other side of the globe, the editor of *The New York Times* obviously had more understanding of the transformation across the state than members of this state opposition.

I want to start by looking at the overall projects that this government has been delivering since it was elected, and then look at some of the things that have been happening in my electorate of Forrestfield. Most members here would have heard of the "bigger picture" as it rolls out across the state in many forms. In the portfolio of health, we have a \$7 billion spend on health infrastructure. The government is rebuilding the health network across the state from top to bottom. Of course, there is the flagship Fiona Stanley Hospital and we have the new Perth Children's Hospital, which is underway. Every time I drive through Midland, I see the Midland public hospital, which is taking shape every week. Of course, that will be of great benefit to citizens of my electorate given that it will provide state-of-the-art health facilities to the eastern corridor, and of course Forrestfield is in that region.

When we look at Perth city itself, I think Western Australians want to feel proud of their capital city. They want to feel proud when people visit it and they want to feel proud when they visit it. We do not want to play second fiddle to the eastern states. We want to come of age. We want to have the key infrastructure projects that other global destinations enjoy. Given our geographic location, it is fair time that we should have these sorts of projects taking place. Again, I reiterate that it is a Liberal-National government that is delivering these projects, and I will list a few. Of course, Elizabeth Quay is underway not far from here. It will link the river to the city, creating a very vibrant foreshore, and will be a great destination for all kinds of demographics across Western Australia. Then, moving up Barrack Street through the city is the Perth City Link project, which is progressing quickly and taking shape; this project will transform the heart of the city. It will give a real heartbeat to the centre of Perth as a vibrant and bustling metropolis, which we need as an emerging city and destination for tourism and business. The Riverside project, which I drive past every time I am on my way to this place, will revitalise the eastern half of Perth and the city. The new Perth Stadium will continue to take shape this year and

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beyond. It will deliver Perth a state-of-the-art sporting facility second to none. With all these key infrastructure projects in place, one cannot help but think about the future, and who knows in the 2020s whether we will be in a position to possibly bid for the Commonwealth Games or the like, which would transform how the world looks at the city of Perth and the state of Western Australia. All of these projects are being delivered by the Liberal–National government.

When looking at mining and resources, we see some \$146 billion in projects either going into construction or currently under construction—that is \$146 billion worth of projects. Iron ore production is set to double across this decade and liquefied natural gas production is set to treble across this decade. In regional Western Australia, the \$1.2 billion invested in the Pilbara Cities project is transforming the cities in regional Western Australia. There has been a strong commitment from this Liberal–National government. Why should our regional citizens not have access to some of the state-of-the-art facilities that we have in metropolitan Perth? We see the Ord stage 2 project underway and more.

Looking at transport, we have seen the sinking of the rail line in Perth. Recently, we saw the undertaking of the Perth bus depot, which is going to be sunk as well to assist in the Perth City Link project. We see the train line extension to Butler; the extending of the Mitchell Freeway up to Hester Avenue; new rail cars being rolled out on our networks; more buses on congested routes; several upgrades to regional highways; and the installation of 40-kilometre-an-hour flashing lights in school zones across Western Australia, which is close to my heart as a former educator. I can tell members from having been in and out of the system that we can forget very quickly the operating hours of schools. Therefore, it is a very poignant reminder to me when I enter those zones to make sure that I slow down. I certainly encourage all Western Australians driving through those areas to obey that law, and these flashing lights will assist them with that.

The Perth–Darwin highway is more investment in road infrastructure by this Liberal–National government. The Forrestfield–airport link, a key piece of crucial public transport infrastructure, will of course benefit the people of my electorate and, may I say, the member for Kalamunda’s electorate as well, given the catchment area. I will talk about that more as my speech progresses.

I also wanted to touch on law and order. Law and order is something we will always be tougher on. Any day of any week of any year, a Liberal–National government will always be tougher on law and order and crime and criminals than members opposite. I look at our platform on law and order that we took to the 2008 election. One of our key points was to scrap Labor’s disastrous truth-in-sentencing laws to make sure that if offenders do a crime, they do the time. We had a disastrous situation—it was worse than the Boxing Day sales—whereby criminals, when convicted, got a 30 per cent discount. I refer to the Labor government’s Attorney General at the time, Hon Jim McGinty. In his second reading speech of Thursday, 15 August 2002 on the truth-in-sentencing legislation, he said —

If this were not done, by far the greatest risk is that there would be an across-the-board increase in sentences and an intolerably large increase in the prison population.

Does he mean to say that criminals who are doing crime would be behind bars where they belong? From my way of thinking, that is exactly what we want and that is exactly what people tell me when I am out in my community talking to my constituents. They want to see the appropriate penalties for the appropriate crimes. That is what we took to the 2008 election; that is why we came down harder and introduced mandatory sentencing for thugs who assault police officers. We re-established the Graffiti Taskforce and increased penalties for graffiti vandals. When looking at some of the trends of reported crime under the former Labor government, we saw graffiti increase by 31.5 per cent; assaults increase by 31.5 increase; offences against the person increase by 31.6 per cent; and drug offences increase by 18.9 per cent.

Yesterday, we heard the Premier say in his address to Parliament that when we take population growth into account, reported crime under the stewardship of a Liberal–National government has reduced by 18 per cent—it is a decrease, not an increase—making our communities and our streets safer. I am pretty sure that is what members of the public of Western Australia expect from their government.

Finally, our 2008 election platform on law and order included repealing the Labor government’s soft-on-cannabis laws and legislating tougher penalties for drug possession, cultivation and the sale of drugs to children. I turn to *Hansard* of 5 May 1999. The former member of Willagee, who went on to become the Premier, said —

Decriminalisation of the possession of marijuana and cannabis has been Labor policy for some time.

He went on to say —

Cannabis does not lead to harder drugs.

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I would beg to differ, in that most people in the field of drug research and drug rehabilitation would disagree with those statements. We, as the Liberal–National government, do not apologise for taking a hard stance on law and order or taking an aggressive approach to our legislative agenda. We will always be on the side of a victim; we will always be on the side of the vast majority of Western Australian citizens who go about their business to ensure that they do not become victims of crime; and we will always, always be tough on criminals. That is why, as we move forward across this term of government, we will see harsher penalties for hoon drivers and for violent home invasions and we will see the fitting of alcohol interlocks in vehicles driven by serial drunk-drivers. We will also see harsher penalties for graffiti offenders. As a member of the State Graffiti Taskforce, I note that it does a lot of fantastic work. It is fantastic to see that the incidence of graffiti across the metropolitan areas of Western Australia has reduced significantly since the reinstatement of the WA Graffiti Taskforce, but of course there is always work to be done.

I now want to talk about my electorate of Forreestfield. I have talked about the vision that the Premier and the cabinet have for this state and the projects that are rolling out across this state, from the top to the bottom. But I also want to talk about how this government is having a real, positive impact at a grassroots level in local communities such as my community in Forreestfield. Some of the projects I am referring to include a noise wall in High Wycombe, which will stretch 2.4 kilometres along Roe Highway. I sent surveys out to that part of the world, and overwhelmingly the response I got back from residents was that they were hostages in their own homes to the increasing noise emanating from the roads around where they live. A lot of these residents were long-term residents of 25 or 30 years, so I decided to doorknock those houses affected. When they took me into their backyards and into their homes, it was evident that what they were telling me was true. People were crying because they do shift work and they cannot sleep at night. People cannot use their backyards to have friends over because they cannot hear each other talk, rendering their backyards, for all intents and purposes, useless to them. One gentleman I encountered was so grateful to see me on his doorstep that he said that when he went to work the next day, he would get the decibel counter from his workplace and measure the sound. This is a great outcome for these local residents—a 2.4-kilometre stretch of noise wall that will change their lives being delivered at a local level by this Liberal–National government.

I also want to talk about several school upgrades that are rolling out across my electorate. There is the \$5 million upgrade to Maida Vale Primary School. It is an old primary school that was in need of some money and some upgrades. Again, this Liberal–National government is delivering those upgrades to that local community. I met with members of that community recently and I can tell members that they are over the moon. There is a \$3.6 million upgrade to the Darling Range Sports College. Every time I drive down Berkshire Road, I see it coming to fruition. I believe the minister will join me out there shortly to inspect the works, which I am looking forward to. Again, this is being delivered at a grassroots level by this Liberal–National government. There is \$200 000 for a stop-and-drop zone for East Kenwick Primary School, and \$150 000 to refurbish classrooms to commercial kitchen standard for the well-established community kitchen program that the Forreestfield Primary School runs, which will deliver real benefits to those students.

I want to move on to the next project, which is the Hartfield Park upgrade. This is a sporting complex in the heart of my electorate of Forreestfield. That received a \$6 million commitment from this Liberal–National government. That may not seem a lot in the scheme of things, but it will deliver real outcomes to my community. I recall the Premier coming out to make the announcement, with no fanfare. He just came out and spoke to some local sporting administrators and some local volunteers who help out at those clubs and gave them the good news directly. The feedback I have had from those sporting clubs has been overwhelming. A few of the parts of the project will involve water harvesting technology, which is fairly cutting edge in how many sites have this technology operating; new clubrooms; better lighting; better playing fields, of course; and a new skate park for our youth to help them stay engaged—all delivered by this Liberal–National government. I can say quite comfortably that in my electorate, sporting clubs are a fantastic vehicle for bringing my community together. My constituents highly regard their local sporting clubs and actively participate in them, so this will have a real benefit for their sports and for their community engagement when they come together at Hartfield Park.

The next project I want to discuss is the Berkshire Road–Roe Highway intersection. This much-maligned intersection has lain neglected in this state for some time now. Again, it is by the means of this Liberal–National government that that will be corrected. I do not have the figures in front of me, but I believe it is about the sixth most dangerous intersection. There is a dogleg—it is an unaligned intersection—and the part of that intersection that has no signals is where a lot of trucks come through, playing chicken as they cross the road. I am sure that if members have transited through that intersection, they have probably been left wondering why it is in that state. That will be realigned and fixed under this Liberal–National government. That will be a fantastic outcome for my community and, I imagine, all commuters who use that part of the road network.

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The next project—there are a few—is the Gateway WA project. I am sure that I am not the only member who drives through that stretch of the world and sees it transforming extremely quickly. The interchanges and the intersections are world class; the engineering involved in those intersections is world class. That will transform the way people transit through that part of the world—through the eastern suburbs—again highlighting this Liberal–National government’s strong commitment to the eastern corridor of Perth with the billion-dollar Gateway WA project.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr N.W. MORTON: The last project I want to talk about that will directly affect my electorate is the one I touched on before—that is, the Forrestfield–airport link. This is approximately a \$2 billion project that will transform the way the eastern suburbs connect to their CBD. For so long now the Perth Airport, through no fault of its own, has been a scar through the eastern metropolitan region, disconnecting the suburbs further east of it from the connectivity that other electorates and other suburbs take for granted. By delivering the train line to Forrestfield, it will change the way people operate in the east; it will ease congestion; it will connect people to their CBD in 20 minutes. I then begin to wonder and think ahead. I think maybe of a young professional who works in the city. It is a Friday. That person goes down to the state-of-the-art Forrestfield train station and parks their car in the 2 000-bay car park there. They jump on the train and are in the city in 20 minutes. After work finishes, they head down to Elizabeth Quay and have a bite to eat with friends. They head across to the new Perth Stadium and watch the Fremantle Dockers win a Friday night game of football. They jump on the train and head back home to Forrestfield. It is revolutionary. They may be things that other people have taken for granted for many years, but not in the east. This Liberal–National government is delivering that. It will change the way that we do business in my part of the world.

In closing, I have been in this job and nearly a year has gone by. I love my job and I love representing the people of Forrestfield. As I said in my inaugural speech, I am an optimist. I strongly believe that the vast majority of people of Western Australia are optimists. When I get around to speak to people, I think that the feeling is that they are optimistic about the future of this state. Led by the member for Cottesloe and this Liberal–National government, I think that our future is in secure hands.

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler) [4.08 pm]: Madam Acting Speaker —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): The member for Mindarie.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Madam Acting Speaker, I am the member for Butler, but I do not take issue with that. I have been called lots of things because the seat gets renamed, and no doubt after the next redistribution it will become known as the seat of Alkimos further down as the population drifts further north.

But I rise to respond to the Premier’s Statement. It is a mixed response for there are some things that I congratulate the Premier on and other things that I will be critical of. But as I stand here, my overwhelming emotion at this stage, having first been elected as the member for Mindarie in 2005, and having been privileged and humbled to be re-elected again and again to that district, is one of cynicism—cynicism in observing the dominance of the executive over this Parliament and the way in which policy now is driven not by what will drive a good outcome, but what will get the best headline. I see this time and again, and I think that was exemplified in the speech of the member who preceded me.

Before I turn to electorate issues, I will turn to three of those things to demonstrate what I am saying. The member for Forrestfield and the Premier say that they will always be tougher on crime than are we on our side of politics. That is a chant that they have been using for a number of years. I want to show members that this sort of rhetoric is nothing but fairy floss. Take the outlaw motorcycle gangs. It has been some years since the government achieved headline after headline by saying that it will have the toughest anti-bikie laws in Australia. Those laws passed through this Parliament with Labor’s support. However, since that time, not one action has been brought under those anti-association laws. There has not been the dismantling of bikie gangs. As the member for Victoria Park says, the government can get the headline. But when it comes to the grunt work, it is not happening.

While I was doing my exercises this morning, I was watching Fox news, and I heard the commander of police in Victoria comment on the simultaneous raids that have occurred across Victoria against the Mongols bikie gang. The police want to dismantle it because it is becoming an outlet for Middle Eastern crime groups. In New South Wales, the anti-association laws were struck down. However, the police in New South Wales have nevertheless managed to conduct concerted campaigns against outlaw motorcycle gangs, and the activities of those gangs have been seriously disrupted, without the need to resort to the laws that we were told had to happen, and which we supported. However, the introduction of those laws was not driven by trying to achieve an outcome. It was

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driven by trying to gain a headline. That was the real purpose of it. No concerted effort has been made under those anti-association laws—diddly squat.

I take members back to the 2008 election, at which the Premier led the Liberal–National coalition to victory. One of the repeated headlines at that time was that a Liberal–National government will bring in effective laws to get brothels and prostitutes away from people’s homes. Four years ago, the government published a green bill to tell the people of this state what it intended to do to control prostitution and keep it away from schools, churches and residences. What has happened? Absolutely nothing. The government had not brought that legislation before the Parliament. The Premier did not even refer to it in his Premier’s Statement this year. That legislation has disappeared into the ether. What has the Premier’s government done? It has legalised prostitution everywhere. That is because the Commissioner of Police has said that he will not seek to enforce the current laws, because they are hopeless. Therefore, as all the brothel owners know, no laws are being enforced to keep brothels away from anywhere. However, that has not rated a mention by the government. That is another example of how the government goes for the headline, but nothing happens. That is why I get this feeling of cynicism.

Another example is mandatory sentencing. The government brought in mandatory sentencing for the offence of assaulting a public officer. However, so badly were those laws drawn, and so badly do they operate, that the WA Police Union of Workers, which supported the government in these efforts and cheered the government on, has now become even more cynical than I am. I have referred in this Assembly on a previous occasion to the WA Police Union of Workers report of April 2013 on the outcomes of mandatory sentencing legislation. I have gone through all the cases that are mentioned in that report and all the pictures that the police union has published of injured officers. The report states on page 53 —

To make a public statement that “a very strong message” —

That is what the Premier and the member for Forrestfield have said —

has been sent by the Government to the community, by way of a legislation that promises to send those to jail who “assault and cause bodily harm to a Police Officer ... No ifs, ands or buts”, is an insult to the Police Officers who have experienced life-altering assaults and then watched as justice was not served.

The criticism from the police union is that the Premier’s words are an insult to all police who have been injured and have watched the offenders walk away because of the system that the Premier left in place. I said at the time that the system that the Premier has left in place will mean that there will be plea bargaining and changes of charges in order to avoid mandatory sentencing. All of that is happening, and all of that is documented in the police union’s report.

The government trashed us on the publicity on prostitution, and it trashed us on the anti-association laws. However, when it comes to delivering outcomes, there has been zero action. There has been zero action under the anti-association laws, which had to be put through the Parliament as a matter of urgency. The government has legalised prostitution by keeping in place a system that allows a woman or a group of women to set up a brothel next to my home and not be prosecuted for that. Thirdly, when it comes to mandatory sentencing, the police union has called the Premier’s words an insult to its members who are injured.

Bills are before the Legislative Council at the moment to fix the holes in the mandatory sentencing laws. Those holes were obvious at the time. We are the opposition; members opposite are the government. The government is responsible for that legislation. The government is now saying that it needs to amend the Sentence Administration Act, under which people who get a sentence of six months or less may be released a bit earlier. At the time the government passed those laws, it was as obvious as the nose on our face that that would be a useless effort.

The Premier is now saying that it wants to make elderly people feel safer in their homes, and it will introduce more mandatory sentencing laws. If the government wants to talk about victims of crime, the statistics show clearly that the most prolific victims of crime are males under the age of 30. They are the people who are being assaulted when they go out. If I can recount a personal story, when I was 17, I was glassed outside the Windsor Theatre on Stirling Highway by some drunks after I had got off a bus when coming home from town, and I had to lie on the operating table and have 95 stitches put in my face. My son was filling up his car at a service station, and he was bashed—I think it got in the paper—by a guy with a baseball bat. It is males under the age of 30 who are the most prolific victims of crime. What we need to do to protect males under the age of 30—who are the biggest group of victims of violent crime in our community—is what Premier O’Farrell is doing in New South Wales and impose lockouts and the like so that people cannot keep boozing all night. But the Liberal government in this state, being in the pocket of the Australian Hotels Association, will not go near lockouts. It will not do anything to reduce the prevalence of alcohol late at night, which is the reason for all these assaults

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and all this mayhem. The government says that it knows that older people are fearful in their homes. I can tell members that as we get older, we feel more vulnerable. I am now in my 60s, and I feel less able to defend myself than when I was in my 20s, 30s and 40s. As we get older, of course we feel more vulnerable.

One of the worst crimes that has been reported is by the offender who happened to be the Geraldton escapee, who entered the home of a lady who was aged 79 or 82 —

Mr P. Papalia: No. That was the rapist of the young mother.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: No; the elderly woman. A young man was sentenced last year to 11 years' imprisonment for entering a house and sexually assaulting —

Mr J.M. Francis: That is a different case. The one you are talking about is a juvenile.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Okay; I take that back. The honourable Minister for Corrective Services and I are at one. He knows the case I am talking about involving the 79 or 80-year-old woman. I think the offender was sentenced to approximately 11 years' imprisonment for burglary involving sexual assault.

Mr J.M. Francis: A juvenile.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Yes, a juvenile. At the end of that sentencing process, neither the victim nor the victim's family complained about the way the offender had been sentenced. The woman who was so horribly assaulted while her children were in the house—who was tied up and all that—did not complain about her offender's sentence. That offender was recently sentenced to a significant term. There is a hook in this mandatory sentencing. The member for Forrestfield talked about these people getting discounts. Last year, this government passed amendments to the Sentencing Act to provide a statutory mandated discount of 25 per cent should an offender plead guilty. At the time, the Attorney General and the Attorney General's representative in this house urged upon the Parliament that the wisdom of putting through a statute for a 25 per cent discount for pleading guilty was twofold. Firstly, it would free up the courts because cases would pass through the courts; people would not just be holding up proceedings. There was an inducement to plead guilty if an accused was guilty. Having been a criminal lawyer and been in the courts for a quarter of a century, I know that witnesses who have to give evidence are traumatised. If there is a mandatory minimum sentence with no discount for pleading guilty, the offender might say, "Why don't I plead not guilty? I am going to get a mandatory term. I will run my luck on the forensics; I will run my luck on the identification; it's not going to be worse anyway." That means the dear old 79-year-old woman, to satisfy the government's regime, has to be re-victimised in court by being cross-examined in public about what she was subjected to, or the young mother—who did not have to give evidence at trial because the offender in that case pleaded guilty—has to go through the trauma of being cross-examined in front of the jury again. That is why the Labor Party says that we should have a sentencing council such as that in the United Kingdom and in Victoria where offences are prevalent or when we think that judges are not getting it right. The sentencing council could include the Chief Justice, the Commissioner of Police and other prominent community members, who would look at a range of sentences over a five-year period to come up with a draft paper on what the sentences should be. That draft paper would be published and provided to the community to allow community feedback and then strike the sentence.

I call what is happening in the Premier's Statement "pollie's pick". The Criminal Code is about three centimetres thick. What are we going to do at every election—turn the page, pull out a new offence and say, "We will make that mandatory"? If we follow the logic of the member for Forrestfield, we may as well now say that all offences in Western Australia will lead to 20 years' imprisonment—that is how we will make it safe! This is nonsense. The member for Forrestfield said, "We don't care if that means more people in prison; that's where the criminals deserve to be." How can we do it on pollie's pick? We are not getting anywhere. There has to be a more scientific approach, a more reasoned and rational thought-through approach, to strike the sentence. I am not saying that some sentences in the Criminal Code should not be increased, but let us hear from the community and let us receive submissions. Let us see what is actually happening in the courts and then move towards that. The Criminal Code would then have in it the sorts of sentences that the community wants, not the sorts of sentences that will drive the headline.

I ask the member for Forrestfield a question: does the Premier also propose to wipe out the amendments that the member for Forrestfield voted for last year to give statutory discounts of 25 per cent? The member is rabbiting on up in the corner about not giving discounts. He voted for his government's statutory regime of 25 per cent discounts and now he sits up there smiling because he knows it is rhetoric. When he represents it in a newsletter to members of his community, they will all clap, but it is not going anywhere.

[Member's time extended.]

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Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: It would be remiss of me if I spent my extension without speaking about sharks and how that is also nonsense. A huge population lives in the coastal electorate of Butler. There is no hook up there; the hooks are down in Cottesloe! Why? If this is an effective solution, does the Premier not care about the people in Quinns Beach? While the Leader of the Opposition was on Cottesloe Beach putting forward a sensible suggestion that surfers, divers and others who are fearful might like to wear a shark-repellent device, I was on the beach for the Alkimos Gift—a long-distance surf swim in Quinns—and what was in the water? There was a great big shark eating a turtle just behind the swimmers.

Mr N.W. Morton interjected.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: We have heard enough from the vegie garden!

Mr N.W. Morton interjected.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: No, I do not advocate the hooks because you catch one shark and another one comes around the corner! Who cares?

The Liberal Party went to the last election making a promise to build a \$300 000 surf watchtower on Cottesloe Beach replete with —

Mr N.W. Morton interjected.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: Madam Acting Speaker, I am not taking interjections from any chooks in the garden. I have heard enough clucking from that goose this afternoon!

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Member, you will call him by his name, which is the member for Forrestfield.

Member for Forrestfield, he is not taking interjections.

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: If it waddles and it quacks, it can be only one thing!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member!

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: I did not call him anything, Madam Acting Speaker. I said if he waddles and he quacks, it could be only one thing. I will let members guess what that one thing is.

The Liberal Party went to the last election promising a \$300 000 surf watchtower on Cottesloe Beach replete with a garage underneath with a couple of jet skis. There is a huge population in the northern suburbs. My electorate has perhaps one of the most dangerous beaches, which I will come to in a moment, and it does not have a surf tower and it cannot get the money for a surf tower. One of the most dangerous beaches in the metropolitan area looks like one of the most benign beaches. It looks so calm that it might even tempt the Premier to have a little dip in it—that is the Yanchep Lagoon. It is a terribly dangerous beach. There is no surf there. It is rimmed by a reef on the western and southern sides. There is a very benign looking body of water between the beach and the reef. The reef is only about 50 metres from the beach. The sea breeze blows the water in from the south west and a deadly rip exits to the north. The president of the surf club, John Heesters, who is a sergeant in the tactical response group—a very brave man—is about to receive a bravery award at Government House for his efforts in pulling swimmers out of the lagoon and saving their lives. We have already lost tourists at this very benign beach. It does not have a surf tower—nor does Quinns Beach where the shark was last week. We would like a surf tower there but the Premier has promised his own electorate a \$300 000 surf tower!

The government says it is building rail. The member for Forrestfield mentioned the Butler extension. I will tell members about the Butler extension. From where the shunt yard is at Nowergup to Butler is six kilometres; it is eight kilometres from Clarkson. It has taken the Liberal government six years to build six kilometres of track over open, flat ground. In that same six years, the Labor government built about 90 kilometres of track to Mandurah, including a tunnel and an underground station. The member for Forrestfield ought to bear that in mind when he goes around promising everyone that the government will build this tunnel to Perth Airport. It has managed six kilometres, which is a kilometre a year. Then the government claims credit for it. Thomas the Tank Engine goes faster than a kilometre a year! This is ridiculous.

There is an important matter I now must put to the Premier and the government, which will not cost any money. The Two Rocks boat harbour is being leased to private operators and has been for many, many years. In July, Yanchep Sun City Pty Ltd decided that because the lease is coming up for renewal this year the boat ramps needed repair. The Premier would not be aware of this and I am not critical of him, but he can certainly step in and save Two Rocks. It was decided to shut the boat ramp for July and August to rebuild it. It was then rebuilt to such a low standard that the Department of Transport said that all the concrete had to be ripped out. Now—

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would members believe it—there is no boat ramp at Two Rocks; the nearest one is way down at Mindarie, 15 kilometres away. The community cannot launch safety boats or rescue boats; boats cannot be launched now the equipment has been taken away. The government could step in, send a government contractor in, fix this problem in a month and then charge the lessee.

People in my electorate are being deprived of the most basic services. Take the new suburb of Amberton, for example, which is the last stop before Yanchep. All these houses, which were reasonably affordable, were put in on the beach side of Marmion Avenue. In the brochure for the development, people were shown playing in a park and having a little barbecue. The park was built, the barbecue was put in, but there was a fence around the park. I do not put Amberton down because one day it will be a fantastic area, but there are thousands of people living there already. Those people were all looking at the park with the anxious expectation, because they are miles from anywhere, that they would get a little park. Some exercise equipment for adults was put in, as well as the barbecue for locals to come down to have a barbecue. Some play equipment for children was also built. Lo and behold, one Friday, all the temporary fencing was taken away and the park was open. That weekend a big sales event was held at this park and everyone was pleased to have their little barbie. On Monday, the fences went up again and the whole thing was ripped out because the City of Wanneroo said the equipment was of too high a standard to be permitted to be there. People could not believe it. This is a new area, so now there is a park with a bit of a slide on the grass, with no barbecue or exercise equipment. People are not allowed to have a barbecue and they are not allowed to have any exercise equipment. It is the standard stuff that the Premier would see between Cottesloe and North Cottesloe where walkers can exercise. All that was ripped out, with residents told they were not allowed to have it. It is unbelievable. The City of Wanneroo says it has a policy of allowing only a certain amount of money to be spent on parks. I hope the Minister for Planning is listening to this, because a bit of flexibility could have been given in this case, with the park being allowed temporarily until some other parks in the area were built. What can the kids do? Maybe they can go and write a bit of graffiti on someone's house or maybe they can go and get boozed down at the beach and maybe they can be subject to mandatory sentencing or the heavier graffiti laws. What do parents do? There are no facilities, and when they get some facilities, they last two days. That is what is happening in my electorate. The developers say, "Come and live by the beach." All the houses have been developed back from the beach. At the local residents' meetings I went to at Amberton and Shorehaven, residents were asking when they would be able to get through to the beach. They were told that they would not be able to get there for a long while yet because if people were let through to the beach at this stage, it would attract people who are undesirable; it would bring undesirable elements to the beach and diminish the standard of life in Amberton. What can these people do? They are tearing their hair out, saying that it is all a fraud. The brochure shows people playing in the park and swimming at the beach, but the park got demolished and the beach is inaccessible. I wrote to the Minister for Transport, saying that this is a very isolated spot and that children had to go out somehow. There are no shops and there are no trees. They have to stand on the side of Marmion Avenue waiting for a bus to take them to Butler College or up to Clarkson. They need a bit of shelter. When a storm comes they cannot run to the nearest shop or hide behind a tree because there is nothing. The Minister for Transport wrote back and said no, there could not be a bus shelter for the kids.

It would be remiss of me, before I sit down, not to touch upon the education cuts in my electorate, which are horrendous. It is galling to hear the Minister for Education, when it is put to him on radio that some schools are losing 200 or 300 grand, say that those cuts affect only wealthy schools that have excess funds and not schools that are struggling. Let me tell members that over 200 grand was cut from Clarkson Community High School. I will not go through the whole list now, but at Yanchep increased population is pouring in. It has a junior high school that opened 37 years ago for a student population of 350 and it is sitting just below 900 at the moment. Before the election, the government was making promises and saying that they were actually not part of its costings because they were not really election promises, but government decisions. In November, the government said it would build two science rooms—whoop-de-doo, a couple of science rooms—a tech drawing room, a room for the teachers and some change rooms for the children. It said it would pour \$10.5 million into Yanchep District High School. Not only did the government cut the school's throat by cancelling that decision, it then knocked another \$236 000 off its budget and the Minister for Education had the gall to go on radio and say that these cuts affected only schools with fat—schools with lots of money. What a deceit being practised upon the people of my electorate.

The government also said it would start the Mitchell Freeway extension. It had come up with committees and other ways to delay this for as long as possible. In the last budget, the government put the commencement date right back until just before the next election to be able to show a couple of bulldozers and say, "Look at what we're doing." The last extension of that freeway was undertaken by the Labor government, which drove that freeway—if I can use that word—from Hodges Drive up to Burns Beach Road. The new extension is desperately

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needed but this government has wiggled on the hook, in order to delay the process, by having community committees to ask where the crossroads are wanted.

MR F.A. ALBAN (Swan Hills) [4.39 pm]: I take the opportunity to reply to the Premier's Statement to speak of recent events in my electorate. Generally, the electorate of Swan Hills is a happy, productive and entertaining part of the metropolitan area. It has a variety of things to do and promote in a place of rolling hills, valleys and lush green bushland, but its very nature is sometimes a liability and we are vulnerable to disasters like fire. During the second week of January 2014, Western Australia endured one of the most significant heatwaves on record before it moved across to our neighbours on the east coast. In Western Australia, South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales, temperatures ranked alongside those of the heatwaves of January and February 2009 that preceded the Black Saturday bushfires. It is also known that 2013 was the hottest year on record, and that for many people in Western Australia the Fremantle doctor, our renowned easterly breeze, provides significant relief. However, as we know, in a fire situation easterlies are like a blacksmith's forge.

On Saturday, 12 January 2014, the Swan Hills communities of Parkerville, Stoneville and Mt Helena found themselves battling a significant bushfire. First reported late in the morning, the fire would go on to destroy more than 50 homes and damage many more. Reports suggest the final damage bill could be well over \$20 million. It is difficult to see the hurt and damage to local communities that I represent, have worked with and for, and care about. It is difficult to comprehend their stories of loss and devastation. I am sure that the member for Armadale experienced the same difficulties in the aftermath of the Kelmscott–Roleystone blaze.

The Perth hills is well recognised throughout the metropolitan area for its parks, walks and trails, as well as its emerging wine industry, which complements the renowned Swan Valley wineries. It provides the metropolitan area with a natural contrast to the suburbia at its west. It has provided a haven to both the daytripper and jaded suburban resident seeking a tree change. This region has developed in an unorthodox manner over many years. Its service provision has been very much made to and of its time. Now this ageing infrastructure, particularly its electricity service, is undergoing a consistent and substantial upgrade. This, of course, relates to the Western Power–managed portion of this infrastructure. Over the past five years, it has made considerable improvements in quantity and quality and by using the latest technology. Several fires have highlighted that the chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and private supply lines have taken the limelight. We have heard that fire management is a shared responsibility and a year-long commitment; it is not just a few days before summer. Each party—state government, local government and residents—is keen to highlight their efforts in this regard, but nobody wants to take responsibility. I understand that no federal, state or local government land is able to have fire management enforced. Only private ownership bears that brunt.

In the aftermath of the recent fires, I was disappointed to note an article on the front page of my local newspaper, the *Hills Gazette*, on Saturday, 25 January 2014, titled “Shire to get tough”. That is probably appropriate when the time comes, but there are just as many residents in my electorate who say it is time for the shire to look after its own backyard and do its verges. I confirm that many constituents contacted my office regarding similar claims about the shire's verges, including a recent communication from the Order of Australia recipient Geoff Blackburn, who detailed a comprehensive concern with some 20 photographs. Members have heard mentioned before that whoever owns the fuel is responsible for the fuel load, and everyone shares the responsibility. The reduction of the fuel load is critical in any new strategy. I welcome the Premier's announcement yesterday to introduce a bill in late 2014 to amend the Emergency Management Act to deal with this and other issues. Currently, a shire council cannot be prosecuted for its inattentive approach; however, a private owner can. Although I am aware that the shire has procedures in place, I understand that the response to concerned constituents is that the shire has limited financial resources to manage those fuel loads.

Country communities have always been at their best during difficult times; there is a history of helping and supporting each other. I have heard stories of bravery, courage, friendship and community support. We have read in the media the stories of Mr Sam Inu, a truck driver from Stoneville, who helped save four of his neighbours' houses using an esky, flames having melted his garden hose. There are many more examples of such stories in many parts of my community, including stories about those who lost their home but went on to assist others. The personal risks that everyday people take, including volunteer bushfire brigade members, in committing to their communities to try to minimise the losses from such a terrible situation are well recorded.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge some of the people, departments, associations, businesses and groups that assisted in the aftermath of what has become known as the Parkerville fire. I would personally like to thank the Minister for Emergency Services, Joe Francis, who is in the chamber today. His communication with me on the day the blaze started and his direct contact with me throughout the disaster was much appreciated. Thanks, Joe. I also thank the Premier, Colin Barnett, MLA, for his attendance at the community meeting on 13 January 2014

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while he was on leave. Further, thank you also to the Minister for Child Protection, Hon Helen Morton, MLC. As a hills resident, I know she is aware of the realities confronting the area, and I thank her for her attendance as well. I would like to thank the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, with special recognition to the ground crews, whose courage, commitment and bravery saved countless lives and houses. With modelling data suggesting that the damage could have been ten-fold, the success of their work should be obvious to all.

During my time as a member of the Legislative Assembly, the state government has provided outstanding and comprehensive new appliances and safety equipment for DFES, much of which I detailed in a previous speech on 27 November 2013. This speech detailed the state government's investment of an additional \$81 million in agencies statewide in the 2012–13 financial year to allow for better bushfire preparedness. This support was evidenced in the state's 27 000 career and volunteer firefighters. For the record, we have 71 brand-new appliances and our aerial fleet has 22 aircraft. However, it is not only career firefighters who have benefited from the Department of Fire and Emergency Services. On 27 November 2013, I stated in this house regarding state government assistance to volunteer fire brigades —

Of most local interest was the comprehensive crew protection system for appliances that is most requested by local volunteer fire brigades. These include burnover blankets, internal radiant heat-resistant curtains, heat lagging and shielding of critical components, in-cab breathing systems, under-body external cab protection with water deluge sprays, and advanced GPS tracking systems.

For those members who do not need to interact with volunteer fire brigades by virtue of their electorates' location, it is incredibly humbling to see the commitment that volunteers make, in addition to their regular employment, to assist their communities. I am aware of at least one member of such a brigade who lost his own house while dealing with others, and have heard many other personal stories about the impact of the fire. I am planning to meet with those people in the future to gain feedback on the state government's initiative to support them. Although planning and theory can assist as much as possible, I would like to hear firsthand personal experiences to see whether there are aspects that perhaps need further discussion. Firsthand experience in such an emergency can understandably be quite different from training and preparation.

Volunteers in the rapid relief team worked at the Brown Park Community Centre, near the Seaborne Road and Bentley Street hot zone, over a five-day period. They provided meals, labour and support to residents and crews inside and out of the fire zone, ensuring essential services were provided to those who needed them most, as well as supporting emergency services and Western Power staff by providing food and drinks to enable them to keep going. Members of Volunteering WA were also helping at the Brown Park Community Centre.

Assistance from around the state was swift. In a disaster, people are always grateful for financial assistance. The Lord Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund has assisted with relief appeals for numerous natural disasters, including the 2007 Dwellingup fire, the 2010 Toodyay fire and the 2011 Perth hills fire. Almost immediately, it launched the Parkerville fire appeal. This fund positioned itself to ensure maximum exposure, and the appeal had raised a total of over \$2.2 million as of 13 February. To highlight this fund, Coles ran a two-week campaign. If customers donated to the Lord Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund through Coles supermarkets in Western Australia, the company would match it dollar for dollar. Between 15 January and 30 January, over \$215 000 was donated, with the commitment of Coles bringing it up to a total of \$431 000 in donations to this fund. It was a great initiative.

The state government donated \$1 million to the Lord Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund and, in addition to the immediate assistance available through the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, committed to make immediately available \$3 000 to householders who had lost their homes and \$1 000 to people whose homes had been damaged but not destroyed. In conjunction with the federal government, the state government has dedicated funding to meet the clean-up costs. I thank them for the prompt announcement of this much-needed support. The reality of this on a personal level means that instead of paying significant clean-up costs from insurance payouts and thus leaving less funds to directly rebuild, affected homeowners can dedicate the funds from the insurance company directly to rebuilding rather than sorting out the dangerous and damaged remains of their former homes. This funding was provided under the jointly funded commonwealth–Western Australian disaster relief and recovery arrangements. The federal government provided further support via the Australian government disaster recovery payment, with payments to eligible people of \$1 000 per adult and \$400 per child.

Of special note were the efforts of Western Power, which installed more than 150 replacement poles during the first weekend and rescheduled upgrades for the area to be completed during the bushfire service repairs to minimise outages, with more than 50 crews working 24 hours a day to meet this goal at a cost of \$3.5 million. Although service interruptions and difficulties remain an issue for hills residents, often of course due to

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environmental causes, I believe the great work completed by the CEO, Mr Paul Italiano, and the team at Western Power to get as many people reconnected as possible deserves recognition.

In terms of corporate support, *The Sunday Times* and PerthNow, in partnership with Channel Nine and the Salvation Army, launched the Perth hills bushfire appeal, with financial donations currently exceeding over \$300 000. The Mundaring Community Bank branch of Bendigo Bank supported this fundraising drive by allowing customers to donate at any branch of the bank. This support is also much appreciated.

I would like to acknowledge local businesses in the area that provided goods and services to displaced families and workers on the ground, specifically the Glen Forrest IGA, whose immediate generosity was certainly appreciated by the crews on the ground battling the blaze.

I thank the public of Western Australia for donating much to this cause. I am certain that the residents of Parkerville, Stoneville and Mt Helena will not forget the generosity that has been directed their way in the past month. We have seen numerous local fundraising events, from concerts to quiz nights. We have seen significant coverage from both major and local media supporting these events. I believe even “The Boss”, Bruce Springsteen—I was not at his concert, but I was advised that this happened—mentioned the then upcoming Mundaring Weir Hotel event during his 8 February concert at Perth Arena.

I am certain I have overlooked many, but as the representative for Swan Hills, I just want to say thank you. Now that the emergency is over and the rebuilding has begun, it is a long road ahead, with many difficult issues to face, including the substantial risk of arson, which is hard to comprehend.

With respect to the cause of the Parkerville fire, the issue of private powerlines remains a concern. I believe the Parkerville fire was caused by one toppled private pole. The problem with private poles is that they have existed for many years and were erected in a time of cheapness and convenience, and many are simply wearing out or are worn out. Currently, the onus is on residents to maintain their poles; however, this is not always done. While this situation remains, the potential for tragedy remains. We have seen the extent of damage that a single defective power pole can cause in our community. The suggestion that private powerlines be immediately made the responsibility of Western Power has been raised, but this must also be considered against other options. Something positive has come out of the situation and all the loss endured. The City of Swan has made a start on bushfire safety zones. To that extent, the City of Swan has voted to introduce a new standard for houses built in bushfire-prone areas. The amendment to local planning scheme 17 is aimed at making homes better able to withstand a bushfire. The amendment will require new homes in bushfire-prone areas to be built to Australian standard AS 3959, which will allow buildings in designated bushfire-prone areas to better withstand attack from these fires.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr F.A. ALBAN: Another suggestion floated has been the idea of mandatory underground power in the hills. Once again, this idea as a blanket solution is inherently flawed. The cost for a resident to move their power supply underground would be a significant impost and, in many cases, unaffordable. The distance between buildings on rural lots, where powered work sheds are far bigger than the sheetmetal flat packs that come from Bunnings, is a real factor, as is the topography and the dense rock that our hills are formed of. In addition, it will not solve the service outages that plague the hills. The factors of distance and environmental causes, which include wildlife, would continue to cause problems, although the new technology of bundled wires that Western Power now uses is an immediate benefit.

While on the topic of services to these communities, I should address the ongoing issues related to telecommunications. They have been extremely important in a fire situation. Although this is firmly within the wheelhouse of our federal government, the reality is that, in an emergency situation, contact is essential. The topography of this region, along with its low density population and distance from the metropolitan area, create a perfect storm of factors that impact on this service. With consideration that the Department of Fire and Emergency Services uses Emergency Alert—a system that can send an SMS to a mobile phone based on the phone’s service address—as well as a well-executed bushfire warning system located on the DFES website, we must work to address the factors that impede these emergency communication services. With a significant number of people using mobile internet rather than a fixed-line connection, cellular telecommunication networks are relied on more and more. It is disappointing that the absence or shortcomings of these networks can adversely affect the systems in place to keep people informed during times of emergency.

The Parkerville fire of 2014 will not be the last major blaze to tear through our country or, indeed, our state. In the weeks following the Parkerville fire, South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria all suffered their own

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fires and, of course, Cockburn in our metropolitan area's south has been ablaze. As a state government, we have a responsibility to do what we can to ensure the safety of our residents. I believe the recent destruction in our hills is a stark reminder that, regardless of how well prepared we are or think we are, the risk of bushfire in our climate is a serious concern that will require further efforts, investigation and action. It would be inherently optimistic or inherently ignorant to believe that we can eliminate the threat of fire, but we must find an appropriate way to minimise the possibility that events such as the fire that ravaged Parkerville, Stoneville and Mt Helena will happen again. Although many concerns may not come to light immediately, I am aware of what we must do in Swan Hills over the coming months. As a state we must find the most practical suggestions to take on board, and investigate and implement them so that the damage, terror and loss experienced by so many residents is utilised positively in the future.

MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle) [5.00 pm]: In the nearly 12 months since I was elected to represent Fremantle, there have been a number of recurring themes that I have already had an opportunity to speak about in this place. I wish I could say there has been progress on those issues, but so far there has been no positive indication that the government is listening to any of these issues at all. Heavy truck transport congestion, a wooden traffic bridge that engineers have been telling us for a decade badly needs replacing, and an as yet unfulfilled promise to relocate the Department of Housing to Fremantle are all issues on which the people of Fremantle have yet to see any positive movement.

Issues relating to schools in my electorate need attention. Like every other single state school in Western Australia, schools in my electorate are hundreds of thousands of dollars a year worse off because of the decision by this government to slash their budgets. The dollars are shocking enough, but the real story is apparent when the programs that have been affected are listed: English as an additional language, less hours allocated; Aboriginal education officers, less hours allocated; languages other than English, less hours allocated; school support program resource allocation funding, cut by 30 per cent and affecting literacy and numeracy teacher allocation, learning support coordinator allocations—which affects students with disabilities—and behaviour management funding; special needs education assistants have been cut, restricting the flexibility that was used to meet high-need students, including those with undiagnosed disabilities; and cuts to the time allocated to a highly skilled classroom teacher. This list is from one school that outlined to its parents the programs affected by the cuts. If the Premier was here, I would say to him that school communities are well aware of the impact that his budget mismanagement is having on their schools and the education programs that they offer. I commend the energy and commitment shown by parents and citizens association representatives who are not taking this issue lying down and who are continuing to work so that their local community understands what is at stake with these cuts. They are taking up the fight to get the cuts reversed and to ensure their schools are not in the firing line in the next state budget.

The effect of these cuts has been well documented, and I can assure the government that they have not been well received. If this was not enough, the Premier announced in August last year that school amalgamations were on the books for the Fremantle area. The Minister for Education later gave the only clarification we have had on this matter—that is, that these likely amalgamations involved high schools—but we have since had no information at all. What parents in Fremantle want and have every right to expect from their local state school is a reasonable choice of subject selection across tertiary admission subjects and vocational education and training subjects. Any outcome of the flagged school amalgamations—just another way of saying school closures—must address this central issue so that all students have adequate subject choice. That is what families have a right to expect from their local state school. If the outcome from the school amalgamation announcement does not deliver this, I doubt that the Fremantle community will cease its campaigning on this matter. Instead of providing leadership on this announcement, we get an off-the-cuff comment by the Premier in August last year followed by some hasty, if shallow, assurances by the Minister for Education that the local parent community will be consulted, but no indication of what options the government is considering or a framework for the forthcoming debate. This announcement six months ago has also served to undermine the schools in the area. In my electorate, it has particularly affected South Fremantle Senior High School by creating uncertainty about its future. The staff and parents of students at that school in particular are working very hard to build momentum, but what does this government do? It makes utterances about possible closures and then walks away, leaving the school to start a new school year with a sword of Damocles hanging over its head. That particular school has done an amazing job under the circumstances.

The uncertainty of this issue has also extended to primary schools in Fremantle. In December last year and in January, about a quarter of Fremantle Primary School was demolished after the building, which was originally built on a tip, was found to be unstable. The problem is that parents and children came back to school a few weeks ago to find the demolition job only half done with no planned replacement storage or canteen facilities.

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Parents asked me whether the government planned to shut the school, such is the uncertainty that has been created by the school amalgamation announcement. I am working with the members of that school's council and P&C to ensure that the school gets decent facilities, including proper security for its undercover area, but it would be helpful if the government could do its bit to clarify what its intentions are with school amalgamations and to ensure that, in this case, Fremantle Primary School has decent facilities.

I began by talking about the issues I have previously raised in Parliament on which there has been no progress. Not a week goes by in my electorate without someone asking me about the government's plans for the Fremantle warders' cottages. By way of recap, I am talking about 13 cottages or terraces that were, as the name implies, built to house the prison warders and their families. The buildings date back to the 1850s and are among the state's earlier buildings. There was so much land available early on that terrace housing was not the norm. These are not only early buildings, but also a continuous row of terraces, so these houses need to be protected. The cottages housed prison warders until 1991, when they were sold to the Department of Housing and used for public housing tenants until October 2011, when, presumably because the upkeep was considered too costly, the tenants were evicted. Since then, which is well over two years, the cottages have been left vacant and left to rot, literally. Any solution as to what will happen to these cottages must address three things: the significant heritage value of these buildings must be recognised, the cost of restoring the buildings—the current estimation is around \$7 million—and a suitable future use for the cottages. Along with the City of Fremantle, I have asked for an urgent meeting with the Minister for Housing to nut out the possible alternatives that meet these criteria, but the minister does nothing—no plans, no options, no leadership. These are state government-owned buildings of significant heritage value and the government has a responsibility to do something. Locals and visitors alike despair at the warders' cottages. Right alongside these cottages is the original Fremantle courthouse, which until last year housed the local police. The police have now relocated and the courthouse and associated buildings are boarded up. Does this government have a plan for these buildings? Nothing is evident. Are we simply to watch while this complex becomes dilapidated with neglect? I implore the government to act now on these heritage assets and not wait for years to pass before action is taken.

In the middle of 2012, the then finance minister, Hon Simon O'Brien, made an announcement about decentralising the location of a number of government departments, including moving the Department of Housing to Fremantle. Now, 18 months later, there is no sign of any progress on this relocation. What exactly are the government's intentions with this? Can we rack up this announcement as yet another broken promise, or is it incompetence? Is it inertia? In 2012, I was happy to say to people in Fremantle that I supported the government's announcement to relocate the Department of Housing. We need people working in the centre of Fremantle, and Fremantle would be a major attractor for public sector workers. But since the announcement in mid-2012, apart from an expression of interest process, we have heard nothing—no announcement, no decision, silence.

The issues I have raised so far I have raised before, and I am sorry to say that there has been no progress on them in over 12 months. There are a couple of other issues I would like to address that I have not spoken on before but now deserve the attention of the government.

Members may know of the increased awareness of the extent of antisocial, dysfunctional and criminal behaviour in a Department of Housing estate in Beaconsfield known as Davis Park. In particular, members may have seen the publicity around the police raids conducted in that area in early January. The area is about four blocks, bordered by South Street, Lefroy Road, Fifth Avenue and Caesar Street. The Department of Housing says that about 250 houses are in this area, and 213 of them are state government owned. That provides for a public housing density of 85 per cent, which is well above the 11 per cent, or one in nine, that is the desired ratio of public to private housing. The majority of residents who live on those blocks are scared to go out of their houses after dark. They are scared to speak to authorities about the vandalism and violence that they experience for fear of being targeted. One resident who spoke to the local paper and then to the police about issues in the area had her house targeted so much that she and her child were moved out by the department, and she was too scared to go back to collect her belongings unsupervised. As a parting gesture, the week she moved out the house was set alight. The issue is not just a number of dysfunctional families who live in this precinct. Because the area has had a reputation for some time, it attracts groups of children in particular to come back and spend their days and nights in the area. Children as young as 10 years of age are taking drugs and toddlers in the area are left unsupervised.

I am well aware that this is not the only area of disadvantage in Perth. There may well be worse cases, but a policy has been adopted by successive governments to break up these outmoded designs of concentrated public housing and to disperse that housing, sell some of the blocks, renovate others and invest in some streetscaping to improve the design and quality of life for people in the area. This policy should be implemented in the Davis Park area. I am not for a minute saying that I want to lower the number of public housing residents in my

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electorate, and existing residents would quite rightly want assurances that they would not be forcibly evicted as a result of the implementation of this policy, which I understand has happened in other instances in which this policy has been implemented. But I support the one to nine ratio, which is a far cry from the 85 per cent density of public housing that we have in these four blocks in Beaconsfield.

Public housing density is not the only issue that these residents need addressed. The coordination of services is crucial. I commend efforts to apply some concentrated and coordinated attention across a range of government and not-for-profit agencies. I also want to support those residents and businesses in the area that are taking the initiative to get active and work for change for their community. However, this state government must do its bit and not just talk about planning to make change in this area, but actually do something to begin to tackle the problem. Residents communicated to me that they felt a particular dismay when the head of the Department of Housing was interviewed on the ABC's 7.30 WA program on this matter. The message coming from the department was that it did not perceive that there was a problem in this area, but that is certainly not what the police and the other agencies that are active in the area are saying to us, and it is certainly not the experience of residents. Those residents would feel enormously buoyed if they saw that the government understood that there is a real issue and that some change was taking place.

I would like to address one more matter and it relates to the announcement last week that Kulcha is closing its doors. I will read from Kulcha's website —

After 30 years of promoting culturally diverse artists in Western Australia, the award-winning Multicultural Arts of Western Australia Inc (trading as Kulcha) will wind up its operations in early 2014 due to challenges in maintaining sustainable income levels. All upcoming events will now be cancelled effective immediately, including Kulcha's nationally broadcast Oz Concert 2014 production during Harmony Week in March 2014. The Kulcha Board and Management deeply regrets this terrible outcome and we will shortly announce a meeting for Kulcha Members at a time and location to be advised.

For those who are not aware of Kulcha, it is an award-winning organisation that was formed more than 30 years ago, as the excerpt from the website states, to promote multiculturalism and the arts in Western Australia. Just last year it was the winner of a Western Australian Multicultural Community Service Award, and the year before it won a national business arts foundation award. It has been a hub in this state for promoting multiculturalism not only in Perth, but also throughout the state in regional centres. It would be reasonable to hope that the Department of Culture and the Arts, which, according to its website, is the state government department responsible for supporting the arts and cultural sectors, would assist an award-winning organisation such as Kulcha. But what did the department do? It advised Kulcha to go into receivership to get out of a period of difficulty; that is, instead of helping the organisation, which was suffering from challenging philanthropic circumstances and a challenging budgetary situation, it advised the board of Kulcha to turn off life support to make sure, if you like, the organisation was well and truly dead. I say to the Minister for Culture and the Arts—I am glad to see he is in the chamber to hear this—and also to the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests: nice work! There was an opportunity to support that organisation, to help it through a difficult period. Instead —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Sometimes irony doesn't work.

Ms S.F. McGURK: For the purposes of *Hansard*, that was intended to be sarcastic in the extreme.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Don't worry; I took it that way. There is a bit more to the story than what you presented. It has been going on a bit longer than just that.

Ms S.F. McGURK: I understand, minister, that the organisation was having financial difficulties, but at the eleventh hour, for the department to advise that the organisation should go into receivership and close its doors as a way of getting itself out of immediate difficulties, implying that that would assist it to move forward in some sort of new version, I think ignored the expertise, the wealth of experience and the corporate knowledge that had been built up in Kulcha over 30 years and is not easily replaced. In the period under this government and the previous government, we have seen Deckchair Theatre in Fremantle go under and now Kulcha, and it is not a legacy of which the minister's government should be proud.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Did you ask the City of Fremantle what it thinks?

Ms S.F. McGURK: Yes, I have spoken to the City of Fremantle about Kulcha. It was subsidising Kulcha's rent for some time. I understand that it will be working with Jon Cope and other people who are involved in the Kulcha board to try to assist them to continue to ensure that some of Kulcha's functions continue to operate in some form. But, as I said, the government needs to take some responsibility for overseeing the death of this

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organisation, when in fact the department, under the minister's leadership, should have assisted the organisation to get out of difficulty so that it could continue to provide important services in not only Perth, but also regional Western Australia. For instance, the other element of this organisation's funding that I think is a little alarming is that it was receiving no regular funding from the Office of Multicultural Interests, despite the fact that it was doing a tremendous job in promoting multiculturalism through its work in the arts.

Mr J.H.D. Day: It certainly has got about \$183 000 from the Department of Culture and the Arts this year, and there has been no reduction.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms S.F. McGURK: Yes, I understand that amount was given by the Department of Culture and the Arts, but no funding was given by the Office of Multicultural Interests that I am aware of, despite, as I said, the significant work that it was doing in both regional Western Australia and Perth to use the arts to promote multiculturalism. As our population grows, Western Australians expect that the state government will work to build cultural and social infrastructure. However, to abandon this award-winning organisation that promotes and fosters multiculturalism for the arts is, as I said, a real step backwards. Organisations that have the depth and richness of experience in arts, delivering across a range of different communities across the board, are not easy to come by. They should be supported, not abandoned. It is not too late for the government to retrieve the situation. If there is a will by the minister and the government to ensure that all is not lost, as I said, with the knowledge, expertise and corporate experience that has been amassed by the former culture director, Jon Cope, and his team, there could be an opportunity to support them. If the government is serious about the arts and about supporting multiculturalism, I implore the minister to throw a lifeline to the organisation to make sure that wealth of experience and expertise is not lost.

Mr J.H.D. Day: If you want a full briefing on the situation and how it got to this point, I am happy for that to be provided. However, there is a bit more background that is probably useful to have.

Ms S.F. McGURK: I would appreciate that from the Minister for Culture and the Arts, but in the meantime, I hope he also takes on board my comments, and the comments that reflect not only the Fremantle community, but also the general arts community, that the government has a responsibility to see what it can do to assist this organisation to keep it going and not to turn off its life support and to actually see whether some of that experience and corporate knowledge can be utilised. As I understand it, Jon Cope had not drawn a wage for some months. I am not sure how he has managed to sustain a family and continue to work in the way he does. Nevertheless, people who are doing that work need to be supported. If there is an opportunity to address the matter, I would certainly be happy to work with the minister and/or the department.

Given that I still have some time, one other issue I will briefly address that affects my electorate and this government is the upgrade of the High Street–Stirling Highway intersection. I have addressed this upgrade a number of times in this house, but was dismayed—however, not surprised—to see in the midyear budget review that the project had been put off for yet another year. Getting this project done is important to the people in my electorate. It is a dangerous intersection, given that it is not designed to deal with the amount of truck traffic that it currently deals with. Having said that, the community has every right to expect that the design will be a design that they can live with. The current plan is for a six-lane highway that is built into a trench—so it has large retaining walls around it—with little pedestrian activity occurring in an east–west direction along the Stirling Highway side of the intersection. That is not something that most people I have spoken to feel is acceptable. When I addressed this matter with the Minister for Transport in this chamber, he dismissed those concerns as perhaps being concerns of a fringe green element in Fremantle, who just cannot see that this road needs upgrading. I can assure this house and the minister that people do understand that the current intersection is unsafe. They do want to see some upgrade occur, but a six-lane highway where vehicles from one end at Stock Road feed in to another four-lane bridge at the other end of the intersection makes no sense. To cut this huge swathe through the middle of East Fremantle and Fremantle just makes absolutely no sense.

I will continue to listen to what my community wants for that intersection upgrade. However, I think it would be good if the Minister for Transport could do the same and could get his department to do the same. A lot of green space is going to be affected, including a lot of mature trees that will be removed as part of the upgrade. As I said, it will be a massive change. However, from everything I have seen, a six-lane upgrade is complete overkill and unnecessary. I just wanted to take the opportunity to address that. Thank you.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The member for Maylands.

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [5.25 pm]: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, you must have read my mind!

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I do like this occasion because it is one of the two times that members get to have a free-range discussion about the things that are important to us in our electorate. I hope that Hansard follows me with my wandering around the electorate. I wanted to start by referring, first, to my role as shadow parliamentary secretary for small business. This is an area of real interest to me. I have worked in and out of small business for most of my adult life, including many times in training by helping people to strengthen their small businesses, to start home-based businesses or to look at micro-enterprises. I have worked with women in business in particular and that is an area I care deeply about.

I want to put a couple of things into the ether. I am sure the Minister for Small Business is somewhere—maybe he is listening to this presentation, maybe not. I am hoping he will be mindful of the fact that the Small Business Development Corporation Act has been with us for quite some time now. I would argue that it is probably not a bad idea to have a look at the objectives of the act to refresh what they might be. Life has changed a lot since the Small Business Development Corporation was established and since the relevant acts were put into place. For instance, we have the internet now, which might have had quite a bit of influence on small business in our state. It would be really useful to have a look at the interaction between the internet, online media and small business. To be clear, the Small Business Development Corporation is located in the centre of the city. The Business Enterprise Centre network has been reduced and has been allocated out to the regions; it does a fantastic job. I have been on the board of small business development centres, including the Swan Enterprise Centre and the Eastern Region Business Enterprise and Arts Centre and, hopefully, I contributed some of my knowledge to their development. However, we have to ask ourselves what the interplay is between the geographic layout of those centres and the Small Business Development Corporation's remit to grow small business. How effectively are those centres tapping into the new innovations in the development of small business? Are they using the internet and, if they are, how effectively are they using it? There are many different models. The Berlin centre for innovation is one of the leading lights in the use of innovation and technology to grow small business. It has many lessons for us. I would like to encourage the minister to pick up the act and have a look at it and also look at the small business centres. I think the small enterprise centres are being reviewed at the moment, which is a good thing from my perspective. In fact, I thought that review could have been done when we were in government some years ago. I am not sure why it never happened. I certainly would have been pleased to see that happen because I was involved when they were first set up, which was a very long time ago. It is time to review small enterprise centres because we need to look at how the resources have been delivered—that is, the inner city versus the outer metropolitan areas versus the rural and remote areas. What is the relevance of a physical centre to a busy small business owner? Are they going to drop their business and get to training or activities away from their premises or are they more likely to be attracted to a more innovative way of sharing that information or putting that training out there?

What do the Small Business Development Commission and Small Business Centre network actually try to fix in our community? What is their objective? What is their *raison d'être*—their reason to be? Are they about starting up new businesses? Are they about making existing businesses more productive? Are they helping government get compliance from small business? I think we need to have a closer look at how the delivery of all these services is being done, and what is the centralised model. Perhaps, we need to look at more flexible delivery that takes into account the very changed conditions that small business owners as well as new entrepreneurs are facing now when they start to consider setting up a small business.

Along with that, we need a small business policy that crosses government agencies and provides the services that small businesses need to help them grow. We know that small businesses are the biggest employer of people in our state. But we know also that 80 per cent of small businesses fail in their first two years of operation.

One of the things that we need to do is develop an enterprise culture. I remember that in the 1980s and 1990s, there was a big movement towards building an enterprise culture, and there were school and community-based activities to encourage enterprise. Young people were encouraged to set up mock businesses and go through the process so that if they were to choose at some time to go into small business as either an owner or an employee, they would be more aware of the risks. Even more importantly, an enterprise culture helps to generate a sense of entrepreneurship in the community and gives people faith in the future and motivation and excitement about the future. If we start to build an enterprise culture when young people are at school, they will be inclined to look at life more positively and stretch themselves a bit more. An enterprise culture teaches people how to assess and manage risks and to ultimately go into a small business that will have a chance of succeeding in the long term. We need to encourage small business start-ups. Economic theory would say that churn in the economy is very important. However, I have a problem with encouraging start-ups if they are going to fail. The trick is to ensure that people are not blindfolded but are equipped with business planning skills, understand the importance of cash flow and do not under-capitalise. People also need to understand the avenues for financing their business. That is

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not necessarily a credit card, which many women still choose to use, and ideally it is not mortgaging the house, although I know that a lot of small business owners end up using their house to finance their business. Those are very high-risk ways in which to move forward. It is important that the small business culture that is built in this state is not only enterprising, but also realistic. We should support the growth of small businesses, because they provide a strong employee base for our community. We should hope that some of those small businesses will grow to become middle-sized and large businesses and be strong employers of people in our state.

I have mentioned the challenges of digital technology. One of the ways in which businesses are using digital technology is by accessing crowd sourcing as a form of venture capital. That is an exciting, but risky, journey in itself. The use of crowd-sourcing finance is growing at a galloping speed. However, along with that, businesses need to be educated so that they do not head in the direction of crowd sourcing until they know what they are doing and the risks that are associated with that kind of venture capital.

We also need to look closely at the support that we are giving to immigrants to our state and to Aboriginal Australians, and we need to ensure that the small business packages that are available are targeted effectively. There is a huge opportunity to help the people who have come to our country to start a new life to enter into their business venture with success. There are many community-based organisations that are willing to work with our immigrants to help them get into small business. There is an obvious link between good employment policy and good economic policy, particularly microeconomic policy. Obviously, there is the issue of red tape. This government did a substantial amount of work in its first term in reducing red tape, and a number of the major recommendations in the report of the Red Tape Reduction Group have been implemented with the establishment of the WA Small Business Commissioner. However, I would like to know why more attention is not being directed to those recommendations and where the remainder of the recommendations are at in the government's priority list.

I have talked about my personal commitment to helping small business in the state and in my electorate. I also want to talk about a redeveloped Maylands and a redeveloping Inglewood. A couple of weeks ago, I went to a City of Stirling visioning workshop, which was all about how to attract and sustain good small businesses in our region. The participants at that workshop were told that the increased development along Beaufort Street will transform the strip over the next 50 years. More than 200 people attended that workshop, including local business owners and residents. I am fortunate to represent a region that is developing progressively. However, it is facing some challenges. Those challenges include ensuring that the necessary services are provided to support the population growth and the business influx. But we cannot have that until we have a well-planned commercial precinct and business area. There has been a huge failure by the state government in the Bayswater area. As those members who are familiar with my electorate would know, Bayswater is now the second cousin to Maylands. Maylands has been redeveloped beautifully, thanks to a concerted effort by the council and with support from the state government. However, not much has happened in Bayswater. My traders tell me this with great sorrow. Businesses in Bayswater are in a sad state, and many of them are closing down. That is because it is a very fragmented area and is not attractive and appealing for customers, and therefore there is not the pedestrian and traffic flow that the traders need to be sustainable. The catch 22 in the Bayswater area is that the City of Bayswater is dependent on the state government to build the airport rail link before it develops the Bayswater precinct. That is the core of the problem. The government made a promise to build an airport rail link. However, that promise has now been moved so far away that we cannot even see the airport, let alone where that rail link might be. That rail link has now moved so far out of sight that it might as well be in Melbourne. It will be years and years into the future before we get that rail link, and that work will be well and truly outside the life of this government. The failure by the government to keep that promise has effectively put a hold on the redevelopment of Bayswater. I can tell the government that my traders and the people who live in Bayswater know what the government has done. They are very aware that they were promised an airport rail link as part of the government's redevelopment of the transport network. We will not see that airport rail link in the life of this government. The government will leave it to someone else to build that rail link.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: And now you will no longer be invited to the opening, according to the member for Dawesville!

Ms L.L. BAKER: Yes. That is yet another transport promise that has been broken and not delivered upon. That is very sad for the residents of Bayswater and for the traders' association. Sorry. I can see that people on the back bench are pointing at each other. Is there something the member for Geraldton wants to say?

Mr I.C. Blayney: The member for Forrestfield is going to make it happen.

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Ms L.L. BAKER: Excellent. I will be there with the member for Forrestfield, with a shovel putting the sleepers down, let me tell him. If I can get a commitment from this government that it will progress this quicker than it said it would, I will be right there with him to make sure that happens.

Mr N.W. Morton interjected.

Ms L.L. BAKER: Thank you. The member raises a good point.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: We have a bit of a problem with public transport in Maylands. We have a problem getting the tickets because there is no room on the trains. There is no room in the boom to get on the train! I still receive letters from people who are angry that they were waiting on the platform in the morning at, say, 7.32 to catch the train to work but it went straight past them. It went straight past not because its brakes failed—although that may be some of the problem—but because there was no room to get on. No-one else could fit onto the train. I have seen instances of people being pushed on to the train by stuffing them in the door. It is just appalling. It will be good to have a ticket, member for Forrestfield, but I think I would probably have to pick my time for the ticket; I might not get on the train. That is somewhat amusing because, in contrast, the government has cancelled bus routes in my electorate. A year or so ago I spoke about this in the house. A great many constituents in my electorate contacted my office to complain about the cessation of one bus route that ran through the heart of my electorate, through Mt Lawley into Perth. The government did not change its mind—it cancelled the bus route. Those people now find their own way.

I want to put another closure on the public record; that is the closure of bus routes 21 and 22. I know that a lot of fuss has been made in the house by the Minister for Transport about the amazing new bus route that will take people straight to the university, which is all fabulous. If members had been sitting at the Bedford Bowling Club with me and 20 elderly residents who had come to tell me what the cessation of the bus route would mean to them, they would be a bit more reticent about supporting the kinds of cuts that we are seeing. One resident in my electorate, Rosemary, collapsed when she was trying to catch the bus. She was taken to hospital suffering from exhaustion and dehydration. The bus routes are too far away for her. Bus routes 21 and 22 have stopped. This is in Embleton, which is a historic area. It has a lot of elderly residents. There are a lot of people who simply cannot get to a bus stop that is 500 to 750 metres away. They relied on those buses to travel across the electorate to get into Morley Galleria to see doctors, surgeons and dentists. In fact one resident used that route to get their meals from someone. These people have been left high and dry.

Along with that elderly group, a new group of residents has also moved into Embleton because it is very good value. If members did not know about this, it must be the best-kept secret in Perth. Embleton is very close to Perth. The blocks and the houses are really quite well priced. They are obviously affordable as many new residents are buying them. They are buying huge blocks and infilling them. Three or four units are being built on some blocks. The population is increasing in these areas. It is only going to increase with more infill. When that density increases, where will people go? They are looking for public transport. One resident in my electorate, Tony, who is blind, moved to a particular place in Embleton because of the bus routes. Now he is stuck. He cannot catch the bus to do the things he once did. He is a fantastic guy. Tony and his wife do volunteer work for a couple of charities. They used the bus to go to the charities to volunteer. Notwithstanding the fact that Tony is blind, someone has to walk with him for a significant distance to try to get onto a bus to go to appointments.

A week or so ago I received a letter from a lady who has asked me to look into bus route 55 between Perth and Bassendean, which is the only service available from King William Street to Bassendean. I will read some short quotes out of her letter. It states —

This is regarding the poor bus service for people living between Bayswater and Bassendean, needing to travel to and from the city and live between Guildford Road and the river. The only bus service provided ... is the number 55 ... I am hoping you can help improve this service as it is extremely bad.

...

Monday to Friday in off peak times the 55 bus service only runs every hour. In peak times for people travelling to and from work, it is supposed to run every 30 minutes, but is never on time and is not frequent enough.

I should also mention that some of my elderly residents have told me about the impact that the cancellation of bus routes 21 and 22 have had on them. They have experienced three buses drive past them at the bus stop. I am not sure why they drove straight past and ignored them but they did. They were left standing on the side of the street, which is dreadful. Others have reported seeing buses travelling bumper to bumper travelling down

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Broun Avenue. We cannot figure out why that is happening either. This lady said that she has complained to Transperth about the service. Although Transperth is not looking at improving it, it admits that it is not a good service. Again, public transport is a huge issue in my electorate, as I am sure it is in many other electorates in this state. I am sure it is as much an issue for my colleagues on the other side as it is for my electorate. This issue is certainly not only a Labor issue; it goes across all electorates. It is something that the government really needs to get a handle on. It promised a range of sophisticated changes and then said sorry; it either will not do that anymore or it has been moved so far away that it is in Melbourne!

I now want to talk a little about health care. In my electorate I have had time to realise that there are endemic issues facing Aboriginal residents who come from the north west of the state for dialysis. They come into my electorate because there are two hostels. I have spoken to the member for Kimberley about this. She has shared some of her knowledge about some of the people who are currently in one of those hostels. It is a dreadful shame; it is absolutely awful. They fly down either with a carer or on their own. They are left in a hostel with precious little to do and feel really isolated. Many of them have alcohol problems, which is why some of them are on dialysis. The hostels will not have them if they have been drinking, as they have a zero alcohol policy. On the surface, members might think that sounds pretty sensible: why would they want alcohol in a hostel?

Ms J.M. Freeman: They come and camp in the Mirrabooka bushland. There are no health services for them there. It is a real problem for the community.

Ms L.L. BAKER: I am seeking an appointment with both the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister for Health to discuss this. It seems to me there must be some solution to this. We really need to get on top of it. These people are left vulnerable. They are turned away from the hostel. They go to this lovely green, shady, leafy place outside The RISE in Maylands and get themselves into trouble. I fear that someone will die soon because these people are not being treated. They are being ignored. It is just not good enough. It is a complex problem. I do not have the solution. I need the support of the Minister for Health and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs to see if we can come up with a better solution than leaving people lying on the street to die. I do not want that in my electorate; no-one wants to see that in any electorate. We owe it to our Indigenous people to work with them to get a better solution for this matter.

Another statewide issue I raise in the health care debate is my personal concern about the Midland Health Campus contract that has been given to St John of God Health Care. It is my understanding that that hospital is not obliged to provide any pregnancy termination services. Personally, I have a problem with that, but that is the way the legislation is at the moment. It is meant to be a public hospital. People should be able to access all services at that hospital. I am not sure whether women who go there will be referred for those kinds of procedures. Will the Midland Health Campus refer them to a hospital or a service that can help them and give them appropriate advice and support? I am not sure that is the responsibility of that hospital. I totally understand that there may be medical practitioners at that hospital who do not want to perform an abortion, but I believe that it is completely unreasonable to refuse to refer a patient to a safe place so that they can access the services that they require. That is a potential gap in the Midland Health Campus contract, and I would like to see the service specifications so that some decisions can be made about that.

However, aside from the termination issue is the bigger issue of contraception. I have been led to believe that the hospital will also not provide women with access to contraception. I would like to hear from the Minister for Health or someone else who might be able to tell me whether that is the case, because that would not be okay when dealing with a low socioeconomic group, which that hospital's catchment area lends itself to. It should be essential that a hospital has the capacity to provide a service for a woman who is in hospital to have a baby or another procedure and who decides that she wants a prescription for the pill, or inter-uterine device or a Mirena. If a hospital sends that woman somewhere else, it is missing an opportunity to help that woman manage her health. I am really interested in an answer to the question of whether a woman going to the Midland Health Campus will be given access to contraception if she asks for it. From the look on members' faces, it looks as though members agree that that service should be available. I do not know whether it is not available, but I would like the minister to assure me that if a woman presents and wants contraception, she will be able to get access to the pill, an implant or an IUD, whatever it is, at that centre while she is there. Otherwise, a good opportunity will be missed.

Before I finish, I want to mention quickly what is happening in education in my electorate. Members have heard from my colleagues that all schools are experiencing funding cuts. The cuts to schools in my electorate total \$1.95 million. Staff and school parents and citizens groups have indicated that the positions being cut include Aboriginal education officers. One school in my electorate has 83 Aboriginal students and another has 60-odd students. The Aboriginal officer in one school has had her days wound back to three days a week. She has done a lot of work to get those kids to come to school. She did a lot of work in homes, with parents and families, saying,

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“This is what we will do. I will help you. We will get your kids to school.” She also worked with those kids in campus. At times she will not be there; she will be there only three days and not a week. I will be watching closely to see the impact of that move on schools in my electorate.

I also found out the other day that chaplaincy services to schools are being cut. I did not know that before then. Evidently some funding has been played out by schools that have been putting extra money into chaplaincy to ensure it is there, and now it is gone. I know five schools that will lose funding in that area.

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [5.55 pm]: I thank the member for Maylands for her speech. She finished talking about chaplaincy services and about the impacts of cuts to education. I understand that when schools have had additional money in their budgets, they pay for chaplains to assist and work with children at their schools. Cuts to the budget have meant that those services have been cut. The challenge for me is that, although I work with chaplains in schools, who are fantastic, I believe in secular education. The people I have worked with have never pushed their religious affiliations but there is a need for a broad debate on this issue, especially given that this matter was raised when someone took a matter to the High Court. In any event, it is an important service particularly when working with kids who are at risk or who need extra assistance. There is also important work to be done by school psychologists and schools assistants, and the cuts to education have had an impact on all those services across the board and in many schools.

I would like to start my speech by recognising the passing last December of Nelson Mandela. His dream for the unification of people from different backgrounds towards a common cause of equality was the inspiration for my political involvement. Mandela was inspiring because he was a politician of principles and a leader who could be trusted. He was a leader who did not prey on the fears of people, but he capitalised on their aspirations through words and actions. I am not talking about anyone in particular at this point in time; I am talking about the things we, as leaders in our community, should all aspire to be—that we do not play the politics of fear, that we play the politics of principle, that we live by our principles, and in doing so, we also live by our word and our commitments.

Mandela gave his country the hope to believe in a democratic nation. That democratic nation celebrates its twentieth anniversary this year. He thwarted the threat of civil war through his commitment to civil society—a civil society we should all be committed to, especially given that we are about to head into another election, one which we are all concerned about because we have people in our communities who are no longer engaged in the civil society and engaged in the democratic community that they are offered.

As a member who represents people from a diverse background, I am always amazed how engaged in the democratic process are people who have fled persecution in their countries and who have come to Australia for a better life for their families and for themselves because of civil war in their own nations. They and people of our communities look to leaders they can trust. In particular the people and communities of Mirrabooka that I represent look to people they can trust. So when the Premier came to Mirrabooka to meet the community and to sell his transport promises, outside the bus station, I believe they were looking to trust him and I believe that at that time he was being dishonest with the community on what he could deliver. On 2 September 2012, this government committed to deliver public transport infrastructure into Mirrabooka.

In fact, the member for Victoria Park outlined that in September 2012 in a radio debate with the Treasurer; he was touting that it would be in operation 18 months later. If the people of Mirrabooka had gone on the Treasurer’s promise in that media commentary, they would have light rail by now. Everyone knew that project would take more than 18 months, but they did want it delivered according to the time lines given by this government in its election commitments.

As all members know, I have lobbied hard for more efficient transport for the constituents of Mirrabooka. I have surveyed them. I have spoken to different community groups. I have held a community forum. Efficient transport in that eastern corridor is absolutely integral to the growth of that area. My electorate is sitting on 7.6 hectares of Department of Housing land that has been flat-earthed; little roads have been constructed so they can commence development there, but that has been held off because of the government’s commitment to the people of Mirrabooka on light rail. That piece of land, which has been vacant since the 1950s and which I have talked about it in this place previously, has not been developed because this government held it back through a commitment to the people for light rail, but, again, they have been let down.

Members would also know that I am an advocate for heavy rail along Reid Highway; however, a promise by the Premier of this state to the community I represent should be honoured. The government promised the community that MAX light rail would be operational by 2018, but now the community has been betrayed through this delay, which is effectively a cancellation of the project. The Premier said in his speech yesterday that the government is

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still working on it. If the Premier had not left the chamber when I raised this issue, I could have told him that they are not working on it. Prior to the Premier's announcement that he would delay this project, there were lots of Public Transport Authority workers and contractors around the Mirrabooka area. I do not know whether it was the same for the member for Morley and other members, but we constantly had surveyors standing on roads. If someone went out to have a chat with them and to ask them what they were doing—which I am very good at doing—and to check what is happening in the area, they would say that they were lining up roads and working out where the light rail system would go. I can also tell the Premier that prior to him announcing the delay, community forums were hosted by the PTA and the City of Stirling to talk about how they saw the development and what was happening with infrastructure development around the area. But now—nothing, nada—we have heard no more about that stuff. I also understand that meetings between the council and the PTA have stopped as well—so, nothing, nada! Joe Spagnolo said in *The Sunday Times* article of 18 December 2013 that the people of Western Australia and the people of Mirrabooka should feel dupped and betrayed. He confirmed what the people of Mirrabooka felt when he said that the shelving of the light rail made a mockery of the election and the election commitments of this government. It is my belief that the government knew full well before it went into the last election that it could not afford to deliver it by 2018.

We want leaders who people can trust and for whom they want to vote. Members, be warned, all of us will be judged by the actions of our leaders. In the alternative, the opposition's leaders, Mark McGowan and Roger Cook, and opposition shadow Treasurer, Ben Wyatt, funded the Labor Party's election commitments by looking at where they could save and reallocate taxpayers' money to deliver needed infrastructure to our community through Metronet. That contrasted with the Elizabeth Quay project, which will not assist the constituents of Mirrabooka to have infrastructure that meets their transport needs.

The member for Maylands raised the important issue of the Mirrabooka bushland and about camping there. The member for Swan Hills talked quite eloquently about the very devastating fires. The Premier's statement on bushfires and fuel mitigation was quite noteworthy to me, because I have two large areas of bushland in my electorate. It is sort of three. Dianella is not really in my area, but it is close to my house! One of those two large areas of bushland went up in flames only a few years ago and put houses at risk. I would like to acknowledge the efforts of firefighters and volunteers in the recent fires and send my thoughts to those impacted and to those who have suffered loss or trauma. The member for Swan Hills stated that it is a well-known fact that whoever owns the fuel is responsible for the fuel. I want to put the government on notice—the Minister for Planning is not in the chamber—that it is responsible for the Mirrabooka bushland because the Minister for Planning has yet to resolve the management of that bushland. Members here who are involved with the issue of camping in the Mirrabooka bushland will know that the Department of Planning has responsibility for that Bush Forever site. The Department of Planning does not manage bushlands. The Department of Environment Regulation manages bushlands, or in the case of Koondoola bushland, it is the City of Wanneroo. The city manages it extraordinarily well, and had it not managed it so well, the Koondoola bushfire we had a few years ago could have had serious consequences. In fact, the houses that were under greatest threat were located near Water Corporation land. The Water Corporation had not properly mitigated the risk in that area. My problem is that in my electorate there is a piece of land, full bushland, in the middle of an urban area that is under real threat from not only fire but also being degraded as people who are in need are taking the opportunity to camp within it. It is a very large piece of bushland that could be the icon of that area. It could be the Kings Park of that eastern corridor. But no, despite the fact that I have raised it with the Minister for Planning, the Minister for Environment and the City of Stirling, there has been no resolution over its management. There are some good possibilities for its management. John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School is close by and the government could work on some synergies there; but, no—nothing, nada.

I also want to talk about housing, because it is the major issue of the people who walk through my office, and I imagine it is the same for many members here. The Minister for Housing refuses to accept that the proliferation of evictions under his administration has resulted in greater inequity in our community. The minister has resorted to defending his actions, because he knows his actions are causing inequity, by criticising other members. All members have the right to raise issues around housing with the minister. In fact, the minister stood up in this place and said, "You people on the other side just go to the media. Why not email me directly and I will fix it?" I walked up to the minister afterwards and said, "Minister, that is fantastic. I'm going to email you next time I have someone who is homeless walk into my office." I have to tell members that it is really distressing when I am trying to help someone who is a victim of domestic violence and who has fled her house. Just recently, I was helping someone from Geraldton who had fled her house because her partner, who was in prison because he had been convicted of domestic violence, was about to come out of prison. She came down to Perth, and the response from the Department of Housing was nada! She was told she could go on the list like everyone else. She has a house in Geraldton that is probably needed by someone, and I asked whether the department could do something

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about that. No! I got the same response: she can just go on the list. I admit that was not the case that I took to the minister, but the case I took to the minister was not too dissimilar to that. It was a person who suffered domestic violence and was homeless. What was the response I got from the Minister for Housing? He sent my email to the department! I do not email a minister if I do not think the issue is serious. I do not know whether members know me well enough by now, but if they did they would know that I can usually fix things myself. It is a really bad trait for a politician. I do not whip up an issue in the electorate through hysteria and fury; I try to resolve problems.

If I send an email, I send an email because it is a serious issue. If we raise an issue, it is serious. If we raise an issue that happens to involve serious antisocial behaviour, usually associated with criminal behaviour, it is a serious issue. The talkback audience of radio 720 ABC got it. The talkback audience of radio 720 ABC this morning identified the issue that this government should have been aware of since its internal report on the tragic circumstances of Mr Roll, who lay dead in his accommodation for a period of at least two years. I understand that the Coroner's Court—I have not had an opportunity to read the report that came down in December—did not say that the Department of Housing was at fault. I am not sure whether the court agreed with the internal report, which referred to the lack of resourcing in the Department of Housing for accommodation managers.

Although the Department of Housing may be great at managing an asset base, it needs to understand that it is also a human services agency. It might not want to be a human services agency; it certainly did not want to be a human services agency all those years ago when I set up the special housing assistance program, which used to provide early intervention to save tenancies, but that is the reality of what it is. I have outlined, and the report on Mr Roll outlined, that the lack of human resourcing means that the department's accommodation managers have almost twice the workload of an accommodation manager in the private sector. They deal with much greater problems in public housing and they have at least twice the workload of an accommodation manager in the private sector, yet we expect them to manage these tenants when they become a risk. When they become a risk, we shuffle them off to the behaviour management unit, and then it turns into a blame model. Dealing with these issues turns into a penalise model. It does not fix the problem; it can heighten the problem.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: In fact, what can often happen is that the behaviour management officers—I have written to the minister about this—will visit the person about whom the complaint has been made and then get in their car and drive up the road to see the person who made the complaint. If that is not going to heighten the problem, I am not sure what will. That does not seem to be the best answer to this issue.

I will tell members about two elderly gentlemen in my electorate. One is an 80-year-old gentleman whose wife had just come out of hospital at the time; she had been seriously ill after having a heart attack. He came to see me because he was at his wit's end about the behaviour of the person who lives above him. I thought it was terrible and I understood. We started to talk about the behaviour, which had been going on only for the previous week. He had made a complaint to the Department of Housing. He wants this bloke out. What transpired in the discussion was that these gentlemen had been great friends. The bloke from upstairs had come down and had dinner with him. A couple of months prior to this, the gentleman from downstairs had done some work on his property. He borrowed a ladder from a friend and he put it down the side of the property because someone was going to pick it up. Unfortunately, the ladder got used to get onto the balcony of the property of the bloke from upstairs. Someone got through his balcony door and stole very valuable items that he had collected. He did not collect them because of their value; he collected them because they were valuable to him and he was a collector. The bloke from downstairs was devastated. He said that he felt terrible. The bloke from downstairs made the mistake of asking how they got in and the bloke from upstairs said that they came in through the balcony door. The bloke from downstairs asked the bloke from upstairs whether he had locked the door and the bloke from upstairs said that he had not because it was his balcony door. The bloke from downstairs said that it was okay because he would have been insured, but the bloke from upstairs said that because he was a Homeswest tenant, he could not insure these things because of his income, and while they were valuable, he just loved to collect them. The bloke from downstairs said that the bloke from upstairs should have insured them. Of course, the bloke from upstairs, who is also an elderly gentleman, got very annoyed that the bloke from downstairs seemed to blame it on him, and the bloke from downstairs got annoyed because the bloke from upstairs blamed it on him.

When I rang the people at the behaviour management unit, they said that the gentleman had two choices. I asked them whether they could do some mediation, but they told me that they do not do mediation and that if these gentlemen wanted mediation, they needed to go to a private mediation company or contact the Citizens Advice

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Bureau. I said that it had gone on only for a week and it involved tapping on the floor and playing the radio loud at night. I asked them whether they were honestly going to issue a strike against this bloke, and they said that if they found out that he had been doing this, that would be a strike. If they go in there, they will make the problem worse. I asked them whether there was anything they could do. Do members want to know what the answer was? They asked me whether I could talk to them. When a department manages its housing through members' offices, there is something wrong. It basically means that it is happy to manage the physical asset, but it is not willing to recognise that, in Western Australia, we do not allow shantytowns and we do not allow people to set up a tent across the road in Solidarity Park. The way that we address that issue in our community is to make sure that we have enough sustainable and affordable public housing. The public has an expectation that people in the community will get public housing when they need it.

My view is that this government has to stop treating people as though they are the problem. It has to recognise that it has a problem and it has to manage that problem, and that problem is caused by a lack of effective action. Although the government is congratulating itself for building student accommodation in Nedlands, that is not a way to address the problem.

The father of the family of seven who walked into my office the other day held down a job and lived in a house in Mirrabooka. Unfortunately, they got notice to leave; they were not evicted. The house will be knocked down to build three houses on the property, which is pretty much what is going on in that part of the world. He cannot get another house; it is pretty hard with a family of seven. He left the house in November, but the Department of Housing sent him a letter in December offering him a house. Of course, he did not get it and the department took him off the list. Thankfully, it has reinstated him—because the housing is being managed through the office of a member of Parliament!

Mr R.H. Cook: So people who do not have a house get written to at some bizarre address and because they don't respond, the department kicks them off the list, but they still have a need for a house.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Yes. I have an industrial relations background and my view is that an offer is not an offer unless the person can refuse or accept it, so there was no offer. The department said that it made an offer. I said that an offer is only an offer if the person can accept it or not accept it, so I asked the department to make him another offer. I was told that he is on the priority list and he will come up when he is due and that the department has procedural justice and all that sort of stuff. The people are not the problem. I could help them straightaway. Some houses could be built on lots 60 and 61 Milldale Way, Mirrabooka. The department blames the City of Stirling and the City of Stirling blames the government. The fact is that the department does not have to care about what the City of Stirling says.

Another of my frustrations is bus shelters. I am talking about little things, but I am talking about what matters to the people in Mirrabooka, Nollamara and Balga who have to stand on the side of the road in the sun or the rain because the City of Stirling council resolved in March 2008 not to put bus shelters in until it could resolve a policy through the Western Australian Local Government Association and government. I raised this issue in a grievance a year or so ago and prior to Christmas and everyone said that they would get onto it. I followed it up. WALGA sent a draft to the PTA in June 2013. The only time that the PTA look at it is when I raise another grievance, not because WALGA received a response on 28 January this year. It does not address the fundamental questions of whose responsibility it is to install and maintain these bus shelters and meet the disability requirements. We will have to go back to the drawing board.

Honestly, if the government cannot look after its paperclips, how can it look after the rest of the operations of government? That is how I feel when I sit on the Education and Health Standing Committee and listen to how the Fiona Stanley Hospital contract has been managed. If the government does not have the integrity to manage something in a staged and progressive way so it can deliver the hospital at the same time as it has a physical building, something seriously wrong is going on in government, and it starts with our leaders. If they cannot lead to ensure that these very important milestones are met, they will be judged. There is not one leader in this place at this time, apart from the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the member for Wagin. We could talk about the netball stadium but we will not do that. It would have been better if it was in Perry Lakes, where the games are played.

I digress. I turn to education. Like my colleagues, I am really disheartened by the government's removal of important human and fiscal resources, in particular ethnic education assistants, from our schools. I have had representations from parents whose children have been advantaged by having ethnic education assistants. They are concerned for the future education of children, not their own, so they can achieve in the schools of their new home.

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I would like to place on record the dire need for an upgrade of Balga Senior High School. At least a lick of paint would be nice, if the minister is listening. That was the school that the Premier was very happy to visit during the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to highlight its fantastic netball program. The way the education staff are being treated is reflected across government. One of those areas is the Government Employees Superannuation Board. The government is not only undermining the employment of workers in the public sector as a whole because there is limited choice for people coming into GESB, so it is undermining the viability of the superannuation fund and restricting the membership base, but it is also now privatising the administration arm of GESB. I understand that the decision has been made and the employees of GESB need certainty of their future employment. The minister is sitting on this issue and not making that announcement.

With respect to the continual contracting out of government services to the non-government sector, I note the importance of Lotterywest grants since the Office of Multicultural Interests changed its policy of funding. OMI has now decided to pick favourites, so there is this strange amalgam of who it funds and who it does not. It is not particularly clear to us. There seems to be some favouritism. Many of the community groups that were not getting OMI funding were relying on Lotterywest to fund community events but now it appears that Lotterywest is setting restrictions on what people can be granted and how often. Lotterywest has changed its policy without really going into how it has changed.

I would like to congratulate the City of Wanneroo's public health plan, which was launched recently, showcasing what a local government committed to its community can do, despite the lack of state government support through the long-awaited changes to the Health Act 1911. It was able to progress it because of the support of the previous federal government grant but the act has languished and, without change, it prevents proactive health measures being taken through our councils. The City of Wanneroo was able to do it simply because of that funding. Without proper leadership—again, I come back to that word “leadership”—on local government reform, a whole bunch of our local governments have been drawn away from the really important things that we would like them to be doing. One of those is waste management. That will be the most compelling and important issue that we will face.

MS W.M. DUNCAN (Kalgoorlie — Deputy Speaker) [6.25 pm]: I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the Premier's Statement and also note a lot of the great work that has been done by this government, particularly in regional areas, a lot of which has been accomplished through royalties for regions. The Premier noted that a lot is going on in the regions, and a lot of it is to do with my area of interest in resources projects. He noted that \$146 billion worth of projects are either going into or are under construction, and he listed some of those. The great proportion of expansion is occurring in the iron ore industry, and that is where the profit is being made. In the gold industry, which is what Kalgoorlie is well known for, times are not quite so rosy. The cost of production in the gold industry has doubled from \$511 an ounce in 2007 to \$1 100 an ounce in 2013. A survey by Citi noted that 98 per cent, based on production, of gold companies have production costs that match or exceed the current price of gold. The price of gold has come up a little in the past week or so; it is over \$1 300 an ounce now. Hopefully, that will continue. The gold industry is under pressure at the moment. It is still a very important industry, delivering \$8 billion in gross state product, employing 25 000 people and delivering over \$220 million in royalties. In light of the royalty rate review that is going on at the moment, we really need to keep in mind that the gold industry is a little fragile. The temptation of it being low-hanging fruit with the gold royalty review concerns me. Seventy-seven per cent of our royalties come from the iron ore industry, but they come through state agreements, which need Parliament to change them. That is more difficult but it is probably where there is more ability to pay.

The other issue that the Premier noted was the number of people coming to Western Australia each week. He said that 81 000 people moved to WA last year—1 500 people a week—putting a great deal of pressure on our infrastructure and services. In the Kalgoorlie area, particularly Kalgoorlie–Boulder, we have seen a great deal of construction, which has been greatly appreciated by the people of Kalgoorlie–Boulder. There is the new courthouse in the old post office building, which is a magnificent restoration and a credit to those who were involved. Over \$18 million of royalties for regions funding went into the upgrade of Kalgoorlie Hospital. Another big project that is about to commence is the redevelopment of Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison, which should create a lot of jobs and perhaps work for contractors. I have some concerns about that project. I received a message the other day from someone who tagged me in a post on Facebook. It basically said —

Goldfields Business's: Are you losing contracts to outside contractors? are you feeling local and State government are not supporting local contractors?? Id love to hear your views. There are very large Government projects going on around Kalgoorlie Boulder and very few local companies are involved. Keeping the money in the Goldfields is a major concern as there are local business's closing everywhere ...

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Following last year's state election campaign, in July the government announced its commitment to the Buy Local scheme and the decision to increase the price preference fivefold from \$50 000 to \$250 000 to support regional businesses and to make sure regional businesses employ regional workers when they tender for government work. What concerns me is that government agencies are not paying due heed to our Buy Local policy and contracts are going to out-of-town contractors, often because they have submitted the lowest price, but possibly because they are not aware of current conditions such as the heavy clay soil or the availability of the necessary expertise or contractors. They then discover that they should have taken these things into account in their initial tender process and put them in as additional out-of-contract payments, and the project probably ends up costing somewhere near what the local business thought it would in the first place, but the local businesses have missed out. During the election campaign, the Nationals talked a lot about the Buy Local policy and strengthening the Buy Local provisions to include stronger government purchasing policy in relation to royalties for regions investment. The Nationals also talked about strengthening the role of the Small Business Commissioner and appointing a Buy Local watchdog to the regional development commissions to examine the awarding of royalties for regions contracts to make sure they comply with strengthened government regional policy. I look forward to that happening because there is an incredible amount of investment in regional Western Australia but we must ensure that local businesses and local contractors have the opportunity to benefit from that.

While I am on the subject of small business, I had the opportunity to meet the Minister for Police in Meekatharra recently and I greatly appreciate the opportunity that she gave me and the member for North West Central to bring in some of the local hotel owners from the regions to meet with her. They are suffering at the hands of some sections of the Liquor Control Act that allow liquor restrictions to be brought in under section 114 at very short notice. These businesses are lawfully going about their business and suddenly they find their business is restricted, having bought in stock and engaged staff and organised their rosters. There was a classic example of this on the weekend before Christmas when, with just 24-hours' notice, police initiated a section 114 notice that was applied to all the northern goldfields hotels. On Thursday they were told they could not sell takeaway alcohol between Friday lunchtime and Monday lunchtime, and Christmas fell on the following Tuesday. The police officer said that the hotels had 24 hours to put up some notices around the pub and that people should know about it because it is a small community. What he did not understand was that the drillers who had been out in the bush for six weeks and the people from pastoral properties who come into town to get their supplies were totally disrupted because of this restriction. Another thing is that the people being targeted who may misuse alcohol if a funeral is on or something, know what is going on and bring in alcohol by the taxi load, so the whole object of the exercise is defeated. These small businesses are often the lifeblood of our small regional towns and supply not only alcohol, but also a pool table, a footy game on the television and a restaurant. They are the things that make a difference to our little communities. I appreciate that the Minister for Police came and heard the publicans in my electorate and I hope that she will take note of what was said.

The Premier also talked about rebuilding our public hospital system with a \$7 billion investment into 80 different projects in more than 100 towns and cities across the state. This is truly an amazing achievement; this government has certainly transformed health services in Western Australia in not only the city, but also the regions. We have new hospitals in Albany, Karratha and Port Hedland, although that was started under the previous government. We have also seen upgrades to hospitals in Kalgoorlie and so on. This is all greatly appreciated but there is still more to be done. A couple of issues raised with me in my electorate need attention under some of these regional health initiatives. The Southern Inland Health Initiative has put over half a billion dollars into regional health services in the southern half of Western Australia. In the most recent budget, the North West Health Initiative makes commitments to health, but the goldfields, northern goldfields and Ngaanyatjarra lands have really missed out—there is a bit of a hole there.

I have spoken to the Minister for Regional Development and will be raising with the Minister for Health the need for a health initiative for this region, particularly regarding Laverton Hospital. That facility is very outdated and leaks, and to get patients to the ambulance they have to be wheeled through the waiting room, past the staffroom and out through the back. It is really unsatisfactory. I have had a commitment from the Minister for Health that the WA Country Health Service supports the replacement of Laverton Hospital with a contemporary facility that will promote primary healthcare and provide multidisciplinary and visiting services. The new facility at Wiluna is a classic example of that type of facility. However, this must happen sooner rather than later and I look forward to the commitment being met.

The Menzies nursing post is another health issue that could be rolled into the discussion about the Eastern Region Health Initiative or the expansion of the existing initiative. The post has been without a nurse for quite some time and in spite of everyone's best endeavours, we really cannot seem to get the post re-established. I

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have written to the minister about this and he has written back and said that they are providing a drive in, drive out service three days a week, but in the last week I have heard that it has been reduced to only one day a week. We need a more permanent service. The Yilgarn Iron Province to the west of Menzies is being developed and there are plans to put a 40-man camp in the town of Menzies, so it will be very important to have health services there. The highway going through that town is very important. In a Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations hearing on 7 June 2012, I put the question to the then chief executive officer of WA Country Health Services, Mr Ian Smith, and the assurance that he gave me in his response was, “We have to find a solution to getting a long-term permanent appointment there.”

I really want to see that happen. In spite of our best efforts, we have not been able to do that. The Shire of Menzies has offered to assist with funding. There was a question about the accommodation being attached to the nursing post and it was thought that maybe that was a disincentive because the person in the job would be available 24/7, but I negotiated with the Department of Housing and the Shire of Menzies to make a separate house available. We really need to solve that issue for the people of Menzies. They are holding a public meeting tonight, which unfortunately I cannot attend. I am very committed to seeing that problem resolved.

I will also talk about education, which has had quite a lot of coverage here today. In particular, I will refer to the Premier’s report to the house that the first 10 child–parent centres are open at public primary schools in vulnerable communities and the construction of a further six will occur, and to the government’s commitment for additional school health nurses. These are greatly needed and greatly appreciated. In particular, we need to be conscious of the needs of our young Aboriginals and particularly those in the Ngaanyatjarra lands and the northern goldfields. There has been a working group in the Ngaanyatjarra lands trying to give their older kids the opportunity to pursue their education away from home. It was very interesting to hear the member for Armadale talk yesterday about the need to maybe put some of these kids into hostels, and then about how we are all a little reluctant to do that because of the terrible history of the stolen generation. But this desire for the children to have somewhere to stay to attend an education facility is actually parent-directed, so the parents in the Ngaanyatjarra lands want to see this for their children and grandchildren. Often, the grandparents are more literate and able to read and write better than their grandchildren, and that is a real indictment on us all.

With that in mind, it has come to my attention that the current purpose of the Leonora detention centre—it is actually called an alternative place of detention; APOD—is coming to an end, and it will no longer be required as a detention centre within a month or so. I have been contacted by the owner of that facility saying that he would actually really support it being used as an educational facility for young people. It is certainly well set up. It has 170 accommodation rooms all-up, it has a large kitchen that can be used for a training kitchen, it has offices, classrooms, medical facilities, laundries, and it has all the data cables and IT going into it. It has an established volleyball and soccer field and a swimming pool. It is absolutely perfect for the purpose of young Aboriginal people, particularly those who may need a bit of extra TLC, to go and stay and study and get themselves on the right path. That would happen with the support, mentoring and encouragement of their own people. In fact, I had the opportunity last week to have in my office the elders of five language groups from that region, which is really quite an achievement and honour.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms W.M. DUNCAN: We discussed the potential of this facility in Leonora, and they are very excited about it. I really hope we can work together with the Ministers for Regional Development, and Education, and perhaps Mental Health, to use that facility for the benefit of our Aboriginal children. I read in the *Koori Mail* of 12 February a report that has been released as part of the Closing the Gap Clearinghouse, which was a review of early childhood parenting education and health intervention programs for Indigenous children and families in Australia. The article notes that working with parents and families in a culturally sensitive way achieves the best outcomes. That is what these elders were saying to me last week. They said, “The kids can stay there, Leonora has a district high school, and we will go in and give them the cultural side of our history. We can take them out bush and tell them some of the stories. We can help them revive their language and have pride in who they are.” Those kids would have the ability, I think, to live in both worlds, which is what they have to do. The *Koori Mail* of 12 February also features an article by Warren Mundine in which he noted that —

School attendance is the number one priority in Indigenous education. In some areas school attendance is woefully low and some kids never attend school.

He is talking to his own people in this article, and he went on to write —

The only thing stopping our kids from attending school is us.

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I think the critical message for all of us is that to get Aboriginal kids to attend school, we have to have the involvement of their parents, elders and families. The Leonora facility would be just perfect for that.

I was also interested in the Premier's comments on the achievements in the area of mental health—the appointment of the Minister for Mental Health, the creation of the Mental Health Commission and also funding for the step up, step down facilities. I would like to really emphasise that after the improvements to Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital, it is now well placed to have a step up, step down facility. That is where it needs to be; that is the regional hub for mental health patients. Apparently the funding is there and it was announced quite some time ago, but we have not really heard what is happening there. I think it needs attention soon.

There has been a lot of discussion today about housing, homelessness and children being the victims of homelessness. I just thought I would share with members something we are doing in Kalgoorlie. It is just a quiet little thing, but it is actually making a difference. We have a little group that meets in my electorate office quite regularly called Save our Homes. We get the regional manager of Housing, Diane Blade—who deserves a medal—to come along. She has been with Housing for quite some time in the goldfields, doing a brilliant job. She is very, very keen to ensure that people find housing in a timely manner. This group, which includes my electorate officers and various non-government organisations—the Salvation Army, Red Cross and groups such as the community legal centre; anyone who can actually help a family stay in their home—meets and when a family receives a first strike, then everybody knows about it and we sit around the table and say, “Right, here's a family at risk of losing their home. What are the issues? How can we work with them to prevent the second and third strike happening?” It is working quite well. We still occasionally, obviously, have families rendered homeless through this three-strikes policy, but the work that is being done by the fabulous community groups in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, with the support and active involvement of the Department of Housing and Diane Blade, I think is actually making a difference, and perhaps other members may, and probably do, do something similar.

Finally, I wanted to have a bit of a talk about transport, which is very important in the goldfields region. We heard the other day from KCGM that the mine life of the Super Pit has been extended from 2021 to 2029, and obviously there are other mining projects around the goldfields region, so we are not facing the end of the world in 2029. But it is a timely reminder that we need to think about economic diversification for our regions that are very dependent on the mining industry. That is why it is very important that we proceed with the PortLink project, which is a project that sees Kalgoorlie–Boulder as a logistics and transport hub, with Esperance port as one link, Port Hedland port as another link, and Oakajee, should that occur, as another. But also, of course, linking into that are the other very important arteries, such as Great Eastern Highway and Outback Highway, which goes up through Laverton and out through the Ngaanyatjarra lands and to Warburton and on into the Northern Territory. It is very important that these links are given the precedence they need to have the ability to generate other industries and diversify the economies of these regions, not only through the transport of freight, fuel and equipment, but also it would encourage, perhaps, bringing mining equipment down from the Pilbara to be repaired in the goldfields. We are already talking about a mobile liquefied natural gas operation from where the gas is brought down from the Pilbara through the goldfields and goes to the eastern states and so on. These are the sorts of things that that link would be able to support, and create jobs and diversification for our economy. I am disappointed that the funding that was promised for 2013–14 for the 15 passing lanes on Great Eastern Highway has been delayed and that the passing lanes will not be finished until 2017–18. Those passing lanes are incredibly important. Great Eastern Highway is a dangerous highway, but it is a very busy one. It is the highway on which all the freight from the eastern states comes to Perth. Hopefully, with PortLink we will be able to siphon off a bit of it and reduce the pressure on Perth and on Great Eastern Highway, but it will always be a very important link for freight and for tourism. It is good to know that the federal coalition government has committed \$67.1 million for widening Great Eastern Highway. My amateur mind is thinking that perhaps the widening needs to come before the passing lanes, so maybe I am slightly inclined to forgive the delay of the project. However, I think it is very important that we keep Great Eastern Highway in the forefront and upgraded.

Finally, the outback highway, as I mentioned before, goes from Laverton out to the Ngaanyatjarra lands. The Ngaanyatjarra lands are a prospective area for minerals. Metals X, BHP Billiton and other mining companies there are starting to develop the projects, but they are basically stranded. There is no decent infrastructure to get their product out. The local Ngaanyatjarra people are very keen to see these projects develop, because they see an opportunity for jobs for them and economic sustainability on the land to which they have very, very strong cultural links. Therefore, I urge the government to not forget the Ngaanyatjarra lands. Not only do they have the potential for mining development, but also the arts and culture out there are mind blowing. In fact, several touring art exhibitions have gone from the Warburton arts centre to China, which is fantastic. They got a huge response there. The slumped glass that they make is what we see in the Aboriginal Peoples' Room. We want to

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make sure that the new beginnings of the culture delivering itself into the wider world are encouraged and allowed to blossom.

I really look forward to this forthcoming year, 2014, and beyond. We have a lot of work to do in the goldfields and the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder. I know that this government is pretty committed to that. We will have our first meeting on Friday to look at expending the \$150 million under the goldfields–Esperance revitalisation plan, which will see some great changes in my region.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**.