

**ESPERANCE BAY TURF CLUB**

*Statement by Member for Roe*

**MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.53 pm]: I would like to acknowledge the Esperance Bay Turf Club, whose members and volunteers work tirelessly to present a thrilling season of racing, including the Esperance Cup Day meeting on 3 March. My colleague Colin de Grussa and I were the joint sponsors of the first race on the card, and our congratulations go to the connections of the winner, Profit Rocket. The feature race on the card was the 2 000-metre Freight Lines Group Esperance Cup, won in handsome style by Manavendra.

Congratulations go to those behind the horses who step out onto the track and to those behind the scenes who make the racing season possible. The Esperance Bay Turf Club president, Ken Norton, is one of the committed locals who work hard to ensure the race round's success. Supported by vice-presidents Rob Gilbert and Josh Brown, he leads a committee that includes Kevin Scott, Jo Offen, Chelsi Forder, Greg Hunt, Robyn Hill, Alan Jones, Mick Creedon, Ian Scott, Sheila Oorschot and Sascha Bozanich. Along with the stewards, clerks, clerk of scales, timekeeper, judges, starter, medical and veterinary teams, and volunteers, this team ensures that races continue to be a feature of Esperance's summer season. Racing and Wagering Western Australia's CEO, Ian Edwards, has stated that the goldfields–Esperance area generates \$54.3 million of the \$1.3 billion the racing industry contributes to the state's economy each year. It also underpins 430 full-time jobs, but what it contributes is far more than what is measured in monetary terms.

The Esperance Bay Turf Club members and volunteers are not only working hard to keep an industry afloat, but also playing a vital role in strengthening the social fabric of the Esperance community. The races bring people together and bolster the sense of community that is so essential in the regions. For that, they deserve our thanks and gratitude.