

Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Mia Davies; Mr Shane Love; Mr David Templeman; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Alison Kent; Mr David Scaife; Mr Hugh Jones; Mr Chris Tallentire

PREMIER'S STATEMENT

Consideration

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [2.55 pm]: Now, where was I? While the Minister for Education is in the house, I want to recognise that there is a nasty fire in the Esperance town site that is also threatening buildings at Esperance Senior High School. I want to wish the best of luck to everyone fighting that fire.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Is that now?

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: It is right now, along with another fire that is about four kilometres from my farm.

Dr A.D. Buti: You should go. Seriously.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Regardless of that, I will move on to a couple of other subjects that I want to wrap up. Welcome back for the year, Deputy Speaker.

As I did with my question to the Premier, I want to focus on live export. This subject is obviously close to my heart. I have a very clear understanding of what our sheep producers are going through, throughout the state. My electorate of Roe has more sheep than any other electorate in the state. Live export also certainly affects the likes of the member for Central Wheatbelt and many others, including the member for Moore. We are very concerned that, as we brought up in question time today, the federal government is dictating policies to our state. Since 2018, the industry has made radical improvements. Mortality rates, the way sheep are put into feedlots and transferred onto ships, and their conditions have improved. I have been on one of those ships to see the ventilation system and so forth, and sheep are handled very well.

Over the last few weeks, we have seen how the federal government, federal minister and federal department are dealing with things. The federal minister commissioned a panel report. Farmers, supply chain operators and many others turned up last year in good faith to put in their submissions and talk about how the live sheep export business is so important to their occupation or business. They turned up in good faith, but the federal minister cannot even be bothered to release the report, which he has now had for several months. I thought he was going to wait until federal Parliament finished last year and release it straight after that, but that did not happen. We are now in mid-February, and we still have not seen the release of the panel report. Members can understand why Western Australian sheep growers and supply chain operators are very upset at this debacle and how the minister is treating Western Australian sheep growers. I point out that this has an intrinsic value to the confidence and supply of sheep within the state. It has a large impact on industry confidence and the price of sheep in the saleyards and the like. It is understandable why sheep growers and supply chain operators in Western Australia get upset when the federal government deals with this industry in the way it has. What we are seeing now is quite frankly a pattern of the Premier or our WA state government not standing up to federal government decisions and policies that affect Western Australia—whether it be the cashless debit card or Qatar Airways. The Middle East wants more chilled meat, but the federal government cancelled out the ability for Qatar Airways to take that meat across.

The number of skilled migrants has dropped from over 8 000 back to 2 750. We have heard very little from the Premier and ministers on that. Apparently, according to today's announcement, the GST is all sorted now, but there are still the industrial relations laws and the right to disconnect. That is going to have a massive effect on businesses right throughout Australia. This is an opportunity for this Premier and state government to actually stand up and be counted.

In light of that and the importance of the live export industry to Western Australia, the sheep growers and the communities and businesses within my electorate, I would like to move an amendment.

Amendment to Question

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I move —

That the following words be added after “noted” —

and that this house condemns the Cook Labor government for its failure to stand up for Western Australia's interests in the face of live export bans, its failure to stand up to the federal Labor government and its policies that are harming the people and businesses of WA

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt) [3.01 pm]: I am very pleased to rise to speak to the member for Roe and Deputy Leader of the Opposition's amendment about live exports. As the member mentioned, it is now February 2024 and we have had months of uncertainty in an industry that underpins so many of our communities and is an important contributor to our state's economy. All we have heard from this government are hollow words.

Extract from Hansard

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I take the point that the member for Roe made about the vigour with which we saw the Premier respond to the Dorothy Dixers. I might point out that we do not hear Dorothy Dixers from the government about live export, so we can tell it is not important at all. The government was going to take up the fight on the GST. It is to the point that a GST “fairness fighter” contingent has been assigned within a department somewhere in the government to make sure that that fight continues and that the Premier is well armed whenever he stands to speak to the Prime Minister. This is despite having had a rock-solid promise from not just the Prime Minister, but also the national cabinet, that there would be no change.

To me, that GST “fairness fighter” contingent is somewhat superfluous. Perhaps we could shift that across to something that the national cabinet does not support—yet this government says that it does—that is, the live export industry, particularly for our sheep farmers. We want more than hollow words and placations from the state government to make our industry feel like it is being heard. Nothing has changed, except that the industry itself has continued to go into decline because of the loss of confidence and attacks from its own state and federal governments. That is what is happening. Labor has form for this. In 2011, the then federal Minister for Agriculture made the disastrous decision to shut down the live cattle trade; that still has ongoing ramifications for our nation that are in the courts as we speak. The Labor government made an ideological decision instead of one based on facts and understanding and did not take advice from its own departments. In the interim from 2011 to now, we have seen people pushed to the brink of financial and emotional ruin, and, in fact, there were suicides in that industry right across the nation in Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland.

I note that the now federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, Murray Watt, was very quick to point out at a Northern Territory Cattlemen’s Association conference late last year that the government has absolute confidence in the live cattle trade and that no changes will be made to that industry; it is just the Western Australian live sheep export industry that does not have the confidence of this minister, and I have to ask why. Why is there a lack of support from our federal government that purports to understand Western Australia and be on our side? I conclude that, as a good Queenslander, he understands the value of the live cattle export industry in Queensland but has absolutely no interest in understanding the dynamics—social, financial or any other means—of the sheep industry here in Western Australia. Shame on the state Labor government for not taking up the fight at every opportunity. It needs to put on the record support that is more than standing and responding to questions that we as an opposition put to keep this issue on the agenda. We need to make sure that the state Minister for Agriculture and Food is walking into state cabinet and saying that we need to do more, because the industry is under enormous pressure.

I will not go on about the complete debacle of the *MV Bahijah*. I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will comment on that. Needless to say, it has been a complete and utter disaster. The federal government and the department had more than enough time, after that ship was directed to turn around, to talk to their state counterparts to come up with a plan. We did not need to see an entire boatful of sheep and cattle hanging off the edge of Fremantle while we waited for a response. That was completely unacceptable. Again, we saw the government wash its hands and say that it was a commercial issue and a matter for the exporters. It did not see it as a risk to our agricultural industry and our export relationships, and it did not step in to support that sector to make sure that we got a better outcome than the one we are still seeing being played out today.

This is not the first time I have seen, essentially, the gaslighting of the industry, in that it is neither the fault nor the problem of federal or state governments. Complicit in that are the Prime Minister, the federal Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry and our state minister, because she does not push back when these comments are made. As a result of oversupply, we have seen prices fall and a loss of confidence in the industry. These ministers have essentially removed themselves from taking any responsibility for their decision, which they announced federally and agreed to at a state level, by saying that this is an oversupply issue. That loss of confidence has knocked the industry, and we have seen prices at the saleyards drop from multiple hundreds of dollars a head for sheep and cattle to potentially \$1, if we are lucky, and if farmers are not shining up the bullets and digging holes. I am not exaggerating; farmers will be forced to make these decisions in the coming weeks and months if federal government members do not bring certainty into the system. They have just washed their hands of it. It is another issue! It has nothing to do with us saying that we will shut down the industry! That has not rocked the confidence of our farming community and the businesses that rely on it at all! Note the sarcasm, please, Hansard. It is, I think, a complete disaster. Again, these governments, at both state and federal level, show that they have no real interest in agriculture.

I note the Premier’s Statement today, which we are responding to, and I look forward to contributing on other issues later in the week. Last year we had a significant budget surplus, and a section of the Premier’s Statement was about economic diversification, which is something that we hear bandied about by governments of all persuasions, but the previous Premier and the now Premier seem to make it a bit of a catchcry. It has been said to me on a regular basis in my electorate—where this is not just an academic argument; it is people’s livelihoods—that their businesses are reliant on this industry. It is not just farmers, but also the trucking supply industries, the agents, the wool classers and those involved in the wool industry, the businesses that then operate in those

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communities, our grocery stores, and all the service providers in the wheatbelt. It is a cornerstone of the economy in that area. Governments talk about economic diversification. Why are we taking away something that is already generating income and stability, and creating drought resilience when we have just been through one of the hottest summers I can recall? Why are we taking away those options for price stability and all the things that we know that having that option on the table creates? Why are we taking that away? It will be taken away from the community, with a big chunk of money pulled out. I do not see this government sailing over the Darling Range to try to replace that chunk of contribution and what removing it will do to start unpicking the social and economic fabric of our communities. I simply do not see it doing that in the wheatbelt. I see it operating in Collie, where we are transitioning an economy. I see the government paying lip service to transitioning an economy where it has shut down the industry associated with the old-growth forest. I see nothing from our state government that acknowledges this will have a significant financial and social impact in the wheatbelt. It is causing problems right now. I have seen absolutely nothing from this government.

Sadly, it has been left to shires like those involved in the North Eastern Wheatbelt Region of Councils. We had NEWROC in Parliament House last week and it has written to the state and federal ministers about the specific impact this decision will have in its corner of the wheatbelt. Whatever the numbers are in the Econisis report, *Live sheep by sea trade policy: Impact on the NEWROC economy*, we can multiply that, because this is only a small number of shires: the Shires of Dowerin; Wyalkatchem; Nungarin; Trayning; Mt Marshall, which is Beacon and Bencubbin; Mukinbudin; and Koorda. They have worked together because they have seen that this issue needs addressing for their communities. They want the government to be armed with all the facts, right until the moment that the axe is swung and there is no point of return. They will fight, like the National Party, the Liberal Party and our federal colleagues will fight, to make sure that the decision is made knowing it is doing it to the detriment of these communities, and that there was an alternative to allow this legitimate industry to continue.

I will read directly from the letter written to Hon Jackie Jarvis in May 2023. I have the report and I am happy for anyone who would like to read it. I am sure members will find it has rigour and demonstrates just how important this sector is, particularly to the electorate of Central Wheatbelt and by extension the broader region. The letter states —

The NEWROC wishes to express our support for the live sheep trade by sea. Our purpose is to work together for successful communities, and we have two long term goals in our strategic plan (out of four) that are relevant to our support for the live sheep trade by sea;

1. A stable to increasing population in the ... communities and
2. Industry growth and diversification.

The agricultural sector in the NEWROC district has consistently had the highest number of businesses. Agricultural businesses across the seven local government areas contributed \$408m to the Western Australian economy in 2020/21 of which \$37m was from the sheep industry.

Bearing in mind, this is just a small group of shires. The letter continues —

During the 2020/21 financial year there was 402,574 sheep in the ... district, and 180 businesses involved in the industry.

That is 180 businesses in those shires that will see some form of economic impact as a result of this disastrous decision. They rely on the sheep industry; it is not just our farmers. The letter further states —

... transport carriers, wool classers, shearers, stock agents ... all of whom will be impacted by the phase out of live sheep exports by sea which will reduce industry growth and diversification ... will most certainly affect their bottom line, their viability and potentially their presence and valuable contributions in our communities, including our population.

I heard the member for Roe in his contribution earlier talking about volunteers and how hard they have been working over this summer on emergency services and responses. Where do members think those volunteers come from? They are people who have jobs and contribute to their communities—those who pitch in to make sure that we remain safe. This will undo and unpick these communities. We do not have a lot of fat in these systems. Outside of Northam, York and maybe Merredin, most of my communities have a population for the entire shire at the 500 to 700 people mark, and that would be generous. Taking away 180 businesses, along with the flow-on to our schools, our hospitals systems and our other businesses, will have a catastrophic effect.

At some point the state government will have to realise that there will be an economic impact for it. There will be, because the government will be required to step in where these self-sustaining economies were taking care of themselves. The state government is being short-sighted in not putting the full weight of what it can and what I have seen it do when it cares deeply about an issue—or when it wants to be seen to be standing up to the federal government. There is quiet from the backbenchers, hollow words from the Premier and a reluctance by the government to engage on the issue except when the member for Roe or the Leader of the Opposition or anyone

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from this side of Parliament raises it. It means that the government is not committed to that industry, and anybody who says otherwise is playing politics.

My communities deserve more. They deserve more from their state and federal government representatives, particularly when they have significant power, a budget surplus and a platform to advocate on behalf of their state and the industries that are important to it. In addition to what the member for Roe talked about, there is much economic and social evidence of the changes that have been made by the industry to respond to what was seen as an unacceptable state of affairs. It has done everything that was asked of it by the government and regulators—over and above—yet this government sees fit to continue to support a federal shutting down of the industry. I do not want to be cynical, but I suspect that when members of this government talk to their colleagues and constituents in electorates like Fremantle, they will claim success in shutting down the live export industry. They do not say that when they are in my electorate. They use very carefully worded press releases and commentary to make sure that there is no risk to the meagre support they have in my area. But we are not stupid in the wheatbelt, the great southern and the midwest. We understand that this government does not support the live export industry, and it has an opportunity to step it up. It is a state election campaign year. This industry supports many, many people who are just as important as anyone anywhere else. They rely on an industry that might not be the sexiest or getting great support in the polls in *The West Australian*, but, by goodness, it most certainly is not the worst. There will be a significant diminishing of the communities I love, which work very hard to make sure they contribute to the state's economy and Western Australia more broadly.

It is time for the Premier and his Minister for Agriculture and Food to do more. I was devastated to read the comments from Hon Jackie Jarvis, who has essentially washed her hands of the matter and put her hands up in the air. This was as far back as March 2023; she said —

“I have pushed the issue as hard as I can, but we are now at the point where Murray Watt has said that this is happening,” ...

“We have to agree to disagree.”

Our minister has given up. What action has been taken? What correspondence has been exchanged? What advocacy has been done? We certainly do not see that minister standing proactively in the Parliament on this issue. She did not last year except when this side of the house raised it.

Once again, the agricultural industry has every right to feel like it is under attack or at least abandoned by its own government. I dare say that other industries are looking on and, when this finally occurs and the industry is shut down, if that is what happens, they will be nervously sitting there thinking, “Gee, are we next? What happens if we are on the Greens’ ideological agenda to shut everything down that does not align with their views, and the Labor Party are chasing votes in those inner-city seats?” What will happen to them? There are some unattractive industries in Western Australia, but they all contribute. They do good work, yet this industry has been abandoned by its government. It has done everything that has been asked of it to meet the expectations of the regulators and of governments.

I once again put on the record my support for the live export industry. I thank the member for Roe for his continual advocacy and our team for their continual fight for this industry, because that is what we will do right to the very end. I want every Labor MP to know exactly what that decision will mean when it finally comes through and this government releases the report and we see the demise of an industry that supports so many in our community.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition) [3.21 pm]: I would like to take the opportunity to contribute to this amendment to the motion that the Premier’s Statement be noted. The amendment really outlines an urgent issue for Western Australia. It states —

... that this house condemns the Cook Labor government for its failure to stand up for Western Australia’s interests in the face of live export bans, its failure to stand up to the federal Labor government and its policies that are harming the people and businesses of WA.

In taking note of the wording of this amendment, I would say that this is a condemnation of not just the Premier but also various members of the government who are tasked with making sure that the arguments for Western Australia are well known and well prosecuted in Canberra and elsewhere. It is about not only live export, although that is the issue that has been most spoken about, but also a range of other issues that I will touch on in the 20 minutes or so that I have to speak on this matter.

As the member for Central Wheatbelt has just been explaining, we know that the minister has been very quiet in standing up, supposedly, for Western Australia’s live export industry in this regard. She has been very quiet indeed. Freedom-of-information documents that were obtained indicate that when the investigative panel was in Western Australia and in the lead-up to that, over a number of weeks there was no written communication between the state minister’s office and the federal minister’s office regarding the issue of live sheep trade. It is

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incomprehensible to me how the minister could have been standing up for Western Australia and at the same time not communicating directly with the federal minister. I think she made some comments in the media that that was misleading and she had spoken to him. Where are the records, in the diary or the office, of those phone calls? We could find nothing. Usually, we could find a trace. It appears that Canberra had radio silence from the minister in Western Australia.

It is not unknown for state members of Parliament to be on the TV in states outside their area. I quite often see Treasurers from other states, for instance, expounding to their audience the need, in their view, to undo the GST deal or to get whatever they are after for their state, such as improved emergency services support. I very much doubt that anyone in Sydney or Melbourne has seen on their TVs our Minister for Agriculture and Food stridently arguing the case for the retention of the live sheep export trade in Western Australia. If someone could provide me with any evidence that that has occurred, I will gladly view it, because it would be a rare example of that minister standing up for the trade in Western Australia.

As I said, this amendment talks about a number of other issues that are affecting Western Australia and the ability of our industries to prosper. Why is that important? Well, nearly half the goods manufactured and made in, or exported from, Australia come from Western Australia. It is a huge contribution from roughly 10 per cent of the workforce of Australia and hugely important in making sure that both the federal and state governments have healthy budget surpluses. It is not the state government that makes surpluses; the heavy lifting for that is done by our industries and workforces in sectors that the government fails to support. Those sectors have enabled the government's expected revenue increases. We heard the Minister for Training and Workforce Development's views on the government's record in TAFE training places, but what we have not heard from her is what she has been doing to stand up to Canberra in the face of the 67 per cent cut in the skilled migration list. Prior to that cut, the Premier said that he expected the number of places to increase from roughly 8 000 to in the vicinity of 10 000. That shows the inability of this government to make sure that Canberra is listening to it. Work is not being done to ensure that the state government's message is being heard in Canberra. That is evident not just in the live sheep export issue but also with the skilled workers cap under the state nominated migration program.

We have also seen a situation develop in which the federal government intends to establish its own environmental protection authority and duplicate the approvals process when our resources and other sectors seek approval for something that triggers measures under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. Traditionally, there was cooperation with the state government. In the past, the state agency undertook the investigation and report, which was then approved by both the state and federal ministers. The federal government trusted our system to generate the investigation and report on which both governments would make the decision. In the previous Parliament, a change was made to the environmental protection legislation that paved the way for a dual approvals process. The change meant that not only would the state and federal governments cooperate on the investigation and report, but also the state would have delegated powers of approval, thereby cutting the red and green tape that is strangling industry in Western Australia. Far from that happening under the federal Labor government, we are seeing a reversal of that sensible reform and the imposition of a whole new layer of unnecessary environmental green tape for the approval of any project in Western Australia that has some significance under commonwealth law, whether that be under the EPBC act or within the commonwealth's jurisdiction. That is another area in which this government has been silent—absolutely silent—in addressing that issue and that threat to our industry going forward.

We have seen the imposition of an industrial relations agenda by the federal Labor government that is not in accord with the interests of the Western Australia workforce. It will also lead to a situation in which industry will be hamstrung in its ability to continue to drive forward those great mining and agriculture and oil and gas industries that are the engine room of the economy of our country. Those industries will continue to be hampered by these new industrial imposts that seem to be driven by the Greens and Labor with a long-held ideological viewpoint. We know all about Labor and its ideology. We saw that at the start of this term of government when an attack on regional representation took place despite that not being on the agenda. It had been on Labor's agenda for 130 years; it just did not tell us about it prior to the last election. I have seen some things come by in this current Labor government that have been on its agenda for a long time, and it has not really been upfront with Western Australians about what they will mean for the state and our industries going forward at a time when the world increasingly will rely upon our ability to get approvals for developing mineral industries, especially critical minerals, and the raw fuel of LNG to allow countries such as Japan to keep their lights on and their industry going forward into the foreseeable future.

My party, the National Party, has made a commitment towards a net zero target for the state by 2050. That has been long held. We do not dispute the need for sensible change in carbon emissions, but we also understand that part of that is enabling our industries to support the world in that transition. Although we hear these words being said by the Premier in this place, we do not see actions on the ground when dealing with the federal government that would

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enable that to occur. Instead, I think we have a looming crisis in terms of business and industry being able to get the approvals needed to move ahead and develop those projects to fuel not only the development of Western Australia but lead to the decarbonisation of other areas of this country and this state.

I do not think there is any evidence that the federal government holds any of those views. I do not see any evidence that the state government has been able to convince the federal government of these needs. We have a federal resources minister who says these things, but I doubt very much that she holds sway in cabinet over people like the federal environment minister and others who are ambitious and have been in Parliament for a long time and have embedded themselves in the Canberra system over many years and who have a much stronger voice in the caucus room and cabinet than the voices from Western Australia.

Perhaps it is a weakness of those voices from Western Australia in the federal Labor area that led to the preposterous situation in which the Premier of the day, our new Premier, the member for Kwinana, as one of his first acts, as an admission of his lack of profile compared with his predecessor, proposed to establish an embassy in Canberra. I would love to know the status of that embassy. We have ministers here who can probably update us on the status of the embassy—on how many staff are employed there, how many contacts they have had with officials in Canberra and what runs they have on the board, or, whether it is, like so many other things with this government, just an announcement with a budgetary figure and a whim, a wish and a hope that something might happen just by making an announcement and a budget allocation. That will probably not work. I doubt that the embassy will work.

I do not know how close it is to Parliament House and I do not know what it has achieved, if anything, or the time lines that the Premier has on seeing improvement in his ability to influence the direction of policy and discussion in Canberra. I have not seen any evidence that we have ministers in this chamber who are able to get onto the people in Canberra and ensure that the needs of Western Australia are known, whether that be the state Minister for Agriculture and Food or any of the state ministers involved in areas such as industrial relations, immigration and skilled visa lists, and of course environmental approvals.

Another matter of concern is looming, with the federal government considering what it might do about Aboriginal cultural heritage. We saw the disastrous foray of the Western Australian government into Aboriginal cultural heritage with its naive legislation. It was a disaster. It was such a disaster that within six weeks of being implemented it had to be pulled. There is a very real risk that there will be federal intervention in that area. We have seen how that could stymie development and growth in our mighty export industries. A clear example of that happened, not through the intervention of the federal government per se but through interpretations of cultural heritage and songlines, which was the initial situation with the Santos decision. It led to industry and the sector having no clarity about how they could go ahead seeking approvals. In the end there was a Federal Court decision, which provided a level of hope that sense may be brought into the discussion. The federal government continues to support organisations that helped lead to that delay. The judgement was scathing of persons involved. I do not need to go through all the details of that, but it is known that the Environmental Defenders Office uses its taxpayer-funded position to deliberately throw off the rails projects that will benefit Australia. If that is the sort of thing we are going to see from this federal government into the future, with its foray into legislation and a new system of interpretation and interaction with Aboriginal cultural heritage, I think we will be back where we were in July last year.

I think the member for Roe has done a great service to the house in bringing forward this amendment. He is a passionate supporter of the live sheep export industry because his electorate has some of the largest flock numbers in the state. The member for Central Wheatbelt similarly represents areas where the sheep industry is an essential part of the rural landscape and farming communities. It may not be known that the electorate of Moore has a large number of people who are concerned about the future of the industry. Many producers in my electorate may be on land that is not of high agricultural value, but for which sheep play a vital role in enabling the improvement of that country and the further development of communities and industry. If we take the sheep out of the equation, we will have a much-depleted industry.

What I do not think is understood about the live sheep trade is that this is one component of the sheep industry and if it were taken away, we could well see a collapse in the industry because it is an essential part of a very hard element of the sheep industry to market here in Western Australia. Live sheep is not a product that our supermarkets require, but sheep are required if people wish to grow a considerable amount of wool and make use of the stubble and summer grazing areas that are available in the wheatbelt and midwest as a result of the role that sheep play in the crop system. It is an essential industry in many parts of the state, including mine, and many people are very, very disappointed by the lack of support being shown here in Western Australia by the minister and by the tepid support that the Premier has given. It is easy enough for members to get on the front page of *Farm Weekly* and say that they support the live export trade, but it is harder for members to show their faces in the eastern states and make that case. I do not think anyone in Labor is doing that. I think the member for Central Wheatbelt highlighted that, secretly, most Labor members would be happy to see the demise of the live sheep trade. That would solve the problem for the Labor Party. I think that the philosophy espoused by the federal minister is the secret view of many Labor

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members of this place. It would be interesting to hear what Labor members tell their constituents when they talk to them about the live export industry.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House) [3.41 pm]: On behalf of the government, I am happy to respond to the amendment that has been moved by the opposition. It is an interesting amendment because it condemns the Cook Labor government for a decision made by the federal Labor government. Members of this place know that I very strongly support our regional communities because I not only live in one, but also am from one. I was born in Northam and my grandparents were sheep and wheat farmers in Narrogin. Although I cannot claim to know whether the sheep would have been bound for live export—because I am not 100 per cent sure—I know that my pop Jack Bates used to load up many a sheep-carrying truck. I suspect that back in the 1970s and 80s, most of those sheep would have gone to Robb Jetty. They might have been bound for live export—they could have—but I know that, as a wheat and sheep farmer, his stock was regularly sold on the market. Even as a young fella into my teenage years, I used to attend some of the sales with my grandfather in Narrogin, mainly. I do not think we went to Katanning, but I know that it has always had big saleyards.

Mr P.J. Rundle: Come to Katanning.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The member might take me to some other places and lead me astray!

I have great empathy with farming families because I was a regular visitor to the farm at Narrogin in Yilliminning and to Boundain in the Narrogin Valley. I know about the hard work that my family was engaged in as farmers, particularly with their stock. I also acknowledge that this is a polarising issue. I accept that. Although in all the contributions of opposition members there was no comment about the current situation of the ship that has been off the —

Mr P.J. Rundle: I did.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: You did; sorry. It is off the coast of Western Australia at the port of Fremantle. It has certainly, in many respects, put a focal point on the industry more broadly. I honestly do not think anybody in this place would not understand that a person living in a rural and regional community—particularly those reliant on the health and wellbeing of the farming industry, be it in grains or stock—knows of the impact that those viable operations have on the economies of the immediate towns and broader regions. It is very important for all Western Australians and members of Parliament to understand where their food comes from, what is grown in our agricultural regions, and the grain growing and stock raising in our regions. Everybody needs to continually remember where that comes from. I refute the view put quite often by members opposite that they are the only ones who understand the importance and impact of rural and regional farmers, grain growers and stock raisers. I quite honestly think any normal Western Australian should understand where their food comes from, and importantly, where our export markets came from and arose. We know that there are changes in climate and rainfall across the state of Western Australia, like the whole of the country and the globe. We know there has been a drying climate for decades. The science says that the impact of climate change is not only here and real, but more recent reports detail the very grave concern that the tipping point of global temperatures may already have been reached and the impacts that will have into the future. It means that all industries—it does not matter whether it is rural or regional industries, food manufacturing, grain growing or stock raising—face the same threats. Governments will face these challenges going forward. I assure the house that the Western Australian government has put its strong value of our agricultural regions and farmers very clearly in this place, as the Premier did, including late last year. The federal government has embarked upon a policy initiative that it seems it intends to implement. As we are aware, the federal minister announced a review, in which various interests made submissions, including the Western Australian government. The Western Australian government's submission made it clear that if the federal Labor government, or any federal government, intends for a phase-out to go ahead, that there is an absolute need to significantly work on supporting farmers in any necessary transition. That has been made clear. It also needs to be done in a reasonable timetable.

I do not know, member for Central Wheatbelt, whether we are at the stage that Collie is with its transition or Manjimup is with its experience with old-growth forest. I do not know whether we are at that stage with live sheep export. We may be and, if we are, any government will need to have a very strong policy that supports transition. We have made it very clear that our view is that we strongly support the new animal welfare measures that were implemented. They relate, of course, to the northern summer live export ban. We strongly believe that is working and is appropriate. It is interesting to bear in mind that the situation we saw off the coast of Western Australia more recently was a result of concerns about the health and wellbeing of the animals on that ship. We recognise that our sheep industry plays an important role throughout rural Western Australia. It absolutely strongly supports and underpins many of the businesses that operate in rural and regional Western Australia. It supports jobs and job growth in our regional and rural communities. It supports businesses and government enterprises that exist in those places as well, such as the services that are provided in education and health. One of the great things that the Minister for Transport has implemented, which has driven jobs back to the regions, is in Main Roads Western Australia.

Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Mia Davies; Mr Shane Love; Mr David Templeman; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Alison Kent; Mr David Scaife; Mr Hugh Jones; Mr Chris Tallentire

She made sure the workers returned. It is very interesting that when members on the other side were in power, they oversaw the drift of regional jobs away from the regions because they did not stand up and support them at the time, which meant the loss of road workers, for example. This Minister for Transport has returned that very specific policy. I am not going to get all excited but, for this opposition, during its time in Parliament including when there were National Party ministers in the previous government, they allowed the rail system to decline in their electorates and their regions. They allowed rail lines to be shut or decommissioned. There was not a whimper. Those members, including one or two who might still be in this place, were part of a cabinet that allowed that to happen. I know that during the Barnett–National Party alliance, sometimes they were not even around the table because they used to vacate the field. We know it is a factual thing that a number of National Party cabinet ministers would vacate the cabinet if the issues got a bit too hot and testy.

Ms R. Saffioti: Did they stand up for them?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: If members are talking about standing up, they did not stand up—they walked out! They left the table bare. On this sort of thing about standing up, they should have a look at their own record. I have given two examples. I could give more but I am not going to.

I want to touch on Premier Cook’s commitment to making sure that Western Australia’s interests are at the forefront of the interface with Canberra. Already he has highlighted very strongly and he has charged ministers that, over this coming year, they will be meeting regularly, visiting Canberra. The best time to visit Canberra is not during the holidays. It is not a good time to go over there when no-one is there. Of course, when the federal Parliament is sitting, that is the time to go. I assure members that a number of ministers will be visiting Canberra, continuing to put Western Australian interests and businesses first and forefront on those visits. I think that this is an important point. Let us put aside the COVID years when the borders were closed, but post that period, we saw very little of the Morrison government, including government ministers, here in Western Australia. In the nearly two years since the election of the federal Albanese government, there have been two federal cabinet meetings here, I think there is another one scheduled in the next couple of weeks, and my understanding is that there are regular visits and connections between various ministers and their federal counterparts. That includes Minister Jarvis in the other place and the conversations that she has with the federal agricultural minister, Hon Murray Watt. I know that she has regular conversations with that federal minister. The member’s assumption that the minister is mute on this matter and on matters relating to the interests of Western Australia is wrong. She has and continues to put Western Australia’s position and interests very strongly.

In my view, this is another important matter. This is an important debate. Do not get me wrong; I like it when we debate issues about regional Western Australia and the importance of our agricultural region and others, because I think it reminds us of the important role that those industries play, not only now, but in the history of our state. Our state has a very proud history in agriculture and associated industries that have made many of our towns and bigger regional centres prosperous. But, like any place that is challenged, we need to look at things so that when we need to respond to change, whether it be climate change or a change in economic circumstances, we can support those communities in their resilience.

Whatever is the fallout, if you like, of the federal government’s policy position, as a government, we will absolutely continue to support the sheep industry, and we will support it if and when a clear transition plan or major financial support is required. We have a history of supporting communities that have been impacted by transition factors, particularly in regional areas. The member for Central Wheatbelt highlighted two examples of this government’s response to factors that have impacted on communities going forward. We are seeing the transition that is occurring in Collie, with substantial support and investment by the government to assist that community in its transition from coal, and, of course, we have also had various packages, including the first packages that came in this place when the then Gallop government made the decision to end old-growth forest felling. This government actually has a very strong track record. I ask those members opposite who talk about standing up and use selective examples in their arguments: where were they when the rail system was under threat in their own regions? They did nothing when they had the power and the positions to do something, because they were in government. A number of them were sitting around the table in the cabinet and could and should have made very strong decisions on and advocacy for matters associated with rail in their areas. They also sat back and allowed a large number of government workers to be lost from regional Western Australia in the water, Main Roads and agricultural department areas. Those are three key areas in their electorates, and they not only did nothing at all to try to protect those jobs, but actually sat on their hands and closed their mouths or vacated the chamber or the cabinet room when such matters came up.

Members opposite do not have any track record in this, but I can assure them that the Cook government will continue to listen to and work and consult with the sheep industry and farmers, because we value them and recognise their importance to the Western Australian economy, regional economies, regional businesses and regional towns, and the people who live there. That is an important factor that I want to highlight to the house in responding to this amendment. We will not be supporting this amendment.

Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Mia Davies; Mr Shane Love; Mr David Templeman; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Alison Kent; Mr David Scaife; Mr Hugh Jones; Mr Chris Tallentire

Division

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (6)

| | | |
|---------------|--------------|----------------------------------|
| Ms M. Beard | Mr R.S. Love | Mr P.J. Rundle |
| Dr D.J. Honey | Ms L. Mettam | Ms M.J. Davies (<i>Teller</i>) |

Noes (44)

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mr S.N. Aubrey | Mr M.J. Folkard | Mrs M.R. Marshall | Ms A. Sanderson |
| Mr G. Baker | Ms E.L. Hamilton | Ms S.F. McGurk | Mr D.A.E. Scaife |
| Ms L.L. Baker | Ms M.J. Hammat | Mr D.R. Michael | Ms J.J. Shaw |
| Ms H.M. Beazley | Mr T.J. Healy | Mr K.J.J. Michel | Ms R.S. Stephens |
| Dr A.D. Buti | Mr M. Hughes | Mr S.A. Millman | Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski |
| Mr J.N. Carey | Mr W.J. Johnston | Mr Y. Mubarakai | Dr K. Stratton |
| Mrs R.M.J. Clarke | Mr H.T. Jones | Ms L.A. Munday | Mr C.J. Tallentire |
| Ms C.M. Collie | Ms E.J. Kelsbie | Mrs L.M. O'Malley | Mr D.A. Templeman |
| Mr R.H. Cook | Ms A.E. Kent | Mr P. Papalia | Ms C.M. Tonkin |
| Ms L. Dalton | Dr J. Krishnan | Mr S.J. Price | Ms S.E. Winton |
| Ms D.G. D'Anna | Mr P. Lilburne | Ms R. Saffioti | Ms C.M. Rowe (<i>Teller</i>) |

Amendment thus negated.

Consideration Resumed

MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River — Parliamentary Secretary) [4.05 pm]: On behalf of the people of Canning Vale, Gosnells, Huntingdale and Southern River, I rise to make a contribution to what is a fantastic Premier's Statement. Members would be aware that the Premier gave a personal shout-out to a fantastic business in Canning Vale, which is in my electorate. I would like to also place on the record my congratulations to Portable PPB and the work it has done as WA Innovator of the Year 2023. It is a fantastic business in my electorate. I would like to give a special shout-out to Simon Bolster, Peter Williams, Dr Mel Lintern and all the staff and team of Portable PPB, which is metres from Nicholson Road train station in Canning Vale.

In his address, the Premier also spoke about the fact that our trains will be running soon. It is looking more and more likely—although trains will run on the Morley–Ellenbrook line before they do on the Thornlie–Cockburn Link—that trains will run on the Thornlie–Cockburn Link in 2025. The Premier also spoke about the importance of the local manufacturing of railcars and the importance of the rail line in connecting my community and allowing people to have the public transport that they seek.

I sought permission from the Speaker to bring this gift into the chamber. I was at the opening of Thornlie train station in 2005, at which Paul Andrews, the then member for Southern River, was presented this gift by the then fledgling Metronet team. I would like to share it with the chamber. It was given to me by Gim Andrews because Paul has passed away. At the opening ceremony on 7 August 2005—like I said, I sought permission from the Speaker before bringing in this metal rail pike—this metal rail pike was presented to the local member and the local community. It was passed on to me, and I look forward to taking it to the opening ceremonies next year for the Thornlie–Cockburn Link, the Nicholson Road train station and the Ranford Road train station. I say that with great, great excitement.

The Premier spoke about how it is so important that we continue to stand up for Western Australia and work on easing cost-of-living pressures, boosting our housing supply and strengthening our health system. It is important that members understand how we will do that. It is also important for my community to have conversations about the importance of those things.

Sometimes people ask me what I envision for the communities of Southern River, Canning Vale, Gosnells and Huntingdale in years to come. I have already mentioned trains running on the Thornlie–Cockburn Link in 2025. Bus routes will connect families and bus stops will have shelter and seating. The eight-lane Ranford Road Bridge is almost ready to open; I drove over it today. The community can see that it is close to completion. The \$80 million Nicholson Road flyover, funded in 2022, is next to the Nicholson Road station. The women's and babies' hospital at Fiona Stanley Hospital will have two new multistorey car parks, which the Liberal Party is currently opposing. There will be a fully functioning youth plaza at Sutherlands Park, which I will expand on soon, and a footpath along Barrett Street so the community can enjoy the Bush Forever space—if fewer people choose to dump rubbish there. The government is also providing free or affordable training pathways into the careers and industries of tomorrow.

I would like to expand on a number of cost-of-living initiatives and things available to my community. On behalf of the City of Gosnells council and its awesome staff, Lotterywest and the Western Australian government, I invite my community to a free movie night to see *Sing 2* in Canning Vale on Friday, 1 March. We are aware that the cost

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of going to the movies is making it tougher for families. This is a free event. Come and join the council, the community and me at Auckland Parade Reserve. It is on Friday, 1 March 2024, from 5.00 pm. Auckland Parade Reserve is a wonderful local park and outdoor cinema. There will be kids' fun activities. Please come and enjoy it. I thank the council, Lotterywest and Perth Airport for their funding and support. I thank the WA government and the local council for supporting free and affordable events for all families in our community.

Addressing the cost of living is a major priority of the Cook government. I would like to speak to the seniors in my community who might be eligible for the cost-of-living rebate that is paid to people who have a Seniors Card. It is allocated in July. Last year, in 2023, we indexed and increased it, and there will be another payment in July this year. The deadline is coming up at the end of March. My office will be more than happy to run through the application process with seniors. The seniors' cost-of-living rebate is available to everyone who has a WA Seniors Card. Single seniors will be paid \$104 into their bank account. Couples will receive \$156. It will not say Terry Healy on their bank account statement, but it is a very important payment from our government to seniors. The important thing is that not everyone who has a WA Seniors Card is registered for this important payment. If people are unsure, they can contact the WA Seniors Card team or my office at terry.healy@mp.wa.gov.au, and we can walk seniors through the process. The deadline is coming up; at the end of May, seniors must have applied to be eligible for the July 2024 payment. I would like to see every senior in my community register for this payment so it can be provided to them. If people have any questions, they can contact the Seniors Card team or my office.

I take great pride in and am excited about inviting my community to a free event at my electorate office. Spider-Man will be at my electorate office on Monday, 8 April, from 4.00 pm until 5.30 pm. I am aware that these days the cost of taking families out makes it difficult. People who came last year know that we have done *Frozen* in the last couple of years. This year, Spider-Man will be at my office for free family photos. One meeting room in my office will become a movie cinema. There will be a colouring-in room. As we did last year, this year we will have four face painters. Mums, dads and families know that one of the stresses of going to a kids' event is the amount of time spent in a face-painting line. This event is free. People can google "Terry Healy" and "Spider-Man" and register online or go to my Facebook page. It will be on Monday, 8 April 2024, from 4.00 pm until 5.30 pm, and I invite all families and young people—boys and girls—to come and enjoy the Spider-Man event with us.

My office has started receiving a number of hard copy and digital petitions supporting this government's investment in new multistorey car parks at Fiona Stanley Hospital. One thing I would like to do is commend the Minister for Health for the investment that this government continues to make in health services for everyone. My daughter was born at Fiona Stanley Hospital. My other daughter was born at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. That is a common story across my electorate.

Unfortunately, another common story across my electorate is of people struggling to park at Fiona Stanley Hospital. For those unsure about the difference between Labor and Liberal as we approach the election in a year's time, Labor committed to building two multistorey car parks at Fiona Stanley Hospital and the Liberal-National position is to cancel that. I would like to thank all the community members who have started returning petitions in support of the work that we are doing locally and that Hon Stephen Pratt in the other place is doing. It is great to see that work and support coming through.

This Wednesday, 22 May, is National Simultaneous Storytime day. On that day, all across the country—at 10.00 am Western Standard Time and 12 noon Eastern Standard Time—everyone in Australia will be reading the same book. Over the last couple of years, we have provided a number of free books. My office is aware of the costs facing families these days, so it has 15 free *Bowerbird Blues* books for any teachers, parents, people part of childcare centres, homeschoolers or grandparents looking after kids on that day. This book will be available for National Simultaneous Storytime. It can be downloaded for free; people can go to my website for all the information. If someone wants to recommend it for their child's classroom, or they are eligible as a teacher—like I used to be—or a childcare worker, please contact my office to go into the draw to win one of the 15 free *Bowerbird Blues* books.

I would like to introduce the chamber to two special characters. My electorate, and most of Western Australia, has been taken over by *Bluey* madness. I am just like Roger Cook. He is a dad of two kids and I am a dad of two kids—just like Bandit. I have to say that people are absolutely loving Hammerbarn right now. This is Jeremy. For those who have not seen the Hammerbarn episode, he is a husband. Not everyone is able to get to Bunnings at 7.00 am to fight through the crowds. These are \$19 retail and are now being resold for over \$100, given the demand. My office has a free program available. All people have to do is share the Facebook post to enter, and they could get themselves one of the free Jeremys or Hecuba—with a beautiful little moustache. I am aware that many families are really struggling. They cannot afford to bid online for these things and cannot afford the crush and rush at the Bunnings' Hammerbarn. I want to make sure that my community knows that we will always make sure that there are fun and free family —

Mrs L.A. Munday: Are they popular?

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Mr T.J. HEALY: I was at Bunnings' Hammerbarn on the first day when there was a limit of four *Bluey* gnomes per person. That has now dropped to two. It actually reminded me of the toilet paper craziness of the COVID pandemic. It has been very intense. The member can also enter the competition, if she would like—share and like the Facebook page. Again, we will make these *Bluey* gnomes available so that the member's and others families can enjoy them.

I am very honoured to have some amazing, young student leaders within my electorate. Hon Roger Cook, Hon Rita Saffioti and I can do our jobs better when we are advised by active, engaged young people, and I would like to thank the people within my electorate who serve on their student councils or as faction captains and in all the roles that they do.

I will give a very special shout-out to each of them.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr T.J. HEALY: I take great pride in informing the chamber and the Parliament of Western Australia of the student leadership of Ashburton Drive Primary School. I would like to say thank you and congratulations to Lyla Harrison, Asbah Hossain, Kaycee Hiko-Kita, Dhinali Madurapperuma, Caitlin Mansveld and Toby Pearson. I also say congratulations to our faction captains: in Murchison, Steven Cox; in De Grey, Brandon Blurton; in Fortescue, Marley Reichelt; and in Gascoyne, Aalyiah Hallet. Thank you for your service.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership of Bletchley Park Primary School in Southern River, and I would like to congratulate our student councillors and the leadership team. Our head girl is Dakota Drury and our head boy is Gavin Bhullar. Our councillors are Levi Achariam, Sean Loh, Troy Chappell, Aila Fitzgerald, Tyson Ng and Siena Coldham. Our faction captains are, in Fraser, Noah Marinescu and Indiana Mussell; in Farmer, Jayden Godecke and Matilda Jancey; in Strickland, Max Kuzimski and Milania Farmer; and in Bradman, Evan Truscott and Geordie Chen. Thank you for your service.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership of Caladenia Primary School in Canning Vale. I had the great honour of being at the student elections last year. It was hotly contested as more than 80 persons put their names forward, and I say thank you to each person. I congratulate the successful nominees of that election: our head girl, Ebony Lankowski; our head boy, Lucas Chen; our councillors, Lily Adams, Audrey Sun, Nuoya Li, Alexis Limbert, Eboni Richards, Mason Bathgate, Nandhan Suresh, Max Andrezza, Jonah Grey and Jineth De Silva; and our music captains, Yina Liu, Jazz Sran and Charan Thota. Thank you. Our red faction captains are Alex Zhang and Sloka Juvvadi, and the vice captains are Samantha Walker, Kashvi Kattakola, Jasper Chou and Vinon Sararasinghe. Our green faction captains are Ethan Gould, Amanda Tsekos, Nilesha Senthuran, Victoria Cao, Alex Mill and Dave Godika. Our blue faction captains are Zach Sasidharan, Grace Samuell, Isabella Wojciechowicz, Cassie Chapman, Andres Martinez and Braxton Needle. Our gold faction captains are James Grocott, Shaurya Dave, and the vice captains are Alyssa Simmons, Amy Zhang, Dulain Abeynayake and Zac Martellotta. Thank you for your service to our local Canning Vale community.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership of Campbell Primary School in Canning Vale in my electorate. I would like to say big congratulations to the families, the staff and especially the students. Our councillors are Orlando, Rylan, Gurmehr, Abigail, Jeevan, Salma, Taleen, Ella, Denzel and Jeffery. Thank you. To our faction captains Jorja, Parlokjot, Blake, Drayke, Brendon, Athena, Mahizha and Demiana, thank you for your service to our community.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership of Canning Vale College, a school that is shared by me and Yaz Mubarakai as the local members of Parliament. I congratulate the college captains, Nidhi Matta and Sam Mamootil, and the year 12 councillors, Alana Patterson, Ariana Carot Collins, Ashley Vujcich, Ella McGoldrick and Grace Lillywhite. Thank you. Our year 11 councillors are Ana Hall, Eva Carot Collins, Jayden McGoldrick, Oliver Birrel, Sofia Bashir and Samantha Herbert. Our year 10 student councillor is Keona Latiff; our year 9 councillors are Chloe Drew, Lisa Writer, Lina Ichigaya and Rhyley MacPherson; and our year 8 student councillors are Cooper Loos, Emily Martin, Mila Gibbs, Rayna Yudistra and Theresa Benny. Thank you for your service to our community.

I issue my great congratulations and appreciation to the students of Excelsior Primary School in Canning Vale. I thank the student councillors, Ethan Forbes, Hasrat Batth, Ayumi Chu, Bhani Kaur, Myah Silva and Katelyn Tan. I thank the faction captains for Lacerta, Thomas Bainbridge and Tia Wulff; for Phoenix, Zachary Craig-Martin and Surmeet Kaur; for Delphinus, Jad Damoni and Ashili Chan; and, for Pegasus, Eric Zeng and Sophie Mosey-Weate. Thank you for your service.

I take great pride in announcing the successful leadership team of Huntingdale Primary School in my electorate and I say congratulations to our student councillors Janayah Blackwood, Rafa Al-Sumaidae, Owen Desmond, Nate Sorensen, Lincoln Muncey, Amelia Kelly, Tomo Snelling and Holly Blacker. I also say congratulations

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and thank you to our faction captains. For Acacia they are Ruby Hodge and Jackson Howarth; for Banksia, Martha Ah-San and Kalinda Keys; for Hovea, Kaylee Humphreys and Brandon Zilko; and, for Zamia, Isha Sygaco and Tallara Fitzgerald. Thank you for your service to our community.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the leadership team, prefects and captains at Providence Christian College in Southern River. I congratulate our two captains, Indiana Tyrer and Ewald Prinsloo, and our prefects, Maisey Baker, Katelyn Burrows, Nicola Joubert, Rakhia Kellahan, Josiah Kee, Asher Lim, Liyakha Mpfu, Aliane Ndayishimiye, Ameleigh Ramirez, Isaac Samuel, Ian Sharma and Grace Tantiprasut. Thank you for your service to our community.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership team at Southern Grove Primary School in Southern River. I commend the student ministers of Southern Grove Primary School. I look forward to working with you. Congratulations to Levi Brown, Kim Patricio, Sanjana Balaji, Chrystle Manlutac, Imogen Smith, Natalija Camprag, David Howe and Sean Wang. Congratulations to our captains, Charlotte Mansillas, Max Brady, Hiba Ismail, Nashe Marimbe, Reece Good, Kamsi Obinwa, Ivanka Mawire and Ariel Chidukwani. Congratulations and thank you for your service.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership of Southern River College and our student council: our year 12 head prefects, Katie Russell and Logan Gwilym; our deputy head prefects, Amelia Dillon and Adam Khurram; and our year 12 councillors, Nicole Whitte, Saira Mohammadi, Puneet Singh, Alex Cooper, Chloe James and Lila Tregoning-Boden. I acknowledge the year 11 student leadership and councillors: Kaeden Amos, Freya French-Cain, Hayley Verco and Rebecca Kwa. Thank you for your service.

I take great pride in informing the chamber about St Munchin's Catholic School. It is a school that Chris Tallentire and I share as local members of Parliament. I say congratulations to our student captains: Ruby Gardiner, Pavya Tharmarajan, Lona Wani, Oliver Chien, Stacy Kuto and Sandra Chan. I also congratulate our sport captains: in Clarke, Luxanna Suthakaran and Sophie Torregoza; in Canning, Mary Ma Awn Awi and Rocco Mullumby; in Limerick, Abbie Tyson and Kobe De Glanville; and in Carmody, Sherien Jeyakumar and Hailey Joseph. Thank you for your service.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership of Wirrabirra Primary School in Gosnells. It is a school shared by Chris Tallentire and I as local members. I say congratulations to our head girl, Latiah Woods; head boy, Xavier Cook; and our councillors, Leo Lian, Tyler Bennell, Takiah A, Henry Kunzli, Sienna Ryan, Esmeralda de Haan, Lahairoi Abeza, Verity Kimbar, Layla Mafarji, Samia Azam, Declan Quayle and Perry Irwin. Thank you for your service to our community.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the student leadership team at Australian Islamic College. It is a school shared by Chris Tallentire and I as local members. I would like to congratulate our student councillors in class 6A: Abdur Rahman Mohammed and Arfa Khan. In class 6B, I congratulate councillors Maytham Ali and Aala Aleem. In class 6C, I congratulate councillors Sultan Attar and Johara Jones. Thank you for your service to our community.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the leadership team at Gosnells Primary School. It is a school shared by Chris Tallentire and I as local members. I congratulate our head girl, Ella Grace; head boy, Charlie Mitchell; and councillors Charlotte Carthew, Tiana Nilo, John Bron, Sarvesh Siva Subramanian, Ana Bosnjak and Virraj Mahajan. Thank you for your service to our community.

I would like to inform the chamber about Gosnells' best postman. Victor Lynch from round 25 in Gosnells recently finished his leadership as a local postie. I would like to give a shout-out to Colin Ahearn, who wrote to me and allowed me to write to the Australia Post CEO informing them of the best postie. These are Colin's words —

Here is a guy that is super efficient at his job, extremely personable, extremely reliable and extremely trustworthy, He has always gone the extra mile to make sure our parcels are placed well so as not to be in plain sight, and avoids lawns where he has been asked to. Gets along with each neighbour in our street ...

You would not believe the amount of people that absolutely rave about Vic, his service, his personality, his caring for doing the job right. The post I put up on our local page had 459 reactions and in excess of 80 comments ...

... every comment about Vic praised him ...

On behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia, we also say thank you to Vic.

I take great pride in informing the chamber of the Gosnells citizen of the year, a resident from my electorate, Jennifer Keys. Congratulations on behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia. She has served in a number of

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 13 February 2024]

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roles, be it the Huntingdale Junior Football Club, Auskick, Hammers Softball Club or a running group. She is also a champion of the future Charles Hook Park, as well as our local school, and I say thank you to her for her leadership.

I also extend my congratulations to our local Gosnells youth citizen of the year, Syeda Maisara Muzaffar. Ms Muzaffar is a volunteer in a number of organisations and a well-deserving recipient of the Gosnells Youth Citizen of the Year Award. On behalf of Western Australia and on behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia and Gosnells, we say thank you.

I inform the chamber that at its recent annual Cadet of the Year Awards, RSLWA nominated two people for significant awards. First, the RSLWA Trustees' Award for Cadets WA went to our own Gosnells Police Rangers unit. I congratulate Senior Sergeant Pyper Kent. I thank her for all the things she has done in our community. Also of note, Hon Mark McGowan received life membership of RSLWA. It was wonderful for Minister Papalia, Minister Beazley and Mark McGowan to congratulate Pyper. On behalf of the Gosnells community, we say congratulations.

I say congratulations to new Order of Australia Medal recipient Aunty Millie Penny for her leadership as one of our local leaders and local Indigenous elders. She has made invaluable contributions to our local Gosnells and Aboriginal community. She has worked with Telethon Kids, providing health and other amazing research. We say thank you on behalf of the community.

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [4.35 pm]: I am going to give this a good go. I do not have much of a voice, but I will make a good start and keep sipping water! This is the first time I have had an opportunity to recognise the new Premier and new Deputy Premier, so I take this opportunity. It might seem like a long time since they were both elected to those roles, but I am incredibly proud to be part of the team that they are leading, and I look forward to taking the party into the next election with them. It is fantastic.

Part of my excitement about that is to try to make sure that the Premier brings forward two policies that I am particularly keen on, and I know he is very aware of them. One is to bring forward the Animal Welfare Amendment Bill. Of course, it is now six years since the review was done and we have been waiting and waiting while WA has slipped backwards in animal welfare standing from an Australian perspective. The review puts us in a position to draft a new bill that will be absolutely groundbreaking. I am really, really keen to see that happen this year. The second policy direction was recently announced in the WA Labor platform. That is the commitment to introduce an independent office of animal welfare. I really look forward to working with the Premier in the coming months to give some shape to that and provide some ideas on how it might look so that we can get ready to be in a position to back that into existence.

I turn now to a subject that I have spoken about in this place many times and I will continue to speak about because I think it is something that the Western Australian government has not yet really addressed with the level of seriousness that it deserves. As our world population heads towards 10 billion in 2050, of whom 32.8 million will be Australians, we are faced with both challenges and opportunities in how we will provide people with healthy, affordable, accessible and sustainable food. I will be long gone, as will many of us here, but our children are going to be part of this future and it is absolutely essential that we turn our attention to what we are doing now to provide for this population into the not-so-distant future. If we think 2050 is a long way out, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is making projections around scarcity of food by 2034. That is 10 years, folks. We in Australia are not immune to that. We already know that food and drinking water in Australia are not assured. If we look at some of the stats to which I will refer later, we see that it is not a given. Proper healthy food and access to water are still not available throughout Australia, and that situation is going to decline. The demand for protein will increase. Members might wonder why I am talking about protein, but it is one of the building blocks of life; if we do not have protein, humanity will end, as will everything else on this planet in fact. As the demand for protein increases, we will have to find ways to supply it that have less environmental and social impacts. It is important to note that if we were to increase livestock production to meet projected global demand, we would break this planet. In fact, to supply the population that is anticipated to be on this planet in 2050 with protein in the way that we eat it at the moment, we would need not one planet but three and a half planets. Just think about that for a minute: we will need three and a half planets the size of earth to feed the population if we do not get it right immediately! That is not that far in the future.

I am about to launch a social media campaign to outline why I am so passionate about the future of food in this country and the world, so I will refer to some of the slides that I will put into that pack when it comes out. I have already mentioned that access to healthy food and water is not guaranteed in Australia. In 2023, about 370 000 Western Australian households had inadequate access to food. Do not forget that figure—370 000. That is more than a quarter of a million! That is a significant number of Western Australians who do not have the right food or enough food. How does this impact on the planet? Why am I talking about food? Who cares? Well, up to 37 per cent of global emissions, including greenhouse gases, come from the food we eat and how it gets to us. We

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are completely fixated on energy as a solution to climate change, but it is not the solution on its own. We have to work with the agricultural sector and consumers across the world to reduce global emissions and greenhouse gases. It will not work if we focus solely on energy. Energy is important—I am not saying that it is not—but we are missing the elephant in the room at the moment. Food production currently accounts for 70 per cent of the world's consumption of fresh water. Three-quarters of the world's fresh water is currently taken up by agricultural production processes. Thirty per cent of food produced is wasted, between the time it is produced and the time it is consumed. Seventy per cent of our water is going into this and we are wasting 30 per cent of what we are producing. It is unfathomable that this is going on and that we, as a state and a country, do not have a strong position on tackling food security and the links between climate change and food.

The current system for food production drives a loss of biodiversity, pollution and deforestation, is responsible for immense animal cruelty, directly impacts on species loss, and creates human and animal sickness. I will talk a bit more about that because I heard a very interesting presentation from our Nobel prize-winning Barry Marshall some time ago, and I would like to share the information that he gave me with the house. I am sure the Minister for Health will be aware of what I am going to say. The United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization has calculated that the hidden cost of growing and supplying food for humans back in 2020 was \$A15.35 trillion. That is not what it cost to buy a steak, grape or pie; that was the hidden cost of transport, fuel and deforestation. It was the cost to the globe. As I have said already, Australia will become home to 32.8 million people. If left unchecked, the demand for simple animal-based protein will increase by 60 per cent. I have already told the house that three and a half planets the size of earth will be required if we do not shift from our reliance on animal-based protein and look at some alternative proteins. If someone wants a steak on their plate in 2050, it will cost them \$A382. WA's Nobel prize-winning professor, Barry Marshall, predicts that in 2050, 80 per cent of human deaths will be linked to zoonotic disease—that is, diseases that are transferred from animals to humans and sometimes back. I say that again—80 per cent. Do members understand the significance of 80 per cent of deaths being linked to the transfer of disease between humans and animals?

Australia has some of the strictest guidelines to protect us and help us develop resistance, but the problem we have is that humans still develop resistance to antibiotics. It does not matter what we do. This resistance continues. Barry Marshall is looking at how we can develop new antibiotics to fight this fight. We need to look at the cause. The cause is the conditions in which these animals are kept—that part of the supply chain and the food production system. That is where the problem lies. We should not try to breed cows that do not have disease. We should put them in places they can live without contracting and spreading disease. Diseases linked to intensive animal production include COVID-19, swine flu, influenza A and the Hendra virus. More diseases are expected to develop more frequently and more rapidly. It is batten down the hatches, guys! Zoonotic diseases are on the increase, and rapidly.

Future foods must protect the planet and provide food for everyone. Farmers, scientists, entrepreneurs, innovators and governments are key to achieving a sustainable food system. Creating alternatives to our animal-based sources of protein is therefore critical. I would like to define what I mean by alternative proteins. I am talking about alternatives to meat and animal-based products. Alternative proteins are not just plant-based proteins. There are proteins that come from cultivated, or lab developed, meat. These come from a more recently introduced process called precision fermentation. There are other things that I am not all that fond of thinking about—insects, for instance. There are many different forms of alternative protein. We have the alternatives. We just have to start to develop them, refine them, make them consumer ready, support them as governments and individuals and use them.

More alternatives are coming onto the market all the time. In the USA, I was fortunate enough to see a business that stems from NASA. It is a company that was created to develop food for astronauts in space. Members might be amazed to know that this food is developed from air. This NASA-based company has developed air protein. It develops protein fit for human consumption from CO₂. Wrap your heads around that one!

Printing meat is also starting to happen. With the speed at which change is coming, Australia is behind the eight ball. Western Australia has a huge opportunity to get behind these things and benefit enormously from the export potential. We were listening in this place to the Nationals arguing against the stopping of live exports and asking, "What are our farmers going to do?" Let me tell you, massive market opportunities are available. As a government, we just need to get behind our farmers and lead them into these new and diverse technologies.

Is alternative protein just a name? Is it just something other than an animal? No. It is about the benefits of alternative proteins over conventional proteins. To start with, alternative proteins use less land and water. I have given members the figures—70 per cent of water, massive amounts of land, and deforestation. Alternative proteins use less land and water, and emit significantly less greenhouse gases. Most have less salt, less fat and way more fibre. In fact, the Food Standards Australia New Zealand is looking very closely at these issues. When we talk about obesity epidemics and jokingly talk about ham being off the high school or primary school menus, we are talking about a product—processed meat—that has been recognised by just about every major medical and health authority in the world as being behind some forms of cancer and other forms of obesity and ill-health. We cannot say that we

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do not know that this is happening. It is happening, not only in our backyard, but all over the world. Alternative protein does not use antibiotics; therefore there is far less chance of antimicrobial resistance. Finally, and for me the most important thing, is that it is free from animal cruelty.

What are the opportunities for Aussie farmers in this space? The alternative protein sector is expected to grow globally into a \$65 billion Australian market by 2034. Where are we? What are we doing in this space? Which part of the market are we getting? The CSIRO is working hard. The department of agriculture and food needs to be put on notice that it needs to do things differently. Our state needs to do things differently. It needs to show leadership in that space. We have been overtaken by Victoria, which has a whole-of-government perspective on it. The federal government is also looking at it from a whole-of-government perspective.

I have written several times to the three key ministers involved—the Minister for Innovation and the Digital Economy, the Minister for Agriculture and Food and the Minister for Climate Action—and raised the issues. The starting point for this is not rocket science, despite the fact that I mentioned NASA! It is, in fact, the need to sit down together and create a strategy that deals with this immense challenge that we are going to face, and the immense opportunity that our farmers have of maintaining a clean and green global reputation.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: A number of sources, including the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, have estimated that our current global food system, from farm to fork, contributes up to 37 per cent of greenhouse gases and 70 per cent of the world's fresh water and biodiversity and animal species loss. Food wastage across the value chain creates pollution and animal cruelty. I highlighted this 10 minutes ago. I am saying it again because I do not think people understand, I do not think they listen and I do not think they get that this is a crisis occurring in our own backyard.

We have the way forward. The COP28 conference was held in December 2023 and a number of my colleagues attended. For the first time, parties came together and a declaration was signed by 134 countries, including Australia, recognising the need to work together to mitigate climate change, and the huge role transforming food systems will play in doing that. I will read a quote from the declaration that those 134 countries signed, including Australia. I think it is important that you hear it. It states —

We stress that any path to fully achieving the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement must include agriculture and food systems. We affirm that agriculture and food systems must urgently adapt and transform in order to respond to the imperatives of climate change ...

[We need to] Revisit or orient policies and public support related to agriculture and food systems to promote activities which increase incomes, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and bolster resilience, productivity, livelihoods, nutrition, water efficiency and human, animal and ecosystem health while reducing food loss and waste, and ecosystem loss and degradation.

If growing populations and the environmental impact of our current food production and processing systems are not enough to concern us, we also need to factor in rising concerns about food security and food supply chain vulnerability that we have experienced during the pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine. It is hard to have this conversation in Australia because we are a bloody big country. We grow a lot of food and we have got a lot to offer, but we have to have the conversation. We suffer from an obesity crisis in this country. There are many problems coming our way. We have an opportunity for our farmers that we have never before seen in this country.

The challenges facing food systems, globally and in Australia, mean that food security and livelihoods for present and future generations are under threat. In Australia, access to healthy food and water is not a given. The Australian *Foodbank hunger report 2023* states that three million people—that is 37 per cent of Australian households—had inadequate access to food. How shameful. This is a developed and wealthy country. That is just shameful. I know that committees of previous Parliaments have researched food security and found that dreadful things are happening, particularly in our rural and remote regions.

What are we doing about all of this? Alternative proteins are not the only agritech solution to these issues. I focus on them because I believe that they are a critical part of meeting the growing food demand and creating sustainable food systems. Alternative proteins include proteins that are plant based, use precision fermentation or are cultured. There are many others on the horizon. Alternative proteins offer a low-emission source of protein. They use less land and water than conventional protein production and they do not use antibiotics. A challenge for all food and production processing systems, whether traditional or alternative, will be to incorporate renewable energy solutions along the value chain.

Australia has a well-deserved reputation for its work in transforming its ag systems to be more sustainable. I would like to give a shout-out to the good work being done by Farmers for Climate Action and the many in the broader

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ag sector for their genuine actions to decarbonise their operations. Food Frontier, the peak body for the alternative protein sector, says that in the combined global context of climate change, growing food security, nutrition-related public health concerns and the ongoing disruptions to supply chains, the future of our food system is not guaranteed by sectoral decarbonisation alone. Agriculture cannot do it alone and it will not work if it remains business as usual. This is my addition to the quote. There are numerous opportunities for partnerships between agribusiness and the AP sector. While supporting efforts by the ag sector to transform sustainably and thrive, it is also important to support the development of protein sources and their industry.

This is not a competition between traditional and alternative production. There is room for everybody to be part of the food system's transformation. Alternative proteins are part of the supply-side solution to providing sustainable, healthy and affordable food choices. There is widespread recognition that APs are one opportunity, as recognised by the European Union, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and many countries, including Singapore, the USA, Canada, China, Denmark New Zealand and Australia. There are many opportunities out there for our farmers to strike good partnerships and make good deals. Australia is recognised as a quality, safe and green food producer. WA leads Australia's production of the major grains used in plant-based proteins, including wheat and oats, and we already have a major and growing market for pulses. WA has access to the largest and growing markets for APs in South-East Asia as well as strong supply chains and existing trade relationships. We also have excellent R&D academic institutions that we could leverage to progress the sector's adoption of other major grains like canola, barley, pulses and lupins. Lupins are a massive industry, by the way.

The number of AP companies in Australia was 30 in 2023 and 56 per cent of the AP products in supermarkets were made by Australian manufacturers. In 2019, there were fewer than 90 plant-based meat products on the supermarket shelves. In 2023, in just four years, there were 300 on the shelves—300. Food Frontier also indicates that although there are currently three commercial-scale plant protein fractionation facilities in Australia, at least another 10 are needed, and they are needed now to meet the demand for plant protein ingredients like isolates and concentrates. Australia could host up to 20 of these facilities, including a number in WA, to capitalise on our grain and pulse production, given the expected future domestic and global demand, much of which is focused in South-East Asia. Just look at companies like Wide Open Agriculture, which recently announced it had secured exclusive distribution right across Europe for the lupin protein. That is a Western Australian company. I am very proud to say that the Minister for Agriculture and Food has been talking to, and continues to talk with, Wide Open Agriculture, and I am sure she is supportive of its work. I have so much to say that I do not even know where to start!

Another challenge to the alternative protein sector is that consumers need to understand the product. We really need to work on the health of the product and making sure that consumers understand what they get when changing from an animal-based protein source to a plant-based or alternative protein source. Much like processed meat products, I think there are a range of health benefits regarding protein, fibre, salt and sugar content depending on the product. The George Institute for Global Health—if members do not know of it, it is a world leader in this space—stated in a 2023 media release that its FoodSwitch database could access Australian supermarkets and compare the nutrient content and nutritional quality of plant-based meat analogues and their equivalent meat products. The types of meat products and plant-based meat analogue equivalents studied included burgers, meatballs, mince, sausages, bacon, coated poultry, plain poultry and meat with pastry. Using the government's health star rating, researchers found that, overall, plant-based meat analogues had a healthier nutritional profile compared with the equivalent meat product and their energy content was marginally lower.

I have spoken about what should be happening. I also want to make a couple of concluding comments. Doctor Simon Eassom, the executive director of Food Frontier, sent me some words to add to this speech. Simon writes that Western Australia has the nation's only dedicated food minister and a wealth of agrifood capabilities. We have a unique opportunity to lead the way in establishing a future food system that is sustainable and resilient in the face of global challenges around climate change, food security and diet-related diseases. Complementary proteins can offer existing industries and regional communities added value, as well as economic benefits and position the state to capitalise on the growing global demand for diverse protein sources.

While this government could be doing many things, I will finish by telling members what I have been doing. Clearly, I spend a lot of time and energy promoting the role that future food systems can play in addressing the state's climate change outcomes. I will not back off from that. I will continue to press the key three ministers who lead this agenda to raise their sights from an energy focus to incorporate one of the greatest threats to climate change that we should be across. I have been linking alternative protein businesses into WA-based opportunities. I give great thanks to the WA Collie Just Transition fund, the Pinjarra Food Innovation Precinct, the staff at the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development who have been helping with this and various agricultural connections I work with. They are fantastic—thank you. I am connected with international and national innovators and peak bodies to promote this work.

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By the way, I have just received information from an acquaintance based in America who is the director of a new startup that focuses on gathering capital and buying into major supermarket and other chains. The startup has just bought major shares in McDonald's and a couple of other big chicken ranges. McDonald's is now 100 per cent cage free in everything it does; it was slipping badly. The purpose of his new venture—I have to check the name, but it is something to do with accountability—is to buy up shares and then make sure that companies meet their environmental, social and governance requirements. It is magic to see. I am very proud of him and the work he is doing.

I have been championing the new industry sector to WA Parliament and to our consumers in Western Australia. I have been briefing ministers on the opportunities presented by the alternative protein sector. I will continue to research progress around the world to highlight emerging trends and good practice. I have had several interns working with me. I am shortly going to release a paper on government responses that should be looked at with what is available globally, what is available in Australia and what lessons we should be taking from all models. The paper will look at what governments could do and what our government should be doing. This journey for me is not just about my passion to improve the lives of humans and animals. It is also a journey related to saving this planet. If people do not start to take a serious look at food security and food safety, I do not know where we are going to find the other three and a half planets we will need to get our food from. We better start looking now. I guess that is what Elon Musk is doing in some respects. My final message is that we should support the development of this fledgling industry wholeheartedly and with great passion. It should not just be me standing in this Parliament, alone.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Lilburne): Thank you very much, member for Maylands, for your very valuable contribution. Member for Burns Beach.

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [5.06 pm]: I, too, hope my voice will make it to the end of this speech. I am battling a bit with the flu myself.

I rise in response to the Premier's Statement made earlier today. I have had a very interesting summer. For those who know—great. For those who do not know, I am an old clubby—an old surf lifesaver. I think this year will be my forty-third season on the beach. I am currently a patrol captain and proudly the patron of my local club, Quinns Mindarie Surf Life Saving Club. I am also a patron of Surf Life Saving WA—one of many. On our first patrol this year, we rescued a senior who had a major spinal injury from the surf. What appeared to have happened is he was bodysurfing and he was dumped right on the shore edge. It would appear he really took the force to his face and the top of his neck. From my discussions with him, he felt a large crack to his neck and, straight afterwards, could not feel his arms. Straight away, we secured his head and neck. We then placed him on a spinal board and lowered him to the ground. Then we placed him on the back of our all-terrain vehicle. Still securing his neck, we slowly walked him off the beach to our first aid room. After a quick chat on our radios, four paramedics and an ambulance turned up to our little surf club. Their attendance was made quicker by the beach emergency number or BEN number.

Let me unpack this rescue. The ATV was from a joint funded state government grant. That is how we got it. The spinal board was funded with a Lotterywest grant—fantastic. The first aid equipment in the club first aid room was from a small election commitment from—guess who?—the local member. The ambulance and paramedics were from the state government funded contract and the BEN number was from a Labor government initiative and project. It works. The patient spent three nights in ICU at Joondalup Health Campus. Our work stopped him from becoming a paraplegic. It stopped him from having surgery and gave him the opportunity to return to his family for the best opportunity of recovery. I would like to recognise this great outcome by naming my fantastic patrol members who are here in the place: Shaun Cleaver, my vice-captain; Darren Thyse; Naomi Walker; Melanie Gray; Nathan Smith; Noah Cleaver; Aiden Gray; Phillipa Holding and Kenzie Douglas. They are part of a great team and almost like extended family. Thank you guys—job well done.

We had a very successful rescue, but members may not know that throughout the Christmas period, over 60 people drowned across Australia. In Western Australia, we lost eight people. We normally make up 10 per cent of the Australian statistic for drowning, but this year we are well above that. I was brought to tears when I heard about the tragic death of the two youngsters in the Swan River. On reflection, too many kids from our culturally and linguistically diverse communities make up victims of drowning. It is a crime. They were not aware of how safe it is between the red and yellow flags on our beaches. For those who do not know, no-one has drowned in WA between the red and yellow flags for over 125 years—no-one.

How do we fix this? I pondered that question with some very experienced people—members of the community and members in this place. The key thing that seemed to consistently come up is that we need to teach our kids to swim. Simply put, whether through swimming lessons at school or VacSwim, we think that this is the only way we can address this horrific statistic. More people drowned over the festive season than were killed on our roads. I cannot put it more simply than that. Every child here in Western Australia needs to be taught to swim. It should

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be a right, not a privilege, and it should not be based on postcode. It seems that in some postcodes, every kid knows how to swim; in other postcodes, none do. I cannot get my head around that.

When I was not patrolling on the beach this summer, I returned to my old craft. I re-volunteered to be a firefighter once again. I volunteered with the Quinns Rocks Bush Fire Brigade. It has been refreshing to go through my third time of requalification. I think I have forgotten more than some of these kids have learnt, but that is another issue. I turned out to all the campaign fires in the northern suburbs and more throughout the summer; it is not over yet. I was at the Mariginiup fire in Wanneroo and was working when the horrific ember attacks tried to destroy the homes and bushland surrounding the area. I recall that the embers were so thick that they were attacking my face shield and eye protection and making their way behind my glasses, interfering with my vision. My firefighting colleagues thought it was pretty wild. I was pretty angry; it showed I was getting old because I needed my glasses! I want to give a big shout-out to Tracy from one of my successful local businesses, the Glasses Lady. Tracy was made aware of my problem. We arranged an appointment and within seven days she managed to put together a pair of prescription safety glasses, which I now wear religiously as part of my PPE.

I turned out to the Lancelin and Carabooda fires. Most recently, I was at the Chittering fires. The Chittering fires were probably one of the most interesting ones for the summer. It is not over yet; I say that again. After finishing my abalone patrol at the surf club, I went down to do some maintenance at the fire station. It was a long day! Just as I turned up, I got a tap on the shoulder asking me to turn out. As a result, I ended up back at Quinns Rocks on the 3.4 large four-wheel drive fire appliance. On arriving at Chittering, we were deployed to asset protection, which was basically protecting houses and sheds. We drove up one of the hillsides, cut our way into the paddocks surrounding the home, and with a couple of appliances and a team of career firefighters, we defended the house. With some textbook work and a bit of sweat, we beat the fire and we saved the home, the sheds and all the infrastructure. Happy days.

A short time later, after refilling our tanks and having a bit of a break and some cold, fresh water, we were tasked to move to the head of the fire. I must admit that I stood in awe at some of the skill sets of our volunteers, particularly the driver of our 3.4 appliance. I will not mention his name because he will probably be absolutely embarrassed by it, but he drove the truck up the side of the hill to the top. The hill was so steep that all the alarms were sounding inside the truck because the gearbox had started to overheat. This was not unusual on this particular day as it was bloody hot. Pardon my language!

After doing some preliminary work at another residence, we were joined by a small bulldozer. The Chittering fire was burning in gullies and they were really steep—too steep for normal firefighting to take place. As a result, there were four Helitak water bombers working the fires; we were just protecting assets at this stage. A short time later, we were tasked with fighting the head fire, which was unusual, because it was moving fairly fast. As a result, I watched the bulldozer go over the edge of a steep gully in front of us; I then watched as we followed it down a steep incline in front of the fire and I thought to myself, “This could get interesting.”

A few minutes later my crew and I were on the hoses. The flames were high and the smoke was thick, but we calmly went about our job. As we held our ground, I could hear the Helitaks dropping water all around us. I could hear their sirens, warning us that they were about to drop their water, and then I heard the water hit the ground. On one occasion, I heard the siren and looked up and made direct eye contact with the pilot. He gave me a thumbs-up, I turned my back, and he dropped his water. Seconds later I was covered in ash and smoke; wearing my personal protective equipment, I calmly returned to fighting the fire shortly afterwards.

If someone were to ask me: “Is the emergency services levy worthwhile?”, I would tell them that, if they were to ask the people whose houses we saved—whom I do not know—they would definitely say yes. I know my fellow firefighters—both volunteer and career—definitely would say yes. I look at my personal protective equipment, our fire trucks and all the kit that I have, and I can honestly say, hand on heart, that every dollar that goes to our brigade is well spent.

I have learnt a lot this summer. It has been refreshing to see the way in which the Minister for Emergency Services, Hon Stephen Dawson, and our Premier have got behind the fire services community and provided the funding to fight fires. More importantly—this is a very important point—they have also provided the funding for recovery after incidents. I have to say that our Premier and our Minister for Emergency Services have done a great job and need to be recognised for it. It is about having the right people in the right place, with the right kit, doing the right thing. We can do lots.

That is enough about my summer, because I was supposed to take a break! Let us talk about the Cook Labor government and what it has done over recent times. Since 2017, when I was first elected, we have created more than 250 000 jobs. We fought COVID and won, despite the great economic shocks that that illness brought to our community. I thank the Premier, both in his former role as Minister for Health and, more importantly, as the current Premier. I also thank all the other ministers who helped us in that space. I thank them for that.

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Arguably, the biggest issue in my community is cost of living; it is hurting people. It is hurting my seniors, it is hurting my pensioners and it is hurting my families. I can tell members that the \$1 400 household electricity credit that every household has received since 2020 has been a real benefit to my community. It means that seniors can put fuel in the car so that they can go to the doctor. It is an extra feed that mums and dads can put on the table for the kids, 100 per cent. Little things mean a lot. Capping public transport fares at two zones is great; I love that. The government has also made public transport free for students travelling to and from school; that is a godsend. Making public transport free for families on Sundays is also making just that little bit of difference.

With regard to health, we definitely have an outstanding investment record. I appreciate the \$10 billion of new funding we have seen over the last three years. Some would say that WA has the highest funding per person of any state in the country. That really matters to me. It means that we have more than 571 new hospital beds. More importantly, it has resulted in the new mental health ward at Joondalup Health Campus. I remember that when we were first elected to government, a group of political students from one of the local high schools referred to there being no mental health facility for young people in the northern corridor. At least 25 beds have been put aside for kids and young people at this new facility. That is a seriously good thing.

I reflect on my time as a police officer. The new body-worn cameras and protective body armour and the investment in mobile devices has made police work a lot safer. It is a lot safer than when I was on the ground—not that anyone shot at me. They did, but we did not have protective body armour when it happened. I reflect on the additional 1 100 police officers. No-one can accuse this government of being soft on crime—no-one. We have managed to get back and maintain our fair share of the GST. We heard the opposition ask questions about it today. It is ours; it is there, secure and locked in. Heaven help anyone who even tinkers with it. We have regained the state's Aaa credit rating. That will save us the millions of dollars we lost under the former Liberal–National government—millions of dollars that might mean more opportunities to help my constituents. We have invested nearly \$34 billion in infrastructure that will benefit our community and my electorate for years to come. This investment will not help our kids or their kids but maybe their kids in the years to come without increasing debt. That is important. The train lines will be around for hundreds of years. The best example is the Fremantle line. How old is that line?

We have diversified the economy, which is a flash way of saying that we have found more jobs for our kids! We can say it any way we like, but in diversifying our economy, our kids have a future. The Cook Labor government has been a part of that. I will not talk about the brilliant job this government has done to abolish TAFE fees. Today we heard that the \$6 000 enrolled nursing course is now free. My son did a trade at TAFE, and I think he got a bill for \$4 000 after completing his trade qualification. Some courses are now free, and that helps families and battlers.

Labor governments build and fix rail infrastructure.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr M.J. FOLKARD: We restarted the Fremantle rail line after it had been shut down, which was absolutely run-down. I remember one of the old orange diesel trains catching fire in Subiaco years ago on a hot day like today. It was a Labor government that built the Mandurah line. I remember the howling and carry-on in this place about that, but it has been nothing but a success. Now, our Cook-led Labor government has built 72 kilometres of new rail line, with 23 new stations. This is great infrastructure for our children, and it is here to last and here to stay.

After listening to the Premier's Statement today, I look forward to this year's agenda. The government has a fearless approach to putting jobs, the cost of living and the safety of families, the community and my constituents first. I feel proud that the Cook Labor government can deliver better outcomes as we go further down the legislative agenda this year. I note that the Minister for Police is here. I look with interest at the firearms legislation and other legislation that will be put before this place. It is well and truly overdue. With that, I thank members for their time.

MS A.E. KENT (Kalgoorlie) [5.25 pm]: I rise today to add my reply to the Premier's Statement. It is an absolute pleasure to provide my third reply as a member of the Cook Labor government. It is such a privilege to represent my electorate every day and be part of a government that I know cares for our communities. It is a government that cares about the impact of cost-of-living pressures and understands what it takes to have an effect on these issues. Importantly for me, this government continues its record of delivering for the goldfields and investing in the region's future.

The Kalgoorlie electorate started 2024 with some challenges. I was there throughout it all, supporting my community, and working night and day alongside emergency teams and key stakeholders. I saw the tremendous efforts of everyone pulling together in the same direction. In amongst this, I was able to reach out to the Premier and ministers, who supported me and provided tangible outcomes and real solutions.

I will start with the power outages. As we know and as the Premier mentioned earlier today, a freak weather event brought down five large transmission towers, which crumbled like tinfoil. The Western Australian electricity network is one of the largest isolated systems in the world, and that comes with unavoidable challenges from weather events

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and other disruptions. Weather caused the power to go out in the goldfields and backup generators to falter. Due to Western Power's and Synergy's mammoth efforts, the generators started working and kept Kalgoorlie–Boulder powered while the towers were being repaired. We know that freak weather events will become more common, so we need to strengthen the network. Within days, Premier Roger Cook came to the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder and pledged that it will get next-generation backup power generators. The Premier said that the existing faulty system, comprising two gas turbines in West Kalgoorlie, would be exchanged for a more reliable system. He said —

“We are committed to doing everything we can with regards to creating a more resilient system.”

...

“We want to make sure that we do everything we can to ensure this doesn't happen again and that we stand by the people of Kalgoorlie ...

Let me be clear about this: the Cook Labor government will secure new, next-generation technology generators. The generators will deliver the short-term and medium-term resilience that Kalgoorlie–Boulder needs, but that was not all that was announced. The Premier also committed to delivering a long-term solution to rebuild and maintain the resilience of Kalgoorlie's power supply for a long-term renewable energy future. Considering the disruption caused by the power outages, the government doubled the power outage payment to \$240, a fabulous gesture that was gratefully received by my community. Of course, the Leader of the Opposition chose to politicise a national disaster instead of stepping up to help. I was not focused on politics; I was focused on helping the people of Kalgoorlie–Boulder.

In early 2024, another challenge happened, and that was an increase in antisocial behaviour in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. I absolutely understand and appreciate that it has been a tough time for businesses and community members. I attended the roundtable meeting at the Kalgoorlie–Boulder Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which hosted more than 75 business representatives. The forum raised a number of concerns, which I immediately fed back to the government, specifically to the Minister for Police. Thankfully, the minister is in the chamber. Within two days, the minister was in Kalgoorlie–Boulder, and he was back again a couple of days later. The minister committed to ongoing collaboration with the Kalgoorlie–Boulder community to address concerns about antisocial behaviour.

Importantly, he brought Operation Regional Shield to Kalgoorlie–Boulder. The operation is an overt, targeted effort to suppress and disrupt antisocial behaviour in the region. Enhancing police efforts in Kalgoorlie–Boulder will not only significantly increase the visibility of the police presence, but will also provide tactical support to disrupt antisocial activity. The Minister for Police also said that the liquor enforcement unit will address community concerns about sly grogging—the practice of supplying alcohol to those on the banned drinkers register—and ensure that the recently enhanced register is enforced.

Liquor enforcement unit staff from Perth have been meeting with licensees to get the liquor accord up, running and collaborating to get better measures around liquor regulation management. The Cook Labor government has also funded extra return to country services to provide transport for displaced people to get them back to their communities and homes. I cannot emphasise this enough: this activity demonstrates that this government is listening to, engaging with and acting on community concerns. I welcome the additional police presence and foot patrols throughout the CBD and thank the Western Australia Police Force for its swift response.

Antisocial behaviour is not acceptable and will not be tolerated in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. I would like to talk about a couple of instances in which businesses saw immediate results. City News Kalgoorlie newsagency co-owner Tania Parkes has experienced daily cases of theft and abuse during the past few months. In an article she said that she experienced “everyday theft; everyday abuse”. The article continued —

Ms Parkes said the increased police presence in place since Wednesday had discouraged antisocial behaviour in Kalgoorlie's CBD.

“The police presence has made a big impact for us,” she said.

“This week has probably been the best week we've had in many years on the street as in (the lack of) antisocial behaviour.”

A local clothes shop manager said that she was pleased with the response of the WA police and the minister to quell antisocial behaviour. She continued —

“It's really good that the police are going above and beyond for our town,” she said.

“It's good to see that people are coming in here like they used to, shopping around and feeling comfortable.”

...

“I've been threatened, it's not nice and it's a bit overwhelming when you don't know what to do in that situation,” she said.

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“But all that has settled down and we are very comfortable right now.”

These are the facts. There is no simple solution to antisocial behaviour. I am working with the Kalgoorlie–Boulder Chamber of Commerce, the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder, retailers, key stakeholders and the community. It needs everyone working together. I understand this: it is what I do and it is where I live.

The Leader of the Opposition flits in and out of Kalgoorlie–Boulder and thinks he knows what is going on. It is shameful. He said that the only reason Operation Regional Shield was deployed was the pressure the opposition put on. Again, that is shameful. He called me an “ineffective” member. Really? For listening to my community, acting swiftly, getting the Minister for Police and Premier to hear our concerns and getting the Cook Labor government to bring actual results to Kalgoorlie–Boulder, I am “ineffective”? I would not say that those actions align with that.

I would now like to discuss a key initiative that has made a big impact on the cost of living in the goldfields. I have previously discussed in this house the highly successful regional airfare zone cap, which provides affordable airfares for regional residents. At a time when a return fare from Kalgoorlie costs over \$1 000, residents are able to book a flight and pay no more than \$199 each way. This has been wonderfully embraced by goldfielders. The high cost of airfares affects every resident in many different ways. It affects some people because of regular medical appointments in Perth or, for others, an unexpected family emergency or because they are just trying to run a small business. Since we introduced the scheme 18 months ago, well over 30 000 capped airfares have been booked between Perth and the goldfields. This has saved regional Western Australians thousands and thousands of dollars on flights and helped ease cost-of-living pressures.

A few locals have told me how it made a difference to them. According to my notes, Yogi stated —

“This affordability has allowed me to visit my daughters, who attend boarding school in Perth, more frequently. The capped fares have made a meaningful impact on my ability to maintain a closer connection with my kids, fostering a stronger family bond”

According to my notes, Karen stated —

“The capped airfares give me an affordable choice regarding the medical care I receive. Instead of paying \$1130, I just had to pay \$399. It was big help”

I have another case from my notes —

“I have utilised the residential fares on several occasions. These fares have allowed me to attend family gatherings, sneaky shopping trips, medical trips and most importantly visit my aging parents regularly. Without the negotiated resident fares, I would not have been able to make as many trips to Perth as I have in the past 12 months.”

I know these initiatives mean so much to our community. I am proud that the Cook Labor government and the Minister for Transport put in the hard yards. This initiative is the first of its kind in Australia and has been a major success.

Accommodation options are very important to the growth of the goldfields region, and, as a member of the Cook Labor government, I have advocated strongly for this, including organising for the Minister for Planning to attend a key stakeholder roundtable in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. I was grateful to see the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder awarded \$4 million through the Cook Labor government’s infrastructure development fund. This will enable an extension of the main sewerage network to service 69.9 hectares of undeveloped land near the airport. The land includes a 17.2 hectare site that the city recently sold for the development of a 400-dwelling residential and lifestyle village, featuring one, two, three and four-bedroom homes. This announcement means that we can unlock the constraints to get new housing to the market quicker. Residential land supply in Kalgoorlie–Boulder also received a major boost with the release of 28 new single residential lots and one grouped housing lot as part of stage 4 of the GreenView estate development at Karlkurla. These projects demonstrate the significant investment by the Cook Labor government in housing and land supply, and I am delighted that we are delivering these priority initiatives to Kalgoorlie–Boulder.

In 2023, it was an honour to have Minister Winton in Kalgoorlie–Boulder to present the Goldfields Women’s Refuge with a Lotterywest grant of \$450 000. I then presented the refuge with another \$100 000 in November last year. These grants will support additional temporary accommodation in the form of townhouses, which will double the capacity of the refuge with 72 beds, providing independence and security for the women and children accessing the refuge. Our region relies on the wonderful work of the Goldfields Women’s Refuge, and I wish we did not need it, but, thankfully, it is there to support women and children who are escaping family violence and to provide crisis accommodation. The additional accommodation is crucial for us, and I am very proud to be part of a government that prioritises preventing family and domestic violence in our community and keeping families safe.

Last week I visited the highly anticipated basketball stadium in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. The steel structure is going up, and it is fabulous to see. It is a massive project, and everyone is working hard towards the new stadium being

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ready before the end of 2024. On completion, it will feature two additional indoor courts. One will be a show court with tiered spectator seating. The upgrades will also include refurbished existing courts, seating for more than 1 000 spectators, separate women's and men's home-and-away team change rooms, offices, a function room, kitchen and first aid areas. It is safe to say that the thousands of goldfields community adults and children who love basketball are very excited to see this stadium progress. I was proud to advocate for this stadium to the Cook Labor government, which provided \$5 million to build it. Kingsbury and Lord Forrest Parks in Kalgoorlie–Boulder will be unified into a central youth precinct. When the previous Premier and I announced \$2.2 million for a youth precinct, I was reacting to strong community feedback that there was a lack of youth facilities in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. Lotterywest then provided an additional \$2.1 million last year, and the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder added a further \$1.83 million to this exciting project. The youth precinct project will consist of a skate park upgrade, a pump track, a play scape, a multipurpose sports court and fitness zone, and the renovation of Lord Forrest Park into a major youth hub. The transformation of the Kingsbury Park site is an important project for Kalgoorlie–Boulder and will provide a much-needed hub for young people and their families living in the community.

I will now talk about one of my favourite projects, the Karlkurla nature playground. The land has been cleared and construction is underway. The new park will be ready in March or April this year. Nature brings out the best in children—everyone knows that—and what better way to take advantage of this than to build a massive nature playground in the beautiful setting of the 200-hectare Karlkurla Bushland Park? The Cook government is funding \$600 000 towards this project, with the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder contributing a further \$400 000. This will be worth waiting for and I cannot wait to see the community enjoy all the new facilities. As we know, sports play an important role in regional Western Australia. It can bring communities together, contribute positively to community identity and a sense of space, promote social interaction and inclusion, and play an important role in providing opportunities for physical activity and improved health outcomes.

Anyone coming to the goldfields loves the newly sealed track at the Eastern Goldfields BMX Club. I was proud to deliver on this \$70 000 election commitment and I love seeing the club being enjoyed. We now have the best track in regional Western Australia. BMX is not just for the kids; parents love it too. The Eastern Goldfields Hockey Association was awarded \$70 000 last year through the Cook Labor government's night lights program. What a difference the new lights have made to the hockey stadium in Kalgoorlie–Boulder! I was honoured to switch on the new lights for the first time. It is such an awesome sporting club and I am thrilled to see the players and supporters benefit from this funding. Let us not forget other parts of the region and the Leonora multi-facility court project. What an absolute joy it was to see the finished basketball and tennis courts in Leonora! This marked the delivery of a \$100 000 election commitment to resurface the courts. Thanks to the Shire of Leonora for leading this project and putting on new lights. The courts can now stay open later in the evenings, as was requested by the community.

I will stay on the topic of Leonora. In November last year, I joined the Minister for Regional Development; Seniors and Ageing to officially open the ageing-in-place village in Leonora. This is an exciting project for not only Leonora, but also the northern goldfields. It provides a modern independent living village for our senior residents to remain in their community while being supported by local and visiting wraparound services. The project was funded through a \$3.5 million allocation from the Cook Labor government's regional aged accommodation program and a \$1 million contribution from the Shire of Leonora.

The Cook Labor government is truly the party for regional Western Australia. The government is getting on with delivering on issues that matter to the people in Kalgoorlie–Boulder and the wider goldfields area. I am proud that it is doing what is right for WA.

MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.42 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to rise to speak in reply to the Premier's Statement for the final year of this term. It is clear from listening to the speeches of all members so far that, as the member for Kalgoorlie said, this Cook Labor government is doing what is right for WA. It is getting on with tackling the big issues, providing cost-of-living relief to our constituents, boosting housing supply and continuing to build a world-class health service for all Western Australians. I will not be traversing too much of that ground, however, because other members have covered that adequately. Instead, I propose today to work through talking about some of the incredible volunteers in Cockburn who make all the services that we rely on tick, whether it is schools, hospitals or community centres. All those types of services rely on both paid staff and volunteers, whether they are board members or just people who come in and do a couple of hours a week helping out with programs. I will use my contribution today to acknowledge some of those people.

Firstly, I want to give a shout-out to the member for Collie–Preston, who is not feeling very well this week, but tells me that she is tuning in online. It is good to know that I have an online audience of at least one person who is paying attention.

Ms C.M. Rowe: She said she was tuning in; she didn't say she was paying attention!

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: All right, member for Belmont. That is a fair correction.

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Ms C.M. Tonkin interjected.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: No, no. I said, “My audience online”! It is good to know that there is some life in the chamber as well, because I know what it can be like—we all know what it is like here! It is only the first sitting day of the year! I think we all know what it can be like around here.

Ms C.M. Rowe: Where there is life, there is hope!

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Where there is life, there is hope, yes!

I will get on with discussing some of these fantastic volunteers and also some people who are employees who work in my electorate providing services that we all rely on. The first person I want to acknowledge is Michael Piu. I am really fortunate to have Michael as a constituent who lives in Coogee, but he would be better known to many members in this place as the CEO of St Patrick’s Community Support Centre in Fremantle. Michael is just a consummate professional when it comes to running a service like St Pat’s. I think it is one of the standout service providers in the Perth metropolitan area. It provides really important essential services for things like homelessness and homelessness support, but it has also been doing really innovative work in that space. It does the standard work to provide social housing options and homelessness supports for people, but it also does really innovative and new work, and Michael has been about driving that. The example I give that is the program Djenabidet Kalleep, which is Noongar for “footpath home”. The program is a trauma-informed Aboriginal-centred and co-designed service that was rolled out at the end of last year. It is a dedicated program where Aboriginal people who are at risk and who have experienced trauma can access lived-experience peer support and other culturally appropriate services. I understand that it is the first program of its kind, and it is a credit to Michael for driving that service.

I also acknowledge that under Michael’s leadership St Patrick’s received a \$7.5 million grant from the state government at the end of last year. It was announced by the Minister for Housing; Homelessness at the end of last year. That \$7.5 million will go to a total \$12 million project that will demolish St Patrick’s existing out-of-date and end-of-life homeless social housing support accommodation and replace it with 28 newly built social housing accommodation options. As members can tell, that organisation is doing innovative and important work that is attracting significant state government funding because the state government has confidence in the work that St Pat’s is doing. I say thank you to Michael. You are a credit to Cockburn and you are a great leader in the housing, homelessness and community services sector in Western Australia.

On the topic of community services, I also want to acknowledge a few people associated with the Yangebup Family Centre. Anyone who has listened to my any of my contributions will know that Yangebup Family Centre is very close to my heart. It is one of the first places I visited when I became the candidate for Cockburn, and I was very impressed by the work done at the YFC and the diversity of it. I particularly acknowledge Samantha Williams. Sam is manager of Yangebup Family Centre, and she always looks for new and exciting things that the centre can do. She not only oversees the centre’s existing programs, whether that is occasional care or the Community Eats program it runs once a month, but also looks for new opportunities and new grants that might be available or new services in the community that need to be delivered. Sam was really the driver behind an election commitment I made towards building a new nature play area at Yangebup Family Centre and to renovating the bathrooms. That was \$150 000 commitment I made before the last election that I am really pleased to have delivered on. The new nature play area looks fantastic. It has really given the centre a lift. It is all because of the advocacy that Sam does for the centre. I also want to acknowledge that Sam lobbies not only on behalf of the centre; she is one of those community members who also lobbies on behalf of the sector. I note the Minister for Community Services is in the chamber and I hope she does not mind me saying this, but Sam is one of those people in the sector who always sends me the Linkwest budget submission. She always takes the time to not only welcome me to an event but also talk to me about the challenges that are facing the sector more broadly. We cannot always deliver everything that everybody wants, but I am really grateful, and I know the minister is really grateful, to have people in our electorates who advocate for change in their sector in a really respectful and constructive way, and Sam is one of those people. Thank you, Sam, for all the work that you do in Cockburn and for our Yangebup Family Centre.

The next person I would like to acknowledge is Jo McGillivray. Jo is the children services coordinator at Yangebup Family Centre and is a local Cockburn resident. As her title would suggest, Jo oversees all the children’s programs at the centre, whether that is the occasional care program, the pre-kindy program or all the way through to the less frequent events like the dads’ and kids’ pizza night. I went to that last year; it was the first time for me to go there as a dad, which was really great. Jo does so much work across a range of activities. She is one of those personalities that is very warm and welcoming. As soon as we walk into the family centre and we are met by Jo—or Ms Jo, as she is known by the kids—we feel like we are in a safe place. We are in a place of warmth and support. That type of attitude can be more important in a facility like the Yangebup Family Centre than the quality of the infrastructure. It is important to have people who really make it a place where everybody feels welcome. Jo, thank you for all your work for Yangebup Family Centre and the community. I know that the parents, the kids and

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everybody who comes through just absolutely adore her. I am looking forward to introducing William to the pre-kindy service at Yangebup Family Centre in a few years.

I also want to acknowledge Tracy Pearson. Tracy is one of those people who is seemingly everywhere in my electorate. I raise her now because Tracy is a committee member with Yangebup Family Centre. I am sure members in this chamber know those members of the community who, when we go to an event, are there wearing one hat and then we go to another event and they are wearing another hat. It turns out that these people are doing the volunteering for 90 per cent of the community. It is like 10 per cent of the community is doing all the volunteering for 90 per cent of the community. Tracy is one of those people. I found it quite confusing when I first became the Labor Party candidate for Cockburn because I went to Beeliar Primary School P&C and met Tracy there and chatted with her. The next day I had an event at Yangebup Family Centre and she was there but not in her primary school capacity; she was there because she is a board member of Yangebup Family Centre. I lately found out that she is also on the board of the Beeliar Community Association, which is the residents association for my area. I think that is fantastic.

I always tell a story here. I compare people like Tracy to my mother. My mother was the secretary of my high school P&C for about two or three years after I graduated and she had no more kids at the school, because she loved the school and she wanted to be involved. I think no-one else put up their hand to be secretary, so she kept doing the hard yards. Tracy is clearly one of those people. She is involved in everything—Beeliar Community Association, Yangebup Family Centre, and Beeliar Primary School. She is everywhere. She is always working hard. I really want to acknowledge Tracy for all that volunteering because, like I said, I think 90 per cent of the community rely on people like Tracy, who seem to do the volunteering everywhere on behalf of everyone else. Thank you, Tracy.

I also want to acknowledge Leah Vagel, the president of the Harvest Lakes Residents Association in Atwell. Leah is again one of those people who, when you come to a residents association meeting or an event, is always there with a friendly smile, is always positive and constructive, and is always looking for the next thing that she can do for her community in Atwell. Last year, Harvest Lakes Residents Association held a bike maintenance workshop, an artist-in-the-park event and its annual Christmas concert. The annual Christmas concert is a huge deal—thousands of people come down, there are food trucks and there is a stage, with acts going on all night. It is a really incredible event. I acknowledge Leah. As I am sure other members have found, sometimes community associations have only three people doing all the work. Leah is one of those people. She puts on so many events throughout the year for Atwell, without any kind of remuneration. I am really pleased that this government has been supporting Harvest Lakes Residents Association for the last few years with Lotterywest funding to support the annual Christmas concert. It was great to be down there to hand over the certificate and announce the funding with Leah. I wish her the very best. Her son always introduces himself to me as “Bob” whenever we meet, but he has the same name as my son. It is very cheeky of him, because he thinks he can trick me into not knowing his name. I give a shout-out to Leah and also to little Bob.

I want to acknowledge Carissa Garza, another president of one of our residents associations. Carissa took over the role of president of Beeliar Community Association at a time when there were concerns about whether the association would be able to continue. She has refocused the organisation and struck a new sustainability agenda for the association and our neighbourhood. In many ways, I think she has reinvigorated the community association. There are a couple of initiatives that Carissa and Beeliar Community Association run, including regular clean-up days around the suburb. That is really significant because Beeliar abuts Thomsons Lake Nature Reserve, which is a Ramsar significant wetland in my electorate. Keeping the bushland around the Thomsons Lake reserve and the wetlands in pristine condition is very important. Carissa’s clean-up events have contributed to keeping not only the suburb tidy but also the wetlands in a healthy condition. I recently went along to an event that Carissa ran down at Beeliar Reserve, at which the association hosted an organisation known as Bottle Top Hill. I know that some other members are familiar with that organisation, such as the members for Bicton and Bateman. Bottle Top Hill educates people on options for recycling plastic, and particularly all the various types of bottle tops. As I am sure members know, we are told to take bottle tops off bottles and to put the milk carton or whatever it is in the recycling and to throw the lid in the bin. Bottle Top Hill is a great organisation that is educating people that there are actually places to send bottle tops to be recycled into all sorts of things. The organisation shows examples of bowls or plates that kids can use and that sort of thing. It is really interesting stuff. Carissa had Bottle Top Hill come down and there was a good turnout. It was a pretty hot day and icy poles were being handed out, which is always a good way to entice people. The session was really eye-opening for me. Thank you, Carissa, for taking over as president of the residents association in Beeliar and really giving it a new life under your watch.

On the topic of presidents of residents associations, I also want to acknowledge Maggie Zentner. I have spoken about Maggie before in this chamber. She, again, is one of those people who is just everywhere. She is always advocating for her community of Yangebup. I acknowledge Maggie particularly because she recently stepped down as president of Yangebup Progress Association. She had been the president there for a number of years and had pushed many

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different projects in our community. For example, she was one of the advocates for putting fencing around the playground in Nicholson Reserve in Yangebup. This was really important. There is a playground on Osprey Drive, a busy road through Yangebup. There were concerns from the community that it was an unsafe place for kids to play because they may run out onto the road. Maggie spoke to me and the City of Cockburn about funding to fence that playground. I was able to make a commitment and deliver that with the city. I know it sounds like a small project, but these small projects are what matter to people and make a difference to the community, to safety and to people enjoying the facilities around Yangebup.

Maggie has also been involved in some mural projects around the electorate. Most noticeably, we now have a beautiful mural along the noise wall down Spearwood Avenue through Yangebup. It had previously been covered in graffiti. When I have driven past since the mural was put along the wall, I have seen very little, if any, graffiti. Maggie was the person who kept pushing the council and kept pushing me saying that we need to do something to give it a lift. She succeeded in that.

Maggie recently ran for the City of Cockburn council. Unfortunately, she was not successful, but I say to Maggie that if you get knocked down, you get back up again. That has always been her philosophy. That has always been the way she has approached things; she has always kept giving it a go until she succeeds. There is no doubt, Maggie, with your determination and energy, you will continue to succeed on behalf of our community. Thank you, Maggie.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: I now turn to the Cockburn Community Men's Shed. This is a fantastic facility, which is located in Cockburn Central. I know many members in this chamber have men's sheds in or near their electorates. They are great places for men, particularly retired men who may be looking for extra purpose in their life, to find a community that is supportive with things they can do and contribute to, and find friendship and support and talk about issues like mental health that might be a little more challenging for them. I would like to acknowledge in this respect Mike Murphy. Mike is the chair of the board of Cockburn Community Men's Shed, and he was, until recently, the coordinator of the shed as well. He was wearing two hats for a period. On several occasions, Mike stepped down from the coordinator role, I think at least twice, and a new coordinator was appointed. The coordinators did not last longer than a month or a few weeks, and Mike stepped back into the breach and took on the role again. It goes to show how big Mike's shoes are when a couple of people found them quite difficult to fill.

Mike sends out great chatty emails with updates about the shed. He is not afraid to include reprimands for anyone who has left equipment in the shed in an undesirable state or anyone who has been using equipment in an improper or unsafe manner. He is never afraid to give a warning in the email, but he always finishes his emails with what could only be charitably described as a bad dad joke. There is always one at the bottom of each email. I always enjoy getting them. Sometimes they are pretty good; sometimes they are not, but that is the nature of bad dad jokes. I thank you, Mike, for your efforts. Mike and I have been dealing with the saga of the mezzanine level for a while now, but we have been pressing on and making progress. I was pleased to make an election commitment to install an accessible lift for the mezzanine level for the shed. We still have a while to go before we can get the mezzanine level up and running properly, but I am sure we will get there. I give a very big thank you to Mike for his work.

On the topic of men's sheds, it is really fitting that the member for Dawesville is sitting in the Speaker's chair at the moment because I also want to acknowledge the new coordinator of the Cockburn Community Men's Shed, who is a bloke called Rob Winchester. He told me that he was an enthusiastic supporter of the member for Dawesville when he and his wife, Lynn, lived in her electorate. I am getting nods from the Acting Speaker to confirm that. It is in *Hansard* that the Acting Speaker is nodding in agreement that what Rob told me was true. Rob has moved into the Cockburn area. I am sorry, member for Dawesville, that is two gains for me and two lost for you! It is all part of the great Labor movement.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.A. Munday): We have two great people, so that is good.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Thank you.

I have not had the chance to meet Rob yet. We have just spoken via email and over the phone. We are catching up later this week for a coffee. I always present a toolbox filled with gourmet goodies that the men's shed uses for its raffle on open day, which is coming up soon. I want to put on the record my best wishes to Rob on starting his position as the coordinator of the Cockburn Community Men's Shed. I acknowledge that I am really looking forward to working with him over the next few years.

Next on my list is Fiona Campbell, OAM. Fiona recently received the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to the performing arts through music. Fiona is a long-time contributor to the performing arts in Western Australia, Australia, and, indeed, internationally. She is a highly respected mezzo-soprano opera singer and a broadcaster. Anyone who occasionally tunes into ABC Classic might have caught Fiona presenting the program. She is also currently the creative director of Perth Symphony Orchestra. For many years she has been an accomplished musician

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and worked with major orchestras like the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the West Australian Symphony Orchestra and also for overseas orchestras. In addition, she has been a contributor to arts management in Western Australia and around the world. Congratulations, Fiona, on receiving the Medal of the Order of Australia. I also want to acknowledge that Fiona did another really difficult job in her life, which is being the mother of one of my electorate officers, Alex. I reckon she did a great job raising Alex. He is a great electorate officer to me, but that must have been hard work, so well done on that, Fiona! I am really glad to see her acknowledged in the Australia Day honours list.

I would like to turn now to a couple of people involved with the Coogee Community Garden. It is good to have the member for Fremantle in the chamber because I think, from memory, that because of the electorate changes, the Coogee Community Garden will be just on the other side of the street in the member for Fremantle's electorate. I would really like to take the member for Fremantle to the garden and introduce her to some of the people involved with it because it has come together over the last three years since I was elected. When I was first elected, it was essentially a vacant patch of land. It now has a shed, a gazebo and a lot of trees. It is on my list, but I will mention now that the member for Fremantle and I will make time to go there and meet some of the people, because it is a great group. The reality is that the Coogee Community Garden would not exist if it was not for two people in particular. The first is Karen Moulton, the chair of the community garden. She is also the chair of the Coogee Beach Progress Association—the residents association. I respect that Karen is absolutely professional in the way she runs those organisations. I have been to the Coogee Beach Progress Association a couple of times. I have not always been given the warmest welcome because I am sure members know that from time to time there is a contentious development in the electorate and members have to front up to the meeting to face the music. Karen has always given me a fair hearing and a fair opportunity to answer questions and put my case. She has always been constructive about issues like the Coogee Beach–Cockburn pedestrian crossing that we installed there. I really appreciate the mature and professional leadership that Karen has brought to the Coogee Beach Progress Association. I particularly mention her extraordinary work on the Coogee community garden. Like I say, it has sprung out of the ground over the last three years, and it would not have happened if it was not for Karen doggedly putting in grant applications or arguing with the City of Cockburn. I know that she hassled my predecessor, Hon Fran Logan, for years to make sure that land—I think it was maybe Water Corporation or Western Power land—was transferred over to enable the garden to come together. Karen, thank you for your efforts for Coogee. The garden is such a credit to you, and the Coogee community generally, and I really thank you for your efforts.

The second person who has been essential to the garden's development is John Ivey. John is also a resident of Coogee and secretary of the Coogee community garden. John is the gardening expert. That is not to suggest that Karen does not know a lot about gardening, but John seems to know everything about gardening, and he has a can-do attitude towards everything. He is the one who arranged for the glass house that was donated by Coogee Common to be transported carefully over to the garden. He is always there supervising at the weeding and busy bee days, telling people to do this, or not to do that, and identifying what particular plants are. People like me need to be kept under a tight leash because we are just as likely to pull up something that is supposed to be in the garden as we are to pull up a weed, so John is always there telling me what to do. I also note that John's father-in-law is a gentleman known as Gavan Troy. To members who know the history of this place, Gavan was a member of this place many years ago. I think it was for Swan Hills, but I could be wrong. I apologise if I got it wrong, but he was certainly member for one of the hills electorates a few decades ago. I had the pleasure of meeting Gavan recently, and it was great to catch up with someone who sat in this chamber during a very different period in time.

That is it for me. I know that every electorate has volunteers and community members who are doing those extra hours, putting in that unpaid time and doing it for the love. I am very proud of those individuals in Cockburn doing that work. Many community services such as the Yangebup family centre, the parents and citizens associations or the Coogee community garden would not happen or function if not for the efforts of those people. I conclude by saying a sincere thank you from me, because I reckon the best part of our job is getting to meet these people and trying to help them with their projects. Standing up here in Parliament is a great privilege, but the best part of the job for me is trying to connect these people with grants and finding ways through local or state government agencies. I am always happy to assist them.

MR H.T. JONES (Darling Range) [6.12 pm]: I rise in response to the Premier's Statement for 2024 and outline what I think of it. I echo the member for Cockburn's remarks about volunteers. Probably the most satisfying part of my role is meeting and hopefully assisting volunteers in the electorate. Quite often, the volunteers are across a number of organisations and spread themselves very thin, but they are very much appreciated.

I also start by acknowledging the preparation and training of both our career and volunteer emergency services personnel, especially during this recent fire season, which is still ongoing. The conditions in February are extremely hot. I am sure the volunteers and career firefighters are always on tenterhooks about having to react to a fire and possibly putting their plans on hold because they are on standby. There are nine volunteer fire and rescue or bush

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fire brigades in Darling Range, and also the Serpentine Jarrahdale State Emergency Service. I acknowledge their efforts throughout 2023 and the preparation and training they put in, let alone actually attending incidents. It is also worth mentioning the Salvation Army Emergency Services WA unit and the Rapid Relief Team. Both organisations provide food, nourishment, conversation and emotional support to firefighters on the fireground. Firefighters often come back covered in soot, hot, dehydrated and in need of some sustenance as well as emotional support.

Since 1 November, brigades in Serpentine–Jarrahdale have responded to 95 incidents, which is a large number of incidents. That includes 10 large bushfire emergencies, including the one in Jarrahdale and Keysbrook. The fire was known as the “Serpentine Complex” fire, which started on 4 November. It refers to seven separate fires across the Murray–Wellington, Darling Range and Mandurah electorates. It threatened Jarrahdale quite significantly. Had it not been for the efforts of the firefighters, including 15 aerial assets, and favourable wind conditions, Jarrahdale could have been seriously impacted by the fire. It was a real wake-up call for people who live in Jarrahdale to make sure that they formulate their bushfire plan, act on the warnings that come, and are not too blasé about it. Brigades from as far south as Denmark and as far north as Muchea attended the fire. There was also a fire in Keysbrook, which started on Christmas Eve. That burned through and required attendance from brigades for the next few days. Obviously, that took firefighters away from their families over the Christmas period. They took it in their stride and attended when they could, foregoing their family time. I want to thank those firefighters and again the emergency support personnel who supported the people on the fireground for their dedication and commitment over that period. It is also worth mentioning the farmers in Keysbrook, Hopeland, Mardella and Serpentine. As farmers do, they pride themselves in being self-sufficient. They were out there fighting fires that did not necessarily impact their own properties, but helped out their fellow neighbours. They put in a sterling effort over those few days under very trying circumstances. One of the mental stresses that is not always remembered is the loss of livestock and its impact on not only farmers but also firefighters. I know that the members from Jarrahdale were particularly upset by the loss of livestock on the fireground.

Turning to the Premier’s Statement, he mentioned that he is doing all he can, as is the government, to make sure that Western Australia is fair, prosperous and full of opportunity. He is doing that through outstanding economic management, allowing the government to introduce cost-of-living relief measures in this period. We know that people are doing it tough. The government is also investing in infrastructure. I am probably a bit biased but I think the south east area of Perth and the metro area is getting the lion’s share of infrastructure spend after years of neglect by the Liberal government.

Dr A.D. Buti: And great local members!

Mr H.T. JONES: That is right; great advocacy from the member for Armadale.

Dr A.D. Buti: When you came on board it all changed!

Mr H.T. JONES: It has all happened coincidentally. It is quite stark. If members go north of the river, it is like a different world to the south. I am glad to see that we are finally getting some investment, particularly in transport.

I was also happy to hear about and will reiterate the fee-free TAFE training. It was quite remarkable and shocking really to hear the quoted figures from the minister before that to become an enrolled nurse under the Liberal Party cost \$10 000. Now, with the fee-free training program, it is free. That takes away a disincentive for people who want to enter the nursing profession. We all know that we need nurses. Removing that financial impediment is a great thing for the state and the Department of Health. Similarly, we all know that child care is in demand. Under the Liberal government, it cost \$7 000 to study for a diploma of early childhood education, but under the Cook Labor government, again, that course is free. That is a cost-of-living measure for not only the students who undertake that training and join the workforce, but also the parents of children who attend day care centres. Those parents are then able to pursue their own careers or training and possibly earn a higher income. One or both parents within the family can now work and earn more money to help them cope with the increased costs of living and housing.

We all know that the former Liberal government shut down the Midland railway workshops. I am glad to know that we are now manufacturing railcars in Bellevue. It is a great achievement for industry and for apprenticeships and skills in WA. I understand that Rio Tinto put in an order for a great number of rail trucks; I cannot think of the exact number. Again, that is upskilling WA and producing things in-house, which is awesome.

We had a summer of free public transport. There were 6.2 million SmartRider boardings during the first four weeks of that program, which is a 40 per cent increase on last year. The Armadale line was shut during that time. That demonstrates the uptake of public transport. It also shines a light on the bus replacement services. Before the shutdown was announced, a lot of naysayers talked about the bus replacement services. I can say with my hand on my heart that I have had no complaints through my office about the bus replacement services since the line has shut down. Almost half a million more people are travelling to the city than during the same period last year, with savings of up to \$370 a person across the entire period, which is a great cost-of-living measure. We also have the ride to school free program, which allows school students to travel from home to school and back for free. Presently,

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300 000 students have SmartRider cards. They can travel for free. As an example, that is a cost saving of about \$560 for a family that has two children attending school. There is a free school bus service in regional WA and the conveyance allowance has doubled. The two-zone fare cap is bringing down prices for people across the metropolitan area. Seniors also travel for free during off-peak times.

Just before I was elected, the Public Transport Authority announced that it was going to expand the public transport area to Jarrahdale, which is a great thing. There was some concern about the school bus service being discontinued, and that decision was delayed for 12 months, but the school bus service in Jarrahdale has now ceased and Transperth is servicing Jarrahdale. I acknowledge that there have been some teething problems, particularly with the bus stop at Kingsbury Drive, and also some concern from parents about the time that their children are arriving at school. My office has fielded quite a few concerns, and Chris and Harry in my office have dealt with those concerns; they are liaising with the minister's office to try to get an understanding. I suppose we are waiting a little to try to make sure that the service is bedded down before we make any knee-jerk reactions, because every change impacts someone else. We are just getting a feel for how the buses are travelling and making sure that the schools are happy. I understand that some students were getting late notices because they were arriving five minutes late for their first class. We will allow it to bed down and then, if needed, we will be talking to schools or the Public Transport Authority, through the minister's office, to try to make adjustments.

We did have a win, though. I think the member for Roe earlier heaped praise on the Minister for Transport for the School Bus Services inquiry and the fact that the service now has more flexibility for families, particularly in regional areas. I was on that inquiry and there were many examples of families for whom decisions about where their children could go to school did not make a lot of sense. The member for Roe observed that School Bus Services is now more flexible in its decision-making, which has had a big impact on families, particularly in the regional areas.

We also had a win in our office. There were families in Bedfordale who needed to get their children to school at Kelmscott Senior High School, John Wollaston Anglican Community School, or Armadale Senior High School. We requested, through the minister's office, that School Bus Services modify its routes. Those families are now satisfied and their children are travelling to school on free bus services.

I would now like to talk about the Byford rail extension. It was a momentous decision to invest in the Byford rail extension, something that the Liberal Party did not support. It thought that Byford would not need public transport until 2050, despite projections of a population increase there. In 2021 there were 32 000 people in the Byford area; it is expected that there will be 95 000 by 2046. The government has forged ahead with the Byford rail extension. It is a \$1 billion project, of which I think about \$300 million is state government money; I will check that later in my contribution.

I want to acknowledge the impact that that project is having on the people of Byford, particularly along the rail corridor. Some properties will have land acquired, including properties in Darling Downs, because it will be necessary to widen the rail corridor. Some residents have concerns about noise walls and security around the principal shared path that will be constructed. I have told them that I am advocating on their behalf to the minister and that we are trying to get the best solution we can in respect of noise walls to protect their lifestyle. The residential lifestyle blocks in Darling Downs are usually one to five acres in size, so they may not ordinarily qualify for a noise wall because the actual residences are further away. I am speaking to the minister to try to come up with a solution that will provide noise abatement and security for those residents. The residents of Darling Downs will not necessarily benefit from the rail extension because they will still have to travel to Armadale to catch a train, but it is something that they are bearing for the benefit of the wider population.

Dr A.D. Buti: Although they might have less traffic on the road.

Mr H.T. JONES: That is a good point, minister; yes, there should be less traffic on the road.

That brings me to another point. The Shire of Serpentine–Jarrahdale is quite a car-heavy area. The 2021 census revealed the percentage of households in the area that had three or more vehicles, not including motorbikes, scooters and heavy vehicles. The national average is 18.8 per cent whereas the average in Serpentine–Jarrahdale is 34.1 per cent. That is quite a large number of vehicles, and the basic reason for that is that public transport has been neglected in that area for a long time. The Byford rail extension will reduce the number of cars on the road. Families may sell a car because they no longer see the need for that car. For example, someone who works in the city might sell a car and make do with one family car.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr H.T. JONES: Another area of concern with the Byford rail extension is dust. Over the Christmas period, particularly in the height of summer, Byford, with the easterly winds, is the windiest place on earth. I received a lot of complaints about dust and sand blowing onto properties on the west side of the rail corridor. I did a bit

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of doorknocking; I did not take the usual break because I wanted to engage with the residents to make sure that they were heard. I took the action that they required, which was banging on about the dust and sand with MetConnx Alliance and the minister's office. They were already taking measures, but I re-emphasised that we needed more dust suppression. The speed limit on construction sites has been reduced to reduce the amount of dust blown up by vehicles and there is a contingent operation of water carts. If people drive past the works, they will see water carts everywhere. Indeed, one resident complained that there were too many water carts. He was concerned about the amount of water that was essentially being wasted from evaporation; the other 99 per cent of people were very much appreciative. Shade cloth has been installed on boundary fences and dust-suppressing crusting agents are being used to reduce the amount of dust that is produced. They have also commenced trials with a surfactant that infiltrates the soil and reduces dust liberation from the surface. It provides a bind on the sand that continues to do its job of suppressing dust and sand when vehicles drive over it. The winds have abated a little since Christmas, but dust is an ongoing issue about which I field calls and emails. I thank the residents and acknowledge what they are going through—the impact of dust, sand, noise and vibration on their lives. A team went out to properties before works commenced to assess the state of buildings, such as cracks et cetera. At the end of the project, residents will be able to make a claim if vibrations have caused damage to their property.

Another issue with the Byford rail extension is the closure of Larsen Road. Again, that decision had to be made. Larsen Road crossing is not far from Thomas Road Bridge. Construction of the dual-lane bridge over Thomas Road commenced two years ago. It is quite a massive structure. Larsen Road is not far from that. There was no room to build a bridge over the rail at Larsen Road. That would have required knocking down many houses and impacted Marri Grove Primary School. The profile of the land did not permit tunnelling underneath the ground. The decision was made to close the Larsen Road crossing. A pedestrian crossing has been maintained and, again, I acknowledge the impact that has had on residents, particularly because of the childcare centre on the eastern side of the crossing and a primary school on the western side. Parents have to walk across the pedestrian crossing or park on one side and decide where they will walk. There is that impact and an impact on other residents, including me, who used the Larsen Road crossing to get to South Western Highway.

When the project is complete, there will be a crossing at Clara Street, which is further south in Byford. That will be at grade and there will be a crossing to get across the line. Also, Sansimeon Boulevard will be connected through Evans Way and onto Abernethy Road. The closure of Larsen Road will not be insignificant, but it will be almost insignificant; people will soon forget about crossing at Larsen Road in their vehicles and will find other ways to get across. Some issues were raised about why Sansimeon Boulevard was not connected in advance, but that could not be done, because trucks need to come to the train station worksite. The imperative is to get the train station built, so I ask residents to have patience. I admit and believe that residents have shown great patience so far and are getting used to the new way of getting around Byford.

Once the Byford rail extension is in place, it will be a boon for the area. It will be a cost-of-living measure. People will be able to go to work in the city for under \$5. It will give people who cannot drive—young people, people with disabilities, people with medical conditions, elderly people and people who choose not to drive—the option to get on public transport and go where they need to. As I mentioned before, that will reduce the number of cars on the road and the traffic.

The other thing we are doing in the area is the Tonkin Highway extension. I think I mistakenly gave these figures before for the Byford rail extension. The Tonkin Highway extension is a \$1 billion project; \$315 million is provided by the state government and the rest is provided by federal funding. That project will address difficulties with local roads in the area. The shire does not have the ability to fund all the roads it needs to, because it has quite a small rate base. The Tonkin Highway extension will improve the throughput of trucks in the area. Hopkinson Road, in particular, has an issue, and Tonkin Highway will essentially replace Hopkinson Road and make the area safer and easier for Byford residents to transit. I might stop talking about transport here because I am running out of time.

I will mention the Byford and Districts Country Club, which was recently awarded club of the year. Byford has had a country club since 1957, but it relocated to its new premises in Linton Street North in 2017. It is an example of an organisation that received grant funding to get it off the ground, but since then it has demonstrated, through a great business plan, that it is self-sufficient. It is making money and ploughing money back into the community. It currently has more than 13 000 social members, but it had about 300 social members at the other premises. It serves an average of 3 000 meals a week and hosts hospitality students from Byford Secondary College, Armadale Senior High School and Arrow Training when students pursue their cert III and cert IV in hospitality.

In November 2023 and a couple of weeks ago, the country club hosted an EasyBeatz disco, which is a disco targeted at people with disabilities. My son and I went to the one a couple of weeks ago. It was a great event. The club dedicated an area to people with disabilities so they could enjoy a disco, be themselves and have a great time. They were all very comfortable and safe and it was a great event. The general manager of the country club, Ray Carey, has had an awakening about inclusion. He has been making a whole heap of changes in and out of the club such

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as more ACROD parking out the front than is required. He is also changing the doors that go out to parts of the beer garden. They are quite heavy. He is replacing those with electric doors so that people with disabilities can go out and eat, as well as us locals carrying five pints. There is a benefit there.

It invests money back into the community. It donates \$1 000 monthly to local groups. It also made a donation of \$5 000 to the Mundijong Centrals Junior Football Club last month, allowing it to buy brand new jumpers. It also recently donated its outdoor furniture to the Byford Baptist Church and the Lightweight Motorcycle Club, which was looking for outdoor furniture.

I quickly want to mention Byford Secondary College. It has 14 000 students. Paul Jones is the principal. The school's median ATAR has recently improved from 60 in 2019 to 80.25 in 2023. In four years, the median has gone up by a score of 20 in the ATAR, which is a great achievement. Last year, Jaxon Wood received an ATAR of 99.7. Jaxon along with Ellie Birch, Matthew Durrant and Sebastian Matthews all achieved ATARs of above 90. I give congratulations to Sophia Oliveira for being selected for a scholarship by the Australian–German Student Exchange to Germany for 2024–25. Byford Secondary School will also be hosting the second Careers and Enterprise Expo from 21 to 22 June. It attracts businesses from the area to offer guidance to students from all around the area on the jobs of the future.

I am sorry, I do not have time to talk about Roleystone Community College. I will have time in the future.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

Mr H.T. JONES: Yes, I will do it then.

I quickly want to mention the backpack drive. Dandelions WA did a great backpack drive. I think they got 16 000 bags out this year, and I distributed some in Darling Range and Armadale. I want to shout-out to Lisa Gale and the other members at Speedy Spanners who donated a whole heap of backpacks and equipment. I understand that the Serpentine Jarrahdale Lions Club, which I am a member of, has not decided on the amount yet, but will make a cash donation to Dandelions to recognise the work that it does.

With that, I will take my seat.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie) [6.43 pm]: I rise to respond to the Premier's Statement and acknowledge all the exciting work that is going on in the electorates. It is really heartening to hear about the particular projects that members hold dear and the future plans that they have. It is all very exciting.

I wanted to focus my response on my attendance and observations made at COP28. The conference is held under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It was held in early December and concluded on 13 December in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates. I think that was an excellent choice of venue. When I committed to going, I mentioned this to some people in Western Australia. They said, "Why would we be having a climate change conference, a COP event, in an OPEC country? Shouldn't we have it in Fremantle instead, or Copenhagen or somewhere like that—somewhere with a 'green' perspective?" However, I really think it was a great decision and that the presidency of COP28 by Dr Sultan Al Jaber was actually really enlightening and powerful. It forced everyone to face the reality of the amount of fossil fuel use that is still ongoing and that we are so heavily reliant on. It forced us to face that reality, and so, to that extent, I would say that the United Arab Emirates was an excellent venue choice.

I also acknowledge the assistance that the federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, was able to afford myself and the member for Bassendean. He ensured that we had accreditation to attend the conference as what was known as the overflow delegation, but it was actually a fantastic accreditation level.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: It is interesting that the minister raises that. This is directly related to climate change issues. The minister raises the flight over in an Emirates A380 when we hit a pocket of turbulence and the plane descended very rapidly for only a matter of seconds, but, basically, if one did not have a seatbelt on, one hit the roof. That was the case for one of our former colleagues, Alannah MacTiernan, who suffered severe injuries in a similar situation, and there were indeed a number of people on that flight who suffered severe injuries. Planes have sophisticated stuff that helps pilots navigate around turbulence and do all sorts of things, but there are times when there is clear air turbulence that they cannot see and the likelihood of that happening increases with climate change. This is yet another consequence of climate change.

The event was held at what is known as Expo City Dubai, which is where Dubai hosted the global expo in 2020. It was a massive event in massive infrastructure, which was necessary, though, because, according to the information I have, there were about 85 000 delegates from 197 countries in attendance. It was really quite an education for me to see how a United Nations event is organised, and I have to say again how well the UAE organised this event and accommodated everyone. A range of interests were present at the conference. There were people in the green

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zone who were perhaps more involved with companies that provide parts of solutions to tackle climate change. There were manufacturers of wind turbines and desalination equipment and all sorts of things that we would expect in and around the whole area of sustainability to get us on the journey towards a clean energy future. It was fantastic.

When the conference began, a fantastic initiative was announced on day one, and that was the creation of what is known as the loss and damage fund, which aims to support the most vulnerable countries in the face of climate-related disasters. That fund has already received pledges to the tune of \$792 million. The conference got off to a very positive start, which was fascinating to see. The momentum was building for the final communiqué to talk about the phase-out of the use of fossil fuels. Then it is fair to say that I could feel, in this massive venue, an action in all the conversations going on. Various countries, particularly the OPEC and the OPEC+ countries, started to chip away a little bit and call for things to be wound back and not to have in the communiqué any mention of a phase-out of fossil fuels. It was thanks only to the presidency of Sultan Al Jaber that, in the end, the final communiqué did refer to the phase-out. UN Secretary-General António Guterres said —

“To those who opposed a clear reference to a phase out of fossil fuels in the COP28 text, I want to say that a fossil fuel phase out is inevitable whether they like it or not. Let’s hope it doesn’t come too late ...

Bear in mind that the most recent reports tabled are about the scientific realities of worsening climate change, and they show that 2023 was the hottest year on record, and that we are well and truly at 1.4 degrees Celsius above the average relative to the pre-industrial era of 1850 to 1900. There was such a momentum there that at times it was heartening. It was also a cause for optimism. Another thing that I found particularly positive is that 50 oil companies were represented, and they committed to zero methane omissions from their operations by 2030. Some would say that for these oil companies to reduce methane emissions—knowing that the potency of methane is 21 times the greenhouse effect of CO₂—would perhaps not be too hard for their processing facilities to bolt on to various refineries and things. It showed their sense of obligation to be seen to be tackling things.

I note that the member for Maylands mentioned the issue of agriculture and food production and the fact that 134 countries signed a declaration pledging to tackle the climate impacts on the food industry. That was a massive thing. As I said, the member for Bassendean and I were there. The Western Australian Minister for Environment, Hon Reece Whitby, was there, and a number of Liberal Party politicians were there as well, including Ted O’Brien, who I believe is a member of the House of Representatives. He was very keen to talk about how nuclear power would help Australia. It did not really seem to be going too far because of the costs and the time involved for action, and the reality is that we now have so many renewable projects that are far cheaper and quicker to install. That was interesting.

A total of 60 countries made a commitment about air conditioning, which accounts for seven per cent of total emissions. This was in Dubai, where everything is air-conditioned. We have had quite a heatwave this summer here, but air conditioning in Dubai is an essential part of life, so much so that even when going to the metro, the station is air-conditioned and it is only when the train pulls in and its doors open that the station’s doors open so that people are not exposed to the outside. How that goal can be met was tackled as well. A total of 35 countries committed to recognising clean hydrogen certificates. This is a very important thing, because there is exciting discussion going on in Western Australia about the use of green hydrogen. There are other grades of hydrogen, and I note the work of Andrew Forrest on this, but essentially the commitment is to make sure that the hydrogen used is true green hydrogen; in other words, it is manufactured from renewable energy with the hydrogen and oxygen split using renewable energy as the source energy. That is essential for green energy.

I want to mention many other aspects. Green steel was also a focus. The Liberty Steel Group and Sanjeev Gupta, who would be known to quite a few people in Western Australia, hosted a big event in a magnificent steel building in Dubai called the Museum of the Future, which is a giant eye-shaped building made of steel. It is worth googling just to see an image of it. The message is the need to make sure that the steel is manufactured in a way that is not reliant on coking coal and the emissions intensity that comes with it.

Perhaps one of the most heartening things for me was the visit to what we might call the Dubai solar park—its official title is the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Solar Park. This is an incredible facility. The wealth in the United Arab Emirates is there, we see it constantly, whether it is the cars on the road or the construction of hotels and whatever. Bear in mind as well that the place did not really exist 60 years ago, so what has been built out of the desert is absolutely remarkable. The Emiratis have a sense that they can do anything; they can achieve things. As part of that spirit, they have built this massive solar park with a concentrated solar power system. This is one of those towers. It can be seen from miles away. When we were driving out to it, I thought it must have been some sort of gas flare because I could see it on the horizon from 30 kilometres away. It is this tower that mirrors reflect light into. This heats a salt substance in the tower that gives off heat to provide the boiling water for the steam to drive turbines that produce enormous amounts of electricity. Checking my figures, I think the amount is in the 700 megawatt range for the whole solar park, and there are plans to take that to something approaching the

Mr Peter Rundle; Ms Mia Davies; Mr Shane Love; Mr David Templeman; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Alison Kent; Mr David Scaife; Mr Hugh Jones; Mr Chris Tallentire

5 000 megawatt range. The concentrated solar tower produces electricity in the 100 megawatt range. It is enormous technology. The Emiratis delight in testing new technologies. There is no fear of being an early adopter. They want to invest their wealth in the energy systems of the future. They also have massive photovoltaic arrays with different levels of technology. As photovoltaic technology advances, they have been installing more and more of the newer systems at this solar park. When people are in Dubai and they feel that everywhere is air-conditioned and wonder what the energy cost is, they can feel that there is a way forward in the future, and it will be powered by renewable energy. That is clearly what the UAE’s agenda is. But there is no doubt that United Arab Emirates still makes massive amounts from fossil fuels at this stage. The whole global reliance on oil, especially for transport, is incredible. It dominates all.

As a personal response to what I was seeing, when I came back from the UAE, I made a commitment to buy an electric vehicle. I feel that we do not want to be shackled to the importation of oil from overseas. It just does not make sense. I have to say I am very happy with my electric vehicle. It is a BYD Atto 3. I really think it is a great opportunity for us as members of this place to be involved in the transition and to show the community we can do things with just a tiny bit of modification such as changing daily driving habits and plugging in at night. At the moment, I have not even bothered to upgrade my electrical system. I could upgrade for faster charging at home, but I am just using a 1.5 kilowatt an hour trickle arrangement. I think it is sometimes called a “granny trickle” or something, but it does the job with the amount of driving I do. If I were doing longer distances, I would probably then go to a charging station and plug in for a faster charge there, so there are certainly ways around things.

In the brief moments that I have left, I want to say that when I was visiting all these pavilions, nearly every country was represented—there were 190 pavilions, so 190 of the 194 nations were represented—and I think nearly every country said that they were in some way unique. The Climate Change Bill will be debated in this place very soon. All countries see their role and their abilities as unique, and I think sometimes that needs to be tested and investigated. I think it was fascinating to see how a province in Canada, Saskatchewan, and countries that form member states of the European Union are all tackling this together and we are all on the journey, all believing that we are just a little special and a bit different.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mrs L.A. Munday): Member for Thornlie, you can have an extension if you like.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I will not take the extension, but I will conclude by saying that this is a very important global journey that we are all on together, and it is of direct concern to our constituents. I know our constituents sometimes leave us to navigate the matter and expect us to make the right decisions on it, and if we do not, the consequences will be dramatic. These are exciting times and I look forward, I hope, to attending the conference at the end of this year in Baku in Azerbaijan, another big oil producer and a nation that is in the OPEC+ group. From what I could hear at the conference, Azerbaijan was really prepared to show strong leadership in combating the challenges around climate change. I shall conclude my remarks there and commend the work of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Dr A.D. Buti (Minister for Education)**.

House adjourned at 7.02 pm
