

**COAL INDUSTRY SUPERANNUATION AMENDMENT BILL 2013**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston)** [3.13 pm]: Due to the end of the session, I do not have a great deal more to add, other than to say that we welcome the bill into the house.

**MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Minister for Mines and Petroleum)** [3.13 pm] — in reply: I thank members opposite—the members for Cannington and Collie–Preston—for supporting this bill. I will go through the comments made by each member. The member for Cannington covered the bill quite well. He has a very good insight into the reason why we have brought this bill before the house. There is some urgency with this bill because of the need to protect the assets of the coalminers. I thank and acknowledge the opposition for supporting the bill. Opposition members were very well briefed by my advisors, including Frank Sciarrone, who is the chairman of the Coal Industry Superannuation Fund, and Neil Van Drunen from my office. The board itself needs to be congratulated because it is not often that a board recommends its own demise. It is a credit to the board that it recognises the importance of its role as trustee of the miners' funds. It recognised that the Coal Industry Superannuation Fund —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Abetz):** Members, can you keep the tone of your voices down if you are having conversations; otherwise move outside, please.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

It is an important bill and a lot of money is involved. According to the fund's latest annual report, the figure is \$183 million. I might point out that the Auditor General undertook an assessment and made no comment; there was not even a management letter. The board and the trustees have done an outstanding job of looking after those assets. In fact, there was a jump of about \$23 million in the value of the assets, bringing the total to \$183 million at the end of the last financial year, so the board should be given credit for doing that. I note that the chairman is in the gallery. I acknowledge his contribution, as well as, obviously, the contribution of all the staff who work there.

The bill is a step bill, such that it can be a staged, properly coordinated process of transferring the funds to an appropriate commonwealth fund that will keep the defined benefits scheme, of which the member for Cannington spoke highly. We all agreed that it was a beneficial scheme for people who are lucky enough to be in a defined benefits scheme. Those funds will transfer across. The trustees—the current board—will make sure that happens. The amendment bill is designed so that that can take place. Once the whole process is completed, the board can basically be dissolved. The Coal Industry Superannuation Act 1989 will be looked at in, I understand, three or five years, and then we can dissolve the whole act. I congratulate everyone involved. The member for Cannington also raised the fact that the two full-time employees will be protected in the changeover and that there will be representation from Western Australia in some form in any new fund that is set up.

The member for Collie–Preston told some very good stories about life on the mines. I cannot talk about some of the stories that he raised, but I had also heard those stories. I do not know how true they are—there must be some truth in them. As a person who grew up in Bunbury, I know that in the 1960s a lot of people were quite jealous of those who had a job in the mines. It was a well sought after job. I know that the conditions were not all that great. Nevertheless, people were envious of the seven hours a day that the miners worked in the 1960s. In Bunbury we heard stories—they may not be true—that the seven hours included a good half an hour, or longer, for people to have a shower afterwards to clean up before they went home. Most of the miners drove better cars than some of the workers in Bunbury.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** There's a bit of truth in that.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** There is also some truth in the member's other comments about the longevity of people when they left the industry. It probably went across all industries, but in the mining industry to a greater extent; that is, life expectancy was not that great. That is perhaps a reflection on the conditions at the time. I know that they would have been as good as people could probably get at the time, but the member made the point, which I was never aware of—as the member said, it may not be a medical fact—about the nitrous oxide from the explosives and the shot firing that was done underground, which is an interesting concept. That basically suggests that there may have been some addiction to that and that losing that may have had some bearing on when they left the industry. I was also fascinated by the member's story—he was obviously in the fitting game—about the suggestion that sometimes things might go wrong, so the miners had to leave early and they left the fitters with the job of fixing those things. I have a similar story from when I was a fitter's offsider working on the Bunbury power station, which, of course, used Collie coal. I was always envious of the riggers. They would set up a job. We had to undo all these massive nuts and bolts. After we had done that, they would just bring in their

crane and lift something off. They waited there for a couple of hours while we did that work. After they lifted the cover off, they watched us clean it out. When it was time to put the cover back on, they used the crane to do that. Then they watched us do up all the bolts, and then we went home. It is interesting how times change. The fitters did all the hard work; I totally agree with the member for Collie–Preston.

With that, I commend the Coal Industry Superannuation Amendment Bill 2013 to the house. I think it will be very good for miners, and I think credit is due to the board and trustees for how well they have managed it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Mr W.R. Marmion (Minister for Mines and Petroleum)** and transmitted to the Council.