



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2020

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 12 November 2020

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THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) took the chair at 9.00 am, acknowledged country and read prayers.

HON JAMES (JIM) McMILLAN BROWN

Condolence Motion

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [9.02 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house records its sincere regret at the death of Hon James McMillan Brown and tenders its deep sympathy to his family.

I begin by paying my respects, and Parliament's respects, to Jim's family in the Speaker's gallery today. I would like to name the people here: Bill and Jenny Brown, Timothy Brown, Rachel Brown, Kerry and John Fisher, Aaron Fisher, Peter Fisher, Amy Riley, Dawn Pianto, Chelsea Pianto, Vera Hughes, Rose Brown and Gaye McCulloch. I thank them all for coming along today to hear Jim's condolence motion. I believe other family members will be present to hear Jim's condolence motion in the Legislative Council.

Throughout Jim's 15 years of parliamentary service, he served in both chambers of the Western Australian Parliament. He was always willing to assist members and he worked hard on behalf of his rural and regional constituents. Jim was part of a proud tradition of farming Labor members of this Parliament.

Jim was born on 5 April 1927 to William and Susan in Merredin in regional Western Australia. Merredin would be a town that remained an important place for Jim throughout his life and career. His parents owned the local coffee shop, then named the Coffee Palace and later Raphael's. They had farming interests in the area and ran the Cummins Theatre—an historic building that still stands in Merredin today. He spent his early years in Merredin, attending the local state school for the greater part of his education. However, tragedy struck the family when his father passed away on Jim's fifth birthday. Following the death of William, Mrs Brown took the family to Fremantle and Jim finished school at John Curtin High School.

His first step into the workforce was a brief stint selling newspapers before enlisting in the Royal Australian Air Force in 1945. He actively served in the RAAF as a leading aircraftman in Australia, but obviously in 1945 the war was drawing to a close and he was discharged in 1946. Soon after the war, Jim returned to the greater Merredin area for many years, running the Muntadgin store and later a Massey Ferguson farm machinery dealership with his brother George. He also spent many years as a farmer, firstly around the north east of Merredin and then later in life in Warralakin, as well as spending many years as an insurance agent.

He had a love for sport and played for the South Fremantle Football Club. He was elected foundation president of the Muntadgin Golf Club and was president and player of the year of the Merredin Football Club. Jim played for Merredin the day the club won its first premiership and a look back through the Merredin newspapers during the 1950s will reveal that the playing stats and accolades for his football performances received regular mention. However, Jim also had a love for public life.

In 1953, following encouragement from the local community, he ran for local government, and was elected to the Totadgin Ward. He was only 25 years old at the time, making him one of the youngest men in local government in Western Australia. In 1956, he moved into the Merredin township. He resigned the seat and was then elected for the central ward on the council, which he held until 1960. But that was not to be the end of his public life and he would soon turn to state politics. Jim first ran for state Parliament for the seat of Merredin–Yilgarn in 1968 when he was pre-selected to replace Labor minister Lionel Kelly, but he lost to Jack Stewart from the Liberal Party. He contested the seat in 1971. He was successful and became the second ever Labor member to hold the electorate. History shows that Merredin–Yilgarn, which later became known as just Merredin, has not been a seat for those of us on this side of politics to win easily or to easily hold. For most of that electorate's existence it was held by National, Country or Liberal Party members of Parliament.

It was a sign of the standing of Jim Brown that he held within the Merredin community that he was elected for that seat, overturning a long trend. But it was short-lived, and during the 1974 election, when the Tonkin government was defeated, he was beaten by the well-known National Country Party and then National Party MP Hendy Cowan. However, his short time in this place was only the beginning of Jim's parliamentary career, because in 1980 he was elected to the upper house seat of South-East Province—a seat he would hold until 1989—after which he became the very first member for Agricultural Region, which he held until his retirement in 1992. Going from representing the much smaller area of the lower house to the much larger area of Agricultural Region would have been difficult. He served across a long period under two Labor Premiers, Premiers Tonkin and Burke, and in the first Court government and the O'Connor Liberal government. He served this place across a range of committees. In fact, during his final

term he served as Chairman of Committees and Deputy President of the Legislative Council—only the second Labor member to hold that position. In addition, he served on two royal commissions: the Honorary Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into Hire Purchase and Other Agreements and the Honorary Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into Dairy Products and Market Milk.

But perhaps he was best known by current members for being a member and then the secretary of the Western Australian Parliamentary Former Members Association, a role that saw him frequent the members' lounge long after his retirement. In fact, that role earned him the nickname “the politicians' shop steward”. If any MP needed assistance, Jim was the go-to person in Parliament. I have been here 24 years now and I often saw Jim around Parliament, not so much in recent years, but over the years he was a stalwart. There was a group of older MPs—or former MPs; they seemed older to me then—who used to gather and have lunches, and Jim was one of the group.

It is fair to say that Jim Brown was a stalwart of the Labor Party in the regions. Former Premier Peter Dowding wrote in the notice he placed in the paper —

Jim ... was a true Labor man. He represented rural and mining communities and later in life outer suburban areas and always with the same care and concern for the common people of Australia. He was not showy but he was dedicated ...

Hon Kim Chance, who has also passed away, described Jim's advocacy of country people as “having few peers”. Those who knew Kim Chance know what a compliment that is. Jim was respected by his opponents. He was a loyal member of the Australian Labor Party and was well regarded by his constituents.

In the final line of his inaugural speech in 1971, he said something that has stuck with me. He said —

We must face our responsibilities with fortitude and courage to ensure that this State is served to the fullest possible extent.

When it comes to our roles here, I believe Jim Brown was completely right. On behalf of the state Parliamentary Labor Party and the government of Western Australia, can I pass our condolences on to his family and friends. Can I thank them for allowing Jim to serve in this Parliament with such distinction. Vale Jim McMillan Brown.

Members: Hear, hear!

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Leader of the Opposition) [9.10 am]: I rise on behalf of the Liberal Party to extend our condolences and best wishes to the family of James McMillan Brown. James McMillan Brown served the electors of the eastern wheatbelt and the goldfields in both houses of the Western Australian Parliament, and has the distinction of being the last member of the Australian Labor Party to represent Merredin and its adjacent rural shires in the Legislative Assembly.

Jim Brown was born in Merredin in 1927, his father having a varied career as a small businessman and farmer. He completed his schooling in Fremantle, sold newspapers and worked for the Fremantle Harbour Trust in 1944, until at the age of 18 he enlisted in the RAAF in April 1945. He was discharged in 1946 as a leading aircraftman, working for a ship repairer and then for a bus company from 1947 to 1950 while playing for the South Fremantle Football Club.

In 1950, Jim Brown relocated to the eastern wheatbelt, joining his brother in a store at Muntadgin before taking over the Massey Ferguson dealership in Merredin in 1955. He also became a service station proprietor, a farmer after 1960 and a Justice of the Peace, while serving on the Merredin shire council from 1953 until his election to Parliament. Having joined the Australian Labor Party in 1952, he served as its Merredin branch president from 1964 until 1968.

At the 1968 election, Jim Brown was endorsed as the Labor candidate for Merredin–Yilgarn to succeed Hon Lionel Kelly, who had represented the district since its creation in 1950. It extended from the Coolgardie and Yilgarn shires to include Merredin, Kulin, Kondinin and Narembeen, and was now a highly marginal seat, given the loss of Lionel Kelly's personal vote. At the 1968 election, Jim Brown polled just under 40 per cent of the vote and after preferences was defeated by 327 votes by the late Jack Stewart of the Liberal Party.

Jim Brown increased his community involvement as president of the Merredin shire from 1968 to 1971, and as an executive member of the Country Shire Councils' Association. He contested Merredin–Yilgarn at the 1971 election and raised the ALP vote to 45.3 per cent. A partial distribution of preferences gave him an absolute majority of 55 votes against the combined votes of the Liberal and Country Party candidates. Merredin–Yilgarn was one of three coalition seats whose capture enabled John Tonkin's government to take office after 12 years in opposition.

In his first speech to the Legislative Assembly, Jim Brown displayed his thorough understanding of the farming and mining industries in his diverse electorate, including the need for improved electricity, water and education services. However, a major electoral redistribution in 1972 removed the Shire of Coolgardie while adding the Shires of Bruce Rock and Corrigin. This made the district of Merredin–Yilgarn a weaker prospect for the Australian Labor Party. At the March 1974 state election, Jim Brown polled 38.8 per cent of the primary vote against Country Party and Liberal candidates, and was defeated by Hendy Cowan by 1 032 votes with a final margin of 42.1 per cent.

He had nevertheless still maintained 62 per cent of the primary vote in the Shire of Merredin. For the next six years he worked as an AMP insurance agent, and farmed at Warralakin after 1980.

Jim Brown returned to Parliament at the 1980 state election, retaining a South East Province seat in the Legislative Council with 58.2 per cent of the vote in a straight contest with the Liberal Party. This two-member province comprised the districts of Kalgoorlie, Yilgarn–Dundas and Merredin, and had become marginal in the two previous elections. However, Jim Brown reversed this trend by polling 45.3 per cent within the now safe National Party district of Merredin, an indication of his enduring popularity in his former seat.

With the change to proportional representation in the Legislative Council in 1989, Jim Brown led the Australian Labor Party ticket for the Agricultural Region, reconnecting with his old base of Merredin. In his final term, he served as Deputy President and Chairman of Committees of the Legislative Council until March 1992, when he resigned and was succeeded by the late Kim Chance. In retirement, he served as honorary secretary of the Royal Commonwealth Society after 1999 and was secretary of the WA Parliamentary Former Members Association from 2003 to 2009.

Jim Brown was a community-based member whose success at the 1971 election was decisive in electing the Australian Labor Party to government. Although serving only one term in the Legislative Assembly, he gave a total 15 years of parliamentary service, assiduously representing some of our state's significant farming, mining and pastoral communities.

We extend our condolences to his daughter Kerry, his sons Richard and William, to their partners John, Jenny and Frances and to their families. We also extend our condolences to his constituents and friends, who no doubt have very fond memories of a very fine member of Parliament.

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Nationals WA) [9.16 am]: I rise to contribute to this condolence motion on behalf of the Nationals WA and to acknowledge Kerry and John, Bill and Jenny, Vera, and the family members who are here today, and others who will join in the Legislative Council later. Our member for Agricultural Region, Hon Colin de Grussa, will speak on the motion in the Council. I note that although Jim and I were not members of the same party, we hold a number of things in common. We represented the eastern wheatbelt and those amazing communities out there and we served in both houses of Parliament. I will let Hon Colin de Grussa speak to his time in the Legislative Council.

James Brown—Jim, as he was better known—was one of only two Labor members to hold the seat of Merredin–Yilgarn from its creation in 1950 to its abolition in 2008. Like many parliamentary predecessors and many to follow, it was not Jim's first tilt that got him into the house on the hill. He first ran for Parliament at the 1968 state election to replace Lionel Kelly in the seat of Merredin–Yilgarn, but lost to Liberal Jack Stewart. Re-contesting the seat three years later, he won in the two-party preferred vote with 52.7 per cent. Three years on, he was defeated by the National Party's Hendy Cowan, who went on to be the member for Merredin right up until 2001. Jim's time in Parliament was not up, though. He went on to be a great servant to the greater agricultural region, serving for 12 years in the other place representing the South East Province and the Agricultural Region up to his resignation in March 1992. At the time of his lower house election in 1971, Jim's electorate covered seven local government areas—Kulin, Kondinin, Narembeen, Merredin, Westonia, Yilgarn and Coolgardie. At the upcoming election, the electorate of Central Wheatbelt will again take in the Shire of Kulin and all of those shires apart from the Shire of Coolgardie. Research conducted in my office in consultation with the WA Electoral Commission shows that it is the first time that Kulin rejoins what is now the Central Wheatbelt electorate in almost half a century, after being gazetted into the Narrogin electorate circa 1972, and remaining with the electorates to the south thereafter. I am proud to say today that I represent Kondinin, Narembeen, Westonia, Yilgarn, and Merredin—the town and district in which Jim was born and led much of his life.

I will talk briefly about Jim's upbringing in his community before leaving and then moving back to Merredin from Perth in 1950. Information regarding some of his earlier years have been taken from the book *The History of the Merredin District* published in 1962, and I acknowledge the author Frederick Law. Jim was born at Merredin District Hospital in 1927. He was the son of William McMillan Brown and Susan Brown, who were well known as the proprietors of Merredin Coffee Palace in Bates Street, which later became Raphael's.

After spending some years at Merredin state school, the family moved to Fremantle, where Jim attended John Curtin High School and played league football for South Fremantle. After serving in the RAAF, he went into business with his brother George at Muntadgin general store, and soon after was elected representative of Totadgin Ward on the Merredin Road Board. Aged 25, he was one of the youngest men in local government in the state in 1953. His representation continued on the board, including a stint as vice-chairman until 1960. He later served on the Shire of Merredin council from 1960 to 1972. Office bearing positions were accumulating, becoming foundation president of the Muntadgin Golf Club in 1955 before he and George moved back to Merredin to take over a stock and agency business. His interest in football had not waned and he quickly established himself as president of the Merredin Football Club in 1956, and played with the team the same year when the club won its first premiership in 30 years. Ironically, it was the same year his old club South Fremantle went down to East Perth in the Western Australian National Football League grand final in front of 37 000 at Subiaco Oval. Jim made the right club choice that year. At the Lions, he played with the late Paddy Crook, father of the former Nationals member for O'Connor, Tony Crook.

Incidentally, when Tony's parents shifted the kids from the farm back into town, their house backed onto the Brown's. Tony and Jim's son Richard used to walk to school together, and play cricket and golf. Their back fences were touching, after all. For all its vastness, Western Australia is certainly a small place.

Trawling through Trove, Jim's name features in the *Merredin Mercury* sports section, including in the 17 May 1951 edition recalling the previous Saturday's game against Bruce Rock—they were mighty adversaries—in front of 1 000 spectators. One thousand spectators in Merredin—goodness. That is a cracker!

Mr M.J. Folkard: Especially to a couple of rookies!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: It was big back then. Country football was a big thing!

A pacy centre man, we are told that Jim's two goals that day helped reverse Bruce Rock's half-time lead and hand his side the win. I quote —

After half time Merredin made a number of changes in the position of their team. McGinniss to centre, Jim Brown centre half forward, Vickers to ruckman, Jack Brown half back flank and Crook centre half back.

They are some names that still exist in perpetuity in the community of Merredin. The report continues —

Merredin went further ahead when Jim Brown drove the ball right into the teeth of the goals and Arthur flew high to take a nice mark and bring up Merredin's seventh goal this giving them a 14 point lead on the game ...

Bruce Rock were battling hard but were no match for Merredin who had settled down as a team and were playing fast open systematic football.. Jim Brown put the issue beyond doubt when he dropkicked a lovely running goal.

Sadly, the *Merredin Mercury* no longer exists—we have a local paper called the *Merredin Phoenix*—but it is wonderful to go back and look at these regional newspaper articles and reflect on what was happening in the community at that time. Jim may have liked putting on a clinic in front of 1 000 spectators, but truth be told the numbers were there to watch Subiaco take on the Eastern Wheatbelt, because the Merredin–Bruce Rock game was the curtain-raiser for that particular event.

Sporting prowess aside, and as illustrated by his early foray into the general store, Jim was a businessman and for some time he ran a local garage and machinery dealership—Massey Ferguson, I believe. In his maiden speech, Jim referenced the productivity and diversity of his electorate. He outlined agricultural, pastoral and mining activity's enormous contribution to the state—something I am proud to say continues in my electorate, and those adjacent, today. The concerns Jim held for his electorate in the early 1970s included the recession occurring in districts that he represented, farms growing bigger and population growth stagnating. One thing is for sure: the resilience of those communities that Jim represented was strong and it has been an enduring representation for those whom I represent today.

I was pleased that the *Merredin Phoenix*, which is the local newsletter that covers that district, ran a tribute to Hon James McMillan Brown on 19 June 2020, and today, on behalf of the Parliamentary National Party, I pay my tribute to a former member for Merredin–Yilgarn and South East Province. I again acknowledge Kerry, Bill, Vera and all the family members who have joined us today. From all accounts, from those I have spoken to in Merredin and through the recollections of others, Jim absolutely lived a rich life, contributing much to his community. I hope you all share very many fond memories of him and understand that his impact in shaping regional Western Australia will be enduring.

Members: Hear, hear!

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth) [9.24 am]: Jim Brown was elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1971 and as has already been said, he served one term until 1974 as the member for Merredin–Yilgarn, and six years later he did what not many members can do: he returned to Parliament as a member of the Legislative Council, representing South East Province, later to become the Agricultural Region, until his retirement in 1992. I have spoken to some members who worked with Jim, and they said that he was a very conscientious member of Parliament with an amazing work ethic—a man of great principle. As the Premier has already mentioned, former Premier Peter Dowding paid Jim a great tribute when he said that he represented rural and mining communities, but always showed care and concern for the common people. We all know that is important in the job that we do.

It is interesting that Jim came into this place with a diverse background. He worked in a lot of areas, as the Premier has already pointed out. There are a couple of things that Jim and I share in common. I notice that Jim's father, William McMillan Brown, among other things, was a bookmaker—very close to my heart! I also notice that Jim went to John Curtin High School, my former school. I am not sure whether it was called John Curtin then, because I think it was only the first or second year of John Curtin when I went there, so it might have been Fremantle Boys' School.

Mr I.C. Blayney: John Curtin might have still been alive!

Mr J.E. McGRATH: He might have been!

Jim certainly lived in Fremantle, which I did, and members know what I say about Fremantle people; they are very good people! The other thing I noticed too is that Jim sold newspapers in Fremantle. When I was going to John Curtin, I also sold newspapers on the corner of High Street and Market Street for some time. There is a parallel there. I did not know all this when I first met Jim in 2006.

After being elected in 2005, I was enticed by the late Trevor Sprigg to become a member of the parliamentary bowls team. One of the longstanding members of that team was the late Jim Brown. I would often talk to Jim. I did not know he was a shop steward back then. I was a new member of Parliament on the opposite side, but I would often talk to Jim about his experiences in Parliament and he was a font of much knowledge. He was a man you could listen to. You could talk about what you were experiencing as a new member, and I always found that he gave good advice. But he was a stickler for protocol. If you were talking too loud when Jim got on the mat, he would turn around and give you a glare. It was not too hard to have a difference of opinion with Jim, because he was a pretty strong character. He was always good company and I enjoyed my time with him. After meeting him on that first interstate carnival that we went to, I saw quite a bit of Jim. I agree that Jim was often in this place as a member of the former members' association.

It is interesting that we talk about Jim playing at South Fremantle Football Club. Jim did not play a lot of games for South Fremantle, but you have to remember that the era he was in was a golden era for South Fremantle. It was an unbeatable team of champion players, and it would have been hard to get a game, but Jim played for that side. He played a handful of games between 1947 and 1950. His mate Ron Leeson told me a story once that Jim talked about his first ever game for South. The coach basically said, "Jim, you've got a game on Saturday; you're playing in the league side". Jim said, "Fantastic; that's good." The coach said, "You're playing on Pops Heal." For those who do not know much about football, Stan "Pops" Heal was a superstar. He actually played in a premiership in Melbourne on one Saturday and came back to Perth and played for West Perth in a premiership. He was a legend. He is in the Australian Football Hall of Fame. Jim's first game was against Popsy Heal. He used to joke about that. He said, "Gee, Popsy must have got a giggle when he saw me running down to stand on him." But, from what I heard, Jim was a very, very good country footballer.

Ironically, Jim and Pops also shared something very similar, although it was not their football prowess, as they both later became Labor members of Parliament. From 1953 to 1965, Pops Heal was the member for West Perth and then later for the seat of Perth in this chamber. Those two guys, who once played on each other, whether it was at Fremantle Oval or Leederville Oval, later became members of this place.

As has been said, in later life after leaving Parliament, Jim was still very involved. He was on the board of the Parliamentary Superannuation Board and he was also on the executive of the Western Australian Parliamentary Former Members Association, serving as secretary for six years. In the members' bar, there is a plaque on the wall with four photos—only four—of people who have been made life members of the former members association. The others are the late Tom Bateman, the late Sir Charles Court and Jim's mate Ron "Dodger" Leeson, who served with him in the upper house.

On behalf of the Liberal Party and all of us who knew Jim, I would like to say condolences to the family. As a racing man, I believe Jim had a relative who was a jockey. It might have been a grandson, but there was a young Brown who was a jockey. I remember being at a country race meeting one day when Jim mentioned it. We are never far away from the sport of kings. It has been great to be able to say a few words about a member of this place who made an outstanding contribution.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie-Preston — Minister for Seniors and Ageing) [9.32 am]: It is with great honour and pleasure that I stand to speak about the late James Brown, or Jim as we knew him. My first encounters with Jim were very similar to those of the member for South Perth, and were in the corridors of Parliament. If you got bailed up in the corridor by Jim, you had to have a bit of time because he would go right through the history of the bits and pieces that had been taken off parliamentary salaries—the train fares and the superannuation. Never mention super in front of Jim because you would be there for two days!

Seriously, he was known as a cantankerous old "b", but underneath he was one of the finest guys. He was sensational to socialise with. Being a good Liberal member, the member for South Perth has done me in! We went away for bowls and we had two teams and they asked me to be captain and I said yes, I would be captain, but they gave me Jimmy Brown. Everyone laughed and I wondered what that was about, but I soon found out. When we got on the bowling rink, Jim was down at the other end and, as the captain, I said, "Down this side, Jim." We would walk down the rink, because we were both deaf, and then we would walk back and he would say, "Down that side? Are you sure? You don't want it down the other side" and I would say, "No, down that side." Sure enough, he would bowl it down the other side! It was the complete opposite of what I wanted. I got a bit jack of this, so the next time he got to bowl, I went and sat on the chairs and refused to tell him where to bowl because he wanted to bowl it his way: "You bloody do it your way then, Jim." He came storming down to me: "How the bloody hell do you think I'm going to bowl if you're not going to tell me where to bowl!" That is what he was like.

On the social side, my wife and I had many a fine wine and a beer or dinner with Jim. As has been said, he would help members endlessly in campaigning and connecting with their community, because he had done it—and he had done it the hard way. Once a member gets out, it is very difficult to come back in, but he was able to do that. We also had a synergy in the sense of being country members, so he understood.

Overall, his last few years were not the greatest. We all knew that and took some time to visit him, especially John Bradshaw, as a former member, who checked on him on a regular basis to see how he was going.

All I can say about Jim is that he was a great bloke and he was good to have an argument with because he forgot it within 10 minutes and got on with life. Vale Jim Brown and condolences to the family.

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [9.34 am]: I would like to say a few words. I first met Jim at the bowls carnival. For my sins, as I found out later, I was in Jim's team. I said to him, "I haven't played before, Jim" and he said, "No; it's all right, mate. I'll get you through." After the game, he came up and said, "You were right; you're hopeless!" As the member for South Perth would say, I have not improved over the years! After the games, we would sit down and have a meal and a few wines. His knowledge of Parliament and people, and the way he did things, made him a remarkable man. As the minister said, he had a bit of a fiery temper and if you did not bowl the right way, you knew about it! But it was all in fun and once we walked off, the white line fever was gone.

I really admired Jim not only as a bowler, but as a person. I learnt a lot just by sitting down and talking and listening to him after a game of bowls. It is great to see Ron "Dodger" Leeson in the gallery. He is another one who thinks I cannot bowl! Jimmy Brown was a true believer. He was a great person and I am very proud to have known him. I would like to offer my condolences to the family members here today.

I request all members to rise for one minute's silence in order to carry the motion.

Question passed; members and officers standing as a mark of respect.

PAPERS TABLED

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

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL (NO. 2) 2020

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

*Fifth Report — "From Words to Action: Fulfilling the Obligation to be Child Safe" —
Government Response — Statement by Minister for Child Protection*

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection) [9.37 am]: I rise to table the government's response to the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People's report titled "From Words to Action: Fulfilling the Obligation to be Child Safe", tabled on 13 August 2020 in both houses of Parliament. The committee considered the scope and direction of work being undertaken to implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the oversight mechanisms to monitor and enforce these principles. This work has been ongoing as part of the response to the 409 recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which the Western Australian government has been unequivocal in supporting.

The joint standing committee made 19 recommendations, which I am pleased to inform the house the government has either accepted or accepted in principle through its response. I thank the members of the committee and the parliamentary staff involved in this work, as their efforts are helping to develop and guide this important and complex policy reform.

As part of this government's response, I also table the Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Bill 2020 as a green bill for public consultation. The green bill has been drafted following consultation with key stakeholders. Further information about the green bill is available on the Ombudsman's website, and submissions from the public can be lodged until 31 January 2021. The draft bill seeks to establish a reportable conduct scheme, as recommended by the royal commission, to provide independent oversight of how organisations handle allegations of and convictions for child abuse. The bill will compel heads of organisations to notify the Ombudsman of misconduct involving children within their organisation so that the Ombudsman can then review investigation findings or undertake investigations on their own motion.

An estimated 4 000 organisations in Western Australia will be covered by the reportable conduct scheme, including accommodation and residential services; religious institutions; childcare services; child protection and out-of-home care services; disability services; education services; health services; and justice and detention services. This is a big reform. It is important that we get it right. That is why the McGowan government is committed to doing it in the interests of child safety. I now table the government's response and the green bill.

[See papers [3978](#) and [3979](#).]

EDUCATION — BURNS BEACH — SECONDARY SCHOOLS*Grievance*

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [9.40 am]: I rise today with a grievance for the Minister for Education and Training. I thank the Minister for Tourism for taking my grievance on behalf of the Minister for Education and Training, which relates to secondary education options in the Burns Beach electorate. This grievance will not be news to the minister because it is something that I have raised previously on behalf of my community. Families in the Burns Beach electorate want great education outcomes. There are three public secondary schools in the Burns Beach electorate. They are Clarkson Community High School, Kinross College and Mindarie Senior College. Clarkson Community High School opened in 1996 and caters for students from years 7 to 12. Kinross College opened in 2002 and caters for students in years 7 to 10. Mindarie Senior College opened in 2003 and takes in students for just years 11 and 12. Kinross College and the Mindarie Senior College share the local intake area, so many students from Kinross College move on to Mindarie Senior College for years 11 and 12. Kinross College and Mindarie Senior College were established at a time when there was interest in the middle schooling model of education, whereby students attend different schools for the latter part of their secondary schooling. The idea of this model is to cater for the education needs of adolescents. The middle school model is no longer considered best practice. Research now shows that the more transition points in a student's education, the greater the likelihood of their disengagement from schooling. A handful of schools in WA still have this model, including Kinross College and Mindarie Senior College.

Since I was elected in 2017, I have heard from many parents that they would like their child to attend one school for the duration of their secondary education and have the opportunity to choose from a wide range of ATAR subjects or VET courses in their senior years. For many years now I have advocated strongly on behalf of my community for improvements in secondary education in our local schools. At the 2017 election, I committed to an investment of \$2.5 million at Kinross College, and I am pleased to see that those works have now been completed. But I know more needs to be done in education and secondary schools. Recently, I met with the principals, P&Cs and boards of three schools to ask for their views on the current secondary options in my area and what they think could be improved. Throughout those conversations, a common theme emerged. Repeatedly, I heard, "Why are our kids required to go to two senior schools when everyone else has to go to only one? This means more disruption for our children which means poorer education outcomes."

The Kinross College community has for a long time engaged in a campaign to expand the school to offer years 11 and 12. I have been contacted by parents, carers and students about this matter for the last four years, continuously. For those students, Kinross College is a familiar school, where they know their teachers and they have established friendships. For students already facing the daunting prospect of their final two years of school, moving school is a big ask.

The Liberal Party is trying to make out that I have broken a promise to the Kinross community. That is not the case. I have always said that Kinross College needs to be transformed over time to ensure the best secondary education outcomes for our local kids. What is the Liberal Party plan? The Liberal Party candidate for Burns Beach seems to have forgotten that changes to Kinross College will affect other schools in the electorate. In 2016, the former Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, MLC, acknowledged in the other place that enrolments in Mindarie Senior College and Clarkson Community High School would decrease if Kinross College went to year 12. I note that in the same response he acknowledged that the model of education at Kinross College and Mindarie Senior College was flawed. The Liberal government had eight years to do something about this, but it chose to do nothing. Its then local member was a minister of the former government and a past board member of Kinross College, yet he did nothing to support local students. Now, with an election rolling up, the Liberal Party has decided that it is time to listen to the community. Where has it been for the past eight years? I have listened and advocated tirelessly for the past four years and will continue to do so. I have a plan to ensure that everyone gets their say and on how secondary education in Burns Beach can be the best that it can be.

I note that recently the Department of Education commenced community consultation in Cannington and Maddington, areas in which the model of education is similar to the one in my electorate. I understand that this consultation allows students, parents, school staff, and other interested parties and members to provide feedback. I believe that parents in my electorate want the same opportunity to provide feedback on the current education options in our area and want to look at how we can improve things for the future. Such consultation would give my community an opportunity to start a conversation. I know that my local schools would be keen to be part of this discussion and to share their views.

I have started a petition asking the minister to launch community consultation. I have already received great feedback from the local community with over 200 signatures on a petition that has been going for only the last week or so. I look forward to presenting that petition to Parliament in the very near future. I now ask the Minister for Education and Training to launch a community consultation process in Burns Beach to get the community's view on how we can improve secondary education in the electorate.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Tourism) [9.47 am]: I rise on behalf of the Minister for Education and Training to thank the member for Burns Beach for his grievance. I acknowledge his strong commitment to students in his electorate and the clearly significant impact that he has had on the minister, because he has definitely got her attention. I will refer to the minister's response to his grievance.

The member has raised a very important issue about secondary education outcomes for student in his electorate. It is a matter that his community is very passionate about and the minister knows that he has been advocating on behalf of his community on this matter for some time. She also knows that the member is committed to ensuring the best outcomes for his local students and notes that a \$2.5 million upgrade to Kinross College, an election commitment the member made in 2017, has now been completed. I am sure that local students are enjoying their upgraded facilities.

The minister recognises that the secondary education arrangements in Burns Beach are different from what we see in most other schools around WA. There is only one public secondary school in the electorate that offers years 7 to 12 at the one school. As the member outlined, Kinross College and Mindarie Senior College were established when there was a view that middle school would allow targeted education outcomes for adolescent students. The idea was that middle school teachers would be able to cater to the particular needs of that age group and that older students would benefit from a senior school environment. However, as the member indicated, research now shows that students face a high risk of disengagement from their schooling when there are more transition points in their education. Now, the Department of Education's preferred model for secondary school is, where possible, to provide students with a seamless year 7 to 12 education at a single school.

As the member outlined, there is a host of other reasons that students want to remain at the same school for their secondary education, including familiarity with the school and teachers, and to maintain existing friendships. Given the number of public secondary school students living in the Burns Beach electorate, any changes to the current system would have flow-on effects on other schools, as the member identified. Before any changes are considered there would need to be close consultation with the community. The member has also noted that that is an essential element of any pathway forward.

Consultations with school communities are not new in Western Australia. Under the previous government, the former Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, MLC, oversaw consultations in Kalgoorlie, Fremantle, Mandurah, Armadale and Geraldton. As the member has identified, a consultation process was recently undertaken in Cannington and Maddington. The minister has advised that she has asked her department to provide information on secondary schooling in Burns Beach and to investigate options for improvement. She acknowledges the significant community support for a consultation process and is considering that request at the moment.

HEALTH SERVICES — MIDWEST

Grievance

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA) [9.50 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Health. It concerns issues in the midwest—mainly around Mullewa. It is clear that the midwest is an area of some need. It has 2.5 per cent of the state's population and 12 per cent of the WA Country Health Service population, and 13 per cent of the residents are Aboriginal. It has more low-income families, single-parent families and unemployed people than the WACHS average and the state average. In 2015, 6.4 per cent of women who gave birth in the midwest were under 20 years of age, in contrast with 2.8 per cent across the state; and between 2011 and 2015, 47 per cent of Aboriginal women and 12 per cent of non-Aboriginal women from the midwest who gave birth reported having smoked during pregnancy. Adults in the midwest are more likely to report high levels of drinking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and obesity, which are all precursors to chronic disease. Suicide is the leading cause of death for those aged 15 to 24 years.

More specifically, one in five residents have high blood pressure, one in four have high cholesterol, and 35 per cent are obese. Between 2011 and 2015, there were 11 401 cases of potentially preventable hospitalisations. The hospitalisation rate for Aboriginal people was 3.1 times higher than that for non-Aboriginal people, and there were 522 avoidable deaths. Those figures are all provided in the "Midwest Health Profile 2018". As the minister can see, that is not a great report card and there are some challenges. At this point, I want to commend the past and ongoing work of the health professionals in the area. Those figures are not a reflection of their efforts and I applaud them for the work that they do.

I will talk more specifically about the health centres in Mullewa and Dongara. In the previous term of government, both sites were approved for redevelopment as primary healthcare centres, modelled on the sites in the wheatbelt in Pingelly and Cunderdin, which had been built earlier. That program saw \$40 million of royalties for regions funding allocated to provide a dedicated one-stop shop for health care. It involved a potential mix of general practitioners, primary healthcare providers, emergency care, outpatient services, allied health, visiting specialists, telehealth appointments, ambulatory services and wound dressing, and population health measures such as disease control, health promotion, community mental health and, of course, aged care. Communities could opt in to the program via an expression of interest. That did not happen in the midwest. Those sites were chosen by the central health authorities without that process.

On 18 March 2016, Minister Hames and Minister Redman announced the selection of Dongara and Mullewa health services for that program. Community consultation was due to start at the end of that month—on 30 March 2016 in Mullewa and on 31 March 2016 in Dongara. Construction was expected to start in the second half of 2017. On 20 December 2016, the *Geraldton Guardian* reported that the Mullewa project was due to start in mid-2018 and be completed in mid-2019. If we fast-forward to 12 November 2020 and look at the WACHS website under

the “Our building projects” tab, for both projects it states that planning for the development of the health centres in Mullewa and Dongara is continuing and that the new health centres are being built in consultation with the local community.

I was at the first community meeting that was held in Mullewa, going way back to that earlier period, and it was apparent that the changes were not very well explained to the community. The intention to discontinue aged-care services was a matter of huge concern for the people of Mullewa especially. There have been flow-on effects to services since that time. Since that meeting, I have been investigating ways to get an aged-care solution in Mullewa. I think some progress has been made and some age-appropriate housing is being built, but getting services into that area will remain a problem.

I have had a few updates through the Minister for Health’s office over the years. In September 2018, the design process was complete. In June 2019, the service model and transition plan for Mullewa, which were internal documents, were completed, I believe, and construction was due to commence in mid-2020. In October 2019, the minister’s office advised that the architects’ drawings were to be made available to the community reference group and construction was due to commence in mid-2020 and be completed by late 2021. The budget was reported as being \$6.06 million for Mullewa. The “My Healthy Midwest” Facebook page states that staff from midwest WACHS would be in Mullewa every Thursday to provide an opportunity to learn more about the exciting development in Mullewa. A lot of what I am hearing on the ground about community consultation is a bit different. The community has laid out some concerns about that. I will contrast that with the comments that the —

Mr R.H. Cook: Is that Mullewa and Dongara?

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is both, but Mullewa is the one with the biggest concern, because it lost its aged-care services. The member for Central Wheatbelt outlined the process in Pingelly and Cunderdin in her speech last night. It was a great contrast in terms of the community consultation and the discussion that has taken place with the community. It is just has not happened in Mullewa. As I said, Mullewa lost its aged-care service. There does not seem to have been any real effort to replace that with some sort of expanded home visitation service in the area.

I was up there a little while ago. The new buildings being put in place by the Midwest Employment and Economic Development Aboriginal Corporation were still empty because there were some issues about the pricing and the structure for people to go into them. Some royalties for regions-funded units were put up by a local Aboriginal corporation not that far from the health centre and could help provide a solution. In my view, active participation by WACHS is needed to make that happen.

I ask the minister: Who in the community has been consulted? What planning has been done to provide those aged-care services? It is apparent from community consultation that the City of Greater Geraldton has done work independent of this process and tried to involve the local agencies. Mental health is seen as the big issue. What is being done for mental health? What communication has happened with the City of Greater Geraldton? What communication has happened with the local doctors and the local service providers in the area? We do not want to have competing services. We want services that complement and work hand in hand with the private practitioners who are already there rather than duplicating them. We have big needs in mental health and in all the other issues I outlined. Mullewa has an especially high population of Aboriginal folk and they need attention from the minister’s department.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [9.57 am]: I thank the member very much for his grievance today. It is an issue about which he has been active for some time. I appreciate him bringing these issues to this place once again. I might answer the member’s concerns in two ways. I can provide him with an update on what is happening in the region. As to the specific questions about the level and style of consultation with the community, I might write to him separately, if that is all right, because I do not have that information with me today.

The development of health services within the midwest region is being driven by the “WACHS Strategic Plan 2019–2024”, which sets out how WACHS will continue to improve the health and wellbeing of Western Australians in our rural and regional communities. Obviously, they are very diverse communities. I thank the member for the details that he provided of the demographic breakdown, particularly in an area like Mullewa where there is a larger population of Aboriginal people. In itself, that creates challenges for the provision of health care, particularly for chronic disease management. I draw the chamber’s attention to the fact that we are doing a big redevelopment at Geraldton Hospital. I know that is not specifically the area that the member is concerned with, but it demonstrates our commitment to continue to improve health services in the region.

I refer to the Dongara Health Service redevelopment. Tenders closed yesterday and an assessment will be made prior to Christmas. A contractor will be engaged in early 2021 if a favourable tender result is received. This is a \$7.56 million redevelopment for an extra six aged-care beds. The redevelopment includes a new palliative care suite adjoining the living area where family can stay close. These additions reflect the priority for improved palliative and end-of-life care across the health system.

The design and development report drawings for Mullewa have been completed and it is anticipated that tenders will be called for in the second quarter of 2021, or in the first half of next year. This might be a good opportunity for me to double-check that we have consulted with and reached out to the community to ensure that those co-design elements are in place. It is anticipated that construction will take place over about 12 months.

In relation to other aspects of the midwest health facilities, the hospital maintenance blitz would have seen a range of opportunities take place in Geraldton, Northam, Northampton and Sandstone. The midwest received \$945 000 for capital works for the Stop the Violence campaign, which essentially went to accommodation, CCTV and lighting upgrades, and that included work at the Dongara and Mullewa health centres.

I want to talk briefly about the expansion of telehealth services, which will obviously become a feature of the new Mullewa and Dongara facilities. We continue to expand the reach and scope of telehealth services, including emergency telehealth services and telemental health, as well as the rollout of inpatient telehealth services, which has allowed a significant number of patients to be seen at a country health facility rather than having to travel to a larger or more acute setting in Perth. We cannot underestimate the revolution that is going on at the moment inside the WA Country Health Service in terms of its capacity to embrace innovation and new ways of delivering health care. This is one of the principles of the seven strategic priorities that have been identified around the themes of caring for patients, addressing disadvantage and inequity, delivering value and sustainability, leading in innovation and technology, building healthy and thriving communities, enabling staff and collaborating with partners. To the extent that we see that happening, the expansion of telehealth has been a significant contributor to the way that we continue to evolve and deliver health services.

I want to turn briefly to issues around mental health. Reform of the Midwest Mental Health and Community Alcohol and Drug Service has been in place and ongoing since February 2018. Its recurrent funding has increased to \$2.5 million a year and the service has engaged the Aboriginal population. Pleasingly, 31 per cent of its service clients in Geraldton are Aboriginal and up to 74 per cent of its clients in the Murchison are Aboriginal. I was particularly pleased to see the expansion of Aboriginal health services for chronic disease management, in particular the work with the Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service on diabetes education and a campaign—the notes of which seem to be eluding me at the moment—on smoking cessation strategies for the Aboriginal community. As we all know, the root of a lot of chronic disease is essentially long-term smoking.

I appreciate that WACHS and other parts of the health system are often keen to get on and do things and that sometimes these things take place to the detriment of the consultation process. I will undertake to make some inquiries on behalf of the member and to write to him separately just to detail all that consultation process, particularly with Mullewa, where we might have that opportunity to do some final consultation before we move forward with the redevelopment of the health centre.

Mr R.S. Love: Especially with that aged-care space.

Mr R.H. COOK: Yes, that is right—particularly in aged care.

CORONAVIRUS — ECONOMIC RECOVERY — VASSE

Grievance

MS L. METTAM (Vasse) [10.04 am]: My grievance is to the Premier, but I acknowledge that the Minister for Transport is taking the grievance. I flagged with the Premier's office yesterday that I would raise issues about the last four budgets, the economic response to the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health and tourism infrastructure, so I hope that these issues can be addressed. I rise to speak on the need for the McGowan government to commit to investing in important facilities, infrastructure and services in the electorate of Vasse and to stop ignoring the needs of this region. According to Australian Bureau of Statistics data, pre-COVID, the Vasse electorate was one of the top four regional areas for growth in the country. The delivery of the McGowan government's fourth budget highlighted, yet again, the government's obvious and ongoing blind spot for the Vasse electorate. In the first budget, Vasse did not even rate a mention. There were plans for Albany, Bunbury and Collie, but no plan for the broader south west or the more than 40 000 residents in the electorate. At least the south west got a mention in a heading on a fact sheet in the second budget, but, again, the majority of funding went to Bunbury and Collie. The third and fourth budgets saw even more dedication of funding to Labor-held seats. Many projects in the Vasse electorate, which are of benefit to students, community members and the needs of the region, failed to receive funding, raising the obvious question about how a government can prioritise the people of one area over another. I acknowledge the progression of funds committed under the former government for the Cape Naturaliste College, and the federal government's \$68 million commitment towards the duplication of Bussell Highway as part of its \$15 billion investment in this area, but the blatant exclusion of one region is galling in light of the investment the former government had made in important infrastructure across all of WA, including Labor-held seats, such as the \$50 million investment in Coalfields Highway in Collie, which was also a SuperTown, and investment in regional health in many areas across the state.

These are not Labor Party funds. These are taxpayer funds—funds that the people of the south west contribute, but funds that this government then decides they do not deserve to benefit from. Sadly, after four years of neglect, it has become unjust. The lack of funds for basic mental health, law and order and education is having an impact on the region. There are many concerns about the growing mental health issues in the region. When the McGowan government first came to office, the Mental Health Commission cut \$89 000 from the mental health homelessness program that was delivered by Lamp—a cruel cut. It meant that the full-time position was halved, reducing the capacity to support mental health patients and people into housing.

We need support to deal with juvenile mental health issues. Last week, we once again raised these issues with the Minister for Health's office and sought support for a patient in Busselton's emergency department over the weekend who was unable to find a bed in the region or in Perth. The minister's office is very helpful, but this is no way to resolve an urgent health need. There are a range of concerns, but at the very least, an assessment must be done of the current demands for support for crisis care in this region.

On law and order, the community calls for youth crime intervention officers to be split between Bunbury and Busselton. Having all four officers based in Bunbury falls well short of a good outcome. We need two dedicated officers in Busselton to support the lower south west region as well.

In relation to school infrastructure, the undercover area at Dunsborough Primary School cannot accommodate 760 students and the canteen does not meet City of Busselton health standards. It is no surprise, given the growth of this region, that sporting facilities are struggling to keep pace with growth. Busselton Amateur Basketball Association has more than 1 600 players and is turning prospective players away as there are only four courts for competition. The Dunsborough playing fields have seen an average 200 per cent increase in the number of players a year since 2010, and the Busselton Football and Sportsman's Club at the Sir Stewart Bovell Park Sporting Complex does not have the capacity to provide showers for its female players.

Busselton Margaret River Airport is another example of the government deliberately overlooking the value of the region, particularly the tourism industry, after talking up regional aviation in the lead-up to the state election. Despite claiming that regional aviation is a priority, upon being elected, the Premier's first move was to hold up the development of this airport. The Minister for Regional Development looked at how the redevelopment could be "unpicked". She held up the runway expansion for several months and then subsequently withdrew funding for the terminal upgrade. Our so-called minister for WA tourism removed the regional aviation project from the government's two-year tourism strategy—so much for supporting regional aviation. The Minister for Tourism claimed that we had been sold a pup on the project and that it was not viable. Jetstar clearly disagreed and began scheduling flights.

The south west economic recovery plan, which is part of the government's \$5.5 billion COVID economic response, somehow assumes that Vasse has been inoculated from the impacts of COVID. This has represented a missed opportunity to invest in a pipeline of tourism infrastructure projects and a chance to back up the federal government's \$13 million investment in the Busselton jetty project before the funds are lost altogether in December this year. That is a plan to create the largest underwater observatory in the world at the end of Busselton jetty, a tourist attraction in what is currently the biggest grossing tourist destination outside Perth. It must be remembered that in 2008, when the Premier was the Minister for South West, he planned to sell off the Busselton foreshore and public open space to pay for a Busselton jetty upgrade. It was a short-sighted plan that, thankfully, was never realised. This is not a government for all Western Australians, but it can be. Western Australians should not have to vote Labor to get access to basic facilities. That is not how democracy in our state works.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [10.10 am]: I thank the member for Vasse for that quite bizarre grievance. Normally in a grievance, members ask ministers to address specific complaints or issues in their community. The member for Vasse's portrayal that Busselton has been left to ruin while the rest of Western Australia is booming is completely false. Busselton is a beautiful place—absolutely beautiful. I have visited Busselton a few times over the past couple of years. Many of my friends have recently been to Busselton and they said that as a tourist destination, they had never seen it busier nor small businesses doing better.

This whole idea that somehow the government is neglecting a particular part of Western Australia is completely false. The reason that the Premier is otherwise occupied is that the topic that was sent was "Investment in Vasse". That was it. I will go through some of the investments that the government is making in that area. I will try to address the specific health and education issues raised by the member. The member for Vasse talked down her electorate and claimed that the Premier tried to sell off—what? The coastline? I do not believe that. I do not believe that when the Premier was the Minister for South West, he tried to sell off parts of the beach. That does not ring true. The grievance was a scripted attack on the government and it failed to acknowledge anything that the government has done in the member's electorate.

I will start with the lack of credit afforded to the government for Bussell Highway. The member for Vasse did not acknowledge the government one bit. I find that it is better to tell the truth in politics because a negative portrayal of everything does not hold true. I am sure that the people of Vasse have respected how the Premier has handled the COVID pandemic. I know that many, particularly those in the accommodation and tourism sectors, understand that the management of the COVID pandemic in this state has helped places like Busselton to continue to grow and expand, which will hopefully allow small businesses to thrive. Bussell Highway is an example. The previous government had eight and a half years to do something about that road. During those eight and a half years, traffic on that highway significantly increased, but the previous government did nothing. The member for Vasse was a member of the former government, but she did nothing. When we won government —

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): Member, grievances are heard in silence. The member for Vasse was heard in silence, so I would appreciate it if we could hear the minister in silence.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The former Minister for Transport admitted that the Liberal government did nothing about Bussell Highway. When we came to government, all of a sudden the Liberal Party, which did nothing about the road during its term in government, said that fixing that road was an urgent. We worked to secure funds. We funded works last year to ensure that if we were successful in our lobbying to get federal funds, we could start works straightaway, and that work is underway.

The Bunbury Outer Ring Road will also benefit the people of Busselton. It is an \$800 million investment in that area, which the member for Vasse failed to acknowledge. The idea that somehow Busselton has been ignored is completely false.

As I understand it, every primary school in the area is getting upgrades as a result of one of the government's recovery packages. We are also, of course, investing in a number of areas in health. I will talk about the government's investments in education. The member for Vasse noted investment in new school buildings at Cape Naturaliste College, but she gave the credit for that to the former government. This government has invested funds in Busselton Primary School, Busselton Senior High School, Cape Naturaliste College, Cowaramup Primary School, Dunsborough Primary School, Geographe Education Support Centre, Geographe Primary School, Vasse Primary School and West Busselton Primary School. I can tell members that during the eight years that I was in opposition, the schools in my electorate never got a look-in under the former government. The member for Vasse should not come in here and talk about taxpayer funds when the Liberal-National government ignored huge areas that voted Labor. We have invested in primary schools across the state, including Vasse Primary School. The grants program administered by the Minister for Regional Development supports local businesses in the Vasse region.

I love Busselton jetty. I put on record my support for the team of volunteers and others who run that project. It is very well run. It was a fantastic experience for my kids, who loved it. One of the best playgrounds that I have seen in my entire life is on the Busselton foreshore, which I acknowledge was redeveloped under the previous government. I do not know whether any other member has experienced that playground. It is incredible. I would probably go as far as to say that it is right up there as the best playground in the Southern Hemisphere.

Vasse is a place of enormous opportunity. It has a lot of entrepreneurial small businesses. It is a beautiful place. The whole idea that the government has ignored Vasse is wrong. The future of the jetty is going through a market-led proposal process with the Minister for Regional Development. I have outlined the government's investment in schools. A number of grants have been given to a number of non-government organisations in the area of mental health. We acknowledge that more can always be done in mental health across the state. This type of grievance does not achieve much; rather, it shows the negative frame of mind of many members of the opposition.

BUS SERVICES — BALDIVIS

Grievance

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldvis — Parliamentary Secretary) [10.18 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Transport and it concerns the specific need to extend bus services to several new estates in the Baldvis electorate.

As the minister well knows, the seat of Baldvis includes fast-growing new suburbs with growing needs. It is a great community and the McGowan government has already invested many millions of dollars to provide much-needed infrastructure to keep pace with community needs. This includes new primary schools and a new high school in just the past four years. It has also invested heavily in the new Baldvis District Sporting Complex, with the latest commitment of \$10 million coming as part of our state recovery plan to boost the WA economy after COVID. The minister will also be aware of the \$49 million of investment to widen the northbound lanes of the Kwinana Freeway which, I am glad to report, has successfully fixed congestion caused by the notorious Cockburn bottleneck. However, today I ask the minister to consider the need for extended bus services to better serve the people of the Baldvis electorate. We already have a very good and efficient public transport system in our community. We have train stations at Warnbro, Rockingham, Wellard and Kwinana, and numerous bus routes that serve our community well. These services will be enhanced further as new Metronet lines and stations are added to the network. The challenge we face, though, is the emergence and rapid growth of new estates beyond the current reach of our existing local bus services. I speak of the estates of Emerald Park and Providence in the suburb of Wellard, and Brightwood in Baldvis.

New outer suburbs such as Baldvis and Wellard have as much right to bus services as any other part of Perth. Today, I am speaking directly on behalf of local families who have written to me or called me. I am fighting on behalf of these families, who I represent in this chamber. These families include a young Brightwood mum forced to go on a 22-minute walk along the edge of busy Baldvis Road to get to the nearest bus stop in Heritage Park. I have asked the City of Rockingham to build a footpath there, but the city says it is waiting for developers to finish the estates. Brightwood mum Codie Lea-Thompson pushed a pram with a four-month-old child and a two-year-old child to get to the bus stop. Her husband, a tradie, drives a ute, which is the family's only car, but he needs it for work.

Another Brightwood mum, who is nine months pregnant, walks the same route pushing a pram. Another Brightwood family, whose daughter will commence studying at the University of Notre Dame next year, needs to get to the train station. Another family, comprising three special needs children and elderly parents with disabilities, needs a bus service.

People who do not have a car, or cannot afford a taxi or an Uber, have no choice but to walk. The shops at Stockland shopping centre are five kilometres away and the nearest doctor's surgery is about three kilometres away. It is the same story in the estates of Emerald Park and Providence in Wellard. Residents in those estates want to be linked to the Village at Wellard, where there is a Woolies supermarket, shops and the Wellard train station. It is simply not reasonable to expect anyone to walk that far through bush or along the edge of busy roads. We need bus services to link all these new estates.

In 2018, the Minister for Transport responded positively to my request. The community had a win when the minister approved the extension of bus route 568 northwards from Fifty Road as far as Kerosene Lane—the location of a new Spudshed and a small shopping centre. This was another estate that had grown beyond the reach of existing bus routes. It is now well served by the 568 bus route. I thank the minister for that.

Today, I ask the minister to consider extending other local bus routes further south in Baldivis, to the estate at Brightwood, and further west in Wellard to link up to the Emerald Park and Providence estates. New extended bus routes to these areas will serve all the communities along the way. In Baldivis, the brand-new and emerging Paramount Private Estate on Baldivis Road will also benefit, even though only a handful of families have so far moved into new homes there. To confirm support for these new bus services, I have organised a petition to seek direct input from the local community. In less than two weeks, more than 650 residents have signed this petition. I know the minister will want to conduct her own community consultation, and I urge her to take that step. I am in no doubt that demand exists and that the extension of bus services is well and truly needed.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [10.23 am]: I thank the member for Baldivis for raising this grievance with me today. Like those areas represented by the member for Jandakot, the member for Southern River, myself and other members in this place, we represent fast-growing regions—suburbs that have basically grown overnight. People who come to live in these suburbs normally have families. They either have younger or older children; normally parents trying to access getting to work or children trying to access school or other places. They are high-demand and high-need areas in respect of bus services. Although there are some train stations in the electorate of Baldivis, bus services are also needed to link to them. The member for Baldivis has been working really hard on this issue and talking to a lot of people in his community. As outlined by the member's grievance today, he has obviously circulated a petition. It sounds like a very successful petition, signed by over 600 residents, but he also has insight into these particular families and their needs. When considering kids trying to access school and parents trying to access workplaces, these areas need improved services.

Again, I thank the member for raising this grievance. He has raised a couple of issues in the past. As the member noted, we were able to extend the bus route 568 service further into north Baldivis near the Spudshed and Kerosene Lane. I am glad we were able to do that. The member has continued to raise concerns about other areas that lack services. The member mentioned the extension of bus services to Brightwood estate and the need for greater public transport access for Wellard residents. A lot of people, including with young families, are moving into new suburbs. When doorknocking in those areas, I have realised that streets have been built overnight. Hundreds of homes are constantly being built and new families are moving into them.

Wellard is not directly serviced by public transport, with the nearest bus route operating along Mortimer Road in Bertram or from Wellard train station. Parts of Baldivis remain unserved, including the south-eastern section along Baldivis Road to Sixty Eight Road. This includes Brightwood estate. I am pleased to announce today that the Public Transport Authority has plans to create new bus services as a result of the member's strong advocacy. The new bus route 544 is intended to serve the suburb of Wellard and will operate from Wellard train station to Kwinana train station via Lambeth Circle, Leda Boulevard and Johnson Road. Additionally, to address the needs of the residents of Brightwood estate, the PTA proposes to extend bus route 567 from its current terminus on Furioso Green—it is an Italian name; I should have nailed it!—to travel south along Baldivis Road to Sixty Eight Road, providing a service to these residents in south-east Baldivis. Both bus routes are proposed to operate seven days a week; every 20 minutes during peak periods and every 60 minutes during off-peak periods and weekends. Transperth intends to introduce these services early next year to commence the 2021 school year.

As the member rightly pointed out, the PTA will now commence community consultation on the proposed bus routes to make sure we capture as many people as possible. That community consultation will commence on Monday, 16 November. It will run for about three weeks and will take place on the My Say Transport website. I thank the member for bringing this matter to my attention and the government's attention. Working to deliver new bus services to newer suburbs is a big challenge as we try to ensure our public transport dollars meet as many needs as possible. The member's strong advocacy and of course the needs of families in Baldivis and Wellard could not be ignored and as a result those new bus services will be introduced.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Seventeenth Report — “More Than Just a Game: The Use of State Funds by the WA Football Commission” — Tabling

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [10.27 am]: I present for tabling the seventeenth report of the Public Accounts Committee titled “More Than Just a Game: The Use of State Funds by the WA Football Commission”. I also present for tabling the submissions to the inquiry.

[See papers [3980](#) and [3981](#).]

Dr A.D. BUTI: Football, or Aussie Rules, has played a significant role in the lives of Western Australians for more than 130 years. As former Premier Dr Geoff Gallop remarked, “No sport has had such a critical impact on our social and cultural development as Australian Football.” Football is a game that develops tribal loyalties and arouses passions, but it is also more than just a game. As noted by Dr Neale Fong, a former chair of the West Australian Football Commission, the history of football in Western Australia is not only about footballers, clubs and supporters, it also involves relationships with networks of politicians, governments, businesses and personalities involved in the game.

The West Australian Football Commission, established in 1989, is the body charged with responsibility for the overall development and strategic direction of football in this state. The creation of the West Australian Football Commission is unique to WA. No other jurisdiction has a similar government-created body responsible for the management of football. The WAFC receives funding from several sources, including the two Western Australian-based AFL teams—the West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers. A considerable proportion of its funding also comes from the public purse, directly and indirectly. The catalyst for this inquiry was a series of stories in *The West Australian* reporting on concerns over salary expenditure in the organisation and unease across the football community with some of the commission’s activities. There was concern that public funds provided to the WAFC were not being used to best effect. These concerns led to the Public Accounts Committee resolving to inquire into the WAFC’s use of state funds. However, as the inquiry proceeded, other issues and criticisms of the WAFC were revealed and articulated.

As the premier audit risk committee of the WA Parliament, we could not ignore these revelations and thus have looked into them and made subsequent findings and recommendations. We have made 58 findings and 23 recommendations dealing with issues around the behaviour and responses by the WAFC during this inquiry, state funding of football, elite talent and grassroots football development, the composition and election of WAFC commissioners, and the transparency of the commission. The rationale, analysis and commentary behind our findings and recommendations are contained within our report.

The committee has worked collaboratively throughout the process of receiving and considering the evidence. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and contributions of my fellow committee members: the deputy chair, the member for Bateman; the member for Mount Lawley; the member for Bicton; and the member for North West Central. Further, on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank our secretariat, principal research officer Dr Alan Charlton, and research officer Dr Sam Hutchinson, for their excellent assistance and dedication throughout this inquiry.

Before continuing, I would like to note that although many witnesses to the inquiry had criticisms and concerns about the WAFC, there was also acknowledgement that the commission has done many things well. There was also broad recognition that the oversight role of the WAFC is necessary and important for the ongoing success of football in WA.

In the submissions and testimony from the WAFC and the West Coast Eagles CEO, Mr Trevor Nisbett, there was a mistaken view that the funding that the commission received from the state government was in effect football money. Any proper reading of the terms of the funding agreement between the WAFC, the AFL and the state shows that the funds received by the commission under the agreement are state moneys. The agreement guarantees the WAFC funding of around \$11 million per annum for the first 10 years, which accounts for around one-third of the annual budget for the commission. The state also took over a residual loan of \$5.6 million as part of the move to the new Perth Stadium, having paid down \$14.5 million in 2005. In addition to this substantial funding and support from the government to the WAFC, the state also provided \$23 million over the last five years to individuals, clubs, local governments, and associations connected to supporting grassroots football. We also note that the state provided \$10 million each to the West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers to assist them in building training and administration facilities.

The level of state funding provided directly and indirectly to the WAFC and to football in general in Western Australia means that the WAFC is not above scrutiny by government and Parliament. In our interactions with the WAFC, we at times observed a resistance to making information public and a restricted view of transparency. The WAFC sought to have the agreement withheld from public view. Although the WAFC argued this was required under the terms of the agreement, it was disappointing that at 2.46 pm on the day before the scheduled hearing with the WAFC, the committee’s secretariat received a request from the commission to discuss —

‘how the Committee will deal with the confidential nature of the WAFC Funding Agreement’.

This appeared to us to be mischievous timing by the WAFC. The WAFC did itself no favours in countering the view that it sought to restrict transparency when it withheld information requested by the committee about the AFL draftee skill history. Further, the attempt to hold inexperienced staff members responsible for failing to provide this information when requested does not reflect well on the leadership of the WAFC. The commission withheld requested information from the committee, and the leadership of the WAFC must accept responsibility for this. The information was provided, but only after prodding by the committee.

The committee heard repeated claims that in a meeting of WAFL and WAFC talent managers, WAFC executive manager, Mr Simon Moore-Crouch, referred to our inquiry as a “dog and pony show”. Mr Moore-Crouch refuted the claims and, due to apparent concerns about reprisals, whether or not they were warranted, we received no further corroborating evidence about those statements and could not make a definitive finding on the matter.

More troubling was the behaviour of the WAFC commissioner, Mr Grant Dorrington. We found that he interfered in the inquiry process by seeking to persuade the Swan Districts Football Club from making a submission to the inquiry. This finding against Mr Dorrington could have resulted in the committee raising the matter of contempt of Parliament in the Legislative Assembly. However, in light of the fact that the club in the end did make a submission and that its CEO and president appeared before us, although not diminishing the seriousness of the actions taken by Mr Dorrington, we have decided not to raise the matter in the Assembly.

It was also concerning that Mr Nisbett, when given two opportunities by the committee at a public hearing, did not refute allegations that at a meeting organised by the WAFC and attended by WAFL representatives and others, he said, “If we do not work together, we could lose our government funding.” The fact that Mr Nisbett was either unable or unwilling to refute this allegation is troubling. It does nothing to dispel the perception that the WAFC and other prominent players in the WA football ecosystem were overly concerned with seeking to restrict information being provided to the inquiry and that the views of the WAFC should be the only views presented to the committee.

Notwithstanding the serious concerns raised, we were pleased to receive 21 submissions from across a wide range of participants and organisations. We received formal submissions from eight WAFL clubs, although there was a hesitancy among some about making their submissions public. One club initially sought to keep its submission private, although later agreed to make it public. The only WAFL club not to make a submission was West Perth Football Club.

The process to elect the WAFC commissioners is overly complex and restrictive, and the WAFC board is not fully representative of all parts of the football community. Currently, the two WA-based AFL clubs hold 40 per cent of the votes for the appointment of commissioners, which combined with the existing commissioners who also vote, makes up a 60 per cent voting bloc in the determination of new commissioners. The WAFL clubs have 30 per cent of the votes, and the affiliates, which include the metropolitan and non-metropolitan regional football development councils, the Perth Football League, the Metro Football League, the WA Country Football League, the WA Women’s Football League and the AFL Masters, share only 10 per cent of the vote. It should be noted that the affiliates have no say in the final secret ballot on endorsed candidates. In a nutshell, the two AFL clubs and the WAFC commissioners have too much power vis-a-vis the other stakeholders in determining the composition of the WAFC board. This needs to change to create a fairer voting system among the wider football family specifically to ensure that the affiliates have greater representation on the WAFC board.

We believe that the WAFC constitution should be amended so that commissioners cannot be members of the WAFC and the affiliates become members of the WAFC. In reforming the WAFC’s board nomination and election processes, regard must be had to ensuring greater representation of the various stakeholders and the wider football community, including the need for greater representation of the various affiliates. Possible reforms include existing commissioners to have no role in appointing new commissioners; term limits on WAFC board appointments; and employees of the WAFC, the two AFL clubs, the WAFL clubs and the affiliates to be prohibited from being appointed as commissioners. On the issue of boards, we note that the West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers are the only clubs of the 18 in the AFL competition that do not have some member-elected board positions. This only exacerbates the insular nature of the current arrangement—that is, that two WAFC-owned AFL clubs, along with the commissioners, hold a controlling vote on the determination of new commissioners to the WAFC board. As I have already mentioned, this needs to change.

With regard to the operations of the WAFC, more than 50 per cent of commission employees work in grassroots areas, but the data and figures provided by the WAFC are unnecessarily opaque, which makes the connection between expenditure and activity difficult to ascertain. In other words, how much of the money spent by the WAFC is actually going to grassroots football? It is not clear or discernible exactly how much support grassroots football receives from the WAFC and its employees. This again raises questions about the transparency and accountability of the commission’s activities. We believe that publicly acknowledging the number and financial cost of employees is something that the state, the stakeholders and the public should expect of an organisation that receives substantial public funding. It works out that state funding comprises about 37 per cent of the WAFC’s revenue, if we include the funding agreement.

The WAFC has an important role to play in managing football across all levels. It is a challenging role that requires the balancing of resources and many demands. There have been positive developments in female football, all-abilities football and Indigenous participation. There has also been some good work done by the junior metropolitan and non-metropolitan regional development councils, but segments of junior and youth football in parts of the state are struggling to maintain viable competitions. In country football, which plays an important role in regional communities, there are many challenges. These require the WAFC to focus on providing appropriate support to growing the game and increasing the pool of talent and opportunities for young people in regional areas.

The committee was interested to understand participation figures, which the WAFC used as evidence that it is performing well. Although the figures appear impressive, at its inquiry hearing the WAFC admitted that general participation numbers are not particularly meaningful. Other witnesses also questioned participation numbers, saying that there was multiple counting of the same individuals. This is not an acceptable situation, particularly given that considerable state funds are involved in the sport. A more accurate and credible method of reporting participation rates must be developed.

In recent years, and particularly since the 2017 structural review of football—commissioned by the WAFC and also known as the “Boston report”—there has been a deteriorating relationship between the WAFC and the WAFL. Responsibility for talent development and competitions has moved to the WAFC from the WAFL clubs. This change, along with changes to the governance model for junior football, has resulted in a decreasing ownership of and connections between WAFL clubs and their geographical locations and communities. To assist the WAFL to reconnect with its communities, the WAFL colts competition should return to being controlled by the clubs rather than the WAFC, and the WAFL needs to be more fully involved in talent and junior development. The WAFC must ensure that the WAFL continues to be the premier state competition—history, traditions and the fabric of our communities demand as much.

In relation to talent development, a highly disproportionate number of school AFL draftees come from a small number of Public Schools Association schools. Although there may be many reasons for this, at the very least it raises questions of equity in relation to WAFC development programs and access to resources that should be addressed by the WAFC and government.

Further on the issue of AFL draftees, we believe consideration needs to be given to increasing the draft age. I would like to acknowledge the member for Bateman, who was very strong on this point. An older draft age would have many positives, including allowing young people the opportunity to pursue further education and training before entering the AFL system. Of course, the AFL draft age is an AFL responsibility, but we believe that the WAFC, the Minister for Sport and Recreation and the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries should work together to argue for a more appropriate older drafting age to promote to the AFL. We also believe that the WAFC and the department must do more to ensure greater player welfare and support, such as developing a rigorous mechanism to track and report on the development of draftees throughout their career, and gathering data on the number of players who drop out of football, especially the AFL, and the reasons for this.

The report makes a series of recommendations—23, in total—and 58 findings. The recommendations can be summarised as follows. The WAFC has done many things well, but there are many concerns and problems that need to be addressed, including a concerning level of distrust between the WAFC and many stakeholders, particularly the WAFL clubs. The WAFC must accept that it is the beneficiary of significant state funding, and therefore must be more open and transparent to scrutiny, from both government and Parliament. The WAFC board must be more representative of the whole football ecosystem, with membership from across the various components and affiliates that make up football in WA. The WAFC must be careful to ensure that its focus is on governance, and it should coordinate with member and affiliate clubs and leagues to devolve its service and delivery functions to the appropriate stakeholders. That is what it should be doing; it should be concentrating on governance. The minister and the department should work with the WAFC to ensure that there is greater clarity around the impact and effectiveness of the expenditure allocated to the WAFL and other parts of the football ecosystem, including the affiliates. The department and the WAFC must do more to ensure greater player welfare and support, and work towards lifting the AFL draft age. Finally, the minister and the department should monitor the WAFC’s responses to all recommendations in this report that are directed towards the WAFC. If the minister and the department deem the WAFC’s responses to be insufficient, they should reconsider the funding arrangements.

I commend the report to the house.

MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman) [10.46 am]: Western Australia has a proud and strong history in football, and the West Australian Football Commission should be commended for the role it has played in the development of football in Western Australia. However, this report highlights some of the concerns of the people of Western Australia at the direction the commission has taken. Today I would like to focus on two particular areas, but before I start, I advise the house that the committee does not regard it to be its role to tell the West Australian Football Commission how to run football; it is more around governance and transparency and the fact that the football industry has become a great employer of young Western Australians. It is our belief that the commission has a duty of care for the young people who are developed for this great game.

I have had a large interaction with football for most of my life. I played the game for 19 years and it was only through many injuries that I was forced to retire, but I have been further involved in my children's football as assistant coach, runner, trainer, goal umpire—whatever it was. I have also been involved in football at a higher level, taking responsibility for ANZ Bank's sponsorship of both the West Australian Football Commission and the West Coast Eagles. I have seen a number of aspects of the game, and one thing that concerns me is the lack of transparency. We heard during the inquiry about the amount of funding that was going to various areas of football, such as the WAFL. When we started to look more closely at that, we found that it was difficult to get clarity. Specific amounts of cash were being handed over, but there was also a lot of in-kind funding. In other words, the funds were being expensed to the West Australian Football Commission on behalf of the WAFL. There was a lack of transparency around that. There needs to be greater clarity around how the West Australian Football Commission supports the respective bodies. In supporting the chair's comments, the affiliate clubs and all other involvement across women's football, junior football, the amateur league and country football leagues do not seem to have enough representation at the footy commission, and this was a real concern to the committee. We support greater transparency and a greater involvement with all aspects of football in Western Australia.

Coming back to junior development, I asked most people who came before the committee for their views on the drafting age. Just about everybody, the vast majority, was of the view that the drafting age should be lifted. It is not for me to say here what it should be, but I encourage the WA Football Commission and the state government—I forget the name of the agency at the moment—to work together to make representations to the AFL, because this is in the best interests of the development of real people. The concern comes from anecdotal evidence that as many as 50 per cent of our kids who have been drafted into the AFL system never play a game. The average duration for a player in the AFL system is just over 30 games. Again, that is anecdotal. I requested specific information and statistics from the WA footy commission and none was forthcoming. It did not have any. Yet, it has taken responsibility for talent development in Western Australia, specifically to feed into the AFL system, away from the West Australian Football League clubs. From my perspective, the WA Football Commission has taken on a duty of care for the development of young Western Australians to pursue a career in football. It is a massive industry in Australia now, and by the WA Football Commission taking on that responsibility and a duty of care for our young Western Australians entering this industry, it has a responsibility to understand the welfare of players and how they track through the system. If 50 per cent of young players drafted into the system never, ever play a game and then are lost to it because their dreams and aspirations have been lost, there is a responsibility on the football commission to understand that and make sure there are processes to support those young people. I am hearing anecdotally that they are being lost to the system—football, a great game—together because their aspirations have been dropped. They do not necessarily have connections with local clubs to come back to the system and feel that they belong.

I believe we should be looking at systems around the world. Other sporting industries around the world, particularly in the United States, are focused on the correct drafting age. In the US, people have to go through a college system. There are exceptions. In basketball, people such as Kobe Bryant and LeBron James came straight out of the schooling system into the professional industry, but they are exceptions. I am not saying that there cannot be exceptions and there are not ready-made AFL players who can go straight in from school, and I would not want to hold back their opportunities, but they are exceptions. We have to give young people the opportunity to develop. We should not necessarily put that pressure straight on them out of school of pushing them this way, when they may not be physically ready and may do two or three years of development and then find they never get a game and are pushed out of the system. Given that there is no international competition, the AFL is the peak level. I do not believe it would harm the professional game to have more mature people coming into the system and having a better development program for them to participate and have greater involvement in football for a longer time. It was fascinating to hear that the WA footy commission supported an older drafting age. One of the two AFL clubs we heard from supported an older drafting age. The WAFL clubs supported it.

Mr J.E. McGrath: What age did they support?

Mr D.C. NALDER: I really did not get into the specifics because I did not believe it was incumbent on us to dictate what the age should be. I would rather that Western Australians encourage the football commission and the state government departments to work together to do the appropriate research work and make the appropriate representation to the AFL to reconsider how this is progressing and whether it is in our young footballers' best interests to be drafted straight out of school.

That is essentially where I am coming from with the two points I wanted to raise. I support the findings and recommendations in the report. I reiterate that I believe that the WA Football Commission has broadly done a fantastic job with development. We have a strong and proud football community in Western Australia and the commission should be commended for that; however, there are areas that it can vastly improve. I have been disappointed with the way that the WAFL has developed since the introduction of the AFL. Having been involved in the WAFL prior to the introduction of the West Coast Eagles and lived through the period after, I believe more could be done to support the premier competition in this state, and I would like to see that. I thank my colleagues on the committee for their work on this inquiry and I commend this report to the house.

MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley) [10.55 am]: On a Sunday morning just after 8.00 am, you can cut across Hamer Park from North Street and head towards the Moyle Pavilion. The grandstand, in need of a refurbishment but loved by generations, stands on an incline surveying Inglewood Oval. The towering gum trees are behind you as you stride towards the smell of onions and sausages. You know that aroma will be mixed with Deep Heat and Tiger Balm when you arrive at the change rooms. There are families everywhere—brothers and mums, sisters and dads—kicking footies and playing tag, and locals are out walking their dogs and enjoying the spectacle. Because it is a spectacle. It is a community coming together—it is the Mount Lawley Inglewood Roos; it is the little Auskickers.

At the height of COVID this year, we missed nothing quite so much as being able to go to the footy, just like this on a Sunday morning. I remember heading down to Yokine Reserve, to Coolbinia oval 1, with the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Mick Murray, when we were doing a TV item on families being able to get back into training. Over at the Coolbinia Bombers, they were keen to start COVID-safe footy training. It was such an important milestone that it made the news that night. Footy is an incredible part of our community fabric. The local footy club is a place where people from all walks of life come together just to be in each other's company and enjoy a common love, a common passion and a common cause.

I want to speak to the tabling of this report, "More Than Just a Game: The Use of State Funds by the WA Football Commission". I am incredibly proud of the work that the Public Accounts Committee has done over the course of the fortieth Parliament. We have tackled issues involving vast sums of money—over \$1 billion spent on the Perth Children's Hospital or how \$28 billion of public sector spending can be improved through better contract management. It is true that the amount of money we looked at in this inquiry was not of the same magnitude, but this inquiry generated an incredible degree of public interest, which is a reflection of the place footy holds not only in our hearts, but also in our collective consciousness.

Before I get onto the substance of the report, I want to acknowledge some people. First, I would like to acknowledge the chair and deputy chair of the committee for the contributions they have made on the issues they have raised. They have done that clearly and articulately, and I do not need to traverse those issues. I would rather speak to the people I had in mind when I came to participate in this inquiry. People at the Coolbinia Bombers Junior Football Club, people at the Mount Lawley Inglewood Roos Junior Football Club and people of the two amateur footy clubs—the Mount Lawley Hawks and the Coolbinia Falcons. These are people who day after day, week after week volunteer their time to make sure the entire community gets the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of local footy. At the Mount Lawley Inglewood Roos Junior Football Club, I would love to acknowledge the president, Lisa Quartermain, who has been tireless in her advocacy and is a great part of our local community; secretary Tony Goddard; treasurer Judi Cramp; registrar Naomi Lockwood; vice president for youths Adam Howard; and vice president for modifieds Will Aves. I turn to the Mt Lawley footy club, the Hawks. Plenty of people who work in my office have a strong connection with Mt Lawley and have a long-running affinity with the Hawks. I want to acknowledge Paul Robinson, president; Stephen Marevic, vice president; Shane Coleman, secretary; Rob Marrocco, registrar; and Cameron Grant, treasurer. I have spoken about the Coolbinia Bombers, and I will come back to them, and in particular the outgoing president Rob Geersen, but can I congratulate the new president, Kyla Tilbury-Kegg for her election. She has big shoes to fill and I know she will do a great job at Coolbinia. I also acknowledge vice president Michael North; secretary Jodee Coleman; registrar Chloe Cushing; and treasurer Sam Delany.

I will speak about the amateur footy club in a second, because the member for Bicton and I were down at North Fremantle Oval for a very special day for the Coolbinia Amateur Football Club, so I will come back to that shortly. I want to acknowledge president Jay Bordas, vice president Luke Douglas and secretary Nik Wybrow. As I say, these are the people who contribute so much time, energy and effort into making sure that our local community footy clubs provide such a fantastic service for our aspiring sportspeople. These are the people I had in mind when we came to do this inquiry. If we are investing public money into the development of footy in our community, we have to make sure that that permeates all levels of our community. Those members of the community, and those hardworking footy mums and dads and coaches of the Auskick junior footy club teams who volunteer so much of their time need to enjoy some of the fruits of their labour and some of the benefits of the money that the government and the Parliament have voted to go towards the development of footy.

I come back to the point that it is about making footy as inclusive as possible. The chair has already spoken about the improvement in the participation rate in Indigenous footy and in women's footy. I want to talk about the improvement in the Integrated Football competition. It was great to be at the beautiful North Fremantle Oval with the member for Bicton for the Integrated Football grand final. This is the competition for players of mixed abilities. The local Coolbinia Falcons Integrated team is an incredibly successful team. Six times in the last six years the team has made the grand final and it was such a great pleasure to be at North Fremantle Oval to watch as the team contested its sixth grand final. It was such an incredible day and it spoke resoundingly to my mind of the way in which football brings people together. To put the icing on top, the Falcons won their sixth flag in a row, which is a testament to the great work that they have put in.

As other members have already said, there are criticisms in this report but they are intended as constructive criticisms. There is also praise and recognition in this report. The members of the Public Accounts Committee have tackled

this issue with passion and diligence. It is fair to say that my fellow committee members are football tragics, yet this report is once again another unanimous report, having been authored by a committee that has the very best interests of footy at heart.

I want to thank some longstanding members of our community for the contributions that they have made to footy. I want to thank Betty and Hinze, who have been involved in the Mt Lawley–Inglewood Roos Junior Football Club, the Mount Lawley Football Club and the Inglewood Bowls Club. I want to thank Dean Turner at the East Perth Football Club, who had both me and the member for Swan Hills down at Leederville Oval a couple of weeks ago to talk about how the East Perth footy club could get more engaged in the community.

I want to finish by placing on the record my particular respect and admiration for the outgoing president of the Coolbinia Bombers, Rob Geersen. Members will see that Rob took the time and effort to put in a submission to this inquiry, such is his passion for footy. Rob Geersen is a dad whose sons play for the Coolbinia Bombers. He is an incredible advocate for the Starkick mixed-ability football team, and the Coolbinia Bombers Integrated team has set the standard. People from all over WA have come to Coolbinia to watch just how well the Coolbinia Bombers Starkick team goes.

After seeing the team play and train, and seeing the enthusiasm on the players' faces when I went down there with the Minister for Sport and Recreation post-COVID, I just knew that this is an incredible part of these young kids' lives. It is an incredible way that they can come together with their neighbours and their friends. I think about the contribution and the passionate energy that somebody like Rob Geersen brought to his role as president of the Coolbinia Bombers, whether it was working with the Starkick team or the coaches who volunteer their time; corralling sponsors at sundowners in order to get the monetary contributions to keep the club going; hassling the local councillors on the City of Stirling for an injection of cash for the change rooms; or hassling me for an injection of cash for the change rooms or for lights to allow the girls team to play. This report is authored for people like Rob Geersen.

We need to make sure that we are diligent and hardworking as a Parliament. We need to make sure that when government money is spent, it is put to the best possible purpose. I urge everyone to read the report, consider the recommendations, consider the spirit in which those recommendations are framed, consider the spirit of constructive criticism, and recognise that we have had some great achievements in footy in WA, but there is always a chance to improve.

I finish by saying that I am really proud of this report. I am really proud of the work that the Public Accounts Committee has done. I am really proud of footy in Western Australia. We have a bright future and we have a glorious past. I commend the report to the house.

MRS L.M. O'MALLEY (Bicton) [11.04 am]: I begin by echoing the words of my colleague the member for Mount Lawley about how fabulous it was to be at the Integrated Football grand final a few weeks ago at North Fremantle Football Club, the home of the mighty Maggies. I will definitely acknowledge the work of the Perth Football League and president Sam Birmingham for their work with Integrated Football.

Football most certainly is more than just a game. At the elite level, it is also big business and at the grassroots level, particularly in the regions, it is at the heart of community. For many here in our great state and right across the other Aussie Rules states of Australia, the seasons of late autumn through winter to early spring are synonymous with football and in many Western Australian households are known collectively as footy season. Player, fan, supporter, coach, official or footy mum like me, the average West Aussie has some connection to the game. It is unsurprising that this inquiry has generated a lot of media and public attention.

I would like to thank the committee chair, Tony Buti, for his exceptional leadership and my committee colleagues and our secretariat for their work on this report and throughout our time as the Public Accounts Committee of the fortieth Parliament. It is a great privilege to serve on this committee and I acknowledge the committee's collegiate approach to this report, as with all the others tabled before it.

I begin by referring to what our inquiry was not about, as noted in the executive summary as follows —

In choosing to inquire into the use of State funds by the WAFC, this Committee did not set out to determine the 'best way' to run football, and certainly did not look into how it is or should be played or umpired. We were interested to see that there were clearly defined and sensibly managed ways to share the considerable resources available to the WAFC across the whole spectrum of football activity.

Guardianship of football in Western Australia is entrusted to the West Australian Football Commission, which was established in 1989 as the body charged with the responsibility for the overall development and strategic direction of football. The creation of the WAFC is unique to WA. It is a government-created body that receives funding from several sources, with a considerable portion coming from the public purse directly and indirectly.

The purpose of our inquiry was clear in our terms of reference. We wanted to know how effectively state funds are being used to develop football across all levels; whether the WAFC is meeting its obligations under the funding agreement with the state; and the effectiveness and transparency of monitoring and reporting functions included

in the state's funding agreement with the WAFC. Our findings and, most importantly, our recommendations are contained within our report for all to see, so I will not spend my time restating many of those, apart from noting the reference in the chair's foreword in which he said —

... while many witnesses to the inquiry had criticisms and concerns with the WAFC, there was also acknowledgement that the Commission has done many things well. There was also a broad recognition that the oversight role of the WAFC is necessary and important to the ongoing success of football in WA.

I will instead focus on the first of the three points in our terms of reference—that is, how effectively state funds have been used to develop football across all levels, and particularly in the areas of grassroots football and female participation. This is expanded on in chapter 3, where it is noted —

There is an uneasy balance between WAFC's elite talent management and grassroots development

Grassroots or community football is the level at which the vast majority of participation in the sport occurs and includes junior, country, metro amateur, masters and women's football. Within the ecosystem of football in WA and in reference to the commission, these are termed affiliates, and although they collectively account for the most individuals who play the game, affiliates are not directly represented on the commission board.

I turn to resources. The WA state football funding agreement requires the West Australian Football Commission to devote its resources to developing all levels of WA football, specifically grassroots footy. The Public Accounts Committee has been unable to form a view on the effectiveness of the delivery on this commitment due to a combination of factors around deficiencies in transparency and reporting. We were, therefore, left to make our own determination through the process of submissions and witness statements. Although progress is pleasing in a number of areas—namely, increasing participation of female and all-ability players—there is still a question of whether this objective is being met. Finding 25 states —

It is not clear or discernible exactly how much support 'grassroots' football receives from the WAFC and its employees.

To this I add my sincere appreciation to all the volunteers across all areas of community football, without whom these competitions simply could not exist. I acknowledge a few of the junior football clubs in my electorate of Melville—the Attadale Bombers, Palmyra Junior Football Club, East Fremantle Junior Football Club and the senior competition of the Melville Rams. I hope I did not miss any.

Female participation in football has, not surprisingly, increased in recent years, as have efforts to support it. Total participation has increased to 109 647, which is up nearly 4 000 per cent over the decade, from an admittedly very low base. Similarly, club-based numbers were up by 1 349 per cent to 7 725. One impediment to further improvement was the inadequate state of changing facilities across WA, where at least two-thirds of grounds had no suitable arrangements for female players. I also note that there is a great deal of pressure on the grounds, ovals and greenfield spaces, with limited availability. That means that sometimes female games are played at the end of the day, the start of the day or in the evening, when other resources, such as access to the canteen, may not be available.

Finding 29 states —

The growth in women's football is creating pressures on the availability of resourcing to support this growth.

I have seen firsthand the growth of female participation in football in my local clubs of Palmyra, where my daughter plays, and East Fremantle Junior Football Club. There is an intention to include a women's team at the Melville Rams in 2021 and, just across the river, at North Fremantle—the Mighty Maggies. East Fremantle Women's Football Club has had phenomenal success. The benefits that female participation brings to our community clubs, from volunteers to club culture, is a good thing and needs greater support in not only infrastructure but also willingness to encourage and include women at all levels of football, from the footy field to the boardroom. Recommendation 5 states —

The DLGSC should work with the WAFC to develop mechanisms to track, monitor, and report on how the appropriate resources are being secured to support the continued growth in all aspects of women's involvement in football.

As stated in finding 35 —

There is a broad social benefit to focusing resources on junior football, regional football, women's football, Indigenous football, and all-abilities football at the grassroots level.

I sincerely hope that this recommendation, along with all the others contained within this report, are adopted, for the betterment of not only the game, but also our society more broadly. After all, football is very much more than just a game. I commend this report to the house.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [11.13 am] — by leave: I would like to congratulate the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, the member for Armadale; and all the committee members for their report. In the brief opportunity that I have had to look at it, I have seen that it is pretty comprehensive. I think it covers some of the angles that I have concerns about. Like the members for Armadale and Bateman and the other members of the committee, I love

football. I have been involved in football for many years, whether it be at the Katanning Wanderers—my local club in Katanning—South Fremantle, or the many country matches I have attended over the last few years, from Narrogin right through to Esperance. It was great, especially in this difficult year, to see the grand final attended by so many people. In a lot of ways they have not had events to go to. It is great to see the passion for football, and I certainly love country football.

I read many of the submissions to the committee, including those from the likes of Darrell Panizza, who has experience at Claremont and Albany, and John Shadbolt from the WA Country Football League. It was really important to get that country perspective. Darrell Panizza has been at the grassroots, played at Claremont at senior level, has gone back to Albany, and has been involved at the academy with the Great Southern Storm. He knows the whole system and how it works. I really enjoyed reading about his interaction with the committee.

I am encouraged to see the greater involvement of the West Australian Football Commission in country football over the last few years. I congratulate Tom Bottrell and his team. I believe they are working harder and getting out into the regions more. I know that our country football leagues and our participants really appreciate seeing someone from the West Australian Football Commission during the year or at the grand final. It gives them some encouragement.

Our colts carnival at Lake Grace has been going for over 100 years. It is the oldest colts carnival in Australia and I think we have finally managed to get it back on the radar. People such as Royce Taylor, John O'Neil, Kim Parsons and many of those in the administration of the Ongerup Football Association and its teams do great work to encourage players from all around our regions. The high quality standard is incredible. In the last couple of years, the grand finals between the Great Southern Storm and Lower South West were as good as any colts football match in Perth, as far as I am concerned. I think we need to link our aspirational country kids to those opportunities. I take on board the comments of the member for Bateman about the aspirations of our kids who are looking to get drafted and the pathways for doing that.

I am encouraged by recommendation 13—that is, that the colts go back to the WAFL clubs. I have been lucky enough to experience that with one of my sons, who played colts for South Fremantle. South Fremantle is a fantastic club. It is called the family club. The members for Armadale and Bateman and the Minister for Transport are also South Fremantle fans. Be that as it may, that club takes football players from the age of 12, puts them into a fantastic environment and takes them right through. I was very disappointed to see the Boston report, which the West Australian Football Commission spent \$350 000 on. It recommended taking kids away from WAFL clubs to create a talent academy. I think that was the wrong way to go. I am really encouraged to see the recommendation to take it back to our WAFL clubs.

Recommendation 7 is about increasing participation in country football. As I have said, that is very important to my constituents and to the country leagues in general that stretch from Narrogin to Esperance. I was encouraged by recommendation 18 because it refers to governance around the board nomination and election process. The weightings of the board are incorrect. The report states that 350 000 participants from 460 clubs play football, but the board seems to be confined to certain elements that do not particularly represent that amount of participation, so I am certainly encouraged by that recommendation. We need to go back to basics and get our governance right.

The other issue in some ways is transparency. I am a keen follower of football and the West Australian Football Commission. I note that in 2019, \$31.8 million in revenue was generated, which is sourced from many different areas, including state funding that makes up 37 per cent of the total, as mentioned by the chair. It would be great for the person on the street to have more clarity about where that funding comes from. The other thing to note is that the Australian Football League club arrangements revolve around profit and so on, so one never quite knows how much will come to the football commission in any given year. No doubt that makes it difficult as well for the football commission to pinpoint how much revenue it will have for the year, so that element could be improved for the wider public.

As I said, I really appreciated the input from those country elements into the report, especially the input from the likes of Darrell Panizza. What he said about the Great Northern Football League being ranked fourth highest for draftees around Australia and the Great Southern Football League being ranked fifth highest for draftees was really interesting. That just goes to show the quality of players being developed in the country. Unfortunately, when those players are drafted, the country team that has developed them receives very little, if anything, of the money that feeds through from the draft payments. That is a disappointment for a club that is very proud of the player that it has developed because it does not really get to see that money flowing back to it through some sort of royalty model. I would like to see more of that.

As I said, the other disappointment for me was when I saw the amount of money going to country football in Victoria, which I spoke with the minister about last year. I would love to see more of that money flowing into our country areas and also back into our West Australian Football League clubs to develop those country kids who feed into the system.

With that, I will wrap things up, but I would also like to wish Gavin Taylor, who was the CEO of the West Australian Football Commission, all the best in his new career. I understand that he is moving east. I believe that he has worked hard and done a good job over the last several years. I would like to wish him and his family all the best. I also congratulate the deputy chair and his committee on a very comprehensive report. Well done.

MR D.R. MICHAEL (Balcatta) [11.23 am] — by leave: I was originally not planning on talking on the seventeenth report of the Standing Committee on Public Administration titled “More than Just a Game: The Use of State Funds by the WA Football Commission”. Obviously, like all non-committee members, I have only had a little time to look at some of the recommendations this morning, but I thought I would have a say. Most of my sporting life during my private time has been involved in a cricket club, of which I am a life member, and playing cricket. I have also had a separate connection with football, but it is not a playing connection. My last game of football was played when I was in Year 12 for Servite College in the semi-final of the Quit Cup, which we obviously lost. But my family is a pretty proud football family and a proud supporter of the West Australian Football League in particular, thanks to Gerard Neesham—I will get onto Claremont Football Club in a second. My family were also proud members of the Fremantle Football Club. I will declare an interest; I am a current member of the Claremont Football Club and the Fremantle Dockers. As a Claremont supporter, I feel a bit uneasy wearing a red tie in here with so many South Fremantle Football Club supporters around me. I still have nightmares about the last few minutes of the game a few weeks ago, albeit that South Fremantle had a very unfair home ground advantage.

I was not allowed to get the 33.6 kilobits per second dial-up internet access at home until I graduated from year 12. The first thing I did in 1997, after I graduated from year 12, was to get on the internet and teach myself how to build websites using hypertext mark-up language coding. The first website I built was an unofficial Claremont Football Club website because, in 1997, Claremont was one of the only teams in the WAFL that did not have a website. I remember when, about a year later, Rob Malone, the CEO of Claremont footy club, rang me and said, “Hey, you’re a member and you run our unofficial website. Can you make it official please?” I ran the Claremont footy club website for over 10 years. There are some words that I wrote about the club’s history that have survived from that time and are on the current Claremont footy club website.

At the same time, while I was at university, word got around that I knew what I was doing with websites and I worked for the West Australian Football Commission. One morning a week, I would go into the WAFC in the old Freemasons Hall in Subiaco to update its website and the scores. That is where I got to know the former member for Wagin, Tuck Waldron, who was involved in country football at the time. I would walk up to Tuck’s office and he would hand me a printed-out version of the current website with his marked-up changes that he wanted to see made and some new scores from country football and I would go back and make the changes. So in my early 20s, I worked for the football commission and updated its website from time to time. In fact, I still have, as it was known then, the Westar Rules WAFL website on my computer that I built at home. It was never used because the football commission at the time did not want a separate WAFL website, which, thankfully, has been fixed nowadays.

My uncle Kim Michael played league football in the 1970s. He played 50-odd league games for Swan Districts Football Club and six for Claremont Football Club, which is how I ended up being a Claremont supporter and following in the footsteps of my dad. In my house there are some prized possessions including my uncle’s framed jumpers from Claremont and Swan Districts, my *Football Budget* collection from the 1950s up until current times, and a couple of boxes of WAFL memorabilia, which at some stage in my life I need to sort out, so I come from an area of caring about football.

I got myself involved in the Claremont footy club in the early 2000s. As well as managing the website, it made me the public address announcer for WAFL games. I would sit in the sponsors’ area with the 1960s PA system. Sir Charles Court, the former member for Cottesloe, Colin Barnett, and a heap of Liberal Party members and a few Labor people such as Denis McInerney would all be in that area having a nice time while I was trying to do the ground announcements. In the mid-2000s, I was the WAFL match day ground manager for, I think, four years, which was a paid WAFL position. I would have to walk off the field with the umpires wearing a WAFL shirt, not a Claremont shirt, which was not the most fun thing that I have ever done in my life. I care about the WAFL, the Claremont Football Club and the Dockers.

The Stirling Amateur Football Club is also in my electorate. Both the senior and junior clubs play at the same location; they are both called the Stirling Saints. One day I hope that they will come together, but they are both very good clubs. One thing that I have noticed is that community sport is struggling and football is struggling at a community level. From reading the Claremont footy club’s annual report and learning about some of the things that have happened at the club, I know that WAFL clubs tend to run on the smell of an oily rag. The WAFL competition has dipped and waned from when I was a 13-year-old who went to lots of WAFL games. Obviously, the competition took a massive hit in terms of attendances and support when the West Coast Eagles entered the AFL competition, and again when the Dockers was formed. The West Australian Football League stabilised in the mid-2000s, but once the West Coast Eagles reserves, or second, team came in, it took another hit. I do not particularly agree with that decision. I have quickly read the report. The idea of linking WAFL clubs with the Colts and making the Colts—the third level—a premier league within the WAFL and making sure that they are looked after is a good idea, because the WAFL clubs are best placed to do that. I know a few football development officers who have worked or still work for the West Australian Football Commission and the WAFL clubs. Regional and metropolitan development officers and managers are not given a lot of money. Some of them run around trying to get sponsorships to run their competitions in the regions and the metro area. They generally do a very good job, well above what they are paid

to do and well beyond the time they are meant to spend. They drive to games to see clubs and they attend training sessions. They make sure that umpires are working and that umpire advisers are bringing up the next crop of umpires. They do a very good job. In terms of the criticisms I have made about some of the things that happen in sport, I could make a similar speech about the Western Australian Cricket Association. Again, that organisation does some very good things, similar to the football commission, but sometimes those things do not filter down to community sport. The recommendation that the WAFL needs to be supported as a premier competition in Western Australia is so important to give the clubs the support they need to develop football in their own areas.

Years ago, Claremont Football Club bought a house in Claremont so that it could bring kids down from the Kimberley. The kids would live in the house and go to school in the area, and they would be close to Claremont Oval for training. Claremont has done well with its players from the Kimberley. All WAFL clubs need to be given the resources to do these sorts of things. Money needs to filter down to community clubs, because that is where the juniors are and that is where Auskick happens. I know that this year is a bit different, but money comes from the AFL's television rights and sponsorship. A lot of that money is—"wasted" is probably a strong word, but it is close to it. We need kids at the park playing sport, whether that sport is soccer, footy or cricket, but from a football point of view, we need kids to play sport. The committee's recommendations are about getting the football commission back to the grassroots level and supporting football development and football development officers. We need to give the clubs the resources they need to help recruit players, run competitions and get great umpires because that will help the entire system. I support the recommendation of the committee, which the member for Bateman outlined, about the draft age. If a draftee had to play 20 WAFL games or something along those lines, that would raise the standard of the WAFL and encourage more interest in the WAFL competition. It would also make such a difference to these kids, because they would be more ready to play AFL games than those who are being drafted now and who, as the member for Bateman said, will end up playing either no games or just a handful of games. I hope the football commission takes heed of this report. I congratulate the Public Accounts Committee for its report.

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth) [11.32 am] — by leave: As members know, I go back a fair way in football. I was a journalist in 1989 when the West Australian Football Commission was formed. Do members know why it was formed? It was formed because the West Australian Football League was broke. The league presidents did not get on with each other and they could never make decisions. The West Coast Eagles had been formed and were quickly going broke because money was being wasted there. The league presidents, who ran the competition for 100 years, missed opportunities to move football from Subiaco Oval. The league owned land in Inglewood on which it could have built a new football headquarters, but it did not do it. The league looked at Perth Oval as a possible replacement for Subiaco Oval. It looked at the old market site in Subiaco. Can members imagine having a stadium on the site of the old Subiaco markets? It would have been an inner-city stadium on a railway line. That did not happen; nothing was happening. The West Australian Football Commission was brought in. I was covering football at the time. Peter Tannock, a good man, became the chairman, and a guy called Jeff Ovens, who is now the chairman of Racing and Wagering Western Australia, was the chief executive. They became the most unpopular people in football. When a board is established to govern a sport or an industry, such as RWWA and the racing industry, there is a lot of resentment of people on that board because they have to make tough decisions.

I am a patron of East Fremantle Football Club, the Sharks. Members talk about South Fremantle Football Club—please! East Fremantle Football Club has won a lot more flags than South Fremantle Football Club and it is a greater club! The game needed some guidance. To his credit, Peter Tannock provided that guidance against a lot of opposition. He and Jeff Ovens did an amazing job.

Racing and Wagering Western Australia was given approval by both houses of this Parliament to run the racing industry with no interference from the Minister for Racing and Gaming. If members think that we should interfere in football, why does the department of sport and recreation not run football? The West Australian Football Commission has been given the role of governing the football industry. I refer to the funding that the commission receives from the stadium. As Premier Barnett's representative, I worked with the stadium steering committee. There had to be some compensation for football in building a new stadium. I know that the Labor opposition did not support the new stadium. The Carpenter government wanted to rebuild Subiaco Oval. Our view was that the headquarters of football should be moved. But in moving football away from Subiaco Oval, we were taking a lot of revenue away from the West Australian Football Commission.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: The member for Collie–Preston interjected yesterday. Does the member want to produce some money from his pocket so that we can have a bet on his seat?

The \$11 million a year over 10 years that the government gives to the West Australian Football Commission is compensation for the revenue it has lost from not hosting an AFL game every week, with 22 games a year. I do not think any conditions were put on that money; it was compensation. The government did not say, "We're going to give you \$11 million, but this is how you've got to spend it." The government had enough faith that the football commission would properly run its operation.

The Public Accounts Committee has done a good job. The report raises issues of transparency and talent identification, which has been taken away from the clubs. The South Perth Junior Football Club is in my electorate. The Minister for Transport is involved in that club. I think one of her two children plays at the club.

Ms R. Saffioti: Two.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: She has two children playing at the club. She knows a good club. She is a very good judge. The club's nickname is the South Perth Stingrays. It has 558 registered players, which means it is a big club. I have spoken to it about this issue and it says that its main concern is talent identification. It believes that the talent programs should go back to the WAFL clubs. I am not against that. Obviously, the AFL would not like that because it is all-powerful and it wants the best kids in the AFL system, which is in its interests. There was a lot of criticism some years ago that there were too many AFL footballers, which meant that the depth of talent had weakened and a lot of ordinary players were running around. The AFL said that it needed better players out on the paddock so that it could put on a better show for the stations that were paying so much money for television rights. That is one aspect. The clubs have told me that the WAFC should be more involved in the proper governance of football.

Earlier this year, we had our love-in in Bunbury—they used to be called love-ins, but I do not think they call them that anymore. I was the shadow minister for sport at the time. I visited Hands Oval and some of the sporting clubs. The AFL officers down there were doing a damn good job. Do members know how big Western Australia is? Those officers go from Wyndham to Esperance. Football is a huge sport, with a lot of young people involved.

We talk about country footy. What is the answer for country footy? We can put all the money we like into country footy, but the populations in country towns are diminishing. They no longer have small farms; they have big, broadacre farms. Farming families are moving to Perth. The young people from country towns are moving to Perth. I have got them moving into my electorate. A lot of them have moved to places like South Perth. There is a big issue.

The member for Bateman raised the age of players. I do not mind lifting the age at which kids can play AFL, but then I think: what if I were a champion player like Tim Watson who played AFL at the age of 15 years and 305 days? He was a 15-year-old kid with a big body. When I go to Ernest Johnson Oval, I see kids playing under 14s who are bigger than me. They have big bodies. Kids are growing quickly now. If we stop these kids playing, next thing we know kids will go to court. That happened some years ago when a West Perth player was barred from playing. He took the league to court and was allowed to go to South Australia to play football. Young people will say, "Why am I prohibited from playing a game that I know I can excel at?" That is something for the WA football commission and the AFL to look at. I am not totally opposed to it. I think the worst thing that ever happened to football was when the Eagles won two premierships and the system required the players to stay with their aligned WA football league club. If they were not playing that week, they would train with those clubs and play on the Saturday. The Eagles would say, "We'd like this player to play in the forward line or the back line", or whatever. They won two flags under that system. It is probably one of the greatest teams in the last couple of decades. Then the system changed and the Eagles and the Dockers felt they needed to have a reserve team, or a second team, in the state league. Those kids started out as Colts. The fans who turned up every week and had seen them come through the ranks watched them on TV playing AFL. Often those kids, at the end of their career, came back to their WAFL club. That linkage has been broken, which is a great shame. When they have a bye or are mid-season in the AFL, some players will go to the club on a Saturday to watch a footy game, or they might be a guest speaker at a lunch. We have lost that connectivity.

The committee has raised a lot of issues. I am sure the West Australian Football Commission and the Eagles and the Dockers will look at the report. We have to remember one thing: the world has changed since the Eagles came in. We have to come up with a system that will be beneficial to the WAFL clubs, but we cannot do anything to harm the Eagles and the Dockers because they are the powerhouses; they provide most of the funding for football.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [11.42 am] — by leave: I commend the Public Accounts Committee for the report that has been tabled in Parliament today. It will take some time to fully digest it. After a brief overview, it is a wake-up call for football. It is not about Parliament or a minister taking over football as such, but it is certainly a wake-up call for the grizzles and groans that are out there. Anyone who has been in football in the last five years would have heard that there were problems about transparency. From my quick reading of it, that has been identified in the report. There were problems with communication between areas, and very similar to South Perth, about some of the talent identification systems that were pulling apart the system, not putting it together. The kids who went to talent identification wore a black T-shirt. With the football commission, they lost that connection with their communities. When they were finished or did not quite get through, they did not go back to their club. Those are the sorts of things we have to address in the future.

Governance and transparency is a must for any club, whether it is football or soccer or whatever it may be. That seems to have drifted away a little bit from what was there previously. Every football club in a WAFL area especially will have a different opinion, and never will the two ends meet totally. But there has to be reasons for the decisions that are being made and put out there very much in the public arena.

There was a huge argument before \$11 million in funding was signed off. Gillon McLachlan came over a couple of times to try to assist—I will leave it at "assist"—in the process of getting that signed off. It is public money,

and it should not be forgotten that it is public money. The government and the people of Western Australia have a right to understand where that money is going. We are not saying where to put it. Taxpayers should know exactly where that money is going. That has been blurred to some degree. Some of the reports have cost huge money. Even its financial statement at the end of last year was one of the biggest glossies that I have ever seen. It probably could have paid for three junior football coaches for a year. I made that comment to the commissioner. I have faith in the changes that have already happened. After meetings with Wayne Martin, the commissioner, he has given me faith that a process has been developed to go forward. In recent times, when the committee has been meeting, we have not met because I think that could be interference in the committee's report. We have worked through that with the commission.

Some people have seen the errors of their ways about trying to diminish the role of a parliamentary committee. I think that was quite an appalling move. Some others, who probably were not called out as much, have also had a say. It is notable from the report, after the number of phone calls I got from country football, that no individual country league put in a submission to the committee. I do not quite understand that. From Fitzroy Crossing to Esperance, I had people ringing me to say, "The system is broken; we should be doing this." Everyone had a different opinion—that is not what I am saying. When we look at the list of people who contributed, they are not there. I wonder why. I have heard gossip of why that did not happen. I certainly took the south west league to task recently when we announced upgrades at Hands Oval. They bolted. The executive group took off and left me standing there because they did not want to talk about it. That was disappointing to me. We missed out on that real grassroots stuff. The local WAFL clubs and the Perth Football League came in and had a say. Darrell Panizza saw me about it and then made a submission. I think that is really great.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Did the South West Football League put in a submission?

Mr M.P. MURRAY: No.

Mr J.E. McGrath: The south west league did not?

Mr M.P. MURRAY: That is what I am saying. I cannot make any comments because I do not have any evidence on that. What I will say is that it disappointed me. I see Don McCausland's name in the report. I know quite well that he has had arguments with every footy club in the south west league over years, but he has some very good thoughts. He put in a submission as an individual. The league itself did not do that. That takes away a little more information that the committee should have had. It is certainly a disappointment.

I really welcome the report. I thank the committee for taking that on in the short time that it had to do it. It is an excellent report. It can only help. It is not the be-all and end-all. If the West Australian Football Commission is foolish enough to dismiss this report, so be it, but I think it will come back onto its shoulders. It would be very wise for the WAFC to look at that. It does not have to pick up every recommendation, but it can at least understand what the football community has been talking about and consider how we can go forward to make our great game even greater.

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.49 am] — by leave: I will try to be quick. Some 15 years ago, I did some work for the West Australian Football Commission via the Department of Sport and Recreation when we were looking at the facilities of West Australian Football League clubs. Part of the brief was to go to Hanson Oval and find out about the facilities in the south west. I played one game of football when the Marsh Rovers in Derby were short a player. Because I played sport, I was asked if I could fill in as a reserve against the Broome Meatworks team. I played in the last quarter and still remember the two kicks I got. Both of them were free kicks after I got knocked to the ground and had about 10 people on top of me.

I have not had time to read the report, but from what I have managed to glean, I can see that it is obviously a very good report that covers a lot of ground. It can only be beneficial for the finances of the WA Football Commission, which is quite a grey area. Before I became a member of Parliament, I also worked on an assignment for the City of Subiaco to work out an agreement between the City of Subiaco and the WA Football Commission on what would be a fair rental price for Subiaco Oval. Because the football commission is a private organisation, it was quite difficult to find out from its accounts what its revenue sources were and what its gross income was.

I will point out a couple of things after hearing some of the comments during this debate. On a minor issue, I felt fairly disappointed to read in the chairman's foreword the comments about Simon Moore-Crouch and to hear his name raised in this house when the member for Armadale finished off with Simon Moore-Crouch's comments about a "dog and pony show". I had to look up on Google what that meant; it is a presentation. I do not know why it was necessary to mention a private person, Simon Moore-Crouch, whose family are strong volunteers at YMCA Coastal City Hockey Club. Generations of his family are hockey players and he is a volunteer there.

Dr A.D. Buti: It's already in the report; it's not private.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I am just saying that it is disappointing. Allow me to finish. It is a minor point.

Dr A.D. Buti: It's in the public domain.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Please do not defend yourself. I am making a comment. The chair did not have to put his name in there and then say that the committee did not find any evidence that what he said was true and therefore the committee would not raise it, but the member raised it in the foreword. I am just making a comment on that. We can agree to disagree, and that is fine.

Another point I will make, which the member for Collie–Preston also made, is that it is public money and there should be some sort of accountability and KPIs for spending government money. Going back to hockey, every \$5 000 for our hockey club is important. If we get \$5 000 from Healthway, a lot of forms have been filled in and there are KPIs for getting that money. I think it is valid for the Public Accounts Committee to do this report on what state funds are going to the football commission. I think we have a right to know that. This report addresses funding going to the juniors and to football development, which is important for any sport. I still play hockey, although I am not a very good hockey player. A member mentioned Jeff Ovens, who was an A-grade hockey player for the University of Western Australia Hockey Club. A number of that club's members, not all of whom played A-grade, went on to become presidents of Hockey Western Australia. That is a very strong club, like my club, the YMCA Coastal City Hockey Club, although I used to play for the University of Western Australia Hockey Club too.

Mr F.M. Logan: Digby tells me you weren't any good!

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will not comment on Digby!

Another more general issue beyond what is raised in this report is that state funding for all sports is important. I must say that my colleagues in hockey grizzle about the amount of money that goes to football and the little that goes to hockey. It is a vexed issue of how the state government can support all sports, not just football and hockey. The state government needs to somehow support a lot of junior sports. We need kids coming through and playing sport because it is part of keeping them healthy. We need to particularly balance their use of computers with physical activity. I think that sport, which kids enjoy, is important for their health and it is important for the community to support that. I commend the Public Accounts Committee for the report but I thought it was unfair to single out a particular person.

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [11.55 am] — by leave: I welcome the opportunity to speak on this report and I congratulate the Public Accounts Committee for the work it has done. It is fair to say that I have glanced through the report and heard the speeches of other members. It would be unfair for me to comment in any great detail on the findings or the recommendations or any of the proceedings that led to the findings and recommendations of the report because it has only just been tabled. I would have to spend more time looking at it before doing that, but I think it will be extraordinarily useful.

Other members have made the point that Australian Rules football binds us together in this state in many weird and wonderful ways, including the ability for us to banter with each other about our representative teams, be they AFL or West Australian Football League teams. It is a unique part of being Australian, and certainly being Western Australian or living in the southern states of Australia, that football is a lot more than just a sport; it is uniquely cultural and binds us in ways that sometimes we take for granted. I think it binds us in ways that break down barriers between people, classes, political parties, and people in suburbia and country towns. That is why football is so important to the fabric of our society.

When public money is involved, there needs to be an element of transparency and an understanding in the community that scarce taxpayers' resources are being applied appropriately for the right outcomes. When there are question marks—even the Minister for Sport and Recreation, the member for Collie–Preston, highlighted this himself—and when there are whispers and more than whispers, it is important to shine a light on what is going on in the administration of football. From my observation of the committee's public hearings and from glancing at the report in the hour or so that it has been tabled in this place, I think the committee has made a very useful contribution to assisting in the future of football. People know that I am a passionate football fan and am a Collingwood supporter, which makes me a minority in this state—I recognise that—but there is a lot more to my love of football. I grew up watching Collingwood play almost every week. I grew up in the shadows of the light towers at Toorak Park, which is the home ground of the Prahran Assumption Football Club. On Sundays, I would spend my time there. I also spent a little time at a junior club unsuccessfully kicking around the bladder. I have continued that love of football throughout my life to this very day, and I think I have passed it on to my children.

Interestingly, what probably makes me unique in this place is that I have a very deep involvement in and therefore appreciation of junior football as it has been conducted in two different states. My oldest son played for a significant time in junior football. I was very actively involved in coaching, training and being the runner for the team during my eldest son's junior football career. At that time, I came across the member for Bateman, for a brief time, who was also a parent at the East Malvern Junior Football Club where the Knights played. Actually, I even recall playing in the midfield in a father v father match; I think it was Auskick v the more senior of the junior teams. I was playing in the centre square and roving to the wonderful ruck work of the member for Bateman, who was clearly a much better footballer than I could ever claim to be! Since I came to Western Australia, I have found that our local junior football club is a place where my family has felt very at home—the Woodvale Junior Football Club. My son and my two younger daughters all play football at that club and they love it. I have been active there, assisting where

I can—everything from line marking to turning sausages to helping out with training. In the last few years I have also assisted as a parent umpire, which has given me a perspective on football that I have never had before in my long, long involvement with football as a player, spectator and supporter. I had never had the perspective of what it is like to be an umpire, and I have to say it has given me an even stronger appreciation of the volunteers, including umpires, who make the game so great.

From my observations, there are some real challenges. Some of them have been addressed in this report, but some of them go beyond the scope of the report; they go to the money involved in keeping the game going. That is a seriously important issue. The Woodvale Junior Football Club is extraordinarily successful. It has more than 900 registered players and nearly every player came back after the COVID-19 crisis, but as I travel around I see other clubs. Some of them are doing well, some of them are middling along, and a few of them are, unfortunately, failing.

The growth of women's football has been phenomenal. That is great; it is something that I have championed and supported for a long, long time, even back when I was member for North Metropolitan Region and the mayor of the City of Wanneroo, Tracey Roberts, got me involved with the Butler Falcons, a junior girls' football team, targeting—although not exclusively—girls from the African community. The growth of women's and girls' football is phenomenal, and I think it will continue to grow, but it has exacerbated the challenges that football faces in this state in a number of ways, including challenges around facilities. I will not go into the intricacies, but it is completely and utterly unacceptable for young girls to have to change jumpers in public parks. That needs to be addressed. We need proper facilities. Those who played football in my era will remember the old changing rooms we had—the communal facilities, let us call them. I would argue that those sorts of communal facilities are no longer appropriate for boys and men, and even less appropriate for girls and women. If we, as a society, truly believe in getting young people actively involved, dealing with their physical and mental health issues, getting them involved in a club and engaged in their communities through sport and participation in sport, we need to put really significant investment into improving and extending the existing facilities, because the number of teams continues to grow, especially in women's and girls' football. Whether members are on one side of politics or the other, we should encourage further investment in those facilities.

I am worried about the very, very narrow elite sporting pathways. My family and I have experienced that; not just me, but my cousins and their children also. I think we make participation in what are termed “elite” squads too narrow, too early. I think that is a major, major failing. It discourages participation by other people, for a start; it eliminates children who grow at different stages and ages; and it puts an unnecessary focus on some skills, usually athletic skills, at the expense of other skills—the skills that one needs to play the game, beyond just athletic skills. I think everyone is responsible for that. It is wrong to make pathways into the colts level a determination of the commission and the AFL as opposed to local West Australian Football League clubs. I glanced at the report, and I think the report refers to that. I think that needs to be brought back. We need to broaden the elite participation pathways and not narrow them down. By narrowing them down in the way that we are, we are creating a cliff that a lot of kids fall off between the ages of 13 and 15, in both girls' and boys' football.

I know I do not have a lot of time left, but I want to focus on the pathways for girls. It is a disgrace that there is no senior WAFL women's football club in the northern suburbs. West Perth has sought a permit to do that; I hope it is granted for 2021, because it is critical and essential. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this important report.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [12.05 pm] — by leave: I was not going to contribute, but given my love of football and all things football and sport, I thought I would make a contribution. I do not want to make a long contribution, but I would just like to pick up on a couple of points that have been made. We need to have a better connection back to the WAFL clubs, grassroots football and community football. That is a key theme of the report. There is an increasing disconnection between junior clubs and their local WAFL clubs. My kids know the AFL, as much as I try to tell them about the WAFL, and there needs to be a much better connection. The report highlights that, and I welcome all initiatives to regain a strong connection between the West Australian Football League and local clubs so that people can see a real pathway. I think that is very, very important. The member for Bateman's figures on that might be anecdotal, but they scare me when it seems people think only about the AFL, and that if a player does not make it in the AFL, there is nothing else. I do not think that is true; there are a lot of other good pathways, and the WAFL should be a significant pathway for young people to aspire to.

I want to talk about girls' footy. Ten years ago things were very different than they are now, and I congratulate all the clubs for supporting women's and girls' footy. It is now a lot better than it used to be. I tell my children all the time that when I was growing up there were no options, but there are now options for young girls. That is something that is going to grow. I pick up on the member for Hillarys' concerns about a lack of presence of girls' football in particular areas, but we need to continue to encourage girls' participation in all sports, including football. I have an eight-year-old girl and an eight-year-old boy who both play football and soccer. One thing that is very important for keeping younger girls playing—this may not be the same for all girls—is to have girls' teams. I saw in my 10-year-old girl's soccer club that sometimes the boys would not give them the ball, basically, so they could never develop their skills. That is what happened to my girl until I found an appropriate girls' team. The continuing need for better change room facilities and support for young girls is very important. They can choose football or soccer, but giving them the option is very, very important.

Again, I refer to the success and improvement of the women's league. The point was made to me once that when we started the women's league, many of the players came from other sporting backgrounds, such as athletics, but we now have a real pathway for young girls to become elite players. The success of the women's league will continue as more and more girls play the game. Again, I very much support that.

I also want to give a shout-out to all the volunteers. All of us who go to the games or have children who play appreciate the amount of work done by volunteers. I am always surprised by, and it warms my heart to see, the hours put in by people. Some of those people's children have grown out of the game, but they have commitment to community sport. I give a shout-out to my sister, who has been the registrar with the Roleystone Tigers for 10 years. Her boy is well past playing football, but she has a commitment. That is the commitment that many demonstrate. As I said, their children may have moved on, but they continue to volunteer. Again, I give a big-shout out to those volunteers.

I am a long-suffering Fremantle Dockers supporter and a long-time South Fremantle supporter.

Ms M.M. Quirk: How is that David Mundy? When is he going to retire?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Hopefully never! To quote Austin Powers, we are going to cryogenically freeze him and pull him out for every football game!

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: He is still top 22.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: If someone can play, it does not matter what age they are. That is my view. If they are not injured and they can play, they can keep going. That is my very strong opinion about things.

Dr D.J. Honey: We will start a petition, I will sign!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes!

I think Tony Buti quoted former Premier Geoff Gallop. All sport, and footy in particular, brings people together. It creates a sense of community. We have done so well in the past, but we need to make sure that we continue to do well in the future to foster young people to create a dynamic and fun environment. I pick up on the comments of the member for Hillarys. Participation and working with others are really important skills, especially nowadays when people are so locked into individual screens. They do not even watch TV together anymore because they all have their individual screens. It is really important for children to understand the ability to work as a team, and to acknowledge that not everyone is fantastic or brilliant and the team is only as good as the weakest player, so they have to encourage everybody. Apart from my eldest child who has pressure to play professional soccer, I am happy for the others to participate and enjoy the game. They need to understand the rules of life that we do not win every time, we have to learn to work with others and we have to support everyone in our team. They are key things. That is what I want my children to learn from sport. If we continue to foster young people playing sport and doing these activities, it is good for the community. The sense of community, camaraderie and belonging to something is very important. What is lacking a lot in society is a sense that we belong to something. Even if it is the local football team or if someone is a long suffering Freo Dockers supporter, people are part of something that is bigger than themselves, which is really important. I thank the committee for all its work. I suspect the report will create a lot of debate, but it will be good even if we just achieve moving the discussion forward, support growing football in WA and support junior football. I support the member for Bateman on the draft age. That is quite an important discussion. If we can do those things, this report will have been well worth doing. I congratulate the committee members for that work.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA) [12.13 pm] — by leave: I have only just picked up this report "More than Just a Game: The Use of State Funds by the WA Football Commission", and I congratulate the members of the Public Accounts Committee who have put together a report that on first glance appears to be a very in-depth discussion about some of the aspects of the sport. We must remember that state government money is going into WA football and we have to think about how WA football can contribute to the community. In his absence, I would like to pay tribute to work of the member for North West Central in participating in this committee inquiry. I am sure he made a very valuable contribution to the deliberations. He is a very passionate supporter of his community in every way.

There are a few little aspects I want to pick up on on this first look through the report. As a country member, I am very much aware of the importance of football and sport generally in the communities I represent, but here we are talking about football. Recommendation 5 is that resources should be secured to support the continued growth and also aspects of women's involvement in football. It was very good to have the Minister for Transport; Planning make a contribution. It shows that this report may receive some favourable consideration from government, and I think that is important. The growth of women's participation in football has been very quick. It is very important for women and girls have an option to take up football.

I think the member for Hillarys spoke about changing facilities being needed for girls. In the town of Muchea in my electorate there is a very limited set of facilities for the local football, cricket and netball communities. A staggering number of young girls are taking up junior football especially in that area, and a lot of girls already participate in netball. I have been there and seen the facilities; they are completely inadequate. Young girls virtually

have nowhere to use as a change room. There is a small toilet block for the girls who participate in football and netball. The local footy team is the Chittering Broncos, and it is not unusual for 260 players to be involved in a day's activity at that very small oval. There is a vast number of football participants for my electorate. Many of them are female, but, male or female, the facilities are completely inadequate.

I know applications have been made for funding. There has been disappointment in some of the results of those applications, and I can only speak of the great need that exists in the community for the facilities to be upgraded and to support all aspects of government and community to get behind women in sport in Muchea in the Shire of Chittering, because they are contributing to the outlet and growth of those young people in that area. Many of them are spread around rural and residential areas, where there is limited opportunity to get together and socialise over the weekends, so it is a great aspect of bringing the community together in that area. They come to Perth and play in the metropolitan competition. The Chittering Broncos is our junior football club. There is no senior football club associated with it, but, even so, hundreds of people play football there. There is a big need for facilities in the Shire of Chittering, and they will spill over and service kids in the southern areas of Gingin as well.

I also note recommendation 6, which is to support junior and youth football development and participation. Again, that is a vital need in all areas. As a country member, I am aware of the need outlined in recommendation 9 to support investment in and expansion of programs promoting all-abilities football. Football is very important across the whole of my electorate. In the electorate of Moore, the town of Kalbarri, which is leaving my electorate and becoming part of the electorate of North West Central after the next election, has semi-annual football games against Shark Bay. It is a big occasion for Kalbarri. The Shark Bay team comes down and they have a march. They do not have a regular competition there, but it is a big occasion. Also, on long weekends the Northampton Rams go up and play a game in Kalbarri, which is well attended. I almost wore my Northampton Rams tie this morning, but for some reason, I neglected to put it on. It would have been fitting, given the topic in here today. In the electorate there is representation of the Great Northern Football League, with Northampton, Mullewa and Chapman Valley football clubs; the entirety of the North Midlands Football League; and the entirety of the Central Midlands Coastal Football League. Coming in after next election will be Dowerin and Goomalling to join Toodyay, Dalwallinu, Gingin and Calingiri in that league. Also in the Central Wheatbelt Football League, there is the Kalannie team, which is in my electorate. There is a very big representation of football clubs throughout the electorate. It is a very big social driver and a huge issue for country people to ensure that football continues in the future.

I thank the committee for its work and look forward to reading in more detail its excellent report.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Eighteenth Report — "Budget Briefing 2020–2021" — Tabling

MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman) [12.20 pm]: This report is on a totally different subject, but I was fascinated with the level of interest in that report by this chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: We have set a record.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I dare say that it will potentially be reflected in the broader community.

I present for tabling the eighteenth report of the Public Accounts Committee titled "Budget Briefing 2020–2021".

[See paper [3982](#).]

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

Sixteenth Report — "Annual Report 2019–2020" — Tabling

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [12.21 pm]: I present for tabling the sixteenth report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission titled "Annual Report 2019–2020". It is the committee's penultimate report.

[See paper [3983](#).]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: Everyone was WAFL-ing on about that last report! It was very interesting. I have to say that I had no idea that the beloved government Whip had such an impressive CV in this regard, so he really is a Renaissance man.

I will not speak at length on this report. It is set out in the foreword that it has been a very busy year and the committee has worked very hard. I would like to thank my colleagues: the member for Kalamunda, Matthew Hughes, MLA; Hon Alison Xamon, MLC; and the deputy chair, Hon Jim Chown, MLC. I also thank Vanessa Beckingham, Sylvia Wolf and Lucy Roberts, who are very conscientious research officers for the committee.

As members will see in the foreword, it has been a demanding and eventful year. In particular, I make the point that the coverage of our various reports and operations in the media has been inversely proportional to the amount of work that we have undertaken. I want to make special reference to a two-year effort on government procurement that concluded in this reporting period. I am particularly pleased that the government has accepted all the recommendations. I commend the report to the house.

**COVID-19 RESPONSE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
(EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) BILL 2020**

Returned

Bill returned from the Council with amendments.

As to Consideration in Detail

On motion by **Mr F.M. Logan (Minister for Emergency Services)**, resolved —

That the Council's amendments be considered in detail forthwith.

Council's Amendments — Consideration in Detail

The following amendments made by the Council now considered —

No 1

Clause 4, page 3, line 7 — To delete “18” and substitute —
15

No 2

Clause 5, page 3, line 12 — To delete “18” and substitute —
15

No 3

Clause 7, page 4, line 10 — To delete “October” and substitute —
July

No 4

Clause 9, page 5, line 10 — To delete “October” and substitute —
July

Mr F.M. LOGAN: The government will obviously accept these amendments, given the fact that we have only three more days of the sitting in this term. We have to accept these amendments from the Legislative Council. I want to put on the record the government's view about what has been done in the upper house to amend a very important piece of legislation to protect the community and the safety and health of the people of Western Australia.

I remind members in the house that the bill that was brought into and passed by the Legislative Assembly sought to extend the provisions in both section 318(1A) of the Criminal Code and section 72A of the Emergency Management Act that were brought in specifically to deal with issues arising from the COVID pandemic, which is the scourge of the world. The amendment to the Criminal Code related to the behaviour of members of the general public who either assault or threaten to assault frontline officers. A number of examples were given in the upper house of charges that have already been brought in Western Australia under that provision of the Criminal Code because of the behaviour of some people in Western Australia.

The other part of the omnibus bill deals with section 72A, which contains all the building blocks to help keep Western Australia safe—the provisions for the border and the provisions for the State Emergency Coordinator to direct people to isolate and for the Department of Health to direct that people be tested. All those provisions are contained in section 72A. Obviously, the directions provided for in those provisions go beyond what is normal for the general public in the democracy of Western Australia. However, we are facing a global pandemic. A pandemic is one of the 26 threats to Western Australia covered by the Emergency Management Act. A pandemic initiates the actions under the Emergency Management Act and, in this case, a state of emergency.

To ensure that frontline officers and all the structures in place under the State Emergency Coordinator—that is, the Commissioner of Police—could continue to do their work to protect Western Australians under sections 318(1A) and 72A after 4 April next year, a bill to provide for a six-month extension to the sunset clause was brought into this house and it was voted on and approved. I said at the time that the State Disaster Council; the State Emergency Coordinator, who is the Commissioner of Police; the Chief Health Officer, and all the people underneath the State Emergency Coordinator were supportive of the six-month extension because it would give them some breathing space to deal with a continuation of the threat of COVID-19 to Western Australia. Everyone agreed with it. The State Disaster Council and cabinet agreed with it. We brought that bill into this house. I remind members that the member for Churchlands agreed with it and I will quote from *Hansard* of Wednesday, 4 November 2020.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: I would like to hear further from the minister.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: The member for Churchlands said —

I say at the outset that the Liberal Party opposition supports the Minister for Emergency Services' request to extend the provisions in the COVID-19 Response Legislation Amendment (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Bill 2020 because it must trust that the rationale and reasons given for the extension are warranted.

That was great. The member for Churchlands, one of the only sensible people in this house, had a briefing, understood what was put to him by members of my office and others, and accepted the provisions that were put before this house. Unfortunately, when it came time to vote on the amendment moved by the member for Moore to reduce the six-month extension to three months, the opposition decided to vote the other way.

I thought we had an agreement that the six-month extension was going to be supported. Clearly, between the time the member for Churchlands made his comments and the member for Moore moved his amendment and brought it to a vote, the Liberal Party decided to change its view. Nevertheless, in this house, the amendment moved by the member for Moore was defeated.

It went to the Legislative Council and a similar debate was held in the Legislative Council. We had contributions from Hon Nick Goiran, Hon Colin de Grussa and Hon Tjorn Sibma in support of an amendment that was virtually identical to the amendment put before this house by the member for Moore and, unfortunately, it was carried. As I said in this house when we defeated the amendment put up by the member for Moore, it is exactly as the member for Churchlands said, which is that we must listen to those people who are on the front line dealing with this pandemic: that is, the State Emergency Coordinator, the Chief Health Officer and others who know best. It is their legal obligation to look after us during a state of emergency. But Hon Nick Goiran, a suburban lawyer; Hon Colin de Grussa, a farmer; Hon Tjorn Sibma, a political hack; and the member for Moore, an ex-farmer, know better than all the people involved in the State Disaster Council, all the emergency service workers, the Commissioner of Police, the Commissioner for Fire and Emergency Services and the Chief Health Officer. They said, “We’ll tell you what the extension should be. We’ll tell you because we know better than you. I know you wanted six months, but as far as we’re concerned, because we’re so bright, we’re going to give you three months.” That is what they have done to us. It is a disgrace. Remember, we are in the middle of a global pandemic! This is not political fun and games. Members can see what happens when there is political interference in a state of emergency or a pandemic. It creates a situation like the United Kingdom or the United States. Yesterday, 200 000 people got COVID! Why? It is because of political interference and political leaders who think they know better than all the emergency service workers and all the medical advisers. That is what we would end up with.

I said this before when issues like bushfires came up and people tried to play games with the issues around bushfires, whether it is the opening or the closing of the highway to the eastern states. I said it then: “Don’t politicise emergency services!” People get hurt when that is done. Things go wrong—badly wrong! Here we are again, in the COVID-19 global pandemic. The frontline officers just want that six-month extension to give them some breathing space, but no, we have smart people in politics who know better than them, and they have decided to cut it back to three months. We cannot do anything but accept this. We have to accept it, but, unfortunately, it will be a very black mark on the opposition. I move —

That amendment 1 made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Thank you, minister, for those typically over-the-top remarks.

This amendment does not leave Western Australia unprotected. This amendment provides for a three-month period after the next election for a new incoming government and, thank goodness, a new minister who will sit in this chamber and propose to the chamber the next extension, if it is needed. The chamber, along with the other place, will be able to examine it just as quickly as we have here and come to a conclusion of whether the extension is necessary. At no time will this leave Western Australia exposed in any way. Western Australia will be covered until the next government is able to make its own decisions. It is the job of Parliament to review legislation and to keep an eye on the freedoms of Western Australia as well as to protect Western Australians. That is what we are doing. We are protecting Western Australians from overreach by people like the minister. Thank goodness for the other chamber of Parliament.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister and member for Moore, can you bring the tone down a little bit. We do not need yelling across the chamber from either the minister or the member for Moore. Please continue your debate with a different tone.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Thank you for your words, Madam Deputy Speaker. I will continue with my remarks.

At no time will Western Australia be left unprotected because of these amendments. There will be plenty of time for the new minister and the new government to come forward to the Parliament and bring a bill very similar to this one, and explain to people that it is needed. The new members of Parliament will take a vote and make their own decision. We do not need to make those decisions for them. We need to leave them to make those decisions. They will have three months in which to make that decision. Good on the members of the other place who dug into the matter. My understanding from my reading of *Hansard* is that there was not any health advice that directly supported six months. In spite of what the minister is saying, there was no such advice. On the basis of that, all parties except the government voted to limit the extension to three months, which was considered appropriate. It is doing its job as the house of review. We are doing our job as members of opposition parties in this place to ensure that the government has the tools it needs to keep Western Australians safe, but it only has those tools for the time necessary to keep Western Australians safe.

Mr F.M. Logan: In your view!

Mr R.S. LOVE: It is my view as a parliamentarian. I might not be a health spokesperson or a policeman, but I am a member of Parliament. I know that it will not take more than three months for this simple bill to be brought forward and be reconsidered in plenty of time, if it is needed, in the following year. This will not leave Western Australians unprotected. The minister is trying to raise emotional claptrap over a simple matter of timing. Three months after the next election is plenty of time. It is three months for the government to bring forward a bill that should take no more than a few hours to get through the Parliament.

Mr F.M. Logan: A few hours? It took a week to get out of this house.

Mr R.S. LOVE: It did not take a week! The government did not bring it into the house until Wednesday.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: That is not true. The government did not bring it to the house with plenty of time. It did not give my party a sufficient opportunity before it brought it to the house to examine it.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Mr R.S. LOVE: You did nothing!

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: Point of order.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members! Minister, you are on a razor's edge at the moment. We do not need either of you yelling at each other and interjecting. The member for Moore has the call. Does the member for Cottesloe have a point of order he would like to raise?

Dr D.J. HONEY: No. It was exactly that, Madam Chair. The speaker was not able to proceed unimpeded by the minister.

Debate Resumed

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister, I have issued warnings. I will start to call people.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I notice that there is a member of the press watching this. I want the people of Western Australia to understand that this does not leave them exposed to any health threat. No evidence was provided in the other place about this extension of three months being any more or less dangerous than an extension of six months. There is plenty of time for this to be re-examined in the new Parliament. I am not a policeman or a doctor; I do not pretend to be. I am a member of Parliament and I know how long it takes to get simple legislation through the Parliament. It does not take weeks or months. It does not take more than a few hours if the government does it properly and informs the parties properly. If the government did its job properly, this would have been done on Tuesday.

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

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

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr F.M. LOGAN — by leave: I move —

That amendments 2 to 4 made by the Council be agreed to.

I hope that the member for Moore's views about getting bills through this house is as positive as he thinks it could be. Just remember this: in a new Parliament, all the provisions that we have in place at the moment for dealing with COVID bills will have to be dealt with again. I do not know whether the opposition in the next term of Parliament will agree with that, whoever it will be. It might turn around and say, "Well, as far as we are concerned, COVID has gone away, so we're not going to agree to have these bills go through the house as quickly as possible." The member assumes that everything will continue as normal. I hope that he is right, but we do not know that. The process that we currently have in place to deal with COVID bills, with agreement from the opposition, will have to be reinstated. That all has to be agreed to. I do not know whether it will be agreed to, but the member has assumed that it will be. We also do not know when Parliament will return. The member has assumed that Parliament will return straightaway, but that is up to the next government.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: It will be up to the next government. The member is just —

Ms R. Saffioti: The existing government might not let go, Trump-style.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: That is right. I am sure it will, Minister for Transport. However, many assumptions were built into the member for Moore's view that the further extension required on the two components of the omnibus bill would just naturally go through within a few days. Well, it did not go through this place or the upper house in a day or so—or hours, as the member said, which was just not true. I hope it does pass through here that quickly, member for Moore. Unfortunately, we will be stuck with the COVID-19 pandemic next year. I give the member an example from today. Today, 215 international passengers arrived from overseas and we now have three new COVID cases. I have pointed out that every single day, all the people who arrive with COVID are from overseas. They are returning international travellers from Western Australia, who have been dealt with through the structure that we have put in place for people who have contracted COVID—by isolation in hotels. That will continue next year and the thousands and thousands of people who will be returning will continue to return during the election period and beyond. I hope that the member for Moore may well be right and that the government in a new Parliament can deal with an extension to those protective powers and rights under section 72A of the Emergency Management Act to direct. God help the member if those powers expire, because, as I pointed out to the house, if the provisions under section 72A of the Emergency Management Act are not extended and they drop away, that is it; there will be no more powers to allow our frontline services to deal with COVID. That is the risk that the member has taken. I have raised this matter in the house before. The member's party initiated the change, so let us see what happens. Let us see if the member is right. If he is wrong, he will be in it over his neck.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

The Council acquainted accordingly.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL 2020

Council's Amendments — Consideration in Detail

The following amendments made by the Council now considered —

No 1

Clause 2, page 2, lines 4 to 11 — To delete the clause.

No 2

Clause 2, page 2, after line 11 — To insert —

2. Commencement

- (1) This Act comes into operation as follows —
 - (a) Part 1 — on the day on which this Act receives the Royal Assent (*assent day*);
 - (b) section 4(3A) — on the later of the following —
 - (i) the day on which the *Planning and Development Amendment Act 2020* section 64 comes into operation;
 - (ii) immediately after section 4(2) comes into operation;
 - (c) section 59 — on the day on which section 83 comes into operation;
 - (d) section 116A — on the day after assent day;
 - (e) the rest of the Act — on a day fixed by proclamation, and different days may be fixed for different provisions.
- (2) However —
 - (a) if no day is fixed under subsection (1)(e) before the end of the period of 10 years beginning on assent day, this Act is repealed on the day after that period ends; or
 - (b) if paragraph (a) does not apply, and a provision of this Act does not come into operation before the end of the period of 10 years beginning on assent day, that provision is repealed on the day after that period ends.
- (3) Despite subsection (1), if section 112 has not come into operation before the day on which the *Planning and Development Amendment Act 2020* section 68(2) comes into operation, the 2nd row in the Table to section 112 —
 - (a) does not come into operation; and
 - (b) is deleted on that day.
- (4) Despite subsection (1), if section 112 has not come into operation before the day on which the *Planning and Development Amendment Act 2020* section 70 comes into operation, the 4th row in the Table to section 112 —
 - (a) does not come into operation; and
 - (b) is deleted on that day.

No 3

Clause 4, page 3, lines 5 to 15 — To delete the lines and substitute —

(1) In section 3(1) delete the definitions of:

bilateral agreement

Chairman

Deputy Chairman

implementation agreement or decision

implementation conditions

proposal

(1A) In section 3(1) delete the definitions of:

applicant

licensee

prescribed premises

works approval

No 4

Clause 4, page 5, lines 4 and 5 — To delete the lines.

No 5

Clause 4, page 6, after line 6 — To insert —

(2A) In section 3(1) insert in alphabetical order:

prescribed activity means an activity prescribed as a prescribed activity for the purposes of Part V;

No 6

Clause 4, page 6, after line 31 — To insert —

(3A) In section 3(1) in the definition of *planning instrument* paragraph (b) delete “section 29 and published in the *Gazette*; or” and insert:

Part 3; or

No 7

Clause 16, page 24, lines 24 to 27 — To delete the lines and substitute —

The Authority must keep a public record of each referred proposal, and shall in that public record set out —

(a) whether or not that proposal is to be assessed under this Part; and

(b) if the proposal is to be assessed under this Part, the level of assessment.

No 8

Clause 18, page 25, after line 1 — To insert —

(1A) In section 40(3) delete “subsection (2)(b).” and insert:

subsection (2)(b) and publish an indicative outline of the timing of the environmental review.

No 9

Clause 28, page 33, lines 25 to 27 — To delete the lines and substitute —

under section 45(2).

No 10

Clause 28, page 33, line 34 to page 34, line 3 — To delete “has a role, or have roles, in making major decisions in relation to matters in the proposal that may have significant effects on the environment.” and substitute —

the Minister considers to be a key decision-making authority.

No 11

Clause 28, page 35, line 4 — To delete “must — ” and substitute —

must within 30 days of the agreement or decision being made —

No 12

Clause 28, page 36, line 29 — To insert after “must” —
within 30 days of the agreement or decision being made

No 13

Clause 31, page 47, line 10 — To insert after “Minister” —
and the proponent of the proposal

No 14

Clause 32, page 51, line 28 — To delete “prescribing” and substitute —
prescribing, or providing for the determination of,

No 15

Clause 44, page 59, after line 28 — To insert —

- (2) Before regulations are made declaring an area of the State as an environmentally sensitive area for the purposes of this Part —
 - (a) the CEO must, in a prescribed manner, notify each owner or occupier of land in that area of the State of the proposed regulations and invite comments about the proposed regulations to be made within the period specified in the notification; and
 - (b) the Minister must take into account any comments about the proposed regulations made by an owner or occupier of land in that area of the State pursuant to an invitation under paragraph (a).
- (3) Subsection (1) does not apply to regulations proposing to declare an area of the State as an environmentally sensitive area if a declaration of that area as an environmentally sensitive area already has effect under subsection (1).
- (4) The CEO must notify the agency (as defined in the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* section 3(1)) principally assisting the Minister administering the *Transfer of Land Act 1893* in its administration of the declaration or amendment of an environmentally sensitive area with a view to that agency including information as to the environmentally sensitive area in information disseminated by it as to property interests in land.

No 16

Clause 60, page 82, line 18 — To insert after “licence” —
and payment of the application fee prescribed by or determined under the regulations,

No 17

Clause 60, page 84, line 3 — To insert after “licence” —
and payment of the application fee prescribed by or determined under the regulations,

No 18

Clause 60, page 89, line 12 — To insert after “application” —
and payment of the application fee prescribed by or determined under the regulations,

No 19

Clause 60, page 90, line 5 — To insert after “licence” —
and payment of the application fee prescribed by or determined under the regulations,

No 20

Clause 104, page 165, lines 14 to 16 — To delete the lines and substitute —

- (3) In Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 1 insert in alphanumerical order:

2	53A(1)	\$62 500	\$12 500
3	53B(1)	\$62 500	\$12 500
4	62	\$62 500	\$12 500
5	63(3)	\$62 500	\$12 500

- (4) In Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 1 insert in alphanumerical order:

11B	86O(1)	\$62 500	\$12 500
11C	86P(2)	\$62 500	\$12 500

No 21

Clause 105, page 166, lines 3 to 5 — To delete the lines and substitute —

(3) In Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 2 insert in alphanumerical order:

2	53A(1)	\$125 000	\$25 000
3	53B(1)	\$125 000	\$25 000
4	62	\$125 000	\$25 000
5	63(3)	\$125 000	\$25 000

(4) In Schedule 1 Part 2 Division 2 insert in alphanumerical order:

11B	86O(1)	\$125 000	\$25 000
11C	86P(2)	\$125 000	\$25 000

No 22

Clause 108, page 167, after line 15 — To insert —

(1A) In Schedule 2 item 1 insert in alphabetical order:

fee includes charge;

No 23

Clause 108, page 168, after line 5 — To insert —

(3A) In Schedule 2 item 2A:

(a) in paragraph (b) delete “regulations.” and insert:
regulations;

(b) after paragraph (b) insert:

(c) prescribing fees that are payable before or when the authorisation is amended,
transferred or surrendered.

No 24

Clause 108, page 169, after line 5 — To insert —

36C. Specifying timelines for steps in processes contained in Part V.

No 25

New Clause 116A, page 180, after line 11 — To insert —

116A. *Planning and Development Amendment Act 2020* amended

(1) In this section —

section 71 means the *Planning and Development Amendment Act 2020* section 71.

(2) Despite the *Planning and Development Amendment Act 2020* section 2, if section 71 has not come into operation before the day on which section 55(1) of this Act comes into operation, section 71 —

(a) does not come into operation; and

(b) is deleted on that day.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I move —

That amendment 1 made by the Council be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council’s amendment agreed to.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I move —

That amendment 2 made by the Council be agreed to.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I am just after an explanation of what the impact of those changes will be on the commencement date. I do not need a forensic discussion; I just want to get to the nub of the effect of those changes on the commencement date.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Thank you for the question, member. These amendments are necessary due to the timing of the passing of the Planning and Development Amendment Bill 2020, so we are aligning with another piece of legislation that was introduced to the Parliament at the same time. The passing of the Planning and Development

Bill 2020 has resulted in some cross-references in the Environmental Protection Act 1986 that requires updating. Amendments are also required to address overlapping amendments between the two bills that were before Parliament at the same time.

The new commencement date provisions are being drafted to address the overlap and ensure that this reflects the amended provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2005. They also ensure that relevant amendments occur in the correct sequence. This amendment contains proposed clause 2(2), which is a sunset clause if the act is not commenced within 10 years. It is intended to commence the provisions of the bill as soon as possible after any necessary consequential recommendations are drafted. I hope that that clarifies things.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I move —

That amendment 3 made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr R.S. LOVE: Can the parliamentary secretary explain why these definitions will be deleted and what the effect of that will be?

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Obviously, the first issue relates to gender; we are moving to gender-neutral descriptions. The explanation that I have been given is that there are some timing issues. They are being moved to ensure that when they commence, they can be separated out. I guess it is a technical staging process.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will interrupt business until a later stage of today's sitting.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 7943.]

NETBALL WA

Statement by Member for Central Wheatbelt

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Nationals WA) [12.50 pm]: Last Friday, I had the honour of participating in a friendly match to mark the new Parliamentary Friends of Netball. I am pleased to be co-convenor of the group along with Hon Samantha Rowe, and we joined members from both houses, media and other Netball Western Australia participants in an on-court battle. The post-match sore legs of some players proved that our best netball days may be long behind us. I am proud to report that Mia's Fever claimed a one-goal win against Sam's Shooting Stars. It was a very even match. However, the real winner was Netball WA, which, again, highlighted the outstanding work it is doing in communities across the state, particularly with its Shooting Stars program.

Shooting Stars not only teaches girls about netball, but also uses the sport to drive more than 60 per cent of the program's participants to an average school attendance rate of 80 per cent or above. West Coast Fever players are great role models for the Shooting Stars girls, and I thank team members Olivia Lewis and Emma Cosh for serving as coaches on the day. It was heartbreaking to watch the Fever just fall short of the title this year, but they showed outstanding dedication by spending three months in a Queensland COVID-19 hub to play in the Suncorp Super Netball season. We are proud of our Fever ladies!

Thanks must go to Netball WA president, Grant Robinson, chief commercial officer, Daniel Barker, and community netball general manager, Liz Booth, for their support on the day and enthusiasm for the Parliamentary Friends of Netball. Appreciation goes to the Gold Industry Group, which is the major sponsor of Netball WA. The group remains strong followers of the sport and Netball WA's efforts. After licking our match-day wounds, we look forward to cheering from the sidelines!

PAULINE WHITE — WANNEROO SECONDARY COLLEGE

Statement by Member for Wanneroo

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo) [12.52 pm]: I rise today to pay tribute to Pauline White, the principal of Wanneroo Secondary College. Pauline is retiring at the end of this year after 15 years of extraordinary leadership at the school, bringing to a close a stellar educational career of more than 35 years. What is the secret to her success? It has been the bond she has built between community, staff, parents and her beloved students. According to my notes, Leanne Guard, the associate principal, said about Pauline —

It has been an absolute privilege and pleasure to work with Pauline for the last 13 years. Her leadership has enabled such positive change and growth to the college. A long and distinguished career that has touched the lives of so many.

According to my notes, parent Jacque Sargent had this to say about Pauline —

Pauline is a wonderful school principal who always has the students' best interests at heart. The communication from this school to us as parents is exceptional. My three sons have all attended the school under her guidance and she makes me feel that my kids are in a safe and caring school environment.

According to my notes, students Hayley, Sarah and Ashlee Cvitan said the following about Pauline —

You have given us opportunities to pursue our dreams from day one, offering multiple extracurricular courses as well as providing a safe, supportive and creative learning environment for ALL students. You have allowed students to travel the world, helped us to access and adapt to new technologies and provided workplace opportunities to help us create our futures.

Pauline has nurtured and guided more than 2 500 young Wanneroo students over 15 years. Her influence and impact at Wanneroo Senior College is remarkable and will be enduring for all students past, present and long into the future. On behalf of my community, I thank Pauline and wish her all the best.

GREECE 2021

Statement by Member for Hillarys

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [12.53 pm]: On 25 March 2021, the world will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Greek War of Independence; the day that the Hellenic people, who introduced the principles of democracy to the world, commenced a revolution to demand liberty from oppression, and return freedom and democracy to their land. The enduring principles of the Greek War of Independence should be commemorated by all freedom-loving people. Greece 2021 has been established to ensure that the global impact of the events of 1821 will be appropriately remembered. Greece 2021 also aims to showcase the modern history of Greece over the past 200 years and the many Hellenes who have left their mark on the world in that time, and, importantly, will present a window of opportunity into the future of Greece as a modern and progressive nation.

Through my role as president of the World Hellenic Inter-Parliamentary Association, I am working closely with Greece 2021 and the Hellenic Parliament to ensure that these important events are properly commemorated in legislatures across the globe. I trust that the forty-first Parliament of Western Australia that is elected early next year will take a leading role in commemorating and celebrating the message that the liberation of Greece sent to all other oppressed people in the nineteenth century—that freedom and democracy is indeed possible for all. At the same time we should celebrate the unique bonds between our state and Greece as allies in two world wars and as great friends in times of peace.

The women, men and children who rose up against the Ottomans in 1821 had a simple motto, Ελευθερία ή θάνατος—liberty or death. May the eternal memory of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for that liberty guide us all as we celebrate 1821.

NAIDOC WEEK — TAMARA PARKER AND ANN HAWKE

Statement by Member for Belmont

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [12.55 pm]: Today I rise in celebration of NAIDOC Week. This year's theme of "Always Was, Always Will Be" recognises that our state's extraordinary landscape always was and always will be Aboriginal land. NAIDOC Week is a great opportunity to learn about and recognise the incredible contribution of Aboriginal people in our community. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the joint recipients of the City of Belmont 2020 NAIDOC Community Award—locals Tamara Parker and Ann Hawke.

Tamara Parker has played an integral role as the Aboriginal education officer at Carlisle Primary School since 2011. In the past 12 months, she has established the KindiLink program for Indigenous children from birth to three years of age. Her education programs have included sports and cultural celebrations and educational incursions, excursions and workshops that have enhanced the learning outcomes of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and families in the community, and promoted Indigenous culture, sport and history.

Ann Hawke has been a foster carer for the past 35 years, caring for some 53 children, and is a founder of local Aboriginal organisation Kinship Connections Aboriginal Corporation, delivering community services to Aboriginal people. In the past 12 months, Ann has successfully reunited 18 children with their mothers, and found families for 112 children. Ann has developed the "Who's My Mob?" program via Kinship Connections that supports young Aboriginal people to identify, connect and reconnect with their birth families.

I would like to take this moment to acknowledge the outstanding and incredible contribution of these two local women who make our community better.

PEEL HEALTH CAMPUS

Statement by Member for Dawesville

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [12.56 pm]: I wish to alert the house to an article in the *Mandurah Mail* dated 10 November in which the Labor Party member for the Murray–Wellington district announced that there will be no more funding for Peel Health Campus until the management contract is sorted. This statement confirms that the Labor Party has no interest in funding any investment in Peel Health Campus until the contract expires in 2023. The Labor Party's plan is to wait until 2023 before there is any investment in our hospital, which is simply not good enough. With wait times reaching seven-year highs, we now know that the Labor Party's plan is to continue

to ignore the districts of Dawesville, Mandurah and Murray–Wellington and kick the can down the road while people are waiting longer than ever before in our emergency departments and in the back of ambulances. This is the Labor Party's plan for our community. This government shows continual ignorance and arrogance and seems to recklessly disregard the concerns of our community. It is too long to wait until 2023 before we see investment in our hospital. The year 2023 is not a plan, but it is a total turning of this government's back on the people of Mandurah, Dawesville and Murray–Wellington. We will not stand for it. I encourage all members of my community to stand united, join our fight to ensure that we fix Peel Health Campus immediately, and not wait until 2023 to see a loosely guided plan that will only mean we see investment deferred for years to come while people's lives are being put at risk.

FORRESTFIELD ELECTORATE — SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

Statement by Member for Forrestfield

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield) [12.58 pm]: I would like to acknowledge the amazing work undertaken by the volunteers of the schools in my community, particularly the members of our school boards, P&Cs and P&Fs. Like all volunteer groups, they have been challenged by COVID-19 this year, but they have continued to do all they can to support their local school community and enhance the learning outcomes for our children. The work the volunteers do supporting our school communities, such as running canteens, uniform shops, fundraising events and so much more, is invaluable.

In my local community, I have had the privilege of sitting on a number of school boards and supporting many of the P&C and P&F activities. This year alone, activities undertaken for our local schools have included car washes, community pantries, movie nights, sausage sizzles, book fairs, quiz nights, lapathons, Christmas gift collections, and Color fun runs. The funds raised from these activities go towards enhancing the learning experiences of our children through such things as the provision of extra library books and resources, subscriptions to online learning programs, subsidising play equipment and excursions such as school camps. A huge thank you to all the volunteers at the primary schools of Dawson Park, East Kenwick, Edney, Forrestfield, High Wycombe, Maida Vale, Orange Grove, Wattle Grove and Woodlupine, and Kenwick School, Darling Range Sports College, Communicare Academy, Heritage College Perth, Hillside Christian College, Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School, Rehoboth Christian College and St Francis School.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

JOINT SITTING

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [2.00 pm]: Members, I wish to advise that I have consulted with the President of the Legislative Council in relation to holding a joint sitting to fill the vacancy in the Senate created by the resignation of Senator Mathias Cormann. The joint sitting will be held on Wednesday, 25 November 2020 at 11.30 am in the Legislative Council chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

RETAIL ELECTRICITY MARKET — COMPETITION

901. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

I refer to Telstra's announcement today that it intends to enter the retail electricity market. Can the Premier confirm that soon people will be able to purchase an electricity and telecommunication home package in every state in the country, except for Western Australia, which is trapped in a Synergy monopoly?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I am unaware of what the Leader of the Opposition is referring to. I am aware that she wants to privatise electricity assets and put prices up.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is what she wants to do.

RETAIL ELECTRICITY MARKET — COMPETITION

902. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Can the Premier confirm that the inability of Western Australians to purchase electricity and telecommunication home packages is indicative of much broader innovations in the electricity sector that WA is missing out on because of Synergy's monopoly?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I can confirm that the Liberal Party has very little knowledge or idea about how to run our electricity network. I can confirm that. I can also confirm that people in senior positions in the Liberal Party have no knowledge or understanding of what they are dealing with. I would not be surprised if in what they are referring to—I have not heard of it—they have got the wrong end of the stick once again. I do know that in order to go to full retail contestability, which is the Liberal Party's policy, there has to be a very, very big increase in price to get there. That is why it did not do it when it was in office.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Mr M. McGOWAN: We will ensure that the people of Western Australia understand. I also note that when the Liberal Party went into opposition, the Leader of the Opposition endorsed the policy of selling off Western Power. I also note that. That was not before the last election; it was after the last election. The people of Western Australia will understand that if the Liberal Party is elected, our electricity assets will be sold and prices will go up.

COLLINS-CLASS SUBMARINE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

903. Ms E. HAMILTON to the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's unprecedented commitment to securing more defence manufacturing work for Western Australia, particularly as the economy recovers from the impacts of COVID-19.

- (1) Can the Premier advise the house what measures this government has taken to demonstrate why Western Australia is best placed to undertake full-cycle docking of Collins-class submarines?
- (2) Can the Premier outline to the house why the federal government needs to end the uncertainty and urgently resolve this matter?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Joondalup for the question. Since we have been in office, the Minister for Defence Issues has been working incredibly hard to secure more defence manufacturing work for Western Australia. We have put forward a range of initiatives that have never been done before. We have a defence advocate, Defence West. We have invested nearly \$100 million in upgrading the Australian Maritime Complex to ensure that we are ready and able to undertake full-cycle docking in Western Australia of Collins-class submarines. Collins-class submarines have to undergo full-cycle docking regularly—one of the six submarines is always in this condition.

We have put the case to the commonwealth government that undertaking full-cycle docking in South Australia, when the six submarines are based in Western Australia, does not make any sense. We have more capable industry here. The crews are based here. The submarines are based here. Best practice around the world is to maintain the defence assets close to where they are based. That is what ordinarily happens. We do not sail them 3 000 kilometres away to undertake that work.

As I said, we committed around \$100 million to work at the Australian Marine Complex as part of our plan. We have announced that around \$20 million of that will be put towards training and improvements for the workforce to ensure that Western Australians are able to undertake this work.

We have a concern, and I have written to the Prime Minister about this—that is, that the commonwealth government, despite saying that it would make a decision by the end of last year, has not made a decision.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Do not defend it. The Liberal Party is defending it once again.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members to my left!

Mr M. McGOWAN: The advice given by the commonwealth government was that a decision on this would be made by December 2019. We are now nearly a year past that deadline. We have now heard via press reports that a decision will not be made until late 2022. What concerns us about this is that due to inertia—or perhaps deliberately due to inertia—the commonwealth's aim is to leave the full-cycle docking in South Australia. That is very concerning. Obviously, South Australia has the manufacturing or the building of the attack-class submarines and the new frigates. South Australia will obviously be full of work provided by the commonwealth government. That is the South Australian way. But certainly the maintenance, the full-cycle docking of the submarines that are based in Western Australia, should be undertaken in Western Australia. I have written to the Prime Minister requesting that that happen, and I just hope that this inaction and failure by the commonwealth to make a decision is not an attempt to ensure that the full-cycle docking remains in South Australia.

ELECTRICITY PRICES

904. Mr D.C. NALDER to the Premier:

I note the government's refusal to support the Liberal Party's plan for cheaper power by giving —
Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, please! I want to hear this.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I note the government's refusal to support the Liberals' plan for cheaper power by giving Western Australians —

Ms S.E. Winton interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, I call you to order for the first time. Start again.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I note the government's refusal to support the Liberals' plan for cheaper power by giving Western Australians competition and choice. Will the Premier at least help small business and commit to lowering the contestability threshold to 20 megawatts an hour?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The member is referring to things that members opposite refused to do when they were in office. The reason they refused to do it in office is because it would have put prices up. That is what would have happened. We are a very small market. We have Synergy, which has long-term contracts. The process of introducing competition would obviously mean that we would have to put prices up before we could do so. I know members opposite shake their heads, but they did not do it for eight and a half years. The reason they did not do it is for this reason.

Mr D.C. Nalder: I did not shake my head.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It was your colleague behind you.

To get to full retail contestability, we first have to get to full price reflectivity. That is what has to happen. That is why their government did not do it.

Mr D.C. Nalder: That's not true.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is true. Why else? Why did Colin not do it?

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Who?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Why did Colin Barnett not do it? For eight and a half years, he was standing right here. Why did he not do it?

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: What was that?

Ms R. Saffioti: He said he was gutless.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member for Riverton accused the former Premier of being gutless. Is that right?

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I asked the question —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: The louder you shout, members, does not mean your interjections are any better!

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The Premier is impugning the reputation of the member for Riverton, accusing him of saying something that he did not.

The SPEAKER: I heard the member for Riverton say something. What was the comment that you made, member?

Dr M.D. Nahan: Do you give me permission to say it, Mr Speaker?

The SPEAKER: I do; that is why I am asking you.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Okay. I said, "We got there!"

The SPEAKER: Okay.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! I was in a good mood before I came here today; let us keep it going!

Premier, can you withdraw that because obviously it was not what was said.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Mr Speaker, if you would like me to withdraw; I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, Premier.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: In any event, the last government did not do it, for eight and a half years. The reason it did not do it was that it would have had to put prices up. That would then ensure that Synergy would become a great burden on the taxpayers of Western Australia. That would then damage country areas, because, obviously, the more profitable customers would be taken and prices would go up for country consumers. We are a big state—the second largest self-governing jurisdiction in the world—and we have a significant subsidy between the city and the country. There would be massive increases for country consumers if the Liberal Party's policy comes in. This is just a thought bubble by the Liberal Party. It did not do it while it was in office. It has not thought it through. Liberal Party members have taken the policy off the shelf from someone who has written it for them and it is not in the interests of the people of the state.

ELECTRICITY PRICES**905. Mr D.C. NALDER to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. Why is the Premier refusing to let small business access competition that big business can access; is that not simply unfair?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I have answered the member's question. For the member's brief period as a minister, before he challenged the former Premier and went to the back bench, he did not do it. The reason that he did not do it is for the reasons I have just said; I have explained it to him.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Riverton!

Mr M. McGOWAN: If the member does what he says he will do, he will increase prices for ordinary consumers, and especially for people in the regions. That is not our policy. This is a prelude to the Liberal Party privatising the electricity assets of the state.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Members on my left!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Have a look at New South Wales. New South Wales has done this: it has privatised its assets. What has happened? Prices have gone up.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

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

Mr M. McGOWAN: Prices are higher in New South Wales than they are here and, despite the sale of the assets that that member wants to do, New South Wales' debt is skyrocketing. The Liberal Party's plan may well be to sell off the assets, but unless it has proper financial management like this government has put in place, it will have skyrocketing debt like those other states that have done so.

CORONAVIRUS — TRANSPORT PROJECTS**906. Dr A.D. BUTI to the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's effort in driving Western Australia's economic recovery from COVID-19 through its record investment of \$260 million a month in road and transport projects across the state.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how this record investment is creating more local jobs, supporting more WA business and delivering more local content?
- (2) Can the minister advised the house what has been the community response to this record investment?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thank the member for Armadale for that question.

- (1)–(2) As part of our COVID recovery, but also as part of our plan for WA, we are spending a record amount on infrastructure in Western Australia. We are building road and rail infrastructure throughout the state. This government is spending \$260 million a month on transport infrastructure, compared with the previous government, which spent about \$150 million a month. What does that mean, members? It means jobs everywhere throughout Western Australia and it means certainty for the companies and workers involved that they have a pipeline of work.

Recently, I was able to release another concept design for another one of our Metronet projects—the new Midland train station. We are in the tender process for Midland train station. This will replace the ageing 52-year-old station with a modern, new facility between Helena Street and Cale Street, better integrating the station with the retail district and Midland Health Campus, so there will be better connectivity between

the hospital and the new station. The concept design is contemporary. Members will have different views about the design, but I am sure those views will be incorporated in the final design. There will be three platforms, catering for up to six railcars, a pedestrian overpass and new, green community spaces. It is yet another project out in the market that has the community very excited. The feedback from the workers and the community has been incredible. This government is serious about building for tomorrow, unlike the opposition.

It is clear that the Liberal Party does not support Metronet. It is running ads against Metronet. It is the Liberal Party's key plank to oppose Metronet, so projects like the Midland station would not happen under a Harvey Liberal government—that is clear. The Byford rail extension would not happen under a Liberal government—that is clear. On that point, member for Darling Range, again, does not appear to be here.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: In the past, members have been encouraged not to reflect on whether a member of Parliament is in the chamber.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Have you all finished making your rulings? I will make mine. I have made this a ruling before: if someone is not in the chamber, we do not let people know that they are not in the chamber. This is something that I have done for the last four years. It is a point of order.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I might go back to the polling questions that were put to the residents of Darling Range in the last week. A massive poll was conducted throughout Darling Range as well as some other seats. What I find really interesting is that the Liberal Party members come here and demand transparency, but it does not even get told the poll results of their own seats for their own side.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I have a further point of order, Mr Speaker, on the relevancy of the answer. The question the member for Armadale asked the Minister for Transport was about Metronet projects. The answer that is being given is not relevant at all.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! Points of order are held in silence. In future, I will name anyone who interjects. Members do not comment on it. You listen to what the person says and then the Speaker makes his ruling. Minister, you will get back to your topic.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The question related to community support for our projects and, of course, there are high levels of community support, as I suspect the Liberal Party's polling might show if only its members were allowed to see it. Liberal director Sam Calabrese provided a high-level briefing to the party room about recent —

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Mr Speaker, if the minister continues to ignore your ruling, I ask you to bring her to the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER: Minister, if you keep referring to that, I will sit you down. Carry on, please.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Let us go back to the community's support. When we heard about that polling question in the Liberal Party's poll, we heard that it referred to our Metronet projects, so it refers to the level of community support. All I am saying is: why will the Liberal Party not tell its own members how popular its leader is? Honestly, for a party that comes in demanding transparency, we have members on the other side kept in the dark about how their electorates feel about replacing Mrs Harvey.

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I have a point order, Mr Speaker.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! What did I say about points of order? I will hear the point of order.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Listen to the faux outrage of the members opposite. Premier —

The SPEAKER: No, I am the Speaker.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Sorry, Speaker. One day we hope you might be Premier, Mr Speaker.

Mr Speaker, the minister continues to ignore your ruling and I ask you to bring her back.

The SPEAKER: No, I still think this is part of the transparency.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Dr A.D. BUTI: A supplementary question?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: How long have you been here? No, you cannot have a supplementary.

Point of Order

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I acknowledge that it has not been the practice to give government members a supplementary but there is nothing in the standing orders that prevents it. Government members, like any member of this house, should all be treated equally. When this system was put in place, that entitlement applied to members on both sides of the chamber. It has just been an accepted convention that governments have not generally done that.

The SPEAKER: It is not a point of order. The member cannot have one.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Ms J.J. Shaw: Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Member for Swan Hills.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Sorry; I got it wrong.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: That was my fault; I apologised. To err is human. To forgive is divine.

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES — VOLUNTEERS

907. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Minister for Emergency Services:

My question without notice is to the Minister for Emergency Services —

Mr F.M. Logan interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am over here. The minister is still a member. He is not going yet!

I refer to the lack of a response provided to Hon Colin de Grussa yesterday about the rollout of life-saving defibrillators for every regional fire brigade and that it has been 12 months since the minister made this announcement via a dorothea dixer.

- (1) Have 780 regional fire trucks been fitted with defibrillators?
- (2) What is current policy on the use of defibrillators, and can the minister please detail exactly what he knows about that?

Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:

- (1)–(2) I know that primarily volunteers called for the defibrillators and that the Department of Fire and Emergency Services agreed that we would roll them out across all the vehicles—both career firefighter and volunteer vehicles—across Western Australia. It is a great outcome. Funding was made available through the Department of Fire and Emergency Services so that each of these vehicles can add to the community service that they provide should they come across someone who may be having a heart attack. Why would the member want to politicise this?

DEPARTMENT OF FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES — VOLUNTEERS

908. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Minister for Emergency Services:

I have a supplementary question. Can the minister explain why volunteers are approaching members of Parliament and saying that they are being prevented from using these life-saving defibrillators on the general public and can use them only on firefighters or bush fire brigade volunteers?

Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:

That is the very first I have ever heard of that. If the volunteers that the member is referring to are bush fire volunteers—he can tell me by way of interjection —

Mr D.T. Redman: They are saying they can use them on them but not on the general public.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Are they bush fire volunteers?

Mr D.T. Redman: They can be used only on other firefighters or bush fire volunteers, yes. That's what I said.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: I asked for an answer on that by way of interjection because, as I have said in this house numerous times, bush fire volunteers are effectively local government employees. If local governments make those determinations, and I hope they would not, there is not much we can do about it. Remember, they are their own government. I would hope that they would not be doing this. It is the first that I am aware of it —

Mr D.T. Redman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warren–Blackwood!

Mr F.M. LOGAN: It is the first I have been made aware of this as these defibrillators have been rolled out. I will follow up on the member's behalf now that he has raised the issue, but I presume—not that the member knows the answer to the question I put to him—it is from bush fire brigade volunteers.

GIBSON DESERT NATURE RESERVE — NATIVE TITLE SETTLEMENT AGREEMENT

909. **Ms J.J. SHAW to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's historic native title settlement agreement with the traditional owners of the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve. Can the minister outline to the house what this agreement means for the Aboriginal people in the Gibson Desert region, including the economic, social and cultural benefits it will deliver for Aboriginal communities in the area?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for that very good question.

In Western Australia, 75 per cent of our state is now covered by native title. We are the native title state, more than any other state in Australia. Indeed, on 28 October I was delighted, with the Minister for Environment, Stephen Dawson, to travel back out to the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve at Mina Mina springs to sign this agreement, which has been three years in the making for this government, but over 20 years in the making for the Gibson Desert people.

Under this agreement, the Gibson Desert has been renamed the Pila Nature Reserve—the traditional Aboriginal name that describes the landscape, being the flat plains of that desert region. For some, this is quite a historic agreement, because we are dealing with people who really came into contact with non-Indigenous Australians only in the 1970s. These people were moved off country when nuclear bombs were being tested in the middle of the desert. They were effectively moved around by the Australian government at the time. However, because of the operation of native title law, the creation of the Gibson Desert Nature Reserve in 1977, without consultation with traditional owners, extinguished native title. We have tried to address this clear inequity for a long time. We have created a jointly managed reserve between the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and the traditional owners.

The reserve covers approximately 18 900 square kilometres in central WA and will be the largest jointly managed reserve in Western Australia. Importantly, it will also cover a range of infrastructure upgrades as well—roads and community infrastructure at Patjarr, primarily. There will be a ranger base there, and rangers will be funded, of course, as part of the agreement.

The traditional owners have fought for a long time for this recognition. The settlement package, because we are also resolving compensation around native title, sets aside \$7.5 million to support these joint-management activities around ranger work, training and work opportunities at Patjarr mainly, but also in Warburton and some surrounding communities. That is significant. All members in this place are probably familiar with the blown glass window in the Aboriginal People's Room. That was done by the people from Pila Nature Reserve. There has been long connection between this Parliament and these traditional owners. Decisions made in the 1970s wiped out the opportunity for native title. Of course, over the last three years, the McGowan government has worked hard to try to resolve this issue. It was an emotional ceremony and an emotional agreement. It is one that I am delighted we have managed to pull together and resolve in the last three years. I want to congratulate the traditional owners of the Pila Nature Reserve.

CORONAVIRUS — INTERSTATE BORDER RESTRICTIONS

910. **Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP to the Minister for Health:**

Will a QR code check-in system, COVID marshalling and other important social distancing protocols be put in place ahead of the change to the border arrangements this weekend; and, if not, why not?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

As many members and people in the community would be aware, this weekend we shift from our hard border to our controlled border regime. I stress that this is a gradual and deliberate next step to make sure that we can continue to keep Western Australians safe, but also bring the community and the economy back together. I stress that remote Aboriginal communities will still be off limits. We will still require international arrivals to quarantine in a hotel for 14 days and be tested on day 2 and day 12. We will still require people from New South Wales and Victoria to home quarantine and be tested on day 11. We are not opening our borders this weekend; we are taking the next step as part of the journey that the Western Australian community is on to make sure that we can keep on top of COVID-19.

At the same time, we have been talking with industry about further steps we can take to make sure that we maintain those measures in place in the community to ensure that we have a good line of sight of whether this disease is occurring. That is around wastewater testing and continuing to test people who are symptomatic or as part of our DETECT Borders program. In addition, as part of that process, we understand that the contact tracing regime will be assisted by a robust system in which people will be able to register themselves when they enter a venue or go to an event. That is not related to the decisions that were made about this weekend; it is part of an ongoing process to continue to review and refine all those measures that we have in place to keep Western Australians safe.

It is an ongoing cycle of review and refinement. The QR codes is another aspect of that. The Department of Health contact tracing team is responsible for tracing potential contacts once a COVID-19 case has been identified. To support the efficient contact tracing responses, a digital register is being developed that utilises QR code scanning technology to facilitate fast and accurate recording of contact details for patrons entering venues. Obviously, this must be done in partnership with our friends in the hospitality industry and others. I thank the Minister for Racing and Gaming; Tourism for his work in ensuring that we continue to work in close contact with those in the industry—not get ahead of them, but walk with them—to implement these systems.

The solution will provide the ability for members of the public to electronically record contact details upon entry to a venue in Western Australia. The solution will enable a primary contact from a business or organisation to register for a QR location code. A member of the public will then be able to scan a QR code to electronically provide their contact details upon entering a venue. Staff at the Department of Health will be able to access this information for the purposes of contact tracing if a positive case is identified. Furthermore, the solution will be accessible through various mobile devices and provide a high level of security and, most importantly, safeguards to protect the privacy of personal information, which is the reason we must take these steps very carefully. We are in the process of finalising the providers of the coding system and continuing to work with industry to understand their needs. It is not part of this weekend's move to controlled borders, but it is another measure the McGowan government is putting in place to keep Western Australians safe.

CORONAVIRUS — INTERSTATE BORDER RESTRICTIONS

911. Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. First, with your indulgence, Mr Speaker, I would like to recognise a former member for Darling Range, Tony Simpson, in your gallery, as well as Mrs Humble and the students —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Welcome, Tony—I saw the grey hair but I did not think it could possibly be you!

Several members interjected.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I hope to get the same raucous applause for the staff and students from South Halls Head Primary School, who are also in the Speaker's gallery today.

[Applause.]

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Thank you very much.

If the QR code checking system is considered to be an important part of the ongoing journey towards our COVID-safe Western Australia, why is this system not being implemented ahead of the change to the state's border arrangements?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

It is because it has nothing to do with it. It is just another measure that is part of all of those things that we put in place. It is not part of the decision; it is another decision. I am not sure how many times we have to tell the member this. That was a feature of my answer to the initial question. This is just another example of how the member never listens to the answers before he asks a supplementary.

CORONAVIRUS — ECONOMIC RECOVERY — FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

912. Mr Y. MUBARAKAI to the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts in keeping Western Australia safe and strong by providing significant investment in the resources and infrastructure needed to support our emergency services personnel. Can the minister outline to the house how this government's investment in new appliances, new infrastructure and new resources has not only helped to improve community safety, but also supported local businesses and created more local jobs as our economy recovers from the impacts of COVID-19?

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I refer to standing order 77 on the rules on questions. There appeared to be quite a lot of hypotheticals and statements there by the member for Jandakot as part of that question.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Do members want to end question time now?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: What did I say before? When there is a point of order, there is silence. If there is another outburst like that, that will be the end of question time. That is not a point of order.

Mr Y. MUBARAKAI: Mr Speaker, can I ask that question again?

The SPEAKER: No!

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr F.M. LOGAN replied:

I thank the member for Jandakot for the terrific question that he has put to this house, and I thank him for his ongoing support for the local Jandakot Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade and the construction of the career fire station underway in Cockburn. That is one of the investments to which the member referred in his question. It is a good question because it allows us to summarise exactly what has occurred over the past three and a half years in rebuilding fire and emergency services. We have taken it from what was originally a response organisation that primarily dealt with fire, to a holistic emergency services organisation, similar to others around Australia and the world, that deals with any of the 26 hazards that are listed as threats to the community and the people of Western Australia. A great holistic organisation has been created over the past four years. Of course, to support that holistic organisation, investment is needed to allow volunteers and career firefighters to do their jobs and also to ensure their protection.

Some time ago, I laid out to the house the record investment the government has put into Marine Rescue Western Australia. Mr Speaker, as you would remember, Albany has been a beneficiary of this. Before 2017, for reasons known only to the government of the day—they were certainly not known by the then opposition—marine rescue work was not funded from the emergency services levy. It did not receive a zack. Marine rescue groups had to visit the local shopping centres with their hats out and run barbeques and conduct fundraisers. Mr Speaker, you would be aware of that occurring in Albany. The government fixed that and made sure that marine rescue, which does a great job on behalf of the people of Western Australia who go into the water, is funded from the ESL. The government made available \$19.5 million over four years. That has allowed many of the marine rescue organisations across Western Australia to have new boats and new facilities, and encouraged new investment in the boatbuilders of Western Australia in Bibra Lake, Henderson and Dongara, all of which have benefited from the \$19.5 million the government made available.

The government has provided \$8 million to completely rebuild the regional volunteer fire and rescue stations at Halls Creek, Northampton, Margaret River and Gingin. As I indicated, the Cockburn Fire Station is well under construction and should be completed by Christmas. Kensington Fire Station is well underway and it too should be completed and opened by the Treasurer before Christmas. The government has invested \$125 million in new locally made fire appliances; our fire trucks are built here in Western Australia. The \$47 million tender for the 1.4 Tanker is out now. That will be built in Collie. There is also an investment by Frontline Fire & Rescue Equipment, which is constructing a new manufacturing facility in Collie. That is well underway. That will create 17 full-time jobs in Collie in the manufacturing of the 4.4 heavy bushfire appliance and the fast attack light vehicle, which will guarantee a significant number of jobs in Collie over many years. The department invested \$13.4 million in the Koolinup Emergency Services Centre in Collie, which is the level 3 incident control facility. It is also where the high season fire fleet will be based, maintained and overhauled, and where those appliances will be applied from.

Additionally, the \$33.16 million Bushfire Centre of Excellence is being built in Nambeelup by a local contractor using local materials. The member for Murray–Wellington is well aware of that; she is grinning from ear to ear. It is the first of its kind in Australia and will lead the way in learning about bushfire mitigation and fire and science, and in providing higher level training for firefighters. The government has allocated \$2.5 million in this year's budget for the department to begin the replacement of the fire and emergency services academy. It is long overdue. That will be a significant investment into the future for the training of all firefighters, both career firefighters and other emergency services workers. It is a massive investment in training our emergency services workers in Western Australia. It could only come under a McGowan Labor government. We have completely overhauled emergency services in Western Australia and we have given them the tools to do the job.

HOMELESSNESS — GERALDTON

913. Mr I.C. BLAYNEY to the Minister for Community Services:

I refer to a young homeless family who visited my office this week, who have been unable to secure emergency accommodation in Geraldton despite my office's best efforts and the help of the minister's office. Has the government commenced identification of a site and/or planning for urgently needed crisis accommodation in Geraldton; and, if not, why not?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

I thank the member for the question. We are doing a number of things around addressing homelessness. It is not a new problem for Western Australia. One would think, listening to the questions from the other side of the house to the government, that this is a new issue that we face, but of course it is an issue that dogs many communities across Australia and the world. In any case, I understand that there are vulnerable people throughout the state. When we launched the “All Paths Lead to a Home” strategy last year, it was underpinned by some research done in Western Australia by the University of WA to understand exactly what is happening with homelessness around the state and not just with those who are street present and sometimes front of mind. It is important that we understand the cohort that we are dealing with.

People would know that our overall strategy is based around a Housing First approach, and that is to have outreach workers develop a relationship with people who are homeless. Our priority is to identify permanent housing for people who are sleeping rough. We need to understand their housing requirements, source housing for them and give them proper supports so that they can stay in the housing. All the research shows that that works incredibly well. Not a week goes by that I do not see more evidence in Western Australia that this is the correct approach or it is drawn to my attention in other jurisdictions. We announced a \$72 million homelessness package. Half of that money will go to the Housing First approach, and that will include an allocation for Geraldton. Some of those outreach workers will be based in Geraldton and will start to work with people who are experiencing homelessness, based on a Housing First approach. In fact, I was in Geraldton just last week and it has already had its connections day, which is when community sector organisations go out and start to work with people so that we can have good data and understand the cohort that we are working with. We have already appointed Ruah Community Services to be the backbone organisation for our Housing First approach. Over the coming months, Ruah will start to engage with local providers who will then do the outreach work. This is in addition to over \$90 million that the state and federal governments already spend in Western Australia to tackle homelessness. Good work is already being done and I know that those services are also operating in Geraldton. I am confident that this is the correct approach. Where we can, we continue to provide emergency accommodation. There is always more to be done in this space, whether it is in the metro area, regional centres or rural and remote areas, but I am confident that what we are doing with Housing First will provide solid outcomes for people in the long term.

HOMELESSNESS — GERALDTON**914. Mr I.C. BLAYNEY to the Minister for Community Services:**

I have a supplementary question. Under the government’s watch, Cameliers Guest House closed after three decades of providing crisis accommodation to people who find themselves in this situation. When will the minister make replacing this service a priority?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

Cameliers Guest House was not a government-run centre. We provided some funding for a small number of beds. When Cameliers was not sustainable as an organisation, it was not able to continue and it wound up. That was not a funding decision by government. It was not our call for it to be wound up; in fact, we made sure that there was still money available in the system for those crisis beds. I was just reminded of another announcement that has been made in the budget, and that is for Aboriginal short-stay accommodation in Geraldton. When I was in Broome recently, a number of people who work in the community sector told me how well the Broome short-stay accommodation is going. It is run by an Aboriginal provider and has been very successful. The money is there. The procurement is on its way to being done for Geraldton. In fact, I saw the site where the Geraldton short-stay accommodation will take place. Again, this will lay the foundation for some very good work to make sure that vulnerable people will be assisted not only in an emergency but also to have a solid, safe and secure future.

JUVENILE OFFENDING — TARGET 120**915. Mr R.R. WHITBY to the Minister for Child Protection:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government’s commitment to keeping WA safe and strong by investing in early intervention measures.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on how this government’s Target 120 program is helping to reduce offending by young people?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how the expansion of this program will further support more young people and their families?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. Members of the house might remember that Target 120 was a policy that WA Labor took to the last election. The name comes from police saying to us in opposition that if they could work proactively with about 120 families around the state, they thought they could really interrupt an unfortunately well-worn path for some of those family members, whereby people end up in the juvenile justice system and progress into the adult justice system, with bad outcomes for individuals as well as young

members of those families. It is essentially a youth justice preventive program that I have had carriage of. We allocated \$20.4 million over four years. We plan to do 11 regional and metropolitan sites and have rolled out nine of those sites. Member for Geraldton, the reason that I was in Geraldton last week was to meet some of the participants at the Geraldton site. There are starting to be some very good outcomes.

The target cohort for this program is young people between 10 and 14 years of age who have had interactions with the police but have not spent time in detention. Essentially, community youth workers go out and work with those young people, and, importantly, their families too. The youth workers engage with the families to understand some of the issues that may have led to offending in the first place. We have been working with the Geraldton site participants for under a year. There are 10 participants in the Geraldton program. Of course, there is a multiplier effect, because the youth workers end up working with siblings and parents as well. Since joining the program, 77 per cent of the Geraldton participants have not offended at all and there has been a 99 per cent decrease in offences. There are 58 active participants across the state. Of those engaged with the program, 62 per cent have had no contact with police since joining. For some of them, it has been a couple of years, so it is significant. Some of the activities include mentoring, support with housing, on-country tours and extracurricular activities like football and netball. In fact, while I was there I met some of the girls who are coming to Perth to play netball as a reward for their school attendance as part of the program.

The other important element of Target 120 is the data analytics that sit behind it, so that we can start to properly demonstrate that investment in young people will be not only good for those young people, but also money well spent. I am very proud of the work that has been done. I thank all the staff of the Department of Communities who are involved in the program and our community partners. I also know that some members on this side of the house—someone who sits alongside me, the member for Warnbro, and the member for Armadale—were involved in the policy development. I hope that we can continue to demonstrate good proactive outcomes for those young people.

FORRESTFIELD–AIRPORT LINK — GEORGE DELIU

916. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to the very disturbing case of Mr George Deliu, who had the skin stripped off his legs during a major safety incident on the Forrestfield–Airport Link. After more than a year the Minister for Transport has failed to resolve his workers' compensation situation. Will the Premier personally intervene to ensure a timely resolution to help Mr Deliu?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. Obviously, I have seen the images. I understand that the Minister for Transport has met with Mr Deliu on these matters. He is an employee of a private contractor and his case is with an insurer to that private contractor as we speak. We expect and hope that that insurer will deal with this matter appropriately and expeditiously.

FORRESTFIELD–AIRPORT LINK — GEORGE DELIU

917. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. What does the Premier say to Mr Deliu, who is now struggling to pay his medical bills because he cannot work and has not been properly compensated for an injury he received on what is now a McGowan government project 12 months on?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The workers' compensation scheme works on the basis that employers take out insurance and that the people who work for employers, if they are injured in the workplace, take up a case with that insurer. The contractor for whom Mr Deliu was working has a workers' compensation policy with an insurance company that provides that policy, and Mr Deliu's case goes to that company. If Mr Deliu has any concerns, the Minister for Industrial Relations has indicated that he should contact his office immediately. I would encourage him to do so.

The SPEAKER: That is the end of question time.

MEMBER FOR ROE — MATTER OF PRIVILEGE — CODE OF CONDUCT

Point of Order — Ruling by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) [2.51 pm]: At the conclusion of question time yesterday, the Leader of the House rose on a matter of privilege and sought my ruling as to whether the member for Roe had failed to disclose a conflict of interest. During question time yesterday, the member for Roe asked the Minister for Water whether the state government would match commonwealth funding to support farmers in water deficient areas, including 411 applications from farmers to access the on-farm emergency water infrastructure rebate scheme that the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation had processed but not paid out. In response, the Minister for Water said that the member for Roe had failed on three separate occasions to disclose to the house the fact that he—the member for Roe—was one of the farmers who had made an application under the scheme and was yet to be paid.

At 4.00 pm yesterday the member for Roe gave a personal explanation, in which he said that his intention on raising the issue of state funding for unpaid applicants under the scheme was to represent constituents, pointing to the fact that in his electorate of Roe there are 10 or 12 water deficient declared areas and that many of his constituents are in the same position that he is in.

This morning I received a letter from the member for Roe that states —

Dear Mr Speaker,

I have reviewed my personal statement and realised that I haven't really explained the mechanics of my applications to the On Farm Emergency Water Infrastructure Rebate Scheme. I thought I should provide this information to you for your consideration and for tabling in the House.

Ucarro Grazing Co is the partnership name that Andrea (my wife) and I are farm partners in and we have applied for one grant of approximately \$2500 (25% of works to clean out farm dams in 18/19) and this was acquitted and monies paid into Ucarro Grazing Co account sometime in 2019. (Invoices were attached to the application)

The other application which is one of 411 referred to in Question Time has been processed by Dept of Water but not funded at this stage by the Federal Government and involved once again cleaning of farm dams 19/20 and purchase of a trough. This is for approximately \$2500 as well, being 25% of works completed. (Invoices were attached to the application)

All applications were paper based and I have copies held at the farm in Katanning. As Primary Producers we were fully eligible to apply to this Rebate Scheme.

I will table this letter with my ruling.

I turn now to clause 3(a) of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Legislative Assembly, which provides —

A conflict of interest exists where a member participates in or makes a decision in the execution of their office knowing that it will improperly and dishonestly further the Member's private interest or another person's private interest directly or indirectly.

Clause 3(a) contemplates that a member may have a private interest. That by itself is no cause for concern. What lies at the heart of clause 3(a) is whether a member improperly and dishonestly furthers a private interest. In this regard, I accept what the member for Roe said in his personal explanation that his intention in raising the matter on repeated occasions was not to further a private interest but to represent his constituents. I have also considered clause 3(f) of the code, which provides —

A conflict of interest does not exist where the member is only affected as a member of the public or a member of a broad class.

In my view, Mr Rundle, as an applicant under the scheme, in which there are about 400 outstanding applications, forms part of a broad class within the meaning of clause 3(f) of the code of conduct. This, however, is not critical to my ruling. The main issue to me is that the member did not act improperly or dishonestly in raising these matters in the house or in budget estimates. Therefore, there is no conflict of interest as contemplated by clause 3(a) of the code of conduct.

I conclude on this point: the member for Roe in his personal explanation apologised for any perception of conflict of interest that his actions may have given rise to. His apology was contrite, heartfelt and, in the circumstances, appropriate. I do not intend to take any further action in this matter.

[See paper [3984](#).]

QUESTION ON NOTICE 6413, 6439, 6441, 6442, 6443, 6445, 6446, 6448, 6449, 6450, 6451, 6454, 6461, 6462, 6466 AND 6469

Answer Advice

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [2.56 pm]: I rise under standing order 80(2) to seek an explanation from the Minister for Police as to when I can get an answer to questions on notice 6413, 6439, 6441, 6442, 6443, 6445, 6446, 6448, 6449, 6450, 6451, 6454, 6461, 6462, 6466 and 6469?

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland — Minister for Police) [2.57 pm]: The member will get those answers very shortly.

WATER CORPORATION — UTILITY BILLS

Question on Notice 6461 — Answer Advice

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [2.58 pm]: I rise under standing order 80(2) to seek an explanation from the Minister for Water as to when I can get an answer to question 6461, which is now outstanding.

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean — Minister for Water) [2.58 pm]: The member will get an answer to that question as soon as possible.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AMENDMENT BILL 2020*Council's Amendments — Consideration in Detail*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

Mr R.R. WHITBY — by leave: I move —

That amendments 4 to 6 made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I was on clause 4 when we concluded the last debate, but I am happy to allow the three to be discussed together.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: We are dealing with those matters cognately and I am prepared to accept a question from the member for Moore.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I would have asked clause by clause, but I am happy enough as the parliamentary secretary has indicated that he is willing to discuss this and other clauses together. Can he explain the effect of these amendments? It is such a massive bill, we would like a good understanding of what has occurred, and we have plenty of time this afternoon to discuss it.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I am having trouble hearing the member for Moore because of all the other conversations.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Thank you, member, for the question. Amendments 4, 5 and 6 do not make any material change, but will allow a number of amendments to commence immediately, separately from those that require development of new regulations. It will support a phased commencement of different parts of the bill. It will allow some new definitions relating to amendments to part 4 to commence earlier than the definitions linked to the replacement of part 5. This will be done by moving the definitions to be removed into separate subclauses, which can be amended at different proclaimed dates along with the amendments that refer to them. The replacement of the licensing provisions will take place after review and amendment of the Environmental Protection Regulations 1987, which will require extensive stakeholder consultation. I hope that clarifies it.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Something I was intrigued about with this amendment and, in fact, the act itself, was the requirement to make specific references to include off-shore areas. In the existing Conservation and Land Management Act 1984, as amended in 2015, section 5 (1) states —

Where in this Act reference is made to “land to which this Act applies”, the reference is to land, or land and waters, comprising —

...

- (d) nature reserves; and
- (e) marine nature reserves; and
- (f) marine parks; and
- (fa) marine management areas

That defines land and it was already subject to joint vesting.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: We are dealing with the amendment sent back from the other place in relation to the Environmental Protection Amendment Bill, not the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill, which we will be discussing later.

Dr D.J. Honey: I am sorry; I have the wrong one.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Thank you, member. He is very keen. He had us worried there for a while!

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I move —

That amendment 7 made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr R.S. LOVE: This amendment will return the bill to its original state. Can the parliamentary secretary explain why this has occurred? I understand it was as a result of an amendment from an opposition member in the other place.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: As the member for Moore said, this was a recommendation by Hon Dr Steve Thomas to return to the previous situation. Consideration on the government side was that it was a reasonable amendment and it was agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr R.R. WHITBY — by leave: I move —

That amendments 8 to 14 made by the Council be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I move —

That amendment 15 made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr R.S. LOVE: This amendment was made by the minister in the other place. I understand another amendment was ruled out of order; it tried to insert a requirement to place a memorial on land titles affected by the declaration of an environmentally sensitive area on a land title. I understand that during the debate, it came to notice that there were about 98 000 such affections that would have to be dealt with under that proposed change of registering a memorial. I think the cost of doing that was calculated at about \$17 million, therefore that measure was ruled out. We now have a compromise position, I suppose, that I have to say is amenable to the Nationals. We spoke to the minister's office and his chief of staff, sitting there, and discussed this matter. It is a declaration of an environmentally sensitive area. That means that it will be placed into a property interest register and that will be available to persons who can purchase a property interest report, I think it is called, from Landgate.

Can the parliamentary secretary explain exactly how the affliction, if you like, of the environmentally sensitive area will be recorded and how the person will understand that there is this imposition? To what level of detail will the recording be made to give the person a good understanding of what is meant to occur? One of the problems we had with the ESA system was that people could inadvertently transgress the law by an action, but they would not know they had an environmentally sensitive area declared on their land. They were therefore being set up in a very difficult manner. Can the parliamentary secretary explain how that works? I will then ask some more questions on the notification issue, which is proposed sections 51B(2)(a) and (b), but perhaps we will talk about the interest register first.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I thank the member for the question. I want to make the point that the negotiations have been productive, and I want to thank the Nationals WA in the other place for its contribution in getting to this stage. The member is right; there was an expense involved in contacting, as the member put it, the great number of affected parties. The difficulty with that is that would have been a money bill, in effect. The compromise, with the assistance of the National Party members in the other place, has worked out quite well. As the member rightly stated, the process now is for that interest to be acknowledged, exposed and explained. I will go through the detail.

This amendment recognises the need to ensure that owners are notified and consulted prior to their property being declared an environmentally sensitive area. This amendment clarifies, through regulations, that this level of notice and consultation must occur before a new ESA is declared over a property. Proposed section 51B(3) clarifies that the notice and consultation requirements will apply to new ESAs. This will reduce duplication and unnecessary bureaucracy. A change to remove the reference to the previous notice will ensure that notification of proposed ESAs will include any currently in force. It is important that potential buyers are aware of ESAs before buying a property. In order to ensure that this occurs, ESAs will now be included in the property interest reports that are available from Landgate. That is the first step we have to understand. Proposed section 51B(4) requires information regarding ESAs to be provided to Landgate to be included in the property interest reports so that the information will be held by Landgate in those property interest reports. This will assist landowners, developers and potential purchasers to find the relevant information more easily and in a format that includes much other relevant information about the land.

The government is working with the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia to amend the standard offer and acceptance and joint form of general conditions for the sale of land to alert all purchasers to the availability of property interest reports. The Minister for Environment has committed to commencing consultation this financial year with all property owners who may potentially be affected by environmentally sensitive areas. The consultation will be undertaken to develop the regulations. There will be formal contact with some 98 000 people. It is not going to cost \$17 million, but it will cost a lot of postage stamps, I imagine. When someone looks at an offer to purchase document, the default position will be that they will be given the property interest information held by Landgate. That will give an overall indication of whether there is an ESA that will impact on a property and it will further direct the purchaser to where they can more easily seek more information about that ESA and how it affects the property.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I turn to the preceding subsections of this amendment. The minister has touched upon the requirement for the CEO to notify each owner of an area of the state of the proposed regulations. We are seeing here a transition from the previous situation in which ESAs were, if you like, created by a ministerial notice. We have spoken about the large number of 98 000 notices, each of which will now have a transitional period, I understand, and will need to be recorded under the regulations that are yet to be made. They will then be declared under those regulations. Before they can be so declared, the CEO will have to notify each owner or occupier of the proposed regulations and invite comments about the proposed regulations to be made within a period specified in the notification, and the minister must take into account any comments that are made about the proposed regulations.

When this was first discussed between the Nationals and the minister, this requirement did not extend to the existing 98 000 ESA declarations; it was for new declarations only. I thank the Nationals in the other place for moving this amendment. Proposed section 51B(3) refers to regulations proposing to declare an area of the state as an ESA. A clause in the originally drafted legislation exempted the minister from having to go through this process on those

98 000 properties. I thank the minister, the government and the advisers who have suggested that this is feasible and for agreeing to review all these 98 000 affected areas so a decision can be made on whether they are still necessary. People will understand exactly what is proposed to be put in the regulations and they will have the opportunity to object. I understand that the minister and not the department will make the final determination about whether the comments by the owner or occupier of the land will lead to the view that the land should not be registered under the regulations. I want an explanation of whether that is the case and for the minister to put on the record how this will work. I will make a declaration here: I am not an owner of a property that, to my knowledge—actually, I am! I think I may be the owner of a property that is subject to an environmentally sensitive area notice, so I make that declaration here in the context of what happened earlier in this place. I think that, with 98 000 other notices around the state, I am certainly in that broad group of affected people.

Can the minister explain what will happen if the CEO notifies me that Marbling Brook is an environmentally sensitive area and must be protected and I write back and say, “No, it’s not sensitive”? How will the process be run? If I form a different view from the minister about whether my property should be subject to an ESA notice, is there an appeal process available to me through the State Administrative Tribunal, through some process the department has set up, or through a judicial process such as the Supreme Court?

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I thank the member for the question. I want to acknowledge the fact that a lot of work has been done, and we have committed to making a lot of work for the government through that consultation process. There are a lot of property owners, but that work will be done this financial year. I guess it is an indication of Parliament in action, negotiating and getting an outcome that the member as well as the government can be happy with; it is democracy in action. That is something we can be happy about.

In response to someone who objects to an ESA on their property, the minister makes the decision. As the member pointed out earlier, the minister must take into consideration any representations made to him. That exists in a whole range of areas of government; the minister has the final say. It is not unusual. That is the usual practice. In this case, there will be the ability for disallowance in the Parliament. That option will be available. We also live in a democracy in which there is a separation of powers, so the judiciary might be another option. I confirm again that the minister will make that decision, but they will be duty bound to consider what is put to them.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The parliamentary secretary said that the minister will make the decision. Will the minister then alert the CEO about their opinion, or will the minister be the person who has to sign off on the regulations, and therefore that is the process that will cause that particular declaration not to occur? Would the backlog of 98 000 titles be disallowed in their entirety, or would it be possible to disallow the declaration of environmentally sensitive areas on a case-by-case basis?

Mr R.R. WHITBY: The Parliament will have discretion about whether the disallowance will deal with one case or all cases. That would be at the discretion of the Parliament, not the government. In terms of ESAs and where they apply and the regional issues, it will come down to a matter of further consultation and making any changes through the regulations that will exist. The government is in no mood to take issue with people. It wants to work cooperatively and consult. It will take a very moderated and intelligent approach to this. The minister will have the final say but will be duty bound to consult.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I seek some clarity. The parliamentary secretary said that the environmentally sensitive areas will be declared by regulation. Will there be a separate declaration for each area, or will there be one declaration that covers thousands of titles? That will materially affect whether the Parliament will be inclined to disallow. It may well be inclined to disallow a small area or a unique circumstance, but that is a different prospect from undoing a year’s work of the department in going through 98 000 titles.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: We are dealing with geography and the natural world. It does not look at titles. We could be looking at a significant lone extremely rare plant or a wetland area that traverses a number of boundaries. An ESA could be applied to a small part of a property or a large area. It will depend on the circumstances.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I guess that is a wait-and-see approach, in a sense. I want to touch briefly on the situation with the current notified ESAs. There are transitional clauses in the bill. We could wait to talk about that when we get to those clauses, but it would probably be just as easy—if the parliamentary secretary is so inclined—to talk now about what will happen to the administration of those ESAs and what will be the status of those ESAs in the interim before the regulations are made. Will the existing ESA notice continue after the act has been passed and assented to? Will that bring the existing declarations to an end? Will there be some sort of transitional period? As I said, we could talk about that later, because there are clauses to that effect, but it might be more convenient to talk briefly about how that will work with the notification process as well.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: The current regime around ESAs will hold until the regulations are completed. As we have discussed, there will be extensive consultation about the regulations. The current scenario will stay in effect until those regulations are made and gazetted.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I have nothing more on this part of the bill. I am sure the member for Cottesloe will have some comments to make. I want to put on the record my thanks to the minister and the advisers. Sarah McEvoy has dealt

with me on this issue over a number of years. We have not always had happy discussions. I want to place on the record how important this amendment is to the many thousands of landowners in Western Australia who I think have been duded by the old system of ESAs. I spent a lot of time with previous governments and others trying to get sensible outcomes and to get reviews of ESAs. The government has now agreed to a review of the existing ESAs, which is desperately needed, and to a more sensible approach to the declaration of new ESAs. Thank you very much.

Dr D.J. HONEY: The member for Moore has covered this quite well, but I want to burrow a bit more into the property interest report. Instead of the ESA being put on the title, which perhaps would have been a firmer way of dealing with it, this amendment is a compromise. It has been put to me that although a property interest report may include a declaration of an environmentally sensitive area, that may not always be the case. Can the parliamentary secretary clarify that for me? If someone asks for a property interest report, and an environmentally sensitive area is declared on part or all of that property, will that property interest report always inform the person that that designation exists?

Mr R.R. WHITBY: Yes, indeed. That will always be the case. The CEO must notify the agency principally assisting the minister administering the Transfer of Land Act 1893 in its administration of the declaration or amendment of an environmentally sensitive area with a view to that agency including information as to the environmentally sensitive area in information dissemination as to property interests in land. By law, that will always be the case.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

Mr R.R. WHITBY — by leave: I move —

That amendments 16 to 24 made by the Council be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendments agreed to.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: I move —

That amendment 25 made by the Council be agreed to.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I would like a brief explanation of what this amendment will do and what its effect will be, to understand how it will affect the Planning and Development Act. I guess it is just a procedural amendment to do with timing, but perhaps the parliamentary secretary can explain that.

Mr R.R. WHITBY: It is similar to the amendment we discussed earlier. We are dealing with two bills that are going through the Parliament at the same time and are overlapping. This was on the advice of the Parliamentary Counsel's Office to deal with that issue, so I think it is basically a technical matter to allow the two bills to align.

Question put and passed; the Council's amendment agreed to.

The Council acquainted accordingly.

CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2020

Second Reading

Resumed from 11 November.

MS L. METTAM (Vasse) [3.30 pm]: I rise to complete my contribution, which will be very brief, on this bill. From the outset, I once again say that we are supportive of the bill. Quite clearly and as I have already stated, some outstanding concerns have been raised that require clarification for many parts of the fishing industry. The fishing industry would like some clarification on what these proposals mean for its livelihood, its current takes and the current management of our marine parks. We have already seen some significant changes to fisheries management, and the sector is supportive of a scientific approach to fisheries management. The feedback that I have had is that the fishing industry is supportive of what the joint vesting with Aboriginal bodies would mean, but it would like some clarification on the definitions in the future management.

I take this opportunity to say that many in the sector are already bracing for the two new marine parks and what the amendment to the Reserves (Marmion Marine Park) Act 2019 will mean. A number of commercial fishers are seeking clarification on the outcome of the outstanding compensation needs and the response to the creation of the Ngari Capes Marine Park in April 2018. I appreciate that that issue is not specifically related to this bill. I raised this in the estimates process, but there is an outstanding concern about when those matters will be resolved and whether the government's approach to those matters will follow what has already been detailed and outlined in the Fishing and Related Industries Compensation (Marine Reserves) Act 1997 as it relates to compensation.

I take the opportunity to thank the advisers who provided me with a briefing on this bill at short notice when it was first introduced into the Assembly: from Minister Dawson's office, Kimberly Onton and Darren Forster; Julian Hilton from Minister Kelly's office; and Brendan Dooley, Sophie Moller and Peter Sharp from the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. They were all extremely helpful and very much forthcoming with any answers and clarifications that were required, so thanks again. I will leave my comments there and I look forward to further clarification when time permits.

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [3.34 pm]: I am pleased to stand and make some comments in support of the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 2020. I take the opportunity to congratulate the Minister for Environment for bringing this important bill before us today. This bill protects the rights of traditional owners over their land and sea country and I am incredibly proud that the minister and our government are championing it here today.

This bill reflects the importance of recognising the ancient and ancestral knowledge of land and sea across Australia by Indigenous Australians. Importantly, it provides a contemporary mechanism for traditional owners to retain rights to joint management. Committed to ensuring and protecting the engagement of traditional owners in the management of Western Australia's conservation reserves, this bill will acknowledge and protect the rights of Indigenous Australians through increased consultation and the recognition of Indigenous leadership in land management, by supporting participation in economic activities on country and the joint vesting of marine parks.

The Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 2020 delivers on the McGowan government's election commitment to enable joint vesting of marine reserves with traditional owners. Undoubtedly, some of Australia's premier tourist destinations are located right here in WA, as many of us know and enjoy them. We have beautiful destinations dotted all along the coast from Jurien Bay to Kalbarri, Ningaloo Reef, Exmouth and beyond. Whilst ensuring tourist access to camping and recreational opportunities, it is our responsibility as a state government to work with traditional owners to protect the phenomenal natural and cultural values of marine parks, marine nature reserves and marine management areas.

As I just mentioned, one of the most important amendments within this bill relates to joint vesting. In 2015, the Conservation and Land Management Act 1984 was amended to permit joint vesting of certain terrestrial reserves—that is, national parks—with the Conservation and Parks Commission and an Aboriginal body corporate. The proposed joint vesting amendment within the bill will extend this joint vesting arrangement and enable marine reserves—that is, marine parks—to be jointly vested between the Conservation and Parks Commission and an Aboriginal body corporate, in the same way as national parks, nature reserves and conservation parks. Importantly, vesting formally recognises traditional owners' interest in country by recording this relationship on the reserve title. It will also legally recognise a joint responsibility between the state, through the Conservation and Parks Commission, and traditional owners over waters or land or both. This will mean that the interests of both entities are recognised and that both parties will have shared responsibility for the future of the reserve. Current and new marine reserves will be eligible for joint vesting, and the state government will ensure that when consideration is given to the vesting of a reserve, the priority will rest with Aboriginal people on lands and waters where native title has been determined in their favour.

[Quorum formed.]

Ms C.M. ROWE: As I was saying, the current and new marine reserves will be eligible for joint vesting. As I mentioned, the priority will rest with Aboriginal people on lands and waters for which native title has been determined in their favour. I think that is a really important element of this bill that sends a really clear message that our government recognises and supports the desires of Aboriginal people to contribute and share their knowledge of the management of marine parks and marine nature reserves while simultaneously acknowledging the value that the parks and reserves have to Aboriginal cultural heritage.

In addition, the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 2020 ensures greater recognition of the rights of Aboriginal people by increasing the purpose of marine parks to include the protection and conservation of the value parks have to the cultural heritage of Aboriginal people. Currently, the reservation purposes for marine parks provided for in the Conservation and Land Management Act allow for only recreational and commercial activity that is consistent with the proper conservation of the natural environment, the protection of flora and fauna and the preservation of any feature of archaeological, historic or scientific interest. Under the bill, a fourth purpose is to be included so that the protection and conservation of the value of a marine park to the cultural heritage of Aboriginal people will be part of the reservation purposes. This means that special purpose areas can be made to ensure the protection and conservation of Aboriginal cultural heritage values, and that these values can be taken into consideration when determining what is incompatible land use. This will ensure that special purpose areas can be made when commercial and recreation activities are deemed to be incompatible with an Aboriginal customary purpose, which will further allow for the conservation and protection of Aboriginal cultural heritage. This amendment delivers on our commitment to support, protect and enhance the rights of Aboriginal people, as it will ensure that Aboriginal cultural heritage and values are taken into consideration when determining the compatibility of commercial and recreational land use.

In addition to amendments to joint vesting and compatible land use, the bill will ensure that our government leaves a lasting legacy for future generations by significantly increasing the conservation estate. I am really proud that our government is taking that seriously. The Plan for Our Parks will secure a further five million hectares of new national parks, marine parks and other conservation reserves over the coming five years. The extra five million hectares will see our state's conservation estate increase by over 20 per cent. This is incredibly significant. At a time when intrastate tourism is booming, the Plan for Our Parks will further increase and support tourism in Western Australia by providing additional opportunities for the expansion of nature-based and cultural tourism and recreational

activities. That is fantastic and something all of us in this chamber should support. The five million hectares of new national parks and marine parks is the single biggest increase in the conservation estate in Western Australia's history. Such a commitment will ensure that we protect Western Australia's unique natural environment whilst also leaving a positive environmental legacy for future generations. The new and expanded parks will enhance biodiversity conservation, including habitat for many threatened and uniquely Western Australian native animals and plants, whilst also creating more opportunities for Aboriginal joint management and on country jobs, which is incredibly important.

I am really proud to be part of a government that is committed to our environment and the rights of traditional owners to land and sea country. I commend the bill to the house.

MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley) [3.43 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution in support of the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 2020. I start by commending the member for Belmont for her excellent contribution to the debate. Her passion for both the natural environment and the rights of Aboriginal people shone through in her contribution. This bill brings together those two issues, which are very dear to my heart and to the hearts of constituents in Mount Lawley. The bill brings together the conservation of our natural environment and the protection, preservation and promotion of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Members are already aware of the strong spiritual connection of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation with the area I have the joy of representing, from Yokine in the north west of the electorate, a suburb that derives its name from the Whadjuk Noongar word for dog, down to the banks of the Swan River, or Derbarl Yerrigan, near Joel Terrace and Banks Reserve in Mt Lawley and East Perth. In fact, the suburb of Mt Lawley is known in Whadjuk Noongar as Jingiderdup. I might have mentioned previously in this chamber that that means "place of the honeyeater". It recognises the prolific number of honeyeaters that inhabited our wonderful parks and bushlands.

I have spoken previously in this place about the terrific support of our local community for our policy of creating ranger parks, and my gratitude to members of our local community who worked together to create the wonderful artwork that currently hangs in my office. It was painted by the community in support of our Create Ranger Parks policy. During a debate in 2018, I said —

... during the course of the campaign leading up to the March 2017 election, an organisation that was very active throughout Western Australia, particularly in my community of Mt Lawley, called Create Ranger Parks, put on a stall one day at Hyde Park.

I know that the Minister for Tourism and the members for Baldvis and Belmont would have seen this organisation Create Ranger Parks active in their local communities as well. My contribution continues —

An artist was helping members of the community contribute to a community-oriented work of art in order to support, encourage and promote the campaign that was being run. This giant dot painting was designed by Indigenous artist Neta Knapp and proudly completed by over 200 Mt Lawley residents in support of the campaign to create ranger parks. Create Ranger Parks is a community based initiative to create a major network of new national parks managed by Indigenous rangers for all Western Australians to enjoy.

I strongly support the work done by Create Ranger Parks. I am incredibly gratified to be part of the McGowan Labor government and to know that that policy was implemented after the election in March 2017.

I turn to the comments made by the parliamentary secretary in his second reading speech about what this legislation will do. I find myself saying this quite frequently when I stand to speak in support of legislation being introduced: this act will give effect to another election commitment! It seems so often that I stand to say, "This is another piece of legislation that gives effect to an election commitment." It is such a feature of the McGowan government that we have been able to introduce so much legislation that gives effect to all those promises we made to the people of Western Australia, because, members, we stick to our word. Before the last election we stated —

At its heart, A McGowan Labor Government will protect the rights of Traditional Owners to their land and sea Country. We will recognise rights —

I think the member for Dawesville needs a Strepils —

through improved consultation, recognition of indigenous leadership in land management, supporting participation in economic activities on Country, and the joint vesting of marine parks.

Have a drink, member. The second reading speech states —

The amendments in this bill extend the joint vesting provisions to marine parks, marine management areas and marine nature reserves.

I want to touch on marine nature reserves. I was speaking before about art and the painting commissioned by Create Ranger Parks that hangs in my electorate office in Mt Lawley. But another wonderful work of art hangs in Parliament House. It is called *The Round House* and hangs in the Aboriginal People's Gallery on the second floor. People would have seen it as they come out of the lift.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Margaret Quirk): Christopher Pease, I think, member.

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: That is the one, Madam Acting Speaker. It is *The Round House*, oil on canvas, 2017, by Christopher Pease. The notation says —

The painting is based on a work by Wallace Bickley. The etching and aquatint entitled “View of Fremantle, Western Australia (from the Canning Road)” was created in 1832 and depicted a panoramic view of Fremantle.

In the artwork by Christopher Pease —

The Wagul rises from the water like a giant sea monster ready to engulf passing ships. The foreground of the painting is overrun with white rabbits (a metaphor for the introduction of western beliefs, eroding and destroying indigenous way of life as well as the environment). On the street is a chain gang being escorted to the “Round House”, an infamous jail that was the drop off point from which indigenous people were shipped to Wadjemup (Rottnest Island).

I bring that to the attention of the house because it shows how important the connection to water is for the traditional owners. That is why this legislation and the emphasis that it places on water is important. The amendment contained in this legislation carries that forward. That is an important and worthwhile endeavour. For those reasons, the recognition that is contained in this legislation about the importance of Aboriginal culture and history is important.

The other important aspect is that it reflects the commitment of both the community of Western Australia and also my local community of Mt Lawley to our natural environment. Mt Lawley has been established for a very long time, but there are some wonderful pockets of remnant bushland in Mt Lawley and I will speak briefly about three of those. Next to the Coolbinia Primary School is a great area and there is another just behind Terry Tyzack Aquatic Centre on Alexander Drive. I share another, Inglewood Triangle, with the member for Maylands. Each of those pockets is well cared for and nurtured by local “friends of” community environment groups. I sing the praises of those groups and the members who volunteer much of their time. That is the first indication of the commitment and passion the people of Mt Lawley have to our natural environment and it is something I endorse, support and encourage. It is an intergenerational commitment.

I want to let members know about a fantastic event that the parliamentary secretary and I were lucky enough to attend on Monday night. Catrina-Luz Aniere, a constituent in the seat of Mount Lawley, is CEO of Millennium Kids, which has been running for about 25 years. That organisation is dedicated to providing the forum in which young Western Australians have an opportunity to have their say about what is important in the environment and what they would like to see happen. On Monday night, among a bunch of other things that were being done, they promoted Indigenous custodianship and stewardship of our natural environment and a citizens’ assembly to discuss tackling climate change, and they launched the Green Lab Challenge. They had a Zoom link with environmentalists in the United Kingdom and they recounted some of their incredible, terrific achievements over the past 25 years. That demonstrates that currently the people of Mt Lawley and the people of Western Australia have a fantastic commitment to protecting and preserving the environment, and that is an intergenerational commitment. Being at that Millennium Kids meeting with the parliamentary secretary, I saw firsthand just how the next generation will take up that torch and carry on that endeavour to make sure we protect and nurture our natural environment.

There is only one section of the bill I want to comment on particularly; that is, amended section 13B(1). This brings me back to the point I made earlier. This amended section includes the protection and conservation of the value of marine parks to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people. Other members have commented on this provision. This is a very important provision when regard is had to the importance of the marine environment to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people. It is imperative that this provision is incorporated in this bill and remains in this bill. Although I accept that other people have commented on that, this bill is directed precisely to the incorporation of Aboriginal heritage into our marine environment.

I am incredibly proud of all the work the McGowan government is doing to invest in our environment as part of the COVID-19 recovery. Hon Stephen Dawson, Minister for Environment, said an economic and environmental recovery package had been put together. Some \$60 million has been set aside for environmental programs, including \$25.6 million for our Plan for Our Parks initiative, which aims to create \$5 million hectares of new national parks across WA; \$3.35 million for Wellington National Park near Collie; \$8.4 million for Kalgulup Regional Park near Bunbury; \$6.7 million for Ningaloo coastal reserves; and \$13.8 million for the newly created Houtman Abrolhos Islands National Park. A \$4.7 million commitment has been made to the container deposit scheme. Members should consider the ban that will be placed on single use plastic bags and the aspirational endeavour that a re-elected McGowan government will have to significantly reduce single-use plastics over the next half decade.

As though that were not enough already, in addition to all of that, \$60.3 million will be invested by the McGowan government in the Green Jobs plan during the next three years. As this bill brings together two important issues of Aboriginal culture and heritage with protecting the natural environment, that \$60 million investment brings together protecting and preserving the natural environment with creating WA jobs which, as everyone knows, is our number one priority. The Green Jobs plan will support projects that protect our environment and create more than 1 000 conservation jobs across the state. The WA recovery plan includes also a \$10 million investment in the clean energy future fund to support clean energy projects in Western Australia in addition to the \$9.3 million

previously announced. What is great about this legislation is that when we combine all of those investments in such important endeavours as protecting the environment and creating jobs in those ways, it is clear that the Aboriginal people of Western Australia will be significant beneficiaries of that. I say that for two reasons: first, because they will have the opportunity to enhance and promote Aboriginal culture and custom. Second, they will have an opportunity to take advantage of the significant extent of Western Australia that is now the subject of native title, as the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs said during question time; that is, on the one hand preserving the culture, heritage and tradition of Aboriginal people, strengthening the Aboriginal community, and on the other hand, having access to those new jobs in the environment, the green and renewable energy sector. Members can see exactly how that works through the ranger parks and Indigenous ranger programs the government created.

This amending bill is just further evidence of the McGowan government's commitment to both creating and promoting jobs in the Aboriginal community and also protecting our environment. That commitment has been with this government from 2017 and will continue for as long as we are in office. It is a commitment that is worth remembering now, in the midst of NAIDOC Week. As we come to mark NAIDOC Week, we are reminded of the importance of Aboriginal reconciliation and we are reminded of the role we all play in recognising how we can build stronger links with the Aboriginal community. One of the ways we can do that is by putting aside the history of antipathy, antagonism and argument over custodianship of the land. That is why I am proud of this year's NAIDOC Week slogan. It is that slogan that I want to end my contribution on, by saying that it always was and it always will be Aboriginal land. I commend the minister, I commend the parliamentary secretary and I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.R. Michael**.

House adjourned at 3.58 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

WATER CORPORATION — WATERWISE TOWNS PROGRAM

6429. Mr K.M. O'Donnell to the Minister for Water; Forestry; Innovation and ICT; Science; Youth:

I refer to your press announcement of 21 September 2020, (More support to the Goldfields to help residents save money on their water bills), where you stated that the State Government paid Water Corporation \$46 million to subsidise the provision of water services to Kalgoorlie–Boulder, and I ask:

- (a) How was the amount of the subsidy determined;
- (b) What is the breakdown for the cost of services that are provided (e.g. Water, Sewerage, Connection fees etc); and
- (c) Where is the money for the subsidy derived from? Is the subsidy provided from general State revenue or is the money derived from the profit Water Corporation makes from Metropolitan water service users?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:

- (a) The \$46 million subsidy is comprised of the Country Water Pricing Subsidy and Revenue Concessions.
- (b) The Water Corporation only provides water services to Kalgoorlie–Boulder and as such, 100% of costs are for the provision of water.
- (c) The subsidy for Kalgoorlie–Boulder water services comes from the Government's Consolidated Account and Royalties for Regions.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — TRANSPORT UPGRADES — KIMBERLEY

6435. Mr I.C. Blayney 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 Minister's media release on 8 September 2020 titled 'Investment paves way to better industry access in East Kimberley' and the intended transport upgrades for the region, and I ask:

- (a) was consideration for funding given to the Kununurra Heavy Vehicle Bypass:
 - (i) if not, why not; and
- (b) was consideration for funding given to the lengthening of the East Kimberley Regional Airport runway:
 - (i) if not, why not?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

The \$18.3 million sealing of Moonamang Road was brought forward to support the Knox Plain development of Ord Stage 2 and allow for the expansion of cotton production in the East Kimberley. The project will also support aquaculture and mining projects.

Construction over the next two dry seasons will create jobs for locals and support the East Kimberley economy which has been significantly impacted by COVID-19.

The McGowan Government considers competing infrastructure priorities across the State.

We are investing a record \$27 billion in infrastructure over the next four years including more than \$7.5 billion in regional WA.

LEGAL AFFAIRS — GRAFFITI VANDALISM

6468. Mr P.A. Katsambanis to the Attorney General; Minister for Commerce:

I refer to the *Graffiti Vandalism Act 2016* and ask:

- (a) for each of the past four years how many community based orders have been issued;
- (b) for each of the past four years how many instances have the Courts imposed a clean-up order; and
- (c) for each of the past four years how many times has a banning order been issued to a serial offender preventing them from further carriage on public transport?

Mr J.R. Quigley replied:

- (a) 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017: 75
 1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018: 204
 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019: 312
 1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020: 168

- (b) 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017: 52
1 July 2017 to 30 June 2018: 66
1 July 2018 to 30 June 2019: 270
1 July 2019 to 30 June 2020: 54
- (c) Prohibition orders are provided for under section 64A of the Public Transport Authority Act 2003 (WA) and made by the CEO Transport. They are not made in a Court. The Minister for Transport has indicated that the number of cases is 0.

WATER CORPORATION — STAFF

6498. Dr D.J. Honey to the Minister for Water:

I refer to the Water Corporation, for the years 2016–2020, and ask:

- (a) Please provide a breakdown, by year, of the total number of workforce employees; and
- (b) Please provide a breakdown, by year, of the total number of full-time equivalents?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:

As found on page 28 of the Water Corporation's Annual Report:

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
(a) Total number of employees	2,654	2,758	2,746	2,819	3,429
(b) Total number of full-time equivalents (FTEs)	2,533	2,622	2,609	2,679	3,277

WATER SUPPLY — DENMARK

6507. Dr D.J. Honey to the Minister for Water:

I refer to the new pipeline to connect Denmark, via Albany, to the Lower Great Southern Town Water Supply, announced by the Minister in September 2019 as costing \$32 million for 60km of pipeline which has now been revised by the Water Corporation to being a project costing \$25 million for 43km of pipeline, and ask:

- (a) Can the Minister please provide any other breakdown in the cost reduction other than due to the reduced length of pipeline;
- (b) Will this project connect to the two Denmark town dams;
- (c) What is the current level of water restrictions being imposed on Denmark;
- (d) When will the water restrictions on Denmark be removed;
- (e) When is it expected that the Albany Town Water Supply (currently mostly from the underground reservoir) will need to be expanded to accommodate the extra supply to the Town of Denmark; and
- (f) Is this expansion expected to require a desalination plant and if so, what is the estimated costing?

Mr D.J. Kelly replied:

- (a) The reduction in the length of pipeline is the primary accountable component for the reduction in the cost.
- (b) Not directly.
- (c) The current level of water restrictions being imposed on Denmark is Stage 4. Stage 4 restrictions are in place for all towns south of, and including, Kalbarri and Kalgoorlie including the Perth metro area.
- (d) There are no plans to remove these restrictions.
- (e) The Water Corporation has a project to equip two production bores in a borefield located south west of Albany in early 2021. This project was required regardless of the connection to Denmark.
- (f) The current expansion of the source for Albany is groundwater.

