

INVEST AND TRADE WA — HUB-AND-SPOKE MODEL

**887. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:**

I refer to comments published in *The West Australian* today and attributed to Western Australia's Agent General in London, Mr John Langoulant, and the Investment and Trade Commissioner for North East Asia region, Ms Nicole Fasana, who were summarised in the article, in part, as saying —

... the State has little to no profile in some of its top export markets ...

- (1) Is this assessment from such senior public servants proof that the changes the Premier's government made to our overseas trade representation, including the introduction of the so-called hub-and-spoke model for our trade officials, are a failure?
- (2) Does this assessment indicate that the Premier's overseas trade trips are doing little to improve our reputation and presence in important overseas markets?

**The SPEAKER:** Order please, members! Premier.

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

- (1)–(2) The member for Cottesloe continually revisits the whole issue of our overseas trade offices. I wonder whether he identifies with some of his former upper house colleagues who themselves were pretty fond of our overseas trade offices and visiting them! I remember one of them saying that they had a particularly arduous journey and needed some information on where to find a massage. We know what that massage was about.

Invest and Trade WA's overseas trade offices are one of our great success stories. They are doing an extraordinary job.

**Dr D.J. Honey:** But they have little to no profile.

**The SPEAKER:** Order please, members! Member for Cottesloe, you have asked your question. If you would like the opportunity for a supplementary, I suggest that we listen to the Premier's answer.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** On the contrary, our Invest and Trade WA offices are significantly lifting the profile of Western Australia right throughout our priority markets. I was in Tokyo recently. As a result of that visit, we had over 60 articles in Tokyo media alone, which was down to the great work of our Investment and Trade Commissioner for North East Asia, Nicole Fasana. As our trade commissioner in Tokyo working out of the hub, she has people deployed in Manila in the Philippines and Seoul in South Korea. She is making sure that we have people out there all the time, looking for those investment and trade opportunities, and they are being inundated with inquiries from right across the industry sectors that we are looking to engage with. In fact, this year alone, we have had more inbound delegations than ever before. These are inbound delegations of business and political interests coming to Western Australia to find out what great opportunities we have had.

A visit to the Chennai office, which I opened last year, will give members a sense of the excitement that is out there in our priority Indian markets. Tamil Nadu is absolutely engaged with the opportunities that exist there. Of course, our Agent General in London is responsible for our Middle East, Israeli, United Kingdom and European markets. That too is going flat out. The Agent General is now in the process of opening up our new office in Frankfurt. In addition, our Association of South-East Asian Nations offices continue to grow exponentially. We have recently opened an office in Vietnam. We have opened an office in Kuala Lumpur.

We continue to look at our network continuing to expand. We are opening an office in Austin in America. That is the first time that we have had a physical presence in that market. Members can see that we are generating a significant amount of economic and investment activity, the whole time inspiring and pushing along our trade.

Just a visit to our Singapore office will tell members how excited the Singaporean markets are, particularly around our agrifoods and the work that we can do there to significantly grow the imports into their hospitality industry, particularly their fine-dining restaurant industry. The opportunities out there are immense. Our Invest and Trade WA is now being heralded as one of the most effective invest and trade networks in the country, and we are very proud of its work. It is doing an incredible job to continue to grow our profile in our priority markets.