

**ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE**

*Sixth Report — Annual report 2022–2023 — Tabling*

**MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee)** [10.27 am]: I present for tabling the sixth report of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee titled *Annual report 2022–2023*.

[See paper [2449](#).]

**Mr P.C. TINLEY:** In tabling the Economics and Industry Standing Committee’s annual report, it is worthy to talk about it in the broader scope of where it fits in the continuum of inquiries and activities of the committee. One of the privileges of being involved in a committee for four years from the outset is that we have been able to develop a series of themes. It might not appear from report after report of different inquiries that there is connectivity between these reports, but, indeed, there is—not deliberative from the start, but one that builds on previous reports.

This reporting period concerns two inquiries, one that is on foot at the moment and one that looked into Western Australia’s trade relationship with Indonesia. The decision to look at how we are trading with our closest neighbour and possible future opportunities came from a previous report that looked into the intergenerational opportunity for Western Australians through economic diversification. We looked carefully at the resources sector and talked about the change in the resource sector going from what we all know as an extraction state, if you like, in which we mine and directly ship Western Australian resources through to a production state in which we take on more diversified manufacturing roles and downstream processing, particularly of minerals. That naturally led us to understand that if we want to diversify our economy, we need to diversify our markets. That obviously took us to the Indonesian inquiry, because Indonesia is our closest and largest neighbour and it could provide the greatest single opportunity for the intergenerational transfer of opportunity. There are 243 million people in the largest archipelagic nation in the world, and, in our lifetime, it will become the world’s fourth largest economy, squeezing us out of the G20 on the way. It was a fitting opportunity to do that. As a result of that, we looked at the energy requirements for a diversified economy. That naturally brought us to the gas inquiry, which at the moment is looking at the effectiveness of the domestic gas policy introduced in 2006 to reserve 15 per cent of any given reserve within state jurisdiction for the benefit of the state. For a diversified economy moving from an extraction basis to a production basis, we knew that energy would be a fundamental challenge and need.

Of course, dovetailing into that is the government’s laudable objective of phasing out coal-fired power generation by 2030 and moving to a net zero economy as fast as possible. As I said, those two inquiries are part of a contiguous body of work that builds to give those who choose to dip into them the opportunity to, if nothing else, aggregate the available knowledge into one repository and report. Indeed, they can go a bit further to actually make analysis and/or recommendations about particular findings that would be of benefit to the state. The objective of the committee from the outset, and certainly my ambition as the chair, was to make sure that we are contributors to the state of Western Australia and are enlargers and builders of what we want for our children. We assiduously avoided controversy or hot topics for the simple reason that we think the long-term in-depth work that we do in this committee is actually a better and more enduring contribution to opportunities for Western Australia.

Of course, no committee does not undertake some changes through any particular term. We have had some changes. I would like to acknowledge the newly minted member for North West Central, Merome Beard, as the deputy chair. She came onto the committee in October and went straight off the tools into the Parliament and into the role of deputy chair of the committee. That is a challenge by any stretch of the imagination. She has risen to it and enjoyed the opportunity. Of course, she took over from Mr Vince Catania when he left the committee on 8 August. Fellow committee members have also been fundamentally important to producing alternate views if you like from time to time as we undertake day-by-day questioning in our inquiry—none less than Mr David Scaife, the member for Cockburn. He brings his lawyer’s brain and inquisitive nature with him, sometimes along with his raspy disposition.

We are also ably supported from the northern suburbs by Emily Hamilton, the member for Joondalup, and, of course, the redoubtable Ms Ali Kent, the member for Kalgoorlie, who brings a particular lens to this regarding her role in the seat of Kalgoorlie and her responsibilities in representing what is now shifting over many years in the goldfields to be of an equal, if not greater, importance than the Pilbara! It has moved on to a significant downstream processing opportunity around critical minerals. Of course, we said goodbye to Dr Jags Krishnan, the member for Riverton, around February of this year. I thank him very much for his service as he has stepped up into the executive as a parliamentary secretary.

None of this work can go on without the staff. This is the only committee that I have been on in my 14 years of being in Parliament. Of course, the principal research officer is Vanessa Beckingham. She has been brilliant. She is very supportive and quietly goes about the diligent and intelligent methodology of her duties. In large part, she was offset by Dr Alessandro Silvestri who was a real livewire character who brought a different way of thinking to the committee and always pushed the envelope of “what if?” That is a fundamentally important part of what any committee or inquiry should do. He left the committee for bigger and better things in June. We very much welcome

Franchesca Walker, who came on in June this year. She herself has a very inquisitive mind and intuitive sense of how the evidence flows and plays. She has fundamentally helped the committee achieve the objectives that it has.

I tabled the report for the purpose of understanding the types of activities we get under. I gave some explanation about where the work of the committee fits into the continuum of this Parliament and the ambitions of its themes. I commend it to the house.