

REGIONS, DELIVERY OF KEY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

**241. Mr P.D. OMODEI to the Premier:**

I refer the Premier to the Treasurer's budget speech in which he claimed that this Government is delivering key services and facilities to Western Australia's regions.

- (1) Is the Premier aware that each of the health projects the Treasurer announced in that speech is already under way, some having been announced up to 12 times?
- (2) Is the Premier aware that each education project the Treasurer announced in that speech is already under way, some having been announced up to four times?
- (3) Having failed to provide new projects for the regions, having cut regional road funding and having failed to properly staff country police stations, will the Premier now admit that his Government has abandoned regional Western Australia?

**Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:**

- (1)-(3) I just answered that question. I remind the member that this year the Government has a \$3.9 billion capital works program with an operating surplus and with a borrowing requirement that puts the Government well below the target it set. That is called good financial management. Our best estimates tell us - it is difficult to analyse it absolutely precisely - that one in every three dollars of that capital works program will be spent in rural and regional Western Australia. I repeat: one in every three of those dollars will be spent in rural and regional Western Australia. I could visit the Kimberley and see the result of the Government's investments and the commitments it made, including the Government's work with the airline industry to boost tourism. I could go to the Pilbara and talk about the significant contribution the Government has made there; the Pilbara is booming. I could go to the Gascoyne and Murchison areas. I could visit Exmouth and see the change the Government has brought about there. I could visit Geraldton and the mid west. Geraldton is booming. As a result of government support, developments are occurring in the north eastern goldfields, the eastern goldfields and north of Esperance. The south west region also is developing extremely well. That development is occurring, in part, because of the Government's regional investment fund, the capital works program and the Government's support for encouraging investment into the State. When I rise to answer a question I always say that we can never believe what the Opposition says. However, if it is true that the Government is repeating announcements about certain projects, we are doing so for the simple fact that they are such good projects, we want to keep talking about them.