



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2019

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 15 May 2019

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) took the chair at 12.00 pm, acknowledged country and read prayers.

DISTINGUISHED VISITOR — MATTHEW BIRNEY

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [12.01 pm]: I would like to welcome one of our former members, Mr Matt Birney. I cannot see him at the moment. He is outside. I would like to welcome one of our former members, Mr Matt Birney, who is outside the chamber today. We will do that a little bit later. A good start to the day!

PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

WA NURSING AND MIDWIFERY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Statement by Minister for Health

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [12.03 pm]: I rise to inform the house that on Saturday, 11 May, the sixteenth annual Western Australian Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards were held to honour WA's most outstanding nurses and midwives. The awards recognised 12 category winners, as well as the 2019 Western Australian Nurse of the Year and the Lifetime Achievement Honour. The winners were chosen from a field of 47 finalists from across Western Australia's public and private health and education sectors.

The SPEAKER: Members, if you want to have a meeting, have it outside.

Mr R.H. COOK: This year, Andrea Rieusset, a nurse practitioner in the emergency department at Fitzroy Crossing Hospital, was named the 2019 nurse of the year. She was also awarded the Excellence in Aboriginal Health award. Ms Rieusset works tirelessly to address the growing issue of family and domestic violence in Kimberley communities. Her work has led to the development of a comprehensive regional family and domestic violence program to improve services and clinical outcomes for women and children.

The 2019 Lifetime Achievement Honour was presented to Professor Dianne Wynaden, professor of mental health at Curtin University. Professor Wynaden has been a trailblazer in mental health nursing for over four decades. Her evidence-based approach to translating findings into standard practice has helped marginalised patients with mental health problems receive better and more targeted care.

The SPEAKER: Minister, your own minister is on his feet.

Mr R.H. COOK: This year's awards introduced a team category—Excellence in Person Centred Care Team Award—to recognise the many inspiring nursing and midwifery teams across the state. The inaugural winner of this award was the Bunbury Midwifery Group Practice, which has developed a holistic woman and family-centred model of care.

These awards serve as a reminder of the amazing work our nurses and midwives undertake each and every day across our state to improve the lives of Western Australians. To our nurses and midwives, I give you my thanks for your dedication and service.

MENTAL HEALTH — RECOVERY COLLEGE

Statement by Minister for Mental Health

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Mental Health) [12.05 pm]: The McGowan government made an election commitment to establish recovery colleges in Western Australia. I am pleased to announce that in the 2019–20 state budget the government has committed \$3.6 million over four years. An independent expert panel, in collaboration with the Mental Health Commission, developed a co-designed statewide draft model of service. The model aims to provide a safe and welcoming place for people with mental health, and alcohol and other drug issues. The Western Australian recovery college will operate using a hub and satellite design, which will be progressively implemented statewide over a three-year period. A central hub will be located in the Perth metropolitan area, with satellites located in all regions across Western Australia. The Western Australian recovery college will be the first trans-regional service of its kind in Western Australia, complementing the existing recovery college in Broome. The full implementation funding is \$1.35 million per annum.

The expert panel used feedback from the community to develop the aims of the Western Australian recovery college. These aims are to create positive change and hope by bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities in a safe, welcoming and flexible learning environment; to enable the sharing of lived expertise and professional knowledge; and to promote personal recovery, empowerment and personal choice and improve physical, social, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. The service will use inclusive educational approaches in a safe and welcoming environment to support personal recovery relating to mental health distress, addiction, and substance use issues. The recovery college in WA will see people with lived experience—carers, family members, those who work

in the mental health, and alcohol and other drug sectors, and interested community members—coming together to develop skills and share knowledge and experiences in health and wellbeing. This will provide a mechanism for a cultural shift in existing mental health, and alcohol and other drug services. It will break down barriers, stigma and power imbalances between consumers and clinicians, and will provide clinicians the opportunity to take their experience back to their clinical services and implement change. The recovery college will complement existing mental health, alcohol and other drug support services. The rollout of the first courses in the central hub, metropolitan satellite and two regional satellites will coincide with the commencement of community mental health step-up, step-down services from 1 July 2020. An early tender announcement is currently available on Tenders WA. It is intended that the request for tender will be announced on Tenders WA on 7 June 2019, closing on 16 August 2019. This government is committed to improving mental health, alcohol and other drug services for all Western Australians, providing the right care, at the right time, and in the right place.

ALBANY SEA RESCUE SQUAD — GROUP BRAVERY CITATION

Statement by Minister for Emergency Services

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn — Minister for Emergency Services) [12.08 pm]: I would like to take this opportunity to inform the house about a Group Bravery Citation bestowed on three volunteer members of the Albany Sea Rescue Squad. On the night of 29 October 2015, skipper Jason Shepherd; Christopher Johns, ESM; and Timothy Wilkinson from the Albany sea rescue were involved in the rescue of a woman from the water at the blowholes near Albany.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: At 8.00 pm, the Albany sea rescue members were deployed to search for a person who had been reported missing. Weather conditions were challenging, with strong easterly winds, rough seas, and almost complete darkness as they made the 45-minute trip to the area. They faced treacherous conditions, managing to locate the woman, and the rescue vessel was carefully manoeuvred alongside her. All three crew members lifted the seriously injured woman onto the boat and immediately performed first-aid treatment. The woman suffered significant injuries and hypothermia, and as the situation became more complicated and time critical, the crew battled the difficult conditions to return the injured woman to shore.

I am sure that every member in this house will join me in acknowledging the Albany Sea Rescue Squad members for their tireless efforts; they risked their own lives and braved rough seas to pull the woman to safety. For their actions, these three volunteers are deserving recipients of the Group Bravery Citation and it is fitting to acknowledge their heroism in this house. On behalf of the Western Australian community, I would like to congratulate each of them on receiving the Group Bravery Citation and thank them for their ongoing service.

Members: Hear, hear!

GERALDTON CAREER FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE FIREFIGHTERS — GROUP BRAVERY CITATION

Statement by Minister for Emergency Services

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn — Minister for Emergency Services) [12.10 pm]: I would like to take this opportunity to inform the house about a Group Bravery Citation bestowed on seven firefighters from the Geraldton Career Fire and Rescue Service. On the afternoon of 4 May 2016, Geraldton Career Fire and Rescue Service firefighters responded to rescue a 17-year-old male student who had become trapped in rocks below the water level at Geraldton Town Beach. He was in danger of drowning, as the swell continued to wash over him. The firefighters entered the water and placed a breathing apparatus on the student. The dangerous surf conditions made the task extremely difficult for them, as they were repeatedly washed off the rocks, pushed back onto the rocks or carried to shore by the swell. With the risk of injury increasing to the student and his rescuers, the decision was made to remove the breathing apparatus and instead connect an airline to the mask; however, as the mask was not designed to function under water, it made it difficult for the student to continue to breathe uninterrupted. Time was critical, so the firefighters set to work using a crowbar to drive a wooden wedge under the boulder, allowing them to lever it up and dislodge it enough to free the student's arm.

Station Officer Parkin maintained the safety of his crew by continually monitoring their actions. Due to the large swell and nature of the rescue, firefighters sustained minor injuries, but this did not deter them. The Geraldton Career Fire and Rescue Service received the Group Bravery Citation for its firefighters' bravery and courage above and beyond the call of duty in challenging conditions. Their ability to think outside the box and implement a life-saving solution using equipment not designed for use in water while under extreme duress was heroic. I am sure that members in this house will join me in acknowledging the seven professional firefighters who have been bestowed the Group Bravery Citation: Station Officer David Parkin, Firefighter Damien Gilbert, Firefighter Christopher Worthington, Firefighter Ben Clune, Firefighter David Geqwin, Firefighter Matthew Merritt, and Firefighter William Gillespie-Harp. On behalf of the state, I would like to recognise each of them for their efforts and thank them for their ongoing service in protecting our community.

Members: Hear, hear!

“STATUTORY REVIEW OF FIREFIGHTER CANCER LEGISLATION” — REPORT

Statement by Minister for Industrial Relations

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Industrial Relations) [12.12 pm]: I rise to table the “Statutory Review of Firefighter Cancer Legislation” report.

[See paper 2442.]

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: On 13 November 2013, amendments to the Workers’ Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 came into operation, providing a rebuttable presumption of work-related exposure for state-employed firefighters suffering any one of 12 specified cancers. The legislation makes it easier for firefighters to claim workers’ compensation entitlements by overcoming the evidentiary requirements of proving an occupational link between firefighting and cancer that would otherwise apply. Section 49E of the act requires a statutory review of the operation and effectiveness of the amendments every five years. The minister must prepare a report based on the review and, as soon as practicable after the report is prepared, cause it to be laid before each house of Parliament.

In January 2019, I asked WorkCover WA to undertake the review. The report is the outcome of WorkCover WA’s assessment of the relevant legislative arrangements. I am pleased to inform the house that the review indicates that the legislation is operating as intended by facilitating timely access to compensation for firefighters who have contracted a specified cancer. To date, a total of 24 presumptive cancer claims have been made by firefighters in the five years since the legislation became operational. Only one claimant was not able to progress with his presumptive claim due to not meeting the legislative requirements. In terms of timely access to compensation, the average time taken to determine a claim is 13 days. The average time taken for an insurer to determine disease claims across the workers’ compensation scheme over the past five years was 43 days. This indicates that the legislation is working as intended and the time frames for a decision are significantly shorter than they otherwise would be.

Although no further legislative amendments are recommended based on the review, the government remains open to considering whether there should be additions to the presumptive cancers identified in the legislation. I wish to thank the United Firefighters Union of Western Australia, the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, and RiskCover for contributing to the review.

METROPOLITAN REGION SCHEME AMENDMENT 1332/41 — SWAN VALLEY OMNIBUS 1

Statement by Minister for Planning

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Planning) [12.15 pm]: I present today for tabling metropolitan region scheme amendment 1332/41, an omnibus amendment that comprises three proposals for land within the Swan Valley. The purpose of the amendment is to rationalise the zoning and reservation of land to cadastral boundaries and to reflect its ownership appropriately.

The first proposal is for the transfer of an area of approximately 6.5 hectares, being lot 33 Padbury Avenue, Millendon, and a portion of the Padbury Avenue road reserve from the parks and recreation reservation to the rural zone. The proposal area is not required for parks and recreation purposes. The second proposal is for the transfer of an area of approximately 3.29 hectares, being lot 102 Harrow Street, West Swan, from the public purposes—commonwealth government reservation to the rural zone. The proposal area is no longer owned by the commonwealth government and its zoning is to be amended to reflect this. The third proposal is for the transfer of an approximately 0.19 hectare portion of the former Riverbank Detention Centre site, being lot 9332 Hamersley Road, Caversham, from the parks and recreation reservation to the rural zone. The former detention centre has been identified as a redundant state asset and the amendment will ensure that the zoning of its exercise yard is consistent with the remainder of the site in order to facilitate its disposal through the land asset sales program.

The Swan Valley Planning Committee was consulted prior to the initiation of the amendment and supported it, as the changes are consistent with the Swan Valley Planning Act 1995. The Environmental Protection Authority advised that the proposed amendments did not require formal assessment under the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and provided advice on proposal 1 relating to flora and vegetation, terrestrial fauna, hydrological processes and inland water environmental quality. These matters will be managed and addressed through the subsequent local scheme amendment stage of the planning process in consultation with the City of Swan and the Western Australian Planning Commission.

In accordance with the statutory provisions for region scheme amendments, these amendments were advertised for three months. A total of 20 submissions were received, comprising 15 general comments, two comments of support and three comments of objection. Having regard to the content of submissions and hearings, the Western Australian Planning Commission recommended that the amendment be finalised without modification. Copies of the submissions and the Western Australian Planning Commission’s “Report on Submissions” are also tabled today.

Finalisation of the amendment will ensure that the metropolitan region scheme is kept up to date as the statutory regional plan for Perth, facilitate the disposal of a surplus state asset and remove potential liabilities for the purchase of reserved land that is not required by government.

I table the documentation for metropolitan region scheme amendment 1332/41.

[See papers 2443 and 2444.]

FOYLE ROAD, BAYSWATER — APARTMENTS

Statement by Minister for Housing

MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee — Minister for Housing) [12.17 pm]: I rise today to inform the house of a new high-quality, affordable apartment development that is aligned with the McGowan government's Metronet commitment to create accessible housing developments with thoughtful and appropriate density around public transport infrastructure. Last month, along with the very active member for Maylands, I had the opportunity to attend the sod-turning ceremony for the development of 17 apartments at 1 Foyle Road, Bayswater. Western Australia's changing population demographic has seen housing needs shift in recent years, providing a challenge for government and industry alike—a challenge to create more diverse housing options in responsibly planned and livable communities. As a result of this, Perth is seeing a significant increase in apartments, townhouses and terrace housing.

The Department of Communities affordable housing project will see construction partner JCM build a five-storey apartment complex comprising a range of one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments, providing a much-needed boost to housing diversity in Bayswater. Located in the heart of Bayswater, within walking distance of the Bayswater train station and close to the town centre, these apartments will provide housing opportunities for singles, couples and small family households, as well as those looking for universal-access apartment options. Future residents will enjoy a versatile rooftop terrace and landscaped gardens, as well as private outdoor living spaces and balconies, with two of the 17 apartments being retained for public housing and the remainder offered for sale at market value. Future residents will have access to major employment hubs via the Forrestfield–Airport Link and the Morley–Ellenbrook rail line, as well as the existing Midland rail line. These apartments will enable people to live in their preferred locations, to stay connected to family and close to facilities and amenities that encourage them to actively participate in, and contribute to, their communities.

It is expected that this development will create approximately 22 jobs across the course of the development and contribute around \$8.5 million of economic activity in the construction sector. Construction of the apartments is expected to be completed by late 2020. I am pleased to see a Metronet-aligned infill apartment development providing affordable, diverse and inclusive housing options for people of differing needs in our community.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — GERALDTON RESPONSE TEAM

Statement by Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) [12.20 pm]: I rise to inform the house of work going on across regional and remote Western Australia to address the scourge of family and domestic violence and its impact. In particular, I want to let members know about my recent visit to the family and domestic violence response team located in Geraldton and servicing the Murchison district. This team is a partnership of three professionals: the WA Police Force; child protection officers from the Department of Communities; and a specialist from a non-government family and domestic violence service provider operating in the area.

The work in Geraldton shows us the value of these services co-locating and working collaboratively so that there is a continuous and consistent focus on victim safety through risk assessment, safety planning and referral to services. I want to thank the Geraldton family and domestic violence response team for its work. These teams are located throughout the state because no neighbourhood, community, postcode or region is unaffected by family and domestic violence.

I also want to recognise the ongoing work of the Geraldton community and local services, such as Desert Blue Connect and Mission Australia, in supporting victims and their families experiencing family and domestic violence. The Geraldton community and these services, plus others, are taking action to stop family and domestic violence from happening in the first place. Their proactive approach to prevention is known as “Community, Respect and Equality”. The name says it all. There is no single or quick fix for family and domestic violence, yet I am confident that if we focus more on collaboration both in responding to victims and providing primary prevention action, we will start to see a difference.

WATER DEFICIENCY DECLARATIONS

Statement by Minister for Water

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Water) [12.21 pm]: I rise to talk about water deficiency declarations in the great southern. Climate change is real and the south west of Western Australia has seen decreased rainfall over the last four decades. Last year, many parts of Western Australia had low winter rainfall and areas of the great southern have had these dry conditions compounded by little or no rain through summer.

Last week, I approved a water deficiency declaration for Mt Short in the Shire of Ravensthorpe. Today, I have declared the same for the Mallee Hill area in the Shire of Lake Grace. These declarations have been made to protect animal welfare. As a result, the government will cart water to central tanks in these areas to reduce the distance local farmers have to travel to access emergency water for their livestock.

Mr R.S. Love: What do you charge them?

Mr D.J. KELLY: It is free.

The minister approves a water deficiency declaration on application from a local government on behalf of a group of farmers. A declaration is made when farmers are required to cart water for their livestock from more than 40 kilometres away and once on-farm water supplies and strategic community water supplies have been depleted. Once a declaration has been made, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation organises for water to be carted to a central location for use by the affected farmers. Water carting continues until the water deficiency declaration is lifted when rain commences and on-farm supplies are restored.

For the Mallee Hill area in Lake Grace, water will be sourced from the integrated great southern town supply and the Kukerin town water supply dam, and carted to a tank at Tommy's dam. For Lake Grace, approximately 350 kilolitres of water will be carted each week for seven farmers. Carting will commence tomorrow. For Ravensthorpe, approximately 280 kilolitres of water will be carted each week for eight farmers. Carting in this area commenced last week.

Western Australia will feel the effects of climate change more than almost any other area on the planet. The McGowan government will continue to work closely with shires and farmers to ensure continuing access to water for livestock.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion

On motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

That so much of standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable private members' business to have priority from 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm on Wednesday, 15 May 2019.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE — DINNER SUSPENSION

Statement by Acting Speaker

THE ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): It gives me great pleasure to advise members that there will be a dinner break this evening between 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm.

TEMPORARY ORDERS 40, 101, 146, 147 — STANDING ORDER AMENDMENTS

Amendment to Motion

On motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

That business of the Assembly, order of the day 1, be postponed until the next day's sitting.

TAB (DISPOSAL) BILL 2019

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

Second Reading

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Treasurer) [12.26 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am pleased to present members with the TAB (Disposal) Bill 2019. This bill represents the culmination of years of debate on the future of the Western Australian TAB. After years of false starts and inaction from the previous government, the McGowan government is acting to secure the future of the Western Australian racing industry.

Members will recall that the current Leader of the Opposition, then Treasurer, announced as part of his 2014 budget speech that the government's ownership of the TAB was under review. Since then, there has been an ongoing debate amongst the racing industry and broader community about the merits of a sale of the TAB and the conditions upon which it could be supported. The government recognises that the local racing industry relies on the TAB for funding. Since coming to office, the McGowan government has undertaken an earnest and concerted consultation process to develop a TAB sale framework that balances the various interests of different stakeholders and sets the foundations to support an independently sustainable and competitive racing industry into the future.

On 6 September 2017, the Minister for Racing and Gaming informed Parliament that the government was commencing a process to inform a sensible and responsible decision on the future of the TAB. In his statement, the minister noted the importance of achieving the long-term sustainability of the industry in a fast-changing landscape.

On 6 March 2018, the minister and I announced that the scoping study report on the future of the TAB had been completed, with the report concluding it is possible for a transaction to be structured in a way that meets the interests of both the state and the racing industry. The government then commenced a two-stage consultation process on the findings of the report. The first stage of consultation involved discussions with the board of Racing and Wagering Western Australia and its subcommittees representing the three racing codes, which was conducted from February to April 2018, resulting in general alignment and acceptance of key principles with the racing industry leadership. The second stage of consultation commenced with the publication of a discussion paper by the Department of Treasury on 29 June 2018. The discussion paper explained how a potential sale of the TAB could be structured to benefit the racing industry, and facilitated input and feedback from key stakeholders and the community. Following the publication of the discussion paper, the Department of Treasury and Racing and Wagering Western Australia conducted 12 consultation forums, including regional forums in Bunbury, Albany, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie. In total, 107 submissions were made to the discussion paper from a range of individuals and stakeholder groups, with submissions published on the Department of Treasury's website. On 9 October 2018, following the conclusion of the consultation process, the minister and I announced the government's decision to move forward with the sale of the TAB. As we declared on that day, the long-term interests of the racing industry have been, and will continue to be, front of mind throughout the sale process. In moving forward with a sale, the government's objectives are to: support an independently sustainable and competitive racing industry; optimise value for both the state and the racing industry; ensure the integrity of racing and wagering activities in Western Australia are maintained; and conduct a fair and robust process.

As members are aware, the origins of the TAB date back to the 1960s. The TAB was established to be the sole provider of off-course betting services in Western Australia, to address the rise in off-course betting shops and to direct revenue from wagering back to racing. Since then, the racing industry has relied on revenue from the TAB. The TAB is currently operated by Racing and Wagering Western Australia. RWWA is also the principal racing authority for Western Australia, making it responsible for the governance and integrity of all three racing codes: thoroughbred, harness and greyhound. RWWA's functions and powers are defined by the Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act 2003. The TAB has served the Western Australian racing industry well for many years under government ownership. However, given the evolution of the Australian wagering market, there are significant competitive challenges if the TAB were to remain as the only standalone state-owned TAB in Australia. These challenges include: intense competition from larger, domestic and internationally backed corporate wagering operators with strong economies of scale; customer preferences shifting from the TAB's traditional strengths, with trends toward online channels, away from physical premises, fixed-odds betting, away from parimutuel, and more wagering on sports relative to races; and the TAB's relatively small scale constraining its ability to leverage investment in marketing and technology compared with its competitors.

In light of these challenges, the case for selling the TAB essentially boils down to the idea that a larger operator will be better placed to manage these challenges over the longer term through the benefits of scale and efficiency and thereby provide a more reliable revenue stream for the racing industry into the future. This bill provides the framework for an incoming operator to be granted a new wagering licence in accordance with a revised regulatory regime. Following the commencement of operations under the new wagering licence by the incoming operator, RWWA will cease its wagering operations and become Racing Western Australia, continuing its functions as the principal racing authority for the three racing codes and maintaining its role in distributing funds to the racing industry.

This bill also preserves the continuing role of the TAB in funding the industry by requiring the incoming wagering operator to enter into a contractual arrangement with Racing WA, which will be called the racing distribution agreement, but referenced in the bill as a racing industry arrangement. The racing distribution agreement will establish the core relationship between the wagering operator and the racing industry, including the obligation for the operator to provide ongoing funding to Racing WA in the form of a product fee, and for Racing WA to coordinate the delivery of the annual racing program. The product fee will be paid by the operator from its wagering activities and set as a percentage of the operator's gross wagering margin. This contractual model was agreed to with the racing industry on the basis that it provides greater certainty for both parties relative to other models and removes the racing industry's exposure to the operator's ongoing operating costs and capital expenditure.

Drafting of the racing distribution agreement is underway and will be finalised ahead of the commencement of the market process in which potential new operators will be invited to express their interest in taking on the new Western Australian wagering licence. Apart from formalising the agreed funding formula with the new operator, the racing distribution agreement will include a number of contractual protections for the racing industry. These protections include: a funding guarantee period that will lock in the minimum level of funding provided by the TAB operator to the racing industry for the initial three years of the arrangement; mechanisms to prevent licence arbitrage; and a positive contractual obligation for the operator to act in the best interests of the TAB, thus

maximising funding flowing to the racing industry. Importantly, the term of the wagering licence and racing distribution agreement will be aligned. The bill provides a licence term of up to 40 years, with a possible two-year extension. Previous consultation and market sounding has suggested that a term of around 25 to 30 years would likely be sufficient to align the interests of the operator to invest in and operate the TAB for the long-term growth and prosperity of the racing industry. The government will assess the value of extending the term up to the full 40 years as part of the market process.

In terms of the legislative framework, the key measure that protects the racing industry's interests is that it is a requirement of the new wagering licence for the racing distribution agreement to be in place. In other words, a new wagering operator is not licensed to operate without an agreed racing distribution agreement with the racing industry. There is no deal unless Racing Western Australia is onboard. This balance of interests reflects the government's view that this reform is not something that is being imposed on the racing industry; rather, the framework has been developed such that agreement is required for the sale of the TAB to proceed. The fundamental principle that has underpinned consultation on funding has been that the racing industry should be no worse off. In other words, the racing industry can expect to receive at least the equivalent amount of funding from the privately operated TAB as it would if the TAB remained in government ownership, with appropriate mechanisms in place to support this outcome. However, beyond the no worse off funding principle, there are other parts of the reform package that will make the racing industry significantly better off. Building upon the government's decision last year to legislate an allocation of 30 per cent of the revenue derived from the new point-of-consumption wagering tax receipts to the racing industry, this bill locks in the government's commitment to allocate 35 per cent of the net proceeds from the sale of the TAB to establish a racing infrastructure fund.

The racing infrastructure fund will be administered by Racing Western Australia, with the investment strategy and funding allocations approved by the Minister for Racing and Gaming as part of the annual strategic development planning process. The assessment of priority needs and associated business cases will be undertaken by Racing Western Australia.

The racing infrastructure fund represents a one-off opportunity for the racing industry to capitalise the value the industry and state have together built in the TAB business. In this regard, the government is pleased to have agreed a fair position with the racing industry that will provide for a rejuvenation of racing infrastructure across the state. In addition, as I announced in my budget speech last week, the government has decided that the balance of the proceeds will be used as a down payment for the planned new maternity hospital to replace King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women.

Another key value add for the racing industry in this reform will be the potential introduction of simulated racing products at TAB outlets. The government is aware that this topic is likely to be used for political pointscoreing. Nevertheless, the government has taken a considered approach, weighed up the options, consulted with stakeholders, referred the matter to the experts and is ultimately satisfied that the introduction of simulated races will assist us delivering on the objectives to support an independently sustainable and competitive racing industry and optimise value for both the state and the racing industry. The facts are these: the local racing industry, TAB agents and state finances will all benefit from the introduction of simulated races as the result of increased revenue flows. The benefits are incremental and should be considered in the context of the overall wagering market product mix. In New South Wales and Victoria, simulated races represent a relatively minor product in terms of percentage of total wagering turnover at around 3.4 per cent of turnover. Strict regulatory boundaries will be imposed such that simulated races may only be accepted at the physical premises of betting agencies; they will not be available online or via betting apps. The hours of operation and intervals between simulated races will be restricted. Betting on simulated races is akin to betting on live races. The races will be shown on TV screens and bets will be placed at existing terminals. The Gaming and Wagering Commission has considered the matter and does not oppose its introduction subject to the regulatory measures proposed. As it is a product that can currently be offered only at the Burswood casino, the government has secured agreement with Crown Perth to provide for the state to authorise simulated races at betting agencies. Should the incoming wagering operator elect to offer simulated races, they will be required to pay a one-off sum of \$1.2 million to Crown Perth. The introduction of simulated races in betting agencies in Western Australia has been mooted by various industry participants for many years. The government's decision to include it within the package of reform measures for the Western Australian racing industry followed an extensive consultation process with stakeholders. Its introduction is not "pokies by stealth" or other such hyperbole we may hear in the course of debate. Its introduction essentially replicates a product that already exists in betting agencies—that is, betting on horse and dog racing. I reiterate that the introduction will be measured and controlled, with strict limitations in place.

Another stakeholder group the government has been consulting with is TAB agents. Although supportive of the proposed sale, TAB agents are concerned about their status quo contractual standing and what additional protection may be included within the sale framework to address these concerns. The bill allows for the preservation of TAB agents' existing contractual rights as part of the transfer of operations to the new operator—contractual rights that were negotiated under the previous government. Nevertheless, the McGowan government has committed to TAB agents that it will secure additional protections relating to their contractual termination provisions under

a new operator. In response to the concerns raised by TAB agents, the government has agreed to require the incoming operator to offer termination payments to agencies identified for closure upon review of network requirements. These payments will be in addition to the 12-month notice period currently required under the standard agency contract and will be set at a minimum of 60 per cent of the prior year's commission up to \$100 000 for the first five years of the new operator taking control. In addition, within the first 12 months of the new operator taking control, any TAB agent that falls below a low commission threshold can choose to be bought out of their agency to the uncapped value of 100 per cent of their previous year's commission. Although these generous conditions will ultimately come at the expense of the broader racing industry, the government considers it a reasonable compromise. Due to the detailed nature of these measures and the cross-referencing to existing contracts, these protections will be secured as a contractual undertaking by the new operator rather than within the bill. However, this does not devalue the importance the government has placed on providing greater certainty for TAB agents going forward.

Lastly, I would like to refer to Racing and Wagering Western Australia's staff. The McGowan government is acutely aware of the importance of the fair and respectful treatment of employees in such processes. RWWA's management has kept staff well informed through formal communication sessions both leading up to and during the sale preparation process. RWWA's staff are considered key stakeholders in the TAB sale process and, in this regard, the successful renegotiation of the general staff agreement, signed in April 2019, is testament to staff being listened to and supported. I would like to thank RWWA's staff for their continued diligence in working to support the local racing industry of Western Australia.

The bill's key functions are to provide the necessary authority and framework to enable a sale of the TAB; provide for the racing infrastructure fund to be established from a portion of the sale proceeds; establish a licensing regime to provide for the grant of a wagering licence to a new operator; amend the existing wagering regulatory framework to incorporate the new wagering licence; ratify and authorise the implementation of the fifteenth supplementary agreement to amend the agreement ratified by the Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Act 1985, as varied, to provide for betting on simulated races to be authorised under the wagering licence; repeal the wagering functions of RWWA and change its name to Racing Western Australia; abolish the racing bets levy as administered by the Gaming and Wagering Commission and introduce a new race field regime to be administered by Racing Western Australia; and commit to a post-sale review of the arrangements, including the structure and functions of Racing WA.

The bill is divided into 11 parts.

Parts 1 to 5—Disposal sections: parts 1 to 5 of the bill provide the responsible minister with the authority to order the disposal of any TAB asset and liability, as well as the framework in which the disposal can be effected. These parts of the bill incorporate the standard provisions that have been enacted in recent disposal legislation, providing the necessary powers to relevant parties, such as RWWA and the state, to conduct the transaction. These parts of the bill also provide the minister with the authority to issue transfer orders relating to any disposal order. This includes specifying which assets and liabilities are to be transferred, the timing of the transfer and the proceedings in which a transfer is to occur. For the purposes of a disposal, legal protections are provided to the state and RWWA for the disclosure of information. Finally, these parts of the bill stipulate that 35 per cent of the net sales proceeds from the sale of the TAB, defined as gross proceeds minus transaction and implementation costs, must be credited to a racing infrastructure fund administered by RWA. The bill provides that the racing infrastructure fund may, with the approval of the minister, be applied for providing and improving infrastructure for the state's racing industry.

Part 6—Betting Control Act 1954: part 6 of the bill makes amendments to the Betting Control Act 1954. The key amendments in this section of the bill include the introduction of a new wagering licence regime. This part introduces the framework and process for the application and grant of the wagering licence and enforcement of the licensing scheme, and amends the existing wagering regulatory regime to incorporate the new wagering licence. The key features of the wagering licence regime are as follows. The licence will authorise totalisator and fixed odds betting on races, events and simulated races with only one licence to be in operation at any one time. In granting the licence, the minister may invite persons to apply for the licence with a list of factors that the minister must consider in determining applications. The term is to be specified in the licence with a maximum 40-year term plus a maximum two-year extension. The licence may include an up-front and/or ongoing fee—likely both. It will be a condition of the wagering licence that the licensee will have in place, and give effect to, arrangements with Racing Western Australia, including for the provision of funding. This requirement will provide the necessary structure for the racing industry to receive ongoing funding under a privately operated TAB. Any failure to have in place or give effect to the racing industry arrangements is a ground for disciplinary action. Unclaimed moneys relating to bets on sporting events will go to the sports wagering account, while unclaimed moneys from all other wagers will be paid to Racing Western Australia.

The Gaming and Wagering Commission will have powers to licence key employees, approve associates, approve events that may be bet on, approve rules of betting, approve a consumer protection policy, disallow establishment or require closure of betting agencies, and give directions to the wagering licensee in limited matters such as systems of internal control and consumer protection policies. In terms of disciplinary action, the Gaming and

Wagering Commission will have powers to issue a letter of censure to the wagering licensee, which may include a direction to rectify a matter, require the wagering licensee to pay a fine, or recommend to the minister that the minister take action against the licensee. The minister is given powers to amend, suspend or cancel the licence, or refer the matter back to the commission. If the licence is suspended, cancelled or surrendered, the minister may appoint a temporary wagering licensee. Regulations may be made about various matters concerning the wagering licence regime.

This part provides for consistent processes between the wagering licensee and oncourse bookmakers. For example, the bill provides a single approval process for events on which betting may be conducted by bookmakers or the wagering licensee. It also establishes a single process by which the commission may approve the rules of betting for both bookmakers and the wagering licensee. In addition, the racing bets levy, as administered by the Gaming and Wagering Commission, will be abolished and replaced with a new race field regime administered by Racing Western Australia. This is possible once RWA is no longer a wagering operator and has no conflict of interest collecting wagering data from other wagering operators. Included at the request of the racing industry, this reform will give RWA more control over its race field revenue and frees the commission of this responsibility.

Part 7—Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement 1985: part 7 of the bill ratifies the fifteenth supplementary agreement to amend the agreement ratified by the Casino (Burswood Island) Agreement Act 1985, as varied, which provides for the state authorising the wagering licensee to offer wagering on simulated races, subject to certain conditions.

Part 8—Gaming and Wagering Commission 1987: part 8 amends the Gaming and Wagering Commission Act 1987 to remove the commission's function to supervise the gambling operations of Racing and Wagering Western Australia and ensure it has appropriate powers to regulate the wagering licensee. The commission's administration of the racing bets levy account is also removed in part 8.

Part 9—Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act 2003: part 9 of the bill amends the Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act 2003, primarily to remove RWWA's wagering functions. As such, RWWA's name is changed to RWA. Part 9 also gives RWA the power to enter into a racing industry arrangement with the wagering licensee. RWA will also administer the race field publication and use approval under part 6, as well as the racing infrastructure fund credited from net sales proceeds of the TAB under part 3 of the bill. The existing rules of wagering will be abolished and replaced with the rules of betting in part 6 of the bill, which will apply to both the wagering licensee and bookmakers. The principles around how RWWA distributes funding to racing clubs remain unchanged.

Part 10—Consequential amendments to other acts: part 10 of the bill makes the necessary amendments to other legislation including replacing references to "Racing and Wagering Western Australia" with "Racing Western Australia", and replacing references to the "Racing and Wagering Western Australia Act 2003" with the "Betting Control Act 1954", where applicable. The Racing Bets Levy Act 2009 is repealed under this part.

Part 11—Review of act: the provisions in part 11 of the bill require the minister to undertake and table in Parliament a review of the post-sale arrangements. This review has been included at the request of the racing industry. The review must address the impact of the changes in this bill on the Western Australian racing industry, the structure and functions of RWA and the administration of the racing infrastructure fund. The review must be tabled in Parliament within one year following the third anniversary of the new arrangements.

Commencement dates: the bill is structured to allow variable commencement dates. It is envisaged that the commencement dates be staged as follows: date 1 is the day after the day the act receives royal assent. Parts 2 to 5 and 11 and other provisions of the bill are enacted. The sale is permitted to be progressed and a wagering licence granted but commenced at a later date. RWWA's wagering functions, and the regulation of these functions, are retained. Date 2 is a day to be fixed by proclamation, intended to coincide with the day the wagering licence commences. RWWA's wagering functions cease and RWWA becomes RWA. The Gaming and Wagering Commission's oversight of RWWA's wagering functions also ceases. Date 3 is a day to be fixed by proclamation that will be on or after date 2. The racing bets levy is repealed, and the new race field publication and use approval scheme administered by RWA commences.

This bill and the associated reform package represents the culmination of an extensive consultation process undertaken by the government. It is the most significant reform package in the history of the Western Australian racing industry. This reform package can help realise the value the industry and the state have built in the TAB business. At the heart of this reform package, however, is the objective to secure the future of an industry in which around 25 000 people participate, and in which more than 7 000 people are employed on a full-time basis. Such reform opportunities do not come around often. The debate on the future of the TAB has been long and often passionate. I look forward to working with the opposition and crossbenchers to achieve an outcome that is in the best interests of the racing industry and the state overall.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms L. Mettam**.

BETTING CONTROL AMENDMENT (TAXING) BILL 2019*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

Second Reading

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Treasurer) [12.55 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill complements the TAB (Disposal) Bill 2019, which provides the necessary authority and framework to enable the sale of the TAB and establish a new wagering licence regime for a privately operated TAB. As I mentioned in my second reading speech for the TAB (Disposal) Bill 2019, the wagering licence will require the new operator of the TAB to pay an upfront and/or annual licence fee, likely both. Under the Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1899, bills imposing taxation must deal only with the imposition of the tax. As such, to the extent that the wagering licence fee is considered a tax, this bill provides the necessary authority to impose the fee. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms L. Mettam**.

APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2019–20) BILL 2019**APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2019–20) BILL 2019***Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from 14 May.

MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren–Blackwood) [12.57 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to get to my feet while the Treasurer is still here, which is absolutely fantastic. I see he is threatened, because he is about to walk out of the house. He is threatened by taking on good argument from the opposition. No, he is going to sit down for a bit longer. I want to go through a number of issues in my portfolio responsibilities, then some issues on regional development more broadly, and then move towards a couple of key issues in my electorate.

There are some positives in the state budget, and I commend the government for delivering a net operating surplus and a target for debt. There are a range of risks around that, and I will go into some of those. Once again, we are seeing the erosion of support for regional Western Australia, most notably the royalties for regions program. We have seen the first two budgets, and now the third budget from the McGowan government, continue to erode the royalties for regions program, totally in contradiction to the commitment it made going into the last election. We now see significant, long-term recurrent commitments going into the royalties for regions fund that are not projects such as a road, a school or some other capital works initiative, whose resources become available for another project at its completion. These long-term commitments that will remain in the program are a permanent erosion of the royalties for regions program. They include funding for education assistants; funding of the school bus program in regional Western Australia, involving upwards of \$125 million when it comes fully into force; annual contributions to vocational subsidies in regional Western Australia of \$45.5 million; Water Corporation subsidies, as already mentioned by the Leader of the Nationals WA, of nearly \$300 million a year; and remote municipal services of \$56 million a year. That will happen year in, year out. It does not mean that we will eventually reach an end point at which we can free up some discretionary funds. It is year in, year out—a long-term recurrent commitment. That is a permanent erosion of the program. Over the forward estimates we will see an erosion of \$1.6 billion to \$1.7 billion out of \$4.2 billion allocated to royalties for regions. I do not accept the argument from the member for Bunbury that the government can choose what it wants to put into royalties for regions, because it is a new government, unlike the Liberal–National government. That is fine; I agree with that. The new government will have its own priorities. But long-term recurrent commitments that are not end-dated are a permanent erosion of the program. That is what we are seeing and it massively contradicts what the people of regional Western Australia thought they were getting when they went to the last election, and, again, this budget reflects that.

On top of that, we are also seeing an underspend. The Minister for Regional Development in the other place has her foot on the hose. The Treasurer wants to go past me and leave this place; I know he is feeling threatened.

Mr R.R. Whitby: I am sure that is the reason.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am sure that is the reason! I make the point that he has left the B-team in here to take up the debate!

Ms S.E. Winton interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Oh, the C-team as well!

The Minister for Regional Development in the other place has her foot on the hose of the royalties for regions program to the tune of a \$319 million underspend, which is a 32 per cent reduction in what the government committed to at the last election. That means that 32 per cent of the royalties for regions program in that year

effectively spills over into the consolidated account because that is how it works. The more the Minister for Regional Development keeps her foot on the hose to deliver what the government committed to in the budget, the more money that spills into the consolidated account, which can be spent on Metronet in Perth. Very clearly this budget has an agenda to shift the focus from regional Western Australia to metropolitan Perth. The government is taking a very centralised focus on that issue. I think everyone in regional Western Australia should be seriously concerned about that.

I would have given my left arm to have sat around the Expenditure Review Committee table.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Yes, I would have given my left arm. When I was the Minister for Regional Development, I remember, as every year passed, watching every set of aggregates and the re-basing of the GST formula for WA. It was rebased and it went down. That has even happened for this government, but it has a 70¢ floor in the GST, which would have been absolutely fantastic for us when we were in government. If we could have played out a 70¢ floor since 2011–12, the difference that would have made to a budget would have been massive. The argument running over there is that the government is a victim of timing, unfortunately, because we pulled the trigger on the big fight. That is now playing out as a massive opportunity in this budget. There are unpredicted royalties from iron ore in the current financial year alone of about \$1 billion. How good would it have been to have had a floor in iron ore royalties, which Canberra could not claw back in the long run, and play that through the budget papers? That is the challenge we faced because the timing was wrong. It is important to note that had that measure been in place in 2011–12, it would have made a massive difference as our government moved forward. There are some positives to the budget, one of which is the GST floor. The federal Liberal–National government delivered a good outcome for Western Australia and, no doubt, that will play out well as far as the budget goes. However, there are risks. There is a section in the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* that refers to risks. One of those risks is the Forrestfield–Airport Link and the contaminated soil issue, which, on the face of it, might seem fairly small. I think the numbers relating to that risk are unclear. The government has to find somewhere to put the contaminated soil base. I know one minister who has tried very hard to deal with that issue—namely, the Minister for Transport. In fact, she took the effort to discuss it with the deputy chair of the Peel Development Commission. We know that she discussed it with the deputy chair because I have a letter I obtained through freedom of information from the Peel Development Commission chair, Ms Paddi Creevey, to the honourable minister. The topic line reads “Forrestfield Tunnel Spoil Disposal”. The first line reads —

Further to preliminary discussions with our Deputy Chair Greg Poland and yourself regarding the abovementioned matter, —

That is the soil disposal issue —

The Peel Development Commission board would like to request a briefing from either Main Roads or your office regarding the disposal of the spoil ...

It is clear in black and white that the minister had a meeting with Greg Poland, who was the then deputy chair of the Peel Development Commission, about disposing the spoil in the Peel region. We know what happened subsequently. Greg Poland had meetings with businesspeople down there. There have been media reports about him having the support of various ministers in land transactions to get rid of the spoil. At the very best, it is an unfortunate link of circumstances; at the very worst, a minister has been involved in some underhanded options to get rid of a liability in the Forrestfield link project. This is absolutely dodgy and it is a serious concern. The minister has been going over time to deal with the liability issue that is linked to components of the Forrestfield Airport–Link project.

The Metronet operating costs are still to come to book. The budget papers suggest that after those costs are researched, they will become public at the end of this year or the start of next year, from memory. That liability has not been put in the forward estimates. It is a very real liability because it will be a substantial cost. The government has a pretty aggressive campaign on property sales targets and assets sales. In some years, I think there will be about a half a billion dollars of land asset sales. When I was the Minister for Lands, I knew exactly what the challenge was to try to deal with that on a range of issues, including contamination and other risk issues that the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development has put a hose on as far as those sales are concerned. But it looks like a very aggressive path and I would have thought that that would be a little challenging.

On a broader issue—interestingly it was a topic of debate today—the Premier has been massively hypocritical about the mining sector. He railed hard against the Nationals WA position at the last election on special lease rentals. The Leader of the Nationals WA has articulated very clearly that we are happy to have a parliamentary inquiry. We think it is valid to look at the old legacy agreements to see whether something that was written 50 years ago on a deal done 50 years ago might be relevant today. That is not hard to do. It could be done in a bipartisan manner with the committee being dominated by the government. On occasions in the house, the Premier has knocked the idea for six. He has said, “No, we are not going to unilaterally look at state agreements; we are not even going to have an inquiry.” However, in the midst of an election, he said, “By the way, we do have a problem with one of those state agreements—the Sino Iron agreement with Citic Pacific—and I am seriously considering

an amendment to that agreement.” That is massive hypocrisy. The Premier cannot on the one hand say that this is a challenge to sovereign risk, but on the other not unilaterally change it unless he thinks it is opportune to do so. He is not happy to consider that maybe those old state agreements might not be in Western Australia’s interest, but he certainly seems happy to consider that it is in the interests of 3 000 workers. I do not deny that it is a massive issue for Western Australia, but the Premier cannot stand on two different platforms to make a case.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The Premier cannot stand on two different platforms to make his case, and the member for Bassendean knows that.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The member should support an inquiry. I am not suggesting for a minute that the Nationals will not support a position to look at the state agreement. What we are saying is that we need to consider a broader inquiry so that all Western Australians can have a close look at the issue. That should not be threatening to anybody. That is something that the Premier should give serious consideration to.

We have also heard big statements from the Premier and Treasurer about BHP and underpaid royalties. Again, the Premier lambasted us about not being on the side of the big miners in Western Australia. That is not the position of the National Party at all. We are very cautious because they take up a fair bit of our responsibilities in our electorates. The Premier is chasing underpaid royalties. It looks to me as though BHP might be doing him over because I have not seen any signals nor heard about any outcomes, and from what I saw last, those unpaid royalties could be worth \$300 million to Western Australia.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The member for Bassendean has the benefit of sitting around the cabinet table and knowing what discussions have taken place. I do not; I am reading what has been said. If there are issues there and someone has signalled that, they absolutely need to be sorted out.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr D.T. REDMAN: On another matter, in question time yesterday, in a dorothy dixer from the member for Swan Hills, the Premier talked about the \$131 million in the forward estimates for agriculture. When we dig into the budget papers, a number of uncertainties sit over that. The Premier talked about new money for agriculture and said, “Look at what we’ve done”, and even waved around a letter from WAFarmers. The former Department of Agriculture and Food is now buried in the broader Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development. It is very difficult to draw a line in the sand between those two portfolios. It is also difficult to understand where to find the royalties for regions—funded projects that the Liberal–National government had at the last election under the Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture initiative. That initiative was targeted at agriculture, with \$350 million over five years. That is \$70 million a year on top of the recurrent budget that went to the former agriculture department. I am sure that if we were to put that against that measure, there is not an extra \$131 million over the forward estimates for agriculture. I think WAFarmers has not read far enough into the budget papers.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I think that is accurate. I stand by that.

Mr D.J. Kelly: You are talking about royalties for regions versus increases in recurrent expenditure.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I will quote to the member the statement in the budget papers —

- \$131.5 million of additional expenditure by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development to continue its critical role in supporting primary producers and rebuilding scientific capability, which includes \$40 million to continue the Boosting Biosecurity Defences, —

That is from royalties for regions —

Asian Market Success, —

That is from royalties for regions —

and Grains Research and Development support programs.

That is also from royalties for regions. Those are three royalties for regions commitments that the Minister for Agriculture and Food and the Premier have articulated will be added to the number of commitments from which agriculture will benefit. That needs a lot more assessment, and, no doubt, next week we will play that through.

I now turn to the broader utility space. It is good to see the Minister for Water in the chamber today. The Water Corporation remains a significant cash cow for the government. When I was Minister for Water, and the now Minister for Water was sitting on this side, he used to hit me hard on the net accrual to government figures for the Water Corp and the fact that the Water Corp is a cash cow to support the government’s budget program. The dividend paid by the Water Corp is now up to \$513 million. That is a net accrual—net of dividends, net of tax equivalents, and

net of any other rates and subsidies. I think the last one under our government was about \$200 million, and we were anxious about that. If we add the \$242 million net in dividends from the electricity utilities, that is three-quarters of a billion dollars' worth of cash cow from those two areas to support the government's budget program.

Some really good things are happening in the energy space. That is reflected in the budget papers. I have been involved in an inquiry on the impact of the distributed energy resource. The pressure on the network from the high penetration of solar PVs has caused the need for reform. The government has signalled that. I think the inquiry will give some information about the direction that might take, and that is all positive.

I now want to reflect on a particular issue in my electorate that shows how that is paying true. I am talking about Walpole, which is a little community about 120 kilometres west of Albany. The substation is based in Albany and the power lines go via Denmark to Walpole. The lines have had a couple of augmentations over time to increase capacity to meet the needs of those communities. Although that system has been reliable for some time, some capacity challenges are now emerging. That was no better seen than over the recent Easter and Anzac Day holidays. Every day over Easter, there was a power outage. Businesses in Walpole were not able to operate EFTPOS machines. They were not able to trade, pump fuel, make a cup of coffee, or make meals for people who had travelled to that area. That created challenges. The difference now, compared with where we have been, is that technology is available to deliver a much more reliable solution for communities such as Walpole. I hope the government, through the responsible minister, will give consideration to those fringe-of-grid areas. Walpole is one of those areas. It has taken some hits over time. It should be in line for some investment to support alternative options—whether that be solar and batteries, or some of the solutions that Western Power is trialling in other parts of the state—that will deliver a better and more reliable outcome. The rhetoric is right. It is a matter of whether the minister will support the electricity utility to make those sorts of investments.

In this budget, power prices will rise by 1.7 per cent. That is great. That is broadly in line with the consumer price index. However, I struggle with the argument used by the government that our government put up electricity prices by whatever amount—I do not know what the numbers are; say, 80 per cent—and it is putting up electricity prices by only 20 per cent. The fact is that that is on top of previous increases. If the government were dinkum about that, it would keep the increases at the same rate as the first increase. Therefore, I struggle with that argument. However, I understand the issue. Certainly, power prices are consumer sensitive, and it is important that government puts some restraint on those prices. I note that even with those increases, the cost of power remains at about 5.5 per cent below cost recovery. The former Minister for Energy was on a pathway to try to reach cost reflectivity, which down the track might have provided greater competition in the market.

I now want to talk about some other energy issues. This government has had a lot of issues with energy. The government tried out the wave energy farm in Albany. That was terminated on 12 March this year and burnt \$2.6 million of taxpayer funds. I have read the quarterly reports that the company was required to provide, and they indicate that only \$1.357 million of that money has been spent and \$1.27 million is unspent. The Minister for Regional Development has indicated her intention to chase down that money. Good luck with that, given the company has gone into voluntary administration. I think the wrong decisions were made about that project. That has played out to be true; and, sadly, the people of Western Australia will be \$2.6 million short.

The government has made some other backflips that have gone under the radar. I have here my little backflip paper, which shows the "200 Fresh Ideas for WA" commitments. I want to mention two backflips that are both energy related. Under the government's plan for jobs in Collie–Preston, it committed \$30 million to support the building of a biomass energy plant in Collie, and to establish the necessary timber plantations in the region to grow the biomass feedstock. That sounds good. The second commitment was \$30 million to support the establishment of a solar farm in Collie, to provide the jobs of the future for the people of Collie–Preston. Both those projects would have utilised probably Collie's greatest asset—the electricity network. If I were in Collie, I would see in those two commitments a massive long-term benefit for Collie. Those commitments have just been knocked on the head. The money that had been set aside for those commitments has gone into some sort of future fund pool for Collie, and presumably other initiatives will also come into play. If I were in Collie, I would not be happy about that. As I have said, those commitments that were knocked on the head would have utilised Collie's greatest asset—namely, the scope to distribute energy through the networks that lead into Collie, and for Collie to be an energy generation base. Whatever comes up will clearly not be anything like that. It is massively disappointing that that has gone under the radar.

The Warradarge wind farm has been sold to Bright Energy Investments. I have tried to get feedback on how much of that project, including the Greenough River solar farm, will be locally procured. The minister wrote back and said I would have to write to Bright Energy Investments. That is despite the fact that Synergy has a nearly 20 per cent shareholding in that project. It is disappointing that the minister clearly has no interest in local procurement or benefits for a project of that scale.

Some investments in this budget are certainly timely. We do not hear the mantra that was going on before the last election about justice reinvestment, but we see the government simply responding with increasing capacity. It has the same issues we had; there remains to be tension in the system. There is a lot of understaffing out there, and the minister needs to sort out a number of issues. No doubt we will work through that, as an opposition.

What is lacking in the Aboriginal affairs space—I think the minister will be tackling this—is having a more global strategy and plan that articulates the priorities in Western Australia, particularly around remote communities. There are some massively challenging issues. We had the report on the suicides; the action on education outcomes, which remain terribly poor; and we have a few examples, little shining lights, such as the Kimberley schools program being funded, which the Premier mentioned yesterday. That is good. I got a briefing on that, and there are some shortcomings, but that is not up for discussion today. A plan around remote communities, Aboriginal affairs and remote housing investment is really critical. As I understand it, I think the government has been able to source more resources out of the federal opposition, should it get elected to government. If that is the case, there will be more resources for remote housing in those remote communities. My advice is: do not let the federal government run the show. It is not connected to the issue well enough to know where investments can make a difference. My advice to the minister is to keep the federal government at arm's length. Nevertheless, it is an important space.

Aboriginal tourism took a bit of a hit, a 38 per cent cut across the Aboriginal Tourism Development Program. That is a big opportunity for the Kimberley and Pilbara, in particular, and, sadly, they will not get the attention they deserve. I will declare an interest: my wife is on the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council board. I say that, but I raise the issue quite genuinely. Aboriginal tourism is one of those real opportunities for many of our remote areas in which there is not a natural economy, and Aboriginal tourism development is something that needs some broader support.

For the last six minutes of my contribution, I move into my electorate. The Minister for Water—the Minister for Fisheries in this case—put in place a fishing ban on Greens Pool. There is overwhelming support in my community of Denmark, where I live, for that ban to be in place. There was some concern from the fishing fraternity about just how wide the ban might go and what the minister's interests were. The minister pleasingly responded in a letter. I will read out the last part of that letter. It says —

Please be assured that I will not increase the area of water prohibited to fishing in the William Bay region.
Please convey my position to your Legislative Council colleagues.

I did, and duly, there was a good result in respect of the disallowance motion. That is a good outcome. There is some investment back into William Bay, nowhere near the investment that we made in government, but the government is redirecting funds from a bridge project in Denmark. It is unfortunate that they are redirected funds, but there will be some investment in William Bay, which is supporting the broader Greens Pool area, a massive attraction in my electorate.

The Minister for Water is here; the southern forests irrigation scheme is a good project. Obviously, I am supportive, as I took it through cabinet. I am between a bit of a rock and a hard place because I know there are some tensions down there. I meet with a lot of people who raise the issues. Putting aside the irrigation scheme as a project initiative, which in time will prove to have significant merit, there is the broader tension around water. The price of avocados has driven potential for investment and therefore more water is needed. A lot of people are in fully allocated systems and cannot get the water that they perhaps would like for their agricultural projects; therefore, a whole range of historical rules are being challenged.

There is scope for some sort of inquiry, whether it is a government initiated or parliamentary inquiry, to look at things such as the first-in-first-served rule for seeking water allocation and the break-up between the allocation to environment and agriculture, particularly in both forested systems and un-forested systems. Often, I think somewhere between 50 and 70 per cent of the water that is allocated is not used. Water security and the nature of that security in both regulation and legislation is important. There is scope to have a broader inquiry of some sort to have all those views put forward, because it is creating a lot of tension, particularly in my area, in which there are surface water users who are not part of a broader network that perhaps historically has been government funded. They see that as something that has put, to use a pun, the foot on the hose for the economic potential of their region.

A couple more key issues include the rollout of National Disability Insurance Scheme services, which is really problematic. The only thing positive I hold in my head is that this is a transition, and I hope it will land with a positive outcome, but I do not believe that will be the case. There is a lot of work for the government, given that it was a signatory to this, to have the input and perhaps provide the services of last resort if people fall through the cracks. There are some broader challenges there.

Palliative care is underdone. The Nationals WA have taken up that debate before in this place, given the debate that we will have in the latter part of this year. Palliative care is so critically important, particularly if a person does not live in metropolitan Perth, in which, in many cases, these services are much more easily accessible than they are in regional Western Australia.

Another important issue is prescribed burning. I am so pleased. I would argue it has been pressured from the opposition, but the Minister for Emergency Services has funded the enhanced prescribed burning program under royalties for regions. That has been extended to \$5.5 million a year, from memory. That will ensure that we meet those targets for burning of the broader landscape, which is the real threat and issue when it applies to significant regional communities, particularly in the south west, so meeting those targets is important. I know we complain.

I was on Jacob's Ladder this morning and I could count only about three or four people on the ladder. Normally it is absolutely loaded at 6.30 am, and I suspect the inversion layers and all the smoke that is coming down out of the hills is one of the contributing factors. I know other issues come out of this, but it is so important to keep that program in place and the government has done it.

I am not sure that I support the location of the Bushfire Centre of Excellence. I have a lot of questions on notice, some of which have been responded to, about the process that the government took to come to that decision. It is all too easy for a city-centric government to locate something close to the city centre, and where it has been located is exactly that. I recognise that there are transport challenges from other parts of the state, but that was an opportunity—I would have even accepted Collie as a good outcome, given that there is a lot of transition and challenges in Collie.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [1.26 pm]: I am not the main speaker for the Liberal Party for the debate on the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 and Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019. The member for Bateman is. He was going to come on today, but the government slowed the process, so I decided to stand in and he will go on tomorrow.

The budget is, as the member for Warren–Blackwood indicated, awash with money. I wish it had happened under our watch; it did not, but, nonetheless, it has now. This government has been very lucky. I guess we think of Kylie Minogue singing, "Lucky, lucky, lucky". The government has won about four lotteries. Firstly, it inherited the capital investment undertaken and finished under the previous government. The government has specialised in ribbon cutting on projects started by us and finished by the government, of which it incessantly complained: the stadium, Yagan Square, Aubin Grove train station and the busport—you name it, it goes on and on. The one that it probably most went on about is the Chevron headquarters in Elizabeth Quay, which the former opposition decried as a complete waste of money—that is, EQ. But that is life and we go on with it. When the Labor Party came to government it also inherited a recovering GST share. As the GST share went down to 30 per cent when the iron ore price dropped to \$36.70 a tonne—I remember the day—because of the lag in the GST, the share was coming back as iron ore prices dropped. It increased under the government's watch by 50 per cent. That is what it inherited and won. That is fair enough.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Forty billion dollars' worth of debt, that is what we inherited.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Oh yes, we will go through that.

Then the government won the royalty lottery; we could call it the China lottery or maybe the Brazilian lottery. When it first came to government, it predicted and forecast substantial cuts to iron ore prices going forward, going down to \$50 a tonne with a higher exchange rate, and, voila—I am not criticising, it had nothing to do with it—the money has been coming in, over four years of this term. Relative to what the government predicted in its first budget, it will now expect to receive \$4.3 billion in extra royalty income. That is a pretty penny! This \$4.3 billion worth of extra revenue is manna from heaven—from the royalty lottery. The second lottery was the commonwealth grant lottery, which came in two parts—it skipped one. The first was the GST top-up, which was phenomenal. Not only did the Liberal commonwealth government pay the state money for a few years to top-up the GST to the first 70¢ and then 75¢, but also it locked it in. If the state has another iron ore windfall with big increases in volumes and price, the GST return cannot go below 75¢, unlike under us when it went below 30¢.

Mr D.J. Kelly: That's the deal you signed up to.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: We signed up and Labor did.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The minister is trying to inhibit debate. Please, Acting Speaker, could you tell him to be quiet or leave?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr T.J. Healy): Member, I interpret from what you are saying that you do not seek to take interjections.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I do not want senseless interjections.

The SPEAKER: Minister, the member has indicated.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: That is a phenomenal improvement. I thank Scott Morrison, the Prime Minister of Australia, for initiating it and pushing it through. When they were in opposition, members opposite said that the GST was not an issue and that it was nothing to do with revenue; it was all about expense. I will go back to that in a minute. Along with others, they decried that the GST was not one of the fiscal issues facing the state of Western Australia. That is what they said. But that has passed. A lesson from history is that the victors write history; but, unfortunately, they write fiction rather than non-fiction.

The other part of the grant lottery is tied grants. Under Scott Morrison and Mr Turnbull, we have had massive increases in tied grants for schools, training, and hospitals. They have been large and all over the forward estimates.

If the GST upgrade and the tied grants are put together just for 2020–21, that is \$4.5 billion in extra unpredicted revenue from Canberra. It is not related to the state government. Is that not good—\$8.8 billion in revenue! They were not finished; these guys are lucky. They won a third lottery; that is, the infrastructure bolster lottery.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Acting Speaker, interjections from the distant benches have an echo about them that is very disruptive.

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He should be on the front bench.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, the member has indicated that he is not going to take interjections. Member for Riverton, I will ask you to talk through the Chair.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Mr Acting Speaker, you will be very interested in this. The fourth lottery was the infrastructure lottery. First under Mr Turnbull and then under Scott Morrison, not only did the federal government commit \$4.6 billion over the forward estimates to additional infrastructure for WA, but also the state government induced the federal government to spend money on additional projects. Most of those matching funds—50 per cent to 80 per cent—went to fund Labor's unfunded election commitments. If all that money is wrapped up, it is over \$13 billion. Wow! How could the government not balance the books with an additional windfall of \$13 billion? That is like some of these lottery advertisements that show somebody standing in the shower with money flowing over them. It is just beautiful. All I am saying is that the government has had the mother of all revenue windfalls that it virtually had nothing to do with and it has a budget surplus. That is fine.

The question is: what did the government do with that revenue? During the election campaign we heard about the \$40 billion worth of debt that it inherited. We hear about these poor, meek people who have been burdened with that level of debt and that Labor is always worried about and struggling with it. The government brings it up every time. The government has had a number of goes at debt reduction strategies, both before the election and now. By the way, these have the anatomies of a con; they are a scam. Let me go through them. What is the bottom line? The government booked \$9 billion in budget surpluses over the forward estimates. How much debt has it paid off? It is only \$650 million. Again, there are some differences in the number of zeros. After paying its expenses, it has budget surpluses of \$9 billion and it has paid off \$650 million of debt. Where is the government's debt reduction strategy?

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Where is it?

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I will go through Labor's debt reduction strategy mark 1. It is a beauty. Then shadow Treasurer Ben Wyatt cooked up a scheme that he thought would never eventuate. He thought that Labor needed a debt reduction strategy, so he structured one in such a way that it would be a Clayton's strategy; it would never possibly eventuate. Labor was going to legislate this, but I have not seen it; have other members? Nonetheless, the strategy was that when GST relativities returned to 65 per cent and the iron ore price was more than \$85 a tonne, 50 per cent of iron ore royalties—net of the 25 per cent royalties for regions share—would be allocated to WA Labor's fund to pay down Colin Barnett's record debt. He said that if the Liberal–National government had done this when it had iron ore windfalls, it would have paid down the debt by at least \$3.2 billion.

Surprise, surprise! What has happened? The iron ore price is above \$85 and the GST share is above 65 per cent. Where is the \$2 billion-plus to pay down the debt the government inherited? That was an election promise! That is what the government took to the election. On 11 February, the Treasurer said on radio and TV that Labor had a debt reduction strategy and that if situations eventuated as they had in 2008–09 under the Barnett government, Labor would have to take half of that to pay down debt. It has failed to do so! It is another backflip!

Labor did not set a high hurdle for itself, because it would eventuate only with unprecedented and unexpected good revenue circumstances. But the government has not done that. This budget has a new debt reduction strategy, which the member for Bateman will discuss at great length. It is another Clayton's strategy. The government has said that it will take some unexpected gains, of which there are rivers, and stick them into a fund. It will call it a debt reduction fund. It is going to pay down about \$1.4 billion in existing debt, some of which this government has incurred, but the remaining \$3.7 billion in the fund will be debt reduction in the sense that it will avoid future debt that the government has created in meeting its election commitments. I kid you not! What a con job! The government has gone on and on about debt and promised debt reduction strategies that it has not delivered. The bottom line is that it has had the mother of all windfalls, but it has not paid down any debt. In fact, this year the debt is growing. Despite the tied grants, the commonwealth government infrastructure spending, and the mother of all windfalls, this government is growing debt. This government is responsible for the debt that is incurred now and into the future. Shut up about the \$40 billion. It is yours!

Mr D.J. Kelly: Steady on, member. Steady on—shut up?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes. Now, I want to go through something that is most important here, and that is the economy. “It’s the economy, stupid.” The economy is struggling.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Under Scott Morrison.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It is yours, mate—yours. The state government will be held accountable for this in two years. Watch. When Labor came to government —

Mr D.J. Kelly: Scott Morrison says we are doing fine.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Again, I am trying to make a statement here. I am the Leader of the Opposition and there is a senseless heckler in the corner. Acting Speaker, would you tell him to go heckle outside, please.

Anyway, I will go to the point. When Labor came into power in 2017, Treasury did some estimates and it saw an economy that had for three or four years been in the doldrums and declining across the board, but there were nascent signs of growth. I can quote some of these references from the first budget. Treasury saw signs of growth. It saw household consumption going up by 1.75 per cent. It saw signs that household consumption in 2017–18 was going up. Dwelling investment was going up. It saw clear signs of house prices going up and the population coming back. The economy was in a growth phase. What did the government do? I give it credit. It knew it was getting that good inheritance, but it did not see the mother of all windfalls coming. Government hit households and small businesses as hard as they could with massive increases in fees and charges and the introduction of a whole raft of taxes, some of which are senseless, useless and destructive.

Under the idea that everyone should carry their fair share, the Labor government also put restrictions on immigration and population, which have really damaged, fundamentally and for the long term, some of our most important industries. What has its hit to households and small businesses done? It has driven the economy into a recession. Back in 2015–16, we were predicting state final demand to grow this year at 3.25 per cent. It is shrinking; it is going down. We hear the Premier say, almost on a daily basis, that under us, the economy shrank. GSP never did, but state final demand did. While he is saying that and braying about the economic circumstances recovering under his watch, it has been shrinking. Unemployment has been going up. Household prices are going down and household demand is flat. The weakness in the economy was grossly underestimated; it hit it hard and it drove it into a recession. When we were in 2017–18 and we faced a fiscal restraint, we forced everyone to take their fair share. Is this government sharing the benefits of the sustained economic windfall? Is it taking some of those additional moneys and relieving the fiscal burden on households and small businesses? Is it pulling back some of the 20 per cent increases in electricity and water prices, public transport fees or taxes? No. It has sustained them. Indeed, the \$6 000 public sector burden on households is going up again by more than inflation. Let us put it in this context: this government has received the largest windfall in the state’s history. It is in surplus this year and throughout the forward estimates.

[Member’s time extended.]

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The GST has locked in any future gains from iron ore or lithium. As a result, it has given the Western Australian government a structural surplus. When it faces an economy in recession and some of the worst economic metrics that households and small businesses—retail and wholesale—have ever seen, does it share some of the wins? No. I think Scott Morrison would look at that and say that the federal government gave WA the GST top-up to help boost the economy, not hold it down; to boost households, not hold them back; and to help people, not have it squirrelled away in the bank called Metronet. The government will be held accountable for that.

The government tries to masquerade expenditure growth as good fiscal management. These budget surpluses have nothing to do with revenue. An amount of \$13 billion is a bit of revenue. The government has had some expenditure restraint, but let me go through a few things. The wages policy of a \$1 000 increase cap has been sustained. Clear signs of the cuts have been sustained throughout it. This might be singing my song, but revenue growth during my three budgets declined by 8.4 per cent. Each year we had lower and lower revenue; over that three-year period, total revenue to the state went down by 8.4 per cent. Some of this is in the forecasts, so we cannot put too much weight on it, and I will go into that in a minute, but under this Treasurer’s budget, total revenue is expected to go up by 21 per cent. Our total revenue went down by 8.4 per cent and this government’s is expected to go up by 21 per cent. Realised expenditure growth over those three years, 2014–15 to 2016–17, grew by 7.8 per cent. Even if the governments accept the Treasurer’s numbers, which are very low in the forward estimates, his are about the same. The entire improvement in the fiscal outcomes of the state is because of revenue. It is largely because the government has revenue sources in which it has no involvement whatsoever.

There are a couple of issues with wages. We support the government’s wages policy, but the government spent \$185 million promoting a program targeted at 3 000 redundancies. It cost \$185 million of taxpayers’ money to fund the exit from the public sector of up to 3 000 people. However, during that same period, the government put on an additional 6 800 people. In other words, the government paid \$185 million to have 3 000 people exit the public sector, then brought in people to replace them and another 3 800 people on top of that. In other words, it is a complete waste of money. So much for its savings and its efficiencies.

The government has saved some money in a couple of areas, and probably the most significant is with the tied grants. In the government's first two budgets there were clear examples of "the commonwealth giveth" on some of the most important essential services such as hospitals, schools and the NDIS—I will come back to that—and the state cutting its own allocation to those purposes and relying on the commonwealth. In other words, it is called cost shifting. Commonwealth grants come in. The government pulls its money out. The government has allocated more money in certain areas this time. The government used some of its windfalls to spend in some essential services. Probably the most important glaring area within which the government has spent inadequately is health—hospitals. The government has real problems in hospitals. We have highlighted those and the shadow Minister for Health will highlight those into the future. I can tell members that over the forward estimates, the government increased spending—additional money—on hospitals by just over \$600 million.

That is a lot of money, but \$550 million of that comes from the commonwealth. This government is increasing allocations to hospitals by \$50 million while the Premier is on radio accusing Scott Morrison of cutting funding to health. Who is cutting the funding? It is those members opposite. Probably the most cynical exercise and one that needs to be exposed, and will be, is the government's treatment of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Right before we left government, we put forward a program to have an NDIS Western Australian style. It eased the transition to a national system. It was more Western Australian-based, it was more targeted at local conditions and local users, and, importantly, it met with industry support. After a number of months of consideration, this government ditched that program and went to the national system. It ditched it to save money, as the budget papers show. It saves this government \$290 million over the forward estimates. In other words, the government made the shift to the national system, which was driven solely and exclusively to save money, knowing full well that it would provide an inferior service to the one that it inherited. I have no doubt that as time goes by the Ministers for Health and Disability Services will stand up in here and in the other place and say, "Isn't that NDIS terrible. It is not providing the level, speed or quality of service that we expected and used to provide through our state system." We will then say, "Yes, it does, but it was your choice." To all those who are using the NDIS and struggling with the inadequate programs, the excessive red tape and the problems moving from a Perth-based system to a Geelong-based system, we say that it was the McGowan government's decision to impose that on them. This government did it to save \$290 million over the forward estimates even though it is a government like no other that is rolling in money with a structural surplus, thanks to winning the lottery and Scott Morrison.

The previous speaker raised the important issue of palliative care. The budget provides an additional \$41 million for palliative care. I speak as a member when I say that I do not think it is enough. The debate on assisted dying is an important debate. I cannot say that I look forward to it, but we will participate in it. Assisted dying is not an effective choice if palliative care is underfunded. In the other place, my colleague Hon Jim Chown spoke about how palliative care in particularly rural and regional Western Australia is simply inadequate. During the estimates process we will scrutinise the \$41 million allocation. I thank the government for the \$41 million, but we will explore how it is allocated. In order for there to be an effective choice about assisted dying and to get into an effective debate about the introduction of assisted dying, palliative care has to be improved in this state. I know that the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices has committed to that and that the government has allocated \$41 million to palliative care. During estimates we will explore if that is the case, but in regional and rural Western Australia right now palliative care services are far from adequate. We also want to see actual programs and money rather than promises.

As the former Minister for Energy, I have looked at the budget in terms of energy policy. The new Minister for Energy is not committed to improving contestability or competition in the electricity system. In other words, he wants to maintain a high-cost monopoly that effectively prevents households and small businesses from effecting lower prices through competition. He has also said that he will do a range of things, including shutting down the Collie coalfields over the next period. He has committed to a 50 per cent renewable policy, and the Premier has supported this. He has also committed to a 45 per cent carbon emissions reduction program, but there is no money in the budget for Synergy to invest in any additional equipment, capacity or renewables, conventional or otherwise. How do we interpret that? There is only one way—this is going to happen—and that is we will get a substantial increase in renewables. Collie will have to reinvest in the coalfields or be replaced by gas-fired power stations or something. A substantial additional investment will have to be made into the electricity industry. If it does not come from Synergy, this government will have to effectively, by stealth, privatise Synergy. This government is going to limit Synergy and shut down its capacity when it chooses to do so and have the private sector fill the gap. This is not just theoretical; this is what the government is doing, and it has to happen soon because the Muja power stations are up for renewal in just six years. That is when key decisions have to be made. If the government was going to rebuild those stations, the required work would be underway by now. Next week, we will explore what the Minister for Energy has in store for the electricity industry, if he has any idea. We will do that in light of Bill Shorten's and this government's 50 per cent renewable policies. I might add, if this government puts in place a 50 per cent renewable policy, it will do what it did in South Australia. It will push us into having statewide or south west interconnected system-wide blackouts because our system cannot cope with it.

This government brought home the lock with this budget, but the question that remains is: what has it done with that largesse?

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [1.57 pm]: I also want to contribute to the debate on the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 and Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019. The 2019 budget speech is like the proverbial curate's egg—good in parts and not so good in other parts. When I looked at it more closely, despite the upbeat narrative from the army of spin doctors, I did not find the picture quite so glossy. Members on our side have often said that if the Barnett government had had the deal that this government has had on GST from the time it came into office, and if it had inherited the hard work of the previous government and also the commonsense of the federal Liberal government and the substantial lift in iron ore prices in recent years, the Barnett government would have had no debt at all. Scott Morrison is right to claim that he has pushed two budgets into surplus this year: the federal budget, which will move into surplus next year, and the state budget, which has been pushed into surplus this year by the GST changes and increases in federal grants. Others have shown that this budget is deceptive in that there are no matching funds from the state government for the federal funds that have been put in there, as in the case of the Ellenbrook line. Likewise, there is no reflection in the accounts of the need to increase operating funding as the expanded rail networks start to operate. The surpluses over the forward estimates amount to some \$9 billion, but the reduction in state debt is only \$660 million. There are no matching funds for the state government's contribution to the Joondalup hospital and only funds from a "maybe sale" of the TAB to build a new King Edward Memorial Hospital. Personally, I have never been a particularly strong supporter of the sale of the TAB. If it is to be sold, I am disappointed that the shares will not be sold to the public via a public float and listed on the stock exchange. I have been amused at the acceptance of that privatisation by government members. Could it have been only a few years ago that we heard endlessly from Hon Darren West, the Australian Labor Party member for the Agricultural Region, that the ALP did not support selling it? He even asked to sponsor a horserace at the Geraldton races that expressed his party's opposition to the TAB being sold.

Another interesting question that arises is about Synergy's funds for capital investment when the Collie coalfields close in 2025. Where will the funds come from to replace the required power sources? Are we heading into a situation similar to that in South Australia where a combination of extreme weather conditions and the closure of a coal-fired power station led to a statewide blackout?

Two other questions about the budget are obvious to me. During my time on the Education and Health Standing Committee, I frequently heard that health costs are expected to increase by eight per cent per annum because of rising population numbers, an ageing population and improvements in medical technology. The government's achievements in cutting the rate of increase in the health budget are surprising, but I wonder how sustainable they will be in the longer term.

The lift in mining investment in particular is starting to make its presence felt in the community, but only just. The 140 000 households in mortgage stress will not go away quickly.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 3417.]

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS — MATTHEW BIRNEY, MR XHANG, HON PAUL OMODEI

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [2.00 pm]: Members, we have two former members of Parliament in the chamber. I would like to welcome former member Mr Matt Birney and his guests to the chamber today.

Mr T.J. Healy: Finally, a Liberal leader!

The SPEAKER: Members! I will stand to speak—and you will never make a leader making comments like that!

In particular, I welcome the general manager of Oppine, Mr Xhang, who is one of Mr Birney's guests today. Welcome; thank you very much. Also, another former leader, Mr Paul Omodei, is in the right-hand side of the Speaker's gallery. Welcome to our chamber, thank you.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The SPEAKER: Are you finished, Minister for Police? You were laughing; I did not hear anyone else. It must have been funny.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

STATE ECONOMY — 2019–20 STATE BUDGET

367. Dr M.D. NAHAN to the Premier:

I refer to comments made last night by the federal Labor candidate for Pearce, who said on ABC news that we have an economy that just is not working for a lot of people and the cost of living is the biggest issue amongst voters. Are the comments of the federal Labor candidate for Pearce correct considering the record number of unemployed Western Australians, the introduction of the government's new taxes, the state economy going backwards this year and the massive \$185 per year cost-of-living increases the government has imposed on households?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Firstly, I welcome Mr Omodei and Mr Birney to the chamber. It is great to see both of them back. For those of us, like the Minister for Police, the member for South Perth and I, who remember that era, it is great to see them in the same room together!

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: And the member for Warren–Blackwood.

In relation to the Leader of the Opposition's question, I am pleased that he has asked me a question about the budget. I think the question is broadly about the budget. I am pleased to see that the Leader of the Opposition has done it—he has finally asked me a question about the budget. The budget that we handed down last week has the lowest increase in fees and charges in 13 years. In the former government's eight budgets it put up fees and charges by more than we did last week, yet that government had record revenues coming into the state coffers. It put fees and charges —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members for Carine, Darling Range and Bateman, I call you all to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It had record revenues flowing into the state Treasury, yet the former government put up fees and charges by more than this government has. In the former government's first three years it put them up by more than double what this government has in our first three years.

Mrs A.K. Hayden interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The fact of the matter remains, as I have said on a number of occasions, the former government left us with more than forty billion dollars' worth of debt, so it is a little bit hypocritical of the opposition to come in here and demand that we put up fees and charges by less, when it left us with that financial legacy.

Mrs A.K. Hayden interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The second component is that the budget expects that economic growth will be at 3.5 per cent next financial year and that job growth will continue.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Mr M. McGOWAN: A range of initiatives contained within the budget will enhance that activity. One initiative that the Minister for Health referred to yesterday is the future health innovation research fund. It was widely welcomed by the scientific community of Western Australia as a job creator. The other week, I launched the \$30 million for the East Perth power station, which was widely welcomed by the property sector and the Master Builders Association as a job creator.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Carine, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The week before, the Minister for Housing, the Treasurer and I launched the Keystart initiative, which was widely welcomed by the property sector, condemned by the shadow Treasurer and then copied by the federal government. I was listening to radio 585—not Radio National, NewsRadio—the other morning and I heard Mathias Cormann explaining the federal government's policy announcement made last Sunday. When he was under attack, he said, "It's just what happens in Western Australia. It's a great initiative. It's what the Western Australian government has just done; it is a great initiative." I am on Mathias Cormann's side on this one; I think he was right.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I never said it was a bad one.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member obviously does not know what his fingers are doing when he is tweeting; he must be looking away. He must be looking away when he starts tweeting.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member is a blind tweeter! He looks the other way while he tweets and anything could come out that just happens to condemn our policies.

All of those initiatives to create economic activity to ensure our state's economy continues to grow and to put in place the lowest increase in fees and charges in 13 years is what we did in the budget. But the Liberal Party says, "Why don't you do more?" Have a look in the mirror—members opposite should have a look at what the former government did.

STATE ECONOMY — 2019–20 STATE BUDGET

368. Dr M.D. NAHAN to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. The government's own budget indicates that state final demand, the domestic economy of Western Australia is shrinking this year. That is the government's own data. Who is telling the truth about the state of the Western Australian economy and the impact of the government's massive cost-of-living increases on struggling Western Australians, the Premier or the federal Labor candidate for Pearce?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I think the Labor candidate for Pearce, Kim Travers, was talking about the federal government. Let us have a look. Although I agree with what Mathias Cormann said about our policy on News Radio the other morning, I am, like most Australians, a bit disturbed by the fact that we have had three Prime Ministers in six years—three Prime Ministers in six years and they did not even overlap; it was three different people. At least the last federal Labor government had only two people as Prime Minister. Three Prime Ministers in three years! What we have seen from the federal opposition is that it has learnt the lesson that stability is important. It is important for the economy. It is important for confidence. It is important to the business community. That is a reality. I heard Bill Shorten talking about it this morning, and that is what business wants. That is what we want across Australia.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: We want a bit of stability nationally.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The Leader of the Opposition's supplementary question described the increase in fees and charges as massive. It is the lowest increase in fees and charges in 13 years.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Carine, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: If that increase is massive, what were the increases the Leader of the Opposition put in place in when he was in office? If the lowest increases in 13 years, according to the Leader of the Opposition, are massive, the increases in each and every year that the former government put in place in eight years were more than massive each and every year. That is what the Leader of the Opposition just alluded to.

SINO IRON — CLIVE PALMER

369. MR S.J. PRICE to the Premier:

I refer to the 3 000 workers who are currently employed on the Sino Iron project in the Pilbara and the repeated claims made by Clive Palmer in relation to this project. Can the Premier advise the house how these workers' livelihoods are being put at risk by Clive Palmer and why the claims by Clive Palmer are both misleading and dangerous?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

It is no understatement to say that Mr Clive Palmer is running one of the most disgraceful and deceitful campaigns in Australian political history. He should be rightly condemned by every Australian. He is spending tens of millions of dollars, made off the backs of workers he has not paid, in deceiving the public of this country. Mr Palmer's campaign is a barrage of lies. Although he attacks Chinese investment, he does not point out that the Chinese investor Citic paid Clive Palmer \$415 million to acquire the mining rights to the project on which it built its iron ore mine. Clive Palmer brought Citic to Western Australia and took \$415 million from it, and now he vilifies it. Clive Palmer makes more than \$200 million a year in royalties from the Chinese company Citic. Although he takes the cash, he does not provide any jobs for Western Australians. He does not employ any workers, and he does not support any families. It is Citic—Sino Iron—that has invested \$15 billion in Western Australia. It has built the infrastructure, employs more than 3 000 Western Australian workers and contributes to the Western Australian economy. All Mr Palmer does is take the money and spend it on shameless, misleading advertisements. He is currently threatening the livelihoods of those workers by blocking Citic Pacific—Sino Iron—from expanding its operations and playing down its waste.

One of the most bizarre claims that Mr Palmer is running is that an airstrip in Karratha poses a national security risk. That airstrip is part of the mining project deal that he negotiated. It supports the fly in, fly out workforce that operates on that project and helps to deliver him the hundreds of millions of dollars a year in royalties that he takes from Western Australia. His other claim is even more absurd—that a Chinese-owned company bought Merredin airport from the Labor government. The truth is that in the mid-1990s, China Southern Airlines purchased the Merredin airport freehold from the Shire of Merredin. The state government, at the time, was the Court Liberal government, but the deal was made between the company and the Shire of Merredin. China Southern operated

a flying school at the airport until 2016. It is still a public airport and is regularly used by the Royal Flying Doctor Service to save lives in the wheatbelt and, therefore, provides an ongoing benefit to the community. He is now attacking a piece of infrastructure that was sold by a local council to a Chinese firm to create jobs and now supports the Royal Flying Doctor Service to save lives in the wheatbelt.

The government is considering its options in protecting more than 3 000 Western Australia jobs on the Sino Iron project. It would be devastating if those jobs were lost to our state. I thank and acknowledge the supportive and positive comments already made by the state Leader of the Opposition. However, I am disappointed that the Liberal Party nationally has done a preference deal with Mr Palmer. The federal Attorney-General, Christian Porter, told me personally that he supports state legislation to deal with this issue and protect jobs, but then the Liberal Party did a deal with Mr Palmer to get his preferences. This is a shameless anti-WA jobs deal.

Mrs A.K. Hayden interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Darling Range, you are on three calls. Do you understand what that means? One more, and you are on your bike.

Mr M. McGOWAN: This is a shameless anti-WA jobs deal, done by the Liberal Party with Mr Palmer, that will hurt our country. My advice to all Western Australians is to not reward the Liberal Party with their votes, and do not vote for Mr Palmer.

HEALTH STAFF — ASSAULTS — 2019–20 STATE BUDGET

370. Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the highly concerning increase in the number of assaults on nurses, with the number of assaults increasing by more than 45 per cent between 2017 and 2018, with 1 754 hard-working nurses assaulted, and the minister's admission yesterday that more needs to be done. Given the serious nature of this issue, why is there not one mention in the 1 000 pages of the budget papers of how this is to be addressed?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I wonder if this is a budget question! That would be unusual. In the budget is entrenched our \$2.2 million commitment to improve security for frontline workers in our emergency departments. I am not sure whether the member for Churchlands was paying attention at the time, but on 1 January 2017—the very first day, if you like, of what was considered the official campaign for that election—the then Leader of the Opposition, now the Premier of Western Australia, made a commitment that we would move to protect frontline workers in our hospital system through a security package valued at about \$2.2 million. It is absolutely in the budget, and we will move as swiftly as possible to make sure that we put those measures in place. The member is quite right. There has been an increase in assaults on doctors and nurses working on the front line; it tripled between 2012 and 2017. That is one reason we brought in our policies, and we are working with health service providers to make sure that they have the best application.

It continues to grow; we know this. The member would have seen the disturbing footage of violence in our schools over the last 24 hours. Violence against all public servants is a significant problem for any government department providing services to the community. As I said in this place yesterday, any assault on nurses is one too many, and we will do what we can to provide extra resources to make sure that we put that in place. As I said, there have already been discussions between director general of Health and the Commissioner for Police to see what they need to do, as system managers, to put better protocols in place to make that happen. I have already spoken to most of the health unions to say that we will convene a roundtable discussion with the chief executives of each of the health service providers to collect their reflections and their feedback from nurses and doctors on the front line, to see what more we have to do. We are absolutely resolute that we will not tolerate assaults on doctors and nurses in our hospital system. We have a range of measures in place in our emergency departments. As members will be aware, the incident that attracted some attention over the weekend was actually on a hospital ward, so clearly we have to look at this in more depth. We have to have system responses to it, and we will do that, working in conjunction with those doctors, nurses and other health staff working on the front line.

HEALTH STAFF — ASSAULTS — 2019–20 STATE BUDGET

371. Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. Given the minister's own admission of the need to protect nurses, and that there is a crisis in the health system, where five nurses are being assaulted every day, does the minister think he has allocated enough resources in the budget to ensure the protection of nurses and staff in our hospitals?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

One thing is for sure—I am confident that we have allocated more resources than the previous government did in security matters. We will continue to talk with the health service providers who are responsible for providing these services, and we will continue to work with them about what we need to do to support them in making sure they provide a safe workplace.

COST OF LIVING — FEES AND CHARGES

372. Mr Y. MUBARAKAI to the Treasurer:

Can the Treasurer advise the house —

Several members interjected.

Mr Y. MUBARAKAI: It is my question; I can look wherever I want.

The SPEAKER: A word of advice, member for Jandakot—the Treasurer is there; face him when you are asking your question.

Mr Y. MUBARAKAI: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Can the Treasurer advise the house —

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Carine, you are on three calls.

Mr Y. MUBARAKAI: Mr Speaker, can I start again?

The SPEAKER: No, I have got the gist of the first bit; keep going.

Mr Y. MUBARAKAI: My question is to the Treasurer.

- (1) Can the Treasurer advise the house how the responsible financial management of the McGowan Labor government has helped to keep increases in fees and charges to the lowest level in 13 years?
- (2) Can the Treasurer advise the house how this compares with the way households were slugged by the Liberal–National government?

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

I thank the member for Jandakot for that outstanding question.

- (1)–(2) Before I start, because I cannot let the moment pass, the Leader of the Opposition asked a question of the Premier and now that there is an interest in state final demand, I emphasise the fact that at no point while the Leader of the Opposition was the Treasurer did state final demand grow; indeed, most of the time it was declining in double digit numbers. We are doing well, restoring the economic mess left to me by the Leader of the Opposition.

One of the things a government can do when it has strong financial management and when it returns to a surplus position—I mean a real surplus position—is spend money keeping power bills and the broader basket of household fees and charges low. We as a government spent just over \$300 million in the 2019–20 budget to ensure that not just power bills, which make up the majority of the household model, but all fees and charges are kept at a 13-year low, member for Jandakot. The reason why that is important is that there is always an interesting history behind a critique of those charges by the opposition. We had to come into an environment in which the Leader of the Opposition left me not only state final demand declining year after year, but also the only recorded GST recession in Western Australia. That is what the Leader of the Opposition handed to me after his time as Treasurer. Let us not forget that the former Liberal–National government was awash with revenue—utterly awash with record revenue. In the first year, 2009–10, when it expected and delivered an \$831 million surplus, what did it do with power bills? It increased them by 23 per cent. In 2010–11, with a \$1.69 billion surplus, it delivered another 16 per cent hit to power bill increases. At a time when it was awash with revenue and running large operating surpluses —

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warren–Blackwood!

Mr B.S. WYATT: — it still delivered in two years a 23 per cent and a 16 per cent increase in power bills. It is interesting to listen to the rhetoric of the Leader of the Opposition. I refer to the *Hansard* in 2010 and what the Leader of the Opposition said to justify those whopping increases —

Subsidising across the board electricity prices, no matter the income or the circumstances of the consumer is dumb and I might add inequitable.

When the Leader of the Opposition stands and rails against the lowest power increase in 13 years—1.75 per cent—he must be reminded, as I will continue to do —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr B.S. WYATT: — that at the time when he was making 23 per cent and 16 per cent increases on the back of whopping surpluses, he was saying that if the government subsidises Western Australian power bills, that is dumb and inequitable. That is the position that the Leader of the Opposition always had when he stood outside this place and headed up the Institute of Public Affairs. Having delivered to me and this government a GST recession, five years of state final demand contraction, record debt, record deficits and record increases in fees and charges, I will put that record out there for Western Australians to see, and I will remind them that although the Liberal–National coalition may talk the big game now, when it was in government it delivered very, very poorly for the people of Western Australia, and that is why the efforts that we have made to deliver strong financial management over the last couple of years mean that we can spend a significant amount of money delivering to Western Australians the lowest increases in fees and charges in 13 years, and I think that is a good outcome.

EDNA MAY MINE

373. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to the government's decision to reject an expansion of the Edna May mine in my electorate, which will cost 100 local jobs. Given this latest decision comes on top of the 400 jobs lost when the Premier rejected two new iron ore mines in the Helena and Aurora Ranges, can he explain to the people of my electorate whether his jobs plan includes them, or is it just for city people?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

That is a serious question. The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety has told the proponents of that gold mine expansion that the submission that it put in was not appropriate, considering that it would most likely lead to the extinction of a Western Australian native plant species that is found nowhere else. It told the proponent to come back with another plan—reduce the size, reduce the scale, construct it differently—to ensure that that plant species does not become extinct. That is the advice that I have received on this matter.

In relation to the Helena and Aurora Ranges, it was a similar sort of theme. I support the mining industry. I think that is on record. I answered a question a moment ago about the Sino iron ore project. I have regularly answered questions about iron ore, gas and other projects across Western Australia, for which we have exhibited our support. But I do not like the idea that species of native flora—or fauna for that matter—will become extinct if we allow certain projects. We need to have careful environmental management around those things, which is what we are doing. The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety—not the Environmental Protection Authority or the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions—has made the decision about the clearing permit. I would not say that it is not pro-mining, but it is careful about those sorts of issues. I am more than happy to say that there will be ongoing discussions and negotiations to try to reach an outcome that meets the interests of everybody, but I am very uncomfortable with the idea that a species would become extinct.

EDNA MAY MINE

374. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Why is the Premier seeking to alter a state agreement to maintain jobs in the Pilbara but he will not step in to support mining in the eastern wheatbelt where jobs are very much required and are very important to the community, the lack of which could potentially shut down future employment and the little community of Westonia?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I think I answered that question with my initial comments. I say again that the government is supportive of jobs and mining and other forms of investment. There are matters surrounding Mr Palmer: 3 000-plus jobs, Australia's reputation as a safe place to invest and our relationship with major trading partners and partners around the world are at risk. In the case of this project, work is going on between the proponent and the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, and I am hopeful that they will reach a good outcome. I think that is an appropriate way of addressing the matter.

REGIONAL ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE

375. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's \$4.2 billion investment in job-creating road infrastructure, including record funding for regional roads. Can the minister outline to the house how this investment will deliver 25 major job-creating road projects, including work on widening Bussell Highway, and can she advise the house whether she is aware of anyone who is misleading the community about this government's investment in roads?

The SPEAKER: Minister.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thank the member for Bunbury for the incredible question and for his commitment to local jobs, local businesses and road improvements throughout the south west. We have a record spending of \$4.2 billion on road infrastructure around the state. Members in the area of Bunbury have taken much interest in the funding of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road. As part of that, we have been able to identify \$4 million for preloading works on Bussell Highway widening, member for Vasse. That is something that the member for Vasse welcomed and about which she made some positive comments, so I thank her. Member for Pilbara, around the state we have the Karratha–Tom Price Road. Mr Speaker, we have the Albany ring-road and South Coast Highway —

The SPEAKER: Fantastic!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: — and we have projects on Great Northern Highway. The important point is that these projects are employing local people and local businesses and, in the north particularly, the Kimberley and Pilbara projects have involved a big uptake by Aboriginal people. We have seen up to 40 to 50 per cent local Aboriginal employment on those projects. I would like to continue to roll that out across the state, because I think that is really important.

Across the metropolitan area, there has been investment in the northern suburbs, in the southern corridor and the eastern corridor, and the Tonkin Highway improvements. Remember—when the now member for Darling Range was the member for eight and a half years, there was not one cent for the Tonkin Highway extension.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Not one cent did she deliver to those projects.

Mr I.C. Blayney interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Geraldton!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We have been able to get on and do that work. I remember that before the Darling Range by-election, the member said, “The project is all ready, because we got it ready.” The former government did nothing on those projects—nothing!

The point I want to make today is that yesterday, the member for Hillarys said that page 143 of the federal budget papers —

Mr P.A. Katsambanis interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Hillarys!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: He said that the project is there. I said, “Where are those words ‘Hodges to Hepburn’?”

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: They are right there, under congestion.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Treasurer, I call you to order for the first time. I was on my feet. Now that we have found you, I know where you are.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: He said there was money specifically for that project. Page 143, he said. It is not there. We know that Christian Porter has been making it up on this project. He said the money was there—\$50 million. He then said, “No. It is not the \$50 million. There is another \$40 million”—which no-one else can see—“for this project.” He is now out there, claiming whatever. We know his form. He nearly bankrupted this state. Just to show members how misleading the Liberal Party has been on this project, I have here two advertisements about this project. They are about the Mitchell Freeway widening from Hodges Drive to Hepburn Avenue. The first says that the Liberal Party “delivered” it. I do not know. Members in the northern suburbs, has it been delivered by the Liberal Party?

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I cannot see it. In the other one, they changed it to “delivering”. How about this one? Maybe the new ad for that project should be, “Oops ... we forgot to put it in the budget ... signed Christian Porter and the Liberal Party”.

TAXIDRIVERS — ASSISTANCE

376. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the strike action by taxidriviers in regional towns this weekend, and the article in last week’s *Albany Advertiser* about the closure of taxi and charter services in Katanning, which follows taxi operators closing down in Denmark, the closure of Rainbow Taxis in the Premier’s electorate, and foreshadowed closures in Albany, Bunbury, Busselton and Kalgoorlie. Given the reforms have created significant hardship for taxi operators and drivers in regional areas, what is the minister doing to ensure that the elderly people in these communities who rely on taxis will continue to have access to these important services?

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Water, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thank the member for the sudden interest in this issue. After two years of discussion, consultation and debating this, I am glad the member has shown a sudden interest in this issue. What are we doing? We announced last Thursday and Friday a new assistance package, working with existing operators. Of course, there has been a lot of interest already for booking services through regional Western Australia—over 300 are authorised, and we will see the commencement of other services also throughout regional WA. But of course we want to make sure that the existing operators get assistance. That is why we announced \$3.4 million of new assistance in the budget last Thursday. It is \$10 000 per licence, capped at \$100 000. It is a waiver of fees for three to four years. It is also making sure the Department of Transport is working with local operators. I want to ensure that all operators will have a chance to continue. It is a changing environment. We have seen that in industries across the board, and, of course, in the metropolitan area. It is a changing and challenging environment for many. We want to work with the operators, and that is what we are aiming to do.

We have had discussions for over two years with different representatives. The regional operators did not want to be part of the levy, so we did not have the levy. They wanted assistance for the regional tax for the cameras, and we gave them that, and they sought further assistance.

In relation to some operators closing down, the Denmark Chamber of Commerce Inc has been very proactive and is working and holding workshops with other service providers. Operators closed down under the watch of the shadow minister, the member for Scarborough, too. We have seen this happen across the years. We want to continue to work with the operators. We want to give the existing operators the ability to transform into the new environment. Of course what has happened—we saw it with Mandurah and Bunbury—is that without reform, without a change, other companies will come in, just as Uber did in the metropolitan area, and in Mandurah and in Bunbury, and just as Uber was invited by the member for Dawesville into the Peel region —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Without reform, and without providing the ability for the existing operators to compete, they would lose market share, because others would just come in and deregulate themselves. So we had to create a new level playing field. We are working with the regional industry. There are very different views across industry. I know that some really welcome the assistance package, but others want more. We are continuing to try to get that balance right.

TAXIDRIVERS — ASSISTANCE**377. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Transport:**

I have a supplementary question. Given that the minister's on-demand transport reforms have allowed competition in regional areas that did not previously occur and have caused the demise of these businesses in regional towns, why are these taxi operators not eligible for fair and just compensation like the metropolitan taxi plate owners?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

The buyback related to the private ownership of plates in the metropolitan area. The legislation that governs the plates and the operation of the taxi industry in the metropolitan area is different from that in regional Western Australia. There are many businesses that operate within the taxi industry that we are not compensating, or undertaking a buyback from. It is related to the buyback of privately-owned plates.

We have had discussions over many years. In relation to the levy, the regional operators did not want the introduction of a levy. That was very clear. That was put to us. The buyback relates to privately-owned plates. We have created a new assistance package. That is because the businesses can continue.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: They are saying they can't.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough! I am telling you that you are not allowed to interject. I call you to order for the second time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: When the member for Dawesville was inviting Uber —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Tourism! I call you to order.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: — and doing a training course for Uber drivers in the electorate, member for Scarborough —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There was a photo of you doing that, member for Dawesville, addressing Uber drivers in Dawesville and saying how good it was. That happened before this legislation came in. What is the member's view on that—that their own colleague was inviting Uber into regional operations?

Mr J.N. Carey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Perth!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: On competition, I am not sure where the member for Scarborough was during the time of the last government, but she basically allowed it all to happen. The floodgates have opened.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member did nothing. Now we are trying to create an environment to allow existing operators to compete in this new world.

WOMEN'S AND BABIES' HOSPITAL — UPGRADE

378. Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the tremendous decision by the McGowan Labor government to commit 65 per cent from the sale of the TAB towards building a new women's hospital.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house why a new women's hospital is needed?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house what work is currently underway in planning for the new hospital?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. It was a great announcement in the budget with regard to the future of the women's and babies' hospital here in Western Australia. Members will be aware that one of the issues identified in the sustainable health review is the need to upgrade the women's and babies' hospital in Western Australia and move it from its current site to the QEII site so that it can be part of an innovative health campus and provide world-class health care for the women who go there to have their children.

We responded to the conclusions of the sustainable health review and have set aside \$3.3 million in this budget to begin early works with respect to the planning and development of that hospital proposal. It is obviously a fairly complex piece of work, because although we are moving a hospital to a constrained site, in addition we are moving it onto a site that already has an operational hospital, including Perth Children's Hospital. It will be a difficult project, but it is one that we need to do. This was identified in the early 2000s as part of the Reid review for hospital services in this state. The \$3.3 million is important money for early planning work, which I am very pleased to say is in the budget, but I am delighted that the government has decided to commit 65 per cent of the proceeds of the sale of the TAB to a new women's and babies' hospital. It represents an investment in the future of this state. There has been commentary about how it somehow represents services going to Perth; it does not. This hospital is a place where the vast majority of women in Western Australia—6 000 a year—go to have their babies. They come from all over the state, and, I must say, many come from rural and regional communities, particularly those from an Aboriginal background who are experiencing complications with their birth. This is a tertiary hospital that provides high-level care and we are making sure that we continue to deliver for women and babies into the future.

Obviously, on the current site, there are some heritage values that we need to protect. I want to assure the people of Western Australia that Harvey House and the memorial garden at the front of that house will be protected under any plan. I want to assure those parents who have used that memorial garden to remember their newborns that we will preserve that site to make sure that those memories are preserved.

It is time that we plan for the future for our health system. We have identified that King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women is in dire need of repair. I want to express my appreciation to the doctors, nurses and other staff who work there. It is an old hospital that has done a terrific service for the people of Western Australia, but it is now time to look forward. Thank goodness for the McGowan government; we are now starting to produce the resources that we need to deliver on that.

STATE AGREEMENT ACTS — AMENDMENTS

379. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Treasurer:

I will ask a question in a second, but I would also like to welcome Matt Birney, who is gone, and Paul Omodei, who is here. Significantly, both are former regional members of Parliament and Hon Paul Omodei is also shire president of Manjimup. We know that my seat is of a good pedigree; he was also a former member for Warren–Blackwood. It is great to have Paul in the gallery today.

The SPEAKER: Great preamble, member. Can we have the question, please?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I refer to the Treasurer's answer to a question in the other place on 17 May 2017. It states —

The state government does not intend to unilaterally amend such agreements, as this would clearly be contrary to their spirit and intent and undermine Western Australia's reputation as a safe and stable investment destination.

Has the Treasurer's position now changed?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

One thing that is unique to Western Australia is state agreements. This is a Western Australian creation, if you like, and the value of them has been highlighted by members on both sides of this house over decades. When we look at *Hansard*, we see that it provides certainty around investment—that is the key. We need certainty around investment because this state is very heavily reliant on that foreign capital. We want to ensure that when we are investing under those state agreement acts—in most cases billions of dollars over long periods of time—we need to provide that certainty. I assume the member’s question is in respect of the issue around Mineralogy and Mr Palmer. The Premier has outlined this quite clearly. What we need to see with those agreements is the certainty that has been provided by every other state agreement to ensure that the investment that has been made by Citic Pacific—again, in the billions—is certainly protected. I want to ensure that internationally, people and organisations feel as though they can invest securely and safely. That is why, for example, we did not think as an opposition and now as a government that unilaterally changing a state agreement to change, for example, the taxes, royalties and moneys paid, which have underlined decades of very significant investment, was a sensible thing to do. It would have sent an appalling message. But I suspect in light of what is happening with Mr Palmer and Mineralogy, and the fact that they are a clear threat to future investment of capital in Western Australia, every member of Parliament in this place would want to do what they can to protect ongoing investment in Western Australia.

STATE AGREEMENT ACTS — AMENDMENTS

380. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Treasurer:

I have a supplementary question. Given the Treasurer’s government has backflipped and is now open to unilaterally changing state agreements, why is the Treasurer so afraid of an open and transparent parliamentary inquiry into legacy state agreements to ensure that the taxpayer is still receiving a fair deal?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

As I said, we do what we can to protect the investment of capital in Western Australia, particularly when that investment is in the billions of dollars over multiple years and creates thousands of Western Australian jobs. We will not do what the Nationals WA did at the fag end of a government and suddenly decide to say, “You know what? It’s time to destroy jobs and unilaterally change the terms upon which people invest.” That is the fundamental difference, which is what the National Party wanted to do and to date I hope the Liberal Party has still held out on that position. We do not change the terms upon which that investment was made, and ultimately, the paucity of the argument around an investigation into state agreements is highlighted by the fact that two Nationals sitting on the front bench spent, I think, the better part of the last eight and a half years sitting in cabinet. The fact that not once did they consider doing that highlights the reality around whether they need that done.

REMOTE ABORIGINAL HOUSING

381. Ms J.M. FREEMAN to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government’s success in securing a commitment from the federal Labor opposition to provide \$1.5 billion over 10 years for remote Indigenous housing should it win the election on Saturday.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how this would support the provision of essential services to some of the state’s most vulnerable Western Australians?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house whether the federal Liberal–National government has offered the same support?

Mr P.C. TINLEY replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question and her enduring commitment to all Indigenous Australians, not only in her home electorate, but also right across the state, like so many on this side who are committed and wedded to the outcomes of first nation Western Australians to share in the same prosperity that we in this house have all shared. During the hurly-burly of the federal election campaign, an announcement was made by Bill Shorten, the federal Leader of the Opposition, around the area of remote funding. This came on the back of a significant amount of lobbying on behalf of those communities that we support, not only in Western Australia, but also South Australia and Queensland, that are particularly affected by the Morrison government walking away from those communities. It simply walked away, with a single termination payment of \$121 million. We really welcome the commitment of the federal Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten, to first nation Australians in remote communities by matching a similar amount of \$121.5 million through the next financial year to ensure that we have two things: firstly, an enduring commitment and statement to first nation Western Australians that we believe in their right to exist and live the life they need to live in culturally appropriate ways is enshrined and supported, and, secondly, breathing room to recast the whole debate around remote housing and move away from a housing-only model and understand what we have all come to know. The evidence has already said to us that a housing-first model around closing the gap and the totality of the life journey for our first nation Australians is something that we need to focus on. I and the whole cabinet are entirely in lockstep about

creating better outcomes across Indigenous lives, not just for the homes that they own and live in. We support 165 remote communities across Western Australia, including, beyond that, the conversion of town camps such as One Mile and Kennedy Hill in Broome, which we can normalise as suburbs and through which we can give genuine housing options across the spectrum to Aboriginal people. It will also help us double down on the transitional housing program that had been established for some time to allow Aboriginal people to have a job and at the same time get housing support and have a future life.

This contrasts significantly with what the previous Liberal–National government did under Mr Barnett, when he had significant indifference to the plight of Aboriginal people. He said some most egregious things to those people that were basically an insult.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Are you finished, member for Dawesville? I call you to order.

Mr P.C. TINLEY: When he got up —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville, I call you to order for the first and second time.

Mr P.C. TINLEY: He got up and told a crowd of people to have some sympathy and to walk in his shoes when it comes to the sort of pain that he was suffering. He told the Aboriginal people of Western Australia that they should suspend all their dispossession and the intergenerational transfer of poverty and systemic violence because the Premier of Western Australia was seeking some sympathy for the egregious effect that he had on our finances that he no longer had the capacity to fix. He rolled over and had his tummy tickled for a handful of silver coins over the remote communities sustainment funding for the remote water and power that we are meant to provide to these communities. It was a one-off payment to allow the federal government to walk away. That is the problem. That is the difference between this side and that side of the house. We believe they have a right to exist. We believe they have a right to a future—the same as ours.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Calm down, member for Dawesville. Wrap this up, minister.

Mr P.C. TINLEY: We have a belief about this. On this Saturday, there is a single stark choice before the people of Western Australia and Australia to choose between a government that cares for all and one that does not care for many.

DEFENCE SCIENCE CENTRE — 2019–20 STATE BUDGET

382. Mr W.R. MARMION to the Minister for Defence Issues:

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house the progress that has been made to establish the Defence Science Centre that he announced last year and that he expected to be operational by mid-2019?
- (2) Can he explain what funding has been allocated in the 2019–20 budget for the establishment and ongoing maintenance of that centre?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank and applaud the member for asking a question about the portfolio of defence issues. It is part of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation's budget, which is the parent department for defence issues.

- (1)–(2) I can tell the member that a partnership with the federal government has been agreed to. The federal government will be funding the director of research and development for the Defence Science Centre. The deputy director of research and development will be funded by us. In the new financial year, a grant scheme will come into force, with contributions from all four public universities and the state and federal governments, which will total \$1 million, with smaller grants within that scheme. We will be calling for submissions for research and development grants from the second half of the year. The announcement about the individuals concerned are driven by the department. The director general will, no doubt, notify me of who the individuals are and the time of the announcement. The member will hear them publicly. As soon as we are able to announce that, we will.

DEFENCE SCIENCE CENTRE — 2019–20 STATE BUDGET

383. Mr W.R. MARMION to the Minister for Defence Issues:

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister confirm whether the funding he has just outlined—the \$1 million—is coming from the existing budget or from the roughly \$3 million allocated in the 2020–21 forward estimates?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

The funding for the Defence Science Centre is within the Defence West budget. It will be accommodated from within the global budget of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation. There will also be a contribution from the federal government to fund the director of research and development. I am not sure what the exact title of that position will be, but the research director will be funded by the federal government. It will also contribute to the research and development grant scheme that will come into force. We will be calling for nominations for grants from the start of the new financial year.

The SPEAKER: That is the end of question time.

ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE

*Inquiry into Microgrids and Associated Technologies — Extension of Reporting Date
— Statement by Speaker*

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [2.53 pm]: Members, I have received a letter dated 15 May 2019, advising that the Economics and Industry Standing Committee has resolved to extend the reporting date on its inquiry into microgrids and associated technologies to 29 August 2019.

HEALTH STAFF — ASSAULTS AGAINST

Matter of Public Interest

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the member for Churchlands seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [2.54 pm]: I move —

That this house notes the staggering increase in assaults on nurses and the failure of the McGowan Labor government to provide adequate protection for these important frontline service workers, and the need for the McGowan Labor government to resource the state's emergency departments properly.

Nurse and staff safety at our emergency departments and hospitals is vitally important to us all because we or our family members may have to present to emergency departments to be admitted onto wards at our hospitals. We want to know that nurses are being protected and looked after so that they can do their job and support us without fear of being attacked. The nurses, doctors and staff at our emergency departments are passionate about their work. Indeed, they do not see their work as a job; they see it as a vocation. This was incredibly evident when Minister Cook and I attended the WA Nursing and Midwifery Excellence Awards last Saturday night. Those nurses do amazing work for the community. They do not want to have to put up with the prospect of being assaulted in their workplace. That is not what they want.

The McGowan Labor government is handling the health portfolio in a somewhat distressing way, because emergency departments are coming under increasing pressure due to demand. Several documents, one of them being the sustainable health review, have indicated that ED attendances have outpaced population growth over the last 10 years. In Western Australia in 2016–17, 90 per cent of people who attended an ED for acute mental health care in WA waited for up to 15 hours before progressing to a suitable care environment. We have had 10 years of increased demand, which is outstripping population growth, and 90 per cent of people with acute mental health needs who present to EDs have to wait for 15 hours. Can members imagine the pressure that alone puts on emergency departments at our hospitals? In addition, the methamphetamine action plan noted that WA Department of Health data shows that between July 2017 and December 2018 an average of 130 meth-affected patients presented to Western Australian emergency departments each week.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Emergency departments have been struggling to cope under the minister's government's watch. This evidence is overwhelming.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The Minister for Police is interjecting, but she was part of the cabinet that just handed down its third budget. This government has only one budget to go before the next election. If the government has not been able to turn around this issue in three budgets, that means it has been sitting on its hands and has not been doing anything about it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, it is a matter of public interest. I will hear it in silence.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The McGowan Labor government has failed to address the increase in demand on our EDs and the subsequent risks associated with dangerous patients who present at EDs. Patients need to be supported, but nurses need to be protected. They cannot be left vulnerable to dangerous patients. The reason we are seeing such

an increase in pressure on our emergency departments is covered by a number of different datasets. One reason is the four-hour wait time rule, which is that 90 per cent of patients who present to an emergency department should be seen to within four hours. Our major hospitals in the Perth metropolitan area are struggling to achieve that rule, which was agreed on at a Council of Australian Governments meeting. It is a key performance indicator of this government and the situation has been getting worse. For the 2017 year, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital saw an average of 74.3 per cent of patients within the four hours, but that dropped in 2018 to an average of 68.2 per cent. It is going in the wrong direction. At Fiona Stanley Hospital, the situation was similar. It was 71.1 per cent in 2017 and then dropped to 63 per cent in 2018. That is a long way from the 90 per cent target that this government is supposed to be achieving. Again, if it is going in the wrong direction, it is an indicator that these departments are under resource constraints and pressure. They are not able to cope with demand. Royal Perth Hospital is the same.

Another key indicator is ambulance ramping. That is when an ambulance arrives at a hospital emergency department, but the ambulance staff cannot hand over that patient to the emergency department staff because the emergency department is not prepared to accept the patient, meaning the ED is full. Therefore, a patient is ramped up with the ambulance staff. Now we are seeing record levels of ambulance ramping outside EDs under this government's watch. Last winter, the Minister for Health said that it was due to the flu season. In summer, the Minister for Health went on leave and the member for Bassendean was given the reins of the health portfolio. For goodness sake, that was a risky move given his handling of crayfish at the time. He was given the health portfolio and then ambulance ramping spiked during the hot days of summer. What did the acting Minister for Health—the Minister for Fisheries in charge of the crayfish debacle—blame? He blamed the heat. We are now seeing that it is nothing to do with the seasons. There is an increased demand on our EDs because people are presenting there all the time now, and we are seeing a spike in ambulance ramping.

The minister may scoff and laugh at this, but this is a serious issue for the patients who have to sit ramped up outside that emergency department. I do not know why he is laughing at that point. On 21 January, ambulances were ramped for 182.5 hours; on 18 February, 176 hours; on 20 February, 160.4 hours; and on 6 May, 159.2 hours. These are big numbers of ambulance ramping hours. The minister at one point argued that this ramping is increasing because ED and ambulance attendances are increasing. However, the statistics show that from the Sunday before to Monday, 6 May, ED and ambulance attendances dropped, yet the ramping hours went up. That tells us that we are not resourcing that particular department effectively enough. That was a good example of the pressure of this environment. The result of the failure to fix resourcing and staffing issues in our hospitals is that we end up with methamphetamine-affected patients presenting and these patients are made to wait sometimes for 15 hours in these environments with bright lights, noise and movement. Do we really think that is a good environment for people with serious mental health concerns to be presenting in? Of course it is not. Do members think it is a safe environment if patients and nurses are trying to deal with other patients at a time when these people with serious issues are being put in a bed off to the side in those wards? Of course, it is not. That is what this government is doing. It is failing to address the issue. It knows all this data.

The data that I have managed to get hold of is something that the minister could get hold of in an hour. All he has to do is ask the department to provide him with statistics on everything I have just said and he will know it. He will know what has been happening day in, day out for the last three budgets of this government. It has had three budgets to do something about it. What does the government have? There was a 55 per cent increase in assaults on nurses when we compare the first half of last year with the first half of 2017. In the second half of last year, the minister said in his own press release that we had a 38 per cent increase in assaults on nurses in the second half of last year compared with the second half of 2017. The minister knows the issue, yet on Sunday night, we saw a nurse doing her job, caring for patients, stabbed in the neck from behind. That is an appalling outcome.

Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski: It was in a ward.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Regardless of where it was, member for Kingsley, be it on the ward or in the ED, we should never distinguish where a nurse's safety is a priority. A nurse's safety is a priority wherever she or he is working. The member should dare not interject and imply that nurses only in EDs should be protected. That is what she just said in her interjection.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Have you finished? Manager of opposition business, through the Chair and then you will not have the interjections.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Last Sunday night was a key example of why more needs to be done. It is incredibly important that this minister understands this need and that he properly resources our emergency departments and, more broadly, our hospitals. He should not only conduct a review of what went wrong, but also recognise that it is all down to resourcing. No better example of that was given than having the head of emergency services at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital last year say that there would be an avoidable death unless more resources were allocated to our emergency departments. The head of emergency services said to the minister that there would be an avoidable death this year unless the Minister for Health does something with the resources of our EDs. It is simply not acceptable and more needs to be done.

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Nationals WA) [3.06 pm]: I rise to support this very important matter of public interest. We have a focus from a regional perspective. When we add the factors of distance, remoteness and fewer staff on the books to everything that the member for Churchlands has spoken about, we start to see some very poor outcomes for not only patients, but also those staff who put their life on the line to ensure that we have access to those services right across the state. I will come to the discussion that we have had previously about single nursing posts. We wholeheartedly support the motion that we need to make sure that these frontline service workers are supported and that we are resourcing our hospital and emergency services departments properly. In regional Western Australia, we do not have the same volume of presentations to our EDs as those in the metropolitan area do. I think everybody would understand that. However, it certainly does not make any difference if someone is confronted with a violent patient or someone under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Whether there are many poor outcomes or one poor outcome, for the person it impacts on, it is the same.

There has been a multitude of discussions across regional Western Australia about staff who have found themselves in very similar situations to that horrible scenario that we heard about over the weekend. As a result of the previous state government's Southern Inland Health Initiative, North West Health Initiative and Northern Inland Health Initiative, a significant amount of investment has been made to upgrade many of the government facilities in these regional hospitals, which has always included an upgrade to security and safety. Many of our nursing and hospital staff are becoming more used to having security available to them in the emergency department. They are provided with safe access if they are dealing with patients who present with mental health or drug and alcohol issues and that has made some inroads to making those staff feel more secure and protected. However, there are obviously still incidents in which we see our staff under the pump.

As recently as I think two or three weeks ago, in one of my electorate's hospitals, staff were confronted with a patient who had managed to pull off the end of a bed and started to swing it around the emergency department. Other patients, let alone the staff in the hospital, would have been terrified. People who are under the influence or having issues with their mental wellness can have superhuman strength. Nursing staff and doctors are suddenly confronted with trying to manage very difficult situations. There are no security guards, as I understand it, on constant call in those regional hospitals. I am happy to be corrected on that front, but my understanding is that no emergency department security guards are available. Especially in the biggest centres that take more of the patient inflow, that certainly does cause difficulties.

Before I sit down, I want to touch on what I spoke about yesterday in my reply to the budget speech. In this state, we still have eight single nursing posts in which a single staff member runs a facility that supports a community. That is unconscionable. We did away with single police posts some time ago on the basis that it was not okay to have frontline staff, particularly from a policing perspective, running a station by themselves. I cannot think of a reason why we still have a single nurse running one of those nursing posts. It may occur at times because of staffing arrangements due to leave or if staff are called away in an ambulance to an accident or to transfer a patient, but then the community is left unable to access health care. If someone presents whilst a single nurse is on duty, that nurse is then reliant on assistance from the police, who may also be out on a call and out of town.

As more of these situations arise, we believe that further resources need to be apportioned to make sure that the security of our staff is put first and foremost. It is very hard to attract staff into regional Australia. It gets harder when their workplace is not secure enough to ensure that they are not under threat while doing their job. We need them to be out there.

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [3.10 pm]: I, too, wish to rise to speak to the motion and support the member for Churchlands and the Leader of the National Party in noting —

... the staggering increase in assaults on nurses and the failure of the McGowan Labor government to provide adequate protection for these important frontline service workers, and the need for the McGowan Labor government to resource the state's emergency departments properly.

I have spoken a number of times in this place about the plight of Peel Health Campus, and I will reiterate those concerns here once again. The member for Churchlands has done a fantastic job in outlining the context—the lie of the land—when it comes to the assaults on nursing and clinical staff occurring right across metropolitan hospitals and the impact that this is having on our state's hospitals. It is a very real concern to the opposition, which is why we have moved this motion today. I hope that the Minister for Health will have something more to say than the usual spin that we sometimes get from this government. I wish I could say that after all the work and community activism that we have done around the plight of Peel Health Campus, we have seen more from this government. Sadly, we are three budgets down and that has not been the case. The member for Churchlands talked about patient circumstances, in particular at Royal Perth Hospital and a number of other key hospitals. The Leader of the Nationals WA spoke about the situation confronting regional hospitals and those outposts.

I would like to talk about Peel Health Campus and what is happening there. Although I consider it to be a regional hospital, it is a service that is delivered under the South Metropolitan Health Service. When I quote this data, I refer to question on notice 4529 answered by the Deputy Premier on 12 March this year. I asked about the assaults on staff at Peel Health Campus in 2018. In 2018, there was a total of 55 assaults on staff members at Peel Health

Campus, 25 of which involved nursing staff, one of which involved medical staff and 29 of which were categorised as “other” staff—a total of 55 assaults. I also asked how many staff members were threatened with assault or violence at Peel Health Campus. I was told that staff at Peel Health Campus had been threatened 374 times with assault or violence, and 55 times they were assaulted. This is a significant increase on the figures for the previous year, 2017. I asked questions about the data from January to August, and only 11 assaults occurred. We have seen a significant jump from 2017 to 2018 in the rate of assaults against those vital staff in our hospitals, who do an outstanding job, particularly in Peel Health Campus in a very constrained environment.

I asked a further question about those staff who had been physically assaulted and whether they had received any treatment. Three cases stick out to me that reinforce the motion moved by the opposition today. I will outline three circumstances in which an emergency department patient has assaulted someone in a hospital and the treatment they had to receive. In one circumstance in 2018, an ED patient affected by drugs punched a security guard in the head repeatedly. That security guard had to get treatment. Another security guard received a hand laceration whilst trying to restrain an ED patient who was drug affected. Another ED patient with a history of mental health issues and drug use punched a security guard in the head. These are just the security guards who work on the frontline. Of course, we have seen it right the way through, and nursing and other clinical staff are exposed to the same risks in ED. As the member for Churchlands rightly pointed out, it does not matter where it happens—in the ED or in the wards; these staff are absolutely being confronted with greater and ever increasing rates of violence. I am very surprised that the government has not done more to try to restrain these attacks on our critical frontline services staff. Members of the community are being confronted by these awful episodes at a very vulnerable time, yet the government is not doing enough to protect staff at these places, let alone the patients who might be witnessing these events as well. There can be no doubt that Peel Health Campus is in distress. It affects not only those patients who witness these events, but also those very highly revered staff in our hospital.

If we look at other key metrics for Peel Health Campus, we see that our hospital’s situation continues to worsen. In 2018 alone, Peel Health Campus was on bypass and three times it had to send patients to Fiona Stanley Hospital or to Rockingham General Hospital. That is an unacceptable situation for Peel Health Campus. In the history of Peel Health Campus, I am not aware of any time that it has been on bypass so many times as recently. One of those bypass times was on 28 December over the summer Christmas period. For a very long time, that hospital was closed to patients coming in because of bed block. In most cases, Peel Health Campus was on bypass because of bed block; it was on divert. Any minute that our hospital goes on bed block is unacceptable for our community. It disappoints me and it disappoints the people of Mandurah that we did not see more money in this budget for our hospital. Other indicators also point to a deterioration in the service. The waitlist for surgery in 2018 has blown out by over 20 per cent. The off-stretcher time from the ambulance to the ED is the worst time, as the member for Churchlands rightly pointed out. That has also blown out. In January 2017, the off-stretcher time was 65 per cent of patients being seen within 20 minutes. In December 2018, it was 39 per cent. That is unacceptable for our community. The median waitlist for elective surgery has grown from 200 days in 2017 to 323 days in 2018. That is a 61 per cent increase in the wait times for elective surgery. Our emergency department now has the second worst wait —

Point of Order

Dr A.D. BUTI: The member is making some very interesting points. Some of them may have relevance to this motion. A lot of them do not have relevance to the motion with regard to waiting time for elective surgery et cetera. Can he please get back to the motion that is being presented by the —

Mr S.K. L’Estrange: Further to the point of order —

Dr A.D. BUTI: Can I finish my point of order? It is about the relevance to the matter of public interest put up by the member for Churchlands. Talking about surgery waiting time is really stretching it. The member for Dawesville is trying to make this into a general debate about problems at Peel Health Campus; we know that.

The SPEAKER: I have heard enough. It is not a point of order, but, member, you will stay close to the motion.

Mr S.K. L’ESTRANGE: Further to that point of order —

Dr A.D. Buti: He said that there is no point of order.

The SPEAKER: I said that there was no point of order.

Mr S.K. L’Estrange: He is directing me to —

Dr A.D. Buti: He said that there was no point of order.

The SPEAKER: No; I am just telling the member to stick to the motion. It is up to him to make that decision. I am saying that it was not a point of order. If he stays on the right path, we will not have a problem, and we are using up his time.

Debate Resumed

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I will continue to point out that the last line of the motion states —

... the need for the McGowan Labor government to resource the state’s emergency departments properly.

Peel Health Campus is the second-worst emergency department in Western Australia.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale!

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I do enjoy the member for Armadale —

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale! I call you to order for the first and second time.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I do enjoy the interjections from the member for Armadale. I will be sure to tell the people in Mandurah that the Labor Party has once again tried to stymie debate when it comes to their local hospital. It is exactly what the member for Armadale is seeking to do here. It is very disappointing.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale!

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: It is very clear from those indicators that our hospital is in distress. Of course, the data cannot measure the real impact that an under-resourced emergency department and wait times that have blown out are having on my community. People are already in a vulnerable state when they are taken to the emergency department, and now they have to worry about not being able to get into the emergency department. It takes a long time for them to get out of the ambulance and for them to be seen—33 per cent are not seen within the four-hour rule in our emergency department. That is absolutely unacceptable by any standard. It is absolutely fair to say that Mandurah and the Peel region deserve more than this. I am certain that the member for Scarborough will follow up with some more debate on this issue. However, I would like to close out on the Peel Health Campus. It is very clear from what is occurring in our emergency department that the Labor government is not doing enough to resource it; we know that already. Members in this place have heard me repeat time and again just how parlous the situation is and how our hospital is really in distress.

The Labor government has continued to ignore us. It has continued to ignore the very real impact on our community of the lack of resources. I do not really know why the government has failed to invest in our hospital. The federal member for Canning, Andrew Hastie, likes to say that Labor is giving Mandurah the Cinderella treatment—it works us really hard but then it does not take us to the ball! I remind members in this place that only the Liberal Party and Andrew Hastie have delivered \$25 million to expand our emergency department and the radiological services at Peel Health Campus. It is now an irrefutable fact that the Liberal Party has invested more than any other party in our hospital. It has had the biggest investment since it was built thanks to the Liberal Party and Andrew Hastie in Canning. Such a historic announcement could have come about only from a community united behind the cause. Andrew Hastie and the Liberals listened and delivered for our community. I doubt that Mandurah has ever seen such united community support. People were in lockstep out there and activated to see our emergency department at Peel Health Campus receive investment from their state Labor government, which continues to ignore us. Labor continues to ignore Mandurah and, to me, it will be at its peril.

I questioned the Minister for Health about his recent announcements of some \$4.4 million, set aside in May last year, for improvements at Peel Health Campus. The minister said specifically that the funding would go towards security at our hospital. Noting the member for Churchlands' motion, of that \$4.4 million, only \$230 000 has gone into security at Peel Health Campus and \$800 000 has gone into a car park. Apparently, the rest has gone into maintenance. Money should have been given to the hospital already for maintenance works, but that is where the funding has gone. Labor continues to constantly mislead the people of Mandurah and the Peel region about the real investment occurring there. The Labor Party should be investing in our emergency department, but it has failed to do so. Labor can continue to ignore Mandurah and to fail our community as much as it wants, because I promise the Minister for Health that he will see a backlash from our community the likes of which has never been seen before when it comes to Labor in Mandurah. We will remember that in three budgets we have failed to see any significant funding for our emergency department. We will remember that Labor continues to forget our community. We will remember the kick in the guts that the government gives us every time it tells us that things at Peel Health Campus are okay. We will remember that it was only Andrew Hastie and the Liberal Party who invested in our hospital. More than that, the people of Mandurah and the Peel region will turn these hurtful memories into action at the state next election. They will be the tip of the spear, on behalf of the people of Western Australia, who will vote the Labor Party out of office!

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.22 pm]: I rise to contribute to this matter of public interest motion on behalf of the opposition. Unlike the answers to our questions on notice, from some of the minister's cabinet colleagues, unfortunately, this minister has been far more honest and has given us data that raises significant alarm bells with the opposition. The data we refer to is the significant rise in the number of assaults on our workers, our nursing staff, in hospitals.

There has also been an increase in the number of code blacks. Having a couple of sisters who are nurses, I know that a code black is the call for extra assistance that goes out because a nurse is under significant threat of physical

harm. We know that the number of code blacks has increased by 6.29 per cent from the calendar years 2017 to 2018. This corresponds a little to the number of assaults on nurses, which increased by 45.32 per cent from 2017 to 2018. That data means that while code blacks are on a rise of 6.29 per cent across the two years, the hospital's response to protect our nurses has fallen well behind—it has fallen significantly behind. In 2017, code blacks are converting to assaults at a rate of about 6.4 per cent. That is now up to 8.7 per cent. It is a pretty clear signal that when a distress call is sounded and one of our nursing staff is under threat of significant physical harm, the hospitals are not resourced sufficiently to respond to these code blacks and emergencies to prevent an incident converting into an assault. These are alarming figures. It has happened over a period of a year and health authorities have known about it for a number of years. We know that methamphetamine use and other issues are involved in these presentations, but we are pointing out this government's failure to act and respond. The outcomes that we get are not good outcomes. In January this year *The West Australian* reported —

The 84-year-old women, who wished to remain anonymous, had no option but to lay on the floor of the emergency department for two hours on Thursday in an attempt to alleviate her crippling pain.

We had that shocking attack on a nurse. As a member in this place with two sisters who are nurses, one with 40 years' experience and one with 30 years' experience, working in our public hospitals I hear how frightening it is. I put to members in this place that my two sisters have saved the lives of at least half a dozen people at roadside accidents on the way home from shifts. That is the kind of people nurses are, that is what they do and they deserve to be in an environment in which they feel protected when they are dealing with not only people who are very sick, but also people who are absolutely out of control because of the drugs they have taken. It is this minister's responsibility to staff hospitals appropriately and to ensure that when a code black is sounded, nurses are protected, and we do not have assaults, so we do not have nurses going to work in fear that they will be stabbed in the neck. My blood ran cold when I heard that story because I have two sisters, an aunty, a niece and a nephew who are at risk in our hospital system because of this minister's failure to fund the security services appropriately to keep them safe. That is why we have raised this issue.

Dr A.D. Buti: That's what relevance is to the motion.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, relevance is that I call you to order for the third time. You are obviously in a hurry this afternoon.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [3.27 pm]: I am thankful for opportunity to speak on this important matter of public interest motion. We come to this motion not because the government has run away from this issue, but because it is seeking to remedy it and take proactive action to continue to protect our frontline workers. As I said in my answer to a question asked earlier today, we have not been silent on this issue. Unlike the previous government, we have proactive policies in our \$2.2 million security package that seek to remedy the situation.

The opposition's claim is that we have not done enough. The record now shows that we have done \$2.2 million more than the previous government ever did. This issue was never on the former government's radar. It never considered this issue during its time in office, despite the fact that over the time that the former government was in office the number of assaults on hospital staff tripled. The former government did nothing. We saw the problem and that is why we had an election commitment. What was the Liberal Party's election commitment around security for doctors and nurses?

Mrs L.M. Harvey: This is about what you are doing about it.

Mr R.H. COOK: In the broad daylight of the election campaign, understanding that the government had set up the system, what was the Liberal Party's election commitment?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: There are lots of comments and lots of ideas, but the minister has the call.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I do not care; I am on my feet.

Mr R.H. COOK: This is an important point: we are aware of this issue and we are acting on it. There is no way to defend the incidents that happened over the weekend; they are disturbing and they are distressing. I went to the hospital on Sunday and spoke with the staff who either witnessed or were indirectly impacted by that particular incident. It had impacted on everyone in the hospital and had affected morale and people's sense of security in the workplace. What was particularly disturbing for those staff was the speed with which the incident escalated from what was observation of a benign situation to an assault on a nurse. That is both unacceptable and distressing, because it makes it all the more difficult to respond to.

I will speak for a moment about methamphetamine, although we do not know whether it was a factor in this incident. We have all drawn that conclusion, but that is not a conclusion that I have drawn. I will talk about issues around methamphetamine and the emergency department situation, although that was not in play in this instance either. The government understands that methamphetamine is a problem. That is why we came in with a methamphetamine action plan. This plan is about achieving three things. Firstly, it is about reducing supply. The

Minister for Police has presided over the biggest seizure of methamphetamine and illicit drugs in this state's history during the short time she has been in that role. Secondly, we want to reduce demand, which involves making sure that we have education and prevention programs so that people do not get caught up in the insidious bind of drug addiction. Thirdly, we want to reduce harm, making sure of the services that people need at the time of their addiction and their crisis, so that we can support them and their families.

In response to the Methamphetamine Action Plan Taskforce, we invested an extra \$42.5 million to address those issues. That brings the total investment over the forward estimates to over \$240 million, on dealing with alcohol and other drugs, and methamphetamine specifically, to make sure that we can address the impact of this insidious drug on our community. No other government has done that, and we are making significant advances in putting these services in place, and making sure that we can win the war against this disgusting and horrible drug. We know the effect that it has; we know that it takes people down a long and evil spiral of despair and drug addiction. We know the impact, therefore, it has on that person, their loved ones and people around them. We have to do more, and we are doing more in making sure that we get on top of this issue.

The member for Churchlands spoke at length about the performance of our emergency departments, although this has nothing to do with the actual motion. I understand the bow that he has drawn here, and I am happy to talk about them. As I have mentioned on previous occasions, our emergency departments are the best performing in the country. From that perspective, we should be proud of the work our doctors and nurses are doing, rather than continuing to knock them. The member for Churchlands talked about the performance against our targets. I want to provide for the member, and put on the record, the detail on the targets. In triage 1—patients we have to get to within two minutes—we are at 99.9 per cent, so far in 2019. We have met that target. Triage 2—patients we have to see within 10 minutes—has an 80 per cent target and we are at 78.7 per cent, so it is slightly short, but pretty much there. I will come back to triage 3 later. Triage 4—patients we need to get to within 60 minutes—has a 70 per cent target, and we have reached 68.2 per cent, so, again, pretty much there. Triage 5—patients we have to get to within two hours; patients who are in the least distress—has a 70 per cent target, and we achieved over 91.9 per cent. So I come to triage 3. These are people who come in with sore backs and other painful conditions. They need care and attention, but they are not specifically urgent. We have to get to them within 30 minutes, and we are achieving that only 50 per cent of the time. Our Achilles heel is triage 3, but across all the other triage categories, we are already meeting our targets. Triage 3 is bringing our overall averages down, but in all other areas of activity in our emergency departments across the state, we are achieving those targets.

It is true that we are struggling with off-stretcher times at the moment. The issue that we are particularly troubled with is ambulance ramping. As I reported to this place before, we are undertaking an audit of ambulance ramping, because while our EDs continue to perform really well, ambulance ramping times are problematic. I do not draw any conclusions from this, but I just put it out for members' information. On 1 April, a Monday, we had 100 hours of ramping in Western Australia. I think it was on the Tuesday or Wednesday that I made the media announcement that we would do an audit on ambulance ramping. By the following Monday, the ramping times had reduced to 27 hours. I am not drawing any conclusions from this, but it is interesting that I make an announcement that we are going to do an audit on ambulance ramping, and all of a sudden ambulance ramping goes right down. I do not know what that is about, but I am really looking forward to that audit coming back, and I will share the details with the chamber so we can get a better understanding. Just to give people an idea, for instance, on 1 April Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital had 34.9 hours of ramping, but by the following Monday it had gone down to 1.3 hours—a very drastic reduction, which is an unusual state of play. As I said, I do not draw any conclusions from that, but clearly we need to have a closer look at the performance of EDs. However, our EDs continue to perform above the national average, and indeed we are the best in the country. We should take some pride in that. There is not a crisis in our EDs.

There is a change in the type of patients presenting to our emergency departments, as the member for Churchlands observed; many more patients are coming into our emergency departments suffering from acute mental health issues, or drug and alcohol issues. We are doing long-term work aimed at reconfiguring the way we deliver services in emergency departments to meet this changing nature of demand. We are rolling out mental health observation areas, or mental health emergency centres, across the metropolitan area. We have opened one at Joondalup and we are in the process of constructing one at Royal Perth Hospital, and funding has been announced in the context of the federal election for a mental health emergency centre at Midland Public Hospital. It is about making sure that we have the facilities to better manage these patients. The mental health emergency centres are there to provide a better environment for these patients to de-escalate and stabilise, and in some cases make sure that we get them back on their medical regime, and therefore better prepare them for ongoing care and attention in a more appropriate environment. We are meeting the needs of the mental health cohort in emergency departments.

In addition, we are also looking at a new clinic we have started at Royal Perth Hospital that is meeting with a great deal of success. We call it the urgent care clinic toxicology unit, or behaviour assessment unit. It allows us to provide a secure, discrete location for members of the public who come in with an alcohol or drug issue. There is a specialist team there that operates separate from the rest of the emergency department. This allows for these patients to be treated in a more appropriate environment, which means they do not disturb the other patients or

distract other consultants providing care in the ED environment. It is an important service, and I have seen it in operation myself. On a Friday or Saturday night, it is a lively space. We can see the staff managing with this particularly difficult cohort of patients, and they do a great job. One of the reasons they can do a great job is that our EDs are being reconfigured to meet the needs of this new patient cohort.

We are providing the services that our frontline staff in emergency departments need to meet the needs of these particularly difficult patients. I acknowledge the comments of the member for Scarborough about the data that we have put out on the subject. We have nothing to hide on this. We know that it is a difficult problem, and we are determined to make sure that our health system is transparent and open, and its performance is there for all to see. Obviously a particularly disturbing picture is painted in the tripling of assaults between 2012 and 2017, as well as the way it has continued to increase. In particular, yesterday I drew members' attention to a 38 per cent increase between the last six months of 2017 and the last six months of 2018. I do not take pride in these numbers; they are there for all to see. Coming out of that are some particularly interesting configurations of what this data presents. Firstly, it suggests that there has been a significant increase and that of the 268 nurse assaults that were recorded, 265 took place at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. If the Shorten Labor team is successful in the election on the weekend, it has committed to developing a behavioural assessment unit or urgent care clinic toxicology unit at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, which means that we will be able to better manage this particular cohort of patients. It presents an unusual picture. Member for Scarborough, I am not for one moment walking away from the data, but the data itself needs greater integrity. For instance, member for Dawesville, the data that I released yesterday actually shows a reduction of 39 per cent in the number of assaults at Peel Health Campus. I have seen Peel Health Campus in the evening and I do not buy that for a second. It suggests that there are data integrity issues that we need to get right so that we can better understand and better respond to this stuff. I was talking to the Australian Medical Association this morning and it said that because frontline staff are receiving more training, they are more aware of assaults and code blacks, so they report them all. The problem with code blacks is that they can be reported twice by two different staff members, so that is two code blacks, and that of itself is a problem. Of course, what is a push and shove and does not particularly bother one nurse is an assault on another nurse, so we need to get a better understanding across the system about what an assault is and, therefore, a better understanding about the level of incidents. For instance, yesterday's numbers showed a 14 per cent reduction at Rockingham General Hospital and a 23 per cent reduction, member for Central Wheatbelt, at the WA Country Health Service. Again, I am not sure about the accuracy of those figures. We need a better way to collect this data and make sure that it is available to the public so that it can see what is going on.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: One of the concerning things about the data is that it appears that no data is kept as to whether any of these assaults were referred to the police. Is there a policy in Health that assaults are referred to police for action? Is there no policy to notify the police if a nurse is assaulted and harmed?

Mr R.H. COOK: That is a great interjection, member, and the answer is that I do not know. I will talk a bit later about interaction with the Western Australia Police Force. I think the Minister for Police will make some comments and she may or may not be able to clarify that.

I turn briefly to some of the comments made by the member for Dawesville. Although it is fair to say that the member for Dawesville did not talk much about security—he did refer to the issue of closed-circuit television—he may not be aware that the federal government's commitment to Peel has now been matched by the federal opposition, so we can all lock that into our expectations for the development in the future.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: That was news to me. It came through earlier this week. It is a great outcome. Again, Western Australia's health system is getting the money it deserves.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: That was because of the advocacy of the WA Parliament.

Mr R.H. COOK: Indeed, we have spent a lot of time advocating on this, and I have spent a lot of time with Minister Hunt on this issue. The member has heard me bang on about a fair share for WA's health care often enough. It is a very live issue that impacts all Western Australians and I am determined to seek a remedy.

I will respond very quickly to the member for Central Wheatbelt about the Cue nursing post situation. She raised it again. I was not going to respond or make a fuss last night. It is true that there are eight single-nurse nursing posts left in Western Australia. As I reported the other day, two of those are currently in transition; I think they are Coral Bay and Burringurrah. We have a body of work to bring them up. The member is right; it is not good enough. The experience of nurse Gayle in South Australia is testament to the fact that we have to do better. I am pleased that the WA Country Health Service is remedying that situation. The Cue nursing post situation that was raised yesterday by the member for North West Central was basically a sliding doors issue. A nurse was coming back from an emergency response. She was due to get back to the nursing post by 11.30. She was supposed to be replaced that day by another nurse who was flying up that morning. The flight was delayed so when that person

presented to the nursing post, only the receptionist was there, which is unfortunate. I am very pleased that we got that patient to Fiona Stanley Hospital by 3.30 in the afternoon, and I hope she is doing well. We are in the process of eliminating single-nurse nursing posts and that important work needs to be done.

We have to do more to protect doctors and nurses who work on the front line. They know that in the situation of providing public health services, from time to time they will come across patients who are disoriented, frustrated, suffering from a mental health issue or in a drug-induced state, and that they could face antisocial and difficult issues. What I do not think our doctors and nurses are ready for is the new form of patient who so quickly goes from nothing to aggressive behaviour. We do not have the system set up to manage that.

In relation to the incident that took place on the weekend, as I said it took place in the acute surgical ward, not the emergency department. The patient had already been in the emergency department and on that ward for some hours before the incident took place. Although he was agitated, he was managed and was not considered a safety risk. When the incident took place, security staff were on the scene almost immediately to deal with the situation, and they are to be commended. Indeed, all the nurses took the time to say that they did an outstanding job on the day. When a patient goes from nothing—that is, a seemingly benign situation—to a highly violent situation, we need to have the capacity to react quickly.

We need to continue to look at what we need to do to manage ongoing security issues as a patient goes through their patient journey. On this particular occasion, the accused went to the hospital in the custody of police and the director general of Health and the Commissioner of Police have already had conversations about how we can get a better understanding about those things. I have also spoken to the health unions and said that I want to convene a roundtable as soon as possible to get feedback from the staff about what they think needs to be done. It may be more security staff. It may be that security staff are given more powers. It may be that we simply need to train frontline staff so that they are better prepared to deal with those situations. I am not in a position to make that call, but I will listen and work with the people on the frontline to make sure that whatever we do is informed by staff feedback. No member of staff—no nurse, no doctor—should go to work expecting to be hit. We will do everything we can to make sure that we put everyone on notice and we will put many security arrangements in place to protect staff. We have already put together a \$2.2 million security package, which was part of our election commitment, but if we need to do more, health service providers, the leadership of those organisations and I stand ready to stand by the doctors and nurses of Western Australia.

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Community Services) [3.49 pm]: I rise as Minister for Community Services, but also as Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, because that is one of the things I want to speak about in relation to this motion. I often think—as I am sure many of us on this side of the chamber do—that the opposition leads with its chin in some of these debates. If we look at the period when members opposite were in government, I wonder how much new money they invested in hospital security and the complex issues faced by frontline staff in our public hospitals and, indeed, in many of our health services around the state. I join with others in saying that is completely unacceptable. We need to do everything we can to ensure staff are supported and able to do their jobs, whether they be doctors or nurses, allied health staff or security staff. Everyone deserves to be given a safe work environment. The Minister for Health outlined very clearly that the Labor Party understood before the election that this was an issue and made a specific election commitment to provide extra resources to address it.

As we know, some of the drivers of that violence continue to be ever present in our community. I have no data to back this up, but, from my observation of the way in which some of these violence offences are played out in the hospitals, some of the drivers are alcohol and drug abuse; untreated mental health issues; and, particularly, the use of methamphetamine, which creates psychosis, as we know, and very unpredictable and often violent behaviour that is very difficult to work with.

The health minister spoke about the initiative at Royal Perth Hospital to provide an alternative secure location in the emergency department in which people who are drug affected and might be unpredictable can be placed under specialist observation, be treated to ensure they are safe and the other patients and staff are safe, and be linked to the support services they need. Clearly, these people are facing not just an immediate health issue but a longer-term issue. Linking those people to support services, and trying to understand the drivers of that violence, is what I want to address. That is not to take away from the fact that we clearly need to make sure that staff in our hospitals and our schools, and people in our community, are safe from this sort of violence. In fact, obviously, as the Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, I spend much of my ministerial time thinking about this issue and how we can make members of the public—in this case, often women and their children—safe from unacceptable levels of violence.

I want to give an example of how, if we can address the drivers of some of these drug and alcohol and undiagnosed mental health issues, we might turn lives around. I was thinking about the breakfast I went to this morning for the launch of the Salvation Army's Red Shield Appeal. There were about 300 people at that breakfast. One of the women who spoke at that breakfast, Kristy, has been four years clear of meth. She talked about her journey, because she had been supported by the Salvation Army to address her drug and alcohol issues. She has also been

able to get back into her custody two of her four children, and she has shared custody with her parents of her other two children. She has a job, she is renting a house, and she has a car. I am not saying she has never been violent in a hospital or anywhere else. She has a criminal record. She has spent time in prison. She spoke very compellingly about the hopelessness and difficulty she had while in the grip of meth addiction. However, given the right supports, and people who were prepared to walk with her for a period of time, she was able to get back on her feet and make a difference to her life and, importantly, her children's lives.

That is the sort of approach this government is taking. This government has specific plans to address methamphetamine abuse, alcohol and drug abuse, and mental health treatment in the community. We have established mental health co-response teams, in which police go out with mental health workers to deal with people in the community with mental health issues. We need to understand how we can change this very violent, aggressive and unpredictable behaviour by looking at the root causes to ensure that people are safe no matter where they are, whether in the workplace or generally in the community. I could speak a lot more about the problem in our community with unacceptable levels of violence. We all have a role to lead a conversation that this violence is not acceptable and do whatever we can to combat it. I urge all members to get on board and have a more sophisticated conversation and come up with real answers to this problem. As I have said, I am not stepping away from the seriousness of the incident that occurred at that hospital. However, it is not good enough to simply take cheap shots about this issue.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland — Minister for Police) [3.54 pm]: I commend the remarks of the Minister for Health and the Minister for Community Services; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. The fact of the matter is that we need to find some real answers. We need to have considered responses. Those are the kinds of responses that we as a government have been working on. It is a shame that the opposition has still not moved on. We need to look at the causes of the issue. The former government's response was always to just pop on a bandaid and say we need provide more security, we need to provide this or that, and we need to keep target-hardening, rather than deal with the root causes of the problem. Let there be no mistake. The root cause of the problem the other day at the hospital was methamphetamine. I will call that out. I speak to police officers every day. Just about everyone they arrest is on methamphetamine. That got out of control under the former government's watch. The wastewater drug monitoring figures went up; they peaked under the former government's watch. We only need to look at what happened with the 20 years' worth of testing by Drug Use Monitoring in Australia at Perth Watch House and other sites in Western Australia. Between 2008 and 2016, there was a doubling in drug use. The vast majority of people who are arrested by police and go to Perth Watch House are not necessarily just under the influence of methamphetamine; they are under a combination of alcohol and drugs. Our Commissioner of Police has been talking to the director general of Health, and they are coming up with real solutions.

As a government, we are taking drugs out of the community. We are working on all levels. We have put in place the mental health co-response teams. We are dealing with the causes of the issue.

Division

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (16)

Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr P.A. Katsambanis	Mr R.S. Love	Mr D.C. Nalder
Ms M.J. Davies	Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr D.T. Redman
Mrs L.M. Harvey	Mr A. Krsticevic	Mr J.E. McGrath	Mr P.J. Rundle
Dr D.J. Honey	Mr S.K. L'Estrange	Dr M.D. Nahan	Ms L. Mettam (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (36)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mrs L.M. O'Malley	Ms J.J. Shaw
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr P. Papalia	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Mr M. McGowan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr R.H. Cook	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr P.C. Tinley
Ms J. Farrer	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms C.M. Rowe	Ms S.E. Winton
Ms E.L. Hamilton	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms R. Saffioti	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr T.J. Healy	Mr M.P. Murray	Ms A. Sanderson	Mr D.R. Michael (<i>Teller</i>)

Pairs

Mrs A.K. Hayden	Mr M. Hughes
Mr K. O'Donnell	Mr S.J. Price
Mr V.A. Catania	Mr M.J. Folkard

Question thus negatived.

LIVE EXPORT — FEDERAL LABOR POLICY*Motion*

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Nationals WA) [4.01 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns Bill Shorten and the federal Labor Party for its destructive plan to shut down Western Australia's live sheep export industry and calls on the McGowan government to stand up and fight to save an industry that generates hundreds of jobs in Western Australia.

On the eve of a federal election, this is a very timely debate to have in this place, because there is a very clear difference between the views of the federal Labor Party and that of the federal coalition. I think it is incumbent on this place to note that a significant industry in Western Australia is likely to end should there be a Shorten Labor government on Saturday. This Parliament should send a very strong message to say that it expects more, because this is a Western Australian sector that is under direct attack from the Shorten Labor Party. I would like to know what those opposite have done to make sure that Bill Shorten and his shadow cabinet have made a decision based on fact rather than chasing the inner-city votes of the Greens in the Melbournes and the Sydneys of the east coast.

On 30 April 2019, the federal Labor Party launched a six-point plan covering animal welfare issues. It reaffirmed a pledge it made public sometime before that it would immediately ban the northern summer live sheep trade, and it proposed a plan that would phase out the live sheep trade within five years. It struck to the very core of many in my constituency, many in the member for Roe's constituency and many in the member for Moore's constituency. It is not just the farmers that we are talking about; this is a sector that has a significant supply chain and it will have a significant impact on many Western Australian jobs. This is a state government that professes to be supportive of creating jobs. This sector already employs a significant number of Western Australians. Due to a policy change and the uncertainty that has been created because of this national debate, this sector is under incredible stress and pressure. I will come to that because there are people involved in this who have made their views public over the course of the last few weeks as we approach Saturday's federal election. Should this be enacted—should a future government decide that the live export sector for sheep be shut down—it would decimate the Western Australian sheep sector. It is a policy that attacks our Western Australian farmers, our Western Australian feedlotters, our transporters, our sharers, those who produce food and pellets for the animals in the supply chain and many others who are indirectly involved in this trade.

As I said, it is an almost uniquely Western Australian trade. That is why it is an attack on Western Australia by Bill Shorten's Labor Party. That is the choice that we have on Saturday. It is a policy borne of the eastern states, the inner suburbs of Melbourne and Sydney, where people see the Labor Party chasing the Green vote. That is the competition. The Labor Party is seeking to make sure that it is balancing what it would like its policies to be with winning as many seats as it can—those seats in which we see very high distrust and great uncertainty about the sector. I will talk a little bit about why that exists. We are not denialists in the Nationals WA; we understand that not everybody understands or approves of live exports. We are certainly not oblivious to that and neither is the sector. I would argue that in the last six to 12 months, the sector has tried to pull itself up and has made some significant changes to regain the trust of communities right across Australia.

I want to put on record that Mr Shorten is no friend of WA and no friend of the agricultural sector. A party's policy that is central to an agricultural policy that will kill jobs in Western Australia cannot be a friend of Western Australia. It will phase out live sheep exports over five years, which will be devastating for those businesses involved and also the communities they operate in. These are the communities that I represent and are represented by many of our regional members, not just those in the agricultural sector, but those in the major regional centres, right the way through to our ports and all the people who work in that supply chain as well. I would like to know whether Bill Shorten, the Premier or others have actually taken the time to sit down and meet those people in the supply chain of this very important sector. Have either of them stopped to talk to a shearing contractor or a hay contractor? What about the people employed at the pellet mills, like some of the constituents in the member for Roe's electorate? What about the truckie who takes enormous pride in putting food on the table and looking after his family? He has a job. These are family businesses that have been handed down from generation to generation with these trucking businesses that are involved in transporting live animals. Have they sat down and talked to those people?

I hazard a guess that neither the Premier nor Bill Shorten has done that. I know that Bill Shorten has not because he has not been to regional WA. He has been here a fair bit during the campaign. WA is certainly in the mix, but he has not made it over the Darling scarp as far as I can remember. He certainly has not explained to the entire sector why he wants to wipe out its livelihood. He has not stopped to think that there is an alternative plan that has been worked on and pursued in conjunction with the current Liberal–National coalition government in the sector here in Western Australia. I would hazard a guess that he has not done any of that because he simply does not care, and that is because he knows that his votes are in the cities of Sydney and Melbourne.

I fear for WA under a Shorten government and my constituents across regional WA fear for their futures. Before I go any further, I would like to provide some context for members about this very important sector in WA. We produce some of the best lamb, mutton and wool in the nation and in the world. We export it to over 100 countries.

We have trade relationships that have gone back many, many years, and that trade has built up over time. The department of agriculture and food, or the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, as it is now known, estimated that in 2015—I have some more recent figures further on—WA's sheep flock was about 14 million. We have struggled in Western Australia. The sheep flock has diminished quite significantly over time for a number of reasons, but there is renewed support for this.

Many people in the sector see a mixed enterprise as a very important buffer in being able to manage some of the seasonal and climactic changes that we are dealing with in the agricultural sector. We have seen some very good wool and meat prices, and the live export sector is a very important part of that mix. That is very important for everybody to understand. We cannot simply pull a section of that sector out and expect it to continue unaffected. It cannot continue to operate. They are integrated farming operations and in some cases they have been built up with infrastructure and significant investment over a long time, yet we have a future federal government talking about potentially shutting down or phasing out the industry over five years. It will take far longer. I suspect once it is confronted with the reality—if, heaven forbid, we are faced with a Shorten government post-Saturday—it will find that it is far more difficult than what it is suggesting. I know that members of the federal opposition are saying it because they need to win votes in Sydney and Melbourne.

About 5 250 businesses involve sheep. On average, they have probably got about 2 700 sheep. That is a big call. It depends on where we are in the state as to how many sheep they have in their flock. It has changed in recent times, but most of the sheep that we grow in Western Australia are merino—I think about 87 per cent. In 2015–16, the total meat sheep and live export was around 5.56 million. The breakdown of processing versus live exports are around 3.8 million into the domestic processing market, 1.67 million are exported live and about 84 000 go over the border into the interstate domestic market. The industry contributes around \$200 million a year to our state's economy, which is not insignificant. In Western Australia, that live export accounts for 86 per cent of national live sheep exports in total. It is a predominantly Western Australian sector. That is why I say that the federal Labor Party's policy is an attack on Western Australia. They are remote from the decision-makers and they are easy to dismiss because we are so far away from where they are trying to win their votes. I do not think for one moment that Mr Shorten has considered any of this. I do not think he has considered the collateral damage for our broader agricultural sector. He has not sat down with farmers to listen to their concerns, and that is certainly something that we have done. We have done it with our federal colleagues as well. I have to say that the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, David Littleproud, has taken some criticism on this issue. But it is a difficult time. He has not, however, shied away from the fact that he needed to have face-to-face conversations with those on whom it is was impacting. We accompanied him to the property of a Brookton farmer who brought together a number of farmers at the end of last year. Murray Hall hosted him for a roundtable session to express some of the industry's concerns and to talk about some of the potential solutions. Murray's comments were reported in the 13 December 2018 *Countryman* after the visit. He is a very succinct man. He said —

“What I really fear is ill-informed Eastern States crossbenchers and politicians from both sides making decisions when they haven't investigated the downstream consequences, including environmental impacts and pressure on the flock in a de-stocked situation, and what it means for WA.”

That was immediately after the meeting that was held with me, a number of my Nationals WA colleagues and the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. Neither Bill Shorten nor any of his cabinet have spoken to anyone like another one of my constituents, Corrigin hay contractor Cory Weguelin, before they launched their six-point plan and pledged to phase-out live export. Bill Shorten has not done that, because if he had spoken to Corey and read what he contributed in another article to the *Countryman*, just this month on 9 May, perhaps the decision would be slightly different. I will read to members what Cory has said, because this is a really significant concern for him in advance of his decision to vote on Saturday. The article states —

“It's hard not to get upset when your whole life is on the line.”

That is the harrowing state-of-mind that Corrigin hay contractor Corey Weguelin is struggling to deal with, while sweating on the outcome of the May 18 Federal election.

The survival of Mr Weguelin's business, Millden Hay, is dependent on WA's live export industry, with most of its income coming from baling straw to be processed into pellets for sheep feed aboard livestock carriers.

With Federal Labor standing firm on its pledge to phase-out the trade within five years, if elected, the self-confessed work addict is fearing the death of his business.

“If Labor do that, it is the end of our business ... it will not be viable for our business to continue,” ...

“With where we are at now, we will lose everything. I am not talking tractors and machinery, I'm talking house, the whole nine yards, it will send us broke, basically.

“It is pretty hard to deal with, really.” Mr Weguelin operates the family-owned Millden Hay alongside wife Katherine, with the help of one casual employee, to support their four children aged 10, 4, 2 and six months.

The 30-year-old former boilermaker admits he is no stranger to toiling long hours to cut hay and also bale straw for Williams-based feedstock supplier Macco Feeds Australia's stock pellet production.

Mr Weguelin said Labor's live export policy was too city-focused and failed to consider potential ramifications for rural Australia.

We understand very clearly what that policy means for our constituency and for a sector that is very important for Western Australia's economy.

We are often asked why we export live sheep. We are told that there are alternative options and that we should be promoting the increase of domestic processing and jobs here onshore. Members would absolutely not find any objection from the Western Australian National Party about increasing the opportunities for domestic processes for increasing jobs here—but it is not at the cost of one for another. They both work in this sector together in Western Australia. I encourage members to, if they have not done so already, visit a website for the newly formed the Sheep Collective. This is a collective that has brought together the transporters, contractors, farmers and exporters. They understand that they have to operate now as a whole —

Mr D.A. Templeman: What is their website?

Ms M.J. DAVIES: It is The Sheep Collective. This is Bindi Murray and Dr Holly Ludeman; there is a whole raft of them. It is made up of representatives from all along the supply chain. They have recognised that we need to do better as a sector at explaining what we do and why it is important. We understand that we need to be more transparent in the way that we discuss what happens and that perhaps that has not always been the case in the past. They all have a responsibility along the supply chain to make sure that the public understands why this sector is important, and why we take a scientific and animal welfare-based approach to managing the entire supply chain. If members took the time to sit down and talk to each of those individuals along the process, they would understand that that is exactly what has been happening for many years. We will never ever defend situations such as the *Awassi Express*. It should never have happened, and nobody would say that that was an acceptable outcome for animal welfare. I would like to say that since that was brought to light, the industry as a whole has made significant inroads in trying to make sure that they are shifting the way that they do business. They are becoming more transparent and the government at the same time is also working to do that, under the guidance of federal Minister Littleproud. The sector would be the first to say that it needs to continuously improve. Continuous improvement in all elements of any business is a necessity. I think members would find that we have done that over many years. We certainly do not treat animals the way that we did even 30, 40 or 50 years ago when we were loading them onto ships. The way that we manage and raise animals, the way that they are put on trucks, all those things, continuously improve on a scientific basis because there is no benefit to us in having a poor animal welfare outcome in the long run. That is not what people get involved in the industry for.

Bill Shorten's plan is to throw away an entire sector, one that is peculiarly focused on WA. Our plan, federally and at a state level—trying to push this government as well—has been to try to work with the industry to address the issues that the community and we think are unacceptable by improving transparency, lifting the bar for exporters and placing animal welfare and science at the centre of every decision. That comes with some pain and it is certainly causing some pain in the sector as we speak. It includes things such as discussions around the summer ban, which was, by the way, initially imposed by the industry itself. Then there was an order made by the federal Department of Agriculture and Water Resources that the industry would continue that this year.

But it was initially imposed by the industry, in recognition that it needed to prove to the public that it took seriously the issues that were being raised. This—along with new stocking densities, independent auditing of the pen air turnover, the watering arrangements and a reduction in the notifiable mortality rate—is part of the sector's response to a number of reports that have been created by the department and by experts and tested by industry. The industry does not agree with some things and thinks they will make it very difficult to continue, but it is continuing to work constructively with the government to make sure we get an outcome for this very important sector. We are not prepared to walk away from a Western Australian sector that is so important to so many.

All the things I have just mentioned are outlined in responses to reports that have been created by the government about how and when it is going to implement its policies and what measures it is taking to address some of the concerns that have been raised as a result of these independent reports. This is in addition to the appointment of an external and independent inspector general of live animal exports, appointed by the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, David Littleproud, to oversee the department's regulation of live exports and also to report to the public and the minister. There is a new level of transparency in this sector. That has been recognised as something that we need to do. I say "we" because this is part of a regional community—my community. As a sector, we need to do better at explaining and bringing people along to understand what we do. We cannot expect people to value something that they do not understand. Whether it is live export or any number of other things we see in the agricultural sector, we all acknowledge that we need to do better at that, but we also need the community to understand that we have and always will put animal welfare at the centre of those decisions. We need to make sure that we continue to build that trust across the community.

What is the state government doing? That is the question we have as part of this debate today. If the government agrees that this sector is important, from a Western Australian point of view—we have heard the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture and Food say on a number of occasions that they support our sheep sector and the live export industry in Western Australia—I would like to know whether it has actually done some modelling to demonstrate to its federal counterparts exactly what the impact of that policy is likely to be. Has it tried to explain to its federal counterparts in Canberra that this is something that is likely to be very harmful here in Western Australia? What is it doing to stand up for our Western Australian farmers, beyond responding to the questions that we have asked in this place and the debates that we have had in this place and in the Legislative Council? Remember, 1.7 million sheep were exported from WA in 2017, which is 86 per cent of all national live sheep exports, and was directly worth \$210 million in 2017 alone. There is a raft of evidence from Meat and Livestock Australia and others involved in the supply chain on the flow-on impacts of that \$210 million through the rest of the community.

Has the state government done any modelling on what will happen if this policy is successfully introduced? Has it done any modelling to share with its federal colleagues to explain to them the impact of this policy? If it has not, why not? If the government is going to say that it supports the sector, it should back that up with actions that give the sector cause to say, “Hang on; we know the Western Australian government is on our side. It’s in there, arguing with its federal counterparts, saying, ‘We need to rethink this policy.’”

Even if the federal Labor Party does not get in, we need to see that policy wiped from the books, because it will not stop there. It will be the sheep industry one day, and I can promise members that the beef industry will be next. Call me cynical, but the only reason the beef industry is not on the table in this election is because of the impact it would have on the seats that the Labor Party needs to win in Queensland. Politics is protecting the beef sector, but that sector is very nervous.

The truth is that we know that the words of the Premier and the Minister for Agriculture and Food are a very thin veneer, because we have seen their actions. We have previously seen the Minister for Agriculture and Food standing on the bridge with anti-live export activists, professing her support for an end to that industry. That is why people are cynical about this, and that is why they expect this government to do more than just say, “We support you.” They want to see action and they want the state government to loudly tell Bill Shorten that it does not support that policy and that it will not support that policy should, heaven forbid, we have a Labor government post Saturday.

This Parliament must condemn Bill Shorten’s policy because it is anti-WA, anti-farming, anti-small business and anti-jobs. It is the antithesis of everything that this government has said it supports. How could it possibly vote against a motion that says we need to support jobs, we need to support an important sector, and we need to support our farmers? It is a very, very important sector, and many people are very nervous. If this Western Australian Parliament were to make a strong statement today, it would go a long way towards giving them confidence that the government will be in there if, heaven forbid, we have a Bill Shorten government post Saturday. Regardless, I would like to hear the government put its position on the record, because we have had this debate and I have not seen any action on the matters that we have raised today.

The sector is hurting, and the uncertainty of this national debate on the Western Australian economy and the people who are reliant on it is very, very disappointing. These are good people who have worked hard and who deserve our government’s support. They are certainly doing their bit. If members go to the Sheep Collective’s website, they will see the work that has been done by the Western Australian Farmers Federation, the Pastoralists and Graziers Association and the Livestock Transporters Association to work hand-in-hand with the government to make sure it can address the issues that have been raised in the independent reports about past challenges to this industry. We need to make sure that we work with them and not simply end a sector that so many are reliant on.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [4.26 pm]: I rise to support the Leader of the Nationals WA and the motion —

That this house condemns Bill Shorten and the federal Labor Party for its destructive plan to shut down WA’s live sheep export industry and calls on the McGowan government to stand up and fight to save an industry which generates hundreds of jobs in Western Australia.

I emphasise the “jobs” part of it, because that is the mantra of this government—jobs, jobs, jobs. If this export industry goes down, it will probably mean that 3 500 jobs will be lost. I call on the McGowan government to stand up and fight to save that industry.

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: That is right; not a problem.

I certainly do not want federal Labor to do deals in inner-Melbourne seats, trying to dictate what happens in the WA sheep industry. That is really what happens. We see these preference deals being done; federal Labor has to protect its inner-Melbourne seats to look after the Green element in inner Melbourne and inner Sydney. I can confirm for the Leader of the Nationals that Bill Shorten has not consulted and has not been over the Darling scarp in the last couple of years. He went to Kalgoorlie for three hours the year before last, so that is the extent of his

consultation in the regions of Western Australia. If the fate of the WA live sheep export industry is to be in the hands of Bill Shorten, Joel Fitzgibbon and Hon Alannah MacTiernan, heaven forbid that the federal opposition is elected on Saturday; that is all I can say.

I am a farmer and have a farm between Katanning and Kojonup. That farm has always been predominantly sheep, so I have a very strong understanding of how the live sheep export industry works. Over the last 35 to 40 years we have sold sheep through the live export trade and I understand how important the industry is. It is really important because, as the numbers indicate, 1.7 million sheep are sold into the live export industry and 3.8 million sheep are put through our processing industry.

That is about one-third of the sheep in Western Australia. That is a really important part of the price mechanism as well within our WA livestock industry. My community of Katanning is probably more involved in the sheep and live sheep industry than any other town in Australia. The Katanning saleyards recently built the largest undercover saleyards in the southern hemisphere where around 25 000 sheep can be put under cover and up to 30 000 at times if necessary. That has been a fantastic asset to the community of Katanning and the whole great southern to be honest. It was good to see the member for Armadale venture into the Katanning saleyards the year before last just to improve his knowledge about the sheep industry.

Dr A.D. Buti: They were great hosts.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I know that the people of Katanning and surrounds were very appreciative of the member's visit.

Dr A.D. Buti: They were very friendly.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Very good; I thank the member for Armadale.

The Western Australian Meat Marketing Co-operative Limited, the state's largest sheep processor, with around 350 employees, is also an integral part of the sheep industry. In Katanning we have both the saleyards for buyers for the live export industry and WAMMCO that exports to the United States, Europe and so forth. We have every angle covered. WAMMCO has struggled for many years to get the labour required for its processing industry. Members opposite make sweeping statements that it is not a problem to process everything in Western Australia; however, those 1.7 million extra sheep cannot be processed in Western Australia, firstly, because they are not always suitable for processing, and, secondly, we cannot physically get the labour. That is part of why our multicultural community in Katanning exists, as a lot of our labour comes from the Burmese, Chinese and Afghan communities. As the Minister for Heritage knows, the Christmas Island and Cocos Island population that came in 1975 was a large part of the stability of the workforce at WAMMCO. I want to point that out because it is very important that there is an understanding of this matter.

Dr A.D. Buti: They love you out there—I must say that.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I know; I thank the member for Armadale.

Mr D.A. Templeman: There was one old lady I was talking to who didn't like you. I won't tell you her name because you might hunt her down. She may have been a tourist.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Hopefully I get on well with the large majority of my electorate, thanks, minister!

I regularly communicate with Col McRury, managing director of WAMMCO, Tony Bessell, manager of the Katanning works, and Nigel Aitkin, who goes out every morning in the minibus to pick up workers because that is how hard it is to get a full roster of workers at the Katanning plant.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I do remember it now. It was a lady in the street. She said, "You're not a politician are you, because I hate politicians. I said, "Yes, I am. I am Peter Rundle." That's how it came about!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I knew there was a reason the minister strayed into the electorate of Roe recently!

WAMMCO does a fantastic job. We are proud of the way it works. It is a great asset for the great southern community. Live export is an integral part of sheep farming from Esperance through to Geraldton, and it covers many pastoral areas as well. It is a \$200 million industry. As the Leader of the Nationals pointed out, 86 per cent of the national market for live sheep export is sourced in Western Australia. We cannot just flick the switch and say that we will process everything in Western Australia; it does not work like that. As I said, many sheep are not necessarily suitable to process. They might be 33 or 34 kilogram live weight wether lambs that are only score 1 and are not suitable to process. They do not fit into a market. There is a distinct lack of understanding from many within the Labor Party—perhaps not the state Labor Party, but certainly federally. Bill Shorten has absolutely no understanding; Joel Fitzgibbon has slightly more, but not much. Apart from those sheep not being suited to processing, there is not necessarily the market for that type of product. I become concerned when Hon Alannah MacTiernan, our ag minister, talks to our Middle East markets about how we can change from exporting live sheep to chilled product. It demonstrates her lack of understanding. An article in *The West Australian* on 22 May 2018 states —

Australia's biggest live sheep customer has confirmed it has started looking elsewhere for supply, amid suggestions Australia could stop the trade.

Al Mawashi, a Kuwait-based livestock trading company, was concerned because for the past 40 years it has been buying up to two-thirds of the 1.8 million head of sheep exported out of Western Australia. Our state agriculture minister has suggested to them and to the Qatar government that the trade is going to end and that they had better start looking for sheep elsewhere because there is a good possibility that we will end our live export industry. It was concerning to me when I heard about that last year. The minister fails to understand that although we all agree that chilled product is good, there is limited refrigeration in some of those countries. The live export product will be replaced by sheep from Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia and many other countries. This is what I worry about—people have not thought at the next level: I can assure members that the animal welfare standards in those countries are nowhere near the levels in Australia. I want to bring that to people's attention because it has not been talked about enough.

I will go through a timeline of the activities of our party last year. The Leader of the Nationals WA talked about some of those. We all saw the vision, which no-one found acceptable, and which, I might add, is under police investigation. Its authenticity is something to keep in mind. As I said when I spoke last year about animal welfare, it was like a military operation. That vision was held back for six months by those putting out that footage. If they were really interested in animal welfare, they would not have held it back for six months. On the Monday morning we all arrived at our parliamentary offices to find the book on live export and animal welfare issues. I questioned that last year. I did get some grief from the likes of the member for Maylands, the member for Balcatta and the member for Thornlie. I tried to explain to the member for Belmont as well that we care for our animals on the farm. We do not want to see anything happen to them. It is in our interest to produce a good quality animal. The better the quality of animal, the better the return. To the credit of the member for Belmont, she spoke to me afterwards about that. It is an important issue to understand that as farmers, we are very interested in the welfare of our animals.

Moving on, the Nationals WA went to the first meeting at Darkan, which was put together by the Compass Agricultural Alliance. That was straight after the immediate reaction to the group. The Leader of the Nationals WA, Hon Colin de Grussa and I turned up—as did 150 sheep farmers. They were a positive group. They suggested improvements that could be made. Unfortunately, no-one from the state Labor Party turned up—the party that says that it is the party for regional Western Australia. When there was a major issue in the sheep industry, no-one turned up. It was disappointing to say the least. Then we had the Katanning meeting with over 1 000 people. The master of ceremonies was Owen Grieve. John Hassell, the candidate for O'Connor, also chaired part of the meeting. Members of the Western Australian Farmers Federation were there, as were several other colourful characters.

Dr A.D. Buti: How was the minister treated?

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: It was a passionate meeting. I give credit to Hon Alannah MacTiernan. She did turn up. She defended her position. That was not a bad effort, considering there were 1 000-odd farmers and people from the industry there. We listened to stories about how important this industry is to the people of regional WA. Chloe McDougall, a farmer from Dumbleyung who has two young children, was there. The continuity of this industry is very important to her farming family. Alan McFarland from Katanning Furnishings told us how important it is to the business sector of the great southern. Ben Poett, who has carted my sheep over the years, is a fantastic young guy with a young family.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Armadale!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: He has not been able to cart a load of sheep for four months, member for Armadale. Honestly, the continuity of his business was really affected by this cessation, I guess you could call it.

We also have Macco Feeds Australia. Ninety per cent of the business of Macco Feeds is about supplying pellets to the live export industry. There is a lack of understanding of the flow-on effects on the 3 500 people who are affected by this industry. We also have the livestock shipping companies Livestock Shipping Services, Emanuel Exports and Wellard. I might add that Wellard has spent tens of millions of dollars getting its ships up to a high standard.

From there, Hon Colin de Grussa and I went to Canberra, and we asked the federal minister, David Littleproud, whether he could come across to Western Australia. He came across, as the Leader of the Nationals mentioned, consulted and went out to Beverly and spoke to growers. We had a forum at Parliament House with many of the relevant parties, including transporters, members of the shearing association, members of the feed industry and farmers. He consulted well. Then we took Minister Littleproud to the Katanning saleyards to look at the facility and to talk to growers, agents and buyers of sheep for the industry and the abattoirs. The Nationals have done everything we can to consult, to improve communication and to try to help the industry at a state level.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I would like to congratulate the Sheep Collective and Holly Ludeman, who, as a vet, has a full understanding of the live export industry and the ships. I congratulate them for inviting all members of Parliament and industry groups to look at how the sheep are loaded and how it works. I thank those members from this house and the other house who took up that opportunity to improve their knowledge. It is very important. As we know, the mortality rate is now below 0.4 per cent. That is a lower rate than that for sheep that are left in the paddock on

the farm. There is less density in the pens. Obviously, there is the three-month ban that the industry has placed on itself. It is interesting that it has made those changes proactively. I certainly congratulate the industry for taking those strides over the last 18 months and improving welfare outcomes and its social licence. We all acknowledge that that needed to happen.

I will highlight one disappointment for me. The state government has not provided any correspondence to indicate that consultation with the federal opposition has taken place. I am not aware of any consultation. The state government certainly has not provided any modelling to tell us what will happen if and when the federal government cuts this industry off. What will happen to regional employment and our WA regional economy? As I said, 3 500 jobs will be lost in the first year. The government for jobs has not provided us with any modelling. The Minister for Agriculture and Food has stated that her goal is to deliver a proper transition away from live export. We are pretty well aware of that, having seen the footage several years ago of our agriculture minister standing with her friends on Fremantle Traffic Bridge holding placards and looking to ban the live export industry. We have a pretty good understanding of where she stands. I condemn Hon Alannah MacTiernan for what she has not done for the sector—that is the way I would put it. I have looked at some of the quotes in the *Countryman* and *The West Australian*, one of which states —

The State's two biggest farmer groups accused Ms MacTiernan of undermining Emanuel's ability to manage animal welfare on its ships.

That was done when, off her own bat, she raided Emanuel, if you do not mind. Someone from Emanuel said that sheep and cattle were on the ocean and the minister took away the tools that Emanuel needed to maintain control. Another quote states —

WAFarmers livestock president David Slade said that despite the trade coming under Federal jurisdiction, the State Minister appeared determined to disrupt it as much as possible.

“It is clear that the minister ... is doing everything in her power to inflame hostility to the live export industry,” he said.

This demonstrates how there was a lack of trust. We saw the headline “Are ewe kidding?” in *The West Australian*. I think that pretty well described it in a nutshell. We have an ag minister who is supposed to act on behalf of our sheep industry, but all we get is the “anti” argument. As I said, we have the memory of the minister standing on Fremantle bridge.

In summarising, I condemn Joel Fitzgibbon for the way he seems to be interested only in the northern cattle industry. He has said that he will phase-out the live sheep export industry, but there are no problems with the northern cattle industry; it is fine. That is the old eastern states' mantra: there is no problem in the northern cattle industry. He has hung our WA sheep growers out to dry. I strongly condemn Bill Shorten. As I said, he has not been over the Darling scarp for a couple of years, apart from his trip to Kalgoorlie for a couple of hours. I condemn the federal Labor Party's destructive plan to phase-out the live export industry, should it be elected on Saturday. I call on the Premier and his ag minister to stand up and fight to save an industry and to stick to their mantra of saving and creating jobs in WA.

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [4.49 pm]: I will speak briefly on this motion. I am thankful for the opportunity. Of course, live export is almost a niche industry of the sheep industry, but within that industry it is vital; it is valuable. Most years I think that Western Australia exports about 90 per cent of the live sheep exported from Australia. For genuinely focused sheep farmers, it is quite a critical part of their operations. When we look at the value of the industry, \$200 million across the entire Western Australian agricultural sector is not huge, but for focused sheep farmers it is of critical importance. Numbers dropped in 2018 to 1.2 million sheep, worth \$158 million, and that was because of the problems in the industry. As a grower, as a farmer, I exported live sheep that I was farming every year. In some years I think it was the only enterprise on the farm that made any money. Commodities rise and commodities fall, but I usually got good money for sheep that I was live exporting. Farmers produce high-quality carcasses in Western Australia, but merino do not produce a particularly good carcass. The niche works because the merinos produce the best wool, but they do not produce a good carcass. However, when that sheep is sold, it suits the requirements of the Middle East quite well.

If we follow the industry through the chain, there are jobs all the way through. There are the people who cart the sheep. The industry stopped again earlier this year and last year, and when we talked to specialised sheep carters, they said there were lots of people with trucks sitting around doing absolutely nothing. If something worth as much as a road train is sitting there literally not turning a wheel, there are huge costs that have to be paid weekly just to keep the thing sitting there, and there is no income. Live export is a valuable adjunct to the industry. If the live sheep export section is pulled out of the industry, it will probably reduce the size of the sheep industry overall. That feeds into shearing, transport again and the growing of pastures. In my area sheep industries have dropped quite significantly from the drought years in the early 2000s, and this would be another blow. The valuable thing with having sheep in a farming system is that it means there have to be pastures. With pastures, problems such as herbicide resistance can be addressed and they provide another couple of streams of income. If those are taken away, it makes the operation more vulnerable to serious downturns in grain prices.

The Middle East is well known to have a preference for fresh meat rather than processed meat. I understand that is changing. I understand that there is more refrigeration in the Middle East, but in large parts of the Middle East, fresh meat is very much the preference. I do not have much doubt that were we to shut down our industry, the trade would simply switch to being supplied by other countries, which, as my colleague said, would have far lower animal welfare standards. I can tell members that there will not be people in those ships keeping an eye on the welfare standards of those sheep. Any sheep they lose on those ships just go straight over the side and no-one will know about them. As I said, the fact that we are able to keep this operation going helps the resilience of the farming system. The new standards that the federal government has brought in for ships and their supervision are very hard to meet and they will be very expensive. There is no choice about that. It has been decided that that will be done.

Of course, the other thing that is going to be done is that some of the ships will be grandfathered. They will have to go. They should have gone by now, but they will be gone very shortly. The ships are very important. I think Wellard ships were mentioned. They are much newer and have better ventilation. There are not the same problems on those sorts of ships. There is also electronic surveillance on all the decks at all times and there are independent people on the ships reporting directly back to the federal department. Under those standards, I do not have much doubt that the industry will not have any more disasters such as the one it had most recently.

I get the feeling that a lot of the opponents of this industry do not care and are not interested in regional areas and the people who live in them. It is never easy living an isolated existence. As I said, I have no doubt that most of those people do not know and are not interested. It is part of a wider trend of less acceptance of animal farming. It could be seen that this is the first industry and that a couple of other intensive industries will follow. I do not argue about having higher animal welfare standards, but I think the issues and ideology of the opponents of this industry go further than just having higher animal welfare standards. In some cases, they just want to eliminate the entire industry. I have no doubt that if they succeed in shutting down the live sheep export industry, they will immediately switch their attention to the live cattle export industry, which in many ways is an entirely different industry. We have developed an entire industry in northern Australia that is built around producing the type of cattle required by our near Asian neighbours—cattle that can cope with the heat and humidity and that when slaughtered have very little fat in the meat, which means it does not go off so quickly in conditions of no refrigeration. As we saw when the trade was banned in 2011, those cattle are not suited to being brought south and put to the systems of the European-type cattle living in the southern parts of Australia. That is one of the reasons the industry feels it has to stand and fight this issue: it knows that the live cattle export industry will be next. The end of that industry would not only do some damage to agriculture in northern Australia, it would just about finish it, because it is pretty much entirely dependent on the export of live cattle. Of course, the industry is very concerned about filming and animal welfare agencies paying people to take footage on the ships—paying people significant amounts of money and giving them an incentive to produce quite dramatic footage, which of course they did.

This Parliament really should support this motion. I think it is important to send a message to federal Labor that not everybody is in agreement with the decision, were it to make one, to phase out this industry. This state exports 90 per cent of Australia's live sheep. In some pockets it is one of the pillars of the whole farming system, and if it is removed, the farming sector will be much less resilient than it is now. I support the motion and I think the house should support it as well.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore) [4.58 pm]: I am very pleased to be able to contribute to this excellent motion put forward by the member for Central Wheatbelt that this house condemns Bill Shorten and the federal Labor Party for its destructive plan to shut down Western Australia's live sheep export industry and calls on the McGowan government to stand and fight to save an industry that generates hundreds of jobs in Western Australia.

It might surprise some people in this chamber to know that the live export industry began over 100 years ago. Sheep and cattle have been exported from this country for over a century. Starting, I think, in the 1970s and developing further in the 1980s, we saw a very large trade with the Middle East. Prior to that time farmers received very, very poor returns on what was known as mutton—the older sheep—that were really the by-product of the wool industry in Australia at that stage. There was a huge increase in the value of sheep for meat in the 1970s, especially wethers. That was initially into countries such as Saudi Arabia, but other smaller countries in the Middle East came into the market.

I can remember as a child hearing stories about people receiving very, very poor returns for their livestock when they sold them, to the point that a few cents a head was what might be expected for a wether. That turned around in the late 1970s, which was around the first time I signed a contract with a live exporter. Sorry, yes, I am involved in the trade; I know that Madam Deputy Speaker has views on animal welfare. It is now over 40 years since I first signed a contract. At that stage, I think the price was something in the vicinity of \$30 on property, which was 800 miles north of Perth. That was big money in the 1970s and a big turnaround from getting nothing. In fact, prior to that, for many stations it might be considered that if they got the transport covered to get the wool sheep down to an abattoir, that was a pretty good job and that was about all they would expect. There were very poor returns from the sale of meat.

Although the sheep market has retracted in recent years, it is still a very important industry in some of our electorates. The member for Roe has a very extensive industry in his electorate. He has spoken about its importance

in towns such as Katanning and to the farmers throughout his region. Similarly, the member for Central Wheatbelt and even the member for Warren–Blackwood have quite good lamb production industries in their electorates. In my electorate of Moore, sheep products are a very important part of the farming systems. It is true that in some areas people have gone into more of a total cropping situation as sheep numbers have declined. They have probably declined from 30-odd million sheep to about half that number now. That is not to say that the industry has not stabilised at a very sustainable level. If we see a five-year phase-out of the livestock export industry, as is openly spoken about by the federal Labor Party, I make two points: firstly, I do not believe it will take five years for the industry to end. Once it is signalled that there is no future for live exporters out of Western Australia and no future beyond five years for a supply chain, those countries will very rapidly find other supplies of live sheep. The export of live sheep to those very same countries will not stop. What will change is where those sheep are sourced.

As other members pointed out earlier, Australia is pretty unique in having an ESCA system—an exporter supply chain assurance system. It is a system that actually places responsibility for the welfare of sheep not at the sale at the farm gate and not at the wharf at Fremantle, but at the slaughter of the sheep. That is unique. It will no longer happen, and it will not be happening under any other country. I do not think that any of the other countries that export to these markets have a similar system. What is most likely to happen is that the same numbers of sheep will be sourced from places like Sudan and South Africa, and some European countries, and welfare standards will probably decline for those sheep. They will not receive the treatment that we would expect in a modern industry. Huge investment in infrastructure has resulted in decent abattoirs and state-of-the-art handling facilities in many Middle Eastern areas.

Back in the day when *60 Minutes* or another TV program had pictures of sheep being loaded into the boot of a car from some market and taken into the backyard and slaughtered, that is not the system that exists now. The system that exists now is a closed loop in which the sheep are accounted for all the way through. Yes, we concentrate on the glitches, but we also should look at the successes. The successes are that we have managed to produce an industry that is far and away a more humane supply chain to the Middle East than would be replicated from any other country. As I say, that supply chain will continue into the future but it will not be sourced from Western Australia; it will be sourced from somewhere else.

Western Australian farmers and Western Australian rural people face a very stark choice on Saturday in the federal election. If, heaven forbid, a Shorten Labor government is elected, we will see a major component of the Western Australian agricultural industry close down. I do not believe that it will take five years to close down; I think it will shut down much quicker than that.

That brings me to my second point: What happens to the sheep in Western Australia? What happens to the price of sheep? What happens to the industry? I fear it will go back to what I described prior to the 1970s. As the member for Roe outlined, there are different classes of sheep. Some sheep that are difficult to market will attract virtually no value. They will be what is called NCV—no commercial value. Having lived through the wool collapse of the 1980s and early 1990s, at one stage our family properties were shearing around 28 000 head of sheep. That collapsed to a few thousand very quickly because of the wool crash. I think it was the Australian Wool Innovation at that stage—I forget the group that funded it—that organised the systematic destruction of many sheep. Farmers were paid to shoot their sheep. Having to participate in that rather bizarre and macabre episode, I do not want to see it happen again. I fear that that may happen again in the future if we close down a market without having an alternative.

I have heard the Minister for Agriculture and Food speak at forums about finding new markets and supply chains et cetera. Those sorts of things do not happen overnight. Over a million head of sheep a year will require a home. Where will we process those sheep and what will happen to them? They cannot just stay on the farm. Farms are not geared to run lots of wool sheep—that is not the main game. I do not think that will necessarily take care of the problem; that will only find a place to put sheep for a year or two. Eventually, there will have to be a turn-off of those sheep. Unless there is a viable market and a viable place to put them, farmers could be forced back into that grisly scenario of the 1990s when, in selecting a .22 rifle to have on the farm, they would pick the one with the biggest magazine because that is what is needed to shoot lots and lots of sheep. It is no fun. I do not want to see that happen.

I am very, very concerned about what might happen with this government, which is very, very Canberra-centric. Areas around New South Wales will not be affected by this change; Western Australia will be. The Western Australian sheep market produces over 80 per cent of sheep exports. This is very much a problem for Western Australia. Western Australia does not have the extensive abattoir networks and markets that run right through the eastern states. People from Naracoorte in South Australia travel to New South Wales to buy sheep and take them back to slaughter them. There is much more of a domestic capacity to handle the sheep that they have, and sometimes they buy our sheep and take them across the Nullarbor. I do not know whether that is any less of an animal welfare issue for the sheep than putting them on a boat. Apparently it is not, because the government is not claiming to want to shut down the livestock transport industry, thank goodness. I am not suggesting that it would. Once livestock is handled, there is always a risk that something might go wrong.

We have to remember that we are talking about sheep. Although we might treat them respectfully and not want to inflict any damage on them, we are not talking about people with wool on them; we are talking about sheep. We

are talking about making sure that they are handled safely and efficiently, which is something that most farmers want to see and most farmers do on their property. I am sure all farmers do this on their properties, and they would like to see that extended throughout the supply chain. I am not necessarily convinced that sticking all the sheep on a truck and sending them over to Dubbo or somewhere is actually a great idea either. The problem is that we do not have a supply chain or the capacity to handle the sheep that are going to be dumped on the market by the Bill Shorten government, if it gets elected in the future. When the Labor Party talks about adjustments, I do not believe for a moment that it will actually put any meaningful money towards helping out a few farmers in a couple of coalition-held seats in Western Australia. I do not think that it could care less. I think that trying to drag money out of Canberra to assist the farming community with such a change will not happen.

I know that live exports are not the only things in the firing line for this federal Labor Party. It has also vowed to introduce federal laws to override state laws to make it much more difficult for farmers to clear their land. Some of the areas in New South Wales and Queensland have woody weeds and brigalow, which used to be cleaned off to allow grass to grow for stock. This is no different from what the Aboriginal people used to do throughout the centuries with their rotational burning, but, apparently, that is all going to be brought to an end as well. The farming community in Western Australia and other parts of Australia is going to be facing a very serious challenge if a Shorten government is elected on Saturday and actually puts in place the policies it has announced. The policies are frightening to sheep producers, and I am sure they are frightening to a lot of other people such as retirees and others who are facing cuts to their income, but farmers, especially, will be greatly affected by a Shorten government if it were to be elected.

In my own area, the electorate of Moore, I still have my property at Badgingarra. A town like that would be absolutely devastated by the changes that are being considered. A lot of that country is suitable for grazing. It is not actually great cropping country. Sheep are an integral part of the operation and, oftentimes, farmers get a poor finish to the season with pretty short feed. Having farmed that area for a long time, I know it is pretty hard to get sheep in a truly marketable, heavy condition for the current weights that are right for lamb. The export industry has played a very large role in that area in filling a gap, especially when the seasons get a bit tighter. What will happen to the farms and the businesses in towns like Badgingarra, Dandaragan or Eneabba, or one of those smaller communities? Heaven only knows! But I believe that those communities will be absolutely devastated by the changes that are likely to happen.

In the face of all that risk for communities in Western Australia, one has to ask what the Western Australian government has been doing to try to effect some second thinking on the part of the Shorten camp about what it is planning to do, and maybe suggesting to it that this might not be such a good idea. We know the answer is probably nothing. In fact, if we look at what is said publicly, the minister talks only about finding alternatives to the livestock export industry, not actually defending the livestock export industry. As has been pointed out, I have seen pictures of the minister on the Fremantle Traffic Bridge with the people who are vowing to shut down the live export industry. We know that is the mindset that now pervades this government, as well as the federal Labor candidates who are standing for election throughout the country, who hope to form the next federal government.

If this government were dinkum about helping the farmers, it would do some serious research on the issues that I have outlined. Exactly what will be the effect on the Western Australian industry? What will be the effect on communities in regional areas? We have a Minister for Regional Development who happens to also be the Minister for Agriculture and Food and we are told that that is a great thing because if we combine the two, they can work hand in hand, but I do not hear anything coming from the Minister for Regional Development about what the effect will be on regional development.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr R.S. LOVE: What will the effect be on regional communities if this change comes in? What about the tiny towns that I have just outlined? What about the town of Katanning, as the member for Roe has spoken about? What about all those people who rely on live exports who are not farmers: the truck drivers, the shearers and all of the rest of the community involved in the livestock industry and agriculture generally? If you take out this market—I do not believe, as I say, that it will end in five years—I think it will shut down very, very quickly and \$200 million will be lost. That \$200 million loss will be devastating to towns in my electorate. It will be devastating to towns in the member for Roe's electorate and the member for Central Wheatbelt's electorate, and even to some in the member for Warren–Blackwood's electorate. It probably will not affect people from Joondalup. It probably will not affect people from Armadale. It might affect some people down in Albany and Jerramungup. But the Labor Party obviously does not care, because it does not hold those seats and it does not care what happens to the farmers of Western Australia. It does not care what happens to the workers. What about the real workers who are going to be affected by this? It really does not even care about the people who formed the Labor Party. Was it not a bunch of shearers under a tree somewhere in Barcaldine who actually started your group up, and now you do not care less?

Mr D.A. Templeman: Who gutted the agriculture department?

Mr R.S. LOVE: You do not care less!

Mr D.A. Templeman: Who gutted it? The guy next to you when he was minister.

Mr R.S. LOVE: You do not care less what happens to those workers and you do not care less what happens to the communities in my electorate.

Mr D.A. Templeman: While you were in government, he gutted the agriculture department and we're putting the money back. You are a disgrace.

Mr R.S. LOVE: You are the disgrace! You and your government are the disgrace, and you should be ashamed of yourselves!

Mr D.A. Templeman: You keep saying, "You don't care" all the time. You didn't care about it at all!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister! I think both of you do not need to be screaming like this across the chamber. If you have points to be made, please put them in the correct way.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Thank you, but I thought I had the call.

We know that the Labor Party does not care because this is happening in coalition seats federally. It does not care because this is in Western Australia. It does not care because this is in Katanning, this is somewhere in Moore, this is Merredin or somewhere. It does not care. All it cares about is winning the next election and pandering to the Green votes in the city. That is what it is aiming to do. It is aiming to sell farmers down the drain so that it can get votes in the inner cities of Melbourne and Sydney and the like. It does not care less what happens to people in rural Western Australia. I understand that. It is based in Canberra. That is what you expect. But what are the government members doing? What is the Labor Party in Western Australia doing to stand up for the communities that government members purport to, in some measure, represent?

We have upper house members in the Agricultural Region. There are members of Parliament in the Agricultural Region who run around. When do they stand up and speak about these issues? When do they talk about the concerns of farmers? When did we last hear Hon Darren West stand up and say that the livestock export industry was important? When did we last hear Hon Laurie Graham stand up and say something about these matters? I do not even know the guys in the Mining and Pastoral Region, but I have never heard them talk about it either, and we know that there are still some people in the Mining and Pastoral Region who rely on the sheep industry as well. Although there are members like the member for Bunbury, who I heard saying quite recently that there are more representatives of Labor people in the regions here than in any other party—that is great; but why is there no representation? Why not actually stand up for the regions? What are you people doing? Labor does nothing for the regions. Labor has agriculture region members who have not spoken about this issue anywhere. They have done nothing. They have helped no-one. Now we know that all the government is doing is waiting for Shorten to come in, so that he can shut down this industry that the Labor government considers an embarrassment because it has had to side with a bunch of farmers. It does not want to do it, it is not doing it now, and it has not done it in the past.

Dr A.D. Buti: Lazy debate. What a lazy contribution by you!

Mr R.S. LOVE: Lazy? Ha! The member for Armadale does not accept interjections when he is speaking; I know his form.

Dr A.D. Buti: Lazy contribution! We do care about the country.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The member for Armadale is trying to distract me from my message.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ahem!

Mr R.S. LOVE: I would quite like to hear from the minister in this house who represents the Minister for Agriculture and Food on this matter. I believe that the Leader of the House is that person. I do not think the government has any story to tell. We know that it has done no modelling of what the effect would be on Western Australia. We know the industry has done plenty of modelling. We know that the price of sheep in Western Australia is highly correlated with the price received through the export markets, so if that driver is taken out, on that alone we will see a price collapse. But the government has not looked at what will happen to those one million-plus extra sheep and it has not done any modelling of what will happen to the communities in our electorates, because it does not care.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House) [5.21 pm]: I am very pleased to make a contribution, representing the Minister for Agriculture and Food in the other place. Member for Moore, I listened to contributions from the Leader of the Nationals WA, the member for Roe and the member for Geraldton, who put forward arguments that of course need to be considered. But you, sir, do your argument no service. When the member for Moore uses terms like, "No-one cares; the other side of the house does not care", it is just rubbish. He does not do his argument any service, if that is how he wants to get understanding and representation. I am going to give the member for Moore a couple of important pointers, if he is talking about who cares, who did not care and who does not care. We need only look at the term of the previous government. The member for Moore, as a National Party member, was a member of the former government. Senior members of his party in this place, who sit next to him, were responsible for the agriculture portfolio. The member for Moore knows very well, as do most people who looked at the agriculture portfolio during their term of government, that the National Party, which has

always argued that it should hold the agriculture portfolio in any coalition government, attacked the very portfolio that it sought to represent. We need only look at the way in which the Department of Agriculture and Food was emasculated by a National Party minister.

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It is there in black and white. Last Thursday, a Labor Treasurer stood in this place and delivered a budget that highlighted \$131 million that this government is putting back into agriculture. That money was stripped away by the member's party in government! So who does not care? Who did not care? It was you, sunshine! The Nationals failed the people in the agricultural regions of Western Australia. Now they come in here and fail to accept and understand what they did to the industry! The member for Moore will never admit it, because that is the sort of person he is.

Other members who spoke in this debate this afternoon put forward good arguments. I want to talk about what they said. But when the member for Moore came in here and said that this side of the house does not care, he was absolutely wrong! That demonstrates his lack of care and lack of standing up for the people in the agricultural industries of Western Australia. He did not say this when the former minister, who sits next to him, was emasculating the Department of Agriculture and Food. Where was he? Where was your voice, sunshine? It was not there, because the Nationals were snuggling up to the Liberal Party in government. He did nothing. This Labor government is returning \$131 million to the agriculture budget, because we recognise that agriculture—food production—is a key industry for Western Australia. We want to enhance it and value-add to it. We will keep doing that, noting the budget that was handed down by the Treasurer last Thursday.

The reason I am angry is that I actually have strong empathy with people who work on the land. I am not just saying that because I was born in Northam. My grandparents were sheep and wheat farmers in Narrogin. It was their livelihood. I watched my grandparents—my grandmother and my grandfather—carve out a living, in good country to be honest, in the Narrogin Valley around Boundain and Yilliminning. As a little boy, I wanted to be a farmer. I grew up watching my grandfather and grandmother, and then their sons, build up a farm, work hard and treat animals respectfully. I saw it as a little kid and as a teenager. I saw that they, like the overwhelming number of farmers in Western Australia, treated their animals respectfully and in a humane way. Do not ever say to me that I do not care, because I have a history! I do not have a great and abiding understanding of the industry, but I grew up with a farming family, so I take offence when the member for Moore starts to say things about people not caring. I am proud of my grandparents and the role they played in agriculture in the Narrogin district. They were great farmers. I watched when sheep crates would come to the race and the sheep would be loaded on to go off to market. Back in those days, there was a big saleyards in Narrogin. I remember the old saleyards in the middle of town. They were huge! I remember standing with my grandfather and watching as his sheep were loaded on at that market. When members start to try to pit city people against country people simply because they think city people do not care, they are so off the mark. It is disingenuous for the member for Moore to continue to do that, because so many people in Western Australia have an affinity with country WA.

I admit that I would love to see more city-based people have a much greater understanding of what happens in rural and regional Western Australia. I would like to see that, but I think there is still a long way to go. When someone is city bound and has been brought up only in the city, then, yes, it does cloud their understanding of what it means to grow or produce something that is then sold to an export or a domestic market. But this is such an important issue. It is so off the mark for the member to belittle people because they might live in the city and to say that they do not understand or do not care. I think that incident—the ship that the National Party highlighted—jolted everyone. It jolted lots of people throughout Australia. Indeed, it jolted the industry. I went to the website of the Sheep Collective, Leader of the Nationals WA. I will read out what they care about. I quote —

The Sheep Collective is a collaboration of exporters, importers, industry bodies and producers. It's about showing the care given to sheep in the live export process.

The Leader of the Nationals WA talked about the production line.

Ms M.J. Davies: The supply chain.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The supply chain. I quote again —

There are many reasons why we export our live animals to other countries. The Australian sheep industry has continued to grow since the first animals were exported more than 150 years ago.

Yes, it is an over 100-year industry in Australia. It continues —

Our own population simply is not large enough to sustain the sheep farming industry based solely on the local consumer market.

That is why exports are a critical part of that business. The site goes into some key elements about how it works and refers, obviously, to the farm, feed lots, transport and the export and importing processes. It then refers to animal health and welfare, and I quote—I do not think anyone would be unsupportive of this —

Ensuring the health and welfare of our sheep is at the core of what we do, across the supply chain, every day.

That is their animal health and welfare focus. It continues —

Our husbandry methods are constantly modified with low stress management the prime consideration each time we handle the sheep. Access to quality food and water is provided at all stages as well as treatment for local pests and diseases and quarantine when required.

I commend that industry group. Its members clearly want to make sure they get a message out to the wider community that greater education and understanding is required about that supply chain, but there are issues that impact on the growers and the producers in providing the resource to that supply chain. I think it is great that that group and other growers and other producers heard the message from what we saw on *Four Corners*, which led to the broad exposé, I suppose, of that particular ship at that time. I do not doubt that a number of important measures have been added or improved upon to ensure greater animal welfare. I do not doubt that at all, but a bit of history needs to be highlighted here. The motion before us certainly demonstrates that members opposite expect a Labor victory on Saturday. That is the first point.

Ms M.J. Davies: I think I made the point that regardless of the outcome, the policy needs to be struck from the Labor platform.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Let me tell members about the Minister for Agriculture and Food; Regional Development. I have to say that I have never seen such venom from members of Parliament, particularly from the National Party and some Liberals, against our minister. I find her quite remarkable. She is an astounding person. Her work and research ethic is immeasurable because it is so comprehensive. Anyone who has ever been to a meeting with her or seen her in action will know that she analyses, asks questions and probes. She does not take everything on face value. She is a minister who demonstrates more than a broad and deepening understanding. She acknowledges that she is learning as she goes. We all do that, but the venom that comes from some of the mouths of members opposite against her is remarkable. She stoically fronted the Katanning meeting. A number of people who were very supportive of the themes she was highlighting had conversations with her privately during and after that meeting. It is no mean feat for someone to go to a meeting of 1 000 people who are potentially angry and concerned about the future. I get that; I honestly do. Of course they are going to be passionate and concerned about the future of an industry that they know sustains their family and that they want to sustain into the future. I get it.

Please do not assume, as the member for Moore does—I think the member for Roe is a bit more of a reasonable person—that no-one cares, because they do. We want to see our farmers and producers continue to produce high-quality product, be it grain, meat, fruit and vegetables or horticultural products. We want to see that. Can I tell members that the myth that is perpetuated by some in the National Party that we in the Labor Party somehow have no affiliation, empathy or, indeed, strong support for our primary producers is absolutely wrong. It is wrong. Yes, people will get very passionate about the welfare of animals. I accept that too. They will be part of the debate and will put their cases also. Part of being in our democracy is that we listen to the debate, understand what is said and probe that, but this default position by the member for Moore, which is to say that no-one cares and that we on this side do not care, is utterly wrong, I assure him.

I was in Katanning earlier this year. In the hotel we stayed at, I was grabbed by a gentleman who I think was in transport, from memory. He said, “I know you’re in town; can I talk to you at breakfast time?” I said yes. He highlighted the issues around the live export industry from his perspective. From memory, I think he has a pretty big transport enterprise and has had it for a long time. It was important for me to hear what he had to say.

Ministers of this government travel in the regions, as I do. I was in Bruce Rock last week. What a magnificent town and shire; what a magnificent group of people who are passionate about a future for their town. Why would they not be? They have wonderful attributes and assets that they can grow and promote. They are brilliant. I came away from Bruce Rock really buoyed, as the Minister for Local Government, about one example of a rural local government that understands what its strengths are and builds on them and promotes its place. It wants to share it with everyone. That is the other thing. One of the good things about Western Australians is that they are usually well travelled.

Mr R.S. Love: Are you talking about live sheep?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Do not assume that Western Australians are not interested in what is happening in regional Western Australia.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Let us go through some history, because I am going to take my time.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am going to take my time because the member for Moore angered me. I am going to take my time to point out a few things that need to be highlighted.

Members opposite attacked the federal Labor Party. Let us look at what the Liberal–National Party has done or failed to do. In fact, it can be highlighted as what has damaged this industry and created uncertainty. We need only look back at the guy that I do not think you guys like very much, Barnaby Joyce, when he was appointed federal Minister

for Agriculture in 2013. What did he do? As the minister, he announced the abolition of the Australian Animal Welfare Advisory Committee—he gutted that. There is a bit of a trend here. That role was to advise the federal minister and the Department of Agriculture on animal welfare matters. He got rid of it.

Philip Moss, who later led a review of live exports, singled out 2013, the year that Tony Abbott was elected as Prime Minister and Barnaby Joyce was named agriculture minister, as the year when things began to go wrong inside the federal Department of Agriculture. Minister Joyce scrapped \$25 million worth of savings in his department, including the work to establish national animal welfare standards; got rid of the committee overseeing them; and abolished the department's animal welfare branch. In 2015, the federal government changed the livestock export certification process, removing approvals for individual livestock shipments. The systematic erosion of animal welfare oversight and regulation of the live export industry sent a message to the live export industry, because he kept eroding measures that were there to oversee the health and welfare of livestock. Then in 2017, we saw the *Awassi Express* voyage, which I highlighted earlier.

As the member knows and as the Leader of the Nationals WA highlighted, we have seen a dramatic decrease in live export numbers. If my figures are correct—I assume they are—in 2000, 4.22 million sheep were exported live out of Western Australia. If we fast-forward to 2018, the figure is under one million; 986 000 sheep were exported live. The percentage has decreased dramatically from 42 per cent in 2000 to 19 per cent in 2018. However, there has of course been a steady increase in the amount of sheep meat exported since 2000: \$126 million worth of sheep meat was exported in 2000, and it is my understanding that \$478 million worth of sheep meat was exported last year.

The Minister for Agriculture and Food and the government unashamedly support boosting local meat processing to capture more value from livestock. That is no secret; the government is focused on boosting processing in WA. That means there is greater capacity and capability for more meat processing jobs to be created in regional WA. I understand that Western Australian abattoirs are capable of processing more than 4.8 million head of sheep annually, and that many of those processors are currently not processing at their maximum capacity, so there is growth potential. The minister informs me that there is renewed international interest in our meat processors from Malaysia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates. Livestock Shipping Services, which has a live export arm and a meat processing arm, last month expanded its meat processing arm by buying its second abattoir in Western Australia.

I read with interest recent comments from the chairman of the Western Australian Meat Marketing Co-operative Ltd, Mr Craig Heggaton, who said that the processing sector was ready, that the live sheep trade had been in decline for a decade, and that over a period of time the processing works here in Western Australia can gear up and take that extra number of sheep; it is not a huge number. He said that the biggest threat to the industry was not necessarily losing the live sheep export trade, but the lack of sheep numbers in general. Those were comments made by the chair of the WA Meat Marketing Co-operative. He also said —

In my opinion, the demise of the live sheep export industry, provided producers take a pragmatic view of it and consider adjusting their production systems ...

That is the point that he made.

The state government has supported the WA sheep industry throughout this period, and there has effectively been no leadership from the federal Liberal government. The state government has been getting on with supporting resilience in our local sheep industry. Over the last 18 months, we have provided \$5 million in loans to the Western Australian Meat Marketing Co-operative to upgrade its Katanning processing plant—that is \$5 million, member for Roe. It is a very important investment. I was in Katanning recently and saw the —

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I have not finished.

I saw the importance of the abattoir that the member mentioned, which operates just on the edges of the town of Katanning. There has been more than \$900 000 provided to boost research capabilities in Katanning. The live export reference group has been formed to provide advice to the Department of Regional Development on strategies for improving the resilience of the WA sheep industry. Of course, the state Minister for Agriculture and Food, Hon Alannah MacTiernan—in whom I have the greatest faith—will work with whoever is elected on Saturday to support and provide positive options for sheep growers to continue to produce quality product for the export market going into the future. She will work with anybody; she will work with whoever is the federal agriculture minister post the election on 18 May.

I understand that the federal Labor Party's priority is to ensure that the sheep industry can continue to thrive, whatever happens at a federal level. The state Minister for Agriculture and Food, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, is in regular contact with the federal shadow agriculture minister and she is constantly putting the interests and aspirations of our farming sector and communities to the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources. I think there is a clear understanding that there are some special elements to what happens in Western Australia in the production of live animals for processing. Western Australia is a very important, emerging and growing market. There is, of course, a focus on support to allow a long and proper transition that will enable WA farmers to manage change and to take up increased opportunities.

I turn now to what Tony Seabrook, president of the Western Australian Pastoralists and Graziers Association, had to say about Mr Fitzgibbon on *Country Hour* earlier this year. I think it once again puts paid to the comment the member for Moore made about the capabilities of the federal Labor spokesperson for agriculture, whom I hope will be the federal agriculture minister post 18 May. Mr Tony Seabrook, president of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association, had this to say about Mr Fitzgibbon on *Country Hour*. I listen to *Country Hour* quite a lot; I do. The interviews it has with various people in the sector are actually very, very good and interesting.

Dr A.D. Buti: *Lateline* is a great program!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: He is not on anymore, but I listened to Tony Delroy.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Anyway, can I just highlight to the house the comments of Tony Seabrook, president of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association. This is what he had to say about Mr Fitzgibbon on *Country Hour* earlier this year —

Joel has been around a long time, he is a very sensible man, I get on very well with him, if we do have a change of government —

This is Tony Seabrook, president of the Pastoralists and Graziers Association —

and he does end up being the Minister for Agriculture, I very much look forward to working with him, he is a very steady operator, I don't believe we would be having the wild swings that we are in policy that we are having right now.

That is very interesting. It is a very different assessment from the member for Moore's assessment earlier. It comes back to the member for Moore's constantly negative approach. He is clouded by the philosophical view that nobody in the Labor Party or who lives in the city can have any empathy or affiliation with the aspirations and the importance of regional Western Australia. This is why he does his side of politics such a disservice. There are members around him to whom people will listen when they speak, because they reflect an understanding that there is widespread empathy and support for, and understanding of, our farmers. When drought ravages parts of our country, we quite often see in social media people who reside in the city —

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: No, I am going to put the member to bed about his negative attitude towards people he says do not care, because he is wrong. He is absolutely wrong and he talks rubbish when he does that; he does himself and his party a disservice. People like Mr Tony Seabrook are quite prepared to work with a federal Labor government and a federal Labor minister for agriculture. The member for Moore made comments about Joel Fitzgibbon, who might be the federal agriculture minister if the federal Labor Party is successful at the election. He is a sensible man and I get on well with him. I very much look forward to working with him. He is a steady operator. This is the key point: I do not believe that we will have the wild swings in policy that we are having now. I do not know Tony Seabrook well, but I know of him. I would not doubt his word in his assessment of who could be the future agriculture minister in federal Parliament.

We have to keep listening and engaging and having conversations. The member for Moore has claimed that none of that has happened. If we look at past budgets of the Nationals WA while in government, we can demonstrate that, if there were conversations, they were not working. Investment in the agriculture industry and in the then Department of Agriculture and Food in particular was gutted under their stewardship of the portfolio—and this was while there were five members of the party in this place and two, maybe three, members in cabinet. When the member comes in here and says that the Labor Party does not care and does not respond, he is talking with a forked tongue, because in the budget handed down last Thursday, \$131 million has been committed to the agriculture industry. As the member knows, we are already marketing our products to national and international markets, because we understand that a very high quality product is produced in Western Australia, including the grains that are exported to the world, particularly to Asia. There is a special grain that is part of the noodle market—I learnt that the other day when I was in Asia.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: There has been an increase in the chilled meat market.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: You have had your go, mate! You had your go when you were in government! You did not stand up for the agricultural region then. You did not defend the agricultural region or the department when the fellow next to you was gutting the budget. I did not hear any speeches from you about the budget in which you said, "I am disappointed that the member for Warren–Blackwood, as the minister, has gutted the agriculture budget." I did not hear that at all. Now you come in here and say that we do not care. History shows —

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: We have heard from you! You failed the people down there and in the agricultural regions of Western Australia.

I will always listen to other members of the Nationals. I have a lot of respect for the leader, the member for Roe and others. I have a bit of respect for the member for Warren–Blackwood, even though I have had a go at him tonight. But the member for Moore does absolutely nothing for the argument. Rather than abusing the Minister for Agriculture and Food and blaming everybody else, he should look in the mirror and realise the catastrophe that he oversaw as a member of the National Party during the eight and a half years of the Barnett Liberal–National government. If he wants to keep being blinded by that, he does not do himself a good service and he certainly does not do the constituents he should be representing or the sector he is representing a good service. All they are hearing from him is negativity, simple abuse and all those sorts of aspects, not a willingness to work with the minister and the department. We are putting more money—\$131 million—into the agriculture sector, unlike the member who oversaw it when it was gutted.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: That is fine. We will accept the failures of the Nationals. We are going to get on with working with the industry and with whomever is elected come Saturday, 18 May. I have every faith in our agriculture minister. She makes sure that she is out and about in the pastoral and agricultural areas. She makes sure that she talks to the producers. She makes sure that she works with those who value add to the products that are sent to the world. She looks at how we brand our state's produce. She looks at making sure that we are telling the story that our products in regional WA are well produced and effective.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: The rabble over there are upset now. I was not going to take it. I was not going to stand here and take their rubbish, particularly from the member for Moore.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: You will blow a gasket shortly, son. I can see it happening. Settle down, son. You failed totally!

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister! I need everyone to stop shouting. Hansard cannot possibly get a recording of everybody screaming at each other.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I will not take any more interjections.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: No; I figured that.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I think that would help the situation. I want to put on record —

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Enough, member for Warren–Blackwood! I call you for the first time.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Of course the Labor Party strongly supports our farmers and producers in the agricultural regions of Western Australia and our pastoralists who use the land. Our Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food has demonstrated her commitment, because another \$131 million from this budget will go back into the agricultural area, even though members opposite gutted it. They do not like this. They hate this. While in government, the National Party, which members opposite have always promoted as the party of rural and regional Western Australia, gutted the very department that it has sought to represent over many years. They hate this. We saw their faces when the budget was delivered last Thursday and they heard the comment that \$131 million would be added to the agriculture budget. They hated it. The blood drained from their faces, particularly from the member for Moore's.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Moore, I call you for the first time.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: They hate it. Let me assure members, as we round down to six o'clock, that we will continue to support our farmers.

Point of Order

Ms S.E. WINTON: I am finding it really difficult to hear.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I quite agree. I once again call all the front bench of the National Party. I have said a number of times that you are not to keep yelling. That is enough.

Debate Resumed

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: We will work with whomever is elected on Saturday, 18 May. The minister is continuing to work with a range of key stakeholders to make sure that we understand that we need a robust industry in regional Western Australia. I have highlighted in my response the gains being made in the chilled meat industry as one example, but there is a raft of others. We will keep working with and talking to farmers and we will support

the work and efforts of groups like the Sheep Collective. I commend them. It is tremendous work. Part of that work is about educating the broader community about supply chains and exactly what the industry does on farmland and at production places. It is positive and an important part of the Western Australian economy and the Western Australian community psyche. Members should never deny that there is strong empathy from all sides of politics in Parliament for the important people who live in rural and regional Western Australia. I care. We care. The member for Moore does not seem to understand that. He might want to have a bit of a think about what he says and how he approaches some of these motions, because it is not the same message that is being given by his leader, the member for Roe or the member for Geraldton.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2019–20) BILL 2019
APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2019–20) BILL 2019

Second Reading — Cognate Debate

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [7.01 pm]: I continue my remarks that were interrupted at four o'clock. I have to pick up where I was.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Where were you? Start from the start.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: I wondered whether anyone would notice if I started again, but Hansard told me that they probably would!

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Oh, Hansard, always getting in the way!

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Yes.

The other issue, of course, is the fallen 18 per cent in small businesses over the past 18 months. That is very much indicative of a domestic economy that is not yet responding to the increased investment in exploration that is starting to flow from improved commodity prices. I say one thing to the government: stop trying to tell us that the lift in investment is due to the government's genius or that the small business sector loves the government. The investment is because the figures work, because that is how it happens—nothing more, nothing less.

I will move on now to talk about my beautiful electorate of Geraldton. I am very happy to see that the budget has a number of positives for Geraldton. The former Liberal–National government established the state's second aquaculture zone at the Abrolhos Islands, following on from the one at Cone Bay in the Kimberley, so that individual projects would not have to do all the clearances themselves. The clearances are all done and the zone is established so that makes it a lot easier for new operators to come in and set up. That process has continued under the current government with granting of the site there to Huon Aquaculture from Tasmania. The next stage has commenced, with funding for a \$7 million finfish facility in Geraldton. This facility increases the state's capacity in the area and means that the young fish are split between two locations. The other location is south of Perth.

[Quorum formed.]

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: Having fish on two sites means that if there is a disease outbreak in one, hopefully the other one will be unaffected. If you like, it is a security measure. We are just being careful. Aquaculture is quite a good potential job creator in Geraldton and the midwest. That is a really positive move.

I also welcome \$6 million from the state government, which was announced a while ago, to add to the \$10 million from the federal government. That is being added to some council funds to reseal and extend the runway at Geraldton airport. That is also a very positive measure. I think the resealing is about two years behind. It is being done in the nick of time.

In a similar vein, the allocation of \$10 million for visitor and operations infrastructure as part of the establishment of the Abrolhos Islands National Park is also a plus for Geraldton. This is an exciting development for the region, with this year being the 390th anniversary of the wreck of the *Batavia* in the Wallabi Group on her maiden voyage on 4 June 1629.

I am very pleased to see the re-establishment of two separate senior high schools in Geraldton. One is Champion Bay Senior High School on the former John Willcock College site, and the other is Geraldton Senior High School on the existing site.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr R.S. Love): Members, the member for Geraldton has an extremely quiet voice and I think Hansard is having a bit of trouble hearing. Could you keep your conversations down.

Mr I.C. BLAYNEY: It is good to see the pride in both schools and the completion of \$25 million worth of work that was spread across the two sites. The community told me that they wanted this, and it is wonderful to see the positive reaction to this change. I acknowledge and thank the former Premier, Hon Colin Barnett, and the former Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, for supporting me with that change. One of the hardest things I have done as the member for Geraldton was to get support for that move.

I am very pleased to see the first commitment of \$2.5 million towards expansion works at Geraldton hospital. Although this government's commitment is slightly more than half the commitment made by the former Liberal–National government, my expectation is that the expenditure will greatly improve services and working conditions at the hospital and enable St John of God Health Care to continue to run a private hospital in Geraldton. The establishment of a step-up, step-down mental health facility is also welcomed in the city, although I question it not being located near the main hospital site, as I think the step-up, step-down facility is in Albany and Joondalup. It is some distance away from Geraldton hospital. As it will be placed at the location of the former sobering-up centre, that puts a final nail in the coffin for our chances of re-opening the sobering-up centre. I will talk about that in a little while.

The budget also contains \$11 million for works to Greenough Regional Prison. The prison was extensively damaged by a riot last year. The report into the riot is quite short; it is only about 70 pages. If anyone is interested in what happened and why, it is an interesting report to read. It makes it quite clear that budgetary restraints led to increasing lockdowns of prisoners and fewer educational opportunities. As prisoners had to be locked down, the people who were supposed to be doing the education work in the prison were diverted to help prison staff. That led to a considerable increase in tension in the prison. In retrospect, the riot was inevitable. The report contains some interesting comments by the Independent Prison Visitor, which basically endorses what I have just said. I welcome the works, and of course I welcome the commitment from the government to try to make sure that as much work as possible is available to local contractors.

Locally, the main concern I have had in recent months is the number of homeless people in our city. In the main, this would have to be due to the closure of the sobering-up centre and the government allowing the Cameleers accommodation facility to close.

I am also frustrated that this government refuses to consider reinstating truancy officers into regional education offices. I drive around my electorate reasonably often and I am tired of seeing children walking the streets during school hours. The job of trying to work out this problem and get these kids into school has been left to police. I do not think it is the responsibility of police. Previously we had truancy officers in the Department of Education. When I mentioned to one of the principals at one of the high schools that I was starting to work to try to get truancy officers back into the system, the principal's response was that if I could get them back, it would be wonderful. The principal said, "As a system it worked and frankly what we have now in place of truancy officers is just a joke."

In a similar vein, I get very upset that some parents do not care when their children are brought home because they let them go out again straightaway. There are also quite a few parents who do not care whether their children attend school, so it is basically left up to the children. If they take themselves off to school, that is good. If they do not, it does not really matter. Quite frankly, education is probably the key factor for people to break out of the cycle of poverty and disadvantage and it is very frustrating when people cannot see that. In the main, the schools that these kids should be going to have quite amazing resources to try to ensure that they attend school and that when they do go to school that they are taught. If they do not even turn up, it is incredibly frustrating.

On policing issues, I am told that it is already becoming clear that the increase in rent for officers in the country is making it harder to get officers to serve in the regions. I seem to remember that under the former government we had a program in royalties for regions to help pay the rent of officers stationed in the country. I think the government is quite wrong and stupid to increase the rent of police stationed in the country.

I look forward to the completion of the Kalbarri Skywalk in the member for Moore's electorate, which of course was the previous government's project. I echo the member for Kalgoorlie's comments and his disappointment that once again funding to seal the road from Meekatharra to Wiluna is not in the budget. We just about had this project in our hands, because the funds to do it were in the Mid West Development Commission, but with the change of government we lost the money and of course the road has been put off again. The completion of this road will seal the road from Kalgoorlie to the Pilbara. It has been promised since the closure of the rail line in the 1950s. It will become a valuable link in the Western Australian road network. As I said, the former government nearly completed the road and it is very disappointing to see that it has been dropped.

I will talk briefly about my shadow portfolios. The Leader of the House might be interested in what I have to say—no? He is not going to listen to me. He had a lot to say to the member for Moore a while ago, but he is not going to listen to me. It is pleasing to see in the budget that the funds from royalties for regions that the previous government had been putting into the Department of Agriculture and Food's budget have been restored. This is not new money. The government has accepted that those funds were needed in the agriculture department so it has put back in the same funding. It is huge relief. I look forward to the completion of the restructure of the agriculture department so that its functions are clear, its workforce are assured that they have a future, and external funding agencies have confidence in its future. The sector is incredibly important to our economy and has a bright future.

It is also good to see that the importance of biosecurity has been recognised. There is an outbreak of African swine fever, I think, in China at the moment. It has been quite devastating to the Chinese pig population, which is feeding into the availability of pork. I think 60 per cent of the meat consumed in China is pork and this is devastating for

people who rely on raising pigs as their livelihood. It is a bit like the foot-and-mouth outbreak in the United Kingdom. All people can do is destroy all the pigs within a certain radius of an outbreak, so it is having an absolutely devastating effect. I think the reduction in the pig population in China has been by about 20 or 30 per cent. That would be the last thing we would want here, or the last thing probably after foot and mouth. But it also means that we have an oversupply of pork in Western Australia, so for us, it might be an opportunity. No-one likes to benefit from other people's misfortune, however. Where this swine fever is going in China is quite scary. Exactly how far it will go and how much of the national herd will have to be destroyed and what they will be left with afterwards is quite amazing.

As can be seen from the number of press releases issued, this was a quiet budget for Fisheries. The sole press release referred to the facility that is to be built in Geraldton. The government's attempt to take a share of the western rock lobster catch last year crystallised the issue of the lack of security that fishermen have over their fishing operations in Western Australia. This is something that Dr Mike Nahan and I will work on with the industry. We have made a commitment to the industry that we will work with them to hopefully come up with a package that gives them more security. It is interesting that at the moment a cray fisherman has to apply to have their licence renewed every year. In effect, they have little or no security. When the government decided it would take 1 300 tonnes or whatever it was of the catch, it brought home to fishermen that they effectively have no security. More importantly, it brought home to the lending institutions that fund fishermen to buy pots, boats and things like that, and to cover their operating costs when they start up, that they have absolutely no security. We have made a commitment to try to find a mechanism to give them more security. As I have said, the effect of the government's intention has caused a fall in confidence in the industry and in its suppliers and financiers. A new boat can cost up to \$3.5 million. I think orders for two new boats were cancelled in Dongara. That affects the people who build boats. They are not wealthy people. They are tradesmen who weld the steel and install the electronics and motors and all the rest of it. The amount of electronics in these things is quite amazing—they are a bit like a submarine. If we pull the rug out from the industry, suddenly they will have no confidence. They just cancel boat orders. No-one will invest \$3.5 million if they do not know whether they will have a licence next year to carry on with their job.

Overall, I rate the budget as a "C". As the late David McNicoll said, luck's a fortune. This government has had an unbelievably good run in terms of securing extra money, mostly from the federal government but also through royalties that have been flowing in. Frankly, the government has had it as good as our Treasurer, who is now our current leader, Dr Mike Nahan, had it bad. He mentioned that when he was speaking earlier today. When the price of iron ore went to \$38 a tonne, the dollar went through the roof—everything went wrong at the same time—whereas in this government's case, everything has gone well at the same time. It is a bit like farming; when it is a good year, take some wise measures and everything will be all right.

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [7.18 pm]: I rise tonight to speak on the budget delivered by the Labor government. The government has spent a fair bit of time patting itself on the back for the budget it has delivered. Congratulations to the Treasurer—it is his third budget. I know Treasurers do it tough and are usually proud of their work, so well done to him for delivering the budget.

I would love to be one of those members who can stand here and talk about how well the budget has delivered for their electorate. Unfortunately, I cannot do that. Instead, I stand here tonight to do something that I am not happy about, but it is something that I have to do on behalf of the people of my electorate of Hillarys. I want to speak about the forgotten people across Western Australia, including the forgotten people in Hillarys, who have not benefited from this budget but who instead have been used as a stepladder for this government to pat itself on the back about some of its achievements. The people of my electorate are hurting, and no-one is listening to them. They are enduring tough economic conditions. The Treasurer's budget might be looking rosy as a result of a series of windfall gains in iron ore, a lot of that on the back of tragedy in South America, which has pushed up the price of iron ore, and hence has filled the coffers with additional royalties that nobody could have expected a few years ago; partly as a result of some largesse from the Morrison federal Liberal government in the context of an election campaign; partly through the recognition finally of Canberra—that needs to be acknowledged—that we were being duded on GST, so they have given us some funds to recognise the fact that we were being duded. It is not enough; they still have not restored us to 100 per cent, but we are better than we were before. That has gone onto the bottom line. The other reason the government's budget is looking rosy is because it has saddled all Western Australians, including the people of Hillarys, with crippling cost-of-living increases year upon year upon year. The government might be telling everyone that things are looking rosy, but come out to my electorate and they are not. We know that small business in particular and business generally is doing it tough. We have seen it reflected in record bankruptcies and insolvencies. We have seen it reflected in thousands of businesses closing down. We have seen it reflected in empty shops and empty offices right across the suburbs and the regions of Western Australia. We have seen it reflected in people doing it tougher than they ever have before. The budget itself tells us that in the current 2018–19 financial year, the state domestic economy as measured by state final demand has gone backwards, not forwards. The budget tells us that. In fact, in the early part of this financial year, the state was in domestic recession, and it may do so again.

People are calling out for some support from this government. They are calling out for much-needed community services and much-needed infrastructure. The people in the Hillarys electorate are no different. I make no apology for standing up here and pointing out the failures of this budget—there are some good things, and I will get to those a little later—for the people of Hillarys and for the portfolio areas that I am responsible for as shadow minister.

First and foremost is the missing link on the Mitchell Freeway. The southbound lanes of the Mitchell Freeway from Hodges Drive to Hepburn Avenue are one of the most congested choke points in the whole of Western Australia. That issue has not been addressed. We know the history of this. An additional lane was built on the northbound lanes between Hepburn Avenue and Hodges Drive by the previous Barnett Liberal government in recognition of the growth of the northern suburbs and in preparation for the fact that the freeway was being extended. It was extended from Burns Beach Road to Hester Avenue, and now this government—correctly so, and I praise it for it—is continuing the extension of the freeway to Romeo Road, but it pushes more traffic onto the freeway going both ways. The northbound lanes have a third lane where it is needed. The southbound lanes do not, despite the fact that the reservation is there. No bridges or infrastructure needs to be moved. Someone needs to go there and put the bitumen down. In 2017, the former government allowed for over \$70 million in the budget to do the works that were necessary to add that much-needed third lane to relieve traffic congestion in the northern suburbs, not just for the people of my electorate, but for the people in the electorates of Joondalup, Kingsley, Burns Beach, Wanneroo, Butler and Carine. It is the northern suburbs. When we talk about a freeway, sticking to electorate boundaries sometimes does not work because it applies to all of us—all our commuters and constituents. People are crying out for it. When it came to power, this government removed the funding. Since that time, the government has received \$1.6 billion in an infrastructure investment fund from the commonwealth Liberal government and applied it to road projects. It is very proud of those projects. I do not doubt that every single one of them is much needed and welcomed by the people who will benefit from them. However, when it comes to this missing link, the small section between Hodges Drive and Hepburn Avenue causes much angst, particularly at morning peak times, but, really, at all times of the day and night. People can drive down there on Saturday afternoon or Sunday mid-morning and it is almost as congested as it is in peak time. The solution is to build that third lane.

The government took the funding out of the budget when it came to power—subsequently, the Morrison government has provided a 50 per cent share of the money required. On 4 April this year, in this house, in reply to one of my questions without notice, the Minister for Transport said —

I am dismayed that the Morrison government has not put money towards that project.

...

I tell those commuters in the northern suburbs: Thank goodness they have a Labor government.

Minister, since that time, the federal minister responsible for cities and infrastructure, Alan Tudge, has come to Western Australia with the federal Attorney-General, Christian Porter, and they said that they have committed \$35 million in this current federal budget—it is in the budget; it is available money—to do this work. However, we get a charade such as we have seen this week from the minister in here when she used cheap political point scoring rather than acknowledging that the money is there. It is in the budget; it is part of the \$4 billion urban congestion fund that the federal government has created. This is rightly so, because the fund is created by money developed up in each state through the road excise tax and the like—so some of the money is being returned to Western Australia, including \$35 million for this lane on the freeway, which is much needed and will relieve much congestion.

Unfortunately, the minister is playing politics, twisting the truth and saying, “Where is it in the budget paper?”, and whatever. It is in the papers. It has been budgeted for as part of a \$4 billion urban congestion fund. The announcements have been made by the federal government. All that is needed is a commitment from this minister and this government to build that extra lane, and they will be thanked for it. If they do that, the people of the northern suburbs will thank them. I can reassure the minister that every day, I will continue to tell my constituents in Hillarys and all the people of the northern suburbs that they get very frustrated when they are stuck in traffic on this section of road because this transport minister and the McGowan Labor government do not care that they are trapped there. They are not prepared to put their money where their mouth is. That is the case even after the federal government has come to the aid of this government and provided it with 50 per cent of the funds.

I urge the government to reconsider at the *Government Mid-year Financial Projections Statement*. Do not let this \$35 million of federal money, which is really our money that the federal government is returning to us, go to waste. Do not let it go into consolidated revenue. By the midyear review, hopefully, the rest of the works further south on the Mitchell Freeway—works that I continue to support and have said I support—will be finished in time to build this missing link. Please do it. It will save commuters time and give people in the northern suburbs more time to spend with their families and will mean they will spend less time stuck in traffic on the freeway. Another area of infrastructure that the electorate of Hillarys misses out on is school buildings. I have spoken about the condition of some of the school buildings in my electorate. We have absolutely wonderful schools with great principals, great teachers and staff, great students and great communities—great parent communities and friend communities. They all work hard. I visit every government and non-government school in my electorate, and I see the work that they put in, particularly in the really old government schools like Hillarys Primary School,

Springfield Primary School and Sorrento Primary School. The teachers and the students are putting up with substandard buildings that are well past their use-by date. The buildings need to be rebuilt to give our teachers and students the opportunity to learn in a welcoming environment. I note that in some of the regular maintenance funding, the Minister for Education and Training has allowed a small amount of funds to replace some ceilings in Sorrento Primary School. Think about that. Why are we replacing the ceilings? The ceilings are falling down; they are an actual risk to students and teachers at that school. We should not wait for the rest of the building to fall down, because if the ceilings are falling down, you can bet your bottom dollar that the roof needs replacing and the walls need replacing. We need to bite the bullet as a society and say that when the buildings have reached the end of their useful life, we need to replace them.

I note that a school in the Treasurer's electorate of Victoria Park is going to get a new build. Honestly, well done! This is what governments are here for. Governments are here to provide for essential services, including essential infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, police and the like. I know the school in Victoria Park is around about 100 years old.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Over one hundred.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: It is over 100 years old. It was originally built in the nineteenth century. That is great. That is recognition that we have some old schools. But let us look at the schools like in Hillarys and Springfield and Sorrento, in particular, that were built over 40 years ago as temporary schools. Next year Sorrento Primary School celebrates its 50-year anniversary. Those buildings were built as temporary buildings. How temporary is temporary? I can tell members that they are going to be around longer than I am if we do not do something about it! My community as well as other communities deserves good quality school buildings and I am going to continue to advocate for that and I make no apology for advocating for that.

The Whitford Family Centre is a very small centre that has been running successfully for 30 years. It is an essential part of my community. It helps young families, especially when they have newborn children. I have to say and put on the record that my family benefited from the centre when we first moved to Perth. It was a godsend to us—I have to tell members. It is a much-loved and respected neighbourhood centre that services around about 280 families over an average week and 400 families over an average year. Unfortunately, the centre has fallen victim to the government's new empowering communities program. It has only secured funding until July next year. Our community fears that from July next year the centre is going to be forced to close, and it would be a shattering blow felt right across my community. The wonderful staff at Whitford Family Centre have been meeting with the Department of Communities, but they get the impression that there seems to be some desire at a departmental level to make the centre conform to the department's agenda rather than recognising and understanding the value that the Whitford Family Centre provides to a local community. The future appears bleak, and families in my electorate are asking what will happen if the centre closes down. I hope that the Minister for Community Services—the member for Fremantle—gets involved and makes sure that such centres and other centres across the state are not shut down by a desire to make them fit into a bureaucratic framework rather than recognise the work that they do, and have the bureaucrats work with these centres so that they continue to provide those types of resources.

I could also talk about how my constituents have been hit by cost-of-living increases. Time eludes me; but they have been. It is not a great look for a government to come in here in this budget cycle and say that it has kept cost-of-living increases lower this year than it did last year and the year before, because that absolutely does not recognise the fact that people out there are doing it tough. Building on two loads of high increases with a slightly lower one just exacerbates the pain—it does not relieve it. People in my electorate and right across the state are looking for relief. That relief does not come from telling them that they are going to be paying only a little bit more this year rather than a lot more. What they really want is the pressure on their cost of living reduced at a time of low wages and definite economic disability.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I move on to my portfolio areas. After a long time of kicking and screaming, the government has funded some policing initiatives with the provision of funds for personal issue stab-proof vests for police officers. We will see how that rollout goes in practice because on the way that I have done the sums, it does not appear that every single officer in the state will be issued with what is supposedly a personal issued vest. In time we will find out from the Minister for Police exactly what that funding will achieve. There is funding for a mobility project, which will essentially allow police to walk around the streets with some modern IT devices, which will cut down on their paperwork and the need for them to return to the station and be desk-bound because we really, really want them on the streets. That is a good idea but in practice, unfortunately, right throughout the government, including the Western Australia Police Force, the rollout of IT infrastructure rarely goes according to plan. We will continue to monitor that and make sure —

Mr R.H. Cook: Except in Health; we do it so well!

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Does the Minister for Health want it on the record that his government does IT projects in Health ever so well? I will leave that there and we will continue to interrogate it in the future.

Again, the question is whether there is sufficient funding to provide a device for every officer who needs it. We will interrogate that over time, no doubt. There is no funding for body-worn cameras—that is, cameras that are worn on police officers' lapels to record incidents and provide evidence. Instead, the Minister for Police and the government told the Commissioner of Police to find money for the cameras in the existing police budget. I am flabbergasted that the government thinks that in these straitened economic times, there is spare money lying around in the police budget. Police command is working hard to make every dollar go as far as it can, but again it is being asked to do more with less. That is absolutely not sustainable. For the police to get body-worn cameras so that they can provide modern evidence in court and protection for themselves, something will have to give somewhere else in the police budget, and that is just not good enough.

I turn to regional police. We know that the recruitment of regional police is in crisis. The government does not have to take my word for it—I know the minister criticises me. Today I published the figures. The WA Police Union did not have a whack at me like the minister likes to do—a personal attack. I love personal attacks because I know that when someone attacks someone personally, they do not have any substance to the attack. It is a trait of this government. Personal attacks expose the fact that the government is the one being exposed. The WA Police Union did not attack me, nor did it attack the figures. It said that if we think things are bad now with the way this government is treating police, especially regional police, they are actually going to get a lot worse. There is a shortfall of almost 100 police officers in regional WA and a shortfall in every single regional district right across WA, but watch what it is going to be like in the foreseeable future. That is a scary thought for the people who live in regional Western Australia—that we cannot attract police officers there, and that their communities are going to be less safe than ever before.

What caused this inability to recruit police regionally? It was the double whammy given to regional police officers by this government. First, it denied police officers the fair pay increase that it told them it would give them during the last state election campaign. We have been over this ground before. The police asked for a 1.5 per cent pay increase per annum. The Liberal Party when it was in government said yes, and Mark McGowan, Michelle Roberts and the Labor Party said, “Yes, yes, yes, we’ll match that, too.” When they came to power, they reneged on it and gave the police a measly \$1 000 pay increase that hardly covered the increases in the cost of living that this government has put on every family in Western Australia, including police; it is now more than \$800 a year extra for the average family.

The government then jacked up its rent by \$1 500 a year, two years in a row, and there is another increase built into this budget for the 2019–20 financial year we will enter into on 1 July—another whack. Police officers are paying a bigger increase in rent than the increase in their wages. That is totally and utterly unsustainable for them and their families. I visit regional police stations and the first lament I hear is, “Can you please fix the cost of Government Regional Officers’ Housing? Please fix it.” Today again, the Western Australian Police Union of Workers came out with some figures and said that a freeze on the 2019–20 GROH housing rental increase of \$30 a week would cost around \$1.2 million. This government runs around praising itself for a \$500 million-plus surplus, and I commend it on that surplus; that is a good thing. I support a surplus budget rather than a deficit budget, wherever we can achieve that. But with \$500 million in the kitty and not much impact on debt from that \$500 million, we are talking about only \$1.2 million to make it more attractive to recruit police officers to our regions, to provide the necessary policing that our regional areas want and absolutely deserve, just like every other Western Australian. It is just not good enough.

We have seen this with police recruitment as well. Police recruitment has slowed down massively. We see that reflected in the number of police and we see it reflected in community attitudes. People tell me all the time that they are seeing fewer police on the road than ever before, and we know that a strong visible police presence on the streets, in the towns and in the suburbs right across the state has a strong deterrent effect on criminals.

Then there is the area of road safety. First, after the Labor Party came to power, the government and the Minister for Road Safety engineered a dispute with the then Road Safety Commissioner. The commissioner either left or was removed, but left in acrimonious circumstances. That was almost two years ago; it was 23 months ago, in June 2017. We are now on our third acting Road Safety Commissioner; we still do not have a substantive Road Safety Commissioner. Each of the people who have acted or are acting in that role are genuinely good people, committed to safety outcomes, but they are not permanent; they are not appointed. They are acting; they have a little “a” in front of their title. That would be bad enough if the position had remained empty for 23 months in normal circumstances, but right now we are going through a review of the state’s 10-year road safety strategy. We are about to implement a new 10-year strategy, sometime next year, and people are meant to be giving input into that strategy, starting with the top of the organisation, the Road Safety Commissioner, but there is just no-one there; there is a caretaker in the chair. It may well be that the current person may eventually get appointed to the substantive position. I do not know; there has to be a process. But the minister has waited for 23 months and still has not appointed a substantive Road Safety Commissioner at a time when road safety is going backwards.

We know that because, in the last two years, the road toll has not budged. We have done really well as a society over decades to bring the road toll down. I do not want to cast aspersions on the people who have been acting in the role. I think they are doing the best they can in difficult circumstances. However, in the last two years, coinciding

with this empty substantive chair in the Road Safety Commission because there is no permanent Road Safety Commissioner, there has really been no focus on reducing the road toll. The road toll has not come down. That is particularly the case in regional areas. We know, unfortunately, that regional areas have a disproportionate representation in the road toll, in both fatalities and serious injuries. There is no focus. There is no desire to reduce the road toll.

In the last two years, over 70 000 drivers have been fined for speeding in school zones. Where are the hard-hitting campaigns to force drivers to stop speeding? It is not good enough to flash the speed camera at 70 000 drivers in school zones and send them a fine if it does not change their behaviour. The idea is that drivers do not speed through school zones. However, if we do not have a focus and a targeted approach, all we are doing is playing Russian roulette with children's lives. The only benefit we will get out of just sending out speeding fines every now and again is that the government's coffers will tick over. We do not need speeding fines. We need people to respect the 40-kilometre-an-hour school zones. We need some hard-hitting campaigns, and they are not happening.

The situation with cycling is exactly the same. Cyclists are among our most vulnerable road users, along with motorcyclists and pedestrians. The government has invested in building some principal shared paths. Good on it. That is in this budget. However, principal shared paths are not enough. We need real separation. We need dedicated commuter cycling infrastructure, to keep our riders safe. The government has brought in the minimum passing law. That is all well and good. Great idea. However, because the campaign to promote that minimum passing law was so ridiculed and had to be pulled at one point, there is minimal adherence to that law. Only today, a cyclist was knocked down in Embleton. That is not good enough. Since late 2017, only 10 motorists have been fined for not abiding by that law, yet 750 cyclists have been fined for not wearing a helmet. Both are dangerous. Cyclists report that not abiding by the minimum passing law causes them the most damage. That law is not being enforced. There is certainly no education campaign to make drivers aware of their rights and responsibilities. Drivers say, "We're confused, too. We don't drive around with a tape measure out our window, especially outside our passenger window, so give us some guidance." That is what the Road Safety Commission should be doing, and what it could do if it had a permanent head who could focus on the long-term, rather than an acting person who, with all the goodwill in the world, knows that whatever they implement might be reversed when the permanent head eventually comes in.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [7.47 pm]: I rise to speak on the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 and Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019. I would generally call this a disappointing budget for the people of regional Western Australia. I say that especially in the context of GST repair, and the rising revenue from the iron ore price. As other speakers have noted, a \$1 increase in the iron ore price is a \$76 million increase in revenue for this state government. That summarises it straightaway. We have not seen a flow back to the regions of the wealth of Western Australia. That wealth is generated from the regions, whether it be from agriculture, or iron ore, gold and other minerals, but that wealth is not dispersed back to the regions. That is why I find this budget disappointing. That is no more so than in the royalties for regions program, which has been slashed and burnt. Over the forward estimates, \$1.6 billion will go into substitution and cost shifting. In these categories, over four years, we have \$160 million for orange school buses, \$180 million for TAFE subsidies, \$1 billion for country water pricing subsidies, \$35 million for education assistants and \$224 million for essential services. Royalties for regions is about additional expenditure in our regions to create amenity and opportunities for people to decentralise out of Perth and move into the regions and to take pressure off the freeways. Surely fewer people travelling on the freeways would be music to the ears of the Minister for Transport. That is what royalties for regions was all about. As far as I can see, it is really wearing away, apart from in Labor seats, as I will mention shortly. Two-thirds of the state budget surplus has come from last year's underspend of over \$320 million of the royalties for regions budget.

There has been a two per cent increase in household charges. That may not seem like much. As we know, Labor went to the last election with a commitment that there would be no increases in household charges. Every average household is looking at an increase of \$856 in charges. It may not seem like much to some people in this place, but I can assure them that the people in the regions and, I am sure, the people in the metropolitan area are really feeling it. This government got voted in on a commitment not to increase charges, so that is a disappointment to me. I am pleased that it has kept the rate of increase to two per cent, but the election pledge was that it would be zero per cent.

I also want to mention the empty shops. Yesterday, a member of the Liberal Party mentioned that 30 000 businesses have closed their doors during the term of this government. That is a major concern in regional areas. Regional towns are struggling with empty shops. I believe that regional people are being treated almost like second-class citizens in this state budget.

I would like to speak about some of the issues in my electorate. Firstly, I do not claim to be an expert in forensically searching the budget for items, but I must say that I found it very difficult to locate any new investment in the electorate of Roe. I found \$6.9 million for shed 4 at the port of Esperance, but what about cruise ship docking? We have heard the Minister for Tourism talk up cruise ships. Yesterday, we heard the member for North West Central talk about cruise ships in Exmouth. This was an ideal opportunity for the government to rearrange. There is a deepwater port in Esperance. There is 18 metres of water that allows large iron ore ships to come in. This was the ideal opportunity to have a cruise ship berth so that when cruise ships come into Esperance, they do not have

to stay out there. The Minister for Local Government will be aware that the cruise ships sit out well over a kilometre past the end of the Esperance jetty, so the poor old tender vessel has to bob up and down out there. Less iron ore is going through the Esperance port, so there is an opportunity to have a cruise ship berth. It is very disappointing.

While the minister is in the chamber, I will ask him about the Esperance tanker jetty. It is my favourite subject. He knows that I would love the state government to put some funding towards that. He was on the boat with the CEO and the president of the Shire of Esperance circling around it. The minister has had a good look and he has seen the condition, but where is the commitment from the state government even just to add in perhaps a third of the cost of refurbishing the Esperance tanker jetty? I am very disappointed.

Mr M.P. Murray: Didn't the shire have a different view than you? I was down there the other day and they told me they have a different view.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: The shire has a different view than me.

Mr M.P. Murray: So you're misrepresenting your electorate!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: The Minister for Heritage recommended that it should go back to the 1935 model, which was brushed aside by the Shire of Esperance. That was the recommendation of the Minister for Sport and Recreation. That was brushed aside. We have a difference of opinion on a few things, but what we do not have a different of opinion on is that there is no funding of any description, whichever model is used, from the minister's government.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Where is the support? The One Mile jetty in Carnarvon is another great opportunity for tourism. It is in disrepair. This government could really step up in the tourism space and look after both of those jetties. When I look at tourism in the Esperance region, I must congratulate Jaimen Hudson who does fantastic drone photography. He has done more for tourism in the Esperance region than the state government. I was walking through Melbourne Airport several months ago and saw a massive poster of Esperance from his drone photography. I certainly congratulate him on what he has done for tourism, along with some other drone photographers, I might add.

The other element I found in that part of my electorate is \$40 million for the Coolgardie–Esperance Highway. Like the member for Kalgoorlie last night, I cannot isolate what part is in the electorate of Roe and what part is in the electorate of Kalgoorlie. Nonetheless I am heartened to see that funding. I also agree with the member for Kalgoorlie's contribution last night about Kambalda pool. It was not long ago that the Leader of the Nationals WA and I were standing in the bottom of that empty pool talking to the local community. I sympathised with the member for Kalgoorlie when he talked about the same thing in his speech last night. The Labor Party has not delivered for the community of Kambalda. It is one of the hottest places in the state, with an average temperature of 44 degrees.

Mr M.P. Murray: I agree with all that, but the federal money didn't come.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: There has been some federal money; \$250 000 came from the member for O'Connor, Rick Wilson.

Mr M.P. Murray: No, that isn't what I'm talking about. The big money from Sport Australia that you thought was coming didn't come—that we were going to match.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Okay. The Shire of Coolgardie has now had to take out a \$1.7 million loan. This was the opportunity for the Labor government to step in. One of those swimming pools in Collie, which has an average temperature of probably 22 or 23 degrees during the year, compared with Kambalda with 44 degrees —

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister for Sport and Recreation, thank you. The member would like to carry on with his speech.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Nonetheless, I will move on.

I want to speak about the re-announcements of funding including for the Esperance TAFE, which was originally announced by the members for Warren–Blackwood and Scarborough. I was there in 2016. It is good to see the continuation of the commitment there. The Minister for Sport and Recreation turned the sod last week for the Esperance indoor stadium. Unfortunately, my invitation did not arrive in time for me to attend. Nonetheless, it is a good thing for the community of Esperance. I will not say anymore other than it was good to see the Minister for Sport and Recreation in my electorate.

We have had some fantastic support for the dog fence by members of the National Party and the federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, David Littleproud. It is great to see that project finally on track. That is one I look forward to, with \$6.9 million in federal funding allocated. I am struggling to locate any funding for the Katanning, Kojonup, Lake Grace end of my electorate. I have found \$500 000 for the Narrogin helipad, which I think will be great for the community. That is the only new funding that I can find for that part of my electorate. Looking south towards the Albany region, it is not a problem to find funding. There is funding for the Albany ring-road, schools, South Coast Highway, and radiotherapy; the list goes on. If I look a couple of hundred kilometres west to

Collie, I can see all sorts of projects popping up. I hope the money will start moving east next year. I look forward to it moving into the electorate of Roe. When I came to this place, I naively thought that if there was a need for money, we were all treated equally, no matter where we lived. I had seen the example set by the Leader of the Nationals WA and the member for Warren–Blackwood when they were in cabinet. It did not matter what part of the state, what area or development commission region people were in, the money was put where it was needed. The member for Pilbara would certainly speak fondly of that. There was an investment of \$2 billion in the Pilbara Cities program. I will move on because I want to talk about several things.

I am glad that the member for Bunbury has come back into the chamber. When I analysed the budget, one of the first things that popped up was \$6.9 million for a pilot program in Bunbury dedicated to people to get help from government agencies. What is that? It is for people to come in and get help. People can get help at over 100 community resource centres spread around the state. Why not put that \$6.9 million into the CRC network? I scratched my head when I saw that one, but I am sure that at some stage the member for Bunbury will enlighten us about the value of that investment.

I have consistently questioned the Minister for Health about the serious issue of the lack of doctors at Katanning Hospital emergency department. Members can imagine my surprise when I saw, in the budget, cuts of \$38.457 million to funding of public hospital emergency services. I cannot see how that ties in. I hear a continual stream of stories about the lack of doctors in the emergency department from my constituents in Katanning and the great southern region. I am glad to say that since my question to the minister last week, there has been movement at the station. The added pressure has been put on, and I have already noticed a transition and more opportunities. I want to thank Tim Shackleton from Rural Health West, who is charged with helping supply doctors to our rural areas. Hopefully, we are looking at getting an extra two doctors over the next few months, which will take pressure off the doctors who are there currently. They are doing a great job, as are the nurses, but they are spread too thinly. Luckily, the hospital has the telehealth backup. The other issue I questioned the health minister about was accommodation at Leschenaultia House in Kojonup, Kerry Lodge in Katanning, and Mallee Springs in Gnowangerup. Leschenaultia House in Kojonup had six beds for our aged people, but every time someone passed on, the bed was closed down. We went from six beds down to three. A returned serviceman from Kojonup wanted go there and his family wanted him to as well, but he was told, “Sorry, no room. We’ve got three beds closed.” I have tried to put the question out there, but all I seem to get is handballing back and forth between the federal and state government. That is another thing I have brought to the attention of the health minister.

I briefly want to mention aged care. I was heartened to be at the opening of the Esperance aged care facility recently. There was \$3.5 million of royalties for regions money and \$3 million of federal money invested. Ken Wyatt opened the facility.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Ken Wyatt did a great job opening the centre, but we are having problems with the staffing of the Esperance aged-care nursing home. We need some assistance from our state Labor government. Wherever it can help in that department would be very much appreciated. We also need some help with our independent living units in the wheatbelt. Money was allocated in the royalties for regions budget and everything was in place. Five shires from around Wickepin, Corrigin and Cuballing were involved. It was a fantastic project. It had a business case and was ready for investment. What did it get last year? It got another bit of funding to do another business case. When it already had done about two or three business cases, it got some more funding, with the government saying that it would just push it out and to get another business case done. This is also the same with our eastern wheatbelt shires—10 shires that had got together for an independent living project, with some houses in each shire, faced the same thing. All they have is funding for the business cases. I say to the Minister for Regional Development that we need to come forth on these projects. It was very disappointing in the budget. There is no real support there. Unfortunately, unless aged people in the regions live in a Labor electorate such as Albany, Collie, Mandurah, Pilbara or Kimberley, they are in strife.

I am the spokesperson for education in the Nationals WA and this portfolio probably disappoints me the most. I would like to read a list of some of the schools that have been funded, which I am sure are worthy of funding. I will read the list. There is Broome Senior High School, with \$19.3 million, in the electorate of the member for Kimberley over there. Bunbury Senior High School has \$5 million. Collie Senior High School has funding of \$7.5 million. Eaton Primary School has funding of \$3 million.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton): Minister!

Several members interjected.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I am sure that the Collie slush fund will come forth, do not worry about that.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Eaton Community College has \$3 million. Flinders Park Primary School has \$2.5 million.

Point of Order

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The Minister for Police was interjecting from out of her seat.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you.

Debate Resumed

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Thank you!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Mount Lockyer Primary School in Albany has \$3 million. There is another school in Bunbury, South Bunbury Primary School, with \$3 million. Newton Moore Senior High School, another one in Bunbury, has \$3 million. Finally, I have got to the bottom of the list. Carnarvon Community College, in the electorate of the member for North West Central—he has been fighting there for years—has been getting built for the last three years. We are finally coming to the end, but we got a mention there in a seat that was not a Labor seat. My question is: what about Wagin District High School in the electorate of Roe, which badly needs infrastructure? The chair of the school board there, Anita Longmuir, says they are desperate for infrastructure. I refer to Hedland Senior High School and Bill Mann. This is an exception to the rule because this is the seat of Pilbara. When the Nationals went up to Hedland, we discovered a situation there. There was a \$10 million shortfall. Only a third of the 850 kids can get in the shade when they are having morning tea. We finally broke through once I came back here and asked the question of the Premier, who was unaware of the matter. Apparently, it would cost \$500 000. After that, we were told it would cost \$1.2 million. I cannot locate it in the budget, but I look forward to being enlightened by someone within the Minister for Education and Training's office about whether this \$1.2 million is there. It is disappointing when I see the millions and millions of dollars being spent in Labor-held electorates and, on this occasion, in the Pilbara electorate. I look also at the Treasurer's electorate, where \$7 million has been spent on Victoria Park Primary School.

Mr D.A. Templeman: It is not logical; you do not want that money to go to regional kids.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I want a share of it to go to all electorates. All our regional kids are worthy, Leader of the House. There is a disparity. I am seeing a pattern developing here. Certainly, \$7 million to the Vic Park school in the Treasurer's electorate is fantastic, but I would love to see some of that money going to Wagin, Hedland Senior High School and a few others through the wheatbelt.

I want to mention a couple of other things about education. The boarding away from home allowance has not been reinstated. Cutbacks were made when this government first came into power. Twenty per cent of the agricultural education farms provision trust has been taken away. Camp schools—the same thing. Four community kindergartens are under threat and I believe one of them is in the member for Armadale's area. Apparently, they do not have the numbers and they are under threat. I urge Labor members—all four community kindergartens under threat are in Labor electorates—to help out and talk to the Minister for Education and Training. I was amused last night when the member for Southern River spoke of the fantastic \$8.7 million for Moora Residential College in the budget. Funnily enough, that was delivered by Michael McCormack and Mathias Cormann with federal coalition money. That saved the day for Moora Residential College. If they had not come forth, we would still be talking about it. The Country Women's Association would probably be out there marching again—unheard of.

Mr M.P. Murray: The non-political group. They have tainted themselves by aligning with you guys.

Several members interjected.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: That is right—for 95 years. They are fighting for regional WA.

Mr M.P. Murray: They have spoilt the cream in their cakes.

Several members interjected.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: No, leave Rick Newnham and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia out of it. I notice in the budget papers that the year 7 and 9 kids are below the national standards in NAPLAN testing with the new benchmarking. They are well below the national benchmark now after the performance of the last couple of days.

Mr D.A. Templeman: It is a bit hard when you cannot log on.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: It is a concern that when they are benchmarked nationally —

Mr M.P. Murray: Bring back Barnaby, for goodness sake. At least he had something to write about.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I do not think he has anything to do with NAPLAN testing, member for Collie–Preston. This is a concern for everyone in the chamber. Year 7 and year 9 students in WA had 63 per cent reading proficiency compared with the national standard of 93 per cent. We need to take note of the chaos and confusion in the last couple of days. I heard the minister for education's press conference this morning and I agree that we need to clamp down on this situation with NAPLAN. While I have been talking about the funding of all these Eaton schools in the member for Bunbury's electorate, I want to express support for Grant Walton; 3 000 people have signed the petition for the deputy. I think we have all seen the media online.

I agree with the Minister for Education and Training that it is time to support our teaching staff. Some of the behaviour that is happening in our schools is not good enough. It is time to support our staff. What seems to happen now is the teacher is guilty until proven innocent. The minister spoke about it this morning. It is not good enough. It has taken too long—since March. Hopefully, by Friday there will be a decision from the director general of Education.

Dr A.D. Buti: You're right, but it is not actually a new phenomenon. Unfortunately, for a long period teachers were guilty until proven innocent.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I agree with that. Both sides of politics need to show their support for teachers. The job is getting harder every day, I can assure members.

I want to mention a few other things before I close. It has been well documented that the Water Corporation will return \$513 million to the government's coffers, yet people in the regions appear to be getting less service. There are real problems out in the Lake Grace–Jerramungup–Ravensthorpe area. When a drought is declared, the Water Corporation carts water from one dam to another. It has assets out there. Its empty dams are not being cleaned out and it is not cleaning the catchments, including the Lake Grace town dam. There are four or five Water Corp dams around the town. It needs to stay on top of its assets. Instead, it is letting its assets run down. Water Corp then tries to dump them onto local government. That is not good enough. Lake Grace was declared water deficient today. This will be a burden on the Water Corp, but, I am sorry, it has given \$500 million back to the state government. It will have to provide some services to the regions. This was the ideal opportunity to bring back the farm water rebate scheme, which was a fantastic initiative of the previous government. It encouraged farmers and communities to improve their assets to make them more self-reliant. I cannot understand why that has not been incorporated. I look forward to a little more thought being given during these dry conditions. When I look at the likes of Lake Grace, I find it quite disappointing.

To top it off, the Water Corporation has now decided that water out of a 25-millimetre standpipe fitting will cost \$2.50 a kilolitre, but water from a larger standpipe, which someone might need for a fire or to fill up a truck quickly, will be \$8.50 a kilolitre. It is exactly the same water out of the same pipe, but the charge is tripled if the standpipe has a bigger fitting. There has been real pushback from local governments on this one. Local governments are now acting as police on behalf of the Water Corporation. What are they doing? They are putting padlocks on all their standpipes because they cannot afford people to come in. If they get charged by Water Corp, they have to on-charge. If water gets taken out, they cannot cover that. That is a real disappointment.

In closing, I want to reiterate my thoughts about the Labor electorates. I am concerned about those electorates, especially around the fringe of Albany, Bunbury, Collie and Mandurah. I am looking forward to some of the money in next year's budget moving east into the electorate of Roe. I know the Minister for Local Government would be more than happy to see some of it drift away from the coast.

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [8.18 pm]: I will spend the next 20 minutes really enjoying myself, talking about what a superb budget this is for Western Australia, for regional Western Australia and for local communities. Before I do so, I was very pleased to hear the member for Roe's concern about Labor electorates, which were of course starved of support during the previous Liberal–National government. Before I talk about the budget itself, I want to talk about something that is very important to members of the backbench, and that of course is our local communities. I recently organised a dinner in Bunbury between members of the Islamic Association of Bunbury and the broader community. The dinner was organised following a visit to the association's meeting place after the tragedies in Christchurch. The aim was for people from all walks of life in my community to come together to share stories and ideas. In that room were people who operated small businesses, people employed in the professions, people working for state and local governments, engineers and tradespeople. In fact, it was a whole community of people from all over the world who had far more in common than they had differences, and all of whom were affected by government decisions every day in their everyday lives. The dinner was very much a micro version of the Bunbury community and was quite likely representative of most regional communities in Western Australia. These are the people whom this budget is designed to help—people from all walks of life, seeking the best for their families, with great hope for the future.

Before I talk about the budget in detail, I want to speak about one family in particular who has made Bunbury home on a short-term skilled migration visa. This family arrived in Australia some years ago. Shizleen Aishath is a mum. She has a son called Kayban who was born in St John of God Bunbury Hospital in July 2016. Shizleen is employed as a social worker and supports and helps people throughout the south west. Shizleen and her partner and two of her three children all hold temporary visas until 2023. Kayban, who was born in Australia and is now two years old, does not. He has severe type A haemophilia and an acquired brain injury that occurred during an accident during his birth at St John's. Because of his multiple health needs he has been denied a visa by the Department for Immigration and Border Protection. To date, the family has met the cost of his health needs and are paying their way through their own dedication and hard work. However, that has not been accepted by the Department for Immigration and Border Protection and his circumstances are now before the Administrative Appeals Tribunal—he is a two-and-a-half-year-old boy. If the family is returned to the Maldives, Kayban has a very poor prognosis. That is not the family's assessment; it is the assessment of medical practitioners.

Kayban is a two-and-a-half-year-old fighter, but his future is now firmly in the hands of the federal Minister for Immigration, Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs. I draw attention to his case in this place knowing that it is not a matter that can be addressed by the state; it is firmly in the hands of the commonwealth. The decision to not grant Kayban a visa does not pass the pub test or the test of over 11 000 people—that number is increasing every day—who have signed a petition in support of allowing him to stay. Kayban's case highlights how important it is that all of us, as members of Parliament, should act not only impartially, but also with compassion, regardless of whether it is a question of the commonwealth granting visas or shaping the state budget. We have an obligation to act fairly and with integrity and compassion for our communities. I will move on from Kayban's story.

Dr A.D. Buti: Well done, member for Bunbury, for bringing that up, and thank you.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: Thank you.

This is a very good budget. It is a reflection of the hard work of the Treasurer and ministers, but, importantly, it reflects a discipline about managing the state's finances that is driven by the Premier and endorsed by a united team with a clear vision of financial responsibility—which is something that I think was lacking in the previous Liberal–National government—and the objective of creating a better and fiscally secure financial future. That is what it is about; that is the critical feature. Delivering a good budget strategy and then, importantly, executing it requires teamwork, commitment, resilience, leadership and discipline, and this government is delivering that in spades. It is a united government with a clear sense of purpose and a clear budget strategy, but it is disciplined in how it executes it.

The Treasurer outlined the key features of the budget, most notably a \$533 million surplus in the operations of government that can be applied to important projects, as well as beginning the work of debt reduction. Importantly, though, this budget limits forecast growth of general government expenses to 1.5 per cent in 2019–20 and an average of 1.3 per cent over the next four years, compared with an average growth of 6.4 per cent during the previous government. I must say, sitting on this side of the house, it was a joy to watch all the long faces on the other side of the house as the Treasurer read out the budget, because really there is no arguing with those basic numbers. This is a good budget strategy. I have heard members opposite trying to pick holes in the budget, trying to weave and duck and dive and saying that this or that was not in their electorate, but overall this is a budget for the interests of Western Australia. Its financial management makes Western Australia the envy of other states and positions us well for the future.

The government had a focus on increasing revenue, both through direct commonwealth allocations as well as a fairer share of the GST. How many people have put up their hands claiming responsibility for the fairer share of the GST? I can tell members that it was the people of Western Australia who got that share because they were not going to put up with a federal Liberal–National government that was not delivering on the GST. The threat of losing all those seats, which it will probably lose on Saturday anyway, drove the incentive to start talking with our Premier.

Those allocations, together with the disciplined control of expenditure, has led to this result. Although there is still a mountain of debt to get on top of, this government is dealing with it in a manner that does not bring the state to a grinding halt while that debt is repaid. That is the important point. I have heard members opposite say, "Spend all the surplus on reducing debt; get rid of it, don't care about what happens to the state, just let the state grind to a halt." They would all complain about what is happening in their electorates if we adopted that strategy. The McGowan government is getting on with important projects in a financially responsible way, and this is paying dividends for the state as a whole. That is the fundamentally important part of this budget.

I was really pleased when the Premier came down to Bunbury for the budget lunch with the Bunbury Geographe Chamber of Commerce and Industry. It is an annual event that everybody looks forward to. It was a sell-out this year, with over 100 people. When my community in Bunbury, the business community, heard those numbers, there were rounds of applause. A number of people came up to me and said, "Thank goodness we've got a government that is exercising discipline and knows exactly where it's heading, because this is what we need for the future and for certainty." I then went to the federal candidates lunch the following Monday. It was quite astounding because all the candidates stood up and gave their spiel. The current sitting member gave her spiel about how good the federal Liberal–National government's approach to the economy was and how doubling the debt did not really matter in the scheme of things. Our candidate, a great man, Wayne Sanford stood up. He has an excellent history —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Who?

Mr D.T. PUNCH: If the member for Dawesville does not know who Wayne Sanford is, he clearly has not been in the south west.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: He was able to say quite clearly that you cannot attack the concept that Labor is a terrible economic manager. It is yesterday's news; it is not there. What is important —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: interjected.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: Let me speak.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: interjected.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: Acting Speaker, can I have your protection? I am getting seriously assaulted by the member for Dawesville.

Wayne Sanford was able to stand up and say what a fantastic job the state has done and that reflected on the capacity of Labor governments generally. I am looking forward to a Labor government being elected on Saturday and some fantastic outcomes, with an immediate response for dealing with some pretty poor budget management by the federal Liberal–Nationals.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: What is he on about? How can he interject when he has a shameful history of budget management? I find it amazing.

Mr R.R. Whitby: They have no clue.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: They have no clue.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: Mind you, this is the first budget —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Thank you.

Mr D.T. PUNCH: This is the first budget about which I have heard the member for Vasse say something positive—which was about dualling Bussell Highway. It was a positive comment. Usually the comment is, “There’s nothing in my electorate.” There it is; we got a compliment from the member for Vasse. We know what happens when a budget is presented. The members opposite act exactly as they are acting now, taking any scope to try to pick a hole in what is a superb budget. We know that we on this side will talk about the real strength of that budget, and that is what I will really enjoy in the next 10 minutes. I might have to ask for an extension.

I have listened to some of the arguments from members opposite about household expenditure, but this budget has been very successful in containing increases in household expenditure to an average of around two per cent, with power prices increasing by 1.75 per cent. As the Treasurer noted, this represents an increase to the average power bill of less than 10¢ a day. I appreciate that although modest increases, they have an impact on people. However, the consequence of not maintaining some link between price and cost is that down the track, households could be hit with even larger increases. Heaven forbid members opposite return to the government benches, because I am sure they would use that as an excuse to do exactly what they did when they were last in government, which was to ramp it up by 20 per cent or thereabouts.

Regional WA is a big beneficiary of this budget. I have heard a lot of complaining from the Nationals WA but the reality is that the royalties for regions legislation has not changed; we are administering it in exactly the same way that the previous government administered it. The difference is that we do not have two Treasuries. We do not have one at the Department of Regional Development and one in the Department of Treasury, with a Minister for Regional Development acting as a de facto Treasurer and a Treasurer. We have one Treasurer, one team and one set of ministers with a set of objectives for regional Western Australia and the metropolitan area. It is not about using royalties for regions to drive the politics of division; it is about taking the state forward as a whole. I am very pleased about that.

Coming closer to home, this budget helps to build on the McGowan government’s plan for Bunbury. My electorate will benefit from statewide initiatives such as job creation, with the McGowan governments target of creating 150 000 new jobs by 2023–24, of which 30 000 will be in regional WA. It has committed \$182 million over the forward estimates to establish an employer incentive scheme and increase training delivery for apprentices and trainees. It will also benefit from changes to the Keystart scheme, which will help to free up loan access for housing purchases, especially given the loan valuation risks that we are seeing from the banks in the regions. I am very pleased that the Minister for Culture and the Arts is here because I want to congratulate him on the budget outcomes for culture and the arts and what that means for regional Western Australia. Thank you, minister.

My electorate has a very close relationship with industry in the town of Collie and we in Bunbury know that Collie will experience a transition as power plants in the town age and demand for coal reduces. I welcome the government’s commitment to provide \$60 million to attract industry to the Collie area. This will help to support the economic resilience of the south west as a whole and employers who are based in Bunbury, and it will contribute to a just transition for those who are most affected. Well done, member for Collie–Preston.

There are many people working hard to support the growth of jobs in my electorate; the Apprentice and Traineeship Company, which is led by Stanley Liaros, is an example of this, as is Jobs South West led by Posy Barnes. Recently, the government opened the skills and jobs centre at South West TAFE to provide a one-stop shop for both employers and potential employees to share information about opportunities and skills. These are the sorts of initiatives that create jobs in regional Western Australia. I would have thought that members opposite would have been applauding those initiatives but all I hear is whingeing and moaning.

Infrastructure is prominent in this budget. The rollout of the waterfront project in Bunbury will continue, with works for the completion of Casuarina Drive and Jetty Road due to start this year and the completion of the business case for the final stage—construction of the marine facilities themselves are not far away. Again, this project has broad community support. I especially acknowledge the work of the Bunbury Development Committee in helping to drive that. Planning is well underway for the construction of the Bunbury Outer Ring Road and the government has announced that forward works will start on the dualling of Bussell Highway, south of Capel. The Bunbury Outer Ring Road is an excellent example of a state government that can build collaborative links with an opposing federal Liberal-National government. All too often in the past there has been an adversarial approach. This government has demonstrated the capacity to build relationships in the interests of Western Australia as a whole, and the Bunbury Outer Ring Road is an excellent example of that. Many other projects in the metropolitan area and regional WA also reflect that. Although that particular project is outside of my electorate, it signals huge opportunities for the local contracting sector, especially tier 2 and 3 contractors. It will benefit my electorate by providing certainty of port access in the future, reducing traffic congestion from through traffic and reducing freight–passenger vehicle conflict. It is also really exciting to see the construction of new road access in Kemerton to not only provide direct access to Albermarle’s Kemerton plant, but also open adjacent blocks. After nearly 30 years of a lack of action, Kemerton is finally coming into its own, and I am sure that the member for Murray–Wellington, who is a superb advocate for Kemerton, will agree that that will benefit the whole of the south west in terms of a major industry format.

There is \$32 million for the rail future fund, specifically for the replacement of the existing *Australind* with two new three-car sets and rail line and station improvements, some of which have already been completed. The current *Australind* cars commenced in 1987 and were an initiative of the then Labor government. The cars had a design life of up to 30 years with good maintenance, which should have seen them replaced in 2017. What did we see from the Liberal–National government? Nothing. Of course, the previous government had no plans to replace those cars —

Mr M.P. Murray: *AvonLink* got the money!

Mr D.T. PUNCH: Yes, *AvonLink* got it. What is more, it became clear that the previous government had scant regard for maintenance of this important asset, with an incredible build-up of wear and tear and corrosion across the two car sets, which we have had to spend the last three months repairing, with major work being done on those trains. Inheriting the *Australind* from the previous government was a little like buying that car that is all shiny and looks great, but when it is driven out of the car yard, it turns out to be an absolute lemon and the wheels fall off. That is what we inherited with the *Australind*.

Bunbury Hospital was also allocated \$11 million to start the work of building its capacity to meet the present and future needs of the region. The hospital acts as the peak hospital for the south west. It has an incredibly busy emergency department and surgical wards.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr D.T. PUNCH: It also has general wards, maternity wards and a very important subacute facility with a strong team that assists elderly patients to recover from surgery or illness. The need for Bunbury Hospital’s expansion was identified in the sustainable health review. Many of the staff at the hospital, although leading busy lives, also make enormous contributions to the community. Last Sunday, Bunbury held the annual Mother’s Day Classic walk in support of breast cancer research. It was organised by Dr Paratha Ramesh and Sharon Ramesh, who also led the annual Festival of Lights, developing a closer understanding of Indian culture in our community. They are two people who are representative of the incredible volunteerism in my community.

Education has also been a beneficiary of this budget, with South Bunbury Primary School receiving a long-overdue commitment of \$5.5 million to upgrade classrooms and early childhood facilities. I also recently met with students and staff at Newton Moore Senior High School, who are excited about their plans for a new science, technology, engineering and mathematics centre.

Smaller projects also make a huge difference to the life of a community, and I want to touch on one because they do not cost a lot, but they do make a difference. The Withers Progress Association has waited very patiently for many years to provide additional facilities at Des Ugle Park, the major events park in Withers. This budget delivers an allocation of more than \$671 000 to start new works on the Withers urban renewal strategy, which includes Des Ugle Park. This is a community that takes pride in what it has to offer to its local residents, and was determined to shake off years of neglect. Mary Dunlop, president of the association, has done a tremendous job highlighting the needs of Withers and helping to improve the quality of life within the suburb through access to services, improvements to public open space, and development of a range of youth activities, including the police and community youth centre. I acknowledge Mary and her committee members.

This budget has been developed by a disciplined and united team—a team with a clear vision for a bright future for Western Australia; a future that builds the jobs of the future, provides for the education of the future, and starts the work of building a new sustainable approach to health. It is a budget for all of Western Australia, and, importantly, it does not pit the regions against the metro area. But most importantly, this is a budget that puts fiscal responsibility and accountability back into government and restores community confidence. Thank you.

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [8.38 pm]: It is a pleasure to rise this evening and make some comments on the budget. I would like to begin by acknowledging the hard work of the Treasurer, because I do not think it has been a simple, easy or, indeed, painless task to restore the finances of this state, but in only three years, he has been able to deliver WA's first operating surplus in five years, and I think that is truly remarkable.

I am not the only one who thinks so; the front cover of *The West Australian* also suggested that the community supports the budget, the media supports the budget and, indeed, all of my electors seemed overwhelmingly positive in their reactions to a lot of our announcements. It was interesting listening to some of the debate earlier and the suggestion that this was all luck. There was very faint praise of the budget and, in some instances, members opposite bemoaned the purported shortcomings and failings of the budget. I would like to touch on a quote from this same article in *The West Australian*, "Back on Track" —

... unprecedented GST receipts, thanks to a new commonwealth deal agreed to by the Federal Parliament last year ...

That was a deal that our state government was able to negotiate and broker—that more GST receipts would come back to our state. That did not happen by accident. It is interesting. Victory has a thousand fathers. However, the fact remains that it was our state government that was able to negotiate that deal. That was hard fought for and certainly something that we should be proud of. That is just one of the ingredients that has found us in the position of being able to get the state's finances back on track.

Like members on the other side, I, too, would like schools in my electorate to have much needed investment in infrastructure. I, too, have schools that are over 100 years old and in dire need of investment. However, when we got into government, we had to be the adults in the room and restore the state's finances, first and foremost. The previous Liberal–National government acted like drunken sailors. We have had to restore the finances. I hope we are now in a position to be able to invest money into those critical infrastructure programs for kids in public schools in both the metropolitan area and the regions. That is fundamentally important. Clearly, it was not a priority for the previous government. It did nothing. In fact, when I interjected in this chamber on the former Premier, he conceded that things had not been done adequately for schools in my electorate. Therefore, I find it a bit frustrating, to say the least, to listen to the other side bemoan the lack of investment. We cannot do it all. We cannot be the ones to rein in all the spending that happened under the previous government, which, as I said, acted extraordinarily recklessly, and also invest in all the things in which we want to invest. However, in saying that, I am pleased to talk through some of the great things our government has been able to do and still manage to achieve a surplus.

It is worth noting that it is easy to say yes to spending and it is easy to splash money around. Our Labor government had to make difficult decisions. We had to be the conscientious ones, the considerate ones, and the ones who analyse things and are prudent and frugal, where necessary, so that we could arrive at the position we are in at the moment. I take my hat off to the Premier and the Treasurer, and all their cabinet colleagues, and everyone in government, for helping to deliver this outcome. It will ultimately lead to a stronger and more prosperous Western Australia, certainly for future generations as well, which is critically important.

This budget delivers a \$2.5 billion turnaround from where the former Liberal–National government left us. That government did not have one expected operating surplus over the forward estimates. That is how dire the finances of the state were during that government's tenure. Therefore, it is a bit galling to listen to members opposite complain about the state of affairs now. Under this government, net debt is expected to be \$4 billion less than over the forward estimates of the previous Liberal–National government. That is phenomenal. State debt is forecast to peak, and subsequently decline, over the forward estimates period.

I now want to touch on an important issue not only to my community but also in all our electorates across the state; that is, jobs. The Labor Party took that to the 2017 election. We said, "We know that jobs are important to Western Australians; so, if we get into government, we will do everything we possibly can to make sure that we have a strong economy in which everybody can participate and get stable and secure jobs", and that is what we set out to do. Treasury estimates that in 2019–20, employment will grow by 1.75 per cent. That is the equivalent of over 23 000 jobs. That will obviously improve life outcomes for many Western Australians.

Metronet is not only a critical public transport infrastructure project, but also a record investment of \$4 billion in public transport infrastructure. I am really pleased that two Metronet stations will be built in my electorate—one at the airport and one at Redcliffe. It is a fantastic public transport infrastructure initiative, but also, almost as importantly, it will create jobs along the way for locals.

While I am on the topic of transport, I would like to touch on the announcement made just prior to the presentation of the budget about critical infrastructure for eight new road projects across the eastern suburbs. I will not outline all of them—all eight projects are relevant to my constituents—but the one that will have the greatest and most positive impact in my electorate is the Lloyd Street extension. Locals in the South Guildford and Hazelmere areas experience congestion, so I know that that project will be welcomed by many locals.

As other members have touched on, including the member for Bunbury, a really important element of the budget is the fact that we have been able to restrain the increase in electricity prices. It is at a 13-year low, at just 1.75 per cent.

The member for Roe said that it is still an increase and that it will be difficult for people in our community to manage, and I am absolutely sensitive to that. There are many vulnerable families in my community and I understand that that will be really difficult. But it is at a 13-year low. We are trying our best to help ease that burden. As the Treasurer said, that equates to a cost of about 10¢ a day being added to power bills. We have done our very best to alleviate those pressures on household costs. Another way that the budget will address the pressures on the cost of living that I am pleased with is the energy assistance payment. That payment will be increased in line with residential electricity tariffs, so that will support the really vulnerable households that we all have in our communities.

I would love to see more money go into public education, because I think it has transformative effects in potentially changing the trajectory of a child's life. I would always like to see more, and I will always argue for more, in my community, as I am sure the Minister for Education and Training can attest to. I am pleased that this budget has not ignored our schools, even though some people on the other side might suggest otherwise. This is quite evident from the fact that in the 2019–20 year, \$452 million will be put towards infrastructure in our ageing public schools. It might not go as far as it needs to go, or as far as members want it to go for their constituents and local schools, but we are doing our best, and I certainly hope to see more of that.

Another initiative in the budget that I am really excited about is the investment in science labs in our schools. We all understand—I do not have to labour the point—that science, technology, engineering and mathematics is a really important area. We want to encourage young people as much as possible to engage in STEM subjects, because we understand that that will place them in the best possible light to obtain a quality job in the future. Fifty-one primary schools across the state will be part of the \$3 million investment, which is fantastic. In addition to the science labs, schools will get \$25 000 towards upgrading and purchasing new equipment. That is fantastic, because it will go a long way in inspiring and encouraging young people to engage in science subjects. The equipment might include things such as 3D models of the solar system and the human anatomy, digital microscopes, 3D printers and virtual reality headsets. I certainly did not grow up with any of these fantastic things in my school and I think it is fair to say that these types of resources will go a long way in fostering an interest in STEM subjects. Encouraging young people in this area is taken really seriously. The other area along the same line is coding. We have put coding into the school curriculum. Again, this is a really critical path for our young people. I am very proud that the first science lab to be rolled out in the state was at Belmont Primary School. We had the Premier come out and do an experiment with the students. It is a really welcome investment into our local schools. One also opened up just this week at Rivervale Primary School. I hear the kids are extremely excited and I look forward to having a tour with the kids shortly. Also in my electorate, Carlisle Primary School and Belmay Primary School are set to get a new school lab. This is critical investment and it shows the Labor government's dedication to ensuring that our kids are prepared for the jobs of the future. I am really proud of these initiatives.

I would also like to bring to the house's attention the \$5 million in capital investment that will deliver a new performing arts centre at Belmont City College. Belmont City College is a fantastic high school in my electorate that has a specialist drama program, but currently it does not have the capacity to take the number of students into that course who want to do it because of the size of its current performing arts facility. This is something the school is very excited about, and planning and development of that construction is underway. I look forward to going along to future shows and seeing the stars of the future on its stage.

Importantly, \$40 million in the budget is directed to public schools to support them and their children who have disabilities. This funding will support students who have an eligible diagnosis of global development delay, intellectual disability, autism spectrum disorder, vision impairments, severe mental disorder, physical disability or are deaf and hard of hearing, and so forth. We are committed to making sure that our children right across this state get the best opportunities to learn.

Another area in which we have really excelled is community safety. This is a big issue in my electorate. We have a lot of work to do in this space and it takes a whole-of-community approach, because there are some complex social issues, as I am sure there are right across the state in so many parts of our community. Of course, we have to be grateful for all the hard work done by our hardworking police officers who dedicate their lives to ensuring our safety in the community. It was great to see announced in the budget the personal multi-threat body armour that will help protect our police officers. This will be very welcome by the local police in my area. Also our community wants to make sure that the police who are doing their very best to protect us are protected against those doing the wrong thing. I also welcome the funding that has been allocated for the mobile tablets that will free up time for our really busy police officers to spend more time on the beat. I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank all the local police officers in Belmont, led by the new officer in charge Daniel Grieve. The police work really hard protecting our community and our constituents right across Belmont. I would like to thank them for all their hard work.

All our communities have been affected by methamphetamine abuse, which is a very difficult and challenging issue that governments need to tackle. Our government is determined to tackle this issue head on. We are doing that by providing the much needed resources to make our communities as safe as possible. That is why we have

dedicated \$42 million towards the meth action plan. That brings the total up to about \$244 million to help address this very complex and challenging issue that remains a scourge in our community. I look forward to seeing the outcomes of our dedicated approach to this.

Police and community youth centres are a personal favourite. Everybody in the community seems to love PCYCs. I was very pleased to see the additional funding of \$11 million to support PCYCs. As a result of that funding, I hope they might look at putting one in my electorate of Belmont, because it would be really welcomed.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms C.M. ROWE: Our government continues to dedicate itself to addressing the scourge of domestic and family-related violence and making sure that funds are available to protect vulnerable women and children. That includes over \$30 million towards a range of initiatives to tackle this scourge in our community. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of Starick, which is a group that does critical work, particularly in my community. I would like to thank the CEO, Leanne Barron, and her fantastic team, who dedicate themselves to protecting the lives of women and children who are fleeing domestic violence.

Mental health is a particular interest of mine because it is very important and affects and afflicts many right across our community. It is non-discriminatory in whom it touches and affects. It can debilitate people and lead to terrible results. I was pleased to see the record level of investment in dealing with mental health—that is, an investment of \$942 million into mental health, alcohol and drug services. This government is not just talking about mental health issues and paying lip service to them. It is putting its money where its mouth is and throwing everything at addressing this sad issue, which affects many lives. That sum includes \$93 million to boost mental health services provided by the public health system by 2022–23. The Mental Health Commission will provide \$942 million worth of mental health and alcohol and other drug prevention treatment support and services for Western Australians right across the state.

I am always saddened when I think that one person loses their life to suicide every day in Western Australia. That is a terrible statistic, and its impact is felt deeply through our entire community. I am really pleased—if that is the word, but I think “relieved” is more fitting—to see that \$8 million will go towards suicide prevention programs. That funding will support the excellent work that has been undertaken by the Mental Health Commission to deliver the state’s Suicide Prevention 2020 program, which aims to reduce the number of suicides in WA by 50 per cent over the next decade. That is really important and we should take a moment to reflect on that. A single life lost is one life too many. I look forward to more being done in this space, but I congratulate the Minister for Health for taking this initiative and taking it seriously. The budget will fund other mental health initiatives, including nearly \$9 million to continue the mental health court diversion program, which is an important initiative that supports children and adults with mental health conditions whose offending is linked to mental health issues. The program works to improve community safety, but just as importantly, it tries to reduce repeat offending. A sum of \$4.8 million will be made available to establish a 10-bed crisis centre in Midland and \$1 million will go to alcohol and other drug education programs for schools, which will focus on at-risk students. A sum of \$614 000 will go towards alcohol and other drug training for frontline workers such as psychologists, social workers and counsellors. Those initiatives highlight this government’s commitment to investing in mental health services and will provide Western Australians with better access to care that is closer to where they live.

Another area of the budget that we should be proud of is what the government is doing for the environment. I was pleased to note committed funding for national parks and reserves to increase Western Australia’s conservation estate by over 20 per cent. Under the ambitious plan for our parks initiative, five million hectares of new national and marine parks and reserves will be established over the next five years. We are also progressing the bid for a World Heritage listing of the Murujuga rock art, and this will give it the international recognition it so deeply deserves.

Another thing very dear to my heart is the commitment to establishing a container deposit scheme. I spoke about this last week. We are going to commence this in 2020, and our budget includes \$4.4 million to implement the scheme. Over the next 20 years, this scheme is predicted to reduce container litter by 760 million and it will cut the number of containers sent to landfill by 6.6 billion, which is quite remarkable. It will also see an increase in recycled containers by 5.9 billion. I think this important environmental initiative is well overdue. It is really welcome in my electorate, because people understand the issue. They have a heightened appreciation for the need to address our waste in a practical fashion. I think people really look to governments to lead the way, obviously and naturally. I think this is a really great initiative. I welcome it and I really hope to see more of this type of initiative going forward.

In 2017, we made the commitment to the public that we would focus on creating jobs. More than 37 000 jobs have been created since the 2017 election. This budget sees the lowest increase in household fees and charges in 13 years, because we know how hard and tough it is for people to make ends meet. We also managed to turn our state finances around, and our economy continues to grow. But we are still investing in those critical areas of health, education, protecting the community, mental health, our environment and so many other important things I have not had time to touch on this evening.

In closing, I again thank the Treasurer and acknowledge his work. It has been absolutely remarkable, to say the least, that he has been able to achieve what he has achieved in only three years. I think it shows his commitment and hard work in turning the tide for our state, and I hope that one day our children will be able to appreciate all the hard work of the Treasurer.

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [9.02 pm]: First of all, of course, I congratulate the Treasurer and also all his cabinet colleagues for maintaining fiscal discipline in this year's budget. I specifically want to mention the Treasurer's cabinet colleagues because they all have particular projects or plans within their own portfolios that I am sure they would have been keen to pursue, but which they had to abandon or compromise for the greater good. Some might say that the state of the books is thanks to a more equitable arrangement of the GST, with the commonwealth injecting funds back into the state coffers, but that interpretation is trite. When referring to budget paper No 3, the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* for 2019–20, it becomes apparent that GST grants represent only a portion of the state's revenue. It is certainly welcome that through the McGowan government's persistent and determined advocacy for reform and a fair share for WA, GST revenue will rise from 47¢ in the dollar to a 70¢ guaranteed floor. However, paradoxically under the Commonwealth Grants Commission formula, the better a state's economy performs relative to other states, the more there is a reduction of GST, but thankfully now with this 70¢ floor, revenue will at least not go into freefall. However, something must be appreciated about the so-called GST windfall. In the words of the Treasurer last year in response to a question without notice —

It sounds like a lot and it is a lot, but let us put it in perspective; it is about six months' funding for the health budget of Western Australia.

Let us take that and put it to good use by ensuring debt gets paid and interest payments are therefore reduced.

Less well known or appreciated is the revenue from commonwealth tied grants. Although there is a veneer of largesse on the way the commonwealth has handled GST in recent years, the same cannot be said for tied grants that make up 50 per cent of the state's revenue. These tied grants are subject to conditions being imposed on the states and are subject to formal agreement entered into by the states. A significant number of agreements in health, education and housing, for example, are due to expire shortly. From a state budgetary perspective, there is always uncertainty about whether these expiring agreements will be renewed or whether the amount allocated will be reduced. It makes medium to long-term planning very difficult.

The notion of tied grants is also problematic when the commonwealth wishes to impose certain conditions or requests that the states match the federal contribution. Similarly, the commonwealth pursues a strong ideological line by tying the funding to the fulfilment of certain conditions, which erodes the autonomy of states and is not flexible enough to take into account local conditions and differing priorities. The desire of the commonwealth to walk away once and for all with its funding for remote Indigenous housing is a case in point. Under a long-term agreement, the state received approximately \$100 million every year for housing in its 165 remote Indigenous communities. The 10-year national funding partnership agreement, designed to ensure that people in remote communities had access to private affordable public and community housing, ended in June last year. The federal government offered a mere \$60 million over three years to be matched by the state as its final payment. The commonwealth asserted that the national partnership was never to continue indefinitely and that remote housing was a core state responsibility, and several other states had already accepted that proposition. I am pleased to say that Western Australia rejected that as a completely inadequate and insufficient exit payment.

The Premier, the Treasurer and Minister Tinley all separately made the point to the commonwealth that the commonwealth had provided states with funding for housing in remote Indigenous communities for decades and that it had an obligation to continue to do so. After many months of robust discussions, the commonwealth agreed and offered \$120 million to be paid in a lump sum earlier this year. It is arguable that with the pending election, the federal government wanted to clear the decks and get this contentious issue off the agenda. As a postscript, I was pleased to hear today in question time that the federal opposition leader, Bill Shorten, has promised \$1.5 billion over 10 years, which will provide greater stability and certainty and assist in closing the gap. Similarly, the federal government has cut \$77 million from WA public hospitals under these grants. That translates, of course, into fewer doctors, nurses and health staff, which puts more pressure on emergency departments and elective surgery waiting lists. All this is a roundabout way of saying that in the course of the federal election, Liberal candidates are keen to tell the community that the GST problem has been fixed, but they are more reticent to fess up about where tied grants and agreements with the commonwealth have resulted in significant cuts to funding for WA.

Every now and then something happens that causes pause for thought and reflection, and so it was for me earlier this year. I had time to reflect on our public health system from a consumer's perspective. Although I had been on the board at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and assisted in drafting the patients charter of rights, that was some time ago. It is a very different perspective as a patient. I am very proud that we have highly adept and world-class doctors in our tertiary hospitals and, similarly, a committed and highly professional nursing contingent. I am extremely grateful and humbled by their considerable efforts. We hear less often about those patient care assistants who come in regular contact with patients. I have never met such a colourful and dedicated bunch of people. Most have worked at Charlies for many years, love their jobs and are good at it. They were happy to have a banter about

the Celtic Football Club, scrounge a piece of equipment Arthur Daley-style, seamlessly and cheerfully transfer my bulk from one bed to another without showing strain, or to give a reassuring smile as I was wheeled off to a procedure, test or operation. These patient assistants are often from migrant and, in some cases, refugee backgrounds. They really are the heart and soul of large hospitals and provide a human touch for what is otherwise a bewildering, isolating and overwhelming encounter with the health system.

I was a little surprised during my stay at Charlies that accompanying me wherever I went in that vast hospital was a mass of paperwork, expanding by the day. I wonder whether the day is at hand to move these records into the twenty-first century so that they can be stored and accessed electronically. This is certainly the case at Fiona Stanley Hospital. It is simply false economy not to make those parts of the system more efficient, thereby saving precious time and, most importantly, ensuring that critical treatment decisions are made with all information at hand.

On a more parochial note, I am heartened by robust reassurances from both the Minister for Health and the contents of the budget that the state's contribution of \$167 million towards the expansion of Joondalup Health Campus is proceeding. Those scallywag Liberal candidates in the northern suburbs have taken out large ads in the local newspaper and distributed pamphlets, no doubt at great expense, to peddle the lie that Labor cut \$167 million from Joondalup Health Campus and that Labor had broken its promise to deliver \$167 million in funding to Joondalup Health Campus. The McGowan government is simply getting on with the job and will deliver on its commitment to expand Joondalup Health Campus to reflect the needs of our residents in the northern suburbs. Important planning continues, and I am advised that work is expected to commence early next year.

One part of the expansion that I am really delighted about is the new stroke unit that opened in March this year. The new service comprises a 12-bed unit, including six acute beds that are co-located with the therapy space. This provides convenient access and opportunity for early specialist stroke rehabilitation, providing comprehensive care. We all know how important time is in addressing strokes. I am absolutely delighted that this unit has finally been established because I have been lobbying successive health ministers for many years for this to occur. Once rehabilitation was moved from Shenton Park to Fiona Stanley Hospital, it meant an even longer journey for visiting families and those attending outpatients from my electorate. Often, patients spend many weeks in hospital and it contributed to the strain, delaying recovery by not having more accessible treatment available closer to home.

I acknowledge the complexity of the health system. That is reflected in the \$9.1 billion expenditure. It comprises 31 per cent of the total government expenditure allocated in this year's budget. The government must cover within this vast portfolio everything from investment in infrastructure and equipment, the challenges of adequately servicing mental health demands, training 44 000 staff, addressing the meth addiction that is so prevalent in our community, accommodating the needs of an ageing population, and educating the community on healthy lifestyle and disease prevention. However, as a volunteer advocate for Alzheimer's WA I was disappointed that explicit provision was not made for a number of measures to address better and more efficient treatment of dementia patients in hospital. There are 42 000 Western Australians living with dementia. Without a medical breakthrough, this number is expected to increase rapidly, to 84 000 by the year 2031. As we all know, dementia affects not only the individual but also their family and the wider community. It is the leading cause of death for women in Western Australia and the most prevalent chronic neurological condition. In 2013, dementia became the second leading cause of death in Australia. However, approximately 70 per cent of those living with dementia can live at home and continue to access their communities and local services. Strategies to respond to dementia need to target both community and healthcare settings.

Hospital use by people with dementia is significant. It is estimated that up to 35 per cent of people over the age of 65 admitted to hospital will have some form of cognitive impairment. Often these admissions are due to comorbidity health issues rather than related to the person's dementia. Avoidable adverse outcomes for a person with dementia during a hospital stay are common, with the average length of stay 3.5 times longer and much higher rates of preventable complications occurring. It is estimated that the financial cost of treating a person in hospital is up to 50 per cent more if the patient has dementia. This increased cost imposition on hospital services is significant and will grow exponentially over the coming years as the prevalence rate of people living with dementia grows by up to 300 per cent.

Research indicates that people admitted to hospital are often not identified as even having cognitive impairment at admission and this can lead to adverse outcomes during their hospital journey. A national trial of a cognitive impairment identification and education program has shown the positive outcomes of successful early identification and the subsequent improved hospital experiences of both staff and patients. Having observed a number of people with dementia in our tertiary hospitals, they are simply not set up to care for these individuals in a way that assists and expedites their recovery. Programs to address these issues include the Alzheimer's WA Dementia Change Champion Program, the development of hospital workforce training programs and the recent appointment of health region cognitive impairment coordinators. All these programs were in the Alzheimer's WA pre-budget submission.

Alzheimer's WA's Dementia Change Champion Program is Australia's most extensive program, with over 100 allied health champions trained in 21 hospital and multipurpose sites across the state. In its budget submission,

Alzheimer's WA sought funding for the Dementia Change Champion Program to be expanded to allow broader reach to regional hospitals with a three-year contract for program delivery. The pre-budget submission also requested project funding to be made available for cognitive impairment awareness in hospital initiatives, such as consistent statewide adoption of the cognitive impairment indicator program and the rollout of the Focus on the Person program. Alzheimer's WA advocated that improved discharge support systems be provided to people with dementia in their families. These recommendations support and are consistent with the sustainable health review that targets improving the hospital experience while also focusing on the necessary and efficient use of hospital resources.

Ensuring health and community support systems are in place at discharge is very important, as is specialist outpatient follow-up by a specialist nurse. It will increase discharge confidence, leading to early discharges and improved bed flow within hospitals where we know there is great demand. Often people with cognitive impairment are kept in hospital longer, as clinicians are concerned that adequate systems are not in place at home to support the person. With patient support, health and navigation, care and coaching, the risk of hospital readmission is significantly reduced. There is a need for a program to provide specialist post-discharge —

[Member's time extended.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: — nurses for people with cognitive impairment and additional complexities that increase their risk of adverse outcomes. These are very important initiatives. Although I think some of the funding allocated in the budget for the sustainable health review could be allocated to these initiatives, it is clear that a lot of that is about administrative changes rather than programs. Of course, we have talked in this place on many occasions about age-friendly and dementia-friendly communities, and that was also included in the Alzheimer's WA submission. As I said, we know that 70 per cent of people with dementia stay at home and interact with and access local community services and support.

One of the things that the sustainable health review has referred to is a program from the UK called the Compassionate Frome project. The sustainable health review recommendation 14 states —

Transform the approach to caring for older people by implementing models of care to support independence at home and other appropriate settings, in partnership with consumers, providers, primary care and the Commonwealth.

The report states further on —

Introduction, evaluation and spread of approaches to reduce social isolation and unplanned admissions to hospital guided by the successful Compassionate Frome Project, ...

This program has engaged the local community in the south west of the United Kingdom to improve health outcomes and the quality of life for patients. It has managed to achieve a reduction in emergency admissions of 17 per cent, which is significant. According to the project, this represents five per cent of the region's health budget. Research shows that no other factors were attributed to this reduction in hospital admissions.

Through this project, they address the link between loneliness and ill health by bringing together general practice, social services, charities and the community hospital. They improve the connectedness of both staff and patients. Volunteers are trained as community connectors to help people they meet find the right service for them. To date, almost 400 groups and organisations have offered support, advice, companionship and creative activity through this project. GP services are integrated with links to the community they serve in their daily work. They are able to reconnect people in the community in which they live. It is a fantastic program. We are obviously a vast state but, certainly, I am very heartened by the sustainable health review embracing this model.

I will now talk briefly about some other government initiatives that were in the budget; in particular, I commend the government for making funds available to expand the number of police and community youth centres and make them more sustainable. Over the years, I have visited a number of these in both metropolitan and regional WA and they do great work. We all know, as a matter of economics, that the more we can engage with young people at an early age, the more likely they will stay on the right track and not be diverted into crime, antisocial behaviour or long-term unemployment. However, I fiercely agree with the member for Burns Beach, who last night called for the establishment of a PCYC in the northern suburbs. The need is acute.

Those who have had the misfortune to listen to my speeches over the year will be familiar with my grievance and whinge that the site of the former Hainsworth primary school has been left vacant for many years. I think, in total, seven ministers—I have counted Minister Marmion twice because he had the portfolio on two separate occasions—in the previous government failed to progress construction on this site. I congratulate Minister Tinley for his prompt action upon the government being elected. The Amble Estate was created and a number of houses have been built and are being lived in. I recently attended a community consultation held on the future of neighbouring Roydon Park and the facilities needed at the park. It is a great model of community consultation. All this has transformed the vicinity, and I am very grateful for the patience and forbearance of the residents who live nearby.

Secondly, I applaud the government for its ongoing and strong commitment to education in the budget. I congratulate in particular Girrawheen Senior High School for its achievement in greatly improving literacy in the latest NAPLAN results. I should formally farewell Rosalba Butterworth, who moved on as principal. The improvement

in literacy at Girrawheen Senior High School is in no small measure due to her commitment and passion. I look forward to working with principal Barb Newton in her new role. I also wish to congratulate Ashdale Secondary College, which celebrated today its tenth anniversary. Due to my commitments here, I was unable to attend those celebrations. It is an outstanding school and, similarly, principal Kylie Bottcher is really generating a great atmosphere and a real enthusiasm for learning. Warwick Senior High School is also punching above its weight in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Late last year, Warwick Senior High School won the secondary category in the 2018 Governor's School STEM Awards, which recognises excellence in science, technology, engineering and maths. It was the runner-up in 2017. The high schools in my electorate are doing exceptionally well, and I thank staff, teachers and students for their commitment.

The focus of the budget, which I welcome, is on generating jobs, and rightly so. I am particularly concerned, however, about those who are aged over 45 years and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds who are disproportionately represented in the unemployment figures. I am not sure whether improving the prospects of these two cohorts can be achieved by government alone. I consider that we need to work in collaboration with employers and better educate those who are wary about employing workers in these categories. Likewise, there is an ongoing issue within the African community. Many African Australians in my electorate, even those who have obtained their academic qualifications in Australia, are unable to gain the necessary experience to be competitive in the job market.

I turn to tourism. I congratulate Minister Papalia for his commitment to securing direct flights from Perth to India. It is a work in progress. The work is supported by a budget allocation. We all know that the Indian diaspora in WA has increased exponentially in the last decade. It would be a fillip to tourism if relatives with family in WA can access direct flights from India.

The final matters relate to tourism and the arts. First, the state government provides substantial funding to the Perth International Arts Festival, but there are very few PIAF daytime or matinee shows. For those who rely on public transport, and for seniors who may have supported the arts for decades and youngsters who are being introduced to live performances, this is unfortunate. I consider that the government needs to mandate that a small quota of programs be scheduled during the day or early evening to accommodate these people and that overall funding be made conditional on this.

I am also heartened to read that the budget includes a sum of \$30 million to clean up the East Perth power station to get it ready for development, which is well overdue. The activation of that part of East Perth, including transport infrastructure for Optus Stadium, makes the proposal more viable. I am strongly of the view that we need a world-class First Nations museum and art gallery there. Originally there was a proposal for a small Indigenous gallery at Elizabeth Quay, but that never eventuated. I have also suggested in previous speeches that such a museum could be situated at the Sunset Hospital site, but to no avail. I have been fortunate enough to visit the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, which is a fantastic showcase of First Nations culture and history, and which we would do well to copy. I think we underestimate the popularity of such culturally focused venues, especially with European tourists.

That is a segue to my final observation on the Museum, which will open next year. I was delighted late last year, along with the member for Mount Lawley and the Greek Consul, to have a sneak preview of the Katta Djinoong gallery—formerly the Hellenic Gallery. It has a classical Greek relief running around the top of the gallery walls. This is one of the world's best-quality casts of the Elgin marbles—or, as I prefer to call them, the Parthenon marbles—which were expropriated from the Parthenon in Athens by Lord Elgin and are now held in the British Museum, despite numerous and sustained calls for their return to their rightful place in Greece. I believe that, with the opening of the gallery, we could run a small tourist campaign in Greece for people to come and visit the marbles in Perth. We could maybe concurrently conduct an essay competition for school students in Greece to win a trip to Perth.

In conclusion, I reiterate that the so-called GST fix is not the whole story in terms of revenue, and that federal–state relations will continue to impact on our revenue levels because of tied grants and the differing policy priorities of the respective governments. We are very fortunate to have first-class tertiary hospitals with remarkable, committed staff, and with a budget of \$9.1 billion for health, there is some room for efficiencies in the ways in which patients are diagnosed and discharged, within the context of patients with cognitive impairment. Bouquets to the government for various other budget initiatives. Finally, I made some gratuitous suggestions in the area of culture and the arts! I commend the bills to the house.

MR K.J.J. MICHEL (Pilbara) [9.31 pm]: I rise to contribute to debate on the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019. I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the Treasurer in the delivery of another sensible and fair budget, and in delivering the state's first budget surplus in five years. I would also like to acknowledge everyone who has made a contribution to debate on the appropriation bills.

I will start by taking members back to the situation faced two years ago by local residents in my electorate of Pilbara. I would also like to bring to the attention of this house that Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who is a wonderful and great minister, came to Karratha for a budget lunch and delivered a great budget meeting. I would like to thank Minister Dawson for coming to Port Hedland and having a budget lunch for the people there. I would also like to

thank Minister Johnston for coming to Newman and presenting a budget morning tea the next day. The people of Karratha, including the mayor, the CEO, the councillors and the other people who came for the budget breakfast really applauded our budget delivery. The same happened in Port Hedland. People are finding this budget to be a very fair budget.

Western Australia was going through the first recorded recession in our history, following a once-in-a-lifetime boom. Small businesses had been struggling to get housing for their workers in the Pilbara, with rents as high as \$3 000 a week. They were being forced to house their workers in tents and backyards. Many residents, after having worked for many years in Karratha, Port Hedland and Newman, lost their jobs and local businesses suffered a large reduction in workflow. That was a shock to everyone. Many businesses started to cut back on staff and worked on lean margins to keep afloat.

On top of that, we had a nasty Liberal–National government that kicked residents while they were down. A glut of housing was released by LandCorp, but it was a little too late—it flooded the market with more vacant properties and caused property values to drop by more than 60 per cent. Nearly 2 500 properties were repossessed by the banks and sold cheaply. In 2013, the typical value of a home in Port Hedland was \$1.27 million. That fell to about \$395 000 in 2016. In 2013, South Hedland houses had a median price of \$865 000. That fell to around \$195 000 in 2016. Property prices and rents were both impacted by the rise of mining camps for workers that bypassed the local housing markets. Many of the camps were constructed by mining companies precisely because rents and house prices had been skyrocketing, making the unusually high cost of construction worth the investment of constructing residential camps.

Under 10 per cent of the local contractors and local residents were employed on local projects. Fly in, fly out workers dominated these projects. The Liberal–National government did not have a plan for local workers. It did not care about local residents getting local jobs.

The Liberal–National government kicked residents when they were down. It forced ratepayers to pay for the cost blowout of the Pilbara underground power project. While business owners were still struggling with huge mortgages, high rates and no jobs, the Liberal–National government sent homeowners a \$3 000 bill, and commercial property owners a bill for up to \$100 000, for the underground power. The Liberal–National government did not care. It kept piling debts on taxpayers by continuing to build the Pelago Apartments and Osprey Village, and by putting additional funding into the City of Karratha building, The Quarter. It made sure all contracts went its Liberal–National mates, getting jobs for the boys.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr R.S. LOVE: I think the member has just impugned that the Liberal–National members of this house are corrupt, and I think he should withdraw the remark.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton): That is not a point of order.

Debate Resumed

Mr K.J.J. MICHEL: There were no responsible business cases. They did not care how much debt was piled on local residents. The Liberal–National government kicked the people of our Pilbara while they were down, and put the state into \$40 billion worth of debt. It was reckless, and the Western Australian voters let it know that at the ballot box.

I was elected to be a local voice for the Pilbara and to fight for local jobs for local projects. Two years later, long-term and sustainable optimism has returned to the Pilbara with the delivery of the McGowan government's "Plan for the Pilbara". Since we have been in government, there has been stabilisation and sustainable growth in the Pilbara's population. The estimated residential population of Karratha and Port Hedland, and the Shire of Ashburton, including Onslow, grew slightly during 2017 and 2018, as did the residential population of the whole of the Pilbara. We have also seen an increase in the median house price. Late last year, the then president of the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia, Hayden Groves, was quoted by *The West Australian* —

"The Pilbara property market has stabilised with rents now beginning to edge up again and property values no longer falling," he said.

"Investor confidence is beginning to return as a result, albeit more cautiously in the face of tighter lending conditions from banks and recent lessons from the last bust fresh in the minds of many."

We are seeing positive signs in Hedland and Newman. The McGowan Labor government is not reckless and we will not kick the residents of the Pilbara while they are down. We are committed to getting the right balance between a residential workforce and a fly in, fly out workforce. The McGowan government has put in the hard work to ensure that local Pilbara residents get access to local jobs first, before FIFO workers. Woodside has announced its aim to have a fully residential workforce by 2023. BHP recently announced that it is now looking at a drive in, drive out employment option for its Eastern Ridge and Jimblebar operations east of Newman, which has the potential to expand to the Area C, South Flank and Yandi operations. Fortescue Metals Group has stated that it will offer a DIDO workforce for its Iron Bridge mine, which should see a growth in the residential workforce for its operation at its Herb Elliott port in Port Hedland. Yara Pilbara Fertilisers has a mostly residential workforce based in Karratha. BBI Group plans a drive in, drive out workforce for the mine site and a residential port and rail

workforce. Perdaman has stated that it plans to build 150 houses for residential staff. These are excellent outcomes to ensure that local Pilbara residents get access to local jobs first. The Liberal–National government did not care about ensuring jobs for local residents. We do.

I am very pleased that the 2019–20 state budget is continuing to deliver on the McGowan government’s plan for the Pilbara. That involves creating jobs and supporting our economy. The McGowan government is aiming to create 30 000 jobs in the Pilbara by 2024. This budget will deliver \$182.4 million in statewide funding for a new employer incentive scheme and training delivery, including \$45 million for regional WA. This scheme will help WA employers with the cost of employing apprentices and trainees. If workers are trained locally in the regions, they will stay and work in the regions, raising families and building stronger communities. Only the McGowan Labor government understands the importance of employing apprentices and trainees to ensure that our workforce is skilled and ready to take on all these jobs locally.

There is \$310 million in total funding for the Karratha–Tom Price road. I would like to name it the “Red Dog Highway”. It is an incredible budget commitment by a government that understands the importance that this road has for the Pilbara. The road will provide significant benefits to our region, including providing safer roads, expanding tourism and job opportunities, improving access to remote Aboriginal communities, cutting the cost of doing business, opening up freight services and improving social connectivity in our Pilbara. This is a road that the wider Pilbara community has wanted ever since the project was started by a previous state Labor government. Only our McGowan Labor government will get this project, which was started by a previous state Labor government, done so that it opens up the heart of the inland Pilbara. This budget will deliver \$1.33 million towards the Murujuga Living Knowledge Centre and the tourism precinct at Conzinc Bay, and \$649 000 towards implementing the Murujuga rock art strategy. Again, traditional owners and locals have long spoken about the significance of the 40 000-year-old rock art on the Burrup and the McGowan government has listened. It is only the McGowan government that will finally give the Burrup the local, national and international significance it deserves.

Our plan for the Pilbara is to deliver better health and community services that the previous Liberal–National government ignored. Last weekend I was in Newman with Minister Bill Johnston to engage with the community, not for a photo shoot like the Nationals WA did. The Newman community has been waiting for the redevelopment of the Newman Hospital for nearly 10 years and everyone I met was happy with the news that construction will start next year.

The community has been calling for Kurra Village to close ever since the Nationals shot itself in the foot trying to close it down. We will close it this year.

For so long my community has been asking for renal dialysis services so that families do not have to travel to Port Hedland for treatment. We are delivering \$1.3 million for the construction of a new renal dialysis unit in Newman Hospital that will house four renal dialysis chairs and supporting infrastructure. In fact, this budget is delivering \$13.8 million to help Pilbara patients access health care near where they live. Under the McGowan government program, pregnant women in inland Pilbara will be able to access enhanced and culturally appropriate midwifery care. The funding also allows for outreach services in Roebourne, Onslow, Tom Price and Paraburdoo, as well as a new women’s health service in Tom Price and Newman. Medical specialists such as emergency medicine specialists, a consultant surgeon, a consultant paediatrician, a specialist obstetrician and a community midwife will service the Karratha Health Campus and will outreach to surrounding areas. This will open up the health services available to our Pilbara patients and spare them the stress of travelling to Perth and leaving vital family and community support.

The stigma surrounding mental health has plagued our Pilbara communities for too long and the McGowan government is investing vital funding into suicide prevention and treating mental health issues. Many of us in the Pilbara community have been deeply affected by recent suicides over the past few years and it is fantastic to see that an \$8.1 million spend for the suicide prevention strategy has been put aside in this budget along with \$14.8 million committed to building up the step-up, step-down facility in Karratha. The McGowan government is dedicated to delivering essential mental health services to the Pilbara. I would like to thank the Minister for Health for listening to the needs of my constituents and providing vital health funding that has been warmly received by our Pilbara communities.

This budget has a \$131.5 million funding commitment to support agriculture in Western Australia, grow export markets and create long-term jobs in the agriculture industry. Beef production is the backbone of the agriculture sector in my electorate and this additional expenditure will ensure substantial growth in this industry. We have a fantastic Minister for Agriculture and Food in the other place, and with a strong passion for diversity and growth, the Pilbara agriculture industry will have a good future. The \$5.9 million Transforming Agriculture in the Pilbara project is exploring exciting opportunities for irrigated agriculture development in Newman. It is a fantastic project, which will create employment opportunities in horticulture for the Martu people, and our government is looking forward to the results of this three-year trial.

Northern beef businesses benefited from a \$575 000 business improvement grant last year.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr K.J.J. MICHEL: Our Pilbara agricultural industry has welcomed the support that the McGowan government is funding through this state budget. They have welcomed the additional \$42.5 million in funding for the methamphetamine action plan to combat the evils of methamphetamine in our communities. The sum of \$21 million has been set aside for the north west drug and alcohol support program to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and other drugs in the Pilbara, the Kimberley and the midwest. There is \$6.5 million for the Aboriginal Community Connectors program to improve community safety and reduce the consequences of alcohol and other drugs-related at-risk behaviour. These initiatives target issues in the north of our state that were neglected and ignored by the previous government. It is fantastic to see action on them.

The budget also sets aside \$11.3 million to support and expand police and community youth centres across our state. This was funding cut by the previous Liberal–National government. Roebourne PCYC in my electorate does an excellent job in reducing juvenile offending and improving community safety, which is a credit to CEO David van Ooran, centre manager Samantha Cornthwaite, and the Roebourne PCYC team. I am proud that last year Roebourne PCYC was named the joint winner of best regional PCYC of the year, tying with Geraldton.

Western Australia Football Commission Pilbara regional development manager Vicki Agnew and Roebourne police Sergeant Steve Taylor won awards for regional partnership of the year and best WA police contribution for their work supporting Roebourne PCYC to deliver Night Fields, the sports engagement football program in the town. Earlier this year, the Minister for Police was in my electorate to present a \$241 000 Lotterywest grant to fund two part-time sports coordinators at the Roebourne PCYC. I am certain that the extra funding commitment for our PCYCs across the state will help them continue to improve the delivery of their vital services to our communities. It is also fantastic to hear that our hardworking Pilbara district police officers will be some of the first in WA to receive handheld smart devices, which will allow them to spend more time in the field. A sum of \$34.6 million has been set aside for the rollout of personal issue mobile smart tablets for police officers. This is an innovative approach to integrating new technology with police work. There is also \$15.4 million towards the rollout of personal issue multi-threat body armour to frontline police officers. The Minister for Police is doing a fantastic job in looking after Western Australian police officers. It is clear how different the McGowan government is compared with the reckless previous government. We are delivering funding to services and projects that our Pilbara community have wanted for a long time. It is really fantastic to see long-term optimism return to the Pilbara with a stable, responsible McGowan government delivering this state's first budget surplus in five years. Well done to the Treasurer and his team for delivering a truly fair and sensible state budget, and for continuing to deliver on the plan for the Pilbara. I commend the bills to the house.

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo) [9.54 pm]: I can feel the anticipation building in the house as I rise to speak on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019. I appreciate that it is not to hear me speak. It is late in the hour and it is my job to bring proceedings home for the night. I was a bit excited that some people in the opposition might like to hear me speak, but they are not here. I am pleased to see that a shadow agricultural spokesperson is here, because perhaps he would like to listen to some of the comments I might make about agriculture in Wanneroo. We would love to see him up there some time to join the member for Cottesloe, who seems to have made lots of friends in Wanneroo with lots of visits apparently.

Last week our Treasurer handed down his third budget. I take this opportunity to speak on it. I am not going to rehash lots and lots of things. I think we have made it abundantly clear that we are getting WA back on track. Everyone seems to agree with the budget except for the opposition. The member for Carine should come and join me! I know he is on three strikes! Where has he been? I am glad to see him. I thought he was still at lunch! I noticed last Thursday when the Treasurer handed his responsible budget down that no opposition members were in the car park. They were at breakfast somewhere. At lunchtime, half an hour before the Treasurer brought down the most important budget for a long time, they were having lunch. The opposition leader and the shadow Treasurer were having lunch half an hour before the Treasurer brought down the budget. That says a lot about the work ethic in this place. I do not know where they are tonight, but they are certainly not here to listen to me, which I am a bit disappointed about, because I know that the member for Dawesville loves to listen to me! The *Australian Financial Review* liked this budget and the media of Western Australia liked this budget. Everybody liked this budget except for the opposition, because we are doing what the federal Morrison government seems to suggest Labor cannot do. Labor can be responsible financial managers and we are proving that in this state. I am absolutely sure when we have a Shorten federal Labor government that the same will apply at the federal level.

We have a \$553 million operating surplus in 2018–19—the first one in five years. Net debt will be \$4.5 billion lower in 2019–20 than projected under the previous government. Importantly, our average expenditure growth is 1.3 per cent, as opposed to an average of 6.4 per cent under the previous Liberal government. That tells the story of this budget. Our budget is in surplus, even without the GST. We have heard a lot from the opposition claiming credit for this budget. It is interesting how the federal Liberal government claims credit too. It is interesting how Christian Porter, who nearly bankrupted Western Australia before he bolted to Canberra, is claiming credit too. Everybody wants the credit for the work of our Premier, our Treasurer and our cabinet in

bringing Western Australia back on track. The return of some of our GST is not a bonanza, like the member for Scarborough says. It is what WA is actually entitled to. It is not a bonanza. It is not a windfall, like the member for Cottesloe says. It actually belongs to us. It is certainly not a lottery, as the opposition leader tried to suggest. We have had six years of the federal Liberal government and in its death throes it has decided to give the money back—give us back what was ours to begin with. It is quite extraordinary, and the opposition is trying to take credit for our state budget. If the opposition wants to go down that line and take responsibility for the 2019–20 budget, it might want to take credit for, or own up to, the whole lot—own up to the intergenerational \$40-plus billion that was on the state's credit card under its watch. If the GST is what has fixed it, certainly the GST is what put us in the mess we were in under the previous government's watch. Man up! We know the Liberal opposition does not have enough women to woman up. "Man up!" is my favourite saying from Selina; members should watch *Veep*. This GST money is not a bonanza. Western Australia has been ripped off and ignored for too long. I concur with the member for Bunbury. The community got the GST fixed. Our community gave the Liberal Party a slap at the last state election and the fear of the federal coalition getting a similar slap on Saturday means that it decided to give it back to us.

We have a responsible budget with the lowest increase in household fees and charges in 13 years; electricity is in line with inflation; and the economy is set to grow by 3.5 per cent in 2019–20. We have created 37 000 jobs in the first two years, invested \$4.1 billion in Metronet, and invested \$1.3 billion in roads. Of course, the Keystart package supporting housing construction and potential homebuyers is absolutely supported, particularly in the northern suburbs where we have many young people wanting to get a start. Our approach targets funding to improve key services, including health, education and community safety.

I have spoken previously about the fantastic infrastructure that is happening all over the northern suburbs, and certainly the Minister for Transport has on many occasions highlighted that to be the case. We do not just stick to delivering a DL and sticking it in people's letterboxes or putting an advertisement in the paper saying that we are delivering on some set of money that does not appear in a federal budget. Our infrastructure commitments are real and being delivered right now. We have \$146 million worth of road infrastructure in Wanneroo. The \$65 million Wanneroo Road–Ocean Reef Road overpass is being constructed right now. The \$50 million Wanneroo Road–Joondalup Drive overpass is being constructed right now. There will be some short-term pain for people while we are constructing that, but when it is done, it will be fixed properly for the next generation to come. We will do it once and we will do it properly. I am convinced that the majority of people in Wanneroo appreciate our forward-looking vision, and will be able to cope with the short-term pain with the roadworks in that area.

Of course, we had \$31 million for dualling Wanneroo Road between Joondalup Drive and Flynn Road. I can say delivered because it is open and I drive on it every day at least twice a day. It is fantastic. It is done and delivered. We have various black spot projects. Of course, it was recently announced that we will extend Mitchell Freeway to Romeo Road. It is a \$107 million project and will create 1 200 new jobs. Of course, I have spoken previously in a grievance to the minister about the extension to Romeo Road; it is important because it will not only bring the freeway further north, but also connect my electorate to the electorate of Butler. It will allow people to access the train lines, the schools and the shops. It is a really, really important piece of infrastructure to connect my electorate to the Alkimos and Butler area.

Let us talk about health for a minute. The member for Girrawheen mentioned the stroke unit. It is done. It is real. It is delivered. It is not on an ad. I have seen the beds. The Minister for Health opened it. Sally from the northern suburbs stroke unit has long advocated for it. I imagine in opposition no-one was listening to the member for Girrawheen. Now we have a Mark McGowan Labor government, we are delivering for the northern suburbs.

Ms M.M. Quirk: That's a bit rough. You've just written off eight years of my career!

Ms S.E. WINTON: No, I was trying to suggest exactly what these people have been bleating about—nothing ever happens. Guess what? While the northern suburbs were filled with Liberal members of Parliament, nothing was done. Now that we have some Labor members in the northern suburbs, people are getting some services and key infrastructure spends in both roads and health.

I also want to mention the palliative care package, which is a \$41 million commitment to the end-of-life choices and palliative care services package. There is a 74 per cent increase in funding for regional palliative care. This package brings the total investment by the McGowan government for palliative care services over the next four years to over \$200 million.

I held an end-of-life choices forum in March, and 200 people attended. It is absolutely clear that people want not only this legislation, which we are going to bring forward, but also an increase in the palliative care services in that area.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Bah humbug! Members, please.

Ms S.E. WINTON: I would like to have a bit of a chat about education, as I always do. Broadly, \$5.2 billion will be spent on school education in 2019–20, and over \$22 billion over the next four years. The sum of \$152 million has been allocated for new schools, including at Banksia Grove and Yanchep, member for Butler. Seventy-seven million dollars has been allocated for the redevelopment of secondary schools. It is real—we are delivering it! I know it is real because I have seen the plans and construction is about to start at Wanneroo Secondary College with a \$5 million commitment to deliver on building a new gymnasium. There is \$3 million for science labs at 51 primary schools. On the ground in my schools, it is real. The principal from East Wanneroo Primary School called me on Monday to let me know that construction on the science lab is about to start. That is fantastic. Wanneroo Primary School and Carramar Primary School will also get a science lab. Tapping Primary School already has an established science lab. Science teacher Vanessa Fairhead is doing a fantastic job delivering science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs throughout the school. It was a pleasure to be at the school's STEM week earlier this year.

Joseph Banks Secondary College recently had a “pamper yourself with maths” evening, which I enjoyed. Female students from years 9 and 10, accompanied by their mums, came together to celebrate all things maths and careers. There were powerful and passionate speakers. I want to congratulate principal Eleanor Hughes, maths domain leader Raluca Gavrilu, and all the staff and teachers. There is a gender gap in STEM subjects. Sixteen per cent of Australian STEM professionals are women. Fifty-two per cent of Australian girls aged 12 to 14 want to study STEM subjects in the future. Australia has the lowest number of female enrolments in STEM tertiary study of any other country in the Asia-Pacific. That number is 27 per cent. The work we are doing in delivering science labs into our primary schools are real changes that will hopefully change that, which is not a very good statistic to have.

Lots of people have been talking about whether federal funding is coming or not. I could not resist. I would like to have a bit of a chat about the federal funding that will be available to schools in Western Australia when a Shorten federal government is elected on Saturday. I want to read from the State School Teachers' Union of WA's analysis of which party will provide the best outcome for our schools. The State School Teachers' Union is not an aligned union. Members would be surprised to know that; I know it well. I suggest that teachers in the main are actually swing voters and they swing depending on which party is going to provide a better outcome for public education. I will tell members how those people will vote on Saturday. It is quite clear who supports public education. A Shorten Labor government will restore, in its first three years, the \$14.1 billion that was cut by the Morrison federal government. It will allocate \$300 million to students with disabilities. A Shorten government will work towards 100 per cent of the schooling resource standard. A Shorten government will invest \$1.75 billion into a national preschool and kindy program, ensuring preschool for three and four-year-olds. Members opposite have got to like that, surely.

TAFE is important. We know what the member for Scarborough did to TAFE. She gutted it and made it absolutely unaffordable for our young people to get training.

Mr R.S. Love: She's actually not here.

Ms S.E. WINTON: I look forward to her reading my contribution in *Hansard*. I know opposition members love to read what I talk about in this place. I will send the member the video afterwards.

Mr D.A. Templeman: This member is like an incendiary device. It keeps you fired up.

Ms S.E. WINTON: I am, but a bit disappointed with the turnout; I have to say. Whoever is doing the rollcall should really have a bit of a think.

Mr D.A. Templeman: You're not necessarily playing to a full house.

Ms S.E. WINTON: No, I am not.

Two-thirds of all government vocational education funding will be for TAFE. A Shorten government will invest \$1 billion into TAFE to offer 100 000 fee-free places in key disciplines, and \$200 million to rebuild and reopen TAFE campuses. Let us look at what the coalition is offering public schools. The Morrison government has cut \$14 billion from public schools. It announced a \$4.6 billion special funding deal, a \$1.9 billion capital works program and a \$1.2 million choice and availability fund for private schools. The Morrison government's plan leaves 99 per cent of public schools below the schooling resource standard. It has cut disability funding. There is no funding for preschools. I will not go on about TAFE other than to say that the coalition government has cut \$3 billion from the vocational education sector since elected. There is no mention of TAFE in the federal budget—none at all. The coalition government is responsible for the national skills crisis, with a drop in apprenticeships of 140 000 in six years.

That is all wonderful, but I can tell members what it will mean for schools in my electorate if we elect a Shorten government on Saturday. I am pretty excited for the schools in my area! Under a Shorten government, Banksia Grove Primary School will get an extra \$810 000 and Carramar Primary School will get \$1 000 040.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms S.E. WINTON: I am on the board of East Wanneroo Primary School; it will receive \$510 000. Hocking Primary School will receive \$760 000. Joseph Banks Secondary College will receive \$1 960 000 if the candidate for Pearce, Kim Travers, is elected.

Ms J.J. Shaw: An outstanding candidate.

Ms S.E. WINTON: She is an outstanding candidate. What a good reason to vote for her—nearly \$2 million for Joseph Banks Secondary College. Pearsall Primary School will receive \$520 000; Spring Hill Primary School, \$870 000; and Tapping Primary School, \$960 000. I am on the board of Wanneroo Primary School and it will be delighted to get \$600 000 under a Shorten Labor government. Wanneroo Secondary College will also receive nearly \$2 million. I am on the board of that school, too, and I would be happy to turn up to the next board meeting and discuss how the school will spend that money.

Extra funding for the whole electorate of Cowan over the first three years is nearly \$30 million. In Pearce, over \$37 million will go to local schools. I could go on, member for Butler: Yanchep Beach, Two Rocks, Quinns Rocks and Queens Beach Primary Schools; John Butler Primary College; Yanchep Secondary College; Clarkson Community High School; Butler College—in fact, in all of our schools the federal Shorten government will put back the funding that Scott Morrison has cut from the public education sector.

Mr D.R. Michael interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Balcatta.

Mr D.R. Michael: That clown over there.

The SPEAKER: Member, call the member by his correct title, please.

Mr D.R. Michael interjected.

The SPEAKER: It was “please”. I am tired and you are tired. I am sure we are getting near the end.

Ms M.M. Quirk: You are going to seek an extension, aren’t you?

Ms S.E. WINTON: I have already had it, member.

I want to spend the last few minutes talking about an important area in my electorate. Of course, members all know that that is agriculture and that Wanneroo grows nearly 40 per cent of the fruit and vegetables we eat every day. It is a very, very important industry. I am very delighted with what the state government is doing for our area. I want to recap on a few things because, unfortunately, the member for Cottesloe did not allow me to interject yesterday and he could have saved all members here from having to listen to me tonight. I take exception to some of the things he said and I need to set the record straight.

Ms J.J. Shaw interjected.

Ms S.E. WINTON: I am sure he will.

The SPEAKER: Member for Swan Hills, are you in your seat? I call you to order for the third time.

Ms S.E. WINTON: There have been longstanding challenges for agriculture in north Wanneroo. The previous government did absolutely nothing for eight years. Let me give a quick summary of what we have done in two short years. Bear with me people; stay with me. We made an election commitment to establish the North Wanneroo Agriculture and Water Taskforce. We did it; it is done. The Minister for Agriculture and Food has responded to those recommendations and it was clear that the growers could not continue with the 25 per cent cut proposed by the Liberal government in 2016. My task force made it clear to the Minister for Agriculture and Food and the Minister for Water that they needed certainty. The Minister for Water announced that there would be a 10 per cent cut in water licences in north Wanneroo from 2028. This is more than half the 25 per cent originally proposed by the mob over there, and it provides certainty.

Mr R.S. Love: It doesn’t provide water.

Ms S.E. WINTON: It provides certainty that their existing licences will continue until 2028. It is important to note that the member for Cottesloe said that we are kicking the issue down the road. We are not. The Mark McGowan government has committed that no changes will be made to growers’ licences and there will be a 10 per cent cut in 2028. That provides certainty. The only uncertainty is that we do not know what the Libs would do—other than to have cut it by 25 per cent in 2016. To provide certainty, the opposition needs to provide an alternative to what we are saying we will do. That is the uncertainty. We make decisions and that is what we will do. We will support growers. We have announced that we will invest in a new water-use efficiency program to support growers and industry to assess technology options to encourage efficient water use and to help them transition. We have listened to growers and we have more than halved the proposed cuts.

That is the government’s position. If opposition members would tell us what they would do if they were elected in 2021, guess what?

Mr I.C. Blayney interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Geraldton, I do not want to hear you.

Ms S.E. WINTON: Wanneroo growers would have certainty. It is interesting that the member for Moore said that our plan would not provide water. No; it will not provide new water; it will provide certainty with their existing licences. The member is right; people need more water. They want to grow their businesses. In 2007, at the end of the previous Labor government, the future east Wanneroo report came out with a recommendation that we needed new water and we should investigate the possibility of getting recycled water from Alkimos and bringing it to Wanneroo. That was recommended in 2007 for new water. If growers are to grow their business into the future, we need a new supply. The Liberal government did nothing in eight years to contemplate what a new water source would be. All I heard from the member for Cottesloe was that it would be quite simple; we could pipe back all the recycled water going into the ocean. If it is so simple, why did members opposite not do it in the last eight years? Growers have been asking for a new water supply for the last eight years. This is not a new plea, so why did the Liberal–National government not do that in its eight years?

Mr I.C. Blayney interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Geraldton!

Ms S.E. WINTON: The opposition does not have an answer. The Liberal–National government had four agriculture ministers and none had an answer. In fact, in all that time, I do not remember one agriculture minister ever coming out to Wanneroo.

Mr I.C. Blayney interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Geraldton, I call you to order for the first time.

Ms S.E. WINTON: The current Minister for Agriculture and Food has been out to Wanneroo at least seven times. She has attended the Wanneroo Agricultural Show for the last three years. She loves the area; she is supporting and advocating for the agricultural industry. You guys did nothing except have four agriculture ministers. It was a revolving door. They had no plan for Wanneroo or the growers there. The member for Cottesloe stood up and said that we are pulling a stunt. I am happy with this government's work in agriculture in Wanneroo. We will stand by what we do and the actions we take. We have done more in two years than the former Liberal–National government did in eight years. Members opposite have gone silent because they do not have any ideas about new water.

I went to the rally to which the member referred on Saturday. One of the key recommendations from the task force is the same as it existed in 2007—we need to explore and investigate and do a business case to see whether it is potentially possible economically to bring recycled water from Alkimos. We are doing that right now. We have invested \$700 000 to do that work. The member for Cottesloe got it wrong because we have not made a commitment to bring recycled water from Alkimos. What we need to do first is investigate whether it is viable. Once we have established that—that is the work that we are doing now, work that should have been done eight years ago—we can decide whether to go ahead with it. We have not committed to go ahead with it because we do not know how much it will cost and whether it will be supported by growers. That work is being done now. The member for Cottesloe misled Parliament by suggesting that we have committed to do that. We have committed to do the work. The purpose of the North Wanneroo Residents Association's rally was to see what the various federal candidates for Pearce will do to support Wanneroo in its investigation of a new water supply. Guess what? The Labor candidate for Pearce, Kim Travers, and the Minister for Agriculture and Food turned up, but Christian Porter did not show. Kim Travers, as the candidate for Pearce under a Shorten Labor government, has committed to give the state government \$500 000 to fast track that work so that we can decide whether it is economically viable to go ahead. Porter has offered nothing—nothing at all. It is interesting that members opposite think that they are offering something for the people of Wanneroo. The truth is that they have done nothing.

Finally, I will take members to one element of the state budget that summarises how Wanneroo has been treated by the McGowan Labor government, particularly the Minister for Agriculture and Food, Alannah MacTiernan. I am a bit biased towards her because she has shown an interest in, and made a commitment to, doing the work with us in Wanneroo. Rather than me being biased, I refer to a media release put out by Trevor Whittington from WAFarmers. Of course, \$131 million has gone back into the department. Can members imagine what support we will provide agricultural growers in not only Wanneroo, but also around the state by bringing the department back? Let us listen to the experts. In his media release, Trevor Whittington states —

The WA Government has come through as per its pre-budget announcement, with a turnaround budget for the WA Department of Agriculture.

For the first time in years, the ... Department ... has secure funding to end the annual budget cuts, which over the past decade have seen staff numbers effectively halved.

The \$131 million of new funding over the next four years will lock in current staffing ...this will mean that the planned cuts in forward estimates which would have taken out another 100 staff will not go ahead.

These are not my words; these are the words of the chief executive officer of WAFarmers.

Finally, we have moved away from the short-term royalties for regions projects and offered a path to a better way. They are up and running and taking the industry seriously, which is a credit to Minister Alannah MacTiernan. It is the first time in 20 years that a minister has stood up to Treasury—is the Treasurer feeling battered and bruised?—and not held the line. She pushed back and demanded funding support to help the industry grow. I assure members that once we conclude the business case, the Minister for Agriculture and Food will be in a position to decide whether that is the way to go for a new source of water; and, if it is not, I guarantee members that we will go to plan B and do the next thing.

Mr R.S. Love: What's plan B?

Ms S.E. WINTON: At the moment, we are dealing with the recommendations of the task force. That is the first aspect we are looking at, because that is what everybody has been expecting us to do for eight years. Once the business case for that is determined, we will look at the various other options. Thank you.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**.

House adjourned at 10.24 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

SHARKS — HAZARD MITIGATION — DRUM LINE TRIAL

4843. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the Minister's media statement on 19 February 2019, 'WA shark alarm technology to be used during SMART drumline trial' and I ask:

- (a) Is information from receivers transmitted to Spectur and/or another third party before or when the alarms are triggered:
 - (i) If yes, is the third party based in Australia; and
 - (ii) If no, where is the third party located?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:

- (a) (i)–(ii) The process of transmission of information to third parties, including Spectur, is the same as it was under the former Liberal National government.
 The comments in the media statement refer to the use of the Spectur alarm units to provide local, visual and audible alerts to the presence of a shark in the area.
 The Spectur alarm is activated by officers of the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (Department) when they are notified of a detection from one of the three satellite linked VR4 receivers, a sighting of a shark reported to the Water Police or the activation of a SMART drumline. This infrastructure is made in Australia.
 Detections from the VR4 receivers and SMART drumline activations are transmitted through the Iridium Satellite Network to Vemco in Canada in the case of the VR4 Receivers and through Marine Instruments in Spain in the case of the SMART drumlines. This process is consistent with SMART drumline operations undertaken in New South Wales. Both Vemco and Marine Instruments forward the VR4 detections and SMART drumline activations by means of automated emails to the Department's Shark Monitoring Network. Sightings reported to the Water Police are all transmitted within Australia. Information on detections, sightings and SMART drumline activations is also sent to officers in other relevant State government agencies and of relevant local government authorities.

HEALTH — ASSAULTS AGAINST NURSES

4853. Dr M.D. Nahan to the Minister for Health:

For each month from July to December 2017, and from July to December 2018, can the Minister advise:

- (a) the number of assaults recorded against nurses in the Western Australian health system;
- (b) the hospitals that those assaults occurred at;
- (c) the area/department of the hospital at which those assaults occurred;
- (d) the number of assaults reported to police;
- (e) the number of nurses that took sick or stress leave as a result of those assaults, where such information is recorded;
- (f) the total number of hours of sick leave and stress leave taken as a result of those assaults, where such information is recorded;
- (g) the number of nurses that resigned or retired as a result of an assault, where such information is recorded; and
- (h) the total number of Code Blacks and at which hospitals they occurred?

Mr R.H. Cook replied:

- (a)–(h) [See tabled paper no 2441.]

BUSSELL HIGHWAY — BUSSELTON–CAPEL

4915. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the completion of the Bussell Highway dual carriageway between Capel and Busselton and I ask:

- (a) Has the Minister for Transport written to the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport to seek Federal funding for this project:
 - (i) If yes to (a) on what date; and
 - (ii) If yes to (a) will the Minister please table her correspondence to and from the Minister? If not, why not;

- (b) Has Main Roads WA written to the Federal Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities to seek Federal funding for this project:
 - (i) If yes to (b) on what date; and
 - (ii) If yes to (b) will the Minister please table her Department's correspondence to and from the Federal department? If not, why not; and
- (c) Have any submissions been made to the Federal Government seeking Federal funding for this project:
 - (i) If yes to (c) on what date; and
 - (ii) If yes to (c) will the Minister please table the relevant section of the submission? If not, why not?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

- (a)–(c) The Minister has previously called on the Federal Liberal–National Government to commit funding towards this project, however no contribution has been forthcoming.

It also noted that the member failed to secure funding for this project when she was part of the former Liberal–National state government.

The McGowan Government will start forward works for the Bussell Highway duplication between Capel and Busselton in June. An initial allocation of \$4 million will be drawn from Main Roads' minor works budget for these works, which involves preparing the dual carriageway alignment with fill. It is then proposed to roll the Bussell Highway duplication project into the wider Bunbury Outer Ring Road project to save taxpayers' money and allow works to start sooner.

MINISTER FOR WATER — PORTFOLIOS — LEAVE LIABILITY

4976. Dr M.D. Nahan to the Minister for Water; Fisheries; Forestry; Innovation and ICT; Science:

What is the total leave liability as at 1 March 2017, 1 March 2018 and 1 March 2019 for all departments, agencies or government trading enterprises within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:

Aqwest

1 March 2017 – \$1 448 173.88

1 March 2018 – \$1 408 498.13

1 March 2019 – \$1 387 676.46

Busselton Water

1 March 2017 – \$802 927.62

28 February 2018 – \$827 949.76

27 February 2019 – \$864 914.57

ChemCentre

1 March 2017 – \$3 114 661.56

1 March 2018 – \$3 066 224.45

1 March 2019 – \$3 198 516.84

Department of Fisheries

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's (DPIRD) systems cannot report on leave liability on these specific dates. However, leave liability as of 30 June 2017 for the Department of Fisheries (DoF) is provided. As of the 1st of July 2017, DoF was amalgamated with the Departments of Agriculture and Food and Regional Development to establish DPIRD.

30 June 2017 – \$15 966 683

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 4988.

Department of Water

1 March 2017 – \$12 656 000

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

1 March 2018 – \$23 871 000

1 March 2019 – \$21 914 000

Forest Products Commission

1 March 2017 – \$2 050 289.00

1 March 2018 – \$1 546 791.06

1 March 2019 – \$1 251 848.35

Former Office of the Chief Government Information Officer

Leave liability reports are run on the final day of each month and are unable to run retrospectively.

1 March 2017 – total leave liability as at 28 February 2017 – \$792 645.09

1 March 2018 – total leave liability as at 28 February 2018 – \$1 043 633.20

Office of Digital Government

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 4993.

Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 4993.

Water Corporation

1 March 2017 – \$69 684 648.30

1 March 2018 – \$69 035 346.36

1 March 2019 – \$65 316 523.37

MINISTER FOR WATER — STAFF — SICK LEAVE

4994. Dr M.D. Nahan to the Minister for Water; Fisheries; Forestry; Innovation and ICT; Science:

I refer to the total number (in days) of sick leave taken by staff in all departments, agencies, government trading enterprises or boards within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities, and I ask:

- (a) How many sick days were taken over the periods:
 - (i) 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017;
 - (ii) 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018; and
 - (iii) 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:Aqwest

- (i) 212 days
- (ii) 282 days
- (iii) 253 days

Busselton Water

- (i) 186 days
- (ii) 237 days
- (iii) 291 days

Due to reporting limits, Busselton Water is unable to provide totals as of 1 March for each year. Figures were calculated on the end date of the pay period closest to 1 March of each relevant year.

ChemCentre

- (i) 884 days
- (ii) 943 days
- (iii) 922 days

Department of Fisheries

- (i) 1 854 days
- (ii) 710 days (1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017)
- (iii) Not applicable.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5005.

Department of Water

- (i) 3 879 days
- (ii) 1 411 days (1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017)
- (iii) Not applicable.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

- (i) Not applicable.
- (ii) 5 218 days (1 July 2017 – 28 February 2018)
- (iii) 6 138 days

Forest Products Commission

- (i) 1 195 days
- (ii) 1 657 days
- (iii) 1 713 days

Former Office of the Chief Government Information Officer

- (i) 154 days
- (ii) 336 days
- (iii) 129 days (1 March 2018 to 30 June 2018)

Office of Digital Government

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5010.

Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5010.

Water Corporation

- (i) 24 644 days
- (ii) 25 440 days
- (iii) 27 432 days

MINISTER FOR HEALTH — STAFF — SICK LEAVE

5009. Dr M.D. Nahan to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Mental Health:

I refer to the total number (in days) of sick leave taken by staff in all departments, agencies, government trading enterprises or boards within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities, and I ask:

- (a) How many sick days were taken over the periods:
 - (i) 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017;
 - (ii) 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018; and
 - (iii) 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019?

Mr R.H. Cook replied:

Department of Health and health service providers advise:

- (a) (i) 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017

Health Service Provider	Sick Leave 1 March 2016 to 28 Feb 2017 Days
Child and Adolescent Health Service	35,152.74
Department of Health	9,719.73
East Metropolitan Health Service	66,455.56
Health Support Services	13,183.01
North Metropolitan Health Service	102,326.87
PathWest	16,449.56
QEII Medical Centre Trust	195.37
Quadriplegic Centre	747.61

South Metropolitan Health Service	79,368.90
WA Country Health Service	73,412.15
Total	397,011.50

Note: Source from Human Resource Data Warehouse (HRDW) and Quad Centre
The total may not add up due to rounding.

(ii) 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018

Health Service Provider	Sick Leave 1 March 2017 to 28 Feb 2018 Days
Child and Adolescent Health Service	37,073.99
Department of Health	8,602.22
East Metropolitan Health Service	65,230.77
Health Support Services	13,319.56
North Metropolitan Health Service	105,533.60
PathWest	17,143.02
QEII Medical Centre Trust	206.67
Quadriplegic Centre	729.36
South Metropolitan Health Service	79,393.82
WA Country Health Service	74,748.98
Total	401,982.00

Note: Source from Human Resource Data Warehouse (HRDW) and Quad Centre
The total may not add up due to rounding.

(iii) 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019

Health Service Provider	Sick Leave 1 March 2018 to 28 Feb 2019 Days
Child and Adolescent Health Service	38,244.87
Department of Health	7,568.54
East Metropolitan Health Service	70,112.95
Health Support Services	12,232.47
North Metropolitan Health Service	108,637.36
PathWest	18,009.85
QEII Medical Centre Trust	241.17
Quadriplegic Centre	698.72
South Metropolitan Health Service	82,406.20
WA Country Health Service	77,052.27
Total	415,204.40

Note: Source from Human Resource Data Warehouse (HRDW) and Quad Centre
The total may not add up due to rounding.

Mental Health Commission advises:

- (a) (i) 2,376
- (ii) 2,967
- (iii) 3,437

Mental Health Advocacy Service advises:

- (a) (i) 34
- (ii) 54
- (iii) 39

Mental Health Tribunal advises:

- (a) (i) 23
- (ii) 30
- (iii) 56

Office Of the Chief Psychiatrist advises:

- (a) (i) 127
- (ii) 137
- (iii) 160

Health & Disability Services Complaints Office advises:

- (a) (i) 68
- (ii) 116
- (iii) 31

Healthway advises:

- (a) (i) 33
- (ii) 30
- (iii) 81 (Staff transferred to Lotterywest on 1 January 2019)

Animal Resources Authority advises:

- (a) (i) 637
- (ii) 646
- (iii) 699

MINISTER FOR WATER — STAFF — WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

5011. Dr M.D. Nahan to the Minister for Water; Fisheries; Forestry; Innovation and ICT; Science:

I refer to workers' compensation claims filed by staff in all departments, agencies, government trading enterprises or boards within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities, and I ask:

- (a) What was the total number of mental stress claims over the periods:
 - (i) 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017;
 - (ii) 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018; and
 - (iii) 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019; and
- (b) What was the total number of bodily injury claims over the periods:
 - (i) 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017;
 - (ii) 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018; and
 - (iii) 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:

Aqwest

- (a) (i) Nil.
- (ii) Nil.
- (iii) Nil.
- (b) (i) 1
- (ii) 3
- (iii) 2

Busselton Water

- (a) (i) Nil.
- (ii) Nil.
- (iii) Nil.
- (b) (i) Nil.
- (ii) Nil.
- (iii) 1

ChemCentre

- (a) (i)–(iii) No statistics specific to claims for mental stress are recorded
- (b) (i) 1
- (ii) 2
- (iii) 2

Department of Fisheries

- (a) (i) 1
- (ii) 1 (1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017)
- (iii) Not applicable.
- (b) (i) 5
- (ii) 12 (1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017)
- (iii) Not applicable.

Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5022.

Department of Water

- (a) (i) Nil.
- (ii) Nil. (1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017)
- (iii) Not applicable.
- (b) (i) 1
- (ii) 1 (1 March 2017 – 30 June 2017)
- (iii) Not applicable.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation

- (a) (i) Not applicable.
- (ii) Nil. (1 July 2017 – 28 February 2018)
- (iii) 1
- (b) (i) Not applicable.
- (ii) 3 (1 July 2017 – 28 February 2018)
- (iii) 5

Forest Products Commission

- (a) (i) 1
- (ii) 1
- (iii) 1
- (b) (i) 7
- (ii) 2
- (iii) 11

Former Office of the Chief Government Information Officer

- (a) (i) Nil.
- (ii) 1
- (iii) Nil. (1 March 2018 – 30 June 2018)
- (b) (i) Nil.
- (ii) Nil.
- (iii) Nil. (1 March 2018 – 30 June 2018)

Office of Digital Government

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5027.

Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5027.

Water Corporation

- (a) (i) 0
- (ii) 0
- (iii) 1
- (b) (i) 16
- (ii) 17
- (iii) 15

MINISTER FOR WATER — PORTFOLIOS — EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

5029. Dr M.D. Nahan to the Minister for Water; Fisheries; Forestry; Innovation and ICT; Science:

For all departments, agencies, government trading enterprises or boards within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities how many employees accessed the employee assistance program (or similar program) for the following periods:

- (a) 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017;
- (b) 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018; and
- (c) 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:

- (a)–(c) Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5028

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS —
EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**5040. Dr M.D. Nahan to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Ports; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:**

For all departments, agencies, government trading enterprises or boards within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities how many employees accessed the employee assistance program (or similar program) for the following periods:

- (a) 1 March 2016 to 28 February 2017;
- (b) 1 March 2017 to 28 February 2018; and
- (c) 1 March 2018 to 28 February 2019?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

Please refer to answer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 5028.

MINISTER FOR HEALTH — PORTFOLIOS — COSTS OF SERVICES

5059. Ms M.J. Davies to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Mental Health:

Will the Minister please provide an agency-wide breakdown of the total cost of services contracted to each service delivery area within each agency under your portfolio areas for the financial years:

- (a) 2016–17;
- (b) 2017–18; and
- (c) Projected for 2018–19?

Mr R.H. Cook replied:Department of Health advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the Department of Health 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the Department of Health 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) I refer the Member to WA Health's 2018–19 Budget Statements for a breakdown of total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.

Health Support Services advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the Health Support Services 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the Health Support Services 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) See Department of Health's answer to (c).

Child and Adolescent Health Service advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the Child and Adolescent Health Service 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the Child and Adolescent Health Service 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) See Department of Health's answer to (c).

East Metropolitan Health Service advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the East Metropolitan Health Service 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the East Metropolitan Health Service 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) See Department of Health's answer to (c).

North Metropolitan Health Service advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the North Metropolitan Health Service 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the North Metropolitan Health Service 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) See Department of Health's answer to (c).

South Metropolitan Health Service advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the South Metropolitan Health Service 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the South Metropolitan Health Service 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) See Department of Health's answer to (c).

WA Country Health Service advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the WA Country Health Service 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the WA Country Health Service 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) See Department of Health's answer to (c).

Mental Health Commission advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the Mental Health Commission's (MHC's) 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the MHC's 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) I refer the Member to the MHC's 2018–19 Budget Statements for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.

Health & Disability Services Complaints Office advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the Department's 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the Department's 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) For the 2018–19 financial year, the projected total cost of Service one (Complaints Management) is \$1,931,699 and the projected total cost of Service two (Education and Training) is \$1,040,146.

Healthway advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to Healthway's 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to Healthway's 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) Projected total cost of services for the Service Delivery Area is \$24.24 million.

Animal Resources Authority advises:

- (a) I refer the Member to the Animal Resources Authority's 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the Animal Resources Authority's 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) I refer the Member to the Animal Resources Authority's 2018–19 Budget Statements for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.

TREASURER — PORTFOLIOS — COSTS OF SERVICES

5068. Ms M.J. Davies to the Treasurer; Minister for Finance; Aboriginal Affairs; Lands:

Will the Minister please provide an agency-wide breakdown of the total cost of services contracted to each service delivery area within each agency under your portfolio areas for the financial years:

- (a) 2016–17;
- (b) 2017–18; and
- (c) Projected for 2018–19?

Mr B.S. Wyatt replied:

For the agencies falling within the responsibility of the Treasurer; Minister for Finance; Aboriginal Affairs; Lands:

- (a) I refer the Member to the agency's 2016–17 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (b) I refer the Member to the agency's 2017–18 Annual Report for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.
- (c) I refer the Member to the agency's 2018–19 Budget Statements for a breakdown of its total cost of services by Service Delivery Area.

TRANSPORT — FEDERAL FUNDING

5075. Mr V.A. Catania to the Minister for Transport; Planning:

I refer to the announcement made by Prime Minister Scott Morrison on 28 March 2019 detailing a \$1.6 billion funding package towards Western Australian road and infrastructure projects, and I ask:

- (a) What is the total project cost for each of the 20 projects listed:
 - (i) Oats Street/Welshpool Road/Mint Street Level Crossing Removal;
 - (ii) Albany Ring Road;
 - (iii) Fremantle Traffic Bridge — Swan River Crossing;
 - (iv) Tonkin Highway projects (Stage 3 extension — Great Eastern Highway to Collier Road, Kelvin Road, Hale Road and Welshpool Road);
 - (v) Bunbury Outer Ring Road — Stages 2 and 3;
 - (vi) Western Australian section of the Newman to Katherine Corridor;
 - (vii) Western Australian section of the Alice Springs to Halls Creek Corridor;
 - (viii) Karratha to Tom Price Corridor;
 - (ix) Wheatbelt Secondary Freight Network;
 - (x) Port Augusta to Perth Corridor;
 - (xi) Pinjarra Heavy Haulage Deviation — Stage 1;
 - (xii) Thomas Road and Nicholson Road in Oakford;

- (xiii) Transforming Freeways — widening and introduction of Intelligent Transport System (ITS) (Kwinana and Mitchell Freeways);
 - (xiv) Lloyd Street Extension;
 - (xv) Abernethy Road Upgrade;
 - (xvi) Lakelands Station;
 - (xvii) Shorehaven Boulevard/Marmion Avenue Intersection Upgrade;
 - (xviii) More Parking Bays at Mandurah Station;
 - (xix) Business case development for Future Road and Rail Connections for Perth — to investigate future road and rail links to support the growth of the transport network in Perth; and
 - (xx) Business case development for Westport project and corridor preservation to support the Westport: Port and Environs Strategy, which is currently being developed by the WA Government;
- (b) What is the total contribution from the McGowan Government towards each of these projects;
 - (c) Is there any funding shortfall for any of the projects listed; and
 - (d) If yes to (c), how will the funding shortfall be addressed?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

- (a)–(d) Refer to the 2019–20 State Budget and relevant media statements.

HEALTH — ELIZABETH HANSEN AUTUMN CENTRE

5076. Mr S.K. L'Estrange to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Mental Health:

- (1) How long does the Government plan to run the Elizabeth Hansen Autumn Centre (EHAC) when it takes possession of the service and facility on 1 July 2019?
- (2) Will the Government look to put the EHAC out to tender for the community sector to run the organisation on a long-term basis, and if so, when?

Mr R.H. Cook replied:

I am advised:

- (1) WA Country Health Service (WACHS) will continue to support the EHAC service until it has been transitioned to an Aboriginal community service organisation with appropriate expertise in the provision of culturally safe accommodation services.
- (2) WACHS anticipates that the EHAC service will be transitioned to an Aboriginal community service organisation within 12 months, under the Aboriginal Procurement and Delivering Community Services in Partnership Policies, subject to interest from the sector and due diligence assessment.

TRANSPORT — TOW TRUCK INDUSTRY

5078. Mr P.A. Katsambanis to the Minister for Transport; Planning:

I refer the Minister to the tow truck industry in Western Australia and ask:

- (a) For each of the last five years how many tow trucks have been registered in Western Australia;
- (b) What is the average age of a tow truck in Western Australia;
- (c) What safety and compliance tests do tow trucks undergo before and after registration; and
- (d) How many tow truck operators are there in Western Australia?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

- (a) 2014 – 613; 2015 – 662; 2016 – 673; 2017 – 715; 2018 – 749
- (b) 19.3 years
- (c) Tow trucks undergo the following safety and compliance tests before and after registration:

All tow trucks are inspected and must meet the requirements as detailed in the Road Traffic (Vehicles) Regulations 2014, Part 12 Division 1 – Standards and Requirements in respect of Tow Trucks, before they can be licensed as a tow truck.

Department of Transport (DoT) policy requires that all tow trucks being licensed for the first time in Western Australia must be inspected at DoT's vehicle examination centre in Kelmscott.

All other tow truck vehicle inspections can be carried out by the Authorised Inspection Station network across Western Australia.

Any tow truck that wishes to operate under a Main Roads Western Australia Heavy Lift Tow Truck Over Mass Period Permit, must first successfully complete a DoT Heavy Tow Truck assessment to ensure the truck can safely operate at the higher mass.

Once a tow truck is registered and operational, the tow truck may be subject to random on-road inspections conducted by Main Roads Heavy Vehicle Compliance. These inspections include checks to ensure compliance with roadworthiness requirements, as well as mass and dimension requirements.

- (d) DoT is responsible for regulating tow truck vehicle standards, and does not regulate the towing industry as a whole, therefore, the Department is unable to provide a definitive number of tow truck 'operators' in Western Australia.

AGRICULTURE AND FOOD — VALUE ADD AGRIBUSINESS INVESTMENT ATTRACTION FUND

5079. Mr D.T. Redman to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Ports; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I refer to the Value Add Agribusiness Investment Attraction Fund, and ask:

- (a) Can the Minister outline the selection process used to determine the successful recipients of this taxpayer funded grants program;
- (b) Who was on the selection panel that made recommendations to the Minister;
- (c) What are the job titles/positions of the selection panel members;
- (d) Did the Minister support all the recommendations of the panel:
 - (i) if not, what changes were made;
- (e) Were the Development Commissions consulted as part of the selection process;
- (f) Were any financial assessments done of the successful applicants, to ensure financial integrity and, by extension minimise risk, to taxpayer's funds;
- (g) Have any of the grant recipients received other State taxpayer funded grants:
 - (i) If so, which businesses and for what amounts;
- (h) Was competitive interest between like businesses in a region considered when awarding a grant to one business; and
- (i) What consideration has been given to businesses who operate in direct competition to the successful grant recipients in their region?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

- (a) Applications opened on 24 August 2018 and closed on 19 October 2018. The fund was announced via media release, and promoted widely via DPIRD networks, Regional Development Commissions, and advertising.

An Assessment Panel individually assessed all eligible applications via a weighted Excel tool in line with the application and aims of the program and the Royalties for Regions Fund.

The Assessment Panel met and reviewed applications, and together determined a list of recommended projects. The Assessment Panel requested further specific project and financial assessment be conducted for each of the recommended applicants, before providing their final recommendations.

A robust project and financial assessment process was conducted which included: financial review; Royalties for Regions governance review; cross-referencing across DPIRD, Regional Development Commissions; and Austrade intelligence.

Final recommendations were provided to the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food, for decision.

- (b)–(c) Mr Liam O'Connell, Panel Chair, Executive Director Trade and Investment, DPIRD, Dr Bill Ryan, External Consultant, Ms Julie Cox, External Consultant, Ms Charlotte Maddock, DPIRD Secretariat (non-voting member).
- (d) All projects recommended to the Minister were supported.
 - (i) Not applicable.

- (e) Each Regional Development Commission was provided the opportunity to comment on recommended projects and applicants in its region.
 - (f) Projects recommended by the Assessment Panel were asked to provide further information on the following:
 - Profit and loss statements for the past two financial years
 - Cash flows for the past two financial years
 - Current balance sheet
 - Confirmation of project funding arrangements, including source of co-contribution
 - Completion of a project business case template as provided, together with any associated documentation that supported the investment decision for the project.

The project business case template requested project capital costs, together with outlook for volumes, financial, and employee outcomes. It demonstrated current position together with a five-year outlook on outcomes. The financial information was assessed for financial viability to deliver the project.
 - (g) Yes – Regional Economic Development Grants, however, there is no overlap in the purpose for which funding was made available.
 - (i) Lucky Bay Brewing – \$198,442 Ocean Grown Abalone Limited – \$85,000 Avon Valley Beef – \$190,000
 - (h)–(i) All eligible businesses had the opportunity to apply for the grants program. Each application was assessed independently on its merits, in line with the intent of the grant to support investment in new project or expansion opportunities by value adding agribusiness, and the criteria of the grant. Panel members were not asked to make assessments outside of the goals of the scheme or the scope of the information provided.
-

