Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT

FIRST SESSION

2025

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 18 September 2025

Legislative Council

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The President (Hon Alanna Clohesy) took the chair at 10:00 am, read prayers and acknowledged country.

MOTIONS ON NOTICE—ALLOCATED DATES

Statement

The President (Hon Alanna Clohesy) (10:02 am): Members, I have received some correspondence about the exchange of allocated dates for motions on notice. It states:

> I advise that, pursuant to Standing Order 66(9)(b), I have been notified in writing of an agreement between the Party Leaders of Greens (WA) and the Liberal Party to exchange their parties' allocated dates for Motions on Notice.
>
> I advise that the new allocated dates for these parties are:
>
> Liberal Perth Wednesday 15 October 2025
>
> Greens (WA) Wednesday 22 October 2025.
>
> I enclose an updated *Annual Schedule of Allocation of Notices of Motions* for tabling in the House.

It is signed by the Clerk of the Legislative Council.

SURROGACY LAWS

Petition

Hon Michelle Hofmann (10:03 am): I present an e-petition containing 1,262 signatures couched in the following terms:

> To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. We the undersigned …
>
> 1. Believe that as global citizens, any changes to surrogacy laws must take into account the implications and ethical considerations not only in Western Australia but also across Australia and overseas. 2. Have grave concerns about the potential for exploitation of women and the risk of harm to both women and children in surrogacy. 3. Understand that the Australian Law Reform Commission is currently reviewing surrogacy laws in Australia. 4. Call on the Legislative Council to defer any consideration of changes to Western Australia's surrogacy laws until the Australian Law Reform Commission has completed its review on surrogacy.
>
> And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

(See paper 595.)

HOMELESSNESS SERVICES—FUNDING—REPORT 88

Ministerial statement

Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for Homelessness) (10:04 am): I rise to table a copy of the progress update on the implementation of recommendations from the 88th report, *Funding of homelessness services in Western Australia*—otherwise known as the progress report. On 25 June 2025, Hon Tim Clifford MLC successfully moved a motion in this place seeking a report on the progress of implementing the recommendations of the committee's 88th report. I am pleased to be able to table this progress report today in compliance with the requirements of the motion.

The 88th report was released in 2023. It made 57 recommendations for response across the state government. At that time, the Western Australian Government tabled its response to the 88th report in this Parliament, with 18 recommendations being supported, 30 recommendations being supported in principle, six recommendations being noted and three recommendations being not supported. Significant work has been undertaken to implement initiatives that support individuals and families experiencing or at risk of homelessness. As we know, homelessness is a complex issue and people experiencing or at risk of homelessness often engage with multiple government departments and services.

The progress report provides updates on projects and programs across the various ministerial portfolios and state government agencies that intersect with homelessness. The progress and achievements being showcased in the progress report are in the context of the implementation of recommendations from the 88th report, as well as the delivery of *All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030* and the strategy's first five-year action plan for 2020 to 2025. The release of this progress report is timely as it marks the midway point of the strategy and compliments the delivery of the second five-year action plan, which is currently

under development. The second action plan will cover the remaining five years of the strategy and will focus on sustaining effort, strong preventive responses, intervening earlier and measuring success as directed by the strategy and the 88th report. The progress report shows what can be delivered through coordinated and collaborative responses across all areas of government, the community and the service sector.

Before I conclude, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the dedication and expertise of the organisations and individuals who work every day to support vulnerable people in our community. In particular, I recognise the courage and insight of people with a lived experience of homelessness who share their knowledge, understanding and lived expertise to improve the delivery of homelessness services in WA.

I now table the *West Australian Government progress update on implementation of Report 88 Funding of homelessness services in Western Australia*.

(See paper 596.)

PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

FORCED ADOPTIONS

Notice of motion

Hon Michelle Hofmann gave notice that at the next sitting of the house she would move:

That this house:

(a) acknowledges the findings of the 66th report of the *Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs*, *Broken Bonds, Fractured Lives: Report on the Inquiry into Past Forced Adoption in Western Australia*, which documents the harrowing lived experiences of thousands of mothers, fathers and adopted persons separated by historical practices between 1939 and 1980;

(b) recognises that these practices of separating children from their birth mother caused lifelong trauma, violated fundamental human rights, and were enabled by systemic failures of state government agencies, health services and private institutions;

(c) notes the government's decision to reject key recommendations of the inquiry, including the right of adopted people to be notified of their adoption status, to access their full medical and genetic histories and to have both birth and adoptive parents recorded on birth certificates, thereby denying survivors truth, identity and recognition;

(d) further notes the government's failure to commit to a timely redress scheme and its decision to defer 14 critical recommendations, leaving many survivors fearful they will die without seeing justice;

(e) affirms the duty of this Parliament to ensure full transparency, access to records, and truth-telling measures to acknowledge past wrongs and promote healing; and

(f) calls on the government to immediately commit to implementing all outstanding recommendations, publish clear timelines for delivery, and adopt a comprehensive redress model, such as that implemented in Victoria, to provide financial compensation, specialist counselling and individual apologies.

ANIMAL WELFARE AMENDMENT (CHIEF ANIMAL PROTECTION OFFICER) BILL 2025

Introduction and first reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Hon Amanda Dorn**, and read a first time.

Second reading speech

Hon Amanda Dorn (10:13 am): I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

I am honoured to introduce this bill to the Legislative Council, which seeks to establish the statutory role of the Chief Animal Protection Officer and, by doing so, create an independent Office of Animal Protection. This reform represents a significant step forward to ensure that animal welfare in Western Australia is administered, enforced and reviewed independently, transparently and in line with contemporary scientific knowledge and community expectations.

WA is home to untold millions of animals whose lives intersect with humans on a daily basis. These include companion animals, native wildlife and animals used in research, entertainment or farming to name a few. Yet despite their number and the diversity of their roles in our society, the systems designed to protect their welfare remain fragmented, outdated and vulnerable to conflicts of interest. Currently, responsibility for animal welfare is

spread across multiple departments and agencies, many of which have competing priorities, and this can lead to a lack of interagency coordination and leadership. There are also inherent risks in having a department responsible for developing animal welfare policies, procedures and standards when it is simultaneously responsible for the economic success of the industries using these animals. This can create pressure to keep standards and enforcement at a bare minimum.

This bill responds to growing public concern and expert consensus that animal welfare oversight must be independent of industry interests. It builds on the findings of several key reviews and inquiries both in WA and nationally. These include the *Animal Welfare Act Review 2020*, the 2015 *Animal Welfare Review* (Easton review) and the 2016 Select Committee into the operations of The Royal Society for The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc). All the inquiries identified structural weaknesses in governance, enforcement and accountability at a national level. The 2016 *Regulation of Australian Agriculture: Productivity Commission Inquiry Report* recommended the establishment of an independent statutory body to develop national standards for animal welfare utilising science and community ethics advisory committees. Together, these reviews provide a clear and consistent message that animal welfare governance must be independent, transparent and aligned with community expectations.

It has now been more than four years since the 2020 review of the Animal Welfare Act delivered 52 recommendations to modernise this framework, and even though the recommendations were supported by this very government, none have yet been enacted. This is proof that animal welfare has not been given priority by the government, despite overwhelming community expectations for stronger, independent and transparent protections for animals. Even the popular Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Act, which was heralded as a much-needed reform, remains ineffective while it waits for the introduction of key measures to make it work.

Despite the scale and complexity of animal welfare issues in WA, our current governance arrangements remain structurally flawed. Most concerning is the conflict of interest embedded in the system; for example, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, known as DPIRD, is tasked with promoting agriculture productivity while also overseeing the welfare of farmed animals. This dual mandate creates an inherent tension, one that risks sidelining animal welfare in favour of economic outcomes. As highlighted by the Australian Alliance for Animals, economic interests too often take precedence over the wellbeing of animals when setting standards. The consequences of this conflict are not simply theoretical. Legal yet harmful practices such as live lamb cutting without pain relief, confinement in sow stalls and the use of battery cages have persisted despite the availability of humane alternatives. It took immense public pressure to start the ball rolling in phasing out sow stalls and battery cages, but these practices were and still are permitted under legal frameworks that prioritise industry convenience over animal welfare. Moreover, as I have spoken about previously, enforcement of animal welfare remains heavily reliant on underfunded charitable organisations and local governments, many of which lack the resources or mandate to carry out their responsibilities effectively. There is no mechanism to ensure consistency, accountability or strategic planning across sectors.

While I applaud the efforts of animal enforcement agencies and the many passionate, caring people within them, when it comes to preventing and responding to animal cruelty consistently, the system itself is insufficient. These organisations are often criticised for not doing enough when, in fact, they are hampered by inadequate financial and legislative support. The 2020 review of the Animal Welfare Act confirmed this, finding that the RSPCA bears significant prosecuting and enforcement costs beyond its government grant, and that it is inappropriate for a private charity to have to rely on donations to fulfil its responsibilities.

The panel concluded that a regulator of this kind of state legislation should not have to depend on public fundraising to meet community expectations. This bill seeks to address these major issues by establishing a Chief Animal Protection Officer—a legislative role with independence from industry and government departments that will provide centralised oversight, coordination and leadership on all matters relating to animal welfare. The position will be appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Attorney General, after consultation with the newly established Animal Protection Advisory Committee. The chief officer will not be part of the public service and will operate independently of departmental influence, ensuring impartiality in the administration and enforcement of animal welfare laws. This model is consistent with other independent statutory officers in Western Australia, such as the Ombudsman and the Auditor General, ensuring impartiality and freedom from departmental influence.

This bill will amend the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* to implement key recommendations of the 2020 review, particularly to strengthen independence and inspector oversight. Notably, recommendation 2 of the review acknowledged that animals "are living beings, able to perceive, feel, and have positive and negative experiences"—a recognition that underscores our moral responsibility to protect their wellbeing.

The Chief Animal Protection Officer's functions will be broad and strategic. They include overseeing the administration of the *Animal Welfare Act 2002* and related legislation; conducting inquiries; commissioning research; preparing reports on animal welfare laws, policies and enforcement, and on the treatment of animals across industries and sectors, including agriculture, racing and scientific research; developing policies, guidelines

and a statewide animal welfare strategy that provides a framework for identifying and prioritising animal welfare issues; coordinating stakeholder action and improving consistency across all industries and sectors involving animals; liaising with national bodies and contributing to the harmonisation of standards across jurisdictions; and collecting and disseminating information to improve public awareness and understanding of animal welfare issues.

To support this role, the bill will establish the independent Office of Animal Protection, composed of the chief officer and supporting staff. This office will serve as a central point of coordination, policy development and strategic leadership. Many of these functions already exist, but they are currently scattered across departments and charities. This reform will restructure those functions into a single coherent framework with proper oversight and accountability. To assist the office in its duties, the bill also creates an Animal Protection Advisory Committee, a multidisciplinary body appointed by the Attorney General. The committee will include experts in animal science, veterinary medicine, bioethics, wildlife conservation, public policy and community education. Its role will be to advise the Chief Animal Protection Officer on relevant legislation, policy standards, education programs and research.

Importantly, the bill will introduce robust reporting and accountability mechanisms. The new office will be required to prepare annual reports and may produce additional reports on inquiries or emerging issues. These reports must be tabled in Parliament and published, ensuring transparency and public scrutiny. The minister may issue directions on general policy but will not be able to interfere in specific matters, preserving the independence of the office.

Finally, the bill will make consequential amendments to the *Cat Act 2011*, the *Dog Act 1976* and other relevant legislation to ensure consistency and integration across the broader animal welfare framework. The establishment of this new office is not only a matter of good governance; it is a reform that enjoys widespread support across the animal welfare sector and the broader community. Organisations such as Animal Liberation, Animals Australia, Voiceless, the Australian Alliance for Animals and the Animal Justice Party have long advocated for independent oversight of animal welfare. Their work, including the Fair Go for Animals campaign, and the excellent *Building a fairer Australia for animals* report, has highlighted the urgent need for a system that places animal welfare at the centre of decision-making, free from industry influence and political compromise.

The bill's proposed framework takes inspiration from the recommendations of these organisations, alongside the numerous inquiries and consultation processes I mentioned earlier in this speech. Public sentiment in Western Australia and across the country strongly supports reform in animal welfare governance. The 2023 Australian Animal Welfare Survey, commissioned by the Australian Alliance for Animals and conducted by Monash University's BehaviourWorks Australia, found that nine out of 10 Australians believe animal welfare should be protected by government legislation, and that seven out of 10 support the creation of an independent and impartial authority to oversee policy decisions. Australians consistently view companion and farmed animals as sentient beings and believe that policy decisions should prioritise animal wellbeing, incorporate scientific evidence and reflect community values. These findings confirm that the public expects a governance model that is transparent, independent and accountable.

These are principles that underpin the framework proposed in this bill. Establishing a Chief Animal Protection Officer will provide a mechanism for evidence-based policy, transparent enforcement and coordinated action across government and non-government sectors. It will ensure that animal welfare is treated no longer as an afterthought, but as a core responsibility of public administration. This bill represents a principled and practical step forward in the governance of animal welfare in WA. It will create a framework that is responsive to both scientific evidence and community values.

I would like to thank the many individuals and organisations who have contributed to the development of this bill, including those in the animal welfare and advocacy sectors who have long advocated for independent oversight.

Pursuant to standing order 126(1), I advise that this bill is not a uniform legislation bill. It does not ratify or give effect to a bilateral or multilateral intergovernmental agreement to which the government of the state is a party; nor does this bill, by reason of its subject matter, introduce a uniform scheme or uniform laws throughout the Commonwealth.

Colleagues, this is a reform whose time has come. I commend the bill to the house and table the explanatory memorandum.

(See paper 597.)

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

ANIMAL WELFARE—CULTURED MEAT

Motion

Hon Amanda Dorn (10:28 am) without notice: I move:

That this house:

(1) acknowledges the potential of cultured meat as a humane, healthier and environmentally responsible innovation, and calls on the government to:

(a) support research, development, and commercialisation of cultured meat as a pathway to reduce reliance on intensive animal farming;

(b) promote the benefits of cultured meat as a hormone-free, sustainable source of protein for consumers; and

(c) explore opportunities to position Western Australia as a leader in cellular agriculture, ensuring economic, health and environmental benefits for the community.

At its core, this motion acknowledges the transformative potential of cultured meat—also known as cultivated, lab-grown or clean meat—as a humane, healthy and environmentally responsible innovation. We need to address how we feed a growing population without continuing to destroy our planet or compromising our health. It is about whether Western Australia chooses to be left behind or to lead the world in innovation. I also note that this debate builds on the work of the Education and Health Standing Committee, and its 2024 report *New Bite: How alternative proteins could improve dietary and planetary health*, which highlighted the health, environmental and economic imperatives for developing WA's alternative proteins industry. The committee found that Australians are consuming almost twice the recommended amount of red meat, that this overconsumption is linked to cancer, diabetes and heart disease, and that livestock supply chains are responsible for a significant share of global greenhouse gas emissions. It also recommended that the government provide greater support for the development of alternative proteins here in Western Australia. This motion responds directly to those findings.

I am sure most members have heard about this technology. It has been around for over a decade, but I will give members a brief description to clarify what it is and also what it is not. Cultured meat is essentially the same as meat from animals raised and killed for food. It has the same cellular structure, the same nutritional profile and, if developed correctly, the same taste and texture. However, the key difference is that it is produced in a lab rather than a slaughterhouse. Technically it is an animal product, but one that does not require the rearing or killing of animals. It is produced by harvesting cells from a single living animal without harming the animal, and then using those cells to create cell lines that can be grown and multiplied as required. Starter cells are then taken and put into a nutrient-rich medium that mimics the conditions inside an animal's body. The cells grow, multiply and form muscle tissue that can then be shaped into familiar meat products. Unstructured products like mince and burger patties are the easiest to produce, while structured cuts like steak require more advanced techniques such as tissue scaffolding. In essence, this technology offers a way to produce slaughter-free meat without antibiotics and without the environmental toll of animal agriculture.

In referring to the *Eat for Health: Australian Dietary Guidelines*, the committee found:

> The Guidelines are based on international research which links the overconsumption of meat to a range of non-communicable diseases, including cancer, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Given that non-communicable diseases are responsible for 89 per cent of deaths in Australia, our high levels of meat consumption are concerning.

Before I go on, I want to make it clear that plant-based proteins offer the greatest overall benefit for health, the environment and food security. They are the most direct way to shift diets towards sustainability. But let us be realistic. We know that change takes time. Many people will continue to want to eat meat even as awareness of its impacts grows. This is where cultured meat plays a role offering a valid alternative for those who want to eat meat while reducing the cruelty, emissions and the health risks inherent in animal agriculture. It is a bridge technology that allows us to move more quickly towards a future food system that is both sustainable and humane.

Firstly, cultured meat is kinder for animals because it removes the need for raising and slaughtering them for food. This is especially important as our population increases and the demand for meat rises. As I have highlighted in previous speeches, animal producers are expected to produce more and more with less space, which drives the rationale for intensive factory farming. Regardless of the conditions under which animals are kept while being raised, they ultimately end up in slaughterhouses. With cultured meat, we are able to do away with this system of exploitation and violence. It is a pathway to align our diets with what matters most—kindness.

Secondly, cultured meat is cleaner for the planet, reducing land clearing, methane emissions and water use compared with animal agriculture. Animal agriculture is one of the most environmentally damaging industries on the planet accounting for a minimum of 14.5% of total global emissions, a similar contribution to that of the transport sector. In Australia, approved clearing data from native vegetation clearing statistics shows that a large majority of native vegetation clearing in WA is attributed to agriculture, contributing to deforestation and habitat loss for native species. This clearing also leads to soil erosion, salinity and waterway contamination, threatening ecosystems. Methane emissions from livestock digestion accounts for the majority of agriculture emissions, with cattle responsible for nearly 65% of Australia's methane pollution. Water usage is also significant. Although improvements have been made, it still takes over 400 litres of water to produce one kilogram of live weight beef.

I found Cellular Agriculture Australia's *White Paper: An Opportunity to Diversify Australia's Food System* to be particularly interesting. It states:

> Preliminary life-cycle assessments showed that cultivated meat could result in a reduction of up to 92% of greenhouse gas emissions, 63–95% of land use, and 82–96% of water requirements, compared to conventional meat production.

Isn't that incredible?

Thirdly, cultured meat is safer for people as it eliminates the use of antibiotics and growth hormones and reduces the risk of diseases like swine flu and salmonella. The committee report warned that intensive farming systems rely heavily on antibiotics, making Australia among the top five global consumers of veterinary antimicrobials. The World Health Organization named antimicrobial resistance one of the world's top 10 public health threats. Cultured meat offers a pathway to meet those challenges without the risks. Cultured meat is produced in sterile, controlled environments, reducing the risk of disease outbreaks like avian or swine flu and ensuring consistent supply. Cultured meat is free from antibiotics and growth hormones and can be enhanced with nutrients like omega-3 fatty acids. It also avoids contamination risks such as E. coli, which can occur during slaughter.

Finally, it is smarter for our economy, opening new industries, jobs and export opportunities in the global protein market. Globally, the cultured meat market is projected to grow from US$800 million in 2025 to over US$4 billion by 2035, with poultry leading the way. Countries like Singapore and the United States have already approved products for sale. Here in Australia, the first cell-cultured quail product has been approved and companies like Val Foods and Magic Valley are leading the charge. Western Australia, with its world-class agricultural sector, advanced manufacturing infrastructure and strong research institutions is well positioned to become a leader in cellular agriculture. But to seize this opportunity, we need strategic investment in infrastructure and workforce development. Let us be an early mover.

Public acceptance is growing, but challenges remain. A recent Australian study commissioned by Cellular Agriculture Australia found that while awareness of cultured meat is increasing, many consumers are still unfamiliar with the technology. Terminology matters. Cultured, clean or cultivated meat is preferred over lab-grown and our younger consumers are especially motivated by environmental benefits. After all, it is their future that is at stake. Cost is another barrier. As with any emerging industry, cultured meat is currently more expensive than meat from animals raised and killed for food. But with investment and scale, prices will fall, just as they did with solar panels and electric vehicles. There is also a perception hurdle. Some view lab-grown food as unnatural or scary. We must counter this with education, transparency and a focus on the benefits. I would argue that cultured meat is in fact more natural and that it removes the need for chemical inputs and intensive confinement.

This motion is about not only food technology, but also the future we choose for Western Australia, one built on kindness, innovation and sustainability. Cultured meat gives us the chance to align what we eat with the values we hold. Let us lead the way. I commend the motion to the house.

Hon Jackie Jarvis (Minister for Agriculture and Food) (10:39 am): As the Minister for Agriculture and Food, obviously I have a strong interest in the Animal Welfare Amendment (Chief Animal Protection Officer) Bill 2025, and I rise to speak about some of the things we are doing in Western Australia and, in some instances, to defend our livestock industries here.

It was interesting. I think the honourable member started with her clearly pre-prepared and read speech by quoting *Report 7–Discussion Paper: New Bite: How alternative proteins could improve dietary and planetary health*. That was a report from the 41st Parliament, from the Education and Health Standing Committee. The member quoted selected passages from that report, which looked at a lot of alternative proteins, including plant-based proteins—I think it even looked at insects at some point. We have had a former rural woman of the year who has done some fantastic work on protein from crickets, but it also touched on looking at cultured meat. I just want to highlight and read from page 15 of that report, which states:

> ***3.2.1 Cultured meat might not have the same health benefits***
>
> The extent to which cultured meat (as distinct from plant-based alternatives) can assist people in achieving a more balanced diet is less straightforward because of indications that cultured meat might have the same impact on human health as animal-based meat. Haem iron, which is found in red and processed meats, is at the centre of this research. Once consumed, it breaks down in the gut and forms N-nitroso compounds—

I am sure I have mispronounced that—

> which can damage the cells lining the bowel and ultimately cause cancer. Given that cultured meat is also likely to contain haem iron, there are suggestions it will have the same carcinogenic effects as red and processed meats.

Therefore, I do not think the idea that cultured meat is somehow healthier has been scientifically proven. I know that my colleague Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur, if she has the opportunity to speak, could provide some more scientific

rigour around the idea of cultured meat because, obviously, she is a very well respected scientist who I understand has done some work in this area. There are concerns around this sort of lab-grown meat.

I also want to quote an article I found relating to some research from the University of California, Davis campus, a tier 1 research university in California, titled "Lab-Grown Meat's Carbon Footprint Potentially Worse Than Retail Beef". It is by Amy Quinton and was published on 22 May 2023. The subheading states:

> Study Finds Scaling Up Production Using Existing Processes Highly Energy-Intensive.

I will quickly read a paragraph:

> Researchers conducted a life-cycle assessment of the energy needed and greenhouse gases emitted in all stages of production and compared that with beef.

Sorry, I just have to find my highlighted bit. It continues:

> "Our findings suggest that cultured meat is not inherently better for the environment than conventional beef. It's not a panacea," said corresponding author Edward Spang …

The article goes on to say:

> cultured meat across all scenarios (both food and pharma), suggesting that investments to advance more climate-friendly beef production may yield greater reductions in emissions more quickly than investments in cultured meat.

I am also concerned about talk of livestock production on a global scale that does not specifically look at the WA experience. WA farmers are, quite frankly, the most efficient dryland farmers in the world. When we talk about intensive farming systems, we are talking, in this instance, about the carbon footprint of beef and sheep meat production. We quite often talk about irrigated land. We are talking about irrigated fodder crops. Western Australian farmers are amazing dryland farmers, and I am sure Hon Steve Martin and the member from the Nationals WA will agree with me. We make big global statements, but we do not look at WA farming systems and how we compare.

There is the idea that agriculture has been responsible for the majority of clearing—yes, a hundred years ago. I cannot think of any land that has been cleared for agriculture in Western Australia since probably the 1970s or maybe the 80s. It just does not happen. We do not clear land for agriculture. Yes, we are dealing with, I guess, the sins of our fathers in regard to land clearing that happened a long time ago, but it just does not happen now.

This week the Regenerative Food Systems Conference was in Perth. Unfortunately, I could not make it. I was hoping to get along there yesterday, but I could not get a pair. The honourable member who moved this motion would have been well placed to go to that conference to meet farmers who are farming in a regenerative, sustainable way; farmers who care about the environment; and farmers who care about their livestock. I appreciate that the honourable member and I will never agree. I am a committed meat eater. I have stood in this place before and said that I am a committed meat eater. I acknowledge that I and probably every other meat eater here could be well placed to eat more plant-based products—absolutely. I think we have a huge opportunity here in Western Australia for alternative proteins.

Before I go to that issue, the honourable member mentioned that we need innovation and we need an early mover. Honourable member, if there is someone who wants to do cultivated meat in Western Australia, the door is open. We are into value-adding. We are into science. We are into innovation. I have been the Minister for Agriculture and Food for a number of years and I have not had a single proponent come to me and say, "Minister, we want to set up a cultivated meat processing facility here in Western Australia." If people want to eat cultured meat, that is fine; the door is open for them to come to Western Australia. We have a great regulatory approvals system in place. We are opening the door to value-adding on food products everywhere. It ties into our Diversify WA plan and the idea that government has to somehow do something more to make an early mover come into the market—if it were financially viable, someone would come and do it. My door remains open to anyone who has the money ready to put up and start their own processing facility.

With regard to our livestock production here in Western Australia, as I said, our farmers are committed to sustainability. They are quite simply the best dryland farmers in the world. We are doing some great work with them from a research point of view. If members have ever been to dairy field days or even the beef industry field days, they will have seen DPIRD's clean green machine. It is a trailer that has a bit of scientific kit on the back that measures methane emissions. We need to measure. We cannot reduce until we can measure. We have given some support to a number of companies that are making actual, real advances and making products to reduce methane in cattle using the asparagopsis seaweed, or algae—I think it is a seaweed. We have people who are doing work down in Fremantle farming asparagopsis, and I have had briefings from them. They are putting their money where their mouth is and investing their own money into these projects. We also have another company, Rumin8, that is creating a synthetic asparagopsis, because it can better control the dosage. Again, I have been to its factory in Wangara. It is putting its money where its mouth is. It is spending the dollars.

From a DPIRD point of view, we have a fantastic Katanning Research Station, and if the honourable member wants to come down there with me, I would be delighted to take her there. The facility in Katanning does a lot of work with the sheep industry and is working with Meat and Livestock Australia to confirm genetic variation in feed intake and methane efficiency. I was there only a couple of months ago. I met two amazing young women who are research scientists. Every time I go to these DPIRD research stations, it is so fantastic to see young people getting into agricultural science. I met Bethany and Amy down there. They are two fantastic young scientists who live and work in Katanning. Again, they have a fabulous bit of kit that measures methane emissions from sheep, and then they are studying the genetics of those animals. As well as additives to feed, they believe that there is also some work they can do on genetics to make sure we can breed sheep that emit less methane. That is really important for industry, because a sheep that emits less methane uses their feed more efficiently; therefore, they put on more kilograms quicker. We know that animals that put on more kilos quicker—as unpalatable as it may be to that member—end up at the abattoir quicker, which means they have less time to emit methane. Therefore, there is a whole range of things to look at with feeding in confinement versus being in a paddock. I met Brittany Bolt and Amy, and I apologise that I cannot remember Amy's surname. Young Brittany went to New Zealand to present her findings at a research conference over there.

I will spend a bit of time talking about alternative proteins. The report the member mentioned that had been done in the 41st Parliament, *New Bite: How alternative proteins could improve dietary and planetary health*, talked about alternative proteins, and Western Australia is well placed to be a leader in alternative proteins. Tonight, I am off to—I had to write it down—the 8th International Food Legume Research Conference and 5th Australian Pulse Conference. I do not know whether Hon Steven Martin will also be attending.

Hon Steve Martin interjected.

Hon Jackie Jarvis: I have my finger on the pulse. I am going to be there. I am road-testing this, because I was going to use it in my speech tonight—maybe I will not. I just want to keep you "lupin" in!

Several members interjected.

Hon Jackie Jarvis: Sorry, President; I got a little bit carried away there.

I refer to a Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation research article I found from 22 February 2024 titled *Cracking lupin wide open: from test sausages to protein ingredient*. It talks about the work done by a great Western Australian company, Wide Open Agriculture, to harness the power of lupin. Lupin and other pulses and legumes are fantastic for WA farming systems. They add nitrogen back into the soil and fix the nitrogen in the soil—I am not sure whether I have that terminology right—so they are really good for farming systems. One of the challenges is that we need to make it a high-value product. Lupin is traditionally used for stockfeed. We have a few companies in Western Australia. I recently went to visit one somewhere north of Wanneroo that is producing some fantastic lupin food products. We got to try some biscuits baked from lupin flour. My adviser was with me, and she was particularly pleased because her partner is coeliac. She got to take home all the leftover cookies for her partner, because he cannot eat wheat-based products and lupin has been declared gluten-free. This CSIRO report from 2024 is amazing. It talks about Dr Graham Arnold, who, back in 1976, was handing out prototype lupin sausages and cookies.

Lupin is currently a low-value product. We want to turn it into a high-value product. As I said, WA is well placed for alternative proteins. Plant-based proteins absolutely have a role to play. There is lots of ongoing research being done. In 2019, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development released a report titled *Alternative plant-based proteins: WA's ability to participate in an alternative, plant-based proteins market*. In 2021, DPIRD released a report titled *Prescriptions for Growth: Opportunities for Western Australian food and beverage firms in Foods for Health markets*. I do not have copies of those reports with me here today, but I am happy to pass them on to the honourable member. In 2022, DPIRD released reports titled *Western Australian plant protein processing* and *Western Australian plant-based milk*. CSIRO released the *National Protein Roadmap 2022*, and, also in 2022, DPIRD released the *Western Australian health-focused oat extracts* report.

Honourable member, I know that plant-based proteins are gaining traction. I certainly know that in my household, with my 21-year-old daughter and one of her friends living with me, everything they eat seems to be protein enhanced. They have high-protein yoghurts and all sorts of things. Hon Stephen Dawson and I were lucky enough to visit a brewery recently—for professional purposes—to look at spent barley. As I said, our Western Australian grain growers do not use irrigation. This rain-fed barley has gone into a brewery to make beer, and the spent grain is a high-protein product. Currently it is used as stockfeed, which is fantastic, but we want to add more value to it. The ChemCentre is doing a research report on how we can use that protein from spent barley waste from these boutique breweries and actually turn it into product—namely, whether it can be used to create a protein powder or some kind of protein supplement. We know that it is all the rage at the moment. People want high-protein foods.

I get most of my protein from red meat and, of course, fish, chicken and pork—I am protein agnostic—but I know that that is not for everyone. Interestingly, I did a quick survey this morning of two vegans and two vegetarians who work in this place in the broader building, and all of them said that they would not eat meat that was basically

grown in a lab. I am more than happy to talk about plant-based proteins until the cows come home. Come on, people!

Hon Andrew O'Donnell: I don't think that one worked, either!

Hon Samantha Rowe: It's a tough crowd.

Hon Jackie Jarvis: That one did not work, either. All right. I will hold off on my comedic career!

With regard to cultured meat, as I said, the door is open if a proponent wants to come and put their money down and build a facility in Perth.

Hon Steve Martin (10:54 am): I will be brief. I know that other members are keen to contribute. I was not planning to contribute to this motion, but I have to. I thank the Minister for Agriculture and Food for her defence of farming in Western Australia. The words we use are important. I heard the honourable member moving the motion talk about the vast environmental damage done by agriculture in Western Australia, and I simply cannot let that stand. Too often we hear those words, and almost always we hear them here in the city. We hear talk about the vast environmental damage that, somehow, I and others are doing in regional Western Australia. People in the city do not grow their own food or catch their own water. Apart from rooftop solar, they do not produce their own power or grow their own fibre, yet somehow vast environmental damage is happening out there. By the way, we do not hear farmers and people in regional Western Australia talking about the environmental damage that is happening where they live; we hear about it down here. I want to put the record straight.

We also heard about land clearing in Western Australia through agriculture. I have no idea where the honourable member has been in regional WA, but if she can find me anywhere where more than a quarter of an acre has been cleared for agricultural purposes in the last 50 years, I would be surprised. It took CBH Group about three years to clear 20 trees outside Moora so they could put in a CBH bin. Again, I will tell members where I do find clearing of native vegetation: it is in the suburbs of Perth and Bunbury. We often see a nice bulldozer flattening a bit of scrub and timber in the suburbs to build houses. I see that all the time. I do not see that where I live. That is disappointing.

We also heard about water use and how many billions of litres it takes to grow a gram of beef. This number gets plucked out of the internet by a Google search. Quite frankly, it is a lazy bit of research—we heard from the agricultural minister about this—that somewhere in the mid-west of America, it takes a certain amount of water to grow one gram of beef. That is not what happens in regional Western Australia. We are dryland farmers. We get very little rain to start with, and we use every single drop that falls as efficiently as we can in grain and in livestock.

This motion states that cellular agriculture will reduce the reliance on intensive animal farming. In Western Australia, we have very little reliance on intensive animal farming. We are broadacre farmers and we do a wonderful job using the rainfall we have on the land we have.

The member moving the motion gave the game away when she said, "We absolutely have to avoid any mention of something being lab grown, because the public won't like that." Absolutely they will not. The member can call it whatever she likes, but we know what it is: it is lab-grown meat. I think the phrase she used about lab-grown meat was "more natural". Again, go for a drive, have a look around regional WA and then tell me that something grown in a laboratory in China, Vietnam or somewhere—that is where most of it will be grown—is more natural than the sheep and cows running around in country WA.

I know that other members are keen to speak, but I do not want to defend our sector—it does not need defending; it does a wonderful job—but highlight the wonderful work that our grain and livestock farmers do in regional WA. I am more than happy to support them every single opportunity I get.

Hon Julie Freeman (10:58 am): I rise today as a genuine farmer—one of a few in the room, including a farmer's husband behind me—to speak to how really wonderful our livestock industries are. I find myself in furious agreement with the Minister for Agriculture and Food and Hon Steven Martin about how incredibly innovative our farmers are.

I am not opposed to cultured meat. I think that the science is fascinating and that pursuing that science will probably lead to all sorts of other discoveries along the way. I am not opposed to people seeking alternatives to what we already have. Looking into the future, I can see potential for something like cultured meat. If we continue to do space exploration or put people in Antarctica for long periods of time, sure, that would be a very reasonable and viable alternative in those sorts of circumstances. I am more than happy to support research, development and commercialisation and am happy to explore the opportunities that may exist. If there is a market for that, it will happen, and good on the people who are involved in it.

Within the motion, there is an implication that somehow farming livestock is inhumane, that somehow the product farmers produce is unhealthy and that somehow it is environmentally irresponsible. I refute that there is even a need for a pathway to reduce reliance on animal farming. I think what we do is quite magnificent.

In referring to the state of our industry, I want to look at Meat and Livestock Australia's *State of the Industry Report* for 2024. That report states quite clearly that Australia holds around 1.9% of the global cattle herd and about 5.8% of the global sheep flock, which are not significant numbers in the global perspective, but let us bear in mind that Australia was the second largest beef and bovine meat exporter in 2023 after Brazil and ahead of India and the US; Australia was the world's largest sheepmeat exporter, ahead of New Zealand, the UK and Uruguay; and Australia was the world's largest goat meat exporter in 2023, ahead of Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania. We may be small, but, in a global context, we are feeding the world. Over the past 20 years, the total global consumption of meat has been steadily increasing at an average annual rate of 1% for beef, 1.9% for sheepmeat, 1.4% for pork and 3.1% for poultry meat. This is in countries that previously were developing and are now growing their middle class and are looking for great sources of protein because they recognise the health benefits and this is what they want and they have the way to do it. Meat consumption is growing globally.

It was interesting that Hon Amanda Dorn mentioned that cultured meat is expected to be worth $4 billion by 2035. I can tell her that in 2022–23, Australia's red meat and livestock industry turnover totalled $81.7 billion, so it is a really significant industry. I do not want to take away from the potential of another $4 billion being added to our export economy, but I do not think that we are at the stage now at which we are ready to consider any sort of transition.

I also would like to address some environmental realities. Again, I turn to Meat and Livestock Australia's *Greenhouse Gas mitigation potential of the Australian red meat production and processing sectors* final report, which it did in cooperation with the CSIRO. In 2005, greenhouse gas emissions from our livestock industry totalled 124.1 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent. By 2015—so, in a decade—we had almost halved that to 68.6 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent, and the journey continues. The journey continues by using excellent farming practices. We have continuously improved our land management. We have continuously reduced enteric methane, and the Minister for Agriculture and Food gave some great examples of some of the work that is being done in seaweed supplementation to help with that. We are continually looking at our breeding programs to make sure that we help to reduce methane emissions. It was found that by 2021, emissions from the Australian red meat industry had fallen by 78.56%. This is an industry that is not turning its back on its responsibilities to the environment; it is actively working.

As a sheep producer, I know that we are required to have an accreditation through Meat and Livestock Australia. As a canola producer, we are required to have an international sustainable canola accreditation. We have to put in an enormous amount of work to prove that we are meeting our obligations to reduce our carbon emissions, to protect our biodiversity, to protect waterways and the like.

I would also like to reiterate that—I do not even have the words for it, to be honest. On the science behind cultured meat, I will refer to a blog post by Cole–Parmer, which is a US-based company that produces lab equipment. Obviously, it is promoting how its lab equipment can be used in the process of creating cultured meat. It says:

> Cultured meat production is a multi-step process that combines biological science and engineering to create a sustainable protein source. The process can be broken down into five essential steps:
>
> **1. Cell Sourcing**
>
> Cultured meat begins by obtaining animal cells via a biopsy.

Then there is the cell line establishment. Once the cells have been isolated from the biopsy—this is very technical—they can proliferate and transform into different cell types, such as muscle or fat cells. It continues:

> Establishing robust cell lines is critical for ensuring consistency, efficiency, and scalability in future production batches. Cells are cultured for immediate use or frozen for future production.

Then the cells have to be grown. They go into a bioreactor in a controlled environment that mimics natural cell growth conditions. Then they have to be scaffolded. Cells are attached to scaffolds that mimic the natural arrangement of animal tissue to create the desired texture and structure. The final stage is the harvesting process, whereby the tissue is processed into the final meat product. That is very complicated, and it does not sound very natural to me when I think about the alternative. The alternative is that, at a particular time of the year, my husband will put the ram into the paddock with the ewes, Cecil will do his job and then, come autumn time, we have lambs bouncing around everywhere ready for the winter. That is the most natural meat-production process. It is the way nature intended it to be.

Added to that, I have lived with a sheep producer for over 30 years. He has had sheep in his life for his 59 years on this planet and has never had an existence without them. He is deeply committed to the welfare of those animals. He takes every opportunity to make sure that they are healthy. We do not go away for long in summer because we have to make sure that they have water. For the couple of months of summer when there is no feed in the paddock, he supplement feeds them with our lupin seconds. But it takes only two or three tonnes of lupins to feed them over summer because we have so much good food for them to graze on in either the pastures or the crop stubbles. These are happy animals that are roaming free and living a very natural life. The mothers are with their babies until they

are naturally weaned. There is nothing artificial in this process. When the time is right, we are able to send them off to market very proud of the product that we have produced and very proud of the animal welfare that they have endured. They are shorn once a year, because there is nothing worse for an animal that is not native to Australia than to have a fleece that is too large. The honourable member mentioned mulesing. Mulesing is not a modern farming technique. Our sheep are bred to have bare rumps now and also we use crutching when we need to.

Hon Jess Beckerling (11:20 am): I rise to make a brief contribution on this motion, and I want to thank Hon Amanda Dorn for bringing it to this house. The motion asks us to consider humane, healthy and environmentally responsible methods to produce protein, with a focus on cultured meat. As a vegetarian of more than 30 years, I know that there are many ways we can get our protein, and I strongly support the call for us to be proactive about developing ways that reduce the impact on animals and the environment. I have also lived in regional WA for most of my life, so I know that many cattle farmers are doing great work looking after and also restoring the forests on their land. Cattle farming does not have to go hand in hand with deforestation, and there is no excuse for it to continue. But the fact is that across Australia it does, and beef farming is a leading cause across the continent. That is largely due to Queensland, as the minister has pointed out, but in WA the situation is different. The leading cause of deforestation here is Alcoa's strip mining of the northern jarrah forests.

We are not only Western Australians; we are also Australians. The leadership and the innovation we show here and the conversations we have about innovation, as Hon Amanda Dorn encourages us to do, matter. At an Australian level, cattle farming is not the leading cause of deforestation because the majority of farmers are clearing forest; it is because some of the more industrial-scale farmers are clearing huge areas. I want to bring members' attention to a quote responding to a 2021 study by Gemma Plesman, the Queensland campaign manager for the Wilderness Society. She referred to data showing that 13,500 hectares of forest had been cleared in Queensland between 2018 and 2021 in spite of new laws that have been introduced. She said:

> This data isn't surprising as Australia is a deforestation hotspot along with places like the Amazon. In the state that bulldozes the most forest and bushland – Queensland – the state's own data shows that the majority of deforestation is for the beef industry.
>
> Millions of native animals, including Australia's iconic koala are killed or left homeless when bulldozers destroy their habitat.

We should not reduce this to the binary of cattle versus forest because, as I have said, we can have both. In fact, many primary producers are the best forest protectors and restorers around. Nonetheless, we have a major problem on this continent, with beef farming in particular being the leading cause of the loss of forests and is part of a larger problem in which more than half of Australia's forests and woodlands have been degraded or destroyed since Europeans arrived. A comprehensive scientific study titled *Little left to lose* shows that the South West biodiversity hotspot, a precious biodiverse part of the world, has lost or degraded 90% of the original vegetation. There is no doubt in my mind that the key challenge in this generation following such fast-paced and broadscale degradation of the natural environment, even though, as the Hon Dr Steve Thomas points out, the vast majority of this has been historical—

Hon Steve Martin: We're twins; only our mother can tell us apart.

Hon Jess Beckerling: Apologies—Hon Steve Martin. I commonly mix up your surnames, but usually not out loud.

Our key challenge is to make the necessary changes fast enough and with real substance and commitment to restore the extraordinary ecosystems that make up this magnificent planet while we still can. That means supporting sustainable and healthy food systems and properly supporting the excellent landcare work happening across regional WA is a key part of this work. Thank you.

Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur (11:12 am): I thank Hon Amanda Dorn for bringing this motion to the house and the wonderful contributions that we have heard. It is a wonderful debate and I think we should be discussing topics like this more often in this chamber. I rise today as a person who, as Hon Julie Freeman mentioned, has done those complicated processes in the lab for over a decade; that has been my life. I have produced different forms and products using the synthetic biology approach that we have been learning about in this chamber. As with anything, there is another side to the coin and we must educate ourselves on and look into that. I thank the Minister for Agriculture and Food for bringing to our attention that report on alternative proteins and plant-based proteins. I have gone through that report, and it is a really good piece of work. However, again, we see that information and knowledge is used a lot to build a political narrative. We probably should not be doing this.

Coming back to cellular agriculture in Western Australia, Hon Amanda Dorn brought to our attention that it takes 92% more water to produce beef or similar meats than to produce cellular agriculture, which can reduce that. Let me bring to members' attention that a lot of papers published in the scientific domain in the top journals refer to the figure of approximately 70% to 80% less water, but this is based on a lot of assumptions. That requires recycling the media that we prepare on a daily basis, which normally does not happen in the industrial setting where you want to scale products up to a certain level. It also depends upon recycling and the different plant designs that

people use compared to Boston or the industry just starting in Australia. I will not talk about Western Australia in that space yet.

The biggest problem, as the member mentioned, is not the water; it is the energy. Approximately 75 to 95 kilowatt hours are required to produce one kilogram of cellular meat. That is huge if we put the numbers in context at this moment. It is an energy guzzler, if you ask me. At the same time, there is the cost of the bioreactors. I have founded a synthetic biology startup and I can tell members that with bioreactors, it cost lots of money to set up a very basic lab-level pilot study, let alone on the scale we are talking about to match the industry in Western Australia. The sterile environments required in a very small pilot lab just for a proof of concept is just not financially viable at this moment in time.

Scale and supply is another big issue we have at this moment. Most of this industry is at a pilot space right now. The very basic consumables that we use in the labs also involve cell lines, which include biopsies, but when we take that successful cell line further to produce at a pilot space—I am not even talking about the industrial scale yet—it requires the chemicals and the serums that are also produced by the animals. We have not yet found a synthetic way to produce those serums. They cost a lot. Cost is absolutely one of the biggest barriers. Again and again, we go back to the same animal, and the welfare of that animal, which we are trying to protect and look after. However, the most significant risk that I see in this space is corporate consolidation. This works because they are normally the very first people who invest into this industry and patent that work. They pose the biggest risk to equity in the food industry, as well as the biggest danger to our farmers, families and smallholder industries. When those big giants patent the way they do it and look to scale it up, we are looking at a whole consolidation happening and the big giants or the big pharma coming and taking over our farming industry at the same time. There is a huge risk to food equity and access.

Hon Amanda Dorn also brought to our attention feeding the growing population. Since I started studying agriculture about 20 years back in India, the biggest question asked and brainstormed in every lecture I went to was how we are going to feed nine billion people in 2050? The good news is that that is a question of the last decade. We have made immense progress in genetic gains in the agriculture industry. Honestly, Western Australia is leading that space. Western Australian farmers have not just delivered but demonstrated to the rest of the world how agriculture can be done differently with the natural resources and the environments in this country. There is a lot of inspiration and a lot of scientists travel from all over the world to study these practices and how our farmers are doing it with the resources, the scarcity of water and the nutrients in the soil. Western Australian soils have next to zero phosphorus, which is one of the most important micronutrients for plants to grow. Yet nature found its way. Western Australia is one of the 36 global biodiversity hotspots. That fascinates me. How on earth is Western Australia a global biodiversity hotspot when its soils have next to no nutrients? That shows promise for the future that we have more than plenty to feed nine billion or 10 billion people. We have had a large increase in that space after COVID; we had a lot of COVID babies, so we might have 10 billion people to feed. That is not a question discussed in any agricultural settings among scientists these days because we have solved that problem. There is a lot of incredible work that has been done by the farming community of Western Australia.

Again, nothing is a silver bullet. Everything has to happen in moderation. There is nothing wrong with doing the proof of concept, pilot studies and being innovative. We have been doing that. As I said, I have had my own startup producing synthetic biology products that are very scarcely available in the legumes. Western Australia again has been one of the leaders in producing the key pasture species for the livestock industry. However, I identified that when we want to produce pastures that reduce methane emissions into the environment when our livestock feeds on it, the genetic networks are connected. When one wants a gain from a genetic perspective, there is always a trade-off. I found the trade-off was that if I increase the production of those nutrients in the legumes by genetic setting, I will also make them much more methane inefficient. That is the reason for the choice of taking that process into the lab and not putting that poison into the paddock for our livestock. That is where the science and innovation need to go, and that is where the government needs to support the next generation of technologies and solutions.

With all that in view, and having done it myself, I do not commend this motion to the house. Thank you very much.

The President: Members, the question is that the motion be agreed to. There being no further speakers, the time for non-government business will expire.

Hon Amanda Dorn: I seek my right of reply. Apologies, President.

The President: If there are no other speakers, the member may reply to the debate.

Hon Amanda Dorn (11:21 am) in reply: Thank you, President. In closing this debate, I want to return to the key points. This is about kindness. Thank you to honourable members for their contributions, but how can you humanely kill something that does not want to die? Happy animals in paddocks—thank you, Hon Julie Freeman, I absolutely respect your position on this, but you said yourself that you proudly send them off to market, which I guess is just another way of saying to slaughter. I guarantee those animals arriving for slaughter, arriving to the

kill floor, are not happy animals. Cultured meat offers a way to eat meat without raising and slaughtering animals. Thank you to the honourable scientist. It is a pathway out of a system built on cruelty—

Point of order

Hon Jackie Jarvis: I would ask that the member to refer to the honourable member by her correct title.

Hon Amanda Dorn: My apologies.

The President: Honourable member, we are required to refer to all members by their correct title, although I do acknowledge that sometimes we get blocks about people's names. I ask that you refer to the honourable member.

Proceeding resumed

Hon Amanda Dorn: My apologies, honourable Parwinder.

The President: Perhaps try Hon Parwinder Kaur.

Hon Amanda Dorn: I am sorry. My apologies, Hon Parwinder Kaur—my sincere apologies.

Cultured meat offers a way to eat meat without raising and slaughtering animals—that is it. It is a pathway out of a system built on cruelty, violence and intensive farming towards one that reflects the values of compassion and innovation. It is about the environment—animal agriculture being one of the most destructive industries on the planet. The committee's New Bite report made it clear that Australians eat almost twice the recommended amount of red meat and livestock. Supply chains are driving deforestation and emissions. Cultured meat, by contrast, has the potential to cut greenhouse gas emissions. It is about public health. Cultured meat is free from antibiotics and growth hormones and avoids the risks of zoonotic diseases like avian flu, swine flu and salmonella. At a time when antimicrobial resistance is one of the World Health Organization's top global threats, this really matters. It is also about economic opportunity. The global cultured meat market is forecast to grow in millions.

I sincerely thank my colleagues for their contributions to this debate. I also invite members to read the excellent work of the Education and Health Standing Committee in its report titled *New Bite: How alternative proteins could improve dietary and planetary health*, as well as Cellular Agriculture Australia's report titled *White Paper: an opportunity to Diversify Australia's Food System.* Both provide an invaluable foundation for the discussion we are having today. Colleagues, this motion is about not only food technology, but also about the future we choose for Western Australia—a future that is kinder.

I commend the motion to the house.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

FORMAL BUSINESS

Statement

The President (Hon Alanna Clohesy) (11:25 am): As I let members take their chairs, I explain that there being no business before the house currently, I will give the call to the Minister for Agriculture and Food; Fisheries to conduct a small amount of formal business.

Hon Jackie Jarvis (Minister for Fisheries) (11:26 am): Thank you, President, for allowing me to table some additional reports that were not available earlier today.

PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled by **Hon Jackie Jarvis (Minister for Fisheries)**.

STATE ECONOMY—DIVERSIFICATION

Motion

Hon Andrew O'Donnell (11:27 pm) without notice: I move:

> That this house:
>
> (a) Recognises the opportunities presented in the ongoing diversification of the Western Australian economy.
>
> (b) Acknowledges the opportunities afforded to Western Australia due to our location, our natural landscapes, and our natural resources.
>
> (c) Commends the Cook Labor government on its work to enhance opportunities in tourism, creative industries, defence industries and local manufacturing.

Thank you, President, for the opportunity today to move this motion to recognise the importance of diversifying the Western Australian economy and talk about some of the hard work that has been done by the Cook Labor government. It is important to note our starting point. Western Australia has the strongest economy in the nation.

Because of our government's strong economic management, there is no better place to get a quality job and we have more opportunities to invest. WA is a resource-rich state, and our natural resources give us great opportunities, but we need to make sure those opportunities are shared. By diversifying our economy, we can make resilient future challenges. I want to highlight the importance the Premier places on this. In fact, it is the first priority and is listed quite eloquently in the Premier's priority booklet, which I happen to have with me today. I will cover a few areas, but first I want to lay out today that this government did not notice these opportunities by chance; it was not an accident. It has been a mindset since first getting elected in 2017. This government set along a deliberate pathway of creating and seeking out opportunities to support local industries and create local jobs.

When I talk about this motion and the opportunities being presented in our natural landscapes, I cannot go past the Plan for Our Parks initiative delivered by the Cook Labor government. In 2019, we set out to create 5 million hectares of conservation area, and Plan for Our Parks has delivered six and a half million hectares. It is a very large area. For context, it is just shy of the size of Tasmania. I want to recognise the hard work of the minister, Hon Matthew Swinbourn, and the former minister, Hon Reece Whitby, in this area. It is an astonishing achievement that represents a 28% increase in conservation areas since 2019. It has also had a significant economic and employment impact on local communities, with joint management arrangements creating over 280 jobs for traditional owners, largely in regional WA, as well as allowing Aboriginal-run businesses to invest in nature-based and adventure-based tourism opportunities. To date, the government has committed a total of $479 million under the Plan for Our Parks initiative, from its inception through to the end of the forward estimates.

I am delighted to note—I hope to hear some more on this today—the recent announcements by the Premier and ministers Swinbourn, Jarvis and Beazley, of the intention to establish a new marine park spanning the Exmouth Gulf. The gulf is an important habitat for nursing humpback whales and their calves; one of the world's largest populations of dugongs; Australian humpback dolphins; four species of marine turtles and—this is one I had no idea about—unique subterranean fauna that is found nowhere else in the world.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: What about the sea snakes?

Hon Andrew O'Donnell: Well, there are also sea snakes, but it is a diverse motion and I have to talk about some other things as well, but I am glad the minister worked sea snakes into my contribution!

In planning the marine park, the government will adopt a zoning scheme that provides some strong environmental protection while supporting the gulf's ongoing social and economic use. I think the conservation value alone in the Plan for Our Parks and the forthcoming marine park at Exmouth is worthy enough of this fantastic work, but I am also pleased to recognise the economic opportunities that this work brings.

I also want to briefly mention the Aboriginal ranger program, because diversification of the economy means nothing if it does not deliver for people. I am really pleased to say that the Labor government has funded the Aboriginal ranger program, which supports the Aboriginal organisations that lead ranger programs. This Labor government has invested $103 million into the Aboriginal ranger program, creating more than 1,400 jobs for Aboriginal people from 2017 through to today. A further $69.5 million has been committed to continue the program into phase 3, which will be rolled out through to 2030. This is meaningful investment, leading to meaningful employment on country, and it is a cornerstone of this Labor government's commitment to working with traditional owners.

I will speak briefly now on the $165 million that the Cook Labor government has committed as part of the outdoor adventure tourism package. It will upgrade boating facilities, campgrounds, trails and tourist attractions, and encourage more local visitors to regional tourism destinations to support local businesses and diversify those regional economies. This is a really good use of the Plan for Our Parks initiative.

I am going to move on to tourism, because—

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Have you read the paper today?

Hon Andrew O'Donnell: I have read the paper today. In fact, I read it last night. I have some comments on that, if the member wants to go there.

Turning to tourism, it is a growth industry that contributes disproportionately to our economy. In the five years leading up to 2024, we had a 28% growth in visitor spend, contributing $17.2 million to WA's economy. Importantly, that is not just in Perth: $7.6 billion of that visitor spend was spent in our regions, which is important. Our location as Western Australia's gateway continues to grow, boosting tourism as well as trade, with direct flight connections to 20 global cities. We remain the only Australian state with nonstop flights to Europe, with direct routes from Perth to Rome, Paris and London. I note that the Rome service will be expanding shortly, with an extra 10,000 additional inbound seats next year.

I suspect that the opposition member may pick up on our always-on calendar of events, and I do not think we should be apologetic about that.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: You'll be surprised if it's the only thing I pick up on!

Hon Andrew O'Donnell: I do not think we should be apologetic about it, because that always-on calendar of events attracted more than 140,000 out-of-state visitors to WA for events and generated roughly $187 million in economic impact. We attracted Matildas games, we have hosted the NRL State of Origin, and we even brought Coldplay to WA. There were 40,000 tickets purchased from outside WA for Coldplay alone, generating a massive $43.4 million in economic impact. I also note the historic return of the AFL State of Origin match, the first in 26 years. It is sure to be a fantastic match between Western Australia and Victoria and, importantly for our economy, the event is sure to draw thousands of interstate visitors.

Those who know me know that one of my passions is cricket—watching cricket, not playing cricket! My personal favourite event of the summer calendar is coming up: the now-annual West Test. I am really thrilled that this year Perth will not just host the first test of the summer; we will also get to host the first test of the Ashes. It is set to be a massive, massive match, and I know that the ticket sales corroborate that. I am sure that during the match the Barmy Army will do their same old whingey Poms thing, but I absolutely recognise the benefit to our economy of having them here, and I welcome them on that basis. Added to that, a first match win will be all the sweeter with the salty tears of the Barmy Army flowing as they move on to the second match at the Gabba! I want to recognise the efforts of the Premier, the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Tourism in attracting all these high-profile events. There are many more events I could mention and, indeed, I suspect other members may expand on those.

I was going to talk about cruise tourism as well. Some outstanding work is being done in that space. I am going to skip past that, but I will note that the government has been very active in that space because it is an undervalued area of tourism, and one where we can have a big impact. The spike in cruise tourism that has been promoted by this government is going to have a big impact on regional economies—particularly cruise ships returning to Geraldton.

I do not have enough time remaining to do justice to the creative industries, either, but I will single out the government's investment in Perth Film Studios. It is over halfway completed, and that is a clear signal to the industry that the Cook Labor government is here to support it to grow and expand.

I will turn now to defence industries and give that a bit more time. The government identified defence industries as a priority sector with significant growth opportunities, creating both economic and job security for future generations. It has been bandied about that defence is likely to become the third-biggest industry in Western Australia. Going back to what I said at the outset, this trajectory did not happen overnight and did not happen by accident. It has been a road purposefully walked down since 2017, when Labor came to government and established a dedicated defence industry portfolio. We have maintained it ever since. We also established Defence West within the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation. I want to pay tribute to the outstanding advocacy efforts in this space of the Minister for Defence Industries, Hon Paul Papalia. He has done a stellar job of ensuring that Western Australia is recognised not only for our strategic location, but also for our ability to maintain and produce defence assets.

Over the weekend the federal Albanese government announced that it will invest $12 billion towards delivering a defence precinct in Henderson—something I think we can all celebrate, because it will deliver continuous naval shipbuilding here in Western Australia. This is a generational opportunity that is going to create literally thousands of jobs for a generation of people. As I spoke about a number of weeks ago, we are also working to train people for those future needs in that workforce to best take advantage of the opportunities that that sector will bring.

In the last couple of minutes, I want to turn to local manufacturing. I will mention a press release dating back a little while, so some honourable members may not remember it. On 2 April 2017, the then Premier, Hon Mark McGowan, and Hon Rita Saffioti put out a press release entitled "McGowan Government to push for local jobs on stadium bridge project". I note that this was just 22 days after the election of the McGowan government. Only 22 days after being elected, this Labor government moved to fix a situation with this project being far behind schedule by delivering it locally. We are all familiar with the end result. The Matagarup Bridge was opened in the middle of 2018. It was capably built here in Western Australia by Western Australian workers. That project supported about 200 jobs, mostly down in Henderson.

This commitment to local content has continued. It would be remiss of me if I did not mention railcar manufacturing, which I know Hon Dr Steve Thomas is very excited about. I know that he often talks about the percentage of local content, but when we compare this with the B series, I think we can agree that it is a job well done and that local manufacturing is actually back. Metronet C series railcars are the first passenger trains to be locally built and manufactured in more than 30 years. The new railcar manufacturing facility in Bellevue employs around 150 people to make C series railcars, with more than 15 local businesses playing a key role in manufacturing parts for those trains.

I again want to remind members that this does not happen simply by accident; these are purposeful decisions by the government to deliberately support local jobs and employment through regular government expenditure. This was not a casual flirtation with local content. As I think I have demonstrated, we have made a long-term commitment to supporting the local industry. I am thrilled that the Cook Labor government is backing this in

further with $83 million in this year's budget to produce electric buses and ferries in WA, building on the success of railcar manufacturing.

To sum up in the last couple of seconds, I reiterate that diversification is more than a label; it is a mindset. It is a mindset that this government brought in when it was first elected. It is a mindset that has supported local businesses and created local jobs for Western Australians. It did not happen by accident; it was a purposeful plan of a strong government that proactively sought out these opportunities, backed by strong financial management.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas (11:42 am): It must be a Thursday morning! Here we are debating fake meat and fraudulent diversification motions, so it just feels like Thursday, doesn't it!

I listened very carefully to Hon Andrew O'Donnell's contribution and made a note of a couple of things. Members have to realise that when the Labor government has nothing of real importance to talk about, it does two things. First, it moves a motion to condemn the opposition, and usually the opposition of two or three Parliaments ago for something that it did all those years ago.

Hon Andrew O'Donnell interjected.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Hon Andrew O'Donnell might take this is a compliment; he is the new Hon Dr Sally Talbot in the Labor Party at the moment. Well done, you!

The first thing the government does is to move a motion of condemnation. The second thing it does is to move a motion of self-congratulation. This is the expertise of the Labor Party—self-congratulation. The government is very good at self-congratulation by announcing nothing! It reannounces things that it has done 10 times before and congratulates itself for it. It is not done just in the Legislative Council, just in case honourable members were unsure about what was going on; the government also does this in press releases and press conferences. It did it today when it announced the South West Interconnected System transmission plan and reannounced things that it had already announced, with no more funding in it. The government has all these Clean Energy Links. It announced funding for the Clean Energy Link–North. That was announced months ago, but it reannounced it today. Well done; jolly good show, everybody! That is what we are talking about; the government reannounces things all over again.

By the way, there were a couple of great bits in today's announcement. The government has glossy brochures for everything. Well done, Hon Dan Caddy! If you wave a glossy brochure, you do not have to have any substance. This is the new philosophy of government. There are lots of bits that are hilarious in today's announcement, but one bit of today's great announcement was that the government has worked out that it has strategic industrial areas that are important and need power. Hallelujah! Well done, Labor Party; you have done a great job. Strategic industrial parks need energy. It has only taken the government two budgets and 18 months to work that out. Congratulations! I am surprised we are not debating that. Well done! The government has announced that it has worked that out. It has not worked out how it is exactly going to work, but they need power. The government announced that today as well. Well done, everybody; congratulations for working that out. That is a big step for the Labor Party. We are still waiting for a whole-of-system plan, but it has gone that far. Congratulations! Its entire transition plan is two years behind schedule, but well done. It reannounced that again today as well.

What the government has done with this motion today is that it has reannounced the issue that the Labor Party likes to reannounce in this chamber regularly; that is, that it believes in diversification. I listened carefully to Hon Andrew O'Donnell, and I got one quote down exactly; the other one I am not so sure about. He said, I believe, that this government did not notice these opportunities by chance. That was in relation to diversification. I did not get the other one down exactly, but he said a couple of times something along the lines of the government having been working on this since 2017, when it got elected to government. How diversified is the economy, Hon Andrew O'Donnell? How successful has the government been, or does it just talk about it? Does it talk about diversification and reannounce it is talking about diversification, and then it reannounces a reannouncement of talking about diversification and note these little, tiny minor achievements? Another glossy brochure; thank you very much. I should sit down because Hon Dan Caddy can wave that at me. I am convinced by that glossy brochure! That works really well.

Several members interjected.

The Acting President (Hon Dr Brian Walker): Order! I am delighted to see that Thursday morning normality has returned, but I would like a little bit more peace and quiet.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Thank you very much for your protection, Acting President. How effective has the government's diversification plan really been? It has introduced trains, and that is good; we like the train sets. It creates jobs; well done. They are assembly jobs. The government is not actually manufacturing trains; it is bringing them here and assembling them. As Hon Steve—which Steve are you? I get very confused—Martin says, squeegees are still needed to get the mist off the front, and they are made in China. Well done! Congratulations! We love to see this local production.

Hon Dan Caddy: Look at you two. You're just like those Muppets.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: It is unparliamentary to call you "Statler", but we might get there eventually Hon Dan Caddy. Well done; the government has done that little bit.

I love the tourism component. On the day that a story came out saying that the only state in Australia that saw a decrease in tourism, both in visitor numbers and spend, was Western Australia, Hon Andrew O'Donnell stood up and told us what a good job the government was doing in tourism!

Hon Steve Martin: We need another brochure!

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Yes, get a brochure for that! Wave that one around at us. The government has done some great tourism programs. Do members remember Wander Out Yonder? We could never work out who was wandering out there. They could not get workers out yonder, so it had to be Work and Wander out Yonder. If tourists did turn up, they could not actually get served a cup of coffee, so the government had to go to Work and Wander out Yonder. The work bit did not really work. We kept asking questions in Parliament about how many jobs had been created through that process and the answer was almost none. The government has kicked an own goal by putting out that media release this morning on energy and then moving this motion on diversification. I have not had a happier day for ages, Mr Acting President!

Hon Dan Caddy: You're easy to please, honourable member.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: I am very easily pleased. I am waiting for some government activity on diversification. If the government actually develops a significant amount of it, I will be very pleased. But in reality, what does the economics of the state do? The government has been "Lucky" Phil.

Several members interjected.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: The mining sector has underpinned this massive growth in income. What has the government done? Sure, it built Metronet. Well done. Cash was paid most of the way along. Congratulations. I am not sure that Metronet has diversified the economy all that much. It did a good job in creating jobs in the construction industry, in direct competition with all the rest of the construction going on. Well done on that, but apart from Metronet, which did not really diversify the economy—if it did, it was temporary, because the government shifted workers from one area to another—how much actual diversity in the economic situation in Western Australia has the government delivered? The answer is next to none. I am an optimist, though. I am the eternal and overbearing optimist, and I like to see some positivity come through. The honourable member mentioned AUKUS. It is looking reasonably optimistic. I think that is good.

Hon Andrew O'Donnell: For good reason!

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Absolutely. Which federal government started down the AUKUS path?

Hon Steve Martin: That would have been ours.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Which federal government introduced AUKUS?

Hon Dan Caddy interjected.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Let me think.

Hon Andrew O'Donnell interjected.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Would it have been the same federal government that underpinned the GST arrangement?

Several members interjected.

The Acting President (Hon Dr Brian Walker): Order, members! Interjections are always considered disorderly but permitted. I would like this to be a little bit calmer in the interjections.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Thank you, Acting President. They do not like being tweaked and they do not like being held to account; they never have!

It was the same government that gave the state government the GST windfall that also underpinned the economy. AUKUS—thank you, federal coalition; GST—thank you, federal coalition. AUKUS is looking a bit promising, but we have to ask a question around AUKUS: What is the split? Before government members claim AUKUS as a major diversification, I point out that it might just be the only significant diversification made by this government in eight and a half years because apparently it did not notice these opportunities by chance and has been working on them since 2017. The only thing that it might deliver with real diversification—putting aside the energy stuff, which is falling apart—is AUKUS, for which the government should be incredibly grateful to the federal governments, depending on how it looks like in the end.

Hon Andrew O'Donnell interjected.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: I thought it was great; $12 billion from the federal government for AUKUS committed to do all of these wonderful things. We all went, "Yes, that's really good." How much is the state government putting in by comparison? Crickets!

Hon Andrew O'Donnell interjected.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Crickets! How much is the Cook Labor government putting into AUKUS? How much is in the budget for it? There is $12 billion from Hon Anthony Albanese; how much from you guys? I am waiting.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Sunday—that was announced by the Albanese government.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Yes, Sunday. I am waiting. How much? Where is it? Diversification is great. We are still waiting for it. Stop talking about it and start doing it!

Hon Klasey Hirst (11:59 am): I thank Hon Andrew O'Donnell for bringing this motion today, which I am pleased to make a contribution to. The motion recognises the opportunities from diversifying our economy and the advantages in our state of its location, its landscapes and natural resources. The member spoke about the Plan for Our Parks and Aboriginal Ranger programs, which are extremely close to my heart, having worked in the environment minister's office between 2023 and 2025. I want to touch on them again. I thank the member for bringing them to us.

As he mentioned, it was announced in 2019, and we had a target of five million hectares of new conservation estate. This is the largest conservation effort of any Western Australian government. That was delivered last year in December 2024. I had the absolute honour of working for the Minister for Environment when that was delivered. We did not just achieve our target—we smashed it, with 6.5 million hectares achieved. We created new national parks, marine parks and reserve. Really importantly, under joint management, there are more than 20 Indigenous land use agreements with traditional owners for these areas. It is the most extensive native title agreement–making process for conservation in Australia's history. Through this there have been over 280 new full-time positions with Aboriginal Rangers, trainees, marine park staff and joint management coordinators, and tourism leases and visitor infrastructure in these new parks also provide direct opportunities for Aboriginal cultural tourism.

At a personal level, some of these conservation areas were very special when delivered at our office and to me. One of those is the Bunuba National Park in the Kimberley, which is 220,000 hectares. It is part of the Fitzroy River National Park project. Mount Augustus, which is 800,000 hectares, has an ILUA with the Wajarri Yamaji people and 16 ranger positions. The Kalbarri National Park expansion has Nanda joint management. I also refer to the Matuwa Kurrara Kurrara National Park. They are just some examples of the amazing national parks that we created through that process.

I do not have a lot of time but I want to acknowledge on the record the really hardworking Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions staff all across Western Australia—from the senior leaders through to planners, scientists, regional officers and lawyers. Their years of hard work made this achievement possible. I also acknowledge the hard work of one of my colleagues in particular, Joseph Quick, who lived and breathed this project in our office. I recall looking over at him at the event we held to celebrate its delivery and there were a few tears in his eye. It was like he had had another child; it meant so much to him. I just want to acknowledge the hard work that he put into that. Plan for Our Parks is a clear example of diversification, using our unique landscape and cultures as the foundations for jobs, Aboriginal tourism and regional development.

The member also talked about the Aboriginal Ranger program. Again, I had the chance to see that project up close. When I travelled with the minister, I met rangers on the ground. I cannot describe that feeling of what it was like to hear what was happening on the ground. We heard directly from them what that employment meant—the pride of sharing their culture and passing on their knowledge. In particular, I got to visit the Peel region and Albany with the minister last year. It was one of the most amazing experiences I had working in that office. As we have heard, the program started in 2017 and we have delivered about $100 million since its inception. Nearly 1,400 Aboriginal people have been employed, and, really importantly, 45% of those positions are held by women. They do things like manage culture, protect cultural sites, biodiversity research, weed and fire management, tourism, guiding and passing on traditional knowledge. I also want to acknowledge traditional owners across Western Australia. This program works only because of their leadership, their knowledge and their willingness to share it. As I said, from mapping country, managing fire and the weeds and animals to guiding visitors, this rests on generations of knowledge. The program is immensely popular and has very strong demand across Western Australia. It has tangible outcomes for jobs, skills and keeping people on country. There we are again: turning cultural and natural resources into real economic diversification.

I know we talked a bit about tourism; I want to talk a little about ecotourism. That is allowing Western Australians to enjoy and appreciate nature. As we know, tourism is one of the government's nine priorities in investing in diversifying our economy. Ecotourism is about encouraging people to get out and enjoy our beautiful state. This has seen significant government investment. We saw that through the WA Recovery Plan. We saw things like the Great Southern adventure trails and the Valley of the Giants trail network. Karijini National Park has new car parks

and Weano Gorge, Eco Retreat and Dales Gorge have sealed roads. I have spent a lot of time in Karijini; it is one of my favourite places on earth. Those roads are really tough at times so seeing them sealed is really important to facilitate people getting out there. Of course, there is also the cantilevered steel lookout over Knox Gorge.

In the Collie region we have the adventure trails and tourism readiness. There are more trails in Pemberton, Peel, and Kalamunda. There are new campgrounds coming in Yanchep, Purnululu and Fitzroy River. There are also coastal or marine upgrades at the Houtman Abrolhos Islands and the Kalbarri foreshore project, and the iconic trees, the Gloucester Tree and the Dave Evans Bicentennial Tree. These expand ways to experience Western Australia through family camping—thus, opening it up to everybody. It creates regional jobs, especially for traditional owners.

At a more local level, I am really pleased to see the upgrades happening at John Forrest National Park—WA's first national park. It has about 130,000 visitors annually and it is currently undergoing a $17 million redevelopment with a new day-use area, upgraded trails, better parking with a visitor hub and a bridge across Glen Brook are coming too. I acknowledge the hard work and advocacy of the previous local member, Matthew Hughes; this legacy from him will be left for the community up there.

Just on that matter, if members are not aware, next weekend the first WanderFest event is happening up in the Perth hills. I was able to attend its launch in Kalamunda a few weeks ago and took part in a mini walk. I look forward to going again next weekend. There are five guided tours, which are at the FR Berry Reserve in Gidgegannup; Lake Leschenaultia in Chidlow; Piesse Brook, Rocky Pool, in Kalamunda; Settlers Common in Bedfordale; and, of course, Kitty's Gorge, which is an absolute favourite of so many out in Jarrahdale. Other events include the night tour at Perth Observatory and sunset and stargazing out in the Shire of Serpentine Jarrahdale. I encourage members to head up to the hills and take part in one of the walks or go along to one of the supporting events.

Hon Andrew O'Donnell touched very briefly on the creative industries. That is something that I also care about. I had the opportunity to attend one of WA's leading creative regional events last weekend, the Margaret River Regional Open Studios. I had the opportunity to attend the media launch in July on behalf of the Minister for Tourism, Hon Reece Whitby, and also the artist launch in Busselton. It was great to get down to the opening last weekend. That is the largest event of its type in the Southern Hemisphere. In 2023, it had over 12,000 visitors over the 16 days. This year there are 150-plus artists. The event is funded through our regional events program. Like I said, I attended last weekend and had the opportunity to visit nine studios. There were so many highlights, but some of my absolute favourites were Christian Fletcher, who, of course, is the iconic WA landscape photographer, and Mel Jarman and Susie French. It was Susie's first time participating. She recently moved from the Kimberley and her artworks of the Kimberley landscapes are simply inspiring. This is an award-winning program. It took the silver award for best event last year at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards and won the gold award at the 2022 and 2024 WA Tourism Awards. It is free to go. I encourage visitors to stay longer and visit the wineries and cafes. I acknowledge the hard work of the chair, Jim Davies, and the entire board, especially Jacquie Happ, for welcoming me to all the events that I have been to in the past few months. I really do feel like part of the family. Again, that diversifies our economy and adds cultural tourism to WA's regional brand.

While I am on art, I will give another plug to the Mundaring Hills Open Studios event coming up next month. That will involve 81 artists this year, including 30 studios over four venues. The studios spread from Swan View up to Greenmount and into Chidlow and Gidgegannup. I had the opportunity to attend the *A Taste of MHOS* exhibition this week, which runs until next Friday at 111 St Georges Terrace. There are 23 artists on display. I encourage members to pop down and have a look and hopefully come up to the hills again in October and have a good look. The Kalamunda Open Studios event is also coming up. That is held twice yearly, in spring and autumn. These events support artists and small businesses and bring people to the communities. Again, I want to thank Hon Andrew O'Donnell for bringing this important motion to the house.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment) (12:03 pm): I rise to give the government's response to this excellent motion by Hon Andrew O'Donnell. It is always good when we can bring a motion into this chamber to talk about our forward-thinking economic diversification. This is a really important topic, about which those opposite seem to have very little aptitude for advancing any credible argument.

A member interjected.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The opposition is not even a one-trick pony. It might be a half-trick pony with how it deals with policy in this area.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas interjected.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We are talking about a different motion now, member. We not talking about artificial or cultured products anymore.

Why is it important to talk about diversification and to do something about it?

Hon Dr Steve Thomas interjected.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Member, I very respectfully did not interject on you, even though every other member in the chamber may have! Although I plan to be particularly harsh on the member and his comments, I would ask that he listen to them quietly and respectfully.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas interjected.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I will try. To be fair to Hon Dr Steve Thomas, who is a good friend of mine and whose contributions I appreciate. I support his efforts this morning for recycling, which is the argument he puts forward every Thursday morning—it is a recycling of the argument! As Minister for the Environment, who is responsible for the circular economy, I say keep your recycling up, member; it is really great!

This is an excellent motion to talk about diversification because it is really important. We cannot just rely on the traditional industries that we have relied upon for most of this state's history, being mining and agriculture. Those two industries are incredibly important and make a great contribution. The Deputy President might agree with me that agriculture is often not given the prominence it deserves in discussions about the contribution it makes to the Western Australian economy, which is incredibly significant. It is a well-developed and diverse industry in and of itself. Farmers have adapted to the changing climate and improved their applications. Part of the government's efforts to diversify the economy are to produce not only primary products but also the secondary and other products down the food chain. I know that my colleague Hon Jackie Jarvis, the Minister for Agriculture and Food, supports that further downstream work. Obviously, the government is focused on diversifying other areas of our economy away from those two traditional industries. That is not at the expense of those industries, by the way. That is not what we are trying to do. We are ensuring that when the mining industry in particular goes into a down cycle or, ultimately, the ore bodies are mined out, which is an inevitability in some sense, that future generations of Western Australians will have an economy, activities and industries that allow them to maintain a standard of living that we are all comfortable with. That is why our diversification is not limited simply to manufacturing; it is also focused on other areas like the arts and culture. That is why building a film studio in Malaga is an expansion of that. That industry is expanding across the globe. The demand for content on platforms, whether it is streaming or social media platforms, is very high and Western Australia needs to get its piece of pie. We can do that only if we have infrastructure in place like the film studio up there. That will do a range of things. I do not know whether Hon Tim Clifford will get an opportunity to speak on this motion, but he is particularly passionate about programming and the opportunities that exist for us, particularly for our younger people who are engaged in those areas. The government supports those kinds of activities and expanding into that field. Programming is also connected to the film and creative industries area because the development of video special effects, I think it used to be called, is a really big industry. Western Australia is not in the same position as Melbourne, but we have opportunities for our young people to get into those sorts of industries. This government is supporting that at a number of different levels in those areas.

As I said, manufacturing is a really important area and there are things that we can do. I heard part of Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson's speech on the radio this morning at an event at which she said she will be directing the three government trading enterprises within her area—Synergy, Horizon and Western Power—to give preference to local manufacturing. I do not know whether I am doing that a disservice, but, essentially, it will ensure that when local manufacturers can provide those services for the energy transition, they are given the best opportunities to do so. If, for whatever reason, those GTEs do not use a local provider, they must have a very good and solid explanation for why that is in the best interests of the state. I think that is a really positive outcome that will give a lot of assurance to local manufacturers and those who are thinking about investing in the Western Australian economy because they will have certainty that there will be a strong line of work coming through, which will provide jobs all over the state. I am a member who has come from the outer metropolitan area. We tend to have our light and heavy industrial areas within the metropolitan area. Obviously, we are also supporting other strategic industrial areas.

I want to go through a list of some of the key budget measures that are connected to our Made in WA policy. We are very proud to be putting Made in WA front and centre as a policy and a focus of this government. The Premier in particular repeats that mantra. It is really important, because it keeps bringing up the importance of the diversification of our economy through using those three words.

We have $83 million to produce electric buses and ferries in WA, which builds on our success in railcar manufacturing. I know that the member has said that it is assembly, but I will quibble with him; I think it is manufacturing. "Manufacture" and "assemble" are synonyms; they are interchangeable. The point is that workers out there are engaged in productive work for this state. It is happening here in Western Australia, not somewhere else. That is the really key point: that is being done here.

There is $50 million for the Housing Innovation Fund and $50 million to establish the Perth biomedical precinct to support the co-location of world-leading medical manufacturers. I know that the Minister for Medical Research, Hon Stephen Dawson, has been particularly supportive of the opportunities that exist here. We created the Future

Health Research and Innovation Fund in our first term of government, which has provided a steady stream of investment into both medical research and innovation. Again, that is something that has boundless opportunities to help us, as a knowledge state and as a state that sits on the Indian Ocean rim, to engage with others. It is a fantastic opportunity. As I say, there is $50 million to establish the biomedical precinct to support co-location. It is a bit like in *Field of Dreams*: "If you build it, he will come." That is essentially what some of that is for.

There is $50 million towards the local battery manufacturing program; a $40 million boost to the new industries and innovation fund; $30 million for a further round of funding for new energy industries through the Investment Attraction Fund; $25 million towards our commitment to manufacture transmission towers and components in Forrestfield and Picton and establish a local industry development fund; $8.9 million to support the Exploration Incentive Scheme; $500 million in additional investment in the Strategic Industries Fund, taking it to over $1 billion over 10 years; a $584 million investment in the Clean Energy Link–North project; $543 million to increase the capacity of the Goldfields pipeline by 7.2 gigalitres a day; a $349 million investment in our ports to grow our economy and export capacity around WA; and $107 million to expand and activate the Hope Valley and Postans industrial areas in Kwinana.

The point is that when it comes to getting the rubber to the road on manufacturing, we are backing our local manufacturers, and we have a plan to continue to support them on this.

I have just noticed that I have run out of time. Once again, I congratulate the member for bringing the motion to the house and for the opportunity to debate it today.

Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur (12:13 pm): We hear about the lucky state a lot, but I have been hearing in my life that chance or luck only favours a prepared mind. I am very proud to say that WA has shown that preparedness. I thank Hon Andrew O'Donnell so much for bringing this excellent motion to the house.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas interjected.

Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur: Honourable member, I would please request no interjections. I very respectfully listened to the member.

I thought we should look at where we are standing at this moment. We are literally sleepwalking into the future. We do not know how to tell our kids or the next generation what sorts of jobs they will be doing in the next five years. It is something that really worries me and I think about it a lot. It is one of the key reasons that I stand here and have become part of this amazing team that is delivering not just a future for WA but a future that is Made in WA. That is something that I would like to be part of, and I would like to put my best foot forward to make that the future that we all want to see for our kids.

While I am talking about future jobs, last week I was invited to the St Catherine's College scholars' dinner at Curtin University. I go to the scholars' dinner every year. This time I happened to meet the keynote speaker, who is known to be the world's number one futurist. I did not know jobs like that existed in today's world. I was really impressed by the keynote speech given by Mark van Rijmenam, which was about the book that he has written. Something really profound that I learnt that day is that whatever the jobs of the future look like, we need to prepare for them today.

As a country, we stand in the bottom one-third of the nations listed in Harvard University's *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*. We have recently slipped behind Botswana, with a ranking of 105 out of the 145 countries listed in *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*. I am really proud to say that the Western Australian Government has taken a step forward and is the very first state government to be going into the future with a plan. We are talking about not just a 10-year science and technology plan, which we are the only state to have, but also a future that builds on our strategic strengths, which is not a lucky thing to do but a very clever thing to do. To have nine priority sectors as the state's strategic strengths takes away the anxiety and puts us into action to deliver that future. As we navigate this space, we do not have many shots. We have this one really amazing opportunity in a time window in which we can deliver that future of abundance, and we can co-create it together starting right from this chamber.

The key diversification sector of the resources industry is the renewables and critical minerals industry, which has been one of the greatest trends in our state. Some really brilliant data shows the improvement. Western Australia's gross state product grew cumulatively by 6.8% across three years to 2023–24 and the non-mining sector recorded solid growth in 2023–24, indicating that Western Australia is becoming less reliant on the mining industry to generate growth. Non-mining investment of $36 billion in 2023–24 was achieved. The Diversify WA plan gave confidence to the rest of the world to invest in our state. Employment also grew by 1.6 million. Employment grew by 3.2% in 2022–23 and by a further 3.8% in 2023–24. More Western Australians are employed than ever before. That is progress. That tells us that we are going in the right direction. According to the Diversify WA update, we made significant contributions that accounted for 47% of Australia's total goods exports in 2023–24 and 48% of total Australian merchandise exports in March 2025. We are a very fortunate state because we have a Aaa credit rating. That does not come automatically; it comes from responsible economic management.

When we talk about renewable energy in the strategic industrial areas that we are developing, it is not just about the investment. There has been a lot of progress, including with hydrogen hubs. Over $270 million in combined investment from the Western Australian and Australian Governments supports three hydrogen hubs in the Pilbara, Mid West and Kwinana. It is not about growth in city postcodes only; it takes into account other regions as well. Our studies suggest that developing carbon capture hubs could boost gross state product by $55 billion between 2030 and 2050. Our lithium exports grew by 20 times between 2020–21 and 2021–22, with the state producing around half the world's lithium.

That is also what leads us to battery and critical minerals processing investment. Since 2015, almost $9 billion has been invested into projects manufacturing battery chemicals and separated rare earth oxides in Western Australia. This is all happening here in Western Australia. It is not something that can be achieved overnight, but can be achieved with strategy and building on our strengths, which we are doing very effectively at this moment.

I come to tourism. I am very excited to share some interesting findings that I made recently with my parliamentary research student, who started a project looking at science tourism in Western Australia and how our landscape, location and the amazing country that we all enjoy can look into getting better STEM opportunities and engagement in our state. Josephine is a student who I am co-supervising with Professor Amanda Davies from the University of Western Australia. She is doing a parliamentary research project on "Science meets the outback: unlocking the potential of science tourism in Western Australia". I look forward to sharing the findings with all members in November once she wraps up her project. I will tell members that the Cook government had already laid the groundwork for us to do a project like this by investments in tourism, manufacturing, defence and clean energy. We have not fully gone into science tourism, but it is something that I look forward to seeing grow in Western Australia. Given that we have the best dark skies and the best reef in the world at the same time as having the largest supercomputers—we are building the biggest telescope in the world—who would be better placed than us to explore those aspects of tourism?

We do not just have natural advantages. In 2023–24, 11.8 million international and domestic visitors came to or travelled in WA, spending a record $18.3 billion, with 45% of that being spent in the regions. This is a record high for Western Australia and 36% ahead of 2019 levels. Creative industries were touched on by my colleagues, but I like to mention international education, which has also added record investments into our state. It is estimated that the contribution to WA's economy by international students is $2.9 billion. All I would like to say is that this is something we should continue to do. It is something that we have an opportunity to co-create for WA. I commend my colleague Hon Andrew O'Donnell for bringing this excellent motion to the house.

Hon Ayor Makur Chuot (12:23 pm): I have few minutes to speak. I thank my colleague Hon Andrew O'Donnell for this fantastic, important motion moved in our house today.

I am really pleased to support this fantastic motion, which was slightly criticised by my colleague Hon Dr Steve Thomas when he spoke about Metronet. As someone who lives in Ellenbrook, I have seen the benefit of our young people getting out of Ellenbrook because, as members know, Ellenbrook does not have a lot of opportunities for our young people. They have to travel to go to TAFE, work or other opportunities and for many other reasons, so I wanted to get up today to say that this is a fantastic motion. It is a very important motion that rightly recognises the opportunities presented for the ongoing diversification of Western Australia's economy.

We know that our state has long powered the world's resources sector. Our government is ensuring that our economy is diverse, resilient and ready to meet the challenges of tomorrow's future. Western Australia is uniquely placed to capitalise on our location, with our natural landscapes and abundant natural resources. More than that, we are investing in our people, as I mentioned to my colleague, our industries and infrastructure to ensure that the jobs of the future are created right here in Western Australia.

I will speak briefly on local manufacturing. We are putting manufacturing at the heart of Western Australia's economy through our Made in WA plan. This year's budget delivered a further $2.7 billion investment into our economic infrastructure, which includes $50 million for the Housing Innovation Fund, $50 million for a local battery manufacturing program, $25 million for new transmission tower manufacturing in Forrestfield and Bicton, and a $5 million boost to the Strategic Industry Fund, taking it to $1 billion over the next 10 years. We are also making a record investment in clean energy, which is much needed in our current life. Investing in industry, land, ports, water security and local manufacturing means creating more jobs here in WA, keeping the supply chain secure and ensuring that pride returns to the words "Made in WA", which is our focus as a government.

In my next minute I will quickly touch on tourism. The tourism and creative industries are also thriving in our state. Tourism is WA's fifth-largest employer, supporting more than 120,000 jobs and contributing nearly $16 billion to our economy. We have set an ambitious target of $25 billion in visitor spend by 2033 and are well on our way to achieve this. International visitor spend in our wonderful state grew to $2.6 billion in 2024, with visitors from China, Singapore, the United Kingdom and New Zealand leading the way. New aviation links and discount airfare programs are helping more visitors discover our beautiful regions. Our major events are putting

Perth and WA on the world stage. Our local events include the Kings Park Lightscape and Broome's Shinju Matsuri Festival.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

EVIDENCE BILL 2025

Third reading

Hon Dan Caddy (Parliamentary Secretary) (12:28 pm): I move:

That the bill be now read a third time.

Hon Nick Goiran (Leader of the Opposition) (12:28 pm): I rise on behalf of the opposition to speak on the third reading of the Evidence Bill 2025. The house has to report to you, Deputy President, that the bill that was considered and agreed to by the house at the second reading stage is not the same bill that is presently before us. Members may recall that when the parliamentary secretary introduced this legislation to the house, bill number 9 for this year, it was the bar-2 bill that was introduced. In other words, that bill was different from the bill that was introduced in the other house earlier this year. I will expand on that a little more in a moment.

At this time, Deputy President, it is the duty of the house to report to you the outcomes of what occurred during the Committee of the Whole House process. As a result of the Committee of the Whole House process, we now have a different bill, which we intend to send to the other place for agreement. I want to spend some time, in the limited opportunity that I have now, to unpack some of those changes that have been made and the necessity and desirability of those amendments, which will then be considered by the other place.

It is a curious ongoing convention of this place that when the other place makes amendments to legislation what then gets introduced to this place is a full copy of the legislation and it is then marked as bar 2. That is a helpful ongoing convention because it ensures that when members are then considering, in this case, the Evidence Bill 2025, there is no question about what it is that they are being asked to agree to. It is not the same piece of legislation as what was introduced in the Legislative Assembly; therefore, members are presented with these bar-2 bills.

What is curious about the ongoing convention is that after we pass amendments in the Committee of the Whole House process, and perhaps after this third reading, and we then send the bill back to the other place, we do not actually send a bar-3 bill back to the other place for its concurrence. We simply say to the members of other place that we have agreed to the bill and we have these other ancillary amendments that we would like them to agree to, and, potentially, we could have some kind of political Mexican stand-off between the houses with regard to those particular amendments.

The reason I raise that at this time is, as a passing observation, I think it would be useful—not that I am expecting this to change—when members are being asked to agree to the third reading of a bill, as we are now being asked to do, that there is some document that accumulates everything it is that we are being asked to agree to. In terms of the documents that I have before me, I have this massive Evidence Bill 2025, a bar-2 bill that was introduced by the hardworking parliamentary secretary some time ago. I also have in my possession the supplementary notice paper (SNP)—in particular, SNP 9, issue 2. In a sense, it is the combination of these two things that then become the law that we are being asked to agree to. But it is a not entirely satisfactory process because, of course, just because I have an SNP 9, issue 2, does not necessarily mean that the house has agreed to all the items that are on the SNP. As it so happens in this instance—this is why I think it is an instructive example—that did actually happen.

I am pleased to report to the Deputy President that the work of the Committee of the Whole House was to examine not only the entirety of this bill, but also the proposed amendments. Members who are familiar with the course of this matter will know that three amendments were moved by me, the bulk of the amendments were moved by the hardworking Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General, as well as—I think by quick count—a further seven amendments, and so all 10 amendments were agreed to by the house, and it is that entire package that we are being now asked to agree to as the third reading.

Having made those introductory remarks, I turn now to the sequence of events that have brought us to this place, particularly as we consider, and I think the government has not unfairly made some point about this, that this is the most significant change to the evidence laws in WA since their inception in 1906. It is not something that WA has evidently been willing to engage in on a frequent basis let alone a complete rewrite of the Evidence Act, and so it is fair for people to ask the question: Why are we doing this?

The reason why we are doing this—this is why the opposition agrees with the government; this is an important reform—is that most of the other jurisdictions of Australia are operating under a common set of principles, a common set of laws, when dealing with evidence. Western Australia does not have that; it has its own standalone act, and I believe, if I remember correctly from the discussion that I had with the parliamentary secretary during Committee of the Whole House, once this bill passes, assuming that it does and is agreed to by the other place, I think it may be then that South Australia will be the only jurisdiction—possibly Queensland, but certainly South

Australia—that has its own standalone Evidence Act. Therefore, in part, the reason that the opposition and the government have agreed to do this, and hopefully the entire house will agree to it, is to ensure that throughout Australia evidence laws are as uniform as they can be.

However, it is important to note that even if this bill passes at this third reading now, Western Australia's evidence law will not be identical to the other jurisdictions because a number of carve outs have been included, and the work that was done during the Committee of the Whole House only further reinforced that. In a moment I will get to the business record rules' issue and the special rule that was reinstated because of the advice of a combination of the Director of Public Prosecutions and Parliamentary Counsel's Office, which saw a set of amendments moved by the parliamentary secretary, which were agreed to by the Committee of the Whole House and which I would encourage members to agree to now at this third reading.

The Committee of the Whole House process was substantial, and I commend the parliamentary secretary for the way in which it was handled. He has certainly taken up the mantle from his predecessor in handling the substantial pieces of legislation. I certainly appreciated the way in which the questions that were posed were well considered and that advice was taken, and I have already put on the record at the conclusion of the Committee of the Whole House my appreciation for those who were obviously assisting the parliamentary secretary. The process was substantial. We started on 9 September, albeit perhaps the Leader of the House and the parliamentary secretary will recall it was a microscopic examination of clause 1. I think I got to ask one question and perhaps the parliamentary secretary started responding to that and then we had to adjourn proceedings, so no real work in terms of scrutiny was done on 9 September. The bulk of the work, it has to be said, took place over three sitting days, not full sitting days, but on Wednesday 10 September, Thursday 11 September and then Tuesday of this week on 16 September. To the extent that changes were made, I particularly want to draw to the Deputy President's and members' attention that the Committee of the Whole House agreed to what I consider to be an important amendment on the commencement clause.

Members who have been here for a little while will know that for some time I have been at pains to ensure that the ongoing findings of the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review, with regard to parliamentary sovereignty, are maintained Parliament after Parliament, and we will be doing that, Deputy President, if we agree to the third reading of this bill. Members may well be aware that certainly in the 40th Parliament the composition of this house was not significantly different from what we have here in the sense that the Labor Party had won government and had a substantial number of members, but it did not have absolute control of the Parliament. The opposition had a substantial number of members, but, equally, it was unable to do anything by itself, and it ultimately boiled down to other political parties to influence the outcome on any particular day.

There was consistent preparedness throughout the 40th Parliament for this house to re-exert its authority to decide when a law comes into effect. It may, on occasion, decide to delegate that power to executive government and leave it to determine when a law is to come into effect, to be done by way of proclamation. The 40th Parliament consistently pursued that important principle. I note that I felt that principle was completely abandoned in the 41st Parliament. Despite the best efforts of some of us to try to ensure that consistency, it was ignored. I am very pleased to report that, today, we will see the reinstatement of that important principle. It is for this house and this Parliament to determine when laws will commence. It cannot be the case that we just lazily, and I would say recklessly, hand over that responsibility to executive government. There is a time and a place for it.

Something as basic and routine as a review clause does not need executive government to decide if and when it is going to come into effect. I have no faith that the other house would bother to implement such a clause, but if this house has decided that it is necessary for there to be a statutory review, then that is what this house has decided to do. The time will begin to run immediately, rather than having the dangerous situation in which a government might decide that despite the fact that the Legislative Council wanted a statutory review, it will make sure that it does not proclaim that particular provision. I hasten to add, in fairness, might there be any suggestion that it is an aspersion on anybody, that I have not seen executive government do that, whether the Labor Party or the Liberal Party has been in power, but let us make sure that that is never the case and that no funny business goes on.

Clause 2 has been amended; it is not the same as it was when the second reading was agreed to. As we read this bill for a third time, clause 2 has changed for the better. Members may be aware that the review clause is found in part 10 of the bill, and specifically in clause 384. Time will begin to run in respect of that review clause from the day after the bill receives royal assent, which I imagine will be in the next few days.

After some examination and, indeed, amendment of clause 2, the parliamentary secretary and I had an interesting discussion and dialogue about clause 3. That revealed a number of things. In particular, I note for the benefit of members that clause 3 deals with the various terms that are to be used in this bill. The clause, in itself, is massive. It starts on page 3 of the bill and continues all the way up until page 14. It is a massive clause that sets out the terms to be used. The term that we particularly scrutinised at the time was "person acting judicially". What that revealed is that there are, in my view—I do not know that this is necessarily shared by the government—inconsistencies in how this bill is going to treat provisions that deal with individuals who are said to be acting judicially. Allow me to just explain that momentarily with the benefit of the information that was unpacked during

Committee of the Whole House. I do not know that the government would necessarily quibble with the point that I will make, but it is pretty clear that the State Administrative Tribunal is being treated in a different fashion from other individuals who are said to be acting judicially. It is ultimately for the government to defend the case as to why there would be what I describe as an inconsistency here; nevertheless, that was identified during the consideration of clause 3.

The parliamentary secretary will recall that we had some discussion about quasi-judicial officers. The government will be aware of some of my concerns about the lack of accountability for quasi-judicial officers in Western Australia under our system. In my view, it is a curiosity that judicial officers in Western Australia seem to have a greater accountability to Parliament—it is not a great accountability to Parliament, but it is greater—than quasi-judicial officers. Let us be clear here: a judicial officer ought to always be considered superior to a quasi-judicial officer. The Parliament has the power, on a motion passed by its two houses, to remove a judicial officer, yet it would seem that we do not need to have that power with regard to a quasi-judicial officer. Ultimately, that substantive issue is a debate to be had on another day. The point at clause 3 of the bill is about the term "person acting judicially". I turn specifically to the clause that we are about to agree to. I hasten to say that we, the opposition, will be agreeing to it, but I hope that those who ultimately undertake the work of a statutory review in due course will recall this, because I was at pains to make the point at clause 3 that this ought to be considered in five years time when the act is reviewed. We are going to repeal the *Evidence Act 1906*. We are about to repeal the evidence law that came into effect in Western Australia more than 100 years ago and replace it with this gigantic new law, and there is at least one provision in here that warrants a further closer look in five years time when they will be required to review this law. That is because the definition of "person acting judicially" at page 9 of the bill reads as follows:

> (a) means any person or body having, in this State, by law or by consent of the parties, authority to hear, receive and examine evidence; but
>
> (b) does not include —
>
> (i) the State Administrative Tribunal or a member of the State Administrative Tribunal exercising the jurisdiction of the Tribunal; or
>
> (ii) a member of a House of Parliament or a committee of a House, or both Houses, of Parliament who, by law, has authority to hear, receive and examine evidence;

In other words, what happens at clause 3, as made clear during the examination of it during Committee of the Whole House, is that we have this broad definition of a person acting judicially, which is any person who has the authority to hear, receive and examine evidence. What was uncovered during the examination of clause 3 is that that includes the chief assessor for criminal injuries compensation in this state and those who take and hear evidence at WorkCover, to give just two quick examples. All these individuals are captured by this definition of "person acting judicially", but not the State Administrative Tribunal. The State Administrative Tribunal is not to be included in this context. It is interesting. I wonder whether members are aware that the President of the State Administrative Tribunal is a Supreme Court judge. I wonder whether members are aware that the Deputy President of the State Administrative Tribunal is a District Court judge. A Supreme Court judge and a District Court judge are the two head honchos of the State Administrative Tribunal, and then there are all the other tribunal members. We are saying here that they do not meet the definition of a person acting judicially. People should ask why we are doing that.

That was the question that I posed to the parliamentary secretary at clause 3. I commend him again for the way in which he handled those matters. Although there could not be a meeting of the minds on that occasion, I want to get it on the record during the third reading: I expect this matter to be addressed in five years time when the statutory review is conducted. Hopefully some of us will be around in five years time to follow up on this. If I am here following this up, those who are here will remember this day and they will say, "Yes, I remember when the honourable member was making quite a point about the definition of a person acting judicially".

I move on now and I assure the parliamentary secretary I do not intend to take as long reporting back to the house in respect of all of the other clauses, given that I have only managed to get up to clause 3 and there are some 492 clauses. I think the parliamentary secretary would agree that the bulk of the work was done early on. Many of the other matters were non-contentious and ancillary to the process.

I do at this time, Deputy President, wish to draw to your attention that at clause 6 there was what I would say was quite an interesting discussion about what is defined as "references to documents". In particular, I took some time during Committee of the Whole House to examine clauses 6, 7 and 8, as a package, dealing with "References to documents", "Representations made in documents" and "References to availability of documents and things". The reason that this was done is that it becomes very clear to anybody who has a particular interest in this matter, and very clear to members, that "documents" includes the package of documents that was tabled by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health Infrastructure. These sittings are usually referred to as the spring sittings. It is another interesting little convention in the Parliament here that we have these autumn sittings and spring sittings.

We are currently considered to be in the spring sittings, notwithstanding the fact that we started these post–winter recess sittings in August. Be that as it may, during these spring sittings the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health Infrastructure tabled a set of documents, including a memorandum to the house and documents with regard to the rapid radiation leakage issue at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital.

The point is that the "References to documents", "Representations made in documents" and "References to the availability of documents and things" in this Evidence Bill 2025 all reinforce the point that these documents that were tabled in this place by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health Infrastructure—after, I might add, quite a bit of work had to be done by the opposition because the minister himself in the other place was so resistant to having this information tabled. I will leave it to other members to decide why it would be possibly the case that Minister Carey would take so long to have these particular documents tabled, but that is what the record reflects. Nevertheless, those particular clauses of the bill, which were examined at length during Committee of the Whole House, reconfirm that those documents and the representations on them could indeed be considered evidence that could be relied upon at any particular hearing on a later occasion.

There was also examination during Committee of the Whole House in respect of clause 13, "References to offspring and parents". Those members who were participating at that particular time will recall that there was this interesting discussion that took place around the distinction between children and offspring. Today is not the day to relitigate those issues, but for those who have a keen interest in the distinction between the definition of offspring and a child, I would commend to them the examination and scrutiny that took place at clause 13.

Examination also took place in respect of a number of other clauses early on in the bill, including clause 15, "Extended application of certain provisions". This goes to my earlier point about a person acting judicially and the definition of a tribunal and so forth. In addition, the Committee of the Whole House considered clause 19, "Application of the common law and equity". It is important to note that clause 19, which I imagine we are going to agree to momentarily, is unchanged from the second reading. It reads, if I can summarise it this way, that the common law—in other words, the law that develops over time by the courts of Western Australia—is not affected by the operation of this bill unless it has been expressly said to be so. One thing we can take from that is that, as you would expect and as is rightly the case, the Parliament is not interfering with the courts' capacity to continue to allow the common law to develop hereon in. There was quite a discussion between me and the parliamentary secretary trying to identify, at the end of the day, to what extent the government is trying to codify those common law principles and rules that have developed over time in this particular bill. It is doing that in large part but not, could we say, in an exhaustive fashion. That was really the point at clause 19.

I turned then to clause 25, and the clauses that surrounded that, dealing with compellability of witnesses. I wish I had more time than what we have today to deal with this, but there was quite an examination about a difference of approach taken to compelling a person to take witness. I implored members of this place at that time—I appreciate that some members may well have been away on urgent parliamentary business—to be familiar with the fact that this bill gives them, as members of Parliament, a special privilege: as a member of Parliament they cannot be compelled to give evidence in a court if it would interfere with the member sitting in this place. For example, if a member were told they were compelled to appear in a court tomorrow on Friday 19 September, yes, that would be permissible. The member would be compelled to attend. In fact, the only way that a member of Parliament would not be able to do that, or to avail themselves of some mechanism, would be if they had a committee hearing. I do not know, but perhaps tomorrow one of the committees may well be meeting. If a member were on a committee tomorrow taking evidence on the review of the firearms legislation, or something like that, and being compelled to appear before a court tomorrow, the member would be able to say, "No, I won't be attending actually" and they would be able to rely on this particular provision in the act. Might I say, it is entirely appropriate that that be the case.

A lot of that work was done then on Wednesday 10 September. I will quickly now turn to some of the scrutiny and examination that was undertaken on Thursday 11 September.

The Deputy President: Order, member! Noting the time, does the member wish to seek leave to continue his remarks at a later stage?

Hon Nick Goiran: Deputy President, I might note that I am being compelled—no, I am not! I am being requested by the Leader of the House to seek leave, and I do so.

Leave granted for the member's speech to be continued at a later stage of the sitting.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Lauren Cayoun**.

(Continued at a later stage of the sitting.)

Sitting suspended from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

ANNUAL REPORTS—TABLING

Statement

Hon Samantha Rowe (Parliamentary Secretary) (2:02 pm): I rise to inform the house about the late tabling of some 2024–25 annual reports. A number of agencies are unable to table their 2024–25 annual reports within the timeframe required by the *Financial Management Act 2006*. Section 64 of the act requires ministers to table an agency's annual report and the Auditor General's opinion, if applicable, within 90 days of the financial year's end, being 28 September for most agencies. If a minister is unable to table an agency's annual report within the 90-day period, under section 65 of the act, they are required to inform Parliament as such on or before the expiry of the 90 days, the reasons for that inability and the anticipated date on which the annual report will be tabled.

Following precedent set in 2017, these accountability requirements are administratively achieved by way of tabling individual ministerial notifications in Parliament through one minister—the Treasurer in the Legislative Assembly and the minister representing the Treasurer in the Legislative Council—on behalf of other ministers. Ministers have notified the Treasurer in writing of the agencies within their portfolios that are unable to table their annual report by the required date, as well as the reasons for that inability and the anticipated dates on which the annual report will be tabled.

Therefore, in accordance with section 65 of the act, and on behalf of the Treasurer, I now table the notifications provided by affected ministers.

(See paper 615.)

EVIDENCE BILL 2025

Third reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

Hon Nick Goiran (Leader of the Opposition) (2:04 pm): I rise to continue the third reading debate on the Evidence Bill 2025. Before I do, I pass my congratulations to Hon Samantha Rowe on her elevation to the minister representing the Treasurer, pursuant to the recent tabled statement! I should say for the benefit of Hansard that is said in jest!

As we are considering the Evidence Bill 2025, members will be aware that prior to the luncheon interval we were considering a number of the clauses that have been scrutinised at length in the Committee of the Whole House process. At that time, I had been particularly considering clause 25 and the clauses in that division of the bill—part 2, division 1—dealing with the broader issue of the competence and compellability of witnesses. I had drawn to the attention of members that the examination of those clauses reconfirmed the privilege that exists for members of Parliament to resist any compulsion for them to give evidence in court or at a hearing in the limited circumstances it would impact upon their parliamentary duties in terms of a parliamentary sitting or a parliamentary committee meeting. I should say as well that the clauses examined in part 2, division 1, subdivision 1 of the bill also looked at issues of the competence and compellability of judges and jurors. Then, quite a bit of time was spent looking at a special provision to deal with witnesses in public revenue cases.

The examination of clause 29 was comprehensive but perhaps dissatisfying. The reason I say that is that to the best of my recollection, the examination of clause 29 made it clear that this special rule of evidence that will apply to public revenue cases seems not to be really used. Clause 29 indicates that it only applies to proceedings that might be described as a proceeding for a contravention of a provision of the *Duties Act 2008* or a proceeding for a contravention of a provision of an act relating to the public revenue and/or any proceeding brought by or on behalf of, or against, the state under a provision of an act referred to in those two previous paragraphs—that is, the *Duties Act 2008* or an act relating to the public revenue. Upon examination of that clause it became clear that it is not really being used and these sorts of proceedings are not really on foot. If I recall correctly, I asked for some data to be provided. In fairness to the parliamentary secretary, that data was not readily available. But I question the necessity of clause 29, which, as I say, is a special provision dealing with witnesses in public revenue cases. Nevertheless, it is what it is. It is being retained. There was no motion on the part of the opposition or any member to have it deleted. There was an extensive examination of the clause but, as I say, it was ultimately a little dissatisfying that we were not really able to get to the bottom of the necessity for the clause to be retained.

I should also add in passing—it was perhaps remiss of me not to mention this earlier—that this gigantic bill before us has an extensive number of notes. I think it is worth putting on the record that those notes are worthwhile because they provide for members using what will be the Evidence Act 2025 a comparison with the provision in either the existing 1906 Western Australian law or, alternatively, the Commonwealth law and, on occasion, the New South Wales law. In other words, it is an indication of where the provision came from in the pursuit of conformity.

It is also worth noting at this point, if it is not already obvious, that specific scrutiny and examination was not undertaken on every single clause in this gigantic bill. The bill has some 492 clauses. Many were passed over, not

in the sense that they were unimportant but because there was, in the view of members evidently, not a necessity to pose particular questions on those clauses. At clause 57, examination was undertaken on what is described as a restriction on who can directly cross-examine a witness. One might say that, from a procedural point of view, this was the most contentious or controversial area of the examination by the Committee of the Whole House. Briefly, by way of explanation for that, it is fair to say that it was the only clause on which the Committee of the Whole House divided and there was a divergence of views on how clause 57 should be addressed. It is worth noting very briefly at the third reading stage of the bill what that commotion was all about.

I should say, particularly in fairness to the hardworking parliamentary secretary, that the amendment that I moved was entirely without notice. I appreciate that members in the chamber had to get their head around what was going on with clause 57 in a very short space of moments—perhaps, at best, I might charitably say "a few minutes". I seem to recall that there was a time when there were not too many of us in the chamber—maybe barely a quorum—and then all of a sudden the chamber was full. The reason for that was what I might describe as a gentlemanly dispute between the parliamentary secretary and me on the necessity of one of the limbs of clause 57. I wish to take a moment to explain that now.

Clause 57, as it is about to be passed, says:

> (1) In a criminal proceeding, an accused who is not represented by legal counsel—

So, an unrepresented accused individual—

> is not entitled to directly cross-examine —
>
> (a) a child; or
>
> (b) if the proceeding is for a sexual offence — the complainant …

Then there is a third scenario, and that is if the proceeding is for what is described as a criminal or identified organisation offence. What we as a house are saying—it is worth noting that this is no different from section 106G of the existing 1906 act—is that we do not want an unrepresented accused person to be able to directly cross-examine a child, a complainant in a sexual offence case or a person who is involved in a criminal or identified organisation offence. We might think of an outlaw motorcycle gang or something of that nature.

As the parliamentary secretary, to his credit, quite rightly pointed out during the scrutiny of the clause, that is not to say that a person is unable to have any form of cross-examination. In fact, there are mechanisms that allow the person to pose their questions—for example, via the presiding officer. It would be a bit like if I wanted to ask a question of Hon Dan Caddy and I was not able to ask him directly, I would have to pose it through you, Acting President, and you might then articulate the question to the person to whom it is directed. That is how the process works at the moment. But there was this contentious extra provision that the government sought to defend on the basis of futureproofing, which would allow—when this bill passes for the third time, it will be the case—the government, at any time that it likes, to prescribe other scenarios in which that special arrangement would take place.

Why I objected so strongly to that at the time is that futureproofing has become the norm in the lawmaking of Western Australia. Every time a question is asked about why we are giving these special regulation-making powers to executive government—it is, I think unfortunately, a side-effect of the 41st Parliament and has now become the norm—whichever minister or parliamentary secretary is representing the government on a particular bill just routinely regurgitates the line that it has been included for futureproofing purposes. The question that I really wanted members at the time that I called the division to consider was whether that is the standard that we are prepared to accept as a house of review. When anyone comes to the table and says, "We would like to include this provision for futureproofing purposes", are we prepared to just continue to say yes? My strong submission at the time, which, it needs to be acknowledged, did not enjoy the consensus of a majority of the chamber, was that that is not what we want to be doing. If executive government would like to have the special lawmaking privilege of being able to write in, at the stroke of a pen, a new law or provision, it has to justify it.

Indeed, there are circumstances in which those kinds of scenarios are justified. Quickly, by way of example, I give the scenario in which a person needs to complete a form consistent with what has been prescribed in the regulations. We do not want to sit here in the house of review and agonise over the manner and form of the form itself. That is not a good use of the time of the house of review. That is an important administrative matter that should be delegated to executive government; it can determine what the form looks like. The job of the house is just to say that an important protective mechanism is that a form exists. That is an example of when the house delegating regulation-making power to the government is appropriate. But my submission at the time, and I put it again now on the third reading of the bill, but not with the intent of opposing the third reading—to be absolutely clear, the opposition will be supporting the third reading of the bill, but I want to get this on the record for the benefit of the 42nd Parliament—was that the government needs to do better than to simply say that it is including it for futureproofing purposes. As I said, I know that that was not sufficiently persuasive on that occasion, but I hope it has been somewhat instructive for further consideration of future bills.

I would be somewhat dismayed, Acting President, if we get to the end of the 42nd Parliament and, as a house of review, each and every time a question is asked about a regulation-making power, the answer provided is that it is for futureproofing purposes, and we accept that every single time for the duration of the next four years. I would be dismayed at that outcome. I do hope we are able to, in a respectful fashion, in the fashion in which we have a duty, challenge executive government on this, not in an adversarial fashion, but just by asking for justification and for it to be put on the record why this regulation-making power is necessary. Be that as it may, some time was spent on that point at clause 57, and I report that, at this time, clause 57 remains unchanged despite my best efforts.

Clause 61 deals with something that is described as the "original document rule". It will be abolished. The parliamentary secretary provided a very comprehensive explanation for that action, and I commend it to the house. Thereafter, several other clauses were examined. To the extent that I can address them now in the limited time available to me, I want to draw members' attention to clause 114. The Committee of the Whole House examined the admissibility of tendency evidence in proceedings involving child sexual offences. Again, it was the case that the parliamentary secretary provided a substantial response, essentially drawing to our attention, if my memory serves me correctly, that the purpose of clause 114 is to mirror a clause in the New South Wales legislation, and it was the government's submission that it would be the best way forward and that indeed the Law Reform Commission of WA had recommended a similar provision. That was certainly persuasive enough for the opposition.

A number of clauses in the bill also deal with the whole issue of delegating regulation-making powers to the government. I do not propose at this time to reiterate each and every one of those scenarios, but I do want to make this quick ancillary point. On each of those occasions, I asked the parliamentary secretary for a justification for the regulation-making power, and one was provided. It should be noted that there was not, then, on each and every occasion, an attempt by me or the opposition to strike out those provisions. On a case-by-case basis, it could be said that the explanation of futureproofing is satisfactory. My problem is when we accept it just because those words are articulated. In contrast to the earlier example I gave, executive government has had the opportunity for years, and it should be said it is governments of both persuasions, to prescribe other classes, but that has never happened. After all of this time it has never been prescribed. Despite being asked, "What are you concerned about and who do you intend to prescribe?", nobody has been identified. In these circumstances, I think simply saying "futureproofing" is not good enough. But there are other circumstances raised by this bill on which, it should be said, the parliamentary secretary provided an explanation, albeit not indifferent, but persuasive enough. Certainly, it was for me.

Clause 200 might be considered somewhat controversial in the sense that it puts beyond doubt that there is no opportunity for a person to exercise what might be described as the "confessional privilege" in proceedings related to child sexual offences or sexual abuse. I might indicate that there was, again, quite an examination between me and the parliamentary secretary, and I put on the record that I certainly have not had any third-party advocacy on this particular point. I suspect there are a couple of reasons for that, Acting President. It is partly because, as the parliamentary secretary explained, this provision was to enshrine something that is already the case. Members who were here in the previous Parliament will remember the legislation that dealt with this particular issue. In that sense, it is not anything new. Clause 200 abrogates religious confession privilege in child sexual offence proceedings and civil child sexual abuse proceedings consistent with the mandatory reporting regimes we previously agreed to in this house. I think that is one reason why there probably has not been any third-party advocacy on this point.

The second reason, and it is my educated guess that this is the case, and it is consistent with what I said some time ago when we last considered this issue, there was no real third-party advocacy on all of this is that, ultimately, it is a fairly benign and unenforceable provision. I think that it is something about which much ado has been made but, ultimately, there are so many other ways the matter can be addressed and it is very, very difficult for prosecuting authorities to truly ensure that these types of provisions have any substance behind them. It is one thing for a person to not be able to claim confessional privilege, but it is another thing for them to give evidence that means anything or for a prosecuting authority to be able to identify that a person has information available to them that they have not brought forward. I have said previously that I do not really have any confidence that these provisions will have any material impact and I have not heard of any cases—I stand to be corrected, and I welcome members who are familiar with them to draw them to my attention—in which confessional privilege has been exercised or enforced or brought about any particular result. As I say, I think it is important for us to note that there was no third-party advocacy on the inclusion of clause 200, and, accordingly, the Committee of the Whole House passed the clause.

I also wish to draw attention to the examination by the Committee of the Whole House on clause 206, which deals with the exclusion of certain evidence relating to a complainant or a witness. I should also acknowledge the work undertaken by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt and Hon Jess Beckerling on the admissibility of recorded statements. I did not contribute on those provisions only because I thought they did a very fine job in scrutinising them, it might be fairly said, at length, on Thursday 11 September.

In addition to those particular clauses, the rest of the matters—remember there are more than 400 clauses in this bill—were dealt with earlier this week, on Tuesday 16 September, over the course of a few hours. We continued to deal with the issue of recorded statements being admissible as evidence-in-chief. On the following clause, clause 241, I asked the parliamentary secretary about the rationale for dealing with admissibility requirements by regulation rather than incorporating them into the bill. That is a theme that emerged on a few occasions during the Committee of the Whole House process. As lawmakers in the 42nd Parliament, I think it is important we question whether some of the material that can easily be included in regulations ought to be included in the primary bill and then the primary act. There are good reasons for doing this, Acting President, not the least of which is that it is easier for practitioners—that is not limited to legal practitioners and includes individuals who need to rely upon the law—to go to one place to find the state of the law, rather than having to go on a legal treasure hunt and draw a line between the dots to ascertain what the complete law looks like. Rather than simply leaving it to executive government to do things by way of regulation, it is desirable whenever practicable and possible for things to be included in the primary legislation. That said, the parliamentary secretary provided a satisfactory explanation during debate on clauses 241, 253 and 259, when all those matters in respect of regulations were put forward.

I do not have too much time left, but I want to note that the parliamentary secretary moved, on my count, some seven amendments to the bill. Those seven amendments, along with the three I moved, will now be sent to the other place before this bill can be presented to the Governor to receive assent. I hope the members in the other place will agree to those 10 amendments; I suspect that they will, but ultimately that is a matter for that house, not us. It was interesting. To summarise the amendments made by the government, they were primarily driven by feedback provided by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office. The Parliamentary Counsel's Office brought certain issues to the attention of the government. Where did those issues arise? The real genesis of it was feedback provided by the Director of Public Prosecutions. When was that feedback provided? It was provided, as I understand it, in January this year. Why is that relevant? Last year, a package of evidence law bills were presented to both houses of Parliament, but they did not pass through both houses. Now is not the time to go through the reasons for that, but in the new year the government received solicitations from the Director of Public Prosecutions regarding the importance of reinserting a special rule with regard to business records. The government was obviously persuaded—I should say, at least, the current Attorney General was obviously persuaded—that that should be included in the bill that is before us today.

That bill was introduced in the other place by the learned Attorney General and passed through that place, albeit with some amendments. It then came into this place with further amendments. They were the amendments that were included on the advice of the Parliamentary Counsel's Office. Quite a bit of time was spent in Committee of the Whole House on this, going as far back as clause 1. Because there is not sufficient time to address this properly, I will simply say that I am pleased to report that, because of the work done in the Committee of the Whole House, it was verified that the bill being sent back to the other place, as it is currently proposed, meets the expectations of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The parliamentary secretary and the advisers went to the effort of going and checking with the Director of Public Prosecutions. I make that point now for two purposes: firstly, I think it needs to be on the record and, secondly, that ought to be the practice. It is good that Parliamentary Counsel does its very difficult job. I do not think anyone would want to trade places with Parliamentary Counsel and have to put these things together. It provides advice on improvements; that is exactly what it should be doing. But we needed to go back to the original advocate for the change or reinstating of the law—in this case, the Director of Public Prosecutions—to make sure that it was in agreement with that, because words matter, particularly in court and in the interpretation of these provisions.

I regret that I do not have more time to unpack this gigantic bill, but I will conclude by indicating that it has the support of the opposition. I hope members in the other place will agree to the 10 amendments that have been put to them—seven from the parliamentary secretary and a mere three from me—and that in five years' time, when this statute is reviewed, they will take into account all the work that was done by the Committee of the Whole House in this place when presenting a report to executive government on any further changes that should be made. I understand that that will happen with the benefit of probably three and a half years of practise with this new evidence law. If that is not good enough, there will be another review five years thereafter.

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Hon Dan Caddy (Parliamentary Secretary)** and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

ASSISTED REPRODUCTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND SURROGACY BILL 2025

Receipt and first reading

Bill received from the Assembly and, on motion by **Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment)**, read a first time.

Second reading speech

Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment) (2:35 pm): I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

It is clear that there is overwhelming support within the Western Australian community for this bill today to reform laws that will enable all members of our community to start their family, regardless of sexual orientation, sex, gender identity or relationship status. The Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Bill 2025 places the patient experience and the best interests of the child born via assisted reproductive technology at the centre of the reform. It does this by removing unnecessary barriers to access for all Western Australians, establishing a streamlined model for the provision of the technology in Western Australia and modernising Western Australia's statutory framework.

It is estimated that around 5% of all Australian births involve some form of assisted reproductive technology (ART) and surrogacy practices. These practices have remained largely unchanged in Western Australia for several decades and are generally regulated through the *Human Reproductive Technology Act 1991*, the *Artificial Conception Act 1985* and the *Surrogacy Act 2008*. The current legislation, however, is restrictive, forcing Western Australians to travel interstate or overseas to start a family. Since the introduction of the current acts, there have been major advances in reproductive technology and the ART industry itself. The bill contemporises the provision of assisted reproductive technology and surrogacy in Western Australia.

I would ask members to remember that ART has been legal in Western Australia since 1991. This bill should not, then, be considered an opportunity to debate the merits of ART and surrogacy itself; rather, to consider how the legislative framework needs to be changed to reflect updates in technology and the breadth of access to all Western Australians for the provision of this health care. I remind members that, pursuant to the Commonwealth's Sex Discrimination Act, we as a Parliament cannot, and should not, restrict access to care for individuals on grounds such as sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, intersex status, marital or relationship status.

The government would like to take this opportunity to thank a range of people who have supported this bill becoming a reality. Firstly, we would like to thank Surrogacy WA, Equality Australia, Rainbow Futures WA, Gay Dads WA and other community groups that have shared their stories and support for this bill. Although their individual stories and journeys may differ, there is one common thread: these Western Australians wanted to start their own families and they wanted to start them here. Their love for their children and their families is undeniable and they should have had the opportunity to start their families at home, here in Western Australia. This bill will give them, and people facing similar situations, that opportunity.

We know how long the community has been waiting for these reforms. I also want to thank the current Minister for Health, Hon Meredith Hammat; former Minister for Health and now Premier, Hon Roger Cook; and former Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson, for their work, which has supported this bill becoming a reality.

I will now touch on the background to the bill. There is no doubt that this bill has a significant history. The Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Bill 2025 is the culmination of a thorough consultative process to ensure that the specific needs of the community are addressed, and to enable safe and compassionate processes for people seeking reproductive assistance. In 2018, the then Minister for Health, Hon Roger Cook, enlisted Associate Professor Sonia Allan to undertake an independent review of the Human Reproductive Technology Act and the Surrogacy Act, considering a wide range of matters relevant to the operation and effectiveness of the acts. The Allan review report, released in January 2019, recommended multiple areas where Western Australia's existing legislation could be modernised and streamlined. The intention of the 122 recommendations was to simplify and facilitate processes for people seeking access to ART treatments and for the providers of assisted reproductive technology services. In August 2021, the government tabled a response to the Allan review report in Parliament, noting the government's commitment to develop new legislation for ART, including surrogacy, in WA that is modern, fit for purpose and best serves WA needs.

In May 2022, a ministerial expert panel was appointed to undertake further targeted consultation to support the development of potential new legislation for ART in WA. The ministerial expert panel had a broad membership of fertility specialists and medical professionals with experience in reproductive matters, as well as legal professionals. The ministerial expert panel was tasked to consider the implications of recommendations for new legislation, the recommended regulatory framework and areas that may need further consideration. It released a public discussion paper and a regulatory impact consultation statement in 2022 as the foundation for consultation.

In May 2023, the ministerial expert panel's final report was published, with 46 recommendations relating to improving the provision of ART in WA. Shortly afterwards, the government tabled a response to the final report, supporting the majority of the ministerial expert panel's recommendations. In addition, between 2023 and 2025, the Department of Health undertook further targeted consultation with stakeholders, including giving consideration to the potential impacts that the proposed amendments may have on existing services. Stakeholders were broadly supportive of the proposed new ART legislation. Clinics, particularly, supported the removal of redundant approval requirements for certain activities from the Reproductive Technology Council, which will significantly reduce administrative burdens.

I will now give an overview of the bill and its intent. The bill establishes a contemporary model with a responsive and streamlined framework for the provision, regulation and management of all assisted reproductive technologies in WA. It recognises surrogacy as falling within the continuum of assisted reproduction. It protects and emphasises the best interests of ART and surrogacy-born children, the health and wellbeing of ART and surrogacy participants, and the public. In line with the ministerial expert panel's recommendation, the bill will repeal the current Human Reproductive Technology Act, the Surrogacy Act and the Artificial Conception Act, and create a single cohesive piece of legislation pertaining to ART and surrogacy. The bill also makes consequential amendments to other acts, including the *Human Tissue and Transplant Act 1982* and the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1998*.

The bill will implement the government's supported recommendations of the ministerial expert panel. It removes discriminatory barriers and opens up access to ART and surrogacy to couples and individuals struggling to conceive, including members of the LGBTQIA+ community, by removing the requirement of medical infertility. Reciprocal in-vitro fertilisation will now be accessible, along with fertility preservation. The bill will continue to prohibit the commercial trade in human reproductive material and capabilities, including commercial surrogacy.

The bill enshrines additional rights for parties to donor conception, enabling donor-conceived individuals to have access to information about their genetic and social heritage, enabling donors and their intended parents to have access to certain information also, and providing rights to donors regarding consent to continued use of donated reproductive material.

The bill will also reduce regulatory burdens by replacing the WA Reproductive Technology Council with the Assisted Reproductive Technology Advisory and Review Board, which will have an advisory function and limited approval powers.

I will now turn to the specifics of the bill.

Licensing: Parts 2 and 7 of the bill provide for a contemporary administrative and licensing framework under the authority of the chief executive officer of the Department of Health, reducing regulatory burden, including the removal of current requirements for approvals by the Reproductive Technology Council. The bill places mandatory conditions on all licences for providing ART services and also enables the CEO to impose other conditions on a licence-by-licence basis, known as discretionary conditions. The mandatory conditions reflect the paramount duty that ART services are provided in a way that ensures the health, safety and wellbeing of the children conceived via the service, and the people who access and participate in the service. The CEO may impose on a licence only the discretionary conditions necessary for the operation of the new act. The CEO cannot impose a discretionary condition that is inconsistent with a mandatory condition. Part 7, division 6 of the bill gives the CEO powers to investigate whether a person is a fit and proper person to be involved with the provision of assisted reproductive services, ensuring patient safety.

Under this act, the CEO has expanded disciplinary powers. This includes being able to take disciplinary action, such as suspending or cancelling a licence. This will occur when a licensee has contravened this law—for example, by breaching conditions of the licence, failing to comply with compliance notices, or failing to pay fees or penalties. Usually a suspension will be given with advance notice, unless in exceptional circumstances in which the CEO may also immediately suspend a licence for up to three months when there is a reasonable belief of serious contravention of the act.

The bill also provides the option for review if an applicant disagrees with a decision relating to a licence application. It allows for both an internal review process to the CEO and escalation to State Administrative Tribunal review if the applicant is still dissatisfied, allowing for appropriate due process for licensees or applicants.

Accessing ART services: Part 3, division 1 of the bill provides broad access to assisted reproduction based on a clinical assessment and decision. When a person seeks assistance to start a family, the treating medical practitioner must form the view that ART is appropriate, having regard to the person's current and likely future physical, psychological and social circumstances. This part reflects the government's position that access to assisted reproduction should be based on a clinical assessment and decision, and is consistent with the intent of recommendations made by the ministerial expert panel.

The bill makes clear that ART and surrogacy should be available to all persons who seek to access it, regardless of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or relationship status. It does this by removing discriminatory barriers, including the requirement for medical infertility. The current Human Reproductive Technology Act allows access only to heterosexual couples who are unable to conceive for medical reasons, or whose child would likely be affected by a genetic abnormality or disease, and even then it is restrictive on those couples.

The bill also allows for assisted reproduction procedures to be offered for the purposes of fertility preservation. This includes when collection is needed to provide for the future reproductive options of the participant when they are undergoing medical treatments or procedures that can damage reproductive materials or organs. While a person must be at least 18 years of age in order to access ART, an exception may be made to persons under the age of 18 for fertility preservation.

Clinical requirements: Part 3, division 2 of the bill provides general requirements that a clinic must abide by when providing ART procedures. These procedures must be conducted by qualified persons at licensed premises, with different types of services requiring specialised clinical practitioners as well as other qualified health practitioners. Licensees may also use appropriately qualified health practitioners or authorised practitioners to deliver specific treatments or procedures, with their requirements prescribed in regulations. This will allow doctors, registered nurses and midwives to provide some treatment procedures to support improved accessibility of ART services, particularly in regional areas. This was a specific ministerial expert panel recommendation. The bill also requires a clinical assessment to be conducted of the medical and psychosocial suitability of a person seeking ART services before they may be provided. The bill retains Western Australia's existing worldwide five family limit for using reproductive material from the same donor to create a family. The continuity of this limit was recommended by the ministerial expert panel and provides stability and predictability for donors, families and ART providers. A pathway is available through application and approval by the board if an exception to this limit is sought.

Establishing parentage: Part 3, division 3 of the bill provides the parameters for the parentage of a child conceived or born pursuant to ART in line with the existing presumptions of parentage under the Artificial Conception Act. The definitions previously embedded in the Artificial Conception Act have been updated to reflect contemporary gender inclusive language. Importantly, it also introduces provisions to allow for the recognition of parentage of deceased persons when there has been posthumous use of reproductive material or embryos.

Record keeping and access to information: Part 3, division 4 of the bill will create an obligation to keep prescribed records on a range of matters, including all procedures, consent forms and contact preferences, and identifying information of all participants, including donors. There is an obligation on licensees to provide information to the CEO of the Department of Health for the purpose of the register of identity and the register of ART procedures, which are described in part 5 of the bill. The bill confirms the right of a donor, conceived persons, their parents and donors to have access to prescribed information held by the licensee. Under the current Human Reproductive Technology Act, this right of information is available only to donor-conceived persons born before 2004.

The bill extends this right to all donor-conceived persons and their intended parents. Donor-conceived persons and intended parents will be able to request certain information, if they desire it, from the clinic or the Department of Health. The bill also enables donors to access certain non-identifying information about any births resulting from their donations. Donors will be advised of their rights to this information at donation.

Rights over reproductive material and embryos: Part 4, division 1 of the bill sets out who has the right to control what happens to reproductive material and embryos during the assisted reproduction process. The proposed bill will maintain the status quo, including current provisions that donors may change their mind and withdraw this consent up until the point when the donated materials are used. The bill also sets out who has the right to control what happens to an embryo. For persons providing reproductive material to create an embryo for their own use, the right to determine the management of the embryo vests with them.

Use of reproductive material and embryos: Part 4, divisions 2 to 7 of this bill set out improved processes and requirements for the use of reproductive material and embryos. There are detailed requirements around obtaining consent for the collection, storage and use of reproductive material, embryo creation and embryo transfer, with further consent requirement provided for in regulations where appropriate.

The bill also sets out rights of donors and contributing parents to withdraw consent and the actions a licensee must undertake following withdrawal. This part has been drafted with the intent to ensure that the wishes of the intended parents who have been allocated an embryo or for whom an embryo has been created can be properly captured. These consent requirements will enable management of reproductive materials and embryos in the event of the death, disability or separation of the intended parents. This part also requires the provision of certain information to all participants, including donors and prospective parents to support informed decision-making. Counselling requirements are also established to ensure participants are informed and prepared for the implications and impacts, including social, emotional, physical and psychological, of participating in assisted reproduction and the creation of donor-conceived children. Counselling is mandatory in certain situations, with the details to be prescribed under regulations.

Testing for conditions, genes, disorders: Part 4, division 3 of the bill provides for the creation of an approved list of conditions, genes or disorders that clinics may test for without prior approval. For rare conditions or exceptional circumstances, for example mitochondrial donation, the approval of the board will be required. The genetic testing of embryos for the purpose of gender determination for non-medical reasons will remain prohibited. Posthumous use provisions are entirely new and provide for a contemporary, compassionate approach to circumstances when a person has died and their surviving partner wishes to have a child. Part 4, division 5 of the bill sets out the right of the surviving partner of a deceased person to use the reproductive material or embryo of the deceased in circumstances when consent for posthumous use was explicitly provided prior to death. The legislation contends the right of the surviving partner to use those for their reproductive purposes if desired. Importantly, if the deceased has explicitly stated that they do not consent to use after their death, their wishes must be respected. Where there is no pre-existing consent, such as when someone dies unexpectedly and their reproductive material is

subsequently collected, the approval of the board is required. When considering whether to grant approval for posthumous use of reproductive material, the board must consider the wishes and parenting intentions expressed by the deceased, the best interests of any child to be conceived and other requirements as prescribed in regulations.

Transferring, importing, exporting: Part 4, division 6 of the bill deals with the transfer, import and export of reproductive material and embryos. Transfers apply to the movement of embryos or reproductive material between licensees in Western Australia, whilst import and export requirements apply to any movement in and out of the state. A licensee is prohibited from supplying or receiving reproductive material and embryos unless the number of conditions are met, including obtaining informed consent from participants in the process, verifying the age and identity of the donor, and ensuring usage will not exceed the five family worldwide limit unless approved by the board.

Offences: The bill makes it an explicit offence to trade in reproductive material and embryos, consistent with the intent of the ministerial expert panel. Offences are also created, consistent with the current legislation, prohibiting human cloning and the creation of embryos for a purpose other than achieving a pregnancy. Offences also apply to anyone providing false or misleading information to prevent persons avoiding requirements for personal information needed for the register of identity.

Registers to be maintained by the CEO: Part 5 of the bill continues the existing obligation on the CEO under the Human Reproductive Technology Act to keep registers of information related to ART. New provisions are included to mandate that contact preferences of donors are also captured and must be provided to any person eligible to access their information where available. This is to support the rights of people who may not wish to have contact.

Surrogacy: Part 6 of the bill sets out the new surrogacy model for Western Australia, which will benefit from the broader access provisions being proposed. Part 6 also applies to people undertaking traditional or natural surrogacy arrangements without the use of an ART service. Approval from the council will no longer be required for surrogacy arrangements. Instead, parties to a surrogacy arrangement must obtain independent legal advice and counselling about the arrangement prior to any arrangement being made. Furthermore, the arrangement must include details about the intention of the birth parents to carry and deliver the child for others, details on agreed reasonable expenses and other matters as prescribed. This will help ensure that traditional surrogacy arrangements without the involvement of an ART service still meet appropriate requirements to protect all parties and allow for legal parental recognition. Consistent with the current legislation, surrogacy for reward is still prohibited but payment of reasonable expenses incurred during a surrogacy pregnancy will still be permitted.

The bill retains provisions within the current Surrogacy Act that enable the Family Court to make parentage orders to recognise a child's parentage and other orders, including reasonable childbearing expenses. The considerations of the court will differ slightly differ in accordance to when the surrogacy arrangement was made.

Provisions will allow for children born locally or overseas under surrogacy arrangements that were not or could not be approved by the council to apply for parentage orders. This recognises the historical disadvantage of WA's discriminatory surrogacy legislation and provides a remedy pathway for children who do not have adequate recognition of their legal parentage. The court will have discretion to dispense with certain prerequisites for a parentage order if it is in the best interests of the child, in recognition of the unique difficulties of contacting and communicating with birth parents in an international arrangement. The same discretion will apply to overseas surrogacy births that occur within the transitional period of the new act, but only if the surrogacy arrangement was entered into prior to the commencement of this act. However, for children born after the transitional period via a commercial surrogacy arrangement, the court must be satisfied, taking into consideration the circumstances of the surrogate, that the child is facing a significant disadvantage without the parentage order.

Investigation: Part 8 of the bill enables the CEO to appoint certain persons to be an authorised officer under the act and sets out the powers authorised officers have and the processes they must follow. The provisions of this part are congruent with the investigation powers under part 7 of the Medicines and Poisons Act.

Enforcement: Part 9 of the bill provides improved and enhanced enforcement and compliance tools for the CEO as regulator. The new provisions will also help address the limited regulatory enforcement options seen in some other jurisdictions. The CEO will be able to issue compliance notices to the licensee for contraventions or likely contraventions of the act. Enforcement action will be able to be taken for contraventions of the proposed act in line with enforcement provisions under the Medicines and Poisons Act to provide a contemporary framework and improve departmental consistency in regulatory approaches and compliance. A suite of offence provisions and penalties have been drafted throughout this bill following consideration of current offences in the Human Reproductive Technology Act and the equivalent legislation of other Australian jurisdictions. The bill sets out specific offence provisions related to breaches of certain requirements and monetary and imprisonment penalties for breaches depending on the severity and impact of the offence.

Assisted Reproductive Technology Advisory and Review Board: Part 10 of the bill establishes the Assisted Reproductive Technology Advisory and Review Board following the repeal of the current Reproductive

Technology Council. The board will support the Minister for Health and the CEO in administering the new legislation. The board will provide advice as requested or on its own initiative regarding critical issues and trends associated with assisted reproductive technology, as well as regulation and governance. It will also provide guidance around surrogacy and ART matters at the request of ART clinics. This will not be legal advice. The board will have a role in approving applications relating to certain forms of genetic testing and posthumous use of reproductive material or embryos. The board will also be able to approve applications for exceptions to the five-family limit and the import or export of reproductive material or embryos in prescribed circumstances.

Transitional provisions: Part 14 of the bill sets out the transitional provisions for legislation on the WA statute book that will be amended by the bill—namely the Artificial Conception Act, the Human Reproductive Technology Act, the Surrogacy Act and associated subsidiary legislation. The bill has been drafted to ensure the delivery of scheduled ART procedures are preserved.

Births, Deaths and Marriages: Part 15 of the bill sets out amendments to the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act to enable greater recognition to be given to persons born through ART or surrogacy. When a child is born as a result of ART or surrogacy, the registrar will be able to record this in the register. Parents of children born to overseas surrogates will also have the ability to have their child's birth registered in WA in limited circumstances. Registration of the birth of a child born via overseas surrogacy can occur only following the issuing of a parentage order by the Family Court of Western Australia. The amendments also provide that when a donor-conceived or surrogate-born person is aged over 16 years and requests a birth certificate, they are notified by the registrar that further information about their birth is available. This is to ensure that these persons are aware of information about the circumstances of their birth.

Posthumous collection of reproductive material or embryos: Part 16 of the bill sets out amendments to the Human Tissue and Transplant Act to clarify and simplify the collection of reproductive material from deceased persons. The bill confers the board with the decision-making power on the usage of the materials. Thus, designated officers will be able to collect materials upon the death of a person, and the board will decide on the use of those materials. This will clarify requirements for clinics and minimise the distress on partners and families during an already difficult time.

Minor consequential amendments: Part 17 includes minor consequential amendments, largely being replacements of references to the repealed acts with a reference to this act or definitional changes to match this act.

In conclusion, the reform of ART laws in WA is long overdue. This is very important to our government and the people of Western Australia. Importantly, this bill removes barriers to access and reflects the progression of the social and ethical consensus of the people of Western Australia. It is evident that change is required and that better ART services could be provided to the Western Australian community. This bill will do so by embedding principles and objectives that make paramount the best interests of persons born through ART and protecting the rights and best interests of all parties accessing reproductive technologies and support. I would again like to thank everybody who has contributed to the making of this bill.

Pursuant to standing order 126(1), I advise that this bill is not a uniform legislation bill. It does not ratify or give effect to an intergovernmental or multilateral agreement to which the government of the state is a party; nor does this bill, by reason of its subject matter, introduce a uniform scheme or uniform laws throughout the Commonwealth.

I commend the bill to the house and table the explanatory memorandum.

(See paper 616.)

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

LIQUOR CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2025

Second reading

Resumed from 17 September.

Hon Kate Doust (3:03 pm): Members might be pleased to note that I will not spend the next 26 minutes and 57 seconds on this bill!

I commend the bill to the house.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment) (3:04 pm) in reply: I rise to provide the second reading reply on the Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2025. I need to get myself in order, for obvious reasons. I presume everything is in order. I thank all members who made a contribution to the bill and for the expressions of support from the opposition. I note that a number of members in the house do not support the bill. I acknowledge the contributions made by Hon Julie Freeman on behalf of the opposition. I believe she spoke on behalf of the Liberal and National Parties. I thank Hon Neil Thomson, Hon Dr Brian Walker, Hon Tim Clifford, Hon Lauren

Cayoun, Hon Pierre Yang, Hon Klasey Hirst, Hon Maryka Groenewald, Hon Jess Beckerling and, finally, but not last, Hon Kate Doust.

The Cook government is committed to growing our state's hospitality and tourism economy and supporting vibrancy and jobs. This bill modifies and modernises the *Liquor Control Act 1988* by reflecting changing business practices and community expectations. It will improve liquor regulatory processes and make it easier for the hospitality, liquor and tourism industries to do business.

Honourable members raised some points about digital identification, including enabling provisions in the bill being confusing for licensees. These provisions make it clear that licensees will be able to accept digital identification from other states as well as digital drivers' licences that are under development through the Department of Transport in Western Australia. An honourable member mentioned that there were concerns that screenshots of identification will be accepted. However, screenshots are not an acceptable form of identification due to the risk of fraud, just like a photo of a hard copy driver's licence would not be an acceptable form now. Licensees will be provided with educational material to assist them with their obligations on acceptable forms of identification.

Concerns were raised about the Liquor Commission being abolished and the implications for reviews and appeals. It should be noted that the Liquor Commission 's review and disciplinary responsibilities will be conferred on the State Administrative Tribunal. This change will align with many other areas of WA administrative law. SAT is an established body with significant experience, and these changes will be appropriately resourced as SAT will be provided official funding to undertake these functions.

The liquor industry community interest groups, unions, government agencies and the public have been consulted to help inform the provisions in the bill, and feedback has been generally supportive. Industry strongly supports the initiatives to improve and simplify the operations.

We heard from many members about their dislike of liquor restrictions. It is important for members to note that this bill does not amend any provisions that relate to liquor restrictions. I will repeat that: It is important to note that this bill does not amend any provisions that relate to liquor restrictions. This bill includes the banned drinkers register. They are two very different tools. A query was raised about the number of appeals that have been lodged by people placed on the BDR and their success. I advise that the information provided to the member that there have been no appeals against the BDR is correct. There were some questions about why the BDR is in some of the regions but not in Perth. One member—I believe it was Hon Neil Thomson—cited Margaret River as an example of a town without restrictions or the BDR. Members should note that there are significantly disproportionately higher rates of alcohol-related harm, including crime, in those areas where the BDR and liquor restrictions exist.

Honourable members also raised matters around the banned drinkers register and the review reports. The University of Western Australia's reports from 2022 and 2023 are published on the department's website. The executive summary of the most recent Deloitte report is also published on the website. The full reports contain commercially sensitive information from licensees and individuals that would be inappropriate to release in full. This includes transactions and sales data. Members should also note that the reports from UWA were commissioned and completed when the BDR was being run as a voluntary program. The UWA reports informed the future of the BDR, which directly resulted in the BDR becoming a legislative program. The resulting bill was the Liquor Control Amendment (Banned Drinkers Register) Bill 2023.

There were queries about the consultation undertaken with key stakeholders specifically about the BDR. The department undertook extensive consultation with stakeholders in advance of establishing the BDR in different parts of the state. The mandatory BDR has been in place for almost two years now, and the department engages in regular and ongoing discussions with stakeholders who are affected by the BDR in those parts of the state where it applies. It is important for members to note that we have seen a significant reduction in alcohol-related hospital admissions, as well as a reduction in alcohol-related crime statistics where the BDR is operating.

There have been concerns raised by members about Aboriginal people not benefiting from laws like that governing the BDR; rather, they benefit from self-determination. I draw members' attention to the fact that the Liquor Control Act has existing provisions under section 175 that provide the minister with the ability to make regulations to restrict or prohibit the consumption, possession or bringing of alcohol into an area of the state. There are 29 Aboriginal communities across WA that currently have section 175 restrictions requested and driven by the local Aboriginal communities themselves. Our government strongly supports communities taking ownership of harm minimisation and alcohol restrictions, as we find the best results come from community-driven initiatives supported by industry and government.

Since the BDR has been a legislative program, it has worked more effectively by introducing new orders that target individual problem drinkers who commit offences, and that now includes the ability for the police to issue an order for alcohol-related family domestic violence. There is no other order in the Liquor Control Act that targets alcohol-related family violence outside of a licensed premises. The Cook Labor government is committed to tackling family violence and the BDR is one of those measures. The BDR improves health outcomes for individuals because medical professionals can also seek a banned drinker order for someone suffering from alcohol-related harm,

particularly individuals who are drinking excessively while pregnant. As honourable members have mentioned, fetal alcohol syndrome is a major concern in many of these regions.

While the changes in the bill reflect and respond to industry feedback about making it easier to do business in WA, it also reflects the act's primary objectives by including important reforms to support the minimisation of alcohol-related harm that we see in poor health outcomes, crime rates, community breakdown and, sadly, family and domestic violence. Tackling alcohol harm is a longstanding and complex issue and not something that the state government can achieve alone. Collaboration is required between licensees, industry groups, WA police and other government agencies, support service providers, local governments and the entire Western Australian community. The banned drinkers register is a targeted alcohol restriction measure that is designed to operate as a harm-minimisation tool in areas where there is heightened misuse of alcohol and impacts on individuals and communities.

We take this opportunity to commend the licensees, liquor accords, local governments and industry peak bodies for their public support of the banned drinkers register. We were pleased to support the work being done by the communities in the Kimberley, Pilbara and Goldfields regions and Carnarvon and Gascoyne Junction by implementing reforms in late 2023 to enable the time-limited trial of a mandatory banned drinkers register in these areas. As members might be aware, the banned drinkers register is currently scheduled to conclude via a sunset clause on 13 December of this year. It appears the impact of the BDR and other alcohol restrictions has been positive and almost immediate. The bill seeks to make the banned drinkers register a permanent program so that it can continue to play an important part of the response to alcohol harm. A permanent banned drinkers register will provide certainty for stakeholders, support the implementation of improvements to the register over time and underpin support services and harm-minimisation strategies in these communities. The state-government recognises that alcohol-related harm is a problem that will not go away overnight. A whole-of-community and government approach is needed, and we will continue to look for ways to tackle this complex issue.

On that basis I commend the bill to the house and seek members' support for it.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee of the whole

The Deputy Chair of Committees (Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur) in the chair; Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment) in charge of the bill.

Clause 1: Short title

Hon Julie Freeman: I want to start just by checking who was consulted in the drafting of this bill.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As I said in my reply to the second reading debate, the liquor industry, community, interest groups, unions, the public and government agencies have been consulted about this bill. I can be a bit more specific. Public consultation was carried out between 22 November 2024 and 23 January 2025 through the Department of Local Government Support and Cultural Industries, now Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety, through a process paper called *The Next Chapter of WA's Liquor Laws – have your say*, along with stakeholder surveys. A consultation was undertaken with the Roman Catholic Church and the Returned and Services League of Western Australia on specific matters such as trading hours. The Liquor Commission and the State Administrative Tribunal were consulted about conferring the Liquor Commission's review and disciplinary powers to SAT. The Gaming and Wagering Commission was consulted about changes relating to liquor licensing, as was the Director of Liquor Licensing. The three working groups consisting of key stakeholders also provided targeted feedback on reform topics. Those three groups were an industry working group, a harm–minimisation working group and a government working group.

The members of the industry working group were Australian Grape & Wine Incorporated; Australian Hotels Association; Business Improvement Group of Northbridge; Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia; Cider Australia; City of Perth; Clubs WA; Coles (Liquorland); Crown Perth; Endeavour Group; Events Industry Association; Liquor Stores Association of WA, otherwise known as the LSA; Restaurant & Catering Industry Association; Retail Drinks Australia; Small Bar Association of WA; WA Distillers Guild; WA Music; WA Nightclub Association; and Wines of WA.

The harm–minimisation working group included the Aboriginal Legal Service; Alcohol and Drug Foundation; Bloodwood Tree Association; Cancer Council WA, alcohol programs team; Foundation for Alcohol Research & Education, otherwise known as FARE; Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services; Kimberley Mental Health and Drug Service; Local Drug Action Groups Incorporated; Marra Worra Worra Aboriginal Corporation; McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth; Hope Community Services, formerly Mission Australia; Moorditj Koort Aboriginal Corporation; National Drug Research Institute; public health; Ruah Community Services; the Salvation Army Western Australia; Southern Aboriginal Corporation; St John WA; The Kids Research Institute Australia;

WA Council of Social Services, or WACOSS; WA Network of Alcohol & other Drug Agencies; and WA Association for Mental Health.

The government working group included the Alcohol and Other Drugs Advisory Board; Department of Communities; Department of Education's road safety and drug education branches; Department of Health; Department of Justice; Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety, as it is now known; Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration, formally DEMIRS; Department of the Premier and Cabinet; Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage; the former Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, which I think has a different title now; Mental Health Commission; Road Safety Commission; Small Business Development Corporation; WA Country Health Service; Western Australian Local Government Association; and the Western Australia Police Force.

Hon Julie Freeman: Thank you, minister, for that very comprehensive list. Just for my clarification, were those organisations consulted on the contents of the bill before or after it was drafted?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am told that, primarily, some were consulted before and some were consulted after the drafting of the bill.

Hon Julie Freeman: The minister, in his second reading speech in reply, spoke about the BDR being a time-limited trial, and he also spoke of the reports that are available on the department's website. Which of the reports that the minister listed was actually an evaluation of the time-limited trial of the BDR?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It was the Deloitte report.

Hon Neil Thomson: When the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) was consulted, was it aware of the proposed changes to the trading hours on Anzac Day?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes, member.

Hon Neil Thomson: Given that today we have seen concerns raised about the rollback of the trading hours on Anzac Day from 12 noon to I believe 10:00 am, what was the government's response to the RSL's concerns? Firstly, were those concerns raised at the time, and, secondly, what was the government's response for the justification for rolling back the trading hours by two hours on Anzac Day?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: During the consultation in 2003, the RSL was approached for feedback on the proposed changes to Anzac Day trading hours, and it indicated that it thought there should be no changes to the status quo on Anzac Day—in other words, venues should continue to open at midday. I might qualify that and say that venues, as a matter of right, can open at midday, but they could open earlier than that if they make an application for earlier opening. Therefore, it is not the case that trading before 12 noon has been sacrosanct for ever and a day; that has not been the case at all. The position we have now landed on is that they can open at 10:00 am as a matter of right, and, in fact, they can open earlier than that after a successful application to the Director of Liquor Licensing if they can make the case for that.

After considering stakeholder feedback, the bill proposes an increase to trading hours from 10:00 am on Anzac Day rather than 6:00 am. I think the original proposal was for it to be from 6:00 am rather than 10:00 am, so we did take the feedback on board, including feedback given from the RSL that that would potentially interfere with when dawn services were underway.

To open prior to 10:00 am, all licensees will still have to apply for an extended trading permit, and it will only be granted if the request complies with the relevant policy. What we are doing here is bringing trading hours into line with Sunday trading hours, while still recognising the significance of the day. This will reduce complexity for businesses and offer the community more choice and flexibility.

Hon Neil Thomson: Thank you, minister, for the little bit of background on that. I note Hon Paul Papalia, the minister, is obviously a veteran himself, and he no doubt would have some connection to the RSL, I would have thought, after his service, and, of course, we thank him for his service to Australia.

Until today, I was not aware of the level of objection, and maybe if I had been aware, I might have had even more to say about it in my speech in the second reading debate. As the minister knows, I said I supported the bill, notwithstanding some of my concerns about other aspects, but this was not one of the concerns I had. However, I see it has raised concerns. Given that dawn services, as we know, are such an important part of Anzac Day, and there are other sacred things that happen that day, I think it is pretty much well agreed to by all members of the community how important Anzac Day is across the board.

Was the minister directly involved in any of those discussions with the RSL prior to the decision being made to change the trading hours from I think the minister said 6:00 am to 10:00 am, instead of 12 noon? Was the minister involved in that discussion?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Member, it is important to understand that Minister Paul Papalia has only become the minister responsible since the election. Obviously, a lot of this work happened pre the election because I set that out in the consultation in response to Hon Julie Freeman's point.

I am advised that the minister has met with the RSL since he became the Minister for Racing and Gaming, and he has had meetings. As the member quite rightly pointed out, and to make a more broader point, the RSL is a voice for veterans, and it is a very powerful and legitimate voice, but not all veterans agree on everything. That is obviously indicative of the fact that, as the member identified, Hon Paul Papalia is a veteran himself and has served this country and he has a different view on this matter to the RSL's view. That view was expressed, I think, in the reporting in the paper today. Reasonable minds will take different views on these things. As I say, through that consultation process, the government did bring it to 10:00 am rather than the original proposal for 6:00 am. That was expressed in a report in the paper today. Reasonable minds will take different views on these particular things. As I say, through that consultation process the government brought it to 10:00 am rather than the original proposal, which was for 6:00 am.

Hon Neil Thomson: As part of that assessment to go to 10:00 am, was any consideration given to workers who might also be veterans and who might want to participate in the activities of the morning, noting that there is more than just dawn services? We have some fairly young veterans now who have served in various more recent wars and also in peacetime. Was there any assessment of the impact of that on their ability to partake in those very important and sacred reflections?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: This will apply to any of the changes that relate to any of the public holidays. The ones that relate to Christmas and Good Friday were of particular interest to Hon Rod Caddies and Hon Maryka Groenewald. I ask the member to please listen carefully to me so that I do not have to repeat this. I do not mean that in a flippant way; I just mean that I will be quite thorough here.

Both the Fair Work Act and the Minimum Conditions of Employment Act provide protections for workers in relation to whether they are required to work on public holidays. Those acts basically mirror each other. We inserted those provisions into the Minimum Conditions of Employment Act last year, when we amended the Industrial Relations Act to reflect the provisions of the Fair Work Act provisions. That effectively provides that a worker can make a reasonable refusal to work on a public holiday. There is not an absolute right to be able to refuse to work on a public holiday, but when a worker makes that refusal, the employer must take into account the circumstances of the worker. For example, if a person is a veteran, as the member has identified, and Anzac Day is of significant import to them, then that worker could reasonably refuse to work on Anzac Day on that particular basis. There is a flip side to that, which provides that an employer can require a worker to work, if it is reasonable to do so, even if they have requested not to work. There is a whole shopping list of things within both the Fair Work Act and the Minimum Conditions of Employment Act that set out the kinds of factors that an employer can take into consideration as to whether they can refuse a worker the right to have that day off. The most obvious ones who would be affected by that are essential workers; we must have those people working, notwithstanding that the day might be of great significance to them, but there is a balance there.

The member has criticised me many times for my associations with the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, but I will tell the member that in my time at the CFMEU we ran cases for workers and particularly, in some cases, veterans who wanted to take Anzac Day off and were refused the right to take that day off. We took those employers to the tribunals and courts, because that was a breach of those workers' workplace rights. We usually took those cases to the media as well, and we were quite successful in either shaming those particular employers for ignoring the circumstances of particular individuals who wanted to observe those days for their reasons, or they were sanctioned by the court or the tribunal—whichever one it was; I cannot recall now. Those protections are there, and what we have done here does not change those particular protections in any way. I think that is one of those considerations. It is an already existing framework.

Hon Neil Thomson: The minister delved into quite a big area there. I certainly would not want his counsel to discourage others in this chamber to ask some detailed questions. I am sure he would agree that he is not trying to do that!

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It was more just to cover that point off.

Hon Neil Thomson: Yes, and I note that to the minister's credit he actually raised that issue with me during the second reading debate. I appreciate that, because I think the issue of worker protection might be a topic for further discussion at the relevant stage of the bill. There are of lot of questions on that. I want to have a look at some of the specific comments the minister made earlier in relation to making an application. If we could just go back to the issue we were discussing around the RSL and the concerns it has raised, the minister said it was not just a case that no venue or—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I think the word that was used was that it's not sacrosanct.

Hon Neil Thomson: That is right; that is the word. The minister said they could not trade on Anzac Day and that, in fact, they could make an application. How many applications are normally made on a normal Anzac Day, and how many were granted prior to this change?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We do not have those figures at the table with us. We are trying to see whether we are able to secure them, but in order to not hold up debate, if we can move onto another part or any related questions the member might have, we can then circle back if that information comes back to us. I will also make the point that that application process applies to RSLs as well. RSLs would have to make an application to open earlier. It is currently 12 noon. When we move it back to 10:00 am, if they want to open before 10:00 am, they would have to apply through the application process.

Hon Neil Thomson: I think the minister makes an important point. I do not know how often it happens with a commercial venture opening. I am aware of RSLs being able to make applications. It is a bit of a time for service personnel to get together and have a few drinks, which is very important on such an important day of reflection.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: One might say it was part of the tradition.

Hon Neil Thomson: Very much so, minister, and very much has been since the very first Anzac Day, absolutely. We all know our history on that.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: By way of interjection, member, I might add that not all veterans participate, and I'll give the example of my wife's father, who fought in the Second World War in North Africa and through Palestine. He never, ever partook of any alcohol, even during the war. He was a teetotaller.

Hon Neil Thomson: Yes, and the minister's personal reflection on that is actually important. I know there is a whole range of reasons why people get involved in the celebrations—if I can use that word; it is probably the wrong word to use—or the commemoration of Anzac Day. There are many veterans who choose to take a different approach, and I can understand why. It is a very complex issue for many veterans who have dealt with that. As I said, I just thought it was worthy of further discussion. I suppose that puts a slightly different angle on it, because the RSL forms such an important part of our culture. It was not something that I had thought of or objected to—the issue around having extended trading, even on Good Friday, as someone who might be regarded as a lapsed Christian, I have to confess!

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: You're a lapsed New Zealander, from what I can recall!

Hon Neil Thomson: I always aspire to be a better one, but you know; I have put that out there, probably to my detriment! I try my best, as we all do. I have respect, as I am sure all members in this chamber do, for different faiths and for people's commitment to faith on a personal level, but I will go back to the RSL issue.

Would it be fair to say that extending trading hours on Anzac Day may potentially impact the viability of some RSL clubs? Is there any risk of that happening? I do not say that in a negative way, but I think it is important that RSL clubs continue to be strong and it something that could be a concern for the RSL, noting its important role and the work it does on Anzac Day.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I do not think this one small thing that will be from 12:00 pm to 10:00 am will affect the viability of RSL clubs. If that is what is keeping them in business, I think there are probably some other issues going on. I will say that people who attend RSL clubs do so primarily because they are comrades and this change will probably not affect where people frequent on Anzac Day.

Hon Neil Thomson:I think the minister might be right. I hope that is the case. Obviously, the RSL made a very big statement today and I certainly hope that these changes will not impact negatively on attendance at Anzac Day ceremonies because that is very important. I hope there will not be an impact on clubs' viability. If only I was the minister, but I am not. The minister we have now is ex-service personnel, so I hope that he has a watching brief on this issue to see how we are going, because it is always in the power of this Parliament to change it if we need to.

The minister mentioned a very extensive list of consultation. Is there any scope for that list to be circulated at this point in time? I guess it is a procedural matter to the Chair or to the minister. Can that be tabled for members? I am not sure what the procedure is in the committee.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Deputy Chair, welcome to your session. This is a copy of a document that was provided to Hon Maryka Groenewald, so I am happy to table it for other members' benefit.

(See paper 617.)

Hon Neil Thomson: We are just having a little chat here. It shows there is collaboration across the opposition and the crossbench.

The minister mentioned the Roman Catholic Church. We have a very diverse society, even in the Christian community. I am talking cross-culturally; were any other churches consulted on this legislation? We have the

Eastern Orthodox—I am probably making a trap for myself by mentioning churches specifically, but there is a range of groups across the board. Were any other church groups consulted?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We are ensuring we are absolutely certain because it goes back a couple of years. We consulted with the Anglican Church as well. That is the only other group we have identified, but I want to get positive information from my advisers that it did, in fact, happen. They are very strongly of that view, but I want to be confident about it. I think on the honourable member's broader point about whether other religious groups were consulted, it would have been only the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Church.

Hon Neil Thomson: I suppose that suggests there was a limitation on that consultation. Unfortunately, in the limited discussions I had some time ago with some church leaders, they raised a concern about the lack of access to ministers under this government. I think, certainly under the Barnett government, from time to time, there was a group representing a range of denominations across our state. It is important, even in these times, notwithstanding the decline of church membership over the last few decades, because 40-odd per cent of Western Australians, in the census at least, indicate their affiliation with a church. I suggest many would probably support the changes, but I cannot speak for churches because, as I said, those organisations will have their own views. I am sure they were probably somewhat disappointed with the change, but there has been a long tradition in our society of particularly those very sacred ceremonies at Easter and Christmas and on Sundays. I think it would probably be fair to say that Christmas is still celebrated by a vast majority of the community because of its cultural nature in our society. I suppose that does raise some issues. It is always that challenging balance between people's desire to have more freedoms and to celebrate together in the different ways we have seen society go about it. There has been some transformation whereby, for example, on Christmas Day, many families go on holiday together and would probably be very welcoming of the fact that they could go to a venue, share a few drinks together and celebrate Christmas that way. That is something I am sure would be regarded as a great addition to the options available. Without labouring the point, is there any way that the minister, with the support of his advisers, could give us a bit of a breakdown of those in that very comprehensive list that might be supporting all the changes and those who might be opposing the changes? It is one thing to consult, but we would like to try to get a bit of what the actual feedback was like. If it is any assistance, minister, as an example, a few local governments, certainly the City of Perth, and the Western Australian Local Government Association, were mentioned.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: WALGA was mentioned.

Hon Neil Thomson: Yes. I assume it has supported all the changes, but maybe not. Industry groups will be supportive and certainly the tourism industry is likely to be supportive. I am trying to give the minister the answers, but there is a collection of groups here—for example, a lot of Aboriginal corporations—that I assume are involved in working in social service delivery, such as Ruah Community Services, and the Salvation Army, and then there are health practitioners. This is a bit of a broad question, but is there any way the minister or his advisers could give us a summary of the sort of feedback that came from those different categories? I will not say this too many times during Committee of the Whole, but I think it would have been helpful to have a more comprehensive review done of these changes because we would have been able to get that background in a more structured way. If the minister could answer that question, that would be helpful.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As the member can tell from the very comprehensive list that we provided and the fact that those consultations occurred through that development process, there is going to be a very broad range of views. It is not really for me to speak on behalf of those organisations as to whether they do or do not support a particular piece of legislation.

Hon Neil Thomson: It would have been good to have a report on that.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Even reports do not necessarily drill down to the individual positions of organisations. Sometimes organisations will express views to government that they want to be expressed only directly to government, but they are free to speak on their own behalf. I do not want to be in a position in which I misrepresent the views of any particular group that is involved. Of course there will be groups that were very supportive of the government's reforms. There will be groups that were largely supportive or groups that were not supportive of elements of it at all. I think Hon Tim Clifford made a contribution in which he talked about the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education (FARE), I think it is, and the consultations that the Greens have had with that organisation about its concerns. Some of the amendments that he has put on the notice paper relate to—I hope I am not misrepresenting anything, member, from our discussions either in the chamber or behind the Chair—helping to be informed on its position in its conversation about those things.

The member will recognise that this bill will do a couple of things. Some of it relates to regulation of small bars, reducing red tape and all those sorts of things. They are important but relatively low level things. It will then do another thing that is very big, which is dealing with the alcohol paradox, as I like to call it: we see alcohol as a pro-social activity that people engage in and enjoy with a range of industries around it—we encourage it because it is great for people to have social interaction that is positive for them—and then the flip side, or the paradox, is the social ills that come with alcohol. This bill traverses both, because we are supporting the industry by reducing

red tape around a lot of its activities, increasing the small bar size from 120 to 150 persons and such things, and reducing the number of applications needed, while, on the other side, we are proposing to make the banned drinkers register a permanent fixture of the liquor licensing regime to try to deal with the harmful use of liquor; there is that element of it. It is a complex space and I am not trying to brush the member off on that, but I do not want to misrepresent the position of any of those organisations.

I will give the example of the Returned and Services League of Australia. When we were dealing with the RSL a couple of years ago, it had different leadership. Although we accurately reflected the position of the leadership at that time, which was that it had concerns about the extension of the trading hours, it was not as vociferous in its criticism as what came out in the paper today. That organisation is controlled by its members. The members have changed their leadership and the leadership is reflecting a different position. Again, I do not want to be in a position in which I misrepresent any of those things, but the member can take it writ that there is obviously a broad range of views on this. But we think the general community is generally in support of what we propose across the broad spectrum and it will be welcomed in many sectors. We as a government have made a decision that these are the matters we want to bring before Parliament to change the law on.

Hon Neil Thomson: I am a little bit disappointed at not being able to be provided with a structured summary of the categories of those who might have had objections and those in support. I note—I may be wrong—that there seem to be no unions that represent workers in the hospitality sector on this list. I assume, given the minister's extensive experience with the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, he has talked—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Be certain; it was not the CFMEU.

Hon Neil Thomson: I am sure it is not the CFMEU, but given I am not an expert on that, can the minister give us a bit of a breakdown of the unions consulted, and maybe give us an understanding of the views of the unions that represent hospitality workers in the sector?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: To be certain, it was not the CFMEU, because it does not have any interest in this bill—I am being glib there—but further meetings were held with the general secretary of UnionsWA, Rikki Hendon, and also directly with the United Workers Union, which represents hospitality workers.

Hon Neil Thomson: Was the United Workers Union in full-throated support of these changes?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am advised that the United Workers Union did not raise any particular concerns. That union represents the largest single-site employer outside of the health system, which is Crown Perth, and it operates almost 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I think it does not operate on some days. It did not raise any particular concerns. A lot of its workers will be affected by extended trading permits in any event on those other days if they are required to work.

Hon Tim Clifford: Outside of the comprehensive lists that the minister has provided today, I am checking whether any other prescribed bodies corporate or land councils within the BDR area were consulted ?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As part of the harm-minimisation evaluation, Deloitte engaged with Aboriginal organisations and support-service organisations that assist Aboriginal people in the banned drinkers areas. They included the Bloodwood Tree Association—I am going to murder these names unfortunately—Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service, Wunan Foundation, Midwest Mental Health and Community Alcohol and Drug Service, Aboriginal Family Legal Services, Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia, Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service, Milliya Rumurra Aboriginal Corporation, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services, WA Aboriginal Health Strategy, WA Country Health Service Pilbara, Wirraka Maya Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, Carnarvon Aboriginal Medical Service, Kununurra Waringarri Aboriginal Corporation and the Bidyadanga Aboriginal Community La Grange Inc. I am advised that these organisations either were contacted and some of them may not have responded or were contacted and engagement was had with them.

Hon Tim Clifford: The data on the number of First Nations people on the BDR can inform the wraparound services required. To ensure that First Nations people receive culturally informed and appropriate support for alcohol abuse, will the government commit to collecting data of First Nations people on the BDR? Are there any issues with collecting that sort of data?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The difficulty with collecting that data is that the BDR process is not one in which the person affected is necessarily a willing participant. Either a medical practitioner, social worker or police officer will make the application. In those circumstances, it would be fraught for those individuals to make an assessment or judgement about whether a person identifies as a First Nations person or any other thing. Information is put on those applications. We do not think it is appropriate for us to then ask the person whether they identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person. That is where that issue around the list is at. In a general sense, there could be benefits of having better data, but the process for obtaining it would not be culturally safe or appropriate in many circumstances.

Hon Tim Clifford: How many people on the banned drinkers register were served papers that stated that they had been added to the register while imprisoned? What was the process for this? Can the government explain what documents they were served?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I do not have detail of the kind that the member has asked for. The reason for that is that police would manage that process but the advisers I have not are from the police. To provide a further explanation of how that might happen, a person might have committed a family violence–related matter and been charged. That condition is a precedent for issuing a banned drinker order. The police would then issue the order and serve it. That person may be in custody when they get served. As I say, I am not in a position to provide the more specific details that the member has asked for because I do not have advisers from the police here.

Hon Tim Clifford: Are any legal services funded to provide legal advice to people who have been placed on the BDR?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: There is no specific funding for people who are issued with a BDO and placed on the BDR. A person who received an order that they thought was issued without merit or substance could make an application to Legal Aid for a grant or they could go to a community legal centre that provides advice about these matters. Not all of them do that, of course; some of the community legal centres are subject-matter specific. An Aboriginal person can probably go to the Aboriginal Legal Service, for guidance at least. Whether they are represented further would be up to the service based on the merits of the particular case. There would be options for them to do that. Of course, they can visit their local suburban lawyer and get advice from them as well. There are options for them, but we do not provide a specific legal pathway to say that once they have been served and wish to challenge it, they can access a grant of funding for X or Y.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: This might be a bit ignorant, but is there a reason why the banned drinkers register cannot be dealt with in a separate bill? A lot of issues have been raised. Is there any merit in separating the BDR function from this bill?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The Liquor Control Act, which is what we are amending by way of this bill, serves a number of purposes. If the member looks at the objects of the act at page 14 of the blue bill, she will see that the objects are to regulate the sale, supply and consumption of liquor; to minimise the harm or ill health caused to people, or any group of people, due to the use of liquor; and to cater for the requirements of consumers for liquor and related services with regard to the proper development of the liquor industry, the tourism industry and other hospitality industries. The bill fits within the objects of the act that we are amending. That is why we brought these things together. It is not uncommon to have a bill that might deal with a set of one thing and then a group of other things as well. Legislating through the Parliament—I have been here a bit longer than the member—is not as expeditious as we would always like, so when the government gets an opportunity to get a matter before the Parliament, it gets its matter before the Parliament. Cabinet made a decision to print the bill in this form with this content, so although it was technically possible to separate them, the government made the choice to bring them together because we want to deal with them together.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: Given the expediency of this bill, is there is no opportunity for the BDR to be given consideration within the health portfolio or is it a different act? Is it set in stone that the BDR is within the Liquor Control Act and there cannot be any considerations or changes to it?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The Minister for Racing and Gaming is responsible for the promotion and regulation of liquor in our society. This is within his portfolio and within that particular department. I do not think it is far out to say this could be a health issue rather than a liquor control issue, and it is a health issue as well, but in making amendments to this act, the decision and policy of the bill has been set by the vote on the second reading, and the decision of this house is that it should be in this bill. We are not in any way proposing to crowbar apart any provision of this bill—we would have to talk to the clerks—even if we were contemplating that, which we are not. We are happy with what we have put before Parliament and we will proceed on that basis.

Hon Neil Thomson: I want to go back to the consultation with the United Workers Union. I thank the minister for the background. In the spirit of the Premier, I did a bit of a Google search to get more information to try to work out which unions to refer to. Are any members of the hospitality sector in the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association of WA?

Hon Samantha Rowe: They are a significant part.

Hon Neil Thomson: I like to hear that union mentioned, given a chance. This is the opportunity to do that. Google works, member!

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The strict union coverage in Western Australia is probably not a matter that falls within the four walls of this bill, but I will assist the member. UnionsWA is the peak organisation for affiliated trade unions. The SDA is an affiliated trade union with UnionsWA. UnionsWA would have been representing its members, which includes the SDA, through that process. My advice is that no specific or direct consultation was undertaken with the SDA. The reason it may be relevant and acknowledged is that the SDA represents retail

workers, not hospitality workers, but retailers work in liquor stores, so the SDA would cover those who work in a retail liquor store like Liquorland or Dan Murphy's. I do not drink and do not buy alcohol, so my lack of familiarity probably has been shown.

Hon Neil Thomson: I think that highlights a very important point. Despite the views of some members on the other side, I am a very strong supporter of people choosing to join a union and getting out there and having their rights represented. If any of them are watching, I am here today because I just wish they would not affiliate themselves so strongly with the Labor Party. We are in a democracy, and we have seen how the Labor Party has moved away from the working person and is out there supporting some of the more elites in society, we could say. I will just share that little bit of wisdom with members to rev it up a little!

The minister raised a very important point. I have mentioned the abuse those retail workers cop at the liquor stores when tourists rock up at Carnarvon and give them a hard time because people cannot buy a bottle of red and a carton of beer—

Hon Kate Doust interjected.

Hon Neil Thomson: Yes, but it happens, member.

If anyone from the SDA is watching now, I wonder whether they had the opportunity to have a say about some of the liquor controls and the framing of this bill in a broader sense. In line with the debate on clause 1, was there proper consultation by the then Minister for Racing and Gaming and his staff and the current minister with those hardworking retailers who are on the frontline of the liquor stores?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The example the member gave about a tourist in Carnarvon not being able to buy a bottle of red and a carton of beer is not correct, because that is not what we are dealing with in this bill. I also remind the member that it was only last year that we passed increased penalties for assaults on retail workers. This government very much takes seriously any violence and aggression towards retail workers, including those who work in liquor stores. If I recall correctly, the Liquor Stores Association of WA, including Peter Peck, were extremely supportive of the government's actions on that. We do not have any truck with anybody, however upset they are with any of our liquor laws, assaulting or abusing retail workers.

Hon Neil Thomson: I thank the minister for reminding me of that. I know that a liquor store owner in Kununurra very strongly led the charge to push for changes to the legislation. I thank the minister for getting that in place. I strongly supported that as well. That is very good.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I hope we are on the same ticket when it comes to that kind of behaviour towards workers.

Hon Neil Thomson: Absolutely, yes.

I will press the minister a little in relation to the United Workers Union. I note that there is an agreement to change the trading hours. I know there has been some history to the objection of changing the trading hours. The government has been quite reluctant to change the trading hours, for example, in the normal retail space for Sunday trading for retailers such as Coles and Woolies. Can the minister reflect upon whether there is any change of attitude from the United Workers Union and the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association of WA in relation to concerns about trading hours generally, given that the minister said they were so supportive of the changes to Good Friday and Christmas?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The member says that I said they were "so supportive" of this; I have never said that about them. I said that we engaged in consultation with UnionsWA and the United Workers Union and they did not have an objection to the legislation. I do not know that they are running up and down St Georges Terrace singing the praises of the bill, but the position is that they have not objected to it. As the member knows, through legislating, groups often do not give a ringing endorsement; they will say, "We don't have an issue with it." That is that particular part of it. In terms of the member's broader argument about changing trading hours, this is not a change to the retail trading hours of the kind that he is contemplating, which I think his political party supports. This is about the processes through which those who hold liquor licences can apply to open earlier on particular days, which they can currently do on application.

Hon Neil Thomson: Effectively it's the same.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Not really, because it is on application. We are removing the application part of it, up to a certain point at certain times, to give consistency of trading across some other hours for those organisations.

Hon Julie Freeman: I want to take us back to Hon Tim Clifford's discussion around the banned drinkers register. I want to understand what the linkage is between the BDR and the services for the banned drinker. Who has responsibility for initiating and monitoring services for these people once they are placed on the BDR?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I presume the member means drug and alcohol support services when she says "services". The department I am dealing with does not make provision for that. When somebody receives their

banned drinker order, they are provided with material that includes contact details for the services available to them through the Department of Health. They have contact details there, and then they can reach out and seek support. They can also go to their GP to seek support if that support is not there, or they can access one of the other drug and alcohol services that are often available. I am sure Alcoholics Anonymous still exists somewhere; that would be one of the popular culture ones that are often talked about. Those are available, but that person needs to take some responsibility for their behaviour and their situation. They are on the banned drinkers register because they have problematic issues associated with their alcohol use. We want individuals to take some individual responsibility for that particular circumstance.

Hon Julie Freeman: It is great to know that they will be provided with a pamphlet and sent on their merry way. I am interested to know what the decision-making process is to apply the banned drinkers register to a new area. Is it something that is initiated by the police? Is it the Department of Health or local government? What are the metrics used to justify applying this tool to an area that is struggling with problem drinkers?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: This might be the last response because I need to report the bill in a second, if that is okay. The process for creating a new banned drinkers area is through the minister, who can make a declaration, I think it is, via the regulations. That would typically come about because it is becoming evident that the rates of alcohol harm in a particular area are getting to a level that would require some action, including the extension of the banned drinkers register. That information could come to the minister by the police, the Department of Health, the community raising those particular issues or Hon Neil Thomson raising it persistently in Parliament about particular towns that he is very connected to. There is a range of ways in which that might be elevated to the level that the minister would consider it. One of the things that would happen in those circumstances is that the department would start looking at whether the statistics in the area for alcohol harm—obviously, alcohol-related violence and those sorts of things—would be sufficient to justify issuing an order of that kind. That is the way that it happens. As I say, the declaration currently is by way of regulation and would continue to be by way of regulation after this bill has passed. It is to be contrasted with where there are liquor controls, which are determined by the Director of Liquor Licensing. The minister does not have a direct role in that. I will just report progress.

Committee interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

(Continued at a later stage of the sitting.)

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

The President: Members, are there any questions?

PRISONERS—ESCAPES

775. Hon Nick Goiran to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the answer from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Attorney General to my question without notice on 10 September 2025, which revealed that the department has four ongoing investigations into incidents whereby prisoners or detainees have escaped or attempted to escape custody.

(1) Other than the escape by Robert Kevin McCullough on 25 August 2025, which other three escapes are under investigation?

(2) Why are those investigations taking so long, given the McCullough investigation is due to conclude on 19 September 2025?

(3) Will the minister commit to delivering a statement to Parliament on the outcome of each of the four investigations once known?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Corrective Services.

The Department of Justice advises:

(1) The other three escapes under investigation are the following.

The answer is in tabular form. I seek leave to have that table incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.

DATE	FACILITY	CIRCUMSTANCES
22/07/2024	CASUARINA PRISON	Prisoner escaped from Fiona Stanley Hospital as part of medical assessment/treatment and was recaptured by escort staff in nearby carpark.
26/09/2024	GREENOUGH REGIONAL PRISON	Prisoner escaped during transit. He was re-captured by WAPF and returned to Greenough Regional Prison.

22/07/2025	MELALEUCA WOMEN'S PRISON	Prisoner escaped from Ambulance upon arrival at Fiona Stanley Hospital for assessment following a fall from her bed. Prisoner was recaptured by escort staff in nearby carpark.

(2) The time required to complete investigations varies on a range of factors, including the availability of witnesses.

(3) No.

AGED-CARE SERVICES—NEWMAN

776. Hon Nick Goiran to the minister representing the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors:

I refer to the minister's response to my question without notice 682 asked on behalf of anxious aged-care respite clients, which did not answer any of the five parts, and which now calls into question whether there is any benefit to our state in having a state Minister for Aged Care and Seniors.

(1) Is the minister aware of the 18 September 2024 Department of Health contract for $199,525 awarded to EY titled "WA Aged Care Market Analysis and Options to Stimulate Supply"?

(2) If yes, what were the options recommended by Ernst & Young's analysis?

(3) Does the government intend to implement any of the options in this analysis and, if so, what is the timeline for implementing them?

(4) Will the minister table the analysis?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question. The following response has been provided by the Minister for Aged Care and Seniors.

(1) Yes.

(2)–(3) The analysis examined current and projected demand and supply for residential aged care in Western Australia. This informed state government advocacy to the Commonwealth, as well as the state government's commitment to deliver a $100 million aged-care low interest loan scheme to deliver additional concessional aged-care beds, as well as the implementation and expansion of the state government's Time to Think program.

(4) The analysis contains commercial-in-confidence and sensitive information and is therefore not appropriate for release.

DOMESTIC GAS RESERVATION POLICY

777. Hon Dr Steve Thomas to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for State Development:

I refer to the government's domestic gas policy, which was updated by the McGowan government on 17 August 2020 and again by the Cook government on 15 August 2023 and 19 September 2024.

(1) How many onshore gas projects have applied or sought to take advantage of the 20% export allowance between 2024 and the end of 2030?

(2) How many approvals for the 20% exemption have been granted?

(3) How many onshore projects that are expected to be in production by the end of 2030 received final state government approval in 2024 and 2025?

(4) Based on the current approvals and proposals, how much additional onshore gas production will be available to the domestic gas system each year from 2025–26 to 2020–30? Sorry, that should be 2029–30; the minister probably will not be able to answer that.

(5) Which projects will provide that gas?

The President: Standing order 105. The Leader of the House.

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Thank you, President, and I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1) It is one.

(2) None have been granted.

(3) It is none.

(4) According to the Australian Energy Market Operator's (AEMO) 2024 *WA Gas Statement of Opportunities*, it is the following.

The remainder of this answer is in tabular form. I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.

2025–2026: No additional onshore gas.
2027: Up to 78 terajoules per day.
2028: No additional onshore gas.
2029: Up to 280 terajoules per day.
2030: No additional onshore gas.

(5) According to AEMO, it will come from the West Erregulla, Lockyer Deep and Waitsia stage 2 projects.

BOAT RAMP—DRUMMOND COVE

778. Hon Steve Martin to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the 2021 election commitment from WA Labor to install a boat ramp at Drummond Cove, an August 2024 constituent mailout from former Labor member for Geraldton Lara Dalton stating that the commitment is being worked on, and comments by the minister in the estimates hearings in July about contention in the community in relation to the project.

(1) What is the status of the project?

(2) When will it be delivered?

(3) Does the government still intend to deliver the commitment?

(4) If no to (3), why not?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Transport.

(1)–(4) The state is engaging with the City of Greater Geraldton regarding the preferred option for dune restoration and sand nourishment to confirm a delivery timeframe for erosion management and passive recreation enhancements.

EAST PILBARA—INDUSTRIAL LAND

779. Hon Neil Thomson to the Minister for Regional Development:

I note the important role of the Pilbara, which was highlighted in celebrations at Parliament this week.

(1) Is the minister aware of the dire shortfall in industrial land in the East Pilbara, particularly in and around Newman?

(2) Has the minister sought advice from the Minister for Planning and Lands as to why there is no progress on light and general industrial land development?

(3) If yes to (2), what was that advice, and did the minister outline why there is no progress on developing industrial land by DevelopmentWA now that native title has been cleared on the sites?

(4) Will the minister back up the rhetoric and commit to delivering new industrial land with timelines?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1)–(4) DevelopmentWA, in consultation with the Shire of East Pilbara and the Pilbara Development Commission, is presently undertaking a review of land supply options to support commercial and industrial projects in Newman.

LANCELIN ROAD–INDIAN OCEAN DRIVE INTERSECTION—SPEED SIGNS

780. Hon Julie Freeman to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the side road activated speed signs (SRAS) at the intersection of Lancelin Road and Indian Ocean Drive.

(1) How many times in the last 12 months have the signs been reported as not working?

(2) What has been identified as the cause of the repeated failures?

(3) What is the average response time for repairs once a fault is reported?

(4) What is the total cost of repairs and maintenance undertaken on the SRAS since their installation?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Transport.

(1)–(4) Three reports have been made. Issues identified include the ingress of ants, power outages and technical faults. It has taken on average 30 days for these repairs to take place, with most repairs undertaken under warranty or defect liability.

WATER CORPORATION—WATER CONSUMPTION DATA

781. Hon Rod Caddies to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to the answer provided to question without notice 539 asked on 14 August 2025.

Of the 6,566 residential properties that recorded less than 100 litres of water consumption in the period from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024, how many of those properties were billed to accounts held by:

(1) a government department;

(2) the Department of Housing and Works;

(3) the Department of Communities; or

(4) a registered business?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

Water Corporation accounts recording less than 100 litres of water consumption from 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024 as requested were as follows:

(1) 91 properties;

(2) 649 properties;

(3) 63 properties; and

(4) 815 properties.

ANSTEY ROAD–MANDURAH ROAD INTERSECTION—TRAFFIC LIGHTS

782. Hon Dr Brian Walker to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer the minister to ongoing local concerns regarding the lack of traffic lights at the junction of Anstey Road and Mandurah Road in the City of Rockingham.

(1) On what date did the city first approach Main Roads Western Australia with regard to the installation of traffic lights at this junction, and how many approaches have been made subsequently?

(2) What assessments have Main Roads undertaken as a result of any such approach, on what dates and with what outcomes?

(3) Is the installation of traffic lights at this junction under active consideration and, if not, why not?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Transport.

(1)–(3) A City of Rockingham project is currently underway at this intersection.

PUBLIC HOUSING—PRIORITY WAITLIST

783. Hon Tim Clifford to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Housing and Works:

I refer to the wait turn and priority public housing waitlists, noting that double counting is present in the potential response.

(1) How many applications were on the public housing waitlist at the end of August 2025, and how many individual applicants does that represent?

(2) How many applicants were on the public housing priority waitlist at the end of August 2025, and how many individual applicants does that represent?

(3) How many applicants exited the waitlist due to being placed in social housing during August 2025?

(4) Of those in (3), how many were from the priority waitlist?

Hon Dr Katrina Stratton replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide the following on behalf of the Minister for Housing and Works.

The data requested is not yet available. However, a response will be provided on 14 October 2025.

SEISMIC BLASTING

784. Hon Sophie McNeill to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I ask the minister to confirm the following.

(1) How many times has seismic blasting occurred in WA state waters in the past year?

(2) Which companies received approval to conduct this seismic blasting?

(3) When did it occur and for how long?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I answer on behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum and I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

Given the matters raised in the question are technical in nature and relate to specific activities undertaken over the past year, the information requested cannot be provided in the time allocated and the member is asked to place the question on notice.

POLYPHAGOUS SHOT-HOLE BORER

785. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

My question without notice of which some notice has been given is to the Minister for Regional Development.

I refer to the 2023 research paper *Cost effectiveness of spread mitigation strategies for polyphagous shot hole borer Euwallacea fornicatus (Coleoptera: Curculionidae: Scolytinae)*,which states:

> A third strategy using a mix of chemical suppression and tree removal was also considered in light of new information about the pest's host preferences … this strategy was only slightly more expensive than using chemical suppression alone and could actually lead to eradication …

(1) Given the 2023 paper co-authored by Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development staff, why has complete tree removal remained the government's primary source of PSHB strategy to date?

(2) What is the government's current treatment of PSHB and, if it changed, when did this shift?

(3) Does the treatment in (2) include any chemical treatment and, if not, why not?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The question has been redirected to me. As the Minister for Agriculture and Food, I have carriage of biosecurity matters.

(1) The paper referred to was written early in the response when the potential host range of PSHB in Australia was not well known and was based on hypothetical options to mitigate impacts of PSHB if eradication was not feasible. It was based on desktop modelling of data available at the time and did not involve any field research into control methods. Tree removal or pruning remains the only proven method of eradicating PSHB in Western Australia.

(2) The National Management Group determined that PSHB was no longer technically feasible to eradicate in June 2025. As a result of this decision, DPIRD is now delivering an 18-month transition to management program. This includes surveillance and tree removals or pruning in strategic locations to slow the spread and manage the impact of PSHB.

(3) A number of chemical treatments are being used by local governments and other landholders in respect of PSHB management. Research into PSHB modelling, surveillance and controls is being delivered by the University of Western Australia, Murdoch University and Curtin University in partnership with DPIRD and funded by the WA government through the WA Agricultural Research Collaboration.

FOREST PRODUCTS COMMISSION—TENDER RFP112025FS

786. Hon Jess Beckerling to the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to tender RFP112025FS, sale of industrial wood and forest residue, issued by the Forest Products Commission.

(1) How many companies have applied to the tender or a request for quote and can the minister please provide their names?

(2) Will seasonal restrictions be imposed on any successful tenderer's activities?

(3) What guidelines does the Forest Products Commission use for the application of the new regimes?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1) The tender is an ongoing process and a response cannot be provided at this time.

(2) Yes.

(3) Tender RFP112025FS caters for the sale of forest products from both ecological thinning and plantation thinning. The guidelines are, for native forest ecological thinning, the "Silvicultural Plan: Ecological Thinning in Forest Enhancement Area" as issued by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions, and, for plantation thinning, the Forest Products Commission's work instruction 25 protocol for thinning and operational assessment.

AVIAN INFLUENZA—POULTRY FACILITIES

787. Hon Amanda Dorn to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the minister's statement on Western Australia becoming a signatory to the national management agreement for H5 highly pathogenic avian influence (HPAI) in wildlife, and I acknowledge the importance of preparing for an incursion.

(1) How many birds are currently legally permitted to be contained in a single intensive poultry facility in Western Australia?

(2) Has the minister received advice that the high-density housing of birds poses a significant biosecurity risk in the event of an HPAI outbreak and, if not, why not?

(3) Will the minister consider reviewing stocking density limits as part of WA's preparedness and response planning and, if not, why not?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1) Stocking density limits are set out in the *Australian Animal Welfare Standards and Guidelines for Poultry*, which was nationally endorsed in July 2023. These standards are dependent on the species and breed of poultry, their age and size, and the type of production system. The Cook government remains committed to these standards, and particularly the move away from battery cages as a production system.

(2) Water birds and shorebirds are the natural reservoirs for avian influenza viruses, and transmission from wild birds is the primary way that avian influenza infects poultry. The key biosecurity risk is potential contact between wild birds and poultry, which intensive housing minimises.

(3) The stocking density limits are as per nationally agreed standards.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACT—SECTION 158—TRAINING

788. Hon Philip Scott to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

According to previous answers provided, the draconian powers outlined in section 158 of the Public Health Act have never been used. However, that section could be invoked during a public health emergency. Given the government can see a scenario in which section 158 would be used, I ask the following.

(1) Has specific training ever been provided to the police officers or authorised officers expected to carry out the provisions within section 158—namely, holding someone down, stripping them naked and forcibly vaccinating them?

(2) Is there ongoing training for police officers or authorised officers in relation to section 158 and, if so, what does that training entail?

(3) Has the government obtained legal advice regarding the adherence of section 158 to Australia's international human rights obligations and, if so, what is that advice?

Hon Pierre Yang replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Health.

(1)–(3) Persons designated as authorised officers are appropriately qualified and trained to exercise powers specific to their role. There is no ongoing training provided to authorised officers specifically in relation

to section 158 of the act. In drafting the *Public Health Act 2016*, consideration was given to ensuring that the act was consistent with Australia's international human rights obligations.

ABORTIONS—PACIFIC LABOUR MOBILITY STREAM VISAS

789. Hon Maryka Groenewald to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to a 19 June 2025 ABC report indicating that hundreds of migrant women on Pacific Australia Labour Mobility stream visas have undergone unwanted abortions due to visa and work-related pressures.

(1) How many visa holders in Australia have accessed these services?

(2) What steps will the government take to ensure that migrant women are not pressured or coerced into these procedures?

Hon Pierre Yang replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Health.

(1) This information is not held within WA Health.

(2) WA Health frontline staff regularly screen for family and domestic violence, including for coercive control. Mandatory training is provided to WA Health staff in antenatal, postnatal, mental health and emergency departments. Training is also made available to health service providers, migrant and refugee services, University of Western Australia medical students and community health and non-government organisations. Social workers are trained in family and domestic violence identification, assessment and intervention, as well as trauma-informed practice.

EAST WALLABI ISLAND—MOBILE BLACK SPOT PROGRAM

790. Hon Rob Horstman to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to a state government media statement from 4 October 2024 promising $242,000 for improved mobile coverage for East Wallabi Island at the Abrolhos Islands as part of the Mobile Black Spot Program.

(1) What infrastructure works have taken place for this project?

(2) What is the timeline for the project to be completed?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1)–(2) As set out in the media statement of 2 October 2024, which I table, a new small cell base station—a 9.6-metre tower—was installed at East Wallabi Island and went live in July 2024. This station provides new and improved 4G mobile coverage to the Wallabi group of islands, which previously experienced limited to no coverage.

(See paper 618.)

ECONOMIC REGULATION AUTHORITY—WEBSITE

791. Hon Simon Ehrenfeld to the parliamentary secretary representing the Treasurer:

I refer to the Economic Regulation Authority.

(1) What was the total cost of the ERA's newly launched website?

(2) Why did the website redesign occur even after it was announced that the ERA and Infrastructure Western Australia would merge to create a new WA productivity commission?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Treasurer.

(1)–(2) An up-to-date, modern, accessible website will assist the ERA to continue to deliver its regulatory functions.

DEER CULL

792. Hon Phil Twiss to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to an ABC online news article dated 5 September 2025 and titled "Recreational shooter questions practices of southern WA aerial deer cull".

(1) Can the minister confirm whether all aerial culling operations adhered strictly to industry standard humane procedures for the killing of feral deer?

(2) Can the minister please advise which national standard operating procedures were used, as mentioned by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development in the article?

(3) Has the government investigated reports of deer found with multiple bullet wounds and, if so, what were the findings?

(4) As advised by DPIRD, the carcasses of deer are left to decompose on the ground. Has the increase of numbers of other feral animals been considered due to the consumption of carcasses?

(5) What steps are being taken to collaborate with organisations like the Australian Deer Association to improve humane and cost-effective deer control strategies?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1) Yes.

(2) Operations were conducted in accordance with the national code of practice for aerial culling, *NATSOP-DEER001: National Standard Operating Procedure: Aerial Shooting of Feral and Wild Deer*.

(3) Yes. The investigation concluded that the operations complied with the *National Standard Operating Procedure: Aerial Shooting of Feral and Wild Deer*, and national best practice was achieved.

(4) Decomposing carcases will not increase the abundance or density of native or non-native carnivorous species.

(5) DPIRD collaborates with relevant organisations and community groups when appropriate.

FORCED ADOPTIONS—*BROKEN BONDS, FRACTURED LIVES* REPORT

793. Hon Michelle Hofmann to the minister representing the Minister for Child Protection:

My question without notice of which some notice has been given is to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Child Protection.

I refer to the minister's answer on 12 August this year to my question on notice 361 on *Report 66: Broken Bonds, Fractured Lives: Inquiry into Past Forced Adoption in Western Australia* and note that recommendations 33, 34 and 36 relating to adoptee access to records were not supported due to complex legal, ethical and logistical considerations.

(1) Will the government table the legal or ethical advice relied upon in making this decision?

(2) Has any independent legal or ethical review been sought and, if so, by whom?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I actually represent the Minister for Child Protection, who has provided the following answer.

The Department of Communities advises the following.

(1) No.

(2) No.

POLICE—TERMINATION BENEFITS

794. Hon Michelle Boylan to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to the *Western Australia Police Force: Annual Report 2025*, page 46, "Financial Statements", section 3.1, "Employee benefits expenses" and "Termination benefits".

(1) How many employees of the Western Australia Police Force received termination benefits in the reporting years listed in the annual report as at 2024–25, with the figures provided separately?

(2) For each of those reporting years, what were the average highest and lowest termination payments?

(3) What were the reasons for the termination payments being made?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Police.

(1)–(3) The Western Australia Police Force advises that it cannot provide an answer within the required timeframe, and requests that the honourable member place the question on notice.

HEALTH ASSET MAINTENANCE AUDIT

795. Hon Anthony Spagnolo to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the answer to question without notice 765 asked on 17 September regarding the terms of engagement letters to Dr Fong and Mr Barnes for the snap audit into Western Australian hospitals. These terms of engagement letters expressly mention that terms of reference for the snap audit will be provided.

(1) Have these terms of reference for the audit now been provided to Mr Fong and Mr Barnes?

(2) If yes to (1), will the Premier table them?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Premier.

(1) Yes.

(2) Copies of the terms of reference for the audit into WA health infrastructure maintenance have been requested as part of supplementary information through the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations 2025–26 budget estimates.

LUCIAN EDOUARD LAGRANGE—MEDICAL DEREGISTRATION

796. Hon Nick Goiran to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the State Administrative Tribunal's decision *Medical Board of Australia and Lagrange* [2021] WASAT 161.

(1) Was any review undertaken by the department following this decision to ensure that it does not take 25 years to cancel the registration of a medical practitioner who was found on several separate occasions to be committing repeat sexual offences against his patients?

(2) If yes to (1), who conducted the review, when was it conducted and will the minister table the review?

(3) If no to (1), will the minister order a review?

Hon Pierre Yang replied:

I thank the honourable Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Health.

(1)–(3) The Western Australian Department of Health does not have jurisdiction over this matter.

GRIFFIN COAL—ICICI BANK

797. Hon Dr Steve Thomas to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for State Development:

I refer to Indian financier ICICI Bank's recent appointment of RSB Partners to seek additional financial backers for the insolvent and foreign-owned Griffin Coal company.

(1) During the period from 26 November 2024 to 15 September 2025, did the minister, his ministerial staff, departmental staff or any government representative meet with or communicate in any form with representatives of ICICI Bank and, if so, who engaged or attended meetings or discussions, on what dates and in what formats?

(2) If yes to (1), what records, notations, minutes, recordings, documentation and follow-up actions were compiled during the meetings?

(3) If yes to (2), will the minister please table them?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. It feels like a Thursday question, honourable member!

(1) On 21 August 2025, an executive from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet met with ICICI Bank representatives in person at Dumas House and the Minister for Energy and Decarbonisation met with ICICI Bank representatives, along with two staff members, in person at Parliament House.

(2) No records were compiled as the discussions were general in nature and no specific agreements or outcomes were reached.

(3) Not applicable.

WESTPORT

798. Hon Steve Martin to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the minister's answer to question on notice 376, which states that the Westport office has not been involved in the regional freight rail buyback.

(1) Does this mean the regional freight rail buyback will have no impact on Westport?

(2) If no to (1), why is the Westport office not involved?

(3) If no to (1), what impacts, opportunities or other linkages between the two pieces of work are being considered?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Transport.

(1)–(3) Any impacts, opportunities or other linkages to Westport will be considered at the appropriate time, subject to the outcomes of a confidential process regarding the proposed freight rail buyback.

FOREST PRODUCTS COMMISSION—TENDER RFP112025FS

799. Hon Jess Beckerling to the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to tender RFP112025FS, "Sale of Industrial Wood and Forest Residue", issued by the Forest Products Commission, which states that the FPC is responsible for harvesting forest products.

(1) Is it intended that log buyers could be responsible for arranging or carrying out the felling and transport of timber in thinning operations, as stated in the answer to question 13 of addendum 1?

  (a) If yes, what checks will be in place to ensure that felling and hauling contractors are appropriately certified and trained in thinning operations?

(2) How many FPC FTEs are dedicated to the on-ground monitoring and enforcement of any FPC thinning requirements?

(3) Can the minister please table these requirements and any checklists staff are required to follow?

(4) Can the minister please confirm whether the FPC is making up to 100,000 or 300,000 tonnes of recovery log available per annum?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

(1) Tender RFP112025FS caters for the sale of forest products from both ecological thinning and plantation thinning. Harvesting of native forest recovery logging is not intended to be conducted by a buyer. Plantation thinning is provided as an option for the buyer.

  (a) Not applicable.

(2) Twenty-four staff have varying degrees of involvement with the monitoring and enforcement of thinning operations.

(3) The FPC has an extensive and rigorous suite of monitoring and compliance documents that relate to operations, including thinning. It is not practicable to provide all documents and checklists used in all aspects of operations that may include thinning.

(4) The first parcel of recovery log released with the tender provided an allocation of up to 100,000 tonnes per annum.

ADOPTIONS

800. Hon Rod Caddies to the minister representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the adoption of children in WA.

(1) How many children in WA were adopted in the 2024–25 financial year?

(2) What is the minister doing to encourage more Western Australians to adopt a child who is born and needs a loving family when the biological parents are not able to care for the child?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following response has been provided by the Minister for Child Protection.

The Department of Communities advises the following.

(1)–(2) When children are brought into the care of the CEO, the initial focus is always reunification with parents when it is safe to do so. The best interests of the child must always be the paramount consideration. Every

child and young person has a variety of individual needs that are considered when making a care arrangement. Adoption may occur only in instances when parents have made the decision to relinquish parental responsibility. Data on adoptions in WA in the 2024–25 financial year is not yet published. In the 2023–24 financial year, a total of 23 adoption orders were granted by the Family Court of Western Australia.

NORTHAM HOSPITAL—WORM INFESTATION

801. Hon Anthony Spagnolo to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to deeply disturbing reports from Northam Health Service that worms have been present in the ceiling for several months and that one of these worms allegedly dropped into the meal of an elderly patient.

(1) Can the minister confirm whether Northam Health Service is aware of these claims and what immediate investigations it has ordered into the hygiene and safety standards at Northam hospital?

(2) How long have complaints regarding worms in the ceiling being known to staff or management and what actions, if any, have been taken under the minister's watch to address the issue?

(3) Will the minister table any records of maintenance or facility management reports relating to infestations, ceiling integrity or hygiene concerns at Northam hospital over the past 12 months and, if such records exist, what do they reveal about when the problem was first identified and what remedial action has been undertaken?

(4) Does the minister accept responsibility for this apparent breakdown in the most basic standards of hospital maintenance and patient care?

Hon Pierre Yang replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by Minister for Health.

(1)–(4) No evidence of worms has been found in Northam Health Service.

Several members interjected.

The President: Order!

WATER CORPORATION—TIER 3 CHARGES

802. Hon Simon Ehrenfeld to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to my question on notice of 22 May 2025 to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water and the data to 2023–24 provided on 12 August 2025.

(1) Is the Water Corporation data for the 2024–25 year now available?

(2) If so, could the minister please table that data?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

The information is not available in the timeframe required and therefore I ask the honourable member to place this question on notice.

DOMESTIC GAS RESERVATION POLICY

Answer

Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House) (5:01 pm): I would like to provide an answer to Hon Dr Steve Thomas' question without notice 748, asked yesterday, and I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.

1. The Department of Energy and Economic Diversification.

2. The Government refers to the 10-year forecast of the WA gas market balance provided by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO).

3. According to AEMO's 2024 WA Gas Statement of Opportunities (GSOO):

2025 to 2027 and 2029 the market is forecast to be in surplus.
2028: 162 terajoules per day will be required.
2030: 22 terajoules per day will be required.

4. Please refer to AEMO's 2024 GSOO for forecasts on expected gas supply from various projects.

5. The Government regularly reviews the policy to ensure it remains fit-for-purpose to support WA's energy security and energy transition.

YOUTH DETENTION FACILITY—MAJOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROPOSAL REPORT

Supplementary information

Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House) (5:01 pm): I rise to provide further information to question without notice 749, asked yesterday. I would like to table the *Major Infrastructure Proposal Assessment Guidelines May 2024* as requested by Hon Steve Martin.

(See paper 619.)

GREEN ENERGY APPROVALS INITIATIVE

Answer

Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment) (5:02 pm): I have an answer to Hon Jess Beckerling's question without notice 727, asked on 16 September. The answer is mostly in tabular form, so I seek leave to have that incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.

Positions within the Environmental Protection Authority Services team are presented within the following table:

Role	Level	Total FTE	Perm	Temp	Vacant
Environmental Officer*	SCL1	8	1	0	7
Environmental Officer	SCL2	11	8	1	2
Senior Environmental Officer	SCL3	18	16	0	2
Principal Environmental Officer	SCL4	12	8	0	4
Manager	SCL5	7	7	0	0
Director	SCL6	1	0	0	1
Executive Director	C2	1	0	0	1

Four vacancies for the role of Environmental Officer SCL1 are new positions recently announced in the 2025-26 budget, and three vacancies are due to recent internal promotions.

The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation is filling vacant SCL1 positions from a recently completed recruitment pool and has reserved three positions for those who have completed its graduate program.

There is active recruitment underway for the roles of Environmental Officer SCL2, Senior Environmental Officer, Principal Environmental Officer and Director.

Positions within the Green Energy Assessment team are presented within the following table:

Role	Level	Total FTE	Perm	Temp	Vacant
Environmental Officer	SCL1	3	1	0	2
Environmental Officer	SCL2	6	6	0	0
Senior Environmental Officer	SCL3	12	11	1	0
Legal Officer	SCL3	1	1	0	0
Manager	SCL4	4	3	1	0
Director/Manager	SCL5	2	2	0	0
Licensing Administration Officer	L3	1	0	1	0
Executive Officer	L4	1	1	0	0
Financial Accountant	L4	1	1	0	0
Program Officer	L5	1	1	0	0
Senior Business Analyst	L6	1	1	0	0
Senior Procurement Officer	L6	1	1	0	0
Senior HR Consultant	L6	1	1	0	0
Policy	L7	2	2	0	0
Director	L9	1	1	0	0
Executive Director	C1	1	1	0	0

There is active recruitment underway for the Environmental Officer SCL1 role.

POLICE—FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE "SOVEREIGNTY NEVER CEDED" RALLY

Answer

Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment) (5:02 pm): I have answers to question without notice 756 asked by Hon Jess Beckerling and question without notice 769 asked by Hon Rod Caddies to me representing the Minister for Police.

The answer to the question from Hon Jess Beckerling is as follows.

(1) Zero.

(2) There are three officers subject to a final FVRO where the FVRO was served since the commencement of the *Firearms Act 2024*. None of these officers are currently undertaking operational duties.

(3)–(4) WA police officers with an FVRO are subject to a range of restrictions dependent on the unique circumstances of each case.

The answer to the question from Hon Rod Caddies is as follows.

(1) No.

(2) Not applicable.

(3) The Western Australia Police Force did not grant permission for the protest in question.

(4) Not applicable.

PAPER TABLED

By leave, a paper was tabled by **Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment)** and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

(See paper 620.)

LIQUOR CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2025

Committee of the whole

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting. The Deputy Chair of Committees (Hon Andrew O'Donnell) in the chair; Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment) in charge of the bill.

Clause 1: Short title

Committee was interrupted after the clause had been partly considered.

Hon Julie Freeman: When we left off, I had asked a question about the decision-making process to apply the banned drinkers register to a new area. The response I got was that it could be triggered by the health department, the local government or the police. It could even be triggered by Hon Neil Thomson raising repeated complaints in this place about the situation in a particular community. Given that it could be triggered in the first instance by one or more groups, how is the community notified and engaged with to establish that it wants to become a banned drinkers area?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The member used the word "triggered", which is not the word I used when I described the process to her. There is not a triggering event; there is not a thing as such. It would happen if there were a level of reporting and awareness. Those sorts of issues would be raised and it would become apparent, like with many other things, that there was a need for action. If a BDA is contemplated or proposed, consultation would happen with affected licensees in that area. Local governments in that area would also be notified and consulted. We think that community groups with an interest in the matter would also be consulted. There would also be a notification published in local media and people could make submissions about their views on whether an area should be declared.

Hon Julie Freeman: What follow-up consultation is then done after some time to establish that the community wants to remain a banned drinkers area?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We have to understand that when a BDA is put in place and imposed on a particular area or community, it is not the consultation that gives rise to that; it is the fact that there are unacceptably high levels of alcohol-related harms with violence, hospital admissions and those sorts of things. The department continues to monitor those statistics throughout the period in which the banned drinkers area has been declared and is in place. If, in time, we see those levels returning to what would be the community norm, consideration would be given to removing the banned drinkers area from that location. Representations may be made to the minister and the department about whether a particular area should appropriately be within a BDA.

Hon Neil Thomson interjected.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Member, I am giving an answer. Can I give the answer, please? I am trying to deal with the honourable member's question faithfully. If those representations were made by a particular community, that would continue. That may precipitate looking further at the statistics to see whether there is justification for it, but the department does not go around and consult with the community in a proactive way to say, "Are you still comfortable with it?" It is the connection between the alcohol-related harm statistics and whether they start to come back towards the mean rather than sitting outside that. All the areas in which we currently have BDAs still sit above the metropolitan average for alcohol-related harms, even though they have come down.

Hon Julie Freeman: The minister answered my next question. Following on from that and referring to the average alcohol-related crime statistics, is it feasible that a metropolitan area like Perth hills or Armadale, for example, could become a banned drinkers area and, if not, why not?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I would not use the word "feasible", because that probably is not a legal standard. Is it legally possible under the scheme? Yes, it is legally possible that a particular metropolitan area could be declared a banned drinkers area.

Hon Neil Thomson: That is interesting. We have the protected entertainment precincts (PEP) scheme that also operates. That is about banning people from areas, as opposed to banning drinkers. Maybe there is a case for a banned drinkers area to be applied in Northbridge, for example.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Are you proposing that, member, and is your political party supporting that?

Hon Neil Thomson: It certainly would be very equitable, given its application more widely.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am asking if you are speaking on behalf of your party to say that you are proposing a banned drinkers area in Northbridge.

Hon Neil Thomson: No, I am talking about the legality. I am just asking a legal question in the case that we are interrogating.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I have conceded that it is possible to have that over some part of the metropolitan area.

Hon Neil Thomson: How many banned drinkers areas do we have in the state?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: There are four, member—the Kimberley, the Pilbara, the Goldfields and the towns of Carnarvon and Gascoyne Junction, which is a single area because they are declared together.

Hon Neil Thomson: The minister mentioned earlier that this is not about alcohol restrictions; we are referring to the banned drinkers register in this legislation. Is there any link between the restriction on volumetric sales—liquid door sales—and the banned drinkers area?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I think when the member is talking about volumetric sales, he is talking about alcohol restrictions in terms of—

Hon Neil Thomson: The number of bottles of wine.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: That is right, and not the litres.

Hon Neil Thomson: Not the litres or millilitres or whatever.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As members know, I am not a drinker, so I have to have these things explained to me. Although alcohol restrictions and a BDR can operate in the same area, one is not a precursor to the other. They are both trying to deal with alcohol-related harms, so there is obviously significant overlap when we have BDAs and alcohol restrictions because of alcohol-related harms in some communities. We can have one without the other, but, as I said, there is obviously a correlation—the alcohol-related harms link.

Hon Neil Thomson: In fact, all BDAs have different alcohol restrictions. Is that not correct?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: There is some nuance to this answer. As I indicated in my earlier answer, although there is a strong correlation and connection between alcohol restrictions and the BDR, they can be mutually exclusive. Most areas that are a BDA also have restrictions, but alcohol restrictions are usually based on townships rather than regional areas. If we take the Goldfields, for example, not every township could be subjected to alcohol restrictions, whereas the BDA applies to the whole area of the Goldfields.

Progress reported and leave granted to sit again, on motion by **Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment)**.

FIREFIGHTERS—WORKING CONDITIONS

Statement

Hon Tim Clifford (5:19 pm): I rise today to speak in support of the United Professional Firefighters Union and the campaign for a fair deal for firies. Firefighters protect us all, every day and every night, sometimes under the toughest imaginable conditions. Firefighters experience workplace hazards that other people do not. The kinds of

conditions that make a place unsafe are precisely the kind of conditions that define a firefighter's workplace. They enter when we escape. In 2025, we are asking more of our firefighters than we ever have before. The energy transition has a thousand benefits, but it means that emergency workers have to deal with a different kind of fire when things go wrong. Lithium batteries produce dangerous fires and hydrogen is immensely explosive. Of course, the energy transition is made necessary by climate change, and climate change heaps more burdens on our firefighters. There is the obvious problem of increased fire risk, and we have to add to that the increased risk of floods and other natural disasters as well. The state and federal governments have decided that we now have to deal with nuclear materials, and the firies will have to step in when things go wrong.

Despite their sacrifice and professionalism, firefighters remain some of the most underpaid, under-resourced and undervalued government workers that we have. When I came back to this place after a four-year break, I promised to spend political capital on what matters and to listen to working people. I think the current moment demands that we speak up in order to meet that promise. Firefighters do their job with professionalism and courage. This state owes them a lot, and I ask the members of this house for their support to secure the fair pay, safe conditions and modern structures the community would expect for them. I have advocated publicly, and now in this chamber, for timely, good-faith bargaining. I am afraid that this appears to be missing in the case of the firies. Unlike other workforces, firefighters do not strike—they cannot, really, for obvious reasons. They are an essential service. The Department of Fire and Emergency Services' decommissioning of fire trucks is already occurring, and this is affecting the safety of the community. This is happening because the government continues to delay the provision of funding to correct underpayments and wage deficiencies, which I will talk about briefly here.

The union has put forward minimum principles for 2025's enterprise bargaining agreement. First is the back pay of overtime. We are not sure why it has happened, but $2.5 million in overtime is owed since 9 June 2023. This should not become a bargaining item. This is what firies deserve. Second is a remuneration adjustment. There needs to be a $2-an-hour adjustment for senior firefighters to correct a base wage deficiency. Third is a government-funded work value review. There is a need for an independent government-funded review with outcomes implemented within 12 months. This has been a part of existing agreements for at least the past five years. Parity with the Community and Public Sector Union–Civil Service Association of WA agreement on key allowances is particularly important for on-call availability allowances, in which firefighters are paid almost 50% less than their colleagues in the same department. This has been an issue for over 10 years. There must be a review of the operational support allowance for call-back and hold-back mobile phone use, safe personal protective clothing return, tiered deployment and specialist roles to bring Western Australia in line with other states. There needs to be classification reform. Western Australia needs funding for leading firefighter and station officer class 3 positions to modernise structures, support progression and improve retention. It is not hard to understand why this is so important. Firefighters do not fit neatly into the general public sector model, which might explain some of the disparity we are seeing today. The work is dangerous, involving long hours and unique risks that no other workplaces carry, including the exposure to cancer-causing agents, post-traumatic stress disorder and the ever-increasing workload created by climate change. A one-size-fits-all wages policy does not work with firefighters. They are so far behind where they should be compared with other government agencies for a service in which lives are at stake every day. There are only 1,200 career fire and rescue service members doing shift work 24/7. At any time, more than 300 firefighters are on duty or on call protecting communities across WA.

At a time when the changing climate, emergency risks and increasing levels of responsibility combine with the cost-of-living crisis to create significantly more difficult work environments, the government has to front up and cough up the money. My colleagues and I have been visiting fire stations to meet crews, hear their stories and find out their capability needs. The Greens will always look for ways to engage with real consultation and support consultation mechanisms such as operational changes in government agencies that are informed by people at the coalface and the people on shifts. The Western Australian Government as a whole needs to do more of this kind of work but, for now, firefighters are fighting for fairness, safety and the future of WA's emergency services. We need this Parliament to do the same.

USS *CANBERRA*

Statement

Hon Phil Twiss (5:25 pm): I rise today to speak on a matter of profound historical resonance and contemporary significance. I am wearing on my left lapel a pin representing the star-spangled kangaroo. This was given to me by a recently retired US Navy captain who was involved with the AUKUS project in Western Australia. Since the 1980s, it has been customary for all Australian major surface fleet units—that is, warships—to bear a kangaroo on the funnel or superstructure to identify them as Australian ships. The custom has been used sporadically over the years since the First World War to proudly identify Australian ships, especially when combined with other fleet units in wartime operations. The star-spangled kangaroo, however, is unique to just one warship: the USS *Canberra*. For those not familiar with the terminology, "USS" means United States ship. The USS *Canberra* is also unique compared with every other ship in the United States Navy, in that it is the only US warship to be named after a foreign capital.

The USS *Canberra* is not just another ship in the United States Navy; it is a tribute. It is a living, sailing memorial to the HMAS *Canberra*, a proud Australian heavy cruiser that was tragically sunk during the Battle of Savo Island on 9 August 1942. It was the lead ship in a taskforce of US Navy and RAN warships, where it provided a protective screen for American transports to the US Marine landing operations at Guadalcanal, when it was severely damaged during a surprise attack from the powerful Japanese Navy. In the darkness and confusion of the early hours of the morning, the *Canberra*, as the lead ship, bore the brunt of the Japanese attacks and was hit 24 times in less than two minutes, with 84 of her crew killed, including Captain Frank Getting. The Japanese wreaked havoc with all the other Allied vessels before withdrawing. However, despite all this, US Marine landing operations at Guadalcanal continued successfully. Then, following an order to abandon ship, the *Canberra* was sunk the next day by a torpedo from a US destroyer.

In recognition of this heroic work, President Franklin D. Roosevelt recognised the sacrifice of the Australian Navy in protecting US Marines and renamed the new Baltimore-class heavy cruiser USS *Pittsburgh*, the USS *Canberra*. The loss of HMAS *Canberra* was a painful moment in our naval history, but it also marked the beginning of a deep and resilient alliance forged in the crucible of war. In naming a United States warship after an Australian vessel, the US Navy made a powerful statement. It was not merely an act of remembrance; it was an act of respect. It was an act of recognition of the courage and sacrifice of Australian sailors, and an affirmation of the bond between our two nations.

In 2021, the latest USS *Canberra*, an Independence-class littoral combat ship, was delivered to the US Navy from the Austal shipbuilding facility in Mobile and was due to be commissioned at a home port at San Diego naval base. Austal is the only company outside the US that builds US warships—an Australian-founded and based company. Instead, she sailed, non-commissioned, across to Sydney, where she was later commissioned at the Royal Australian Navy's Fleet Base East on 22 July 2023. The commissioning of USS *Canberra* in Sydney was a first for any US Navy warship in Australia, demonstrating the special relationship between Australia and the United States. This ship, a littoral combat ship, has been designed for agility and versatility in nearshore operations, and represents more than military capability; it represents trust, shared values, democracy, freedom and the rule of law. It represents a partnership that has grown stronger over decades, through conflicts and crises, through peacekeeping and humanitarian missions and through joint exercises and strategic planning.

As we look to the future, the USS *Canberra* will serve as a floating ambassador to our alliance. It will patrol the Indo-Pacific, a region where stability and cooperation are more important now than ever. It will participate in joint operations, strengthen interoperability and demonstrate our shared commitment to a free and open maritime domain. It is important to remember that ships like USS *Canberra* are more than steel and technology; they are stories and they are symbols. They are commitments made visible, and, in this case, they are a testament to the enduring mateship between Australia and the United States.

It would be remiss of me to not mention the broader strategic framework in which this partnership continues to evolve, namely the AUKUS agreement. This trilateral pact between Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States represents a generational leap in defence cooperation. It is not only about submarines and advanced technologies; it is about trust, transparency and a shared strategic vision. The USS *Canberra* is a tangible symbol of that vision and of our commitment to maintaining peace, security and a technological edge in a rapidly changing world.

Just a few years ago, the world was in a period of relative peace. Today we find ourselves in a time of strategic uncertainty with current hot wars being fought across the globe and with various threats posed to democratic institutions and international stability. In this context, partnerships like AUKUS are more important now than ever. They ensure that like-minded nations stand in defence of peace, sovereignty and the values we hold dear. May the USS *Canberra* sail safely and proudly, carrying with it the legacy of those who served before and the promise of continued cooperation between our great nations.

ENVIRONMENT—METHANE EMISSIONS

Statement

Hon Amanda Dorn (5:31 pm): President, yesterday in this chamber I shared the words of my colleague Jemma, who prepared a speech for the Pathways to Politics for Women program. Today, I rise again, this time to share the words of my good friend Dr Natashia Boland, who also completed the program. How amazing it is to know two of this year's cohort, who went through such a huge competitive selection process. When I found out that they were both selected, I promised that I would bring their passionate voices into this chamber to honour their work and share their speeches. Little did I know what the subject of my good friend Dr Natashia Boland's speech would be. The title alone, "The Power of Poo", certainly caught me by surprise. Thanks, Natashia! Rest assured, I will keep this chamber clear of the mess and stick to her message—a message that was evidence-based, urgent and deeply serious. Natashia is a scientist with a PhD in mathematics. She reminded us that animal agriculture is one of the greatest drivers of deforestation and climate change and 80% of the world's agricultural land is used for animals. Here in Australia, more than 90 million hectares has been cleared for this purpose. Grasslands that replace

forests absorb only a fraction of the carbon, while methane—and members know from the title where this comes from—which is 80 times more warming than carbon dioxide, billows into our atmosphere.

Australia's own data, reported to the United Nations, shows emissions from animal agriculture at 172 million tonnes of CO_2-equivalent each year. That is more than our entire electricity sector and almost double all transport combined. The science is unequivocal, yet no major political party is willing to confront this reality. Natashia also reminded us of the beautiful balance of natural ecosystems. Nature holds many of the answers, if only we allow ecosystems to function. Sperm whales, through their iron-rich waste, fertilise oceans, spurring plankton growth that draws down carbon. Today's sperm whale population alone extracts around 200,000 tonnes of CO_2 every year; how great is that? Penguins, those little legends, produce waste that is rich in ammonia, which increases cloud cover over Antarctica and slows the melting of the southern ice cap. In other words, wild sea animals defecating is helping to stabilise our climate. Nature wants to help, but we have to let it. Is it not striking that while wild animals are replenishing the earth, the vast herds of introduced farmed animals are driving deforestation, destroying ecosystems, and pushing us deeper into the climate crisis?

Natashia's call is clear: end deforestation for animal agriculture. Reforest and rewild cleared lands and strengthen marine protections. These are not radical ideas. They are necessary steps rooted in science and common sense, steps that we must take if we are serious about addressing the climate crisis. I share this call in the chamber today: we must have the courage to name truths that too often go unsaid. I urge this government to confront the real drivers of climate change, because until animal agriculture is honestly addressed, every climate plan in this state will remain incomplete.

NEEDLE DISPOSAL—KARRATHA

Statement

Hon Rod Caddies (5:35 pm): I stand to talk about a problem up in Karratha. I have been contacted by the community up there about the problem of discarded needles. Needles are being discarded around public areas such as schools, parks and places where children frequent. The community is saying it is a real problem. It is telling me that the problem needs to be solved, because someone could be seriously injured, or a child could get a needle prick, ending up with a disease they probably would not like. I am flying up there tomorrow to visit Karratha and the community has asked me to urge the government to help it provide the resources it needs to address this. I have seen that the government has been helping with the needle problem in other towns. I said to the community that I am sure the government will not be opposed to helping them. I have here a list of urgent requests that they sent to the minister, so I thought I would read them out and hopefully this government takes it on.

The community in Karratha would like the government to: install sharp disposal bins in all local parks, particularly in known problem areas; deploy regular patrols and dedicated clean-up teams to sweep high-risk public spaces; establish and publicise a 24/7 needle disposal hotline or rapid response team for reported sightings; facilitate clear coordination between the WA Country Health Service, Peer Based Harm Reduction WA and the City of Karratha council to address this hazard immediately and transparently; and consider implementing a return-to-receive exchange system where individuals must return used needles before being issued new ones to increase accountability and reduce public littering. These are the things they have asked for. I am not saying that is what needs doing; this is what they have asked for, and that is why I am going there to investigate.

At last night's Pilbara function at Parliament House, I happened to mention I was going up to Karratha and a gentleman asked me, "What are you going up there for?" I mentioned how there was a problem with needles, and he said that he is definitely aware of it because he has seen them in places when he has ridden around. That was someone here last night who was not even part of this concerned community group; he was a businessman here for a different function. He said that he and his wife have noticed needles when on bike rides and walks with their children. I hope the government supports the community and, like I said, tomorrow I will go up to speak to the community, get more information and hopefully come back and report on it.

RESERVES BILL 2025
STATUTES (REPEALS AND MINOR AMENDMENTS) BILL 2025

Returned

Bills returned from the Assembly without amendment.

EVIDENCE BILL 2025

Assembly's message

Message from the Assembly received and read notifying that it had agreed to the amendments made by the Council.

House adjourned at 5:39 pm

Questions on notice answered today are available on the Parliament of Western Australia's website