

**WEST AUSTRALIAN RIFLE ASSOCIATION**

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**HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural)** [9.51 pm]: This Queen's Birthday long weekend will mark the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the West Australian Rifle Association's Queen's Prize competition at the Swanbourne rifle range. It is expected that up to 250 contestants will come from all around Australia to participate in this prestigious affair, which will be marked by an RAAF flyover. The WARA is steeped in history; in fact, it goes back to a militia-style home guard in the 1800s. It is quite interesting to note that the very first rifle range in Western Australia was constructed using convict labour at Kings Park, just to the east of where Fraser Avenue is now, before it was moved to Karrakatta and, just over a century ago, to its current location in Swanbourne.

I had the good fortune a few months ago to be invited to the Swanbourne range for the day. It was pleasing to see about 200 contestants from six different branches. There were men and women, and even families, as well as people having a shot for the first time. It was a good community atmosphere. I had the good fortune to have a few shots while I was there and I am pleased to say that, at 600 yards, I had a fairly good score, even though the conditions were fairly windy. I have to confess that it is more to do with the science and the work that goes into setting up those rifles and the ammunition that is tuned to those rifles, so a lot of work, science and time goes into that. The disciplines include full bore, F-class, F-class open, FTR and service. I had to admire those contestants who use open sights and still have fine marksmanship out to 1 000 yards. I can barely see that far, so those guys do fairly well.

The Swanbourne range is being closed to make way for the Special Air Service Regiment's training facility, as it needs more room. The six branches of WARA will be homeless for the next 12 months, as the range will close on 16 December. But the good news is that a new facility is being built to international standards just north of Wanneroo, so the great tradition of WARA can continue and a new era in its history can start from there.