

JOBS — GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE

Motion

HON NEIL THOMSON (Mining and Pastoral) [10.03 am] — without notice: I move—

That the Legislative Council condemns the Cook government's failure to protect thousands of jobs, including those in our resources and value-adding sector, and calls on the Cook government to urgently —

- (a) address the massive uncertainty facing important value-adding sectors associated with our critical minerals and resources industry;
- (b) address the delays affecting our state's environmental decision-making processes;
- (c) stand up for Western Australia against the rapacious federal government as it imposes unworkable new laws and debilitating Canberra-based ideas that do not account for our unique circumstances;
- (d) show compassion for those workers directly affected by the shutdown of Alcoa's Kwinana refinery and the shutdowns and uncertainty in our nickel industry; and
- (e) start treating our workers in these communities, particularly those in the vital services sector, with respect.

This is a very important motion and I hope we have a considered discussion on it by all members of this place. Before I speak about the substantive impacts on our economy by the industries mentioned, and the action, or inaction, of both federal and state Labor governments, I acknowledge the workers who face uncertainty in their future, particularly those who live in the electorate of Kwinana and its surrounds. Their longstanding and high-value jobs are basically coming to an end. I refer also to contractors who provide services to the alumina refinery in Kwinana. I acknowledge those people because we as the Parliament of Western Australia are here to represent them.

I acknowledge also the communities of Kalgoorlie and Leinster and, of course, other communities in the goldfields. The nickel refinery that is based in Kalgoorlie has been in operation for over 50 years and has provided a great baseline of support for that community. Many workers in that community have lived there for a long time. They have relied on their employment with BHP's nickel refinery. They have provided many services and volunteer in a range of activities, such as sport, and are involved in cultural and community groups. There is great uncertainty as we move into the future following recent announcements, including ongoing announcements from BHP about job cuts. Great uncertainty now faces the value-added area within the resources sector in Western Australia.

It is with no pleasure that I stand to speak about the challenges faced in our economy—the structural challenges in Western Australia. I am concerned about the future of the state's value-added sector. The government seems to be in complete and utter denial. In fact, the Premier seems to be powerless to deal with these issues. As the motion states, the rapacious federal government seems to be intent on shutting down any value-adding in the Western Australian economy through its policies and the laws it has passed over the past couple of years to crush Western Australia's important and burgeoning value-added sector. This is a very important discussion.

I have a number of news articles here to refer to because I think they tell an important story and outline the facts. An article in *The Australian Financial Review* is headed "Alcoa refinery closure no surprise to WA premier".

Several members interjected.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: President, could people just listen in silence?

The article by Tom Rabe, the WA political correspondent, states —

Western Australian Premier Roger Cook has lashed out at those seeking to blame state and federal Labor government policies for contributing to the closure of Alcoa's Kwinana alumina refinery, saying its curtailment has been coming for years.

That is exhibit number 1. However, if we go back a little, the Premier tied himself in knots because he appeared to be completely powerless to deal with that. He is not actually powerless; he could be doing a lot more. He said in his contribution that it had been coming for years. In the discussion of the motion yesterday, my colleague Hon Peter Collier mentioned that this government still thinks it was elected just yesterday. It has been in government for seven years, going on eight years. The government, according to the Premier, has known about this for years. What has the government done about it? Nothing! In fact, it has actually held things up. It held up the mine management plan; it took forever to get that done. It has provided Alcoa no certainty for the provision of access to high-grade ores in forestry areas, which is absolutely necessary. In fact, it has done nothing to resolve the gas shortages, which have an impact on the refinery's ability to provide the high-value, energy-intensive processes that it relies on.

According to ABC news on 19 October 2023, the Premier said —

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Mr Cook said the company's recent advice was that operations would not cease at the Kwinana refinery, which directly employs 900 people as well as 300 contractors, south of Perth.

The Premier is contradicting himself. He knows that it has been coming for years and has done nothing about it, and in October he said that he had been advised that it will not cease. What has the Premier been doing? He has done nothing to resolve the backlog of environmental approvals. He left getting that approval through until December—the last minute. He then came out with the review that was undertaken to pretend that something had actually been going on. In fact, more environmental approval reviews are going on, but it is too late. The government has been in power for seven years but has failed to address the delays affecting the state's environmental decision-making processes to the point that these companies can no longer continue operating here. They are starting to send this vital, energy-intensive industry to plants and operations overseas. We know that this will not be good for the environment because carbon emissions in the production facilities operating overseas, outside Western Australia, will be much higher.

On 18 January, the terrible news was presented to the public. Again, I mention the workers who now face great job uncertainty. Instead of compassion, thought, care and respect for those workers, the government is constantly blaming and trying to shame the opposition when opposition members raise issues. The Premier, the Prime Minister and Madeleine King, the Minister for Resources, abjectly failed to make the changes necessary for the critical minerals sector, which is vital for the future for our transition. Things are often talked about in this place, but nothing is done to ensure that structural economic factors are in place so those industries can flourish in Western Australia, which is the jurisdiction with the best environmental record and lowest carbon emissions per tonne of production in the world. I will speak about that and about the imminent potential closure of our nickel refinery. Because of its use of brown coal in energy generation, current nickel production in Indonesia reportedly has carbon emissions in the order of 80 times more per tonne than if operations in Western Australia were maintained.

Dr David Honey, who is in the other place, outlined some very lucid and good comments about the causes of the Alcoa closure. He is not without experience. He was the global manager of residue operations for Alcoa, a production manager at Alcoa for 3.5 years and a senior manager at Alcoa's Kwinana facility for five years. This is someone who actually knows a little bit about the operations of Alcoa. Dr Honey outlined in his article that the mothballing of the Kwinana refinery by the end of the year is a major blow to downstream manufacturing. That is fact number one: it is a major blow. There is a sense of compassion and understanding coming from Dr David Honey. He states in the article —

... State Government inaction on timely approval of a new mine plan and the pending carbon tax ... will result from Federal Labor's legislated 43 per cent carbon emission target by 2030.

There is government inaction on the mine management plan; the fact that the state government is kicking the can down the road on the third-party appeal and is not dealing with it quickly is part of the problem. Dr Honey also talks about the high-paying, high-value jobs in that area—another fact. He talks about the impact of fixed costs within operations. Again, this comes from someone who has considerable technical experience. He states that refineries only make a profit on the last portion of their production. That is another fact, from someone who understands the industry. He states —

That is why the State Government's delay in approving Alcoa's mine plan was such a large negative impact on the business. Alcoa was forced to mine lower grade bauxite ore and reduce supply to Kwinana.

Again, that is another fact. This is, in fact, a fact. The article continues —

The refinery had initially shut down 20 per cent of its capacity at the plant because of gas shortages ...

That is another fact. These are facts. I could go on. There is a number of facts here, including challenges with Australian carbon credit units and the costs to businesses operating in this vital sector. That is another fact. This was all laid out in Dr Honey's article; there are at least eight or nine major, irrefutable facts here that should have been debated with a sense of decorum, respect and intellectual inquiry, but no. What did we get from an opinion piece by federal Minister for Resources Madeleine King that appeared in *The West Australian* on 19 January, titled "Madeleine King: Stick to the facts on Alcoa"? We get this crazy, almost enraged and wildly accusatory opinion piece that I felt was well beneath the office of a federal minister of the Crown.

The article states —

It is becoming increasingly common for the intellectually flaccid and for the dishonest to "speak to their own truth" ...

I will tell members what: this opinion piece is an absolute example of the intellectual flaccidity that she refers to; it is absolutely dripping with irony. She attacks Dr Honey, saying that he sees himself as an intellectual lion and that he was parachuted into his seat. The whole article is, I am sure, an embarrassment for the Prime Minister. There is no mention of the workers. We have to dig down several paragraphs before there is any sort of recognition of the blow to local families who work there. No, she writes things like, "There isn't a dog whistle they won't blow."

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There is hardly a single attempt to rebut the eight or nine facts that were very ably outlined by that expert on alumina refineries, Dr David Honey—just a lashing-out because, I believe, the federal Minister for Resources knows just how rapacious the Albanese government is and knows the sorts of things being hatched by Hon Tanya Plibersek in respect of some of the impositions and overarching duplications that are coming our way very shortly in plans to be forced on Western Australia's resources industry.

We are a resources industry state, but we are more than that. We not only dig things out of the ground, but also want to take our valuable resources and produce them into goods that will be absolutely essential to driving the energy transition across the world. Instead, we are slavishly being forced against our will by the rapacious federal government with its Canberra-based ideas and ideology that is driven by maybe three or four public servants in some dark room in some department somewhere in Canberra drafting crazy policies that do not fit the situation or the facts of Western Australia. They do not recognise the uniqueness of Western Australia and that Western Australia carries the rest of Australia with its wealth, its jobs and the opportunities that it presents for the transition to a new low-carbon economy. That is the opportunity. Our critical industries are being driven off. The nickel industry is vital for that transition. The nickel refining industry should not be just a \$5 billion industry. It should be a \$50 billion industry.

It is vital to hold the alumina industry and other industries onshore through value-adding. I know many jobs have been forced offshore through the Safeguard Mechanism. What is the government doing in relation to that? Is the Premier on the phone or the plane to the Prime Minister to say that the federal government has the opportunity to carve out nickel from the Safeguard Mechanism for a time to ensure that overall global carbon emissions are reduced? The state government has the opportunity to protect Western Australia's trade-exposed industries, but what is the Premier doing? The Premier is simply in denial. He is in complete and utter denial and seeking to blame and pillory the opposition when the opposition speaks up on behalf of workers. Then Labor rolled out Hon Madeleine King to come out with that outrageous set of comments in the paper when Dr David Honey outlined the inaction by the state Labor government in relation to the refinery in the Premier's own electorate. This is why the Liberal Party, whether under the leadership of Peter Dutton or someone else, is on the march to target those people in the next election, because these workers are in Western Australia. Those people who had to rely on the cover of the federal coalition no longer have had that cover for virtually the whole term of this state government.

We have an ideologically driven, left-leaning, extremist government in Canberra. Meanwhile, the state government does not have the guts to stand up for the people of Western Australia. Not only that; we are not showing the compassion to workers now facing the inevitable loss of their jobs. The state government is not driving those agencies and getting on and making sure that the Environmental Protection Authority is properly resourced to do its job with environmental decisions. It is not asking, seeking, lobbying and pleading with the federal government to carve out those key value-adding industries from this ideologically driven Safeguard Mechanism. All it will do is force us out of business in Western Australia. It will drive off those high-value, value-adding components of our resources sector, which is the very component that we need to be building up right now to ensure we continue into the future. This is our problem, and the government seeks to point the finger.

I want to finish on one point. I have to leave it for the experts. I refer to a comment from the chief financial officer of Alumina Limited, Galina Kraeva, about the Kwinana refinery appearing in an article by Matt McKenzie in *The West Australian* of 27 February.

[Member's time expired.]

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [10.24 am]: I stand to support this motion, and I do so with some practical experience. When we have a downturn in the resources sector, it has a phenomenally negative impact on the towns that are directly involved in that industry. As a born and bred Kalgoorlie boy, in 1975, as a year 11 student, I sat in my room, doing my homework and listening to the public meeting at the town hall at which the town was being told that they were going to close the Great Boulder mine because of the low cost of gold. That was true, and the feeling throughout Kalgoorlie at that time was extraordinarily negative. The rest is history, of course, because over the next two years, the price of gold accelerated through the roof and Kalgoorlie resurrected itself.

Hon Kate Doust: You and I both know, coming from Kal, it's boom and boost anyway.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I am aware of that. If the member wants to value-add, fine, but that does not value-add.

Kalgoorlie has always come out the other end. At the moment, I fear for Kalgoorlie. I really do. I say that as a born and bred, red-dust Kalgoorlie boy. I really despair for what is going on in that town. We have always survived; Kalgoorlie has always survived. My sister and her family are very prominent members of the Kalgoorlie community. My sister has a newsagency near the town hall, my brother-in-law is a builder up there, my nephew is a cabinet-maker, and a lot of my old school friends are up there. I hear this day in and day out.

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I go back to Kalgoorlie regularly. When I went back with the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations last year for the inquiry into the financial administration of homelessness services, I was in despair. I sat and looked at Hannan Street. About two-thirds of the shops were shut. It is absolutely awful. There is one facility there for women who are the victims of domestic violence. I really despair. I walked around and talked to people, and that feeling of optimism is evaporating from that town. One thing that was really palpable was the fact that when I got on the plane to go up there, all the other passengers were fly-in fly-out workers. That never happened. Kalgoorlie was not a FIFO town, but it is now. What is happening in Kalgoorlie as a direct result of that is there are no houses. People can try, but they cannot get a house in Kalgoorlie. That is causing massive social dislocation and problems. What bothers me is that now, the demise of the nickel industry will make things even worse in Kalgoorlie. I am hearing this over and again. This is coming from experience. I have been there; I have lived there. My family is there. My fabric is Kalgoorlie. I live and breathe the town, and I genuinely fear for what is going on.

One of the most prominent issues in Kalgoorlie at the moment is law and order. Crime is completely out of control in Kalgoorlie. Business owners, mums and dads and children themselves do not feel safe either in their businesses or their homes. That is a fact. Successive public meetings have been held with residents desperately asking the government to do something about it.

I will give a few examples to show that, again, this is based on facts. Members may say that it is a political statement, but it is not; it is based on facts. Contrary to the bleating of the Premier and the Minister for Police over the last 12 months, crime has not declined in Western Australia, particularly in the regions. The only thing that has declined is drug use, and that is because after COVID there were no drugs coming into the state. Everything else has been accelerated. What is worse is that the five-year average of domestic violence has gone up by 40 per cent over the last year. Let us have a look at how much crime has declined in regional Western Australia. In 2020, pre-COVID, there were 56 044 offences in regional Western Australia. Last year, there were 75 121 offences. That is hardly a decline. I turn to the statistics for Kalgoorlie, the place in point, for 2020 compared with 2023. There were 1 309 offences in 2020 and 2 100 last year. Members do not need statistics to confirm what is happening in Kalgoorlie. I challenge members opposite to visit Kalgoorlie and talk to people in Hannan Street; they will tell you exactly what is happening. There were 129 non-family assaults in 2020 compared with 209 last year; 29 threatening behaviour offences in 2020 compared with 49 last year; 37 dwelling burglary offences in 2020 compared with 53 last year; and 279 stealing offences in 2020 compared with 523 last year. People in Kalgoorlie feel helpless. The Premier and the Minister for Police went to Kalgoorlie with fanfare and put out a media release about a regional team, which comprised a couple of dozen police officers for a month, to say “Yes, we’ve fixed the problem.” The police officers marched up and down Hannan Street and the number of criminal offences declined, but then the government pulled those officers out. That is like putting a bandaid on a broken arm; that is not solving crime. Massive social issues exist in Kalgoorlie. That will not solve the problem. More law enforcement officers are needed in Kalgoorlie on a permanent basis.

In January, there were 12 police officer vacancies in Kalgoorlie. The police advertised to fill three of those vacancies. The reason they only advertised three positions is that there are no houses in Kalgoorlie for the police; it is the same for nurses and teachers. There is simply no accommodation. The government must address the systemic issues of accommodation and not having enough police officers to address crime. Kalgoorlie is bleeding and these issues are prominent in that wonderful town.

I was gobsmacked when earlier this week I read an opinion piece by the police minister, “Blue line of quality in police a force to be reckoned with”, in which he gives police officers wonderful accolades. I could not agree more; I have nothing but the utmost respect for our police. I love the shadow police portfolio. Getting to know police officers across the length and breadth of the state has been wonderful, but they feel helpless. Again, can I be accused of political posturing? No. In 2022, 473 police officers resigned. According to the minister, the number of resignations has slowed down, but 404 police officers resigned last year against an average of 150. That is hardly something the government should hang its hat on. After reading the final paragraph of the article, I know that the minister needs to get out more. It reads —

Little wonder the police are having no trouble attracting new recruits, with more than 4280 local and overseas applicants responding to the latest campaign.

WA is one of the best places to live in the world. The WA Police Force is keeping it that way.

Right! Let us look at those figures to see whether there is any accuracy in that. As I said, I have absolute confidence in our police force, but its members are in despair. All members opposite need to do is talk to some officers. I can tell them right now that they are talking to me. I am not talking about one or two officers—a tsunami of officers has talked to me. I regularly meet with representatives of the WA Police Union. The despair among members of our police force is palpable. Yesterday I asked how many recruits there were last year. We keep hearing that hundreds of officers are coming into the force. The answer was that there were 3 122 applicants to the force. That is great

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and commendable. I asked how many people went through the academy and became police officers. The answer was 377. That is great. One would assume that that is in addition and, if we include the average rate of attrition of 150 officers, we will still end up with an increase of 150 police officers. Wrong! I asked how many police officers resigned last year. The answer was 403. We are going backwards. Last year, 377 new officers came through the pool, but 403 resigned. Not only do we not have more police officers, but we also have fewer police officers than we did the year before, yet we were going to have 950. The problem with that, as far as the officers are concerned, is that the number of resignations is not slowing down; rather, it is increasing, because another 35 officers resigned in January this year. The minister needs a reality check. There are systemic issues within our police force that will not go away. The issue of crime is real, and it is destroying the fabric of our towns, particularly in Kalgoorlie. These issues must be addressed otherwise they will continue.

HON LOUISE KINGSTON (South West) [10.34 am]: I rise to support the motion put by Hon Neil Thomson. Firstly, I want to bring the timber industry issue to the fore again. I will not stop talking about this until we find a solution for the people who have lost their jobs in regional Western Australia. Many times, my questions have been unanswered and many times, the government has said that it is saving the forests. It has said that some of the questions I have asked are an insult to its Forest Products Commission staff. I find that a lot of the information provided is an absolute insult to the foresters and the stewards of these forests who have been in charge of them for hundreds of years. Not many industries out there can claim that.

Every time I have asked for reports to be presented on why the government has closed down the timber industry, nothing has been presented. We have presented many, many reports and a lot of information. Apart from the fact that it is an independently audited and sustainable process done through government every year, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change cites that sustainable forest management, along with sustainably produced forest products, are key solutions to fighting climate change. It does not make any sense. Had the government come out and said, “Okay, we’re going to reduce it and products will still be available for furniture manufacturing and such things”, it would have been good, but it did not. Now we do not even know how much we are going to get out of ecological thinning; we do not know what that looks like. We are now well into a new forest management plan and the government will change the Conservation and Land Management Act so that people will not be able to sell products for commercial gain, which does not make any sense. Theoretically, there could be some really good timber coming out of the forest to provide to various components of the industry. We do not even know what that will look like. That is the problem. How do we give people in business in regional areas confidence that they can invest as they change into a supposed new industry that is meant to be out there, but nobody is able to tell us what it looks like? That remains to be seen.

As is always the fallback position, and has been since I moved to Manjimup in 2001, the government says that it will just go with tourism. That would be fabulous, except that all our climbing trees are closed and nobody can tell us when they are going to reopen, why they have closed and why a solution cannot be found. A wonderful facility just opened, which the minister mentioned yesterday, with the fantastic new climbing ropes. Those people invested based on the Gloucester Tree being open, and it is not. It beggars belief that every time this happens, there is never a plan in place. The government says that we will just move to tourism, but there is no money invested in helping us to do that when it is not keeping our attractions open that are already there. That is a bit of a problem!

The redirection of royalties for regions money could have helped us over the last seven years, but we have instead seen it invested in everything but royalties for regions projects. Obviously, we are facing a change in the voting system for the upper house, and centralised decision-making will further disempower regional people. The situation in regional areas is very different from where these decisions are made. There is a lack of consultation. The government comes in and says there will be gold standard transparency. I have given some really good examples of how we cannot even see the reports that helped the government make the decision on closing the industry. That lack of transparency, consultation and understanding the real issues of people in regional areas is palpable. I ran a community resource centre, so I dealt directly with those people. When the announcement was made with no consultation and no knowledge for the industry, they were unable to find information and there was a lack of crisis counselling, something I have raised before. I still cannot believe hearing that announcement when I was driving down the freeway that day, being involved in the timber industry and not knowing anything about it, and neither did anyone else. That has been raised over and over again.

As I travel around, I talk to a lot of different people and groups. Being in small business myself and having navigated the increasing compliance and regulation, people—particularly small businesses—are overwhelmed with the difficulty of trying to keep those doors open. We talked about the cost of living being extraordinarily high, but there is a cost to running a business. We are now in competition with a global economy and are trying to look at how other countries have so much simpler and easier ways. We are trying to get our products out.

The supply chain during the COVID pandemic was an absolute nightmare. It actually benefited some of our businesses in our town, which was fabulous. They went back into manufacturing parts and could actually do it

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quite a bit cheaper. We had been importing rubbish with absolutely dreadful quality. We are very blessed to have had the prosperity that we have had for such a long time, but it comes at the cost of not understanding the people who fall through the cracks. That can be seen now with the housing crisis situation. There was a lack of investment during this time into social housing to help those less fortunate.

On one of our recent trips with Foodbank of Western Australia, we were told about the increase in demand for its services. It is hard to understand why we continue to go down this path and do not understand the situation, particularly in regional areas. I interjected yesterday to talk about centralisation, how it has caused so many problems and how we could solve them by decentralising and getting decision-making back into those areas that offer so many opportunities for people who are really struggling, particularly in the city.

We need to focus on productivity and look at what the impediments to it are. We need to talk more to the people out there who are really struggling and we need to sit down and have long conversations with them about what is not working in their lives. It is all fabulous; all those things always focus on how wonderfully everything is going. We know, from this side, from being out there and talking to people, that that is not the case. It is the case that they are not being heard by the government. They do not get a chance to put their stories forward and be heard. That is the value of having us on this side. I keep bringing that up. There are only a few of us, but by listening to us and understanding what we are saying, it is valuable to the government because it can make better decisions. It ensures that everybody is catered for and has a voice. It is very difficult doing that in a very small group.

I am really pleased that I got to start in opposition because it is a fabulous thing for me to be able to speak up loudly for the people of my electorate. It is a fabulous electorate—all the way from Albany to Mandurah—and the diversity within that south west region is incredible. I am based in Albany but I live in Manjimup and I get to go to different places and meet different people right through that area. They consistently tell me that they are frustrated and struggling to find solutions. This is probably the issue: we have taken the decision-making away from the people who are using the laws and regulations that we make. It is a centralised approach and a top-down approach—I say this often. I have always espoused for a bottom-up approach, rather than top-down—that is why we find problems. We are speaking loudly on behalf of those people to ensure that they continue to be heard and that their issues are raised over and over again until we find solutions.

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [10.44 am]: I have listened intently. What is missing from the debate so far is the contest of ideas. Let us consider each of the limbs of the motion before us today. Where is the Liberal Party's policy on value-adding for critical minerals and resources? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on approvals processes? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on industrial relations or respect in the workplace? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on diversifying our economy? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on manufacturing here in WA? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on forestry? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on social housing? Where are the Liberal Party's policies on all the matters that members opposite have raised today? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on crime? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on police numbers? Where is the Liberal Party's policy on crime in regional Western Australia? Where are they?

We do not have any policies from members opposite, but we do know, based on the events of this week, where they go looking for policy ideas. We know exactly where Hon Dr Steve Thomas went looking when he wanted a policy fix, as he described it, for Collie. Whom did he turn to? He turned to Brian Burke. When Hon Tjorn Sibma wrote back to the disgraced former Premier, what did he invite him to do? Hon Tjorn Sibma invited him to contact him about policy matters. The Liberal leader, Libby Mettam, the member for Vasse, would have us believe that Hon Tjorn Sibma invited him to contact him just about constituent matters, but if we read the email from Hon Tjorn Sibma, which, it seems to me, he spent a significant amount of time constructing, we find that he invited him to contact him to discuss electoral, legislative and policy matters.

I know that the Leader of the Liberal Party has had a shocking week this week, as her ineptitude to manage her team was laid bare for all of us to see. She spent the first two parliamentary sitting weeks of the Legislative Assembly for 2024 trying to pin something inappropriate on the Cook government, only to reveal that she did not even check with her own team to see whether they were actually following the policy that she was setting out and trying to base her whole attack on. Not only that, but also she did not check with her own people. This is the extent of the discipline that exists in that team. The Legislative Assembly finished on Thursday. On Friday, Hon Tjorn Sibma wrote back to Brian Burke saying, "Please contact me about policy ideas." Seriously, could she have had a worse week? She wants us to believe that Hon Tjorn Sibma contacted the writer of that email, the disgraced former Premier, just as a constituent. Hon Tjorn Sibma invited him to contact him about legislative and policy matters. We can see from the debate this morning that members opposite have no policy ideas, but we know where they are looking for them.

I have heard the new deputy leader, who I thought would rise today, Hon Steve Martin, comment publicly that it is too early to release policies. This time next year, we will be two weeks away from voting day. The polls will be open.

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Hon Samantha Rowe interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, about that—probably about 10 days or so.

Here is a word to the wise: members opposite need to give the people of Western Australia something to vote for. Their job in opposition is not just to try to bring us down.

Hon Neil Thomson interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I love Hon Neil Thomson's enthusiasm for doing that. He has not struck a blow yet, but he is very enthusiastic about it, so kudos to him for that. Members opposite need to do more than try to bring us down. They need to present the people of Western Australia with an alternative, and they are nowhere near doing that.

The Cook Labor government will always do what is right by WA. We have the strongest economy in the country. We have a balanced budget that will give us the capacity to address many of the challenging issues that are ahead of us. We are making things more affordable by cutting people's electricity bills and capping train and bus fares. We are delivering TAFE courses for the jobs of today and tomorrow. We are diversifying the economy. We are ensuring that we can actually build things here in Western Australia.

I want to talk a bit about the difficulties that the resources industry has been through in the last month or so amid BHP's recent decision. It is always disappointing to hear about that, but we have a range of measures in place to assist workers who are disadvantaged or displaced by those sorts of decisions. I want to talk about the nickel industry. It is a very difficult time for the nickel industry. It is not just the normal boom-and-bust cycle that the nickel industry has experienced in the past; there are serious structural issues. The Cook government made the decision to support the industry through the nickel financial assistance program—a conditional 50 per cent repayable royalty rebate scheme—which the industry has welcomed. We will continue to work closely with the companies, the Chamber of Minerals and Energy and the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies to ensure that Western Australian jobs are protected. It is important that our nickel industry is supported through the current market conditions. We welcome the federal government's announcement that it will put nickel on the critical minerals list, which will enable those companies to access billions of dollars' worth of commonwealth funding. We are of course disappointed by Alcoa's decision to curtail production at Kwinana, but we have put measures in place to assist those workers. I will talk about those measures in a minute.

What fascinates me about this motion is that the Liberal Party is trying to be critical of the government about the uncertainty facing workers, but this is the same party that does not want the federal government to do anything about the uncertainty that casual workers face. It cannot have it both ways. It either wants to do something about the uncertainty facing workers or it does not. No group of workers in our economy has more uncertainty about what they can do when they or their children are sick because casual workers do not have the certainty of provisions around their entitlements.

Hon Neil Thomson: There will be a lot more casual workers after they lose their jobs at Alcoa. It's very, very sad.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If Hon Neil Thomson is really worried about addressing the uncertainty facing workers, let us see the Liberal Party's industrial relations policies. I have seen those policies in the past, honourable member. Workplace agreements introduced by your side of politics led to a downward spiral of working conditions and wages. You led the way; you can take pride in that! Under Graham Kierath, workplace agreements were introduced into Western Australia, and they were later adopted nationally by John Howard. Do members know what happened? We heard people say, "I don't want my kid's first job to have such uncertain conditions and to be so lacking in any protection." They voted with their feet by voting for Labor. Members opposite keep talking about the uncertainty for workers. They should put their policies on the line and show Western Australia where they stand on any one of the issues identified in the limbs of the motion before us today. We have not seen one policy on any of those matters. The people of Western Australia have a right to know what the alternative government is. Some of that was revealed by Libby Mettam this week. She showed that her capacity to lead is based on having absolutely no discipline from her troops. There are not many troops for her to try to corral.

Hon Darren West: There should be none!

Hon Samantha Rowe: Maybe Basil can get more discipline out of them.

Hon Jackie Jarvis: Oh, Basil! Yes—the saviour!

Hon SUE ELLERY: I had a thought when I could not sleep on Tuesday night—I can never sleep on the Tuesday night of the first sitting week—that maybe there is some really Machiavellian twist going on and it is all about bringing Basil in from the outside.

Several members interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Maybe it is that.

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Hon Jackie Jarvis: A great plan.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Maybe it is a great plan. It was then revealed that Hon Tjorn Sibma, whom up until this point I had considered a fairly sensible, strategic thinker—that has been blown out of the window—actually responded —

Hon Peter Collier: What was the motion again?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The motion is about a bunch of things that the opposition has no policies on. That is what the motion is—a bunch of things that the opposition does not have a single policy on. The opposition wants Western Australians to vote for it, but it gives them nothing to vote for!

Hon Peter Collier: It's been seven years, and you are still obsessed. I would be a bit worried.

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are not enough of you to obsess about.

Several members interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am trying to give you political advice. God knows why I am doing it! I am trying to tell you that you have to do two things: you have to bring us down and you have to provide the alternatives.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Just settle the chamber a little bit, please. It is getting a little bit active there.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, President; I take your wise advice.

The opposition needs to do two things. It needs to bring down the government and it needs to provide an alternative.

I want to go back and talk about Kwinana and all the things the government has done to support those workers. This includes working collaboratively with Alcoa and the Rockingham Jobs and Skills Centre.

An opposition member interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: What? You do not want us to help the workers? I thought you cared about the workers.

Hon Neil Thomson: Keep the jobs in the first place. We hear words like “collaborative” here. That's about the best you can come up with.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Let us talk about the Liberal Party's description —

Hon Peter Collier: Oh, here we go!

Hon SUE ELLERY: Do you not want to hear from the member for Vasse? We know you do not want to hear from the member for Vasse because you pay no attention to her.

Hon Peter Collier: Okay; keep going.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The member for Vasse said the government's policies played a significant part in the Alcoa decision. However, Alcoa said —

... suggestions that curtailment at the Kwinana refinery was a result of government policy “overlooked commercial realities”.

Also —

“Politicisation of the matter is an unfortunate distraction at a time when the focus should be on caring for our people and others impacted.”

That is not me; that is Kwinana Alcoa saying that. Maybe the opposition should listen to what it has to say.

I want to touch on the BHP nickel mine closure as well. I indicate that the government will provide assistance to workers who need it there as well.

I want to touch on that arm of the motion on the federal government's industrial relations proposals that I have not heard any members opposite talk about yet. I make the point again that members cannot talk about supporting workers and in the same motion call out laws that provide certainty and improve conditions for workers. It is worth noting that Australia has seen the strongest jobs growth for the first year of any federal Australian government. The sky has not fallen down on the jobs market. Wages are growing at the fastest rate for a decade. But it is the case —

Hon Steve Martin: It is slightly less than inflation.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Oh! Was that the new Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party I heard? I will take your interjection.

Several members interjected.

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Hon SUE ELLERY: I want the deputy leader to talk about his policies, but he will not. He has not even stood up. Give me a social housing policy—come on! Give me one social housing policy!

Several members interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Give me one original social housing policy idea.

Hon Steve Martin: There's that obsession again.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Give me one! The deputy leader cannot because he does not have any.

Hon Peter Collier: You're nearly there.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have one minute and 40 seconds. I want to quickly talk about environmental approvals reform. The Labor Party understands better than any other party that the government has a dual responsibility to uphold the highest possible standards of environmental protection and to ensure that the economy continues to grow by ensuring job creation as well. Our economy is growing, and one of the consequences of that—the successes, if you like, of attracting major job-creating projects—is that it has put unprecedented strain on the environmental approval process. That is why the Premier announced that the government will be overhauling its environmental approval system in a move to unlock billions of dollars of investment. Under the direct oversight of the Premier, the Treasurer and the Minister for Environment, some of the key reforms that are being implemented are to allow the Minister for Environment to direct the EPA to assess a project of state significance within a specified time frame; allowing other government approval processes to run in parallel; expanding the EPA's board to include more skill-based members; and requiring the EPA to have a statement of intent. We are investing \$18 million to reduce the bottlenecks and allow for the rapid deployment of additional resources for critical approvals. This government will always do what is right by Western Australia. I look forward to hearing a policy—any policy—on the matters outlined in the motion before us from members on the other side, where it is a policy free zone.

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [10.59 am]: I would like to talk about the motion today for the next 10 minutes and focus on the rapacious federal government changes, including the right to disconnect. I will touch on this story a little and perhaps bore members by referring to my previous life as a software engineering manager for Amazon. At that time, it was the largest employer in the world, with about 500 000 employees.

Several members interjected.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I do not have much time for interjections today.

I had a full-time contract with the expectation that working overtime was basically something that people had to cop on the chin. We were not tied to a standard nine-to-five model. People were given flexibility about when they showed up to work. If people worked more effectively in the afternoon, that was fine. Some engineers who I was looking after would not crawl out of bed until after 10 o'clock and they would show up at 11 o'clock, but they would still get their work done. There was also an expectation that people were on call. As an engineering manager looking after multiple teams, I was essentially looking after business functionality or services, and those services could be very critical. When another team requested certain information, we would do some computation and provide it to that team. Running a marketplace website has potentially hundreds of thousands of these little discrete business services that need to operate and if one goes down, potentially, the whole site or part of the site could go down. On days like the Black Friday sales, that could cost the business millions of dollars per minute. It is critical that these teams operate and that people respond to those incidents. There are different models such as the follow-the-sun policy whereby as the sun shifts around the planet, teams wake up and hand over to another team while also being on call and responsible. Managers could be paged in the middle of the night. As a manager, I was on an on-call escalation rotation. Sometimes my phone would start buzzing at 3.00 am. It did not matter what day of the week it was or whether it was a Sunday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day or whatever. I had to respond to those incidents very quickly.

My concern is that the government is being too prescriptive about the relationship between employers and employees and what that could mean for the innovation of companies. It will potentially give companies pause for thought if they are looking at expanding their operations within WA. In the last few years, and certainly after the pandemic, we have seen an increase in Western Australia in the presence of large enterprise technology companies—the FANG companies, including Facebook, Amazon, Google—and Microsoft. Microsoft has about 1 000-plus employees, Google has an office here and Facebook has a few employees. I have also seen some Apple engineers running around, particularly those working in Broome. The influx of those people is fantastic. It is good for the tech sector and for innovation. It is good to have skilled workers coming to WA, but I am concerned that some of these changes to the industrial relations laws will give some companies like the FANG companies and others with a similar operating model pause for thought when looking to expand their operations in WA. I hope that the government is looking at those unintended consequences of the changes to the industrial relations laws and that members are

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echoing those concerns to their federal counterparts if it could result in stifling scalability and the ability to attract larger companies to WA.

With the last five minutes I have remaining, I would like to talk about a four-day working week, which is related to industrial relations law changes. Members have all probably seen the front page of *The West Australian* today. I remind members of an excellent op-ed penned last year by yours truly calling for —

Hon Kate Doust: Nothing like some self-promotion, my friend!

Hon WILSON TUCKER: That is right. That is why we are all here, member!

The op-ed called for a trial of a four-day working week in the public sector. If the government had listened to me at the time, we would potentially have a different headline today. Maybe it would be another cane toad, a Premier sitting on a throne or a Scrooge McDuck in the money bin, instead of the backlash the government is facing in having to negotiate with the unions. I put on the record that I am very supportive of the Community and Public Sector Union–Civil Service Association of WA’s push. Everything the union has raised about the four-day working week is completely valid. We are talking about productivity increases and health, wellness and lifestyle benefits. There are no losers when it comes to a four-day working week; it is just win–win. It is a win for the employer and a win for the employee. That is lost in translation.

Hon Kate Doust interjected.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I am sorry, member, I do not have time for interjections.

The kneejerk reaction here when talking about reducing hours for employees is that it is bad for the employer, but there have been university studies across the world and jurisdictions are trialling this, and the overwhelming evidence shows that it is a win–win—productivity across the board is increased and employees are being given the benefit of a more flexible working arrangement and the better lifestyle that comes with that.

I cast members’ minds back to a debate we had in this place last year on a motion I moved about a four-day working week and a call for a trial in the public sector. Some of the comments that were made then are very pertinent today. Hon Matthew Swinbourn, who I think was the lead speaker for the government of the time, said —

It is hard to see why it would be necessary to proceed on a four-day working week —

I think the member can probably see the benefit of the four-day working week now given today’s headline in *The West* —

given the breadth of flexible working arrangements that are already available for public servants and government officers; however, from this government’s perspective, if the unions representing those workers are advocating for that kind of thing and it forms part of their log of claims when bargaining with the government, the government will give due consideration at each of the appropriate enterprise levels and make a decision as to whether it is possible for that group of workers.

I hope the government gives due consideration to the unions, which have certainly expressed a desire in the last couple of days for a four-day working week. Hon Matthew Swinbourn went on to say —

The government’s position is that it is not opposed to a four-day working week. If unions are keen to pursue that through bargaining, the government will take that on board ...

I hope the government will take that on board. I hope the government is open to possibilities of coming to the table and following the evidence and community sentiment on adopting a four-day working week.

Hon Kate Doust was interjecting today and she was —

Hon Kate Doust: So you are taking my interjections now, are you?

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I am going to read out Hon Kate Doust’s interjection during the debate on my motion.

Hon Kate Doust: We all know interjections are unruly!

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I thank Hon Kate Doust for her interjections. I will talk about her previous interjection. This is the member’s interjection during that debate —

Member, I am just going to ask: are you sort of making some assumptions that government workers automatically want a four-day week? I mean, how do you assess the demand for this type of change?

I think the front page of *The West* has shown us that there is that demand; I think it is quite clear.

Hon Kate Doust: That was a valid question at that point, was it not?

Hon WILSON TUCKER: It was, absolutely, but I think the demand has presented itself in the fullness of time. There is certainly a lot of demand at the moment. Hon Kate Doust went on to say, “If the government is interested” —

Several members interjected.

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Hon Sue Ellery: Ignore us!

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I will just ignore members interjecting.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Dr Sally Talbot): Hon Wilson Tucker, that is really good advice that you just gave yourself. Address me.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: In the last minute, I would like to say that if the government is interested in bargaining with the unions and coming to an agreement, I have two excellent reports penned by students through a student research program who looked at trialling the four-day working week in the WA public sector. They are excellent reports. I am here to serve. I am here to help. If the government is serious about moving this forward, I can steer it in the right direction. I believe there is a wealth of evidence in other jurisdictions such as Portugal and Scotland, which are also looking at trialling this in the public sector. There is a wealth of evidence here that the government can look at. I hope that it comes to the table, reaches an agreement and ultimately implements a four-day working week within the public sector.

HON STEVE MARTIN (Agricultural) [11.09 am]: I rise to support this excellent motion from my colleague Hon Neil Thomson. I will start by referring to a few of the remarks from the Leader of the House. The Leader of the House referred to our lack of response on federal industrial relations laws, so I read the motion again slowly, just to double check. Federal industrial relations are not mentioned in the motion, but there is a line in the motion to which I am almost certain the Leader of the House referred when she talked about industrial relations laws. It calls on the Cook Labor government to —

stand up for Western Australia against the rapacious federal government as it imposes unworkable new laws ...

The Leader of the House knew what we were talking about. She clearly knew that we were talking about the industrial relations laws. That is where I will start.

Hon Sue Ellery interjected.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: It is good that the Leader of the House agrees with us on those federal industrial relations laws and that she agrees with the head of Wesfarmers, as we see in the media today. The new industrial relations laws, to be very clear, are unworkable and they do not suit Western Australia.

I will move on to this excellent motion from my colleague, Hon Neil Thomson, to talk about the broader mining sector. We heard from Hon Kate Doust that Western Australia is used to a boom-and-bust cycle. We know that. For decades the mining sector in particular, and Western Australia in general because we are so strongly linked to the mining sector, has gone through a boom-and-bust cycle. But then we heard from the Leader of the House that this is clearly not a boom-and-bust cycle for the nickel industry. Indonesia's nickel production has increased and the value of green nickel apparently does not matter. If the market can get it cheaper out of Indonesia, it will take it out of Indonesia. That is what has happened and the nickel sector here is facing a structural difference. That is the first thing I want to mention.

In our patch in the Agricultural Region, as members opposite will know, the mining sector is incredibly important. Even the wheatbelt, which was given that name for a very good reason decades ago, is a very prospective area in Western Australia. Mining exploration is going on right across the wheatbelt and the great southern from the Ravensthorpe nickel mine to the Boddington mine and all the gold mines in the Yilgarn, Katanning and Narembeen. All sorts of activity is happening in the midwest with regard to the mining of iron ore and other minerals. It is a very prospective sector and it is important to recognise the impact of changes to the mining sector. Clearly, this change in the nickel industry will have a huge impact on those workers in that sector at the moment, but what has happened at Ravensthorpe, for example, will also impact those small towns. If we are talking about boom-and-bust cycles, Ravensthorpe is the perfect example. BHP burnt \$2 billion and then it turned the lights out and walked away. A few years later it came back to run the mine, but now it is in recess again. In the towns and communities of Hopetoun, Bremer Bay, Ravensthorpe and even Esperance, which has fly-in fly-out workers, we are seeing a massive impact, so we feel for them. It is important that the government quickly does whatever it can in that sector.

Yesterday, I attended the Property Council Australia's "Vision for the State" event. Premier Roger Cook was the guest speaker with 700 of us sitting on the edge of our seats waiting for something new. Obviously, a large announcement was coming. It was to be the vision for the state. An assembled media pack from every television network and all the journos were waiting for the drop. Every one of those 700 people in the room were anticipating what Roger Cook would deliver. It was the possibility of a new ferry system on the Swan River. The lead item from the Premier's statement in front of 700 movers and shakers was new ferries on the Swan River. It was extraordinary. I wandered past Geof Parry from Seven news afterwards and I said, "Geof!" He said, "I know, mate, I know. But I have to run with it because he said it." I turned on the news last night and there it was—vision for the state; a new ferry service in Perth. The entire vision for the state, except the bit at the start when he mentioned how

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much royalties he does suck out of regional WA, was a vision for Perth. He referenced Kwinana and Rockingham over and over again—we know where he is from—but it was about Perth. It was about Metronet and the suburbs of Perth.

The reason I raise the Premier's performance yesterday is that he mentioned what this motion refers to. The mining, resource and value-added sectors rely on investment from government to set up areas around the state where value-adding can occur, particularly with renewable energy. I have lost count but I think the Premier, Hon Roger Cook, mentioned Oakajee three times in his outline for where the state would be leaping ahead in the renewable space and the value-added space. Members opposite would also know from the agriculture region what Oakajee is. It is a spectacular paddock. It is a lovely paddock. It is one of the best bits of Chapman Valley land in the state. I think—I do not know this for a fact—that somebody is still growing some lovely wheat crops and running some sheep on that paddock, because that is what Oakajee is. There is no \$400 million for the Westport program. There is no plan like there is in the suburbs of Perth for a lovely facility at Westport. It got seven million bucks a couple of years ago for a road. I do not know where the road goes to. I do not know what the road is for. At the end of that little bit of road there are no serious interconnecting roadworks happening. There are no roadworks to get in and out of Oakajee. There is no rail line to get anywhere near Oakajee. There is no water supply in the midwest that would service Oakajee. And there is no port.

Hon Darren West: There's already a port in Geraldton.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Yes, there is. That is a very good point. The honourable member has reminded me that there is a port in Geraldton; there absolutely is not in Oakajee.

Madam Acting President, how many times do you imagine the Premier mentioned the Geraldton port yesterday in his speech? He did not mention it once. The midwest will thrive and move ahead through the Oakajee facility—that lovely paddock. If that sector is going to move ahead in the next decade—or the next five years if we are talking about 2030 for some of those targets—and if the hydrogen thing is real, that paddock needs some work and it needs it in a hurry.

I am nearly out of time, but I want to touch on one leg of the motion that interested me—the unworkable new laws and debilitating Canberra-based ideas that do not account for the state's unique circumstances. It would be remiss of me if I did not mention the Western Australian live sheep trade, which is being smashed by the proposed ban coming from the Labor Party in Canberra. Unlike the nickel sector, which has been smashed in the market by cheaper nickel out of Indonesia, the live sheep trade is about to be smashed by our government. It is profitable and sustainable and it employs Western Australians. None of that matters; it is about to be shut down by federal Labor. That is a classic example of unworkable new laws and debilitating Canberra-based ideas that do not account for our unique circumstances. Western Australian sheep growers have unique circumstances and this policy from the Labor Party in Canberra will be a devastating blow for those small communities and workers in the livestock sector.

There are a couple of other matters. One of the responses given to the question of why we can do away with the livestock sector is that we can use the processing sector. The federal Labor government decided to stop Qatar flying 15 000 sheep a week out of Perth, which would have been catered for in boxed meat from WA processors in the bellies of planes. Canberra Labor said, "No. Hang on. Absolutely not!" It wants the processing sector to thrive and take the place of the live sheep trade, but it cannot be done in planes to Qatar and to markets in the Middle East—absolutely not.

There is a heap of others. The ute tax is a great idea. The three biggest selling vehicles in Australia are utes; I will not name them, but they are utes. This emissions regime will suddenly add to the price of utes. The biosecurity levy is another great idea out of Canberra that adds \$50 million to the bill for farmers. There is a heap of wonderful ideas out of Canberra!

HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan) [11.20 am]: I have only a couple of minutes. It is really good that this motion was moved as we approach the Labour Day public holiday next week. When all of us in this chamber talk about Labour Day, we should be reminded of the industrial atrocities the conservatives committed at the state and federal levels over many decades. The Leader of the House has alluded to some of them. I want to come back and talk about a couple of things.

Paragraph (c) of the motion mentions the "rapacious" government. If we look at the definition of "rapacious", it is about being predatory or greedy, but that is not the capacity in which this federal government introduced legislation that closes a number of loopholes to protect workers. I pick up on the idea of long-term casual workers being able to have permanency; I think that was a substantial and significant change that would have been a long-held desire for those of us who worked in the trade union movement. I give a tick for that one.

The idea that workers can turn off their phones or their emails and focus on their family life after work—I put a tick on that one. I am not too sure why that is so bad. The Business Council of Australia said that their employer

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bodies can deal, work and cope with this. I do not know what the negativity is about. I say to Hon Neil Thomson that if he feels, in opposition, so passionately about workers, he should join a union. I am sure that my colleagues in the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, the Australian Workers' Union or the Transport Workers' Union of Australia will consider his membership in detail.

We are talking about legislation that covers corporations in this state. The mining and resources sectors have corporate companies that are not covered by state legislation. Although the government might have a view on certain elements of it, ultimately, it is a federal decision that will be accepted and worked through for the benefit of workers.

Yes, it is an absolute tragedy that Alcoa's Kwinana site is closing. It has been open since 1963 and is almost as old as I am. Many family members and friends have worked there. I grew up in the area and have seen the significant benefits of Alcoa in the Rockingham-Kwinana area over many generations. The government is doing everything it can to work with Alcoa to enable the workers to be retrained, reskill and redeployed into other parts of the company or other workplaces. The opposition has absolutely politicised and weaponised the situation without the facts. I applaud my colleague Hon Madeleine King for drawing out and putting into place the reality of what has happened. I acknowledge Alcoa for coming out so quickly and giving David Honey a kick for not being truthful or factual about the situation.

I want to pick up on Hon Wilson Tucker's comments about his experience. In high-value, independent gig economies that have developed separately, workers do not have rights, can be sacked at any moment and do not have the legal protections that a lot of workers have and are certainly not unionised. Those arrangements might work for his sector of the industry, but they do not work for everyone else. I want to talk about what this government has done to protect retail workers on the front line. The government has responded to calls to protect frontline workers who have been coping abuse, threats and intimidation as part of their work. Retail is a very vulnerable industry with a high female quota, and the government has now announced—in response to petitions from people in the sector—that it will change the law to put in place legislative protections and penalties for people who abuse those workers. The Labor Party has a strong history of doing everything it can to protect workers. That is not the case for conservatives.

It was quite amusing to see this motion come from Hon Neil Thomson, who does not understand how industrial relations work, the duality of the systems in place and what needs to be done to protect workers. He has obviously had an epiphany in opposition. I hope it survives until he eventually gets to government.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.