

## AEROMEDICAL SERVICES

### *Government Response — Statement by Minister for Health*

**MS A. SANDERSON (Morley — Minister for Health)** [9.06 am]: In January 2020, the former Minister for Health requested that the Chief Health Officer conduct an inquiry into aeromedical services in accordance with section 228(1) of the Public Health Act 2016. This request followed a recommendation from a coronial inquest into the death of a seaman off the coast of Port Hedland that recommended an independent strategic review of the aeromedical, rotary retrieval services in Western Australia. The government has considered the recommendations and provided an initial response, which I now table, along with the report.

[See papers [1953](#) and [1954](#).]

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** Nine of the 10 overarching recommendations have been supported or supported in principle, and we have commenced work to implement these. Recommendation 10, which provides some rough estimates of potential funding needs, will require further consideration by government. We are now getting on with implementation—developing a 10-year strategic plan for aeromedical services; considering further those recommendations that require additional analysis and consultation with affected stakeholders; reviewing and revising the fixed-wing contract; and developing contemporary information systems and data to support a more coordinated and collaborative approach. I recognise the strong and enduring partnership we have with the Royal Flying Doctor Service Western Operations as our primary provider of fixed-wing aeromedical services. For over 90 years, RFDS has delivered high-quality care to communities across our state. In May last year, RFDS responded to its biggest mass casualty incident in a decade, providing urgent care for 18 of the 28 people involved in the Horizontal Falls boating accident, while managing to maintain normal operations and retrieve a further 18 patients across the state throughout the day. RFDS has not had a single severity assessment code 1 incident in the past year, despite the pressures of managing a global pandemic across the largest health jurisdiction in the world. I am confident that the recommendations from this inquiry will pave the way for a contemporary, fit-for-purpose, statewide and state-managed aeromedical service for WA through enhanced service provision and improved patient outcomes.