

GIANTS OF MANDURAH EXHIBITION

705. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to diversifying the WA economy through its investment in tourism and world-class events and attractions. Can the minister outline to the house what this government's success in securing the *Giants of Mandurah* exhibition by world-renowned artist Thomas Dambo means for tourism, particularly for the Peel region, and can the minister advise the house how major events like this support the local economy and local jobs?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for the question.

It was a genuine pleasure to be with the member for Murray–Wellington, along with the Premier; the Minister for Culture and the Arts, the member for Mandurah; and the member for Dawesville at the official launch of *Giants of Mandurah* from Tuesday through to Saturday last week. It was also a pleasure to have the Mayors of Mandurah and Subiaco at that event because, as people would be aware, the *Giants of Mandurah* exhibition extends from the City of Subiaco down to Mandurah.

The secret is out. The rest of the world now understands what Western Australians have known for many years—that is, how extraordinary WA is as a tourism destination. Members may have noticed that *Lonely Planet* named Western Australia one of the top 30 places in the world to visit in 2023 and one of the top five global journeys in 2023. This comes on top of *Forbes* naming Perth as one of the top 10 places to visit in 2023. These are incredible opportunities for our tourism industry, an industry that, in 2019, employed more than 100 000 people and provided \$13.5 billion worth of activity to our state's economy. It is an important part as we continue to grow rewarding jobs and diversity in our economy. Our ability to turn expectations on their head and attract people from across the world is because of attractions like the *Giants of Mandurah*.

The *Giants of Mandurah* is an Australia-first spectacular exhibition of larger than life hidden sculptures by world-renowned artist Thomas Dambo. The giants will reside in their hiding spots across the Peel region and Subiaco for at least the next year and are expected to attract a high number of visitors to the region, providing a significant boost for local accommodation, cafés, and the hospitality and tourism industries. The *Giants of Mandurah* is supported by the McGowan government through Tourism WA's regional events program; the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries; and Lotterywest, as well as the City of Subiaco and the Alcoa Foundation. It is through these creative events that the McGowan government is encouraging people to visit, explore and stay in regional WA to experience all the fantastic accommodation, dining and tourism opportunities on offer. What this represents is local jobs—quality local jobs for people to enjoy in the communities in which they live. Bringing these parts of regional Western Australia alive is an incredibly important part of our economic strategy.

I have previously mentioned the list of world-class tourism and sporting events happening here in Perth, but the list of events happening in regional WA is equally impressive. That includes the total solar eclipse, which will occur in the state's north; the Margaret River Pro in the south west; or any number of events like the 2023 UCI Mountain Bike Marathon Masters World Championships, which is happening in your electorate, member for Murray–Wellington, or Dambo's giants in the Peel. There is something for everyone in regional WA, and this is about not only continuing to stimulate visitors to get out of the metropolitan area and into regional Western Australia, but also attracting people from interstate and international tourists, who are now relying upon publications like *Lonely Planet* to guide them in a post-COVID world on how they go out and explore the world once again. They will be directed to Western Australia, our incredible tourism product, which features an amazing and safe environment, great culinary and wine experiences and incredible landscapes that inspire everyone in the world.

I strongly encourage all members to take their families to Mandurah and Subiaco to see the many attractions on offer. Once they have finished finding and climbing on the giants, they can go and poke the local member, which is equally rewarding!

Mr J.N. Carey: Who wants to poke him?

Mr R.H. COOK: He is rather spongy around the middle!

Mr M. McGowan: The pygmies of Mandurah!

Mr R.H. COOK: The pygmies of Mandurah!

This is a great tourism initiative and we very much look forward to the Western Australian public enjoying it.