

BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY

818. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Premier:

I, too, welcome the Premier back into the fold. I refer to the rolling collapse of our state's construction industry, leaving families without homes and pushing businesses to fold with three building firms closing just last week. I also refer to the home builders action group established to advocate for the industry.

- (1) Since meeting with the group, has the government considered the five-point action plan, including the proposal for a low-interest loan scheme?
- (2) If so, how has the Premier responded?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. We know that the whole housing sector itself, particularly construction, is under pressure at the moment. That is something we see occurring right across the country. We also have our challenges in Western Australia, which is the reason the Minister for Housing has been working so strongly with the housing sector to make sure they have the supports they need so they can continue to provide the supply of housing that we need. The Minister for Housing said today that 1 500 people are coming to Western Australia every week—1 500 people who decide to make Western Australia their home. That not only puts a challenge on the people who live in the state to access housing, it also puts pressure on as a result of the ongoing growth of our population, which is a function of our thriving economy. We know that the housing industry is under pressure at the moment. I meet with them regularly, particularly the Housing Industry Association, to discuss with them the sorts of challenges they are facing, but also to make sure that we understand what they see as their solutions around this.

Recently, the Minister for Housing and I, along with the Deputy Premier and Treasurer, the Minister for Commerce and the Minister for Training, met with the housing industry as part of a roundtable to continue the conversation about what we need in place to support it. We had representatives from right across government as part of that conversation to ensure that all levels of government heard from the housing industry about what it needs and the opportunities and the challenges that it faces. One thing it pointed to as one of the best things to do is to have planning law reform in Western Australia, which the Minister for Housing; Planning has been spearheading. That is nation-leading and will lead to shorter lead times in construction and better opportunities to grow housing stock. We will continue to meet with the housing industry to understand these issues. We will continue to work with it and support it, as we have done in the past. We will make sure that we overcome these challenges and come through them with renewed optimism and opportunity around growing our housing supply.