

STATE ECONOMY — FINAL DEMAND DATA

601. Mr M.J. FOLKARD to the Treasurer:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's prudent management of state finances, which has supported Western Australia as a strong economy.

- (1) Can the Treasurer update the house on the recent state final demand data that demonstrates the strength of the Western Australian economy?
- (2) Can the Treasurer outline what this positive result means for jobs and businesses in WA?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for that question. Most recently, we have seen further strong economic news for Western Australia. Of course, that means that with strong economic growth comes growth in the jobs market, making sure that people in WA can get a job, and the ability for the government to then support the WA community through measures addressing the cost of living. Strong economic growth is fundamentally important to the WA community and society.

The state final demand figures released last week showed that the domestic economy grew by 3.7 per cent in the last financial year, which was higher than our budget forecast of 3.25 per cent. The domestic economy has now grown by a cumulative 16.5 per cent since the onset of COVID, well above the national growth rate of 11.1 per cent. We have seen strong and continued growth in household consumption, which is very, very good given the significant interest rate issues for the community. Dwelling investment has also increased, together with business investment. Importantly, a strong factor in the strong economy has been government investment, with government investment increasing by 15.8 per cent over the last financial year. Government investment, for example, includes our record spend on infrastructure around the state on transport, Metronet, regional roads and all our other services like utilities, whether it is the Water Corporation or the electricity network. There has been a significant spend across the state.

I turn to the other side to the Liberal and National Parties, whose stewardship saw the state economy contract four years in a row, with state final demand shrinking 1.3 per cent, 2.2 per cent, 4.7 per cent and finally 7.1 per cent in 2016–17. This opposition of course opposes our infrastructure program and does not want to create jobs in the WA community. We will continue to grow jobs and opportunities for Western Australians and to support the community through measures like our cost-of-living measures in the state budget. Strong economic growth and strong financial management are key pillars of this government.