

PYEONGCHANG WINTER GAMES OLYMPIANS AND PARALYMPIANS

Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [12.07 pm]: I rise to acknowledge the Western Australian competitors from the 2018 PyeongChang Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, four out of five of whom are seated in the gallery. We have Shaun Pianta, here from Collie, who lost his vision from a Bali superbug. Shaun is one of the best para-alpine skiers in the world, and is certainly another in a long line of fantastic athletes from Collie. With a couple of broken legs along the way, it shows they are made pretty tough in Collie. We have Lucas Mata, from Perth, a former state level sprinter who has now made his name competing in the bobsleigh event. Lucas has taken a day off work as a physical education teacher to be here today, for which we are very grateful. We have Sean Pollard, a para-snowboarder who became a double-limb amputee after a shark attack while surfing. He was determined to keep an active lifestyle and is already a Paralympic athlete after first competing in the sport only in 2015. We also have David Mari, who formed a dynamic bobsleigh duo with Lucas. He started as a gymnast, was then a basketballer, and then a sprinter when he met Lucas and began his journey to the Olympics. He is a transformative athlete who embodies True Sport values. Jessica Yeaton, a Perth-raised cross-country skier, was unable to make it here today as her training base is somewhere with a little bit more snow than Perth.

It is an incredible privilege to have the opportunity to meet with these incredible athletes and thank them for representing both our state and our nation. I would like to acknowledge the years of hard work involved in making it to the Olympics—the pinnacle of competition in sport—and the determination and commitment shown by these athletes, and their support networks, family, coaches and friends. On behalf of the Western Australian government, I thank you for doing our state proud and congratulations again on your remarkable achievements.

[Applause.]