

***PERTH CASINO ROYAL COMMISSION: FINAL REPORT***

*Government Response — Statement by Minister for Racing and Gaming*

**MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Racing and Gaming)** [9.09 am]: I rise to table the McGowan government's response to the *Perth Casino Royal Commission: Final report*. Twelve months ago, my ministerial colleague and then Minister for Racing and Gaming, Hon Dr Tony Buti, tabled the *Perth Casino Royal Commission: Final report* and began the process of implementing the recommendations. I would like to thank the minister for his work.

Members will recall the royal commission found that the casino licensee and the associated Crown entities were not fit to hold the casino licence or be associated with casino gaming operations. Of the PCRC's 59 recommendations, 49 are supported, eight are supported in principle, and one is supported in part. One recommendation does not require a government position, because it is relevant only if the ban on poker machines is lifted. I can assure the house in a very clear way that under the McGowan government, poker machines will not be allowed in Western Australia and electronic gaming machines will not be allowed outside of the Perth casino. These bans will not be weakened under this government.

The government has taken immediate action and is implementing major reforms to address the PCRC recommendations. Importantly, we have strengthened the governance and effectiveness of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. Mr Paul Steel has been appointed as the independent monitor. He and his office will oversee the remediation of the Crown casino. Mr Steel was previously an assistant commissioner with the Western Australia Police Force. He brings decades of experience in organised crime investigation, organisational transformation and senior leadership to this important role.

The maximum fine that can be issued under the Casino Control Act 1984 has been increased to \$100 million. The maximum fine for noncompliance issued by the Gaming and Wagering Commission has been increased to \$250 000. When it comes to strengthening the regulatory framework, six new members and an independent chair have been appointed to the Gaming and Wagering Commission, who bring relevant skills, experience and governance expertise to their positions. The commission and the department are working with the Australian Transaction Reports and Analysis Centre to strengthen anti-money laundering and counterterrorism financing measures. Great strides have been made in reforming the management and regulation of the Crown casino.

Although work still needs to be done to embed these improvements and ensure effective risk mitigations, the government strongly supports the cultural and structural change required to ensure stability and accountability. I want to assure the house that the government is committed to restoring the community's confidence that the state's only casino is managed in a responsible way, and provides a safe, well-regulated environment for patrons and the 5 000 people who work there. I now table the government response to the *Perth Casino Royal Commission: Final report*.

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