

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES — GRADUATE PROGRAM**

*Statement by Minister for Community Services*

**MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Community Services)** [9.14 am]: I rise to speak about the Department of Communities' 2018 graduate program, which is creating jobs in the public service for our future leaders. On 15 February 2018, 15 graduate officers commenced their two-year journey with the department. Of these 15 individuals, 11 are female, six are Aboriginal and nine are 25 years or younger. This demonstrates the department's strong commitment to the recruitment of women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people into the program. The graduates possess a variety of university qualifications, including Bachelor of Arts, Master of Public Policy and Juris Doctor. During their time at the department, the graduates will rotate through the department, completing placements in various divisions of the agency. This will offer them a unique and well-rounded experience in a large government department with a diverse range of functions—an opportunity that can be used to maximise the McGowan government's machinery-of-government changes to achieve better service delivery for all Western Australians. Programs such as these deliver benefits to not only the graduates in the form of jobs, but also the agency through mentoring and supervisory opportunities, fresh perspectives and ideas, and injecting the public sector with the younger workforce it needs. These graduates are the future leaders of the public sector and so it is pleasing to see they are representative of the communities that they will serve. At a time when our public service is ageing and we need a skilled workforce that can think beyond silos and focus on outcomes for communities and individuals, these graduates will be well placed to meet the challenges of the future.