



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2017

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 30 November 2017

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) took the chair at 9.00 am, and read prayers.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER — PHOTOGRAPHER AND TELEVISION CAMERA ACCESS

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): I advise that I have approved the presence of photographers and television cameras in the press gallery and at the south entrance to the chamber to enable the media to cover the statement of the member for Darling Range.

MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE

Service Medals and Qualifications — Personal Explanation

MR B. URBAN (Darling Range) [9.01 am]: I rise under standing order 148 to make a personal explanation. I am here today to make a statement regarding allegations that have been made about my past service and education. I have previously acknowledged that I wore a service medal that I was not entitled to wear. I have explained that in the early 2000s, I ordered a commemorative international police service medal from a recognised military supplier in Western Australia. What I received instead was an Australian Police Overseas Service Medal, which I mistakenly believed I was entitled to wear but which I now recognise I was not eligible to wear. When I was first asked about the medal by the media and the Premier, I was under the genuine but mistaken belief that it was the correct medal. I am embarrassed by my error and for the hurt I may have caused by my actions. At no time did I intend to cause an offence or distress to any past or present member of the Australian police service who has served abroad in peacekeeping and law enforcement roles.

In regard to my service in the British Army, I served from 1985 to 1989. I served with the 3rd Regiment Royal Horse Artillery and was deployed to Cyprus as part of the United Nations Peacekeeping force stationed there in 1988 to 1989. As is common in the armed services, I spent time in a number of different locations. I am proud of my service with the British Army and particularly my deployment in Cyprus, and I wear my UN service medal with pride.

In regard to my service in the British police force, I served with the Hertfordshire Constabulary and the West Midlands Police over a period from 1989 to 1998. I am proud of my record as a police officer in the United Kingdom. In regard to my service with the Western Australian police service, I served from 2005 to 2012. I am also proud of my service as a Western Australian police officer. In relation to other allegations about my service history, I am currently seeking further information from the relevant authorities to substantiate that service history.

Further, in relation to the allegations made against me regarding my tertiary qualifications, I am also seeking information to substantiate those qualifications. I also today acknowledge that I claimed to complete a Diploma of Local Government. I completed nine out of the 10 modules, and the final module was not assessed; it was not completed. I have amended my resume to reflect this and I request that any records be corrected.

I will now take time to reflect on my actions and will continue to seek professional treatment and counselling. As a consequence of my service with the UK and WA police, I suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. Like many service personnel, I have seen and experienced things that are very hard to fathom. While I am largely able to manage my PTSD at most times, in times of high stress my PTSD symptoms can make it hard for me to function. PTSD is a devastating and insidious disease and I am doing my best to cope in these difficult circumstances. I encourage anyone who has suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder to seek advice and support from a doctor or professional counselling service.

I would like to take this opportunity to advise the Parliament that I have resigned as a member of the Public Accounts Committee and the Joint Standing Committee on Audit, effective from this sitting date. I have already resigned from the WA Labor Party.

Finally, I apologise unreservedly to this Parliament. I apologise to the Premier and thank him for his understanding. I apologise to my colleagues and thank them for their continued messages of support for me and my family. I would like to thank the constituents of Darling Range for their continued messages of support and visits to my home. I ask that my family's privacy be respected during this period. As members can imagine, this has been a traumatic period for my wife and my children. I love them dearly and I thank them for their constant love and support for me during this time. Thank you.

**PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE
JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON AUDIT**

Membership — Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): On 29 November 2017, I received a letter from the member for Darling Range tendering his resignation from the Public Accounts Committee and the Joint Standing Committee on Audit.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES

Petition

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the National Party) [9.08 am]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. It has 749 signatures from the communities of Narembeen, Mukinbudin, Bencubbin, Quairading, Dowerin, Bruce Rock and Cunderdin. It reads as follows —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say that Community Resource Centres provide a vital service to regional communities, including access to government services, technology, professional services. They provide opportunity for employment and training and partner with community organisations to attract further funding to enhance the communities they are part of. These centres have evolved beyond simply providing access to technology and are considered by communities to be an essential service in regional WA.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia to call on Premier Mark McGowan to ensure adequate funding to support the ongoing operation of all CRCs, without reducing their capacity to deliver services.

[See petition 50.]

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES

Petition

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [9.09 am]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. It contains 30 signatures from the community of Cue and is couched in the following terms —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say that Community Resource Centres provide a vital service to regional communities, including access to government services, technology, professional services. They provide opportunity for employment and training and partner with community organisations to attract further funding to enhance the communities they are part of. These centres have evolved beyond simply providing access to technology and are considered by communities to be an essential service in regional WA.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia to call on Premier Mark McGowan to ensure adequate funding to support the ongoing operation of all CRCs, without reducing their capacity to deliver services.

[See petition 51.]

CITY OF JOONDALUP — HOUSING INFILL PROJECTS

Petition

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [9.10 am]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. The petition has 713 signatures, and reads —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned would like an immediate halt to all building applications for hi-density developments above R30 within the 10 Housing Opportunity areas in the City of Joondalup.

We want the WAPC to properly review the 10 nominated areas and guidelines for multi-unit and group dwellings in the 10 Housing Opportunity Areas within the city of Joondalup and engage in proper community consultation, to ensure appropriate densities that are sensitive to the residents, and community needs and in keeping with the amenity of the areas.

Now we respectfully ask the Legislative Assembly to direct the Minister to support the City of Joondalup to halt the progress of all multi-unit and group dwellings above R30 so that no approvals are granted until the WAPC has thoroughly consulted the community and completed the above mentioned review.

[See petition 52.]

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES*Petition*

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [9.11 am]: Mr Speaker, I certify that this petition conforms with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. It reads —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say that Community Resource Centres provide a vital service to regional communities, including access to government services, technology, professional services. They provide opportunity for employment and training and partner with community organisations to attract further funding to enhance the communities they are part of. These centres have evolved beyond simply providing access to technology and are considered by communities to be an essential service in regional WA.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia to call on Premier Mark McGowan to ensure adequate funding to support the ongoing operation of all CRCs, without reducing their capacity to deliver services.

There are 150 signatures from people from the likes of Norseman, Kambalda, Esperance and so forth.

[See petition 53.]

MURDOCH DRIVE CONNECTION — TRAFFIC FLOW*Petition*

MR P.C. TINLEY (Willagee — Minister for Housing) [9.13 am]: I have a petition that has been certified by the clerks as conforming with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly, which reads —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. We, the undersigned, say

The Murdoch Drive Connection is not fit for purpose, will potentially increase ambulance travel times to and from Fiona Stanley Hospital, will increase traffic flows in the local area and does not address public transport demand. We are concerned that the increase in traffic flows may be used to reinstate Roe 8 in years to come.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly

Develop a new plan which: integrates public transport more efficiently; is at a scale which assumes Roe 8 will not be built in the future, and which protects the community from increased traffic through local streets and conservation areas. We ask you to set aside works and planning for the Murdoch Drive Connection and work with the community and engage independent transport experts to plan a fit-for-purpose system of integrated road treatments, public transport and parking options in the Murdoch Activity zone and at Fiona Stanley Hospital.

The petition is signed by 212 petitioners.

[See petition 54.]

COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES*Petition*

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore) [9.14 am]: I have three similarly worded petitions that have been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly that contain 160 signatures from Jurien Bay, 47 from Mingenew and 33 from Leeman, and are couched in the following terms —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say that Community Resource Centres provide a vital service to regional communities, including access to government services, technology, professional services. They provide opportunity for employment and training and partner with community organisations to attract further funding to enhance the communities they are part of. These centres have evolved beyond simply providing access to technology and are considered by communities to be an essential service in regional WA.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia to call on Premier Mark McGowan to ensure adequate funding to support the ongoing operation of all CRCs, without reducing their capacity to deliver services.

[See petition 55.]

PAPERS TABLED

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

PREMIER — CHINA VISIT*Statement by Premier*

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [9.16 am]: It is with great pleasure that I stand today with a summary of my visit to China between 8 and 14 November 2017. As part of my first overseas mission since being elected as Premier, I visited Hangzhou and Shanghai in China, leading 37 senior education and tourism representatives.

On 10 November, I arrived in Hangzhou. I was briefed by the Alibaba Group's chief of staff for international business, Ms Jane Jiang, on the company's various online platforms and the potential for marketing Western Australian products and services. I also met party secretary, Mr Che Jun, and the Governor of Zhejiang, Mr Yuan Jiajun, and together we signed a memorandum of understanding to expand the sister-state relationship, reaffirming our strong relationship. Furthermore, I opened the seventh biennial Western Australia–Zhejiang Exchange Committee meeting with Vice Governor, Liang Liming, and witnessed the signing of four cooperation MOUs between Western Australia and Zhejiang organisations. Along with more than 70 representatives from the Western Australian and Zhejiang education sectors, I also attended the Australian education collaboration dinner.

On 11 November, I arrived in Shanghai, where I toured Dongfang Hospital and witnessed the work undertaken by Professor Barry Marshall's outpatient clinic. On 13 November, I met with Ctrip, the biggest online travel agent in China. A memorandum of understanding was signed between Ctrip and Tourism WA to work on cooperative campaigns to promote Western Australia and local tourism products.

A research collaboration lunch was held with Shanghai universities and tier one research institutes to build and encourage research links with Western Australian universities. I met with the Mayor of Shanghai, Mr Ying Yong, and discussed broadening our cooperation in the areas of trade, energy, mineral products, education, tourism, cultural industries and research and development. I also attended the opening of the *Tales of the Two Regions—Beautiful Western Australia* exhibition at China Art Museum. The exhibition showcases photographic work by Madam Yu Huiwen from Shanghai and Western Australian photographers Frances Andrijich, Tania Malkin and Hugh Brown.

In an Australian first, I met with the Shanghai Municipal Commission of Commerce director general, Madam Shang Yuying, and signed a cooperation MOU, the first Australian state to do so. Alongside Minister Ellery, I also launched a digital campaign to promote Perth as a student destination. The campaign includes a website hosted in China and widely used social media platforms to increase the profile of Western Australia as a study and lifestyle destination. The Western Australian government's China office will be a support hub for the state's higher education sector. Finally, on 14 November 2017, in a meeting with China Eastern Airlines' chairman, Mr Liu Shaoyong, Minister Papalia and I promoted a direct air service from Shanghai to Perth.

The visit reaffirmed Western Australia's relations with Zhejiang and Shanghai, promoted education and tourism links and marked the thirtieth anniversary of our sister-state relationship with Zhejiang.

PREMIER — JAPAN VISIT*Statement by Premier*

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [9.19 am]: I also stand today with a summary of my visit to Japan between 14 and 19 November 2017. In Tokyo, I met with Japanese companies with significant investments in Western Australia to reaffirm our longstanding relationship, including Mitsubishi, Mitsui, major Japanese steel mills; JERA and Tokyo Gas. On 15 November, the Australian Ambassador, His Excellency Richard Court, AC, hosted a dinner at the Australian Embassy. Guests included representatives from the Japanese National Diet; Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation; Japan Airlines; ITOCHU; Marubeni; JGC; Nisshin Flour Milling; and Japan Bank for International Cooperation. The dinner provided me with an opportunity to connect with organisations that have strong links to Western Australia and I extend my thanks to Ambassador Court for providing this opportunity. On 16 November, three meetings were held with senior members of the National Diet: the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Mr Ken Saito; the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Iwao Horii; and the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, Mr Yasutoshi Nishimura. I discussed Western Australia's relationship with Japan across a range of industry sectors, including agribusiness and the development of the north west in terms of investment and food production. I also gave a speech at a luncheon hosted by the Australia and New Zealand Chamber of Commerce in Japan. Furthermore, I was provided with a tour by Tokyu Corporation of its Futago Tamagawa development. This will be Tokyu's vision for its Yanchep Beach joint venture project. I was also humbled and honoured to receive an honorary doctorate from Tokyo City University and to address its students during a lecture on Western Australia.

From Tokyo I travelled to Kobe and had the opportunity to make a reciprocal visit to Hyogo Prefecture to further reaffirm our ties and commemorate the thirty-fifth anniversary of our sister-state relationship. I had several meetings with Hyogo's Governor, His Excellency Toshizo Ido, to discuss sister-state matters and new areas of potential collaboration. I also met with Mr Osamu Kurokawa, the Speaker of the Hyogo Prefectural Assembly. Governor Ido

hosted a welcome reception, which was attended by representatives from sectors, including education, tourism and commerce, and the Hyogo Prefectural Government. On 17 November I visited Kawasaki Heavy Industries' shipyard, where KHI outlined its operations and provided a site tour. I also met with Mizuki Pearl Company. I travelled to Ako City, which is currently celebrating its twentieth anniversary with its sister city, Rockingham. A moving experience of my trip was a visit to Kobe Children's Hospital, where I met with a number of young patients and toured the newly established facility. In closing, this trade mission provided a great opportunity to reaffirm the state's relationship with major Japanese companies with investments in Western Australia and promoted education and tourism links.

RECOVERY COLLEGE MODEL OF SERVICE

Statement by Minister for Health

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [9.22 am]: I rise to inform the house of the progression of the McGowan government's election commitment to establish a recovery college model in Western Australia. Many Western Australians experience problems associated with their mental health and often require acute care. As a government, one of our aims is to support people to stay out of hospital and keep well in the community. To support the health and wellbeing of the Western Australian community, we have committed \$200 000 to develop a recovery college model of service. Existing recovery colleges in Australia complement support services by enabling self-directed recovery and learning opportunities about recovery and wellbeing for people with mental health and co-occurring alcohol and other drug issues in a safe and welcoming place. The aim is to improve the mental health and wellbeing of the community, to help prevent further illness and keep people out of hospital. Recovery colleges help to close a gap in access to services for people who do not require hospitalisation but who would benefit from an opportunity to improve resilience and recovery. They also seek to reduce stigma that exists relating to mental health and alcohol and other drug problems. The WA mental health, alcohol and other drug services plan identifies a need to develop and expand local recovery services that offer assistance and support to individuals to maintain personal recovery and live well in the community. We know how important it is to involve people in the decisions that impact them, which is why a critical factor in supporting the success of recovery colleges is the co-design of the model of service. The co-design process will engage consumers, their families and carers, and health workers in the design and development of the service model. This will involve partnering with all the people who are affected by the decisions and services. Working in this way will ensure that services are delivered in a collaborative way and are reflective of the needs of consumers, their families and carers, and those who work with them in health services and non-government organisations. To this end, I am delighted to announce that an expert panel will be established to oversee the development of a unique, comprehensive and co-designed model of service for Western Australia. The expert panel will be appointed through an open expression-of-interest process, which will be overseen by the Mental Health Commission and will consist of representatives from both the mental health, and alcohol and other drug sectors. I encourage consumers, carer and family representatives, clinicians, service providers, and other experts from these fields to apply. The model of service to be developed by the expert panel will be based on evidence of what already works and also give consideration to the local context here in Western Australia. The model of service will be out for public consultation and comment next year, prior to the Mental Health Commission presenting a formal business case to the state government for consideration.

SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION — INDUSTRY LINK PROGRAM — PRISON SYSTEM

Statement by Minister for Small Business

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Small Business) [9.25 am]: I rise briefly to inform the house about the fantastic work being done by the Small Business Development Corporation to improve self-employment opportunities for people exiting our prison system. In line with our commitment to provide training and rehabilitation programs and reduce recidivism, I would like to share a valuable initiative being championed by the SBDC. We know that the difficulty of securing traditional employment can often be a barrier to re-assimilating into society, and can contribute to people finding themselves back in prison. For some, self-employment may be the only realistic option for working again. Through its Industry Link program, the SBDC has in recent months been running business skills workshops at the Boronia Pre-release Centre for Women, Bandyup Women's Prison, and Karnet Prison Farm. The workshops provide simple, practical, step-by-step advice, and cover a range of topics, including starting a business, how to write a business plan, and marketing a business. The SBDC also offers free business advice to help guide small business operators through the pitfalls of starting and running a business. While running these workshops, the SBDC discovered that it can often be difficult for individuals with a criminal record to obtain the business insurance they typically require. The SBDC then successfully sourced providers that are willing, under a set of circumstances, to provide insurance for people who are seeking to start a business after exiting the justice system, and made sure that program participants were aware that this is available to them. The Small Business Commissioner recently received feedback that through this initiative, some students have gone on to start successful businesses in areas such as landscaping, retail clothing, personal training and food service. I highly commend the SBDC and the Department of Justice for collaborating on this fabulous initiative that is helping to make a positive difference in the lives of offenders.

**PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE — MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE —
REFERRAL**

Standing Orders Suspension — Motion

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [9.27 am] — without notice: I move —

That so much of standing orders be suspended as is necessary to enable the following motion to be moved forthwith —

That this house requests the Procedure and Privileges Committee to consider and report back to the house by a date to be determined by the committee itself whether there have been any breaches of privilege in relation to any statements made to the house by the member for Darling Range.

The member for Darling Range has made a statement to the house on the issues that have been raised about him. Obviously, he has made certain statements about his past and his history. In light of the significant public interest in these matters and, in my view, as a matter of regret, the fact that his explanation was not comprehensive enough, I am referring him now to the Procedure and Privileges Committee so that it can look at whether statements that he has made to the Parliament have been sufficiently honest and comprehensive. I urge the committee to take into account what the member for Darling Range said about post-traumatic stress disorder and the things that he has been through in his police and military careers and to take account of his personal circumstances in any inquiries that it makes. I urge the committee to make sure that the reporting date reflects that he may need to deal with those issues in relation to providing any evidence to the committee. It is a matter of public importance and public interest. I urge the committee to deliberate but to just take account of the circumstances of the member for Darling Range.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: As this is a motion without notice to suspend standing orders, it needs an absolute majority in order to succeed. If I hear a dissentient voice, I am required to divide the Assembly.

Question put and passed with an absolute majority.

Motion

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [9.29 am]: I move the motion.

As I indicated earlier, there is significant public interest in this matter. It is a matter of regret that the explanation provided by the member for Darling Range was not sufficiently comprehensive about the matters raised. In light of the circumstances, it is appropriate that the Procedure and Privileges Committee examine the statements the member for Darling Range has made to the house and report back to the house about them. I would urge the committee, in light of the member for Darling Range's evidence that he is suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of his military and police careers, to take that into account in relation to the time frame of any inquiry it might conduct.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [9.31 am]: I would like to explore this issue a bit further. We will support, of course, sending the issues generally to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. We attempted to do so yesterday. It is true that the member for Darling Range —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It is accurate that the member for Darling Range's statement today was entirely inadequate. A whole range of issues have been percolating in the media and the community of Darling Range and others about his curriculum vitae that he failed to respond to. I will go through some of those issues. The first major issue was that he failed to respond to, or confirm or otherwise, his involvement in a peacekeeping force in Bosnia. That was one of the issues that arose. The second issue is about his university degrees from the University of Leeds and the University of Portsmouth. You do know if you attended university. You do know if you have a degree from a university. You do not necessarily need to go back to the university to get a transcript to get authorisation. You do have a diploma, generally; you might have lost it. But the member could have drawn a line in the sand and said, "I went to the university. I have a degree in this from Leeds or Portsmouth." He failed to do that.

Dr A.D. Buti: This is what the privileges committee will look at. We don't have to go through that now.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I am justifying the decision put forward today to send him to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. I am going through it in detail to justify the inadequacy of the member for Darling Range's statement today, which we have been waiting three weeks for and on which the member's side has been dragging the chain.

The university issue is very important because there is reason to suspect that he used those claims about the university. There was a failure to justify or draw a line in the sand on those university degrees, which goes to the heart of his suitability to join, to be a member of, the police force some years ago, which he claimed today he had been there for a number of years, as well as corrective services. The question before Parliament is: did he use an incorrect CV to enter the police force or corrective services; and, if so, was that proper? The important aspect is

that if he did, and this is speculative, use fraudulent claims to become a member of the police force, he should not be in this place at all. Therefore, the Procedure and Privileges Committee must go beyond his actions here today and look into his actions in the police force with those applications some time ago, and his actions in corrective services. The committee must go beyond all the claims.

We must also know, and this is the essential issue, the involvement and role of the Premier in this. The member for Darling Range is in this place at the behest of the Labor Party. It preselected him in 2012 for the 2013 election and it preselected him for the 2017 election. It was your requirement to vet the person. It was your responsibility to vet him and you failed to do so.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is an extremely serious matter and I will not have members in this house yelling abuse across the chamber on the issue. I want to hear the Leader of the Opposition in silence, please.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister! I call you for the first time.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The member for Darling Range is in this house at the behest of the Labor Party, unquestionably. These allegations arose not because of the Labor Party, but because of the media. The Labor Party stalled and obfuscated getting clarity on this issue for three weeks.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He could have written a statement any time over the last three weeks. He could have read out a written statement in this Parliament any time over the last three weeks; he failed to do so. You kept it to the last sitting day of Parliament because you wanted to avoid scrutiny. Yesterday, you refused to send it to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. The question we need to ask is: what scrutiny did the Labor Party put in to have the man preselected and campaigned for and supported to get into this house?

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, I have made a statement about this house's conduct during this debate and I intend to stick with it.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The government is trying to avoid scrutiny about its actions in respect of the member for Darling Range.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for West Swan!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier! I have warned you. That was not necessarily helpful, member for Cottesloe. Go ahead, Leader of the Opposition.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. Over the last three weeks, the Labor Party has tried to stall, hide, obfuscate and machine it so that this issue was raised during the last week of sitting. It made sure that the member left the Labor Party so that its members can hide from it, and now he is abandoned on the backbenches as, I guess, the Independent member for Darling Range. The Labor Party's actions in preselecting, campaigning for and promoting his statements—his degree, his background, his service—to win the seat of Darling Range for the Labor Party, will not be involved in the inquiry by Procedure and Privileges Committee. Labor members wanted to wash themselves of and abandon him. I am surprised that the member for Willagee has said that he was going to stand by his mate. He is not standing by him now. The privileges committee —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier, I call you for the first time. This debate needs to be well controlled. Please be careful, all sides of the house.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The privileges committee must investigate not only so-called breaches of privilege, but also all the claims that the member for Darling Range made about his CV, before the election, during the election and subsequent to the election, to the public of Darling Range and the public of Western Australia and in this house. The committee must investigate not just whether he made a breach in this house, but whether he is here on false grounds. The essence of the issue is: was he elected on behalf of the Labor Party to the seat of Darling Range on false pretences? That is the issue—false pretences.

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Member for Dawesville, their attempts to change the subject means that they are trying to continue to obfuscate on this issue; therefore, we have to ensure that these terms of reference go to the essence of the issue. The Labor Party has already cut him loose, hoping that he will go—it will leave him alone—though I read in the paper today that the Labor Party has indicated that there is a pathway back to the Labor Party, to the Labor fold, if he is able to clear himself. We need to return to the origins of the issue. The issues for the people of this Parliament and for the people of Darling Range are the claims that the member for Darling Range made about his university degree to become the member for Darling Range. Today, he said that he has written to those universities for proof. He could have drawn a line in the sand and told us whether he did or did not go to those universities and whether he did or did not get a university degree of that type. The government knows it. One of the issues relates to Bosnia. Did he serve for the United Nations as a secondee from the police force of the United Kingdom in war-torn Bosnia? He did not mention that today. He also said that he worked in The Hague on the war crimes tribunal.

Dr A.D. Buti: He didn't say The Hague; he never said The Hague.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He did.

Dr A.D. Buti: No, he did not say The Hague. You don't understand.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: You have been examining this, member, as you should.

Dr A.D. Buti: No. Tell me where he mentioned The Hague.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He served on a war crime —

Point of Order

Dr A.D. BUTI: The Leader of the Opposition is misleading this Parliament. Can he verify whenever the member for Darling Range mentioned that he served in The Hague?

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: On 24 January 2017.

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, he said war crimes investigation in the Balkans.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville!

Dr A.D. BUTI: He never mentioned The Hague in this place.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, The Hague was the tribunal where you go when you have been put on trial.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, this is not a debate; it is a point of order.

Dr A.D. BUTI: My point of order is that the —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have got it, thank you. It is not a substantive point of order under these circumstances. Members, I encourage you to remember what I have said.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members for Cottesloe and West Swan, enough. This is not a personal bunfight across the chamber; this is someone's career. Enough.

Debate Resumed

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: This is your motion, and you are speaking against it. I am supporting it.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Deputy Premier! Leader of the Opposition, would you please speak through the Chair and not engage with the government in that fashion during this debate.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The member for Darling Range failed to make all those statements. There is a whole raft of other things about his work as a contractor building the dam in Serpentine–Jarrahdale and whether he was a constable or a detective in the police. There is a whole raft of issues. Read the paper. Look at the media. He failed to answer those. What he needed to do today, and the Premier promised he would do, is come in, draw a line in the sand and set things straight, and he failed to do so. We all know that the Premier and his Labor Party people

have been working with him for a couple of weeks. They have been working with him, machining him, and advising him of what to say. They probably even helped him craft his speech. That is what the Labor Party does. What it did today was cut him loose from the Labor Party and induce him to quit, promising him that there is a pathway back, and now he is on his own. It did that to stop scrutiny on the government. He came here as a government backbencher at the behest of the Labor Party. It preselected him, funded him and promoted him. The Labor Party actually promoted his curriculum vitae. It was pretty impressive; I would promote it if it was real. Now it has cut him loose. Labor Party members are leaving their mate behind. They are trying to stop the scrutiny on themselves. They have cut him loose. They could have agreed to send the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee yesterday. He was a member of the Labor Party until the beginning of question time. The Labor Party is leaving its mate behind and trying to avoid the scrutiny of putting him here.

The Labor Party also has to go back. Yesterday, we asked the Minister for Corrective Services whether he was going to investigate the member for Darling Range's claims about when he became an employee of Corrective Services, because if the CV he presented to be elected to this place is inaccurate, the CV that he used while at Corrective Services until 2012, right before he was preselected by the Labor Party for the seat of Darling Range, was also probably inadequate. He refused to verify it. He said, "That is the past; there is no need to investigate." But if he was employed by the Department of Corrective Services when the Labor Party first preselected him for the seat of Darling Range in 2012 and if he falsely procured a job with either Police or Corrective Services, that is pertinent to the Labor Party's selection processes and his entitlement to be here. That needs to be investigated. Did he or did he not use false or accurate information to procure past employment with Police or Corrective Services for positions in service that formed the foundation for his campaign to be elected to this Parliament? Will this be included in his breaches of Parliament? No, it will not. The government has to expand this to include what occurred beyond today.

The reality is that we are debating this issue because of a fundamental failure of leadership by the Premier. The Premier has purposely, probably with the assistance of the Labor Party apparatchik, machined this issue. They have known for weeks that the member for Darling Range was preselected into this house and made false statements to this house. They have known it for weeks.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The Leader of the Opposition just said that the member for Darling Range came into this house and made statements that were false. That is an imputation against the member and he must apologise and withdraw.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, just be careful with your use of language in this debate please because we do not have the facts yet.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I think we have facts, which have been made public, about his University of Leeds degree, which he claimed in his maiden speech to have. He did not mention it.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It would appear that the Leader of the Opposition is canvassing your ruling. It does not matter what the facts are. He was saying that the member for Darling Range has knowingly said something that is not true. The Leader of the Opposition has no evidence to support that and that is why this matter is going to the PPC. He needs to stick to the standing orders of the Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. Leader of the Opposition, I remind you that this matter is being referred, so please be very cautious in your use of language around this. It is a sensitive issue.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Enough from this side of the house, thank you.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes; I thank you.

We have been needing a thorough inquiry for some time—three weeks. It was up to the member for Darling Range's leader, until yesterday, to make a decision. This issue has illustrated the lack of leadership by the Premier. Let me go through it. It has been clear for some time. The rumours about the medals have been out there for quite a while, and when *The West Australian* journalist made inquiries of him, the member for Darling Range, to put it politely, obfuscated. Indeed, he told some porkies. He told a bunch of stories.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: The Leader of the Opposition has done it again. He has accused the member for Darling Range of telling a lie. He cannot do that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, minister. I am not of the same opinion on this one. I have warned you twice. Please stick to the facts, member.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The facts are that the member for Darling Range admitted he falsified claims about his medals. He admitted that. He admitted it today in the paper.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I think we understand what you are saying.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I draw your attention, Madam Deputy Speaker, to the fact that he said he got the matter wrong; he did not say that he falsified it. The Leader of the Opposition cannot make a statement that he does not know to be true; that is called lying. I am just asking for the Leader of the Opposition to comply with the standing orders that are applied to everybody else in this chamber.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you again, member. Please be cautious with your use of language.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He wore a medal—I have seen the pictures—that he first defended and said that he quite rightly was awarded. He then said it was a mistake and he admitted that he got it online. All along he was saying something else.

Dr A.D. Buti: Did you say online?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes, he did.

Dr A.D. Buti: No he didn't. He didn't say he got it online.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Other issues then started coming about a whole range of issues, particularly going to his police service, his service in the United Nations and his universities. Clear claims have been made about his adequacy for, first, being preselected by the Labor Party, then elected to this house, and then remaining as a Labor member of Parliament. The Premier failed to investigate and failed to pursue it. He failed to do it.

Several members interjected.

Ms J.J. Shaw: You're lying!

Withdrawal of Remark

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Excuse me, who yelled out across the chamber, "You're lying"?

Ms J.J. SHAW: I apologise. I withdraw the comment.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you. This is a very delicate debate. I have said it too many times. Be careful.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Over a week ago we asked the Minister for Police —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, please continue.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Over a week ago we asked the Minister for Police, given there was evidence about —

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Mr W.R. MARMION: I cannot hear my own leader because of the interjections by the Minister for Transport.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am starting to feel like a jack-in-the-box. Would you please keep your voices down and do not engage in debates across the chamber. The Leader of the Opposition is completing his speech.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Madam Deputy Speaker, I seek your clarification and you may want to get some advice on this. The motion is that the member for Darling Range be referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Members of that committee are sitting in this chamber today. I ask for your guidance or ruling on statements being made by the Leader of the Opposition that are potentially prejudicial to the member for Darling Range.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I understand, member.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I have not finished my point of order, Madam Deputy Speaker. It should be heard in silence too, I believe.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, I do understand your point of order. Would you like to complete it, if you want to add anything additional?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes. I would like to add that the Premier has moved a motion that the member for Darling Range be referred to the privileges committee. That is the motion we are discussing.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, you have already said that, member.

Dr A.D. BUTI: If the Leader of the Opposition agrees to that motion, that is fine —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

Dr A.D. BUTI: — but it is not an opportunity for him to canvass matters that will go before the privileges committee.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Member, you need to sit down. Thank you, and enough. This is not a point of order. There are always members of the privileges committee sitting on the floor when these issues are brought —

Dr A.D. Buti: But how often is this issue raised?

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is enough. I do not need backchat to the Deputy Speaker. Continue, Leader of the Opposition.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Thank you for your protection.

The Minister for Police was asked over a week ago whether the member for Darling Range, when he applied to be a policeman—which I accept as accurate; he confirmed that today so I am pretty sure he was—used an accurate CV in that application. The former Commissioner of Police, Karl O’Callaghan, said that that is a very serious issue and that it should be investigated forthwith. We asked the question of the Minister for Police and she said that that was some time ago, that it is probably very difficult to find and that it is in Iron Mountain, which indicates that it is locked away somewhere. However, a real leader would have told his Minister for Police to find it and make a decision, because it goes to the essence of the member’s credibility and suitability to be preselected by the Labor Party, to be campaigned for by the Labor Party and to be the member for Darling Range as a member of the Labor Party. The minister could not find it. We asked the same thing of the Minister for Corrective Services. That minister could not find it. The Minister for Corrective Services was asked the same question. He said, “I don’t have to. It’s in the past.” However, it was germane to finding out whether the member for Darling Range used an accurate CV to become an employee of the Department of Corrective Services. Whether he did or did not was germane to his ability and suitability to be here.

Will those factors be considered by the Procedure and Privileges Committee? Will the committee, under these terms of reference, be able to go back, outside the statements he has made in this house, to find out his suitability for being here in the first place? That is the essence of the issue—not so much what he has said here to date, but what he said to the people of Darling Range to get here in the first place. That is the essential issue. The Procedure and Privileges Committee must go widely about what the member for Darling Range has said, not just in this house, but what he said and what he claimed in the run-up to the election to his community about his CV. This should not be controversial. We should not be hearing a loud cry from members on the opposite side who are trying to obfuscate. They claim he is no longer a member of the Labor Party. This is their motion. I am asking them a legitimate question. The Procedure and Privileges Committee must examine issues outside the Parliament. I want to get clarification from the Premier, who moved this motion: will it include the member for Darling Range’s claims and submissions to the Labor Party? I assume that when the Labor Party preselects somebody, it asks for their CV and background.

Mr D.J. Kelly: We asked if he was a dual citizen.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: That is a good question for Labor Party people.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Honestly, for the Liberal Party to be raising that, vetting candidates, is a bit ridiculous.

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The government has raised questions about a former member of the Labor Party and I am responding to its own submission and asking: will the investigation by the committee go to his application to the Labor Party for preselection?

Dr A.D. Buti: What does that have to do with it?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Because that is why he is here. He is here at your behest. You preselected him and promoted him. You promoted his background, and the people of Darling Range elected him because he was a member of the Labor Party and because of his background, not so much because of what he said here; that is an after effect. We have to go back to the origins of his claim, to his suitability to be here, and that is when he was put here in large part on the basis of him being a member of the Labor Party and his claim that the Premier publicly, during the election, went out and promoted.

What is the remit of this committee investigation? That is the question. We need to have his full CV, not just as he has mentioned in this Parliament, in this place—that has to be investigated—but beyond that, into the community, before the election, and whether he should have been, dependent upon the accuracy of his CV,

a member of the police force and an employee of Corrective Services. We must look at all those claims that he made to the community, even if he did not put them on his CV or provide them to the Western Australian Electoral Commission or otherwise. This has to be a full and wide-ranging inquiry about the statements that the member has made about his claim to be a suitable candidate as the member for Darling Range. That is why he is here. Since he has been here, he has made some claims and answered all sorts of questions inadequately. I agree with the Premier on that. I am surprised the Premier claims to have been informed of that just now, particularly since the Labor Party has been at the member for Darling Range's house and has briefed him for some time. It should have known what he was going to say; it probably helped him write his speech. The Labor Party is a very professional outfit; it would have been cautioning and coaching him for some time. When he cleansed his online statements on his Facebook page and otherwise, I am sure that the Labor Party advised him what to do and how to do it and whatnot. Nonetheless, it did not work very well. We need a statement that this inquiry cannot be restricted only to the actions and statements that the member for Darling Range has made in this place. It must go back to his initial claims when he became a candidate on behalf of the Labor Party for the seat of Darling Range.

Mr M. McGowan: We'll get them to investigate your life story. You think that's what a committee can do—investigate your life story and what you did in America, where you went to university? You want them to do that?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes. Go ahead. Investigate all the claims I made to become the member for Riverton.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, just let me remind you that this is the most serious charge that can be made against a member of Parliament. Let us have complete silence when a speaker is on their feet.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The issue here is the member's suitability to be in Parliament. That did not start only today. That is what the government is trying to do today. It has drawn a line in the sand and said that he is no longer a member of the Labor Party. But he is here at the behest of the Labor Party. It began in 2012, but mainly in 2016–17 when he was preselected and made repeated claims to the people of Darling Range, who elected him. That has to be included in the investigation. The information also has to include what he said personally to not only the people of Darling Range, but also the party that put him there—the Labor Party. The Procedure and Privileges Committee must inquire into the information provided to the Labor Party. It must have the powers to investigate what the Labor Party knew and what the Labor Party inquired into when it preselected him. Also, the inquiry must have access —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He is here at the behest of the Labor Party. Did he provide accurate information to the Labor Party, which preselected him and put him here? I have sympathy for the Premier because I understand from reading the paper that the member for Darling Range provided to the Premier at least, and I assume to the Labor Party, a diploma from the University of Leeds. That is what I read in the paper anyway. The information that he provided to the Western Australian Electoral Commission is relevant because the Electoral Commission has certain requirements of truthfulness. The inquiry should cover not only what he said in this house, but also the CV he provided to the Electoral Commission, the Western Australia Police Force and the Department of Corrective Services. That is the essence. Is he a suitable member for Darling Range? The Labor Party cannot draw the line after ditching him from the Labor Party when it brought him here and promised that the member for Darling Range would give a fulsome discussion of his background, which he did not do. Again, the government failed to deliver.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, can you talk through the Chair please.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes. Also, the inquiry needs to know what the Premier has been doing over the last two weeks. What information has he possessed about the CV or accuracy of the CV and the claims and, therefore, the suitability of the member for Darling Range to be a member of this house or a member of the Labor Party? Supposedly, he has been investigating the matter in the past two weeks. My office has received numerous statements from a range of very authoritative sources.

Mr M.P. Murray: Table them.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I do not need to. The Premier has every one of them.

The SPEAKER: Member for Collie–Preston, I call you to order for the first time.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The people who sent it to the Premier also sent a copy to me. That is the beauty of online communication. We know the Premier has those. Some are very authoritative. A real leader would have said that he needs to draw a line in the sand here because one of his members clearly has serious questions to answer and he needs to investigate the matter. The Premier needs to answer the questions in Parliament and force the member to get the information.

Point of Order

Mr M. HUGHES: Mr Speaker, I refer you to the standing order on repetitious or irrelevant debate and I seek your ruling. The standing order provides —

A member who persists in irrelevance or tedious repetition, either of the member's own arguments or of the arguments used by other members, may be directed by the Speaker to discontinue the speech.

The SPEAKER: It is not a point of order.

Debate Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I imagine that for some people on this side this would be a bit tedious because we have been going through this for three weeks and it has been tedious. There should have been leadership here and members know it. By restricting the terms of reference, the government is trying to avoid scrutiny once more.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I repeat that this is a very serious matter. Member for Cottesloe, you should know better.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The privileges committee should have access to the information that the Premier had over the last three weeks or before and what actions he has taken to investigate this matter.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It should have access to what actions the Premier has taken to investigate the various claims that have arisen about the member for Darling Range's CV. He has not made a single statement. He always says that he will leave it up to the member for Darling Range. The Minister for Police said that she is looking at it. The Minister for Corrective Services said that he does not have to do it. The Minister for Veterans Issues said that he stands by his mate. The government has not addressed this in any leadership manner at all. I am saying that this started with you. You put him there. You supported him. You stood by your mate. You protected him. You protected him against the people of Darling Range. If we listen to the people of Darling Range, at least online, we will see that they are very angry with the Labor Party and the member for Darling Range. The privileges committee must go beyond what he has said and done in this house and —

Ms M.M. Quirk: You can't.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes, you can. The Parliament of Western Australia has very few restrictions on what it can do.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Look at the functions of the committee.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The terms of reference restrict it, but the privileges committee should not be so constrained.

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: We support this, but we want to ensure and have a statement from the Premier that the terms of reference for the committee are wide-ranging and go beyond what the member for Darling Range has said in this house and to the claims that he made to the people of Darling Range prior to the election, to the Labor Party, to the Electoral Commission and outside this house. We should also ensure that the committee has all the evidence that the Premier has accumulated over the last three weeks. We cannot have the Labor Party and the leader of the government, the Premier, not provide to that committee all the evidence in their possession. The Labor Party is not a member of this house; it is not clear whether the Procedure and Privileges Committee can search its material or material from the Premier's office. We have to have a commitment—this is a motion by the leader of the government—that the Premier, his officers and departments will provide the committee all the information they have accumulated about the member for Darling Range. We have to have a commitment from the government that the Minister for Police and the Minister for Corrective Services will investigate the claims that the member for Darling Range made when he became an employee of those agencies. We have to make sure that the committee has the remit to inquire to the Labor Party and get information about his application —

Ms M.M. Quirk: It can't. Read the standing orders. Don't let the facts ruin your story.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I know the member is trying to protect him.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the first time.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: We have to make sure that the committee has the remit to get access to the Western Australian Electoral Commission and to the member for Darling Range's application to the Labor Party, including all the statements put into it. What we are saying is that this has to be a wideranging investigation.

Ms M.M. Quirk: It can't be.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, you have made your point.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: If it cannot be, then something else has to happen. Make a decision. The government has to have a wideranging investigation into how it put him there.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: As we said yesterday, we agree that this should be sent to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. We want a statement from the people. Obviously, from the responses to my inquiries and my speech here, the government wants to limit this to avoid scrutiny.

Mr R.H. Cook: Oh, you are pathetic. You really are pathetic.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Why is the member for Darling Range here? You put him there. Now you have cut him loose, and you want to leave him high and dry and say, “We had nothing to do with it”.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, talk through the Chair. Members, I do not want any interjections, please.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: This is an example of absolutely pathetic leadership by the Premier—absolutely pathetic. He has been trying to avoid responsibility every inch of the way on this, as the government has across the board. It is leaving him high and dry. We say that this did not start today or yesterday, when the member resigned from the Labor Party. The issues need to go beyond that. We support the motion, but we need a commitment from the government that it will not truncate, delimit or avoid; the Procedure and Privileges Committee’s inquiry must be wideranging.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland — Minister for Police) [10.12 am]: I rise to support the motion moved by the Premier today that this house requests the Procedure and Privileges Committee to consider and report back to the house by a date to be determined by the committee itself on whether there have been any breaches of privilege in relation to any statements made to the house by the member for Darling Range. This is an appropriate motion.

It is interesting, is it not, that the Leader of the Opposition has spent the time on his feet questioning the suitability of the member for Darling Range for the position that he holds; the thing I would question is the suitability of the Leader of the Opposition for the position that he actually holds. What he demonstrated in his speech today is how entirely unsuitable he is to lead any major political party in this state, how ignorant he is of the standing orders, and how ignorant he is of proper processes. He has suggested that somehow the Procedure and Privileges Committee is restricted to examining only matters referred to it by the house. The Procedure and Privileges Committee can examine any matter that properly fits within its remit. It is the master of its own destiny and it can choose where the inquiry appropriately takes it. On that very basic point, the Leader of the Opposition is wrong.

Further, the Leader of the Opposition has made some inane comments. He has suggested that I should personally find the personal file of the member for Darling Range. He came in here and said, “She couldn’t find it.” What nonsense; how embarrassing! How embarrassing to have this muppet for a leader who comes in here and says that I have not personally gone to Iron Mountain or the police archives, ferreted it out, examined it and compared it with the CV the member gave to the Labor Party and others.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Leader of the Opposition! Member for South Perth!

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The member for Perth said it: corruption. You want to corrupt the system of government in this state. That is how you might have operated; they might have been the standards that you employed in government, but I have gone through a proper process. I advised the house last week that I had raised these issues with the Commissioner of Police and had called upon him to take what action he felt appropriate. He advised me at the time that he would take steps to secure the personal file and matters pertaining to the member for Darling Range.

I can now advise the house that last night I received a memo from Deputy Commissioner Stephen Brown. That memo was slightly amended this morning and I have been provided with a fresh memo. There are only a couple of very minor variations between what was sent to me last night and what I have been provided with this morning. Those variations are minor in matter. The earlier memo referred to police making inquiries with tertiary institutions. Now, more correctly, it refers to the Hertfordshire Constabulary assisting with that part of the assessment from its holdings; the police have not made direct inquiries, and the wording has been changed to reflect that. There was also a date changed from when Mr Urban graduated from the academy. Originally there was a specific date; now it is just 2006, because Mr Urban was a direct entry applicant.

I intend to inform the house fully and provide copies of both the earlier memo and this memo to the Procedure and Privileges Committee so it can consider whether there is any information that is appropriate to any inquiry it might want to conduct. The memo is brief, and it reads as follows —

ISSUE: MATTERS PERTAINING TO FORMER WA POLICE FORCE OFFICER, MR BARRY URBAN
MLA

KEY LINES:

- This briefing note supersedes the earlier briefing note dated 29 November 2017.
- Western Australian media outlets have suggested the police and military service qualifications and awards provided by former Western Australian Police Force member Mr Barry Urban MLA, Member for Darling Range, are not correct.

- Mr Urban is expected to make a statement relating to these allegations to the Parliament of Western Australia on Thursday 30 November 2017.

BACKGROUND:

The Commissioner of the Western Australian Police Force has requested an assessment be conducted into the recruitment and service history of Mr Urban.

CURRENT STATUS:

Senior investigators have undertaken an assessment of Mr Urban's WA Police Force recruit application and employment files. The following documents held by WA Police Force for Urban have been secured and reviewed:

- Application file 30 July 2001.
- Application file 27 May 2005.
- WA Police Force Personnel file 2005 to 2012.

The documents establish the recruitment processes and service history of Mr Urban.

The files contain a number of documents relating to Mr Urban's previous police and military service history in the United Kingdom.

Mr Urban commenced employment with the WA Police Force on 21/11/2005 as a Police Recruit, graduating in 2006. Mr Urban resigned from the WA Police Force on 21/08/2012, at which time he was deployed to Mundijong Police Station as a Senior Constable.

To date, review of the documents by the WA Police Force, including inquiries made in the United Kingdom have not identified any criminality.

RECOMMENDATION:

At this point in time WA Police Force do not intend to undertake further investigation into this matter unless evidence of criminality is established.

The memo is stated to be current as at 29 November 2017 and endorsed by Stephen A. Brown, APM, Deputy Commissioner, Specialist Services. I would like to table that advice.

[See paper 1014.]

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Contrary to the ludicrous and desperate assertions from the Leader of the Opposition, proper process is taking place here. The proper people to make an assessment of Mr Urban's police record are the police themselves. If there are issues to be raised, they need to come from the police service—from the Commissioner of Police, his deputies, or whomever he allocates to do that task. Contrary to the assertions of the Leader of the Opposition, I have not swept this matter under the carpet, nor have I been derelict in my duties because I have not gone and done my own personal little search. That would just be so wrong, and so improper. I have said a couple of times in here that I am not about to run down and check through the records of the member for Kalgoorlie. I have no reason to believe that they are anything other than impeccable, but if anyone were to write in and raise an issue about the member for Kalgoorlie, or one of the former police officers in the upper house, or the former member Murray Cowper, saying that they had made a false assertion, or something was inaccurate about what they had been saying about their service history or whatever, I would not dash down and say that I need to review that record and compare it with other records that I have, or that I am going to grab their records and provide them to the Premier's office. It is very alarming that this is what the Leader of the Opposition is recommending. I doubt that he will be sitting there this time next year, because his performance today and over recent weeks has been totally and completely embarrassing and improper.

Let us utilise the proper processes here. The police are doing their investigations. The Procedure and Privileges Committee has a proper role here. The Premier has done the appropriate thing in moving the motion today to refer the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. The Procedure and Privileges Committee is never limited by the reference that it gets at a particular time. It can expand inquiries on its own remit, or it can conduct a second inquiry of its own design if it believes there is cause to do so. There are proper processes in this house and in government, and the separation of powers between the police, the Parliament and the judiciary. These are established and proper processes. The Leader of the Opposition jumps in early every time and makes outrageous allegations, gets everything mixed up in some muddle and accuses people of things that are just not true. I have had to put up with him making allegations about me not following up with the Commissioner of Police, not conducting my own investigation, and not personally securing the file of Mr Urban. That is what happens in countries where corruption is rife. We are maintaining a high standard and following proper processes.

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [10.23 am]: I rise to speak for the opposition in supporting this motion. It is important for all of us in this place to reflect on the statement made by the member for Darling Range today. I appreciate that we all have some concerns about its accuracy and the many questions that it did not answer, but there are comments from the member for Darling Range that we should all heed, and the opposition has done

a good job thus far on a very complicated issue. It disappoints me and, I am sure, all members of this place that we have been informed of this issue, and been given a relatively sparse explanation from the member at such a late stage. We are now on the last day of this year's sittings. It has taken too long for us to be given information about the issues that have been raised about the member in public and in this place. Given the issues the member informed us today he is going through, and that the Premier previously informed the house about, I cannot imagine why it is a good thing that this has been stretched out for so long. I cannot imagine why it is a good thing that, since 8 November, when the Premier was first made aware of the matter—although, as he has let us know in this place, he has sought assurances since then and it only really became public after his trip to China—it has taken so long for us to come to any conclusion or receive any explanation from the member for Darling Range. That concerns me greatly.

It bothers me too that the only thing we got out of the member for Darling Range today was an admission that there were some inconsistencies in the claims he made about his diploma in local government. Many more questions have not been answered, and in fact more questions have now been raised because of the member's inconsistent statement today. It is important, given that the Premier has made the case to refer a former member of the Labor Party to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, that all of us take heed of the fact that the Premier and the government obviously have some reservations about the statement. I am curious about what they are, and I expect the Procedure and Privileges Committee to get to the bottom of it.

It is disappointing that, after the great moral lecture we got from the member for Willagee about how members opposite stick by their mates, the government now does not believe the member for Darling Range and decides to send him off to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. It raises a question about what the government knows about why it should refer the member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. The Premier must innately believe that the information provided to this house is not good enough. I question where the inconsistency is arising. Why has the Premier felt the need to refer the member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee? What does he know that is inconsistent or has not been made available to this house? When a member is referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, the case must be made that there is something wrong with the member's statement. For the Premier to take a very big step here, in stark contrast to the member for Willagee who previously said he stood by his great Labor mate regardless of the mistakes that he made, he obviously thinks there is something wrong with what the member for Darling Range said today. Perhaps there might be some issues with the claims that the member previously made in his inaugural speech about his police service. Perhaps there are some issues with the military service that the member has spoken about in not only his inaugural speech, but also in speeches given in this place on 20 and 22 June. A number of claims have also been made publicly by the member in his local *Examiner* newspapers about his police service, leading a team of investigators in Bosnia–Herzegovina. It is interesting to me that the motion does not seek to identify those issues, but simply refers to a matter of privilege.

It is important that the motion recognise the concerns of the public, and the Parliament of Western Australia, and indeed the concerns that the Premier of Western Australia must have to refer a former member of his party—a member only one day ago—to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. It is interesting to talk about those inconsistencies and what the Premier must know. Up until this point, the Premier has made a range of statements about his office's support for the member for Darling Range. I asked a question on 22 November, and in reply the Premier said —

My office sat down with the member for Darling Range to discuss his statement and make sure he clarified all the issues that were being asked of him.

That is normal practice. That would have happened when the member for Dawesville was an adviser to the former Premier when members had issues arise in respect of them; it happened a lot. That is normal life in politics. Issues arise in relation to people and they make contact with media advisers, who are more used to dealing with journalists, to make sure there is clarity and precision, as far as is possible, in respect of the information that is provided.

It is curious to me, and we in this place should all be interested; I suspect journalists would be, as would the people of Western Australia: if the Premier's office has been quite clearly providing support to the member for Darling Range, when did that support stop? After supporting the member for Darling Range for so long, why does the Premier feel compelled at this time to refer him to a powerful committee that can suspend the member for Darling Range for misleading this place or bringing it into disrepute? At some point in time, the Premier needed to turn off the tap of support for the member for Darling Range, and it will be interesting to learn on what date and at what point in time that occurred. The member for Willagee stood here, in a great foray to the inevitable leadership contest, saying that he stood by every single one of his Labor mates. The Premier of Western Australia stood by, saying he was using the resources of the entire Western Australian government to support the member for Darling Range. At some point in time that stopped and the Premier later referred that same member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Many questions are being asked that this place should seek to understand and apprise itself of. However, I also think the Premier needs to answer the many questions about his use of government resources to support a now Independent member.

It is interesting also that in this process, a day before I asked a question of the Premier, on 21 November the Premier said very clearly —

We are seeking the information, as I said. We will make it available when we see it.

I could be confused, members, but I am yet to see any information released from the Premier and the Western Australian Labor Party. We know that the ALP acting state secretary, Matt Dixon, had been sitting down with the member, trying to ascertain his length of service, the issues that were raised and the tertiary qualifications of the member, yet I have seen no information in the press, the public or this place confirming those details. In fact, it was unusual that the member for Darling Range in his statement today did not seek to once assert that he was a graduate of Leeds or Portsmouth universities. He did not once seek to assert his claims in the press on 17 June, I think it was, when he said he led a war crimes investigation team. All he had to do was simply say that and the onus of proof would have been reversed. The Parliament and the Procedure and Privileges Committee would be in a position to find out whether those claims are correct but, simply, the member did not. It is interesting that the member for Darling Range made that statement today but did not seek to assert any of the previous statements he has made. I suspect that could perhaps be because if he made them, he would know that he was misleading the Parliament yet again. Indeed, the greater and larger question that now needs to be answered, which we have been seeking the whole time this entire debate has been going, for 22-odd days, is the role of the Premier, the Western Australian government and the Premier's office in supporting the member for Darling Range and at what point in time they stopped supporting him. We have not, contrary to the statements made by the Premier, seen any information released publicly. Unfortunately, at some point in time the Premier's office made a decision, perhaps arbitrarily or perhaps after finding out too much, that they no longer wanted to support the member for Darling Range. The flip side of that coin is that, indeed, they have been continuing to provide support to the member for Darling Range, and perhaps provided support in crafting his statement today, yet the statement has not been good enough and so they are seeking to refer the member to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. There are two situations: the Premier and the government of Western Australia continued to provide support to the member for Darling Range up until this very day, up until perhaps crafting the media statement, which again they seem to have taken issue with and which is, thus, the basis for the referral today, or they have stopped. At what point in time did that occur? It should cause concern for all members opposite that at some point in time their leader decided to support one of their team and then at some point in time he came across information, which he is not letting the house know about, that caused him to stop providing that support, or arbitrarily stopped providing support to what the member for Willagee called one of their great Labor mates.

I am aware, as all members in this place will be, that the member for Darling Range stood in 2013; he stood again in 2017. Much has been said about the Labor Party's background certainly in relation to the federal candidacy issue and federal members' citizenship status. Quite clearly, the Labor Party is claiming it has a great vetting system. I wonder about the extent to which that has occurred because clearly many claims have been made by the member for Darling Range that are inconsistent with the information that is public and with what the Parliament knows, and it warrants investigation by the Procedure and Privileges Committee. I believe it should go also to the extent to which the Premier's office and the government of Western Australia helped provide support to the member for Darling Range—what they discovered and at what point in time that support stopped.

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the National Party) [10.35 am]: I rise very briefly to advise that the Nationals will be supporting this referral motion. It is indeed a grave and serious matter that this house is considering. It is very disheartening to think that one of the members of this place has brought into question the integrity of everyone who sits in this place. When that happens it really does force the public to question whether or not we all operate like that. It is disheartening when we have to have these types of discussions instead of focussing on things that we need to be getting on with in the business of the house and making sure that this state is running.

I believe the now Independent member for Darling Range will have to reconcile this matter with his electorate, and I imagine that will be very difficult. I cannot imagine, having heard only a part of the story this morning, walking down any of the main streets of the communities in my electorate and being able to explain or reconcile what has happened in the run-up to the election and now, beyond that, having taken a pay packet as a member of Parliament, standing in this place, and, potentially, as the Procedure and Privileges Committee has the right to investigate, on false premise. That is why it is appropriate that the Procedure and Privileges Committee has an opportunity to investigate these matters. I again say that it is incredibly disheartening that we have to spend the last day of this sitting year debating this matter.

The member has provided an explanation to the house which, in the view of members of the National Party, been found to be wanting. It has not answered the questions that have been put by the opposition over the past two weeks. It has not answered the questions raised by the media and certainly none that have been raised in the broader community. It was his opportunity to put some of these things to rest and it has been found wanting. I believe that the opposition has been correct in pursuing not only the questions that it has been raising but the involvement of the government and the Premier's involvement, because he was a member of the Labor Party when he came to this place. It is now the role of the Procedure and Privileges Committee to investigate that. That is right and proper and we support the referral to that committee.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [10.37 am]: I, too, rise to support this motion. However, I think the referral motion is limiting and I will be proposing an amendment to the motion, which I hope the government will support. This is a very serious matter. What we have seen in this place by this Premier is a contempt for this Parliament. Here we are on the last day of the sitting year. Yesterday, we had a long debate about referring the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, but the Premier and the government refused to support that motion. This matter could have been dealt with yesterday. Now we have business before the house and another suspension of standing orders, this time by the government, for the same referral—referring the same member to the privileges committee. What changed between yesterday and today?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I will hear this in silence. It is a very serious issue.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker —

Ms S.E. Winton: He made a statement today.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Why do you not get up and seek the call!

The SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Scarborough, speak through the Chair, please.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I will not go back over all the issues that have brought us to this point. The issues with respect to the member for Darling Range's claims, both to get elected to this place and his credentials to the constituency of Darling Range, have been well canvassed in the media and in this place. Hopefully, they will also be well canvassed by the privileges committee. What was significantly lacking in the member for Darling Range's explanation to this Parliament about his actions was an apology to his constituency.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: They elected him based on a series of —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Once again, we see from those opposite a deliberate attempt to stop the opposition interrogating these matters with all these inane interjections. I have something to say about this matter, but all we get are attempts from the government to shut down debate. I know government members are trying to do that because this is embarrassing for the Premier. It is embarrassing because the Premier has failed to show leadership on this matter and the stunt he has pulled today in referring this matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee is because he is now trying to take the lead.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: All right, members, the next person who interjects, I will call you to order. I keep telling you that this is the most serious thing that can happen to a member of Parliament. Let us have some decorum from both sides of the house.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

That is the issue that the opposition has been raising over the past few weeks. We have been asking the Premier to show some leadership on this matter and the fact is he has not. He has been sitting on the fence; he was hoping it would go away; he did not commence any investigation; and he is still silent about whether he requested that the member for Darling Range resign from the Labor Party. We found that out yesterday midway through question time. If that was not orchestrated, I do not know what was. Midway through question time, suddenly there is a media release saying that the member for Darling Range had resigned from the committees of the Parliament that he was representing the Labor Party on, and resigned from the Labor Party—very convenient! The Labor Party brand gets protected.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Morley!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Now that he is no longer a member of the Labor Party in this Parliament, he gets a referral by this Premier to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Now the Labor brand cannot be tarnished as part of this process. That is what the Labor Party is trying to achieve. We have seen this contempt and stunts like this from day one with this government. Now the parliamentary process is being manipulated so the Premier can look like he is taking a lead on an issue.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Morley, I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Now the parliamentary process is being manipulated to make it look as though the Premier is taking the lead on a very significant issue on the actions of one of the members of the Labor Party. To say that he is no longer a member of the Labor Party is interesting when he arrived at Parliament today in the presence of the acting secretary of the Labor Party, Mr Dixon. If he was in the car all the way from Darling Range to Parliament, did they not discuss what would be in that apology? Did the acting secretary of the Labor Party not say to the member for Darling Range, “This apology is woefully inadequate; it does not cover enough of the issues”? Did they give him advice or did they leave it to the member for Darling Range, no doubt in a very stressed state of mind, to draft that apology, that explanation, to Parliament. Knowing it was woefully inadequate, they let him come in here and stand up and deliver it, when it did not cover all the issues. Then the Premier said, “Perfect—an inadequate apology to Parliament; we’ll throw him under a bus and refer him to the privileges committee now and I’ll look like I’m a strong leader.” Supporting your member is providing them with advice and ensuring that when they stand in this place and give a personal explanation, it covers all the criteria you would expect of a respected member of Parliament. That is what you would expect.

I would have thought that if the acting secretary of the Labor Party was in the car with the member for Darling Range, he might have provided some advice to the member for Darling Range and advised him: “This will not hit the mark; you need to reword this. This needs to cover off on all the issues that have been raised in the media or you will find yourself in front of the privileges committee because it will not cover the areas it needs to cover.” But no—not the Premier, nor the government or the Labor Party provided the member for Darling Range with the advice he needed to give an appropriate apology to this place. Now that they have cut him off, they are sending him to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, which is the right thing; that is where the member for Darling Range needs to be referred. I find the government’s action appalling.

The Minister for Veterans Issues gave an impassioned support to the member for Darling Range. Where was he when the member for Darling Range was giving his apology—his personal explanation? He was hiding behind the Chair. He was hiding; hovering behind the Chair.

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is well-known practice in this house that you do not reflect on where another member is during debate. With respect, I have been here and made some points about other members and have had the exact same issue raised with me. It is not appropriate —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! I will hear the point of order in silence. You might not agree but let them put their case first.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is not appropriate for the member to say those words. Further, it is a reflection on the member and therefore is also a breach of the standing orders.

The SPEAKER: Member, I do not have the standing order, but it is a standard that since I have been in Parliament you do not comment on members who are not in the chamber. It is not a point of order; it is just a standard that has been here for a long time, since I have been here.

Debate Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

Amendment to Motion

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Let us get to this referral to the privileges committee. The wording of this motion reads —

That this house requests the Procedures and Privileges Committee to consider and report back to the house by a date to be determined by the committee itself whether there have been breaches of privilege in relation to any statements made to the house by the member for Darling Range.

I think that is too narrow, so do the other people on this side of the house, because it confines the privileges committee to look at breaches of privileges in relation to statements made to this house, so I have an amendment. I move —

After “Darling Range”, to add the following —

, and whether the member for Darling Range is a fit and proper person to serve as a member of the house in light of the representations he has made, both inside and outside the Parliament, as to his career and qualifications

I move this amendment because in adding those words, the Procedure and Privileges Committee can clearly canvass the representations the member for Darling Range has made to his Darling Range constituency, which elected him on the basis of those representations. If we confine the investigation and terms of reference of this referral to the privileges committee only to what has been said in this house—the member for Darling Range has made a small number of speeches in this house as well as his explanation—that is all the committee can interrogate.

The opposition, the community of Western Australia and, I believe, the Darling Range constituency deserve a broader inquiry into all the claims made by the member for Darling Range that had him occupy a seat in this chamber in the first place. The Procedure and Privileges Committee is the appropriate committee to look at that. I hope the government will agree to this. This will enable a full and proper canvassing of all the claims the member for Darling Range has made and it will help the committee inform this Parliament whether the member for Darling Range is in fact a fit and proper person to be in this place.

I do not have much further to say on that. I think the words I have requested be added speak for themselves. I am interested to hear whether the government agrees to the rounding out of this referral to the Procedure and Privileges Committee and why it would do so, because it is clear that adding those words will enhance the ability for the committee to inquire into a range of different aspects of the member for Darling Range's behaviour. I think this Parliament, the community of Western Australia, the Darling Range constituency, and, indeed, the police constituency and the veterans' constituency in Western Australia want to know fully and accurately the truth about the member for Darling Range, what we can believe about him and how he got to this place. In doing so, all members of Parliament can then learn from whatever that inquiry recommends to this Parliament.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [10.48 am]: I stand in support of this amendment. This is an important issue. It is less than a year—10 months—since the election and when the member for Darling Range was elected to the seat of Darling Range. He has been there a very short period, as the Deputy Leader of the Opposition said, and he has made a few speeches in this house, besides his speech today. I take it from the Premier's decision to send it to the privileges committee that he believes, as we do, that the member's explanation today was inadequate. I assure members that the people of Darling Range will think the same thing. The member for Darling Range has been here a short time, he has said very little, his speech was inadequate, and it goes to the heart—as I said before, the core—of his suitability to remain here as a member of Parliament. That is what needs to be investigated. That is what the amendment says: is he a fit and proper person to serve as a member of the house?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: If members want to have a meeting, go outside the chamber, please.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The essential thing is that we do not represent just ourselves in this house. The member is acting on behalf of the electorate of Darling Range. I assure members that the electorate wants to know not only what he said in this house, but also what he said to them. Clearly, the Premier agrees, if he is honest with us, that there are questions to be answered.

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Premier!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The real issue here is that we need to go beyond what the member said in here. We need to go beyond the process that has been machined by the Premier to avoid scrutiny of himself and his government. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition indicated quite clearly that the Premier's motion has been carefully crafted by the Premier's office and the Labor Party to avoid scrutiny on their role in this. Their role was putting the member for Darling Range here in the first place. The people of Darling Range want the Premier and us, on their behalf, to ensure that the member for Darling Range's statements made to them, upon which he was elected to Darling Range 10 months ago, are accurate. They want to know whether he is a fit and proper person to remain as an Independent member, as it turns out. Do they want him to be paid as their representative for the next three years? The member for Darling Range said that there is a pathway back to the Labor Party. The Labor Party put him there on certain claims and he intends, as I understand it, to be the Independent member for Darling Range for the next three years. The question we have is: is he a fit and proper person to remain in this place? In order to ascertain that, we have to go to the claims that the member for Darling Range and the Labor Party made to the people of Darling Range in the run-up to the election, during the election and since. That is all we ask. That is legitimate because that is the essence here. It has to be inside and outside this house.

We also have to investigate the claims that the member for Darling Range made to the Labor Party when it preselected him. He is here at the behest of the Labor Party. He would not be here without the Labor Party. This is simple. I think it is easy to agree to this proposed amendment. It expands the Premier's motion. The people of Darling Range and the community of Western Australia want to know not only what he said in this house, but also whether what he said inside and outside this house, upon which he was elected, is accurate and therefore whether he is a fit and proper person. It is a very simple and adequate amendment. We want to ensure it is not too narrow. It is what the people of Western Australia want us to do.

As we know, and as inferred by other speakers, the profession of politicians is not very highly rated in the public right now. It has not been for a while, but it is really low. People are saying in Canberra and elsewhere: How did he get there? Why is he there? How does this happen? In Canberra, people are leaving. People in the community

are asking—this is a decision for the government because it has the numbers—whether the government wants to act on behalf of the people of Western Australia and go to the real core issue here: is he a fit and proper person to remain as a member of this house given what he said to the electorate before the election, since the election, and inside and outside this house? That is the core question they want us to investigate. Anything narrower means the government is trying to avoid scrutiny. This is an adequate and appropriate, indeed a necessary, amendment for the purposes of this house.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [10.54 am]: I rise to speak to the amendment. What we have seen today is a Premier who has taken unprecedented strong leadership on this issue. It has left the opposition with nowhere to go. It has left the opposition floundering, so it created this amendment, which basically impacts the ability of the Procedure and Privileges Committee to do its job. The committee has a role, and it will do its job well, and the Liberal Party has a member on that committee. Both parties have two members. The role of members is to provide advice and input to that committee. That committee will examine all the issues. That is what we are doing. It is actually unprecedented that the Premier today refers a former Labor member to that committee. It is a level of accountability and transparency that the former government never delivered!

Let us go through it. The member for Scarborough stands and questions the Minister for Police's role in this. The member for Scarborough was the Minister for Police when one of her cabinet colleagues drove drunk through Subiaco in a government car, impacting houses and cars along the way.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: And he was investigated!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You did nothing about it. You covered it up. You are telling me —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I repeat: this is a very serious issue. Minister, talk through the Chair, please.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That was never referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, was it? Was that ever referred?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Scarborough comes in here and really believes that when she was Minister for Police, she had no idea that was happening.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I protected you when you were on your feet. You might not like what you hear, but that is what is going to happen. Through the Chair, please, minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Scarborough came in here and basically said, "Stop chasing the member for Vasse. Stop chasing and tormenting; give him time to make a statement. Give him time." And remember, at least the member for Darling Range stayed in the state for the past couple of weeks, unlike the member she was protecting. On this issue, the member for Scarborough never made it clear about the communication between her and the commissioner and the rest of government. She played a key role in hiding that issue and has never been transparent to this place. We know that.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: I acted absolutely properly.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I have warned you. You have had your say and I protected you. Now I will protect the minister.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The level of accountability we are showing for the member for Darling Range is unprecedented. We will go through every comment the member for Scarborough made on that issue and we will see if we believe she was telling the truth and maybe we will refer that issue once again to the committee to exactly examine all her comments.

The member for Central Wheatbelt said that the member for Darling Range was voted in as a Labor member and now, as a result of him not being a Labor member, that is a major issue and he was voted in on false pretences!

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member should look behind her!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Central Wheatbelt said that the member for Darling Range was voted in on false pretences, yet the former government appointed the member for North West Central to a parliamentary secretary position in the Parliament. That is what it did. Member for Dawesville —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, you cannot have it both ways. You attack this side and they attack you back, but you have got to take it.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Dawesville is very interested in what happens in the Premier's office, because we know that he used to be in the former Premier's office. There he was in the Subiaco Hotel with Mr Larsson —

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central, I call you to order for the first and second times. The second time, I was on my feet. I do not care what happens over this side. The minister has the call.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Dawesville is very interested in what happens in the Premier's office. When members opposite were in government, he was at the Subiaco Hotel with Mr Larsson. Mr Larsson was texting —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms S.E. Winton interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Wanneroo!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: You were there with Mr Larsson —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville! You just had a go on that side; accept what is coming.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Dawesville was texting that the member for Rockingham was at the Subiaco Hotel; actually Mr Larsson was, and the member for Dawesville did not know what he was texting. You were sitting there talking to him but you did not know what he was texting. Somehow Mr Larsson was sacked for that but you survived. You sat there with him or next to him —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Opposite.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Opposite. The two of you were there.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: After, you both talked to Mr Pontifex and said that you had seen the member for Rockingham at the hotel. He was there texting away but, of course, the member for Dawesville did not get a penalty for that. No, Mr Larsson did.

I turn to the Leader of the Opposition and his shareholdings. As a minister, he held shares in companies for which he was making financial decisions. It is as clear-cut as that and, as a result, nothing happened. Was the matter referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee? No. Was it referred to anything? No, it was not because of the good bloke principle—he is a good bloke, let him go. We have gone through what happened with the member for Bateman on numerous occasions. The level of accountability and transparency on this side is far greater than anything they ever established and delivered. The Premier has made a very tough decision. This is not an easy decision for the Labor Party.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It was a hard decision, and it was made after the Premier felt that the statement made by the member for Darling Range today was not suitable. That is what happened. It was a very, very tough decision and, of course, it has impacted on members on this side. It was a tough decision. When the Premier stood and made that tough decision, the opposition was left floundering so it came up with this stupid amendment, an amendment that pre-empts the committee work. We have put this motion to Parliament to refer the member for Darling Range to the committee so that the committee can investigate all these issues. That is the strong thing to do and it is the right thing to do.

I refer to what members opposite have shown today in their performances. They came in and basically said that it is the right decision, but it is the wrong decision. Members opposite could not maintain a constant argument in

their speeches. They said that the government has done the right thing, but because we are not backing up our mate, we have done the wrong thing.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: No. You took steps in the right direction but it wasn't far enough.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I call you to order for the second time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Steps in the right direction! We know how members opposite did it—cover up, cover up, cover up! That is what they did. There was scandal after scandal—cover up, cover up, cover up. We have made a very tough decision today. We reject the amendment and we believe the committee should be given the ability to investigate the issues at hand.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe) [11.03 am]: I have been fairly quiet for me, but this has degenerated into a race to the bottom. It is not a good day for this Parliament. It has been a race to the bottom.

There is more than a little bit of doubt about the member for Darling Range's credibility. I do not think anyone in this Parliament could deny that. Certainly, after listening to the radio this morning, his constituents are of that view. There are serious doubts about the credibility of his account of his police service, his military service perhaps, his qualifications and his right to wear service medals. He has made comments publicly, which have been reported publicly, and he has made comments in this house.

Yesterday, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition made the point that this matter is about not only the member for Darling Range, but also the standing of all members, the quality and standing of this Parliament and the right of the public to get to the truth, whatever it might be. I do not think anyone has suggested any criminality. I certainly have not and I do not think that is the case. But there is an issue: is he a fit and proper person to be a member of this Parliament? The decision to refer the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee is the right decision. The member for Darling Range had an opportunity to speak this morning—I would have thought at a little more length—to provide either a full explanation or a full apology. He did neither. The referral motion moved by the Premier is to simply send the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee to determine whether he breached privilege. Fair enough; that question can be asked, but it is a pretty lame referral. This is a far more serious issue than that. The amendment moved by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is entirely appropriate because the public wants to know the answer to this and the 26 000 electors in Darling Range have a right to know whether their member, the person they voted for, is a fit and proper member of Parliament and, indeed, whether he is a fit and proper representative for Darling Range. The government should accept this amendment and ensure that the intention of this Parliament is a full and proper investigation of the claims he has made. He may be exonerated on some matters and may not be on other matters. But all those matters should be clearly made and the intent of this house is that it be looked at properly, not whether he breached the privileges of the house. That is lame.

The Procedure and Privileges Committee can do a number of things depending on what it determines. It can call members to appear before it. It could call the Premier. I would be interested to know whether he would agree to appear before the privileges committee. It will certainly call the member for Darling Range and maybe others. People are speaking their mind and making all sorts of claims and accusations in this house; be a little temperate. I do not think they would want to be drawn as witnesses before the privileges committee. They need to think about that. Whatever the privileges committee finds, it should look at all the issues in detail so that the intent of this house is clear. It is true that it can inquire into what it wants to, but this house should at least have the integrity to display its intent in the motion that is accepted. I strongly recommend that all members support this amendment. It is a proper amendment and one that should go forward. When the privileges committee has made its deliberations and spoken to whomever it wishes, it can do a number of things. As I said, it may exonerate the member for Darling Range on some or all of the matters. It will refer its recommendations back to this house and the house might choose to suspend him, which has happened to previous members over time. It will be a decision of this house; it will not be a decision of the privileges committee. It will come to each and every one of you. You will have to make the decision as to whether the member is exonerated, suspended or expelled from Parliament. It will come back to you, members, so be a little moderate in thinking about what you are going to do when that recommendation comes here. But the very thing that we should be doing today is making sure that a full and strong motion and referral to the privileges committee is endorsed by this house, not the lame one that has been proposed. I urge all members to do the proper thing and send a strong referral because this is not a minor issue.

A government member interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I was referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee because my son, it was alleged by the Labor Party, had a conflict of interest in his career. It was completely false. It was a trivial thing for political reasons. This is not a trivial thing at all and we should do our job properly today.

Division

Amendment put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (15)

Mr C.J. Barnett	Mrs L.M. Harvey	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr K. O'Donnell
Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup	Mr J.E. McGrath	Mr P.J. Rundle
Mr V.A. Catania	Mr A. Krsticevic	Dr M.D. Nahan	Ms L. Mettam (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms M.J. Davies	Mr R.S. Love	Mr D.C. Nalder	

Noes (38)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr P. Papalia	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr S.J. Price	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Mr M. McGowan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr R.H. Cook	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms J. Farrer	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Ms S.E. Winton
Mr M.J. Folkard	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms C.M. Rowe	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms R. Saffioti	Mr D.R. Michael (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms E. Hamilton	Mr M.P. Murray	Ms A. Sanderson	
Mr M. Hughes	Mr L.M. O'Malley	Ms J.J. Shaw	

Pair

Mr S.K. L'Estrange

Mr T.J. Healy

Amendment thus negatived.

Motion Resumed

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [11.13 am] — in reply: The government hopes that the motion that was moved by me earlier today will be supported by the house. According to the statements of the opposition, it will be supporting the motion that I moved to refer the matters concerning the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. We need to get a little bit of an explanation around the order of what has occurred in order for there to be a proper summation of the reasons behind what has gone on.

As I have indicated to the house on a number of occasions, I heard about the alleged issue involving the medal on 8 November. I went and spoke to the member for Darling Range. He assured me that there was no veracity to claims surrounding the medal. I then put the matter out of my mind, assuming what the member for Darling Range had told me was correct. That happened 22 days ago or thereabouts. When the opposition says that this matter has been going on for 22 days, that is the context. The member advised me that there was nothing to it and I put the matter out of my mind because I took him at face value. Then, during my visit to China, the journalist Mr Gary Adshead raised the matter at dinner one evening. I said to him at dinner, "Barry's informed me there's nothing to it. You're barking up the wrong tree" or something to that effect. Upon my arrival back in Australia, the issue broke, and that was last week. So when the opposition says that we have dragged our feet and that this matter has been going on for all these weeks, it has essentially been a public issue since *The West Australian* article Saturday week ago; that is how long it has been a public issue. I said that we should wait to hear from the member for Darling Range before this Parliament decides what it might do about these matters. That is a simple matter of natural justice and treating a fellow parliamentarian with basic decency; that is all it is.

The member for Darling Range came to the Parliament this morning. I am sure it was a very difficult experience for him. He provided an explanation to the house about the matters that had been raised and I heard his statement, as did other members. As I said earlier, I believe that his statement was nowhere near comprehensive enough and did not address some of the matters that he had raised in this Parliament about himself and, therefore, because of that, and because of the significant public interest in these matters, it was appropriate that it be referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee for its inquiry. Today the government has referred that matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee so that it can examine the member for Darling Range's claims about himself in this Parliament. I have never before seen a Premier in this place do that about one of their own members. When matters came forward about Mr Buswell during the course of the last government that involved criminality, and serious criminality, the former government just tried to cover it up; that is what happened. Staff members were involved and we learnt today that the Minister for Police was involved because she admitted it. The former government attempted to cover those matters up, and you tried to cover it up too!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Member for Cottesloe!

Mr M. McGOWAN: You covered it up, criminality by —

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, I am on my feet. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Then the opposition attempted to amend the motion referring the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee with the intention, according to the wording, of working out whether the member for Darling Range should be expelled from the Parliament. That is what it is—expel from the Parliament. I have had a look at expulsions from Parliaments. According to my research, it has happened once in the history of Federation. In 1920, the federal member for Kalgoorlie, Mr Hugh Mahon, was expelled from the federal Parliament for sedition. With the member for Darling Range, there is no serious argument that he is corrupt; there is no serious argument that he is a criminal. The argument is that he has misled and not told the truth. That is serious, but I do not think it warrants expulsion from the Parliament in the same way that a serious issue of criminality or corruption would potentially warrant that sort of conclusion or consequence. All I am saying to the Parliament is that we have treated this matter seriously.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Honestly, Leader of the Opposition, there you were last term, dealing with matters involving shareholdings you owned, benefiting yourself with decisions you were making, and you have no right to claim any moral high ground with respect to anything!

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you had your opportunity to speak. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Therefore, I have referred the matters involving the member for Darling Range to the committee for its examination so that it can get to the bottom of statements he has made to the house, which is a fair matter of privilege. These are matters of privilege. Members should think about the name of the committee: it is the Procedure and Privileges Committee. It examines matters before the house and statements to the house and perhaps declarations made to the house that might be inaccurate. They are the sorts of things that committee would examine. It does not go into a member's life history. It is not a committee that examines a member's life history and everything they might have said or done for the duration of their life. It does not examine those things; that is outside its remit. It is outside of 400 years of parliamentary history to allege that that is what it should do. It says something about opposition members that they do not understand the fundamentals of the Westminster system. If they read this book about parliamentary practice based upon 400 years of Westminster history, they will find that it is very clear that the Procedure and Privileges Committee examines matters before the house. That is what it does. If people have allegations of corruption or criminality, they should take them to the police or to the Corruption and Crime Commission. To say that the résumé of everyone in here should be examined by that committee is, frankly, ridiculous. That is what members opposite have alleged. Then they moved a motion saying that this place should contemplate the expulsion of a member of Parliament. I could go through a range of actions of opposition members that could be referred to the committee, and we could contemplate their expulsion. It is certainly outside of my experience in this place for an opposition to suggest such a thing. However, if that is the way it wants to run these things, it is certainly open to the government to look at that way of examining these matters.

Let us imagine an MP signed a declaration as part of one party, was elected using the funds of that party on the basis that they were —

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for North West Central, I do not care.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Let us imagine that an MP was elected to this place and signed a declaration that they were to remain a member of the party that elected them, using the funds of that party to secure their election, and then changed parties halfway through the term. Let us imagine that occurred. Is that not a fraud on the people who voted for that member? Is that not fraudulent to the political party that supported them?

Several members interjected.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Member for North West Central, that is your third call to order.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That would be fraudulent to the people and the party that elected that person and, according to the opposition's logic, that would be entirely appropriate for the Procedure and Privileges Committee to examine with a view to whether that person was a fit and proper person to be a member of this place. That is entirely a matter that the committee should examine.

Let us imagine that a minister was making decisions about matters involving their own shareholdings.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Hypothetically, of course.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, hypothetically. Let us imagine that that was going on and that it was benefiting themselves and they were having meetings with business partners in order to benefit from their own shareholding interest. Let us imagine that that was taking place. That may well be a matter that should be referred to the Procedure and Privileges Committee according to the logic of members opposite. They are the sorts of things that can and may be referred in the future. Let us imagine that a member was not totally honest about their declaration and subsequently submitted additions to their declaration. They are the sorts of things that perhaps the Procedure and Privileges Committee could look at.

The government has been more than scrupulous here. We allowed the member for Darling Range to make his statement to the Parliament today to explain himself.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have said, and I have said, that it was not comprehensive enough and it was not good enough.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: The member for Dawesville is the only one laughing, so it could not have been funny.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have allowed the member for Darling Range to make his statement to the Parliament today. We gave him some space over the past 10 days or so since this matter arose to organise his thoughts and get his evidence together and come before the Parliament today to make a statement. I heard the statement and other members heard the statement and I think we agree that it was not comprehensive enough so we moved to refer it to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, as is appropriate. I give just one bit of advice to the Procedure and Privileges Committee: take account of what the member for Darling Range said about post-traumatic stress disorder when conducting any inquiries in relation to that matter. I think it is beyond dispute that the member served in the British Army and in the police force and people who have had that background often see or do things that affect them. All I am saying is give him that little bit of room and understanding in relation to those matters. The Procedure and Privileges Committee can now examine matters that are appropriately considered privileges before this house, because statements in this house are appropriately considered part of the privileges of this house.

That is what the government has done. I think it is appropriate. That is in accordance with good standards. It is in accordance with natural justice and I think it is in accordance with community expectation. People across Western Australia and the Parliament should now let the Procedure and Privileges Committee do its appropriate work.

Members: Hear, hear!

Question put and passed.

DR TRACY WESTERMAN — WA AUSTRALIAN OF THE YEAR

Statement by Minister for Child Protection

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Child Protection) [11.26 am]: I rise to pay tribute to Dr Tracy Westerman, who was recently named WA Australian of the Year. As a psychologist and Njamal woman from the Pilbara, Dr Westerman's work to bring together mainstream psychology and Aboriginal culture has been unique in addressing suicide and mental ill-health in Aboriginal communities in Western Australia.

Dr Westerman grew up in Tom Price and at the age of 15 decided psychology was her calling after reading about it in a book. In a recent newspaper interview, she described moving to Perth to study at the University of Western Australia as a culture shock. Perhaps this helped her work towards bridging the gap between the two worlds she lived in. Almost 20 years ago she founded Indigenous Psychological Services to bring those two worlds together to deal with the high rates of mental illness among Aboriginal people. Today she is an internationally recognised leader in suicide prevention and she has trained more than 22 000 clinicians in providing culturally appropriate psychological approaches. Her programs have been rolled out in remote Aboriginal communities throughout Australia and have even been adapted in places as far away as Canada.

As the Minister for Child Protection, I am only too well aware that suicide and mental health issues have had a devastating impact on Aboriginal communities in our state. I am grateful that in Dr Westerman we have an outstanding Western Australian woman leading the charge to improve the lives of some of the state's most vulnerable people. I know that the Department of Communities has made use of her expertise, as I heard in her recent keynote address to the department's Festival of Learning. On behalf of the McGowan government, I congratulate Dr Westerman on her outstanding achievement and I look forward to working with her to ensure that we address the impact of suicide and mental ill-health for Aboriginal Western Australians.

CITY OF JOONDALUP — HOUSING INFILL PROJECTS*Grievance*

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [11.28 am]: My grievance is directed to the Minister for Planning. I know that the minister has long held concerns about the potential unintended consequence of infill developments. I believe that we need to regularly review how housing opportunity areas across local governments are being rezoned. We need to ensure that we deliver appropriate housing densities and diversity of housing choice, while continuing to build strong, viable and vibrant communities. I certainly understand the need for infill in our sprawling city and I wholeheartedly support it where good planning is practised. However, I have real concerns about the composition and structure of some developments that are being approved in some of the 10 housing opportunity areas in the City of Joondalup. During community consultation in 2010, the city sent out 63 000 letters, brochures and surveys with reply paid envelopes to every resident and owner of over 58 000 residential properties in the city. Over 7 000 responses were received. Within those responses, there was a generally high level of community support for increased density developments, so the council adopted the draft local housing strategy in February 2011 and it was forwarded to the WA Planning Commission for endorsement.

The WAPC would not support the draft local housing strategy as adopted by the council because it felt that it did not respond strongly enough to the state's strategic planning documents. The city was encouraged to increase the size of the housing opportunity areas and to also increase the density coding within them. The draft local housing strategy was amended as per the direction of the WAPC and advertised in February 2013. Letters were sent to 914 landowners who were not initially included in a housing opportunity area but were then proposed to be. A total of 30 submissions were received. Notices were also placed in the local newspapers and on the city's website.

The city attempted to include a provision in scheme amendment 73 to restrict the development of multiple dwellings to sites larger than 2 000 square metres. This would have made it more difficult for developers to develop multiple-unit dwellings in all housing opportunity areas. In addition, to give more weight to the provisions of the city's residential development local planning policy, the city also included a provision in scheme amendment 73 to require all higher density development in the housing opportunity areas to meet the requirements of the city's planning policy. Unfortunately, the WA Planning Commission did not support these amendments and had them removed from amendment 73. Instead, the final scheme amendment 73 only included a provision relating to minimum lot frontages, and this revised strategy was endorsed by the WA Planning Commission in November 2013.

With hindsight, it would have been wise for the City of Joondalup to liaise more extensively with residents about the proposed zoning changes. However, it did not and now residents are witnessing the construction of unsuitable apartments near their homes. It was not until earlier this year, since the implementation of the local housing strategy, that I started receiving complaints from my constituents about the structures that had been approved and were being built in the suburb of Duncraig, west of Warwick train station. In February, I attended a meeting with many Duncraig residents who were concerned about the developments resulting from the recent changes to the R-codes. As a result of this meeting, a petition objecting to the rezoning adopted by the city was presented to the City of Joondalup. This resulted in a special electors meeting being held on 24 April 2017 to deal with this serious issue. To address the concerns of residents, and to restrict the building of inappropriate dwellings—in particular, apartment blocks—the city initiated an amendment to its scheme to reduce the density coding in housing opportunity area 1 in Duncraig. This amendment is known as amendment 88 and has not yet been advertised. The success of this amendment will largely depend on the willingness of the WA Planning Commission allowing the City of Joondalup to develop the scheme changes needed to vary the current R-codes and provisions of Design WA, allowing local planning policy to recognise local factors and the needs of local residents. Therefore, I implore the minister to get involved and support this amendment 88 to ensure that it is expedited without delay.

I have also been contacted by Edgewater residents who are alarmed about the inappropriate developments that are being approved in their area. They have joined forces with the Duncraig residents to express their concerns to the City of Joondalup. As the minister knows, I wrote to her in April this year to raise concerns about the developments being approved in my area. In her response, she stated —

The location and density of these areas was carefully considered in line with State planning policy in order to meet the future housing needs in the City. Both the LHS and the subsequent scheme amendment were subject to significant public consultation, and feedback received was considered in the finalisation of both the strategy and the scheme amendment.

Notwithstanding, it is open to the City to initiate a further amendment to its scheme if it is of the view that density codes and development standards in Duncraig should be revisited.

I am very glad to hear that the minister considers it possible for the city to initiate a further amendment to its scheme. However, given that the city's local housing strategy and associated scheme amendment have not long been finalised, I am not confident that the WA Planning Commission will support a review of the residential densities for this area. It is therefore very important that the minister supports the city's amendment 88.

Apart from being imposing structures, some of the most obvious problems that will arise from these inappropriate developments is that there is not enough parking catered on-site, and there is a real concern about how rubbish trucks will be able to access bins once the overflow of cars from the new units are parked in the streets, not to mention the conflict that will develop between drivers, pedestrians and bike riders.

I read with great interest in *The West Australian* last Wednesday, 22 November, that the minister has delivered on her promise to create a problem-solving strike squad to improve planning outcomes. I am all for a system that is more efficient, removes cost burdens, creates savings and delivers good planning outcomes for those looking to purchase a new home. I want to commend the minister for this initiative and suggest that her hit squad first target the City of Joondalup, and in particular housing opportunity areas 1 and 8.

I have today submitted to Parliament a petition from residents of the City of Joondalup who have asked for an immediate halt to all building applications for high-density developments above R30, within the 10 housing opportunity areas until the WA Planning Commission has completed a full review and undertaken proper community consultation. The City of Joondalup is listening to its residents and, as a result, will be proposing amendment 88 for consideration by the WA Planning Commission. I implore the minister to support this request and treat these zoning issues as urgent. The minister's intervention in fast-tracking this review process would be greatly appreciated by the local community. I thank the house for its attention. I extend an invitation to the minister and/or the member for Perth to come on-site and look at some of the outcomes of this development. I know from my discussions with the member for Perth that he is very supportive of that view if the minister is happy in supporting him to look at what these developments are doing to Duncraig and other areas. I look forward to the minister's support and I thank the house.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [11.35 am]: I thank the member for Carine for raising this issue. Right at the start of the discussion, I say that the member for Joondalup has also written to me to discuss this issue at length and the member for Kingsley and the member for Mirrabooka have also discussed this issue with me.

Mr P.C. Tinley: Many times.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Many times. All new governments inherit a number of processes and this is one of the millions that I have probably inherited, and it obviously does not seem to have gone down that well or been worked through as well as it could have. We have a drive to create more housing and more infill across the suburbs, but one of the key themes that I have taken to this role is making sure that we have the appropriate density in the right places and do not reduce amenity across the suburbs. This is a big issue as we grapple with the need to find more housing and create higher density precincts, but also ensure that we retain choices in the community so that people can choose to live in a very compact way or in a traditional house with land. I am taking that to this job.

From the millions of issues that I have inherited, it is clear that the process is not working well. One of the key issues is the lack of clarity or consultation at the front end of the planning process. Here it appears that all the boxes were ticked. All the requirements for that scheme amendment were met. I will go through that in a minute. However, there has now been a realisation of the impact of those decisions. Again, I think it is a demonstration of how our planning process needs to be more transparent. Councils and government need to work better to inform the community that it serves of the outcomes of a local planning scheme. It is up to the councils to do that work and to consult. My team is grappling with the issue of consultation and the genuine transparency of the potential outcomes. We have got ourselves into a lot of trouble across the suburbs when people participate, but they do not understand the consequences of their decisions or their advocacy. In other instances, people do not get the chance to participate properly. We have asked the reform team to look at that issue.

There are issues across Joondalup that were the consequence of that amendment. To go through it, in December 2013, the City of Joondalup initiated amendment 73 to its district planning scheme. It was initiated to implement the majority of recommendations contained in the city's local housing strategy by identifying housing opportunity areas and recoding and rezoning those lots. Housing opportunity areas were identified having regard to, amongst other things, public transport and other infrastructure. Amendment 73 was advertised in July 2014 and, following public advertising, submissions on amendment 73 were considered by the city and by the WAPC in recommendation 3 to the then Minister for Planning.

As minister, it is quite clear that by the time I receive a document right at the end, I believe and trust that a lot of consultation was done and awareness was created, and I look at the submissions. As a minister, I would, for example, look at the submissions that have been lodged to see whether local issues have been raised through that process. Because the minister is right at the end of the process, sometimes it is not picked up that people were not aware of the issues or that people have not had the opportunity to put forward their concerns. The minister is right at the end of the process, and I make the key point that there should be a lot more transparency and clarity at the front end. The minister can then make decisions and form recommendations that are more consistent with the public.

That is not to walk away from our density targets. I also point out that at the time the density targets were made by the state government, targets were basically provided to councils and not enough mechanisms were in place for

the government to work with councils to achieve those targets in a proper way. As a result, councils developed ideas that were submitted to the Western Australian Planning Commission, and the WAPC was keen to make sure those targets eventuated, so this is what we have.

We now have an issue with regard to Duncraig. This might be a bit pre-emptive, but I understand that the City of Joondalup is required to advertise amendment 88 and consider any submissions. It appears to be at the beginning of that process, but I note that there are other issues in Edgewater and other parts of the City of Joondalup. I want to make sure that we have a consistent approach to what we are doing in this area. That is something that the member for Joondalup has raised with me—to make sure that we do not just keep on chasing this down the road and that we try to have a more consistent approach.

I thank the member for this grievance. As I said, it is one of those issues; people often do not realise what can and potentially will happen in their street until the bulldozers move in. That seems to be the problem and, as a result, we create these public debates at the end of the process rather than at the front of the process. I also think there is often interaction between local government policies and state government policies. For example, something might be zoned R40 but then there are changes to what an R40 zoning can deliver. All those things work together sometimes to create outcomes that people do not really expect. We are very keen to have more infill, but it really has to be through the proper precinct planning process. With regard to amendment 88, I will see how the City of Joondalup goes through its process. The member is urging me to hurry up, but we really have to wait for the City of Joondalup to do its work first.

FORRESTFIELD TRAIN STATION

Grievance

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield) [11.42 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Transport. I rise to discuss the Forrestfield train station.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Great train station!

Mr S.J. PRICE: A great train station; I totally agree.

The suburbs of Forrestfield, High Wycombe, Maida Vale and Wattle Grove are ever growing, but like much of the East Metropolitan Region, these suburbs were largely forgotten in terms of fast transit public transport, relying solely on bus services that do not always meet the needs of local residents. With minimal government-funded services provided directly to the area, residents are reliant on bus services to get them to nearby suburbs to access many of these services. This is not a quick journey, often requiring hours to be spent in transit. Therefore, the announcement of a train line into the area was welcomed by everyone.

For those unfamiliar with my electorate, the station will be located adjacent to Dundas Road, east of the Forrestfield freight marshalling yards and south of Maida Vale Road. The area to the east of the station is subject to rezoning and will become a vibrant new community, if we plan it correctly. We basically have a blank canvas, giving us the opportunity to properly assess the needs of the community and, indeed, listen to its wishes and plan for the future; as the member for Forrestfield, I intend to ensure that that happens.

As we all know, the tunnel-boring machines are both well underway. Incidentally, both machines were named by children from primary schools within my electorate. TBM Grace was named by the students of Edney Primary School in High Wycombe, in honour of their friend Grace McPhee, who is undergoing treatment for leukaemia and is the toughest person they know. The second TBM, Sandy, was named by Sarah Spratt from High Wycombe Primary School. Sarah said that she was inspired by a sandgroper in her backyard. Like the tunnel-boring machine, sandgropers—the colloquial name for Western Australians—are excellent at tunnelling! From all reports, the machines are making excellent progress, with Grace recently passing the one-kilometre mark.

While the local children have been involved in the competition to name the tunnel-boring machines, representatives from the local community have been actively involved in the Forrestfield Community Group, meeting regularly with the contractors and Transperth, while others have attended the community consultation meetings about the proposed developments around the station. We owe it to all of them to ensure that we get the development right.

Initial plans for the station show masses of land set aside for car parking on the doorstep of the new station. This in turn has the potential to isolate the station from surrounding development, rather than the station being a seamlessly integrated part of the new development. It would appear that with proper planning of other infrastructure, such as walkways, bike paths and bus routes, we could encourage local residents to leave their vehicles at home. This, together with the exploration of new technologies and possibly multistorey parking, could surely see a reduction in the footprint of the car park at the station, whilst ensuring sufficient bays for those who still need to drive. Accessibility for all is another important feature. We have a large population of seniors in the area, together with people of varying life challenges, who increasingly rely on public transport. Therefore, it is essential that bus services link into the train services and that the station infrastructure is able to cater for the needs of everyone in the surrounding communities.

I am proud to be part of a government that is heavily focused on delivering jobs and, to that end, I want to ensure that the new station is a catalyst for attracting business growth in the area, which will in turn create local jobs. Local residents have expressed a desire to ensure that the development also provides for open spaces and a range of public amenities, including parks and sporting facilities.

The High Wycombe residents I met with on Saturday also raised concerns with me about the name of the train station, and they are not the only ones. Local discontent with the station being called Forrestfield has been growing for some time now. Why? It is quite simple. If we look at the area where the station is located, we see it is right on the border of High Wycombe, but is nowhere near Forrestfield, although it is right next to the Forrestfield marshalling yards. A lot of conversations have been going on about the name of the station; nevertheless, it is located closer to High Wycombe than it is to Forrestfield. However, the former government played some politics with this infrastructure, in more ways than one, by naming both the Belmont and Forrestfield stations based on the electorates it held at the time, not the suburbs they were located in. I note that although the federal member for Swan appears to be seeking feedback on the name of the station from local residents through a recent flyer, I question his real motives for the survey.

Done properly, the development around the train station will attract enough population to warrant a new suburb being created, so we should be looking for a name that can be both the new station name and, if we get a new suburb, the new suburb name. But let us ask the community what it thinks the station should be called and not limit it to a choice between Forrestfield and High Wycombe.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend the City of Kalamunda on its continuing commitment to work with the state government to ensure that planning for the new development reflects the needs and desires of the local community, as expressed through community consultation sessions. Of course, it would be remiss of me as the member for Forrestfield to not try to encourage the council to lead by example and relocate its offices to the new suburb.

Many local residents have personally made their views known to me, and others have attended community consultation sessions to have their say. I thank them for their continuing interest and input. I want to ensure that they are being listened to, with their desire for a well-planned area that offers opportunities for a diverse range of housing developments, aged care, schools, recreation areas, commercial, dining, and a variety of businesses being met. Importantly, we owe it to the community to deliver a rail service that does not work in isolation but improves connectivity throughout the suburbs and the wider community. Can the minister please explain how the McGowan government is addressing the concerns raised by the community that I have just mentioned?

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport) [11.48 am]: I thank the member for Forrestfield for his grievance. The member has raised a number of issues, all related to the new station currently known as Forrestfield station. I would like to thank the member for his enthusiasm for and commitment to this project, and his enthusiasm for and commitment to the local community in that area. His level of engagement is really, really good. As a minister, it helps inform me about what the community is thinking at all times.

In opposition we raised some concerns about the planning for this precinct. A common criticism of existing railway stations across the network is about the level of safety. One reason people often do not feel safe is that they are parking a long distance away and walking across desolate car parks. There is not a great feeling of safety. Interestingly, surveys show that people feel very safe on the train, and less so on the station and in the car park. The feeling of safety decreases the further they get away from the train itself. One of the issues we are grappling with on the heritage lines is that, although the stations are located in communities, they are pretty isolated and there is not a lot of activity around them. As a result, the feeling of safety and connection is not there. We did not want those issues to continue with our new train stations. On coming to government, we looked particularly at the Forrestfield station, which has acres of car parks around it. This meant that people would have to walk very long distances to get to the trains, but it also failed to use the opportunity of this magnificent rail line and station to connect better into the community. We are doing some planning with the City of Kalamunda. I acknowledge the work that the city has been doing on this issue. We are looking at improving the residential outcomes so that there will be about 6 000 new homes, compared with 1 500 previously, and a mixture of housing types. Community infrastructure is also being considered as part of that plan—for example, aged-care facilities—and employment opportunities. The member for Forrestfield also raised the street and pathway network so that we do not create a little island that is difficult to get to. We are reworking path and road connections to make sure that we get that connectivity. There is also the connectivity with the buses that come down the hill and across the community, serving the train station. Hopefully, the revised structure plan will be ready early next year to go out for further consultation. I think everyone will be excited about the creation of a whole new community.

The member for Forrestfield has raised with me the issue of the name of the new station. We have carried out community consultation about Belmont versus Redcliffe, and hopefully I will be able to make some announcements about the successful name soon, and also the name of Forrestfield versus High Wycombe. However, the member for Forrestfield has raised with me that this area will be, in a sense, a suburb on its own, and this is probably the right time for us to consider that so that we do not name the station and then have to spend

money on signage to change the name. There is potential for a new suburb name and a new station name. I welcome the contribution of the member for Forrestfield to that and we will work together on genuine community consultation in the coming months as part of the structure plan consultation. We can incorporate all these new ideas and work with the community. I wanted to confront this issue early, because we do not want to put in all the signage and timetabling and then have to go back and change everything afterwards. We saw that with the Elizabeth Quay project, where it cost about \$700 000 to change the name from the Esplanade. Let us try to work through this over coming months to see whether we can sort it out before the train arrives.

TURQUOISE COAST HEALTH INITIATIVE

Grievance

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore) [11.53 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Health and concerns the Turquoise Coast Health Initiative. This \$22.46 million investment, approved by the previous government, was focused on the growing peri-urban and coastal areas of Chittering, Jurien Bay, Lancelin and Dongara. It was designed to deliver essential emergency, acute and palliative care, short-stay and community-based care, rehabilitation, community midwifery, physiotherapy, social work, aged-care and seniors mental health care services, along with an expansion of telehealth services, including at community resource centres, to help streamline primary and outpatient care, augmented by a new, quick retrieval helicopter landing site at Jurien Bay, to support more responsive emergency care. The funding also included financial incentives for local general practitioners and extra aged-care beds in the Dongara Health Service.

On the history of this plan, on 23 April 2014, I wrote to the then Minister for Health, Dr Kim Hames, and outlined to him —

Ever since my election in 2013 I had learnt from my constituents that health service provision to them is problematic. Often there is a confusing landscape of many different layers of service provider and many of my constituents complained of a lack of services, especially in areas such as the Gingin, Dandaragan and Midwest Coast and the high growth Chittering Shire.

The Southern Inland Health Initiative invested \$565 million in infrastructure and services but for the most part largely ignored the growth in this part of the midwest and wheatbelt. I noted that the “Wheatbelt Regional Planning and Infrastructure Framework” stated that \$565.34 million had been funded under royalties for regions. Although the SIHI will offer improved services to a large part of the wheatbelt, projected growth in the Shires of Chittering, Gingin and Dandaragan is expected to create demand for health infrastructure that is not within current SIHI funding. Servicing of these areas must be considered through subregional planning.

A number of discussions then took place with the WA Country Health Service and Dr Hames, and I again wrote to him on 22 October 2015, thanking him for taking the time to meet with Hon Martin Aldridge and me, along with WACHS officials Mr Jeff Moffet and Ms Melissa Vernon on that same day. I went on to say that I had for some time been concerned about the lack of appropriate health services in the growing shires of my electorate such as Dandaragan, Gingin and Chittering and had previously written to him and met with him and WACHS about my views. I was also of the view that the coastal population in the Shire of Coorow, in the towns of Leeman and Greenhead, should be integrated into health delivery with the town of Jurien Bay. This is currently hampered by the arbitrary line that exists between the wheatbelt and midwest health districts.

In the course of the October 2015 meeting, Mr Moffet confirmed that WACHS was indeed already building a health plan for this district, concentrating mainly on services. That plan was not yet funded. I was pleased that Dr Hames appreciated our concerns and indicated to Mr Moffet that he—Dr Hames—would like to see a program for the district starting at Leeman and heading south to the metropolitan boundary. He indicated that the program could be akin to programs such as SIHI but that it would not have to fit into the normal wheatbelt model and that suitable health and aged care in this district should indeed be a viable option.

I then asked that WACHS work to develop a business case to improve health and aged care for my constituents in the abovementioned shires. Subsequent to these developments, and contrary to claims made by the Minister for Health in budget estimates that this initiative lacked a sound business case, a business case was developed and finally, in January 2017, cabinet approved a \$22.46 million investment in the Turquoise Coast District Health Service. That was included in the 2016–17 *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* under the heading, “Minister For Health; Culture and the Arts”, with \$4 million towards services in 2017–18, \$4.7 million in 2018–19, and \$4.8 million in 2019–20. Not mentioned in that statement, but part of the cabinet decision, was further funding in 2020–21. Asset investment was planned to be \$0.7 million in 2017–18, and \$0.5 million in each of the subsequent years.

However, the present government subsequently made a decision to cut more than \$21 million of royalties for regions cabinet-approved funding for the health initiative, in what was very sad news for those living in the affected communities. Instead, Labor has committed to just \$1 million to fund four to six aged-care residential beds in Dongara. Since the loss of the funding, one of the most severely disadvantaged shires, the Shire of Chittering, has

been approached by concerned community members about the level of service delivery to residents within the shire. These residents and the shire are seeking better health service options. Post-operative nursing and support services and palliative care support to residents have been of particular concern. There especially seems to be a lack of awareness of post-operative or post-hospitalisation service provision options available to residents of the Shire of Chittering. The shire does not easily fall within the definition of rural or urban—a problem compounded in some cases by the sharing of postcodes between regional Chittering shire residents and metropolitan City of Swan residents, leading to some ambiguity of service provision. Compounding health care issues is a lack of access to the patient assisted travel scheme for many local residents. This is despite the fact that the shire has an ageing population and no public transport options to assist residents to access specialist services in the metropolitan area. The shire has established a health services roundtable to give an opportunity to share information on current service provision. It is also hoped, through discussion, to further identify gaps in service provision and seek collaborative solutions to these issues. This proactive step by the local community in the face of the indifference of government is of itself evidence of the serious nature of current health service shortfalls in the Turquoise Coast Health Initiative area.

I utterly reject the claim made in budget estimates that this program lacked a sound business case. I ask the minister to table or provide any needs analysis work done by WACHS in the Turquoise Coast Health Initiative catchment and any supporting evidence for the business case that was developed. I ask that he outline his plans for addressing the demonstrated health needs in this area. I believe this can be achieved by recommitting funding to the Turquoise Coast Health Initiative. However, if that is not possible, I request that Department of Health resources are reallocated so that people in my electorate receive an equivalent service that other residents in regional areas are provided.

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [12 noon]: I thank the member for bringing to the house the important issue of providing health services to people living in rural and regional communities, which is something that we need to plan for very carefully. We also need to make sure that our health dollar is spent to maximum effect so that people in rural and regional communities do in fact get the services that they deserve. Unfortunately, that is not the way royalties for regions funding for health has been treated. Indeed, I think that part of the problem, as the member pointed out, is that a lot of money has gone to politically sexy areas and perhaps not to the areas of greater health funding need. For that reason, I commend the member for Moore for highlighting these issues of disparity and bringing this matter to this place.

It is true that the previous government committed to a range of spending initiatives in the area referred to as the Turquoise Coast. One of those, on 1 February, was the commitment of \$7 million to aged and dementia care grants across the great southern, goldfields, wheatbelt and midwest, funded through the Southern Inland Health Initiative and royalties for regions. I think part of the problem was that it was done one day before the writs were issued. Let us understand what this is: it is the tail end of what was essentially some election commitments. I respect and understand that in the lead-up to elections, governments make election commitments, but so do oppositions. As such, we have a range of commitments and priorities that we want to see brought to fruition in the context of royalties for regions and we cannot just continue to spend. I think the former Premier summed it up best in an article in *The West Australian* recently, in which he suggested that the former government spent too much. He stated —

As time went on the projects became more marginal. I think that's where it was overly indulgent. That was the problem with the alliance ... with the Nats.

I have never been in an alliance with the Nationals so I cannot provide any insight into that, but I would say that what we had under the royalties for regions program was a shopping list of things that people would like, not necessarily a properly analysed list of what was needed. I think no better demonstration of that is that once the Nationals wrecked the state's finances, they then went on to find new fields of funding to essentially continue on the way they had been going—that is, to continue to spend without understanding that governments cannot spend in perpetuity. There must be some restraint and prioritisation.

I respect the member for bringing these issues to this place, but one thing we have to do is to actually operate within our means. Obviously, the government had some priorities upon coming to government. Those were to commit to its election promises in the royalties for regions program and also to make sure that it got the finances of the state under control—that is, over the forward estimates to reduce the deficit so that it could get back into surplus and, over a longer period of time, to reduce state debt. The government has had to make some difficult decisions. Unfortunately, the government identified that some of these projects had to be set aside until it had a better line of sight of the needs of the state. I take the member at his word. I do not for one moment say that these services are not needed; I am simply saying that at this point in time we cannot afford them. I make a commitment, as I did at budget time, that all these royalties for regions health projects are not forgotten. They will be borne in mind and the government will continue to look at them and see how it will be able to fund them in future budgets. I commit to work with the member to make sure that we get a proper analysis of the priorities to fund them in due course.

As the member observed, these services will continue at Jurien, Dongara, Lancelin and surrounding towns. As the member, I think, observed—although I remind him—we have maintained the \$1 million worth of funds for the redevelopment of four to six extra aged care beds in Dongara. Some work has already been undertaken in the Turquoise Coast Health Initiative, which means that patients have some improved urgent and primary care facilities as well as aged care facilities. Also, the residents in that area will continue to enjoy improvements to, and the rollout of, emergency and other telehealth services available in that area.

I note that the member said that people in that area are struggling to access the patient assisted travel scheme. I am very keen to work with the member to understand the nature of that problem and to get to the bottom of it to see how we can continue to improve PATS to make sure that it serves the needs of people in those communities.

I confirm that these projects, unfortunately, had to be reprioritised, but they are not forgotten. We will revisit them and I will personally visit those facilities early in the new year to get a better personal understanding of these matters.

I will make a final observation. Budget repair requires not only identifying cuts but also identifying opportunities for revenue growth. The best way to be in a position to fund these sorts of projects is for the member's party to support the government's revenue measures, including the very understandable increase in the gold royalty. As a result, I think we could all reflect that the best way to get these services to people is through budget repair, and the member's party should be on board to assist the government with that.

CARAVANS — INTERSTATE CONSUMER WARRANTIES

Grievance

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury) [12.07 pm]: I thank the Minister for Commerce for accepting this grievance about the ability of people to exercise consumer warranty provisions for caravans purchased interstate. Caravanning has been enjoying a huge increase in popularity over the past 10 years, with more people retiring from work and investing their savings in caravans, which range in price from being very modest to well over \$100 000. Caravans are a pretty significant investment for many people looking forward to a retirement lifestyle, and for many people they can be their last major investment.

Mr and Mrs Weymes from my electorate are one such couple. In 2016, the couple purchased a new caravan for \$75 000 from a retailer in Adelaide. The caravan was built by a manufacturer based in Victoria. They bought the caravan because they wanted to commence their trip in the eastern states, travel around Australia and return to Western Australia. When the Weymes took delivery of the van, they started to notice serious towing problems, with the caravan lacking stability when tracking behind their vehicle. It turned out that although the compliance plate on the caravan stated a ball weight of 120 kilograms, there was minimal weight on the tow ball. When they complained to the retailer, the retailer advised them to return the caravan to the Victorian manufacturer for repair. Like many people who purchase a caravan in the eastern states, they had no accommodation. The Weymes had no option but to take the van on a very slow trip back to Victoria for repair. The manufacturer then shifted the water tanks from above the axles to the front of the caravan. Mr Weymes pointed out that this would have made no difference when the water tanks were empty. The manufacturer put on higher tyres. They did not weigh the empty caravan but installed a new compliance plate.

The Weymes continued their holiday, but instability in the van remained. They began freighting their belongings back to WA so that they could take the van back to the manufacturer and leave it there until it was fixed while they went home. They again took the van back to Melbourne. The manufacturer then contracted a chassis company to cut off the suspension and shift it back by 150 millimetres. To do that, they needed to cut out the floor, remove the chassis outriggers, cut out the wheel boxes, cupboards and caravan sides. These components then all needed to be welded, stapled and siliconed back together. Subsequently, the shower in the caravan did not drain properly and a second plughole had to be installed. Mr Weymes had the van checked by an engineer and they found the chassis was bent; it had a bend in the floor, the kitchen bench and the shower and it was overweight and did not match the compliance certificate. Mr Weymes asked for a full refund but was refused by the manufacturer.

Overall, the Weymes have towed their caravan 3 500 kilometres multiple times at their own cost solely for the purpose of returning it to the manufacturer, as it remained defective. An expert engineer has told Mr Weymes that the caravan itself has inherent safety issues that seem to have been built in from the outset. Despite those major modifications carried out by the manufacturer, it has not resulted in a caravan that can be safely towed at normal road speeds, particularly when the rear storage is full. It is fortunate that the caravan has not been in a crash so far. The chassis is bent, and that has had a significant impact on other parts of the structure. The overall weight and length of chassis members in other caravans are generally made of around 150x50 millimetre material, but the Weymes' van chassis is made of 100x50 millimetre material, so it is quite lightweight. The Weymes have come to the conclusion that the van should not be towed as it has the potential to create danger for other road users. The manufacturer has offered to facilitate the sale of the Weymes' van; this would not fix the problems but simply transfer them to a new owner. The Weymes have taken the ethical position of saying that they will not sell the van to a new owner; they will retain it because they could not live with their conscience if someone else inherited the van.

The really difficult part of this grievance is that this was a holiday the Weymes were taking because Mr Weymes has a brain tumour and there is limited time left to him and his wife. Their holiday was an important part of their life together and, effectively, it has come to a halt with a faulty caravan that they refuse to sell to someone else for very good reason. Over 14 000 insurance claims are made annually for accidents involving caravans. Many of these seem to be the result of stability problems and many of them involve older drivers. It is too easy to dismiss these instances as driver error when there is significant increased reporting of faulty manufacture in the media. When I searched on Google today, it revealed 255 000 results for lemon caravans and there are many stories on Google similar to those of the Weymes, particularly on the grey nomad websites.

I noticed that on 29 November, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission announced it was taking action on behalf of four buyers of caravans from a prominent Australian manufacturer and urged all Australian caravan manufacturers to review their complaints management process to make it easier for consumers to have complaints addressed based on good quality customer service, and that is where it should begin. The ACCC identified that, given the expense of the modern caravan, consumers should have an expectation of a quality product and remedy through the provisions of the Australian Consumer Law. For many people who are buying caravans in Western Australia and following the example of buying in the eastern states to start their holiday there and return to the west, it is especially difficult to get a remedy on consumer law matters involving a manufacturer and a retailer out of the state. It seems to me to be imperative that people be advised of the potential risks and be encouraged to look to buy from a trusted local supplier as much as possible rather than taking the risk of heading over east and becoming stranded with a caravan that is no longer functional for them.

The Weymes have been through a very difficult set of circumstances at a very difficult time in their life. Mr Weymes' health is such now that they cannot consider another holiday. His prognosis is not good and they could do without the stress and worry of this situation at this time in their life. Thank you, minister.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations) [12.13 pm]: Firstly, member, thank you for the grievance. I should start by passing on our best wishes to Mr Weymes and his wife. I am sure it must be very difficult circumstances for them, and I am sure I speak on behalf of everybody in the chamber today when I say that our heart goes out to them for their tragic circumstance. I hope you can pass on our best regards from all members present.

The Weymes have been dealing with Consumer Protection from the Department of Commerce, and I start by saying that I will be happy for Consumer Protection to again talk to the member and the Weymes family to help in any way the division can. I emphasise that the Australian Consumer Law applies no matter where people buy goods; however, it is clear that given the member's first port of call is the retailer, and for this family the retailer is in Adelaide and the manufacturer is in Victoria, it is much more complicated to deal with the retailer. Clearly, it is one of those things that people, particularly for these large purchases, look for the best deal they can get. But one of the points that needs to be considered in that is that a Western Australian retailer is accessible when things go the way they have in this case.

I can say too that I know how popular caravanning is among grey nomads. In the thirty-eighth Parliament, when I was on the Economics and Industry Standing Committee, we undertook an inquiry into caravanning. With committee members, I visited a number of locations. I do not know, Mr Acting Speaker —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): I was not on it at that time.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: You were not on it at that time. The Leader of the Opposition was the chair and I was deputy chair of that committee. I did not go on all the visits, but I remember particularly meeting people on the Coral Coast and seeing the huge enjoyment retired people were having in their little community there. I understand from talking to vanners how much enjoyment they get.

As the member said, the Weymes spent \$75 000 on their van. Some vans cost up to \$100 000 and when the rig to tow it is added, that can mean an enormous investment. There is a lot of high technology in these vans. Unfortunately, there are increasing complaints about vans not being manufactured properly. I note the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's announcement yesterday about one of those high-profile manufacturers. These are some of the problems we are having. Another problem that arises under the Australian Consumer Law—currently legislation is being considered for this issue—is when a series of minor defects becomes a major defect. If we buy a mobile phone that has something wrong with the battery, it is often easy for the retailer to swap the phone. Even though retailers are probably obliged only to fix the battery, it is often easier for them to give the customer a new device. At what point does consumer law state that a major purchase like a motor vehicle or caravan should be replaced or a refund given? One of the challenges is: when does a series of minor failures add up to a major failure? Something that needs to be looked at is whether what has happened with the Weymes' caravan is a major failure.

I know the family has received assistance in mediation through Consumer Protection, but I emphasise that mediation is just a process to see whether there can be agreement. It is not a legal procedure; it is not a process that ends in court. The Weymes can still take the matter to the Magistrates Court—of course, they may not want

to do that—to get their consumer rights enforced. That is, ultimately, where these sorts of disputes may end up. It is obviously important for the Weymes to understand that they can launch any legal action here in Western Australia. They do not have to launch the action in the jurisdiction where they bought the van or where the van was manufactured. It is a single law that applies across Australia that can be enforced through the courts here in Western Australia. Again, Consumer Protection wants to let the family know that it will be very happy to meet with them to look to assist them if that is what the Weymes want to do.

I applaud the family for refusing to allow the van to be sold to some other innocent party who would then have the exact same set of problems. I think there needs to be clearer rules for when a series of minor failures becomes a major failure. However, as I say, current legislative reform on that is being looked at. I remind the chamber that WA is unique in that there is a separate consumer law in Western Australia, but it applies only to unincorporated businesses. Obviously, this matter would be dealt with through the commonwealth law. But regardless of the fact that it is commonwealth law, the enforcement agency is still Consumer Protection in the Department of Commerce, so this matter can be dealt with in Western Australia. As I said, if the facts are as outlined by the member, it is a tragic circumstance. Clearly, that is a major failure and the company should, in fact, replace the caravan or refund the family's money to allow them to get on with their comfortable enjoyment of life. I look forward to the member and his constituents talking to me and the department so that we can provide more assistance if we are able to do so.

ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE

Second Report — “Perceptions and Realities of Regional Airfare Prices in Western Australia” — Tabling

MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills) [12.20 pm]: I present for tabling the second report of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee entitled, “Perceptions and Realities of Regional Airfare Prices in Western Australia” and the submissions.

[See paper 1015.]

Ms J.J. SHAW: Few issues in regional Western Australia attract greater local interest or rouse community sentiment more than the cost of air travel. Air travel in the regions is not a luxury; rather, it is an essential service akin to buses and trains in the metropolitan area. It sustains communities, provides links to families and friends, facilitates economic activity and affects people's perceptions about the liveability of regional centres. Access to reasonably priced air travel can be the point of difference between feeling a sense of remoteness or remaining connected; between deciding to build a life in a regional town or leaving because the sense of isolation is too great.

This inquiry was initiated because regional communities have repeatedly raised concerns about the price of regional airfares and have often been met with muted industry responses. Moreover, government policy has not adequately addressed community concerns, particularly following recent changes in the market. This report examines whether prices are in fact high; considers the impact prices have on regional communities; explores causal factors driving high prices; and suggests steps that industry and government can take to address community concerns and reduce airfares.

Airline industry pricing is notoriously complex and opaque. Unlike most things that Western Australians buy in their everyday lives, airfares for particular flights and routes can change by the day, if not the hour, and prices escalate rapidly—and perhaps inexplicably—closer to the travel date. The committee considered fares for regular public transport services on regulated routes when a monopoly is granted to a single operator with information disclosure obligations, and on unregulated routes when market forces theoretically place downward pressure on price and information disclosure is not required. We received considerable evidence suggesting that fares on unregulated routes are unreasonable. Successive witnesses from across the state used terms such as “price gouging”, “market failure” and “duopoly” and stated that routes lack competition. We also received academic evidence to suggest that fares are lower and less volatile on regulated routes. Unfortunately, the committee encountered general resistance from unregulated airlines to provide information that would have enabled us to draw conclusions about the reasonableness of fares on unregulated routes. Without clear information, it was difficult for us to conclude that airlines are genuinely setting fair prices, and without proactive community engagement to explain their position, it is impossible for industry operators to change community perceptions or allay community concerns.

The committee received very clear evidence about the impact of high airfares on regional communities. The inquiry attracted 122 submissions—a record number for a Legislative Assembly inquiry—demonstrating the extent of community concern across the state. We held a record number of hearings for a Legislative Assembly committee right across the state in Perth and six regional centres: Albany, Broome, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Karratha and Kununurra. We chose to broadcast the Perth hearings, which is another unusual step for a committee, so that people in regional Western Australia could hear as much of our proceedings as possible. Given the level of public interest, and in another first for a Legislative Assembly committee, we held public forums in four regional centres—Broome, Kalgoorlie, Karratha and Kununurra—to provide community members with the opportunity to directly communicate their concerns, tell their stories and provide recommendations. Our engagement with regional

communities across the state conveyed the widespread level of unhappiness in many townships, with high airfares affecting social amenity, government service delivery, the operation of local businesses and the development and sustainability of a vibrant tourism industry. People recounted stories of being unable to attend important legal or personal appointments, visit sick relatives, attend significant family events and, tragically, say final farewells to loved ones. People told us that their Perth-based families could not afford to visit them, and vice versa; that they could not visit their children at boarding school or regularly bring them home; that their adult children could not return home from university; and that they could not afford to go on holiday. All these factors can compound feelings of isolation and loneliness. Airfares are often a major factor when people decide to leave regional centres altogether.

Local business operators expressed frustration about the cost of air travel and its impact on their businesses. It affects recruitment and training costs, staff attraction and retention, and professional development. It also prevents them from meeting clients or seeking new business opportunities. Government services and not-for-profit organisations are similarly affected, with negative impacts on service delivery potentially placing people at risk in some instances. Tourism operators are disappointed about the lack of engagement from airlines on initiatives to expand local markets. They described the impact that airfares have on demand for Western Australian destinations compared with overseas locations. The committee appreciated residents' candour and willingness to share their experiences.

Given time and budgetary constraints, we were disappointed that we were not able to visit more regional centres. However, we received submissions from across the state and held a range of videoconferences to hear from as many regional centres as possible. Although many stories were similar, the committee notes that there were marked differences between the volume and tone of evidence between regulated and unregulated routes. This report finds that community sentiment is more positive on regulated routes where airlines proactively engage with local communities about price and service operation.

We considered factors affecting prices, and undoubtedly Western Australia is an expensive place to do business. All airline operators noted the relatively high costs associated with operating in this state, and this is broadly accepted by the committee. The committee also notes that supply and demand dynamics and cost drivers vary significantly between routes. We identified three broad route types: resource and energy destinations; community destinations where the traffic is more like commuting; and hybrid routes, where there is an element of tourism, an element of resource and energy traffic and an element of local or commuter traffic. Despite differences between these route types, a number of overarching factors contribute to WA's high airfares. Firstly, RPT routes are thin and characterised by low passenger numbers and small population centres, which means fixed and operating costs are shared over a smaller base. On resource and energy routes, both general purchasing decisions by resource and energy operators and the recent structural adjustment in the sector as it moves from the construction to production phase have also had an impact on price. Moreover, charter services and the location of airstrips proximate to RPT airports affect RPT route pricing and overall service viability. The committee considers that market structure is an important factor that contributes to the price of airfares on unregulated routes. This report notes that the previous government adopted a light-handed approach to route regulation based on the belief that competition would impose a natural restraint on prices. Evidence before the Economics and Industry Standing Committee suggests, however, that market forces may not place downward pressure on airfares to some unregulated destinations. The committee considers that duopolies on routes may lead to parallel schedules and similar pricing.

Airport charges were a particularly contested factor on this inquiry. The committee finds that airport landing fees constitute a varying, but generally small component of the total costs of regional airfares. It also observed that regional airport operators were remarkably open and transparent about the calculation and level of landing fees. Some have actually proactively fixed or reduced charges. The committee did not receive evidence that airports are charging unreasonable fees.

It is legitimate and, in fact, necessary for airlines to make a profit. This principle was advanced repeatedly by witnesses to the inquiry. No business can be expected to operate at a loss. The committee also accepts that commercial confidentiality needs to be protected in a competitive environment. Noting the importance of air travel to regional communities, the committee considers that there are a range of steps that the airline industry could take to address community concerns and demonstrate that they are not extracting unreasonable profits, particularly from local residents forced to travel under emergency or other compassionate circumstances. Most obviously, airlines can reduce fares. The committee notes that airlines used to offer compassionate fares to assist community members attempting to travel at times of great distress. If airlines proactively reintroduced these fares, this would be wholly consistent with good corporate citizenship and would be likely to considerably assist in reducing community outrage.

This report considers several initiatives currently offered by airlines in the market. The committee observed, however, that discounts are frequently offered on the most expensive fare classes and may therefore still represent considerably more expensive fares than other fares offered into the market at different points in time. It particularly noted Qantas's offer of discounted fares for residents, which was announced during this inquiry. Although this is

a welcome step, the committee is concerned about the community engagement undertaken when introducing the fare, its ability to provide a long-term, sustainable solution for regional communities, and whether these fares genuinely represent the best prices that could be offered to community members travelling under compassionate circumstances. The evidence to this inquiry overwhelmingly suggests that when operators proactively engage with communities to explain costs and service requirements, such as Regional Express Airlines' engagement on the regulated Esperance and Albany routes, community sentiment is far more positive. Voluntary initiatives to assist customers to understand airfare pricing dynamics would considerably reduce community outrage.

What can the state government do? The committee definitely prefers that industry takes voluntary steps to address community concern. However, when industry either cannot or will not proactively introduce measures, there is scope for the state government to act. Given altered market conditions and the recent change of government, the committee considers that the state aviation strategy is in urgent need of review. Significant changes have occurred to the Western Australian economy, particularly in the resources and energy sector, since the strategy was first released. Evidence also suggests that the light-handed approach outlined in the strategy and adopted by the previous government may not be delivering reasonable outcomes for regional Western Australia. There is also considerable scope for greater interdepartmental collaboration on aviation policy, with this report also recommending that the Premier consider re-establishing an aviation ministerial council, previously instituted under the Gallop Labor government.

Beyond general policy recommendations, there are also a number of more direct interventions that the state government can take. There is a paucity of information available about intrastate aviation. This lack of information prevented the committee from forming a view on the reasonableness of airfare pricing. It also stopped it from recommending the re-regulation of specific routes in Western Australia. We are genuinely concerned that a similar constraint affects the Department of Transport. The Minister for Transport has a range of existing licensing powers available under the Transport Co-ordination Act 1966 and associated regulations that enable the minister to compel the production of information. The committee recommends that the minister use these powers on unregulated routes in conjunction with strict confidentiality protocols to protect commercially sensitive information. We consider that more information would considerably assist with policy development. Moreover, disclosure may in itself place downward pressure on prices. Sunlight is often the best form of disinfectant. A number of witnesses observed that the mere fact of disclosure places a natural restraint on gouging or unfair pricing. We further recommend that the Department of Transport use the information made available to it to prepare a biannual report to the minister on intrastate market dynamics and airfares. A requirement to provide greater information, as I mentioned earlier, on unregulated routes represents an intermediate step between the current light-handed policy approach and route re-regulation. It provides the state government with the ability to conduct its policy function more effectively, observe the operation of the intrastate aviation market, consider whether the market is operating to produce fair pricing outcomes on regional unregulated routes and determine whether more interventionist market steps are warranted.

Evidence to this inquiry suggests that market forces may not place sufficient downward pressure on airfares to some unregulated regional destinations. Decisions about route re-regulation in specific destinations must be based on the best available information, and this has perhaps not been provided to the committee. Given the complex policy environment and extensive economic analysis and community consultation required to determine appropriate forms of market intervention, the committee, based on the evidence to this inquiry, cannot recommend the re-regulation of particular routes. However, it is appropriate for government to consider whether any existing WA routes should be re-regulated. The committee has therefore also recommended that the Department of Transport undertake a separate program of work on this specific issue.

A range of other matters arose during this inquiry, including service quality, freight, market interactions, leveraging government purchasing power, and enhancing the availability of public information. As part of its review of the state aviation strategy, the committee has recommended that government consider the design of tender packages on regulated routes to bundle like destinations, attract market interest and deliver scale efficiencies. It also considered the opportunity for additional regional centres to be incorporated into a regulated coastal milk run, noting that there is currently no framework within which this type of initiative can be examined. The committee considers there may be considerable public benefit to communities on the milk run and interest from market operators.

Regional Western Australians are rightly concerned about the cost of intrastate air travel. Air services are vital to regional communities. Unfair pricing can have a devastating impact on individuals, families, businesses and entire townships. Airlines are rightly entitled to generate profit for the services they provide. Alongside this right, however, sits a responsibility to treat local communities fairly and compassionately. If disproportionately high or unreasonable returns are being extracted from vulnerable community members, this is manifestly unacceptable. The previous government assumed that competition would drive lower prices. However, the mere presence of two market participants on a route does not automatically guarantee a competitive environment, nor does it provide assurance that market forces are delivering price restraint. Based on the evidence presented to this inquiry, the

committee was unable to find that market forces are placing sufficient pressure on unregulated route prices. The possibility of market failure or anti-competitive conduct is of significant concern. The state government must have access to information to enable it to address any market failures on an ongoing basis rather than at a fixed point in time. The committee would prefer that industry proactively provide information and engage with communities. But if industry will not act, government should. The committee suggested a graduated range of measures aimed at promoting fairer outcomes and lower fares for regional Western Australia.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and contribution of my fellow committee members: the members for Churchlands, Jandakot and Forrestfield, and particularly the member for Warren–Blackwood who is not able to be in the chamber today but who really provided some fantastic guidance and support to me in my new role as committee chair. His tours of the various regional townships we visited were renown. I would also like to thank the fantastic work of the committee secretariat that really pulled this committee inquiry together very well, given the number of submissions we received and the pressure it was under. Thank you to the secretariat for its amazing work on this inquiry. I commend the report to the house.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): Member for North West Central, are you on the committee?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: I am not, but I am seeking leave to respond to the committee's report.

The ACTING SPEAKER: As I thought, member for North West Central. If someone on the committee wants to speak first, they are entitled to speak first. I give the call to the member for Forrestfield.

MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield) [12.40 pm]: I, too, rise to contribute briefly to the tabling of the Economics and Industry Standing Committee second report titled "Perceptions and Realities of Regional Airfare Prices in WA". This inquiry has been quite difficult, considering the issues raised with the committee and the expectation that a lot of the community has had regarding the outcomes associated with this report. The report examines whether prices are high, considers the impact that these prices have on regional communities and explores causal factors that drive up the price. As we go through the report, we will see that 48 findings have been made and on top of that 13 recommendations have been made to address some of the concerns that have been raised with us.

On behalf of everyone who was part of this inquiry, I do not think that we fully appreciated or comprehended the impact that higher regional airfares have on people who live in the regional areas of WA. As the committee chair said, we held hearings in six regional centres around WA, including Albany, Broome, Esperance, Kalgoorlie, Karratha and Kununurra. On top of that, we held community hearings in four of those places—Broome, Kalgoorlie, Esperance and Kununurra. The public sentiment expressed at those hearings was quite overwhelming. People living in the regions were in tears as they explained the situations and circumstances to which they were exposed when they have had to fly down to Perth for a family event, a funeral or to visit a sick relative, but have been unable to afford to do so because of the cost of the airfares. It drives home the significance of this issue within our regional centres. It goes both ways.

We live in the city of Perth and we think regional airfares do not really mean that much or impact on people that much, but it has a reverse impact on people in Perth who want to go to the regions to visit their families. Grandparents want to see their grandkids. Children come to Perth for schooling and parents may want to fly them home during the break. This impacts people's lives in a number of different areas that we did not really fully appreciate. It was the firsthand lived experiences of the residents that drove home the significance of this to the committee. I thank everyone who took part in those community hearings. They were very well attended at the four centres and the information that was provided was factual and very effective. On top of that, as the chair previously mentioned, 120 submissions were made to this inquiry and we held a large number of hearings in all the regional towns that we visited, plus we did a number through video conference and held a significant number here in the city. The majority of people provided information in an extremely open and honest way. Some of the airlines were very forthcoming with information and some of them were not.

Through the inquiry, we gathered that a significant number of different aspects and dynamics impact on the cost of regional airfares. The expectation for us to deliver a solution was quite high and, to be honest, unrealistic. We have put forward a range of measures to help identify and allow people to understand why regional airfares are what they are within WA; they vary significantly. A lot of people make the mistake of comparing a flight to Broome, for example, with a flight to Bali. Different dynamics come into play with the pricing mechanisms for those airline tickets and we have to be careful to ensure that we compare apples with apples and not apples with oranges. That ease of comparison and the oversupply of cheap airfares internationally out of Perth really highlights the difference between regional airfares and what we can access in the city. The report has taken into consideration a lot of the information and concerns that have been raised throughout the regions within WA and we have tried to provide key recommendations that will highlight and provide more information for the regulators to make decisions about how they manage air routes into the future.

We have a couple of regulated air routes in WA. The Albany and Esperance example is a perfect demonstration of regulation working to the benefit of the local residents. That was highlighted by the fact that when we offered community consultation meetings in Albany and Esperance, they were not taken up. There were only positive things

to be said about the relationship that those communities now have with Regional Express Airlines, the airline that delivers air services to those regions, compared with the previous providers. During the inquiry we noticed that significant and instrumental outcome. It also highlighted that in the areas where there is not a good relationship between the local community and the providers, it is difficult to maximise the opportunity for lower airfares.

The commercial airlines also have a significant role to play in this. The government has a role to play, but we are all concerned and hesitant about government intervention in private enterprise. A balance needs to be struck. The airlines have a social responsibility for the way that they interact and provide a service to our communities in Western Australia, and I urge them to get serious about that. During the inquiry, there was talk about Qantas introducing a community fare, so to speak. The perception was that it was a kneejerk reaction to the inquiry. It needs to do more to engage with the communities and it needs to do more to ensure affordable airfares for regional people.

Both Qantas and Virgin need to do more to provide discounted airfares for compassionate reasons to residents. People having to pay \$1 000 each way to fly to a funeral of a family member is unacceptable. There should not be such a burden on a family to do that. We hear examples of families having to drive down from Karratha because the family has five or six members and they cannot afford to fly everyone to attend the family function or gathering.

I thank the other members of the committee, the chair, the member for Swan Hills; deputy chair, the member for Churchlands; the member for Jandakot and the member for Warren–Blackwood.

A significant amount of work has gone into this inquiry, and I think the community will appreciate that we have taken its concerns seriously and produced a report that provides a way forward for addressing some of those concerns.

I will finish by thanking our principal research officer, Dr David Worth, and research officer Lachlan Gregory for all their work. Without their constant support, drive and encouragement keeping us on track throughout this whole process, it may have taken a lot longer than it did. Thank you.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [12.49 pm] — by leave: I want to congratulate the government on starting a process of inquiry into one of the biggest problems we have in regional Western Australia.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 6443.]

RAWLINSON PRIMARY SCHOOL — GRADUATIONS

Statement by Member for Girrawheen

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [12.50 pm]: Students never cease to inspire me and give me confidence that our future is in good hands. I love school graduations. Over the years I have been to hundreds. It is a real privilege to share this important milestone with students, families, teachers and school staff. At graduations we honour achievement, remember with nostalgia, and look ahead with hope and optimism.

This year I experienced a first. I found it so refreshing and novel that it deserves special mention. Ordinarily, invitations to graduations come by email. However, in the case of Rawlinson Primary School in Marangaroo, I received formal letters from five students inviting me to attend. They contained well-researched information about my work and kindly suggested that my attendance would be appreciated. These days it is rare to receive a letter, and even rarer for it to be well set out and with perfect spelling.

Time does not permit me to quote in full, but I really liked Hayden, who said, according to my notes —

“I am about to graduate from Rawlinson very soon ... I am just an ordinary kid, just like everyone else. But our school has high standards ... we have learned a lot not just from the curriculum but also from the 50 cultures that attend here”

Mia wrote, according to my notes —

“At high school there will be more opportunities to achieve our dreams and take not a step but a jump towards what we have worked hard for in our lives so far.”

I want to thank all the students for writing to me. I have been involved with Rawlinson since before it opened in 2005. If these letters are any indication, everyone there is doing a great job.

WONGAN HILLS THERAPY GROUP — TINY SEEDS SPECIAL NEEDS RESOURCE LIBRARY

Statement by Member for Central Wheatbelt

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the National Party) [12.52 pm]: I rise to congratulate the Wongan Hills Therapy Group on the imminent opening of the Tiny Seeds Special Needs Resource Library, which will take place on Sunday, 3 December. Tiny Seeds is the only resource library outside Perth that focuses exclusively on acquiring resources that benefit children with disabilities, special needs and learning delays. It is open to all families, schools, childcare centres, playgroups, therapists and allied service providers.

The launch of this one-of-a-kind service is a huge achievement for a small country town and has been driven by a dedicated community group. The two movers and shakers behind the project are Lorraine Lobo and Heydi de Waal, the coordinators of Wongan Community Care and the Wongan Hills Therapy Group respectively.

Wongan Hills Therapy Group is a not-for-profit disability support group started by local parents to provide essential services and support for families with special needs children. The group relies on a dedicated team of volunteers and collaborates with the local school, professional therapists and community groups. It was recently recognised for its amazing work at the 2017 Regional Achievement and Community Awards, winning the community service category from a strong field of nominees. In September 2017, the group was successful in applying for \$10 000 of funding through the royalties for regions Community Chest Fund. This has allowed it to realise its dream of building a better space to house its 500-plus special resources.

The library initially began running out of an old shed in 2015, but quickly outgrew the space. The funding has allowed the group to carry out an internal refurbishment and building fit-out. It has achieved some amazing outcomes for families in the wheatbelt and I congratulate those who continue to work hard to ensure parents and kids are supported, no matter where they live.

I cannot join them on 3 December for the celebration, but I will be visiting in the next couple of weeks. This is a real and tangible project that has changed the lives of families and children in regional Western Australia, supported by royalties for regions.

BUSSELTON LIFE IN SNIPS AND SNAPS

Statement by Member for Vasse

MS L. METTAM (Vasse) [12.53 pm]: With an oral history going back thousands of years through the Wardandi people, together with a 200-year-old written history following European settlement, there is no denying that the Busselton region has an important story that needs to be told. Last week's launch of Busselton Life in Snips and Snaps celebrated our region's rich oral and written history with an entertaining collection of excerpts of recordings from the Busselton Oral History Group, along with historical photographs illustrating Busselton and the stories of people's lives. These stories are of hard work, enterprise and the determined Aussie spirit.

BLISS is the brainchild of Colleen Liston, who proposed collating snippets and snapshots of Busselton, and was supported by Heather Hill, who compiled the photographs. It is also the legacy of the oral history matriarchs of the Busselton Oral History Group—Margaret Tickle, Margaret Dawson and Delys Forrest—who for many years have wanted to bring together a collection of excerpts from the oral histories that they began recording in 1985.

The Busselton region has seen enormous change in the last 200 years. These personal reflections tell the story of that change and provide context for the enviable international reputation our region enjoys today. BLISS is testament not only to our traditional owners and pioneers, but also to those who call Busselton home. In helping us understand our past, this important work will also assist us to move forward in creating our future. We owe a huge debt of gratitude to these visionary and dedicated women, whose commitment to local history has created a marvellous and enduring legacy.

ABBEVILLE PARK — SPORTING FACILITIES

Statement by Member for Burns Beach

MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach) [12.55 pm]: I rise to speak about Abbeville Park in Mindarie. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Neil Gornell, president of Mindarie Football Club, Daan Nel, president of Mindarie Mustangs Little Athletics Club, and Daniel Shortill, president of Quinns Rock Junior Cricket Club, for the good work they do in running and growing sport in my electorate. Without these volunteers and club presidents, community sport in my electorate would not be what it is today. On Friday, 24 November 2017, the Premier joined myself, Mayor Tracey Roberts from the City of Wanneroo, Mindarie Football Club, Mindarie Mustangs Little Athletics Club, and Mindarie Primary School in announcing the delivery of \$400 000 to the City of Wanneroo for upgrades to Abbeville Park in Mindarie as part of this government's Local Projects, Local Jobs scheme. This funding will go towards upgrading storage at Abbeville Park to help accommodate six sporting clubs with over 500 club members and the innumerable community members who use that facility, and upgrade lighting to ensure the safety of those who use the facility at night, particularly children. I am an avid supporter of community sporting groups. I am a long-time member of the Wests Scarborough Rugby Union club. I am also an active surf lifesaver. I have also seen the positive impact that sporting clubs have on reducing things such as youth crime and school absenteeism. I look forward to these upgrades being delivered to the community and to jobs being created during the construction phase, as well as the positive impacts that good community sporting facilities have on the surrounding communities.

ARTHUR MARSHALL — BOOK LAUNCH*Statement by Member for South Perth*

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth) [12.57 pm]: Last night, I attended the launch of the book *Never a Dull Moment: Memoirs of Arthur Marshall*. Arthur was a member of this place for 12 years between 1993 and 2005. He represented the seats of Murray and Dawesville. Last night's event was attended by many outstanding people from the Perth community, including members of Parliament from both sides of politics, leading businesspeople and some famous people from sport. Arthur was an outstanding sportsman. He twice played at Wimbledon, once making the final 32. He was a footballer for the great East Fremantle Football Club. He was a television commentator for Channel Seven. He played table tennis and was a state champion four times. He played squash and was an A-grade pennant player. More importantly, he played in my team in the parliamentary bowls team and we won the national title three years running—a three-peat. Arthur is an outstanding individual. It was a night to celebrate Arthur's fantastic career. Arthur is probably one of the most positive people I have ever met. He still positive today, despite going through a difficult time with illness. Arthur, on behalf of all of us, we wish you all the best with your book. We are sure it will sell well. Arthur is a great salesman, so, if it does not sell well, he will make sure that it does. Well done, Arthur.

UMBRELLA MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES*Statement by Member for Maylands*

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands — Deputy Speaker) [12.58 pm]: I would like to take this opportunity to give my heartfelt congratulations to Umbrella Multicultural Community Care Services. Last week, Anna Harrison, chief executive officer of Umbrella, was recognised for her contribution to improving the quality of life for older Australians. Anna was named one of 12 finalists from across Australia in the HESTA Aged Care Awards for establishing Umbrella some 17 years ago. Umbrella is a not-for-profit aged-care service based in Bedford that celebrates the individual and cultural diversity of its clients. I have witnessed the passion Anna puts into the organisation's important work in delivering high-quality and culturally-appropriate services to people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as gender diverse backgrounds. In the City of Bayswater, almost 40 per cent of the population were born overseas and 27 per cent are from non-English speaking countries. Umbrella works in the Maylands electorate, as well as in wider metropolitan Perth, with older people who are socially isolated to deliver aged-care services to over 500 seniors from 52 different countries. The programs are designed to assist older people to remain living independently in their homes by providing them with flexibility and choice in how their care and support is provided. This year, as part of WA Labor's Local Projects, Local Jobs initiative, we were able to provide \$30 000 to enable Umbrella to purchase a new van. This van has already been used to transport hundreds of clients. I am proud that Umbrella Multicultural Community Care Services is providing services in my electorate and I congratulate Anna for realising the need for this service and having the drive to establish it 17 years ago.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm***QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE****PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE — MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — REFERRAL****765. Dr M.D. NAHAN to the Premier:**

Yesterday, the Premier refused the opposition's call for a Procedure and Privileges Committee inquiry into the member for Darling Range. The Premier also refused to provide a thorough and full explanation of what he knew. What has changed his mind to get him to agree to our demands for a Procedure and Privileges Committee inquiry?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Yesterday, the opposition moved that the matters concerning the member for Darling Range go to a Procedure and Privileges Committee inquiry. The government voted against that motion because we wanted the member for Darling Range to have the opportunity to present his case before any such decision was made. The member for Darling Range presented his case this morning. We are of the view that the explanation he gave was not comprehensive enough, so then we moved to refer the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee for an inquiry into the matters he has stated before the house. I note that we moved to refer him to the Procedure and Privileges Committee today in similar terms to what the opposition moved yesterday, but this morning the opposition decided that the motion it moved yesterday was not good enough. It then moved to amend the motion, because yesterday's motion was not good enough—amended it again! Whatever we do—whatever accountability is put in place and all the measures we put in place to ensure natural justice and that the facts come out—it is never good enough for members opposite. But we know that when members opposite were in government, they covered up serious criminality. They covered up one of their ministers driving around drunk, damaging people's property and potentially risking lives. They had staffers covering that up!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, you asked the question; you are getting an answer.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We learnt today that the then Minister for Police knew all about it. That is what she advised the house.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough!

Mr M. McGOWAN: When the Liberal Party was in office, it had ministers engaging in major criminality with no consequences, and it tried to cover it up. We ensure that there is proper accountability, and that is what we did today.

PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE — MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — REFERRAL

766. Dr M.D. NAHAN to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. What information has the Premier collected over the last three weeks to justify his decision that the member for Darling Range's explanation today was inadequate?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

As I have now said on at least four occasions in this house —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: As I have said on at least four occasions in this house, matters were raised in respect of the member for Darling Range and aspects of his biography that he did not address this morning.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Therefore, I think it is important that the matters he made statements about —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the second time. You are not going to ask a question and answer it.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I therefore think it is appropriate that the matters he raised himself in this house about his own history be inquired into by the Procedure and Privileges Committee. But I do note there are no allegations of criminality or corruption against the member for Darling Range—none.

Dr M.D. Nahan: You haven't said anything. You've been hiding.

Mr M. McGOWAN: When the Leader of the Opposition was in government, conflicts of interest reigned; criminality reigned. That is what occurred.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: That Premier over there allowed criminality —

Mr C.J. Barnett: What criminality?

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, please; it is the last sitting day. Just relax.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Ministers were driving around drunk in the streets and not answering the questions of the police. The Minister for Police, as she then was, knew all about it. You were up to your necks in criminality when you were in government—up to your necks in it!

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: You were up to your necks in criminality and you did nothing about it.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I have a point of order, Mr Speaker.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The minister may laugh —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I will hear this in silence.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Premier, regrettably, has accused the Leader of the Opposition of criminality. I would ask that you direct him to withdraw.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: He just did it.

The SPEAKER: Premier, it was just a general term for the previous government—sorry, member for Cottesloe!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I liked you better when you were the Premier! It was just a general thing about the government, it was not about an individual, but I accept your point of order.

MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK HISTORY

767. Mr A. KRSTICEVIC to the Premier:

Will the Premier detail every action that he or his office has taken since he became aware, on 8 November, about the veracity of the member for Darling Range's claims with respect to his education and service history?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I have made a number of explanations to the house in relation to these matters. I think that rather than the opposition trying to undermine the work of the Procedure and Privileges Committee —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: This is about you, not about the member for Darling Range, mate.

Mr D.J. Kelly: What would you know, "Dr Dawesville"?

The SPEAKER: I call the member for Dawesville and the Minister for Water. Minister for Water, if you refer to someone in this chamber, you call them by their correct title.

Mr M. McGOWAN: On numerous occasions, I have outlined to the house what we have known about these issues and we have referred it to the appropriate place. The member for Darling Range is now an Independent member of Parliament. According to his statement this morning, he will be seeking information to verify the statements he has made about his past life. I look forward to him providing that information.

MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK HISTORY

768. Mr A. KRSTICEVIC to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Given that the Premier was made aware of questions about the honesty and integrity of the member for Darling Range on 8 November, why has he done nothing but outsource responsibility to the media and to the member, whose own credibility is in question?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I do not know whether the member for Carine is really up with what is going on, but I will explain to him what happened this morning. I moved a motion to refer the matter to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, which has two members of the opposition on it. The Procedure and Privileges Committee, I assume, will examine the matters.

STATE ECONOMY — BUSINESS CONFIDENCE

769. Mr T.J. HEALY to the Premier:

My question is to the Premier, who is an outstanding minister for jobs. I refer to the survey of the Master Builders Association that shows confidence amongst Western Australian builders is the highest it has been for four years and the McGowan Labor government's comprehensive "WA Labor Plan for Jobs" that has created confidence in the WA economy.

Can the Premier outline to the house how this government's policies will continue to provide confidence for Western Australian workers and Western Australian businesses?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Southern River for his question. As we have learnt, the positive news about the economy continues to flood in. Since Labor was elected to government, confidence has returned to the Western Australian economy. When I meet with businesspeople and engage with the business community, they are so grateful they have a government that is interested in creating jobs. They have great ministers to deal with. They do not have to deal with a bunch of second-raters. The great ministers that they deal with are consultative and want to get things done. They are working on creating jobs and opportunities for our citizens. They are ministers with horsepower. They are not the bunch of second-raters who were in office last time whom the member for Cottesloe referred to last week.

This has been demonstrated by the survey of the Master Builders Association. Western Australian builders' confidence is at its highest since 2013. According to the business confidence index put forward by the Master Builders Association, our confidence levels in WA are higher than the national average. Business confidence, according to the index, is 45 per cent higher than it was two years ago. That is because we have a plan for jobs and ministers who are getting on with creating jobs in Western Australia.

On the last day, I have to remind the house of this one: the last government did not have a plan for jobs; we know that because the member for Churchlands, a former minister, said this when asked about that —

... the people of Western Australia already know that. The member is not telling us anything we do not know.

When he was asked whether the former government had a plan for jobs, he said people already knew it did not have a plan for jobs. It was unusual honesty, I must say, from the opposition.

When we came to office, unemployment was 6.5 per cent; it is now less than six per cent. The annual average unemployment rate is the second lowest in the country. We are out there getting on with our plans for Metronet. I think the Minister for Transport outlined yesterday all those projects across Western Australia that we are working with the commonwealth government on funding to ensure road and rail projects across Western Australia. This is more than just one single road that did not reach Fremantle port. Those projects we have funding for will create jobs and opportunities for people in both the city and the regions. That was not happening before. Confidence has returned to the Western Australian economy under this Labor government.

TAXIS — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT — REFORMS

770. Ms J.M. FREEMAN to the Minister for Transport:

Before I begin, can I wish everyone a good and safe break.

I refer to this government's reforms to the WA taxi industry and on-demand transport industry—the biggest reforms ever undertaken in WA and certainly welcomed in the seat of Mirrabooka. Can the minister advise the house how the industry-funded buyback scheme compares with similar schemes in other states, and how does it compare with the dismal way taxidivers were treated by the previous Liberal–National government?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thank the member for that question, and I thank the member for her advocacy for her constituents over this issue for many years.

As we know, this is very, very difficult reform. It is probably one of most complex pieces of reform that this government will do because of the complexity of the industry and the different interests across the industry. We heard from the former Premier that his second-term government did not even have the horsepower to make changes to a regional cemetery board, as I understand, so this bit of reform was too difficult for it to introduce. But we have a plan, and that plan will come to Parliament early next year. It is about an industry-funded buyback; it is the most generous in Australia. It is about creating a level playing —

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Moore, it is not a chat show!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is about creating a level playing field into the future. Basically, we will have strong competition out there in the market to deliver results for the community over the longer term. We know the current system is broken, and we have an obligation to fix it.

Since announcing this major piece of reform, we have been trying to brief the opposition. Remember, I actually offered to personally brief the opposition.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: That was very kind.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It was kind. It was something that it rejected. It would not accept a briefing from the Minister for Transport about —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. Harvey: We wanted the member for Armadale; he's done the work and we —

The SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, I do not know whether you think this is your show or something, but this is Parliament and it is question time.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The member for Scarborough talking about work—that is an interesting concept!

In relation to the briefing, I am happy to say a briefing was held this week. I heard the Leader of the Opposition interject about it. He did not even bother turning up to learn about on-demand transport reform. The member for

Carine, who out there purports to be the taxi industry's friend, failed to turn up. The member for South Perth is again someone who did not turn up for the briefing. We are very keen —

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Obviously the Leader of the Opposition's office can tell him about it!

We are very keen to get this through next year, and we hope the Liberal Party supports this very detailed reform. I know the member for Scarborough went out saying that Uber drivers will be collecting \$2 in tin cans and rocking up and paying somebody; that is not going to be the case.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: What was that?

The SPEAKER: No, no; do not encourage interjections.

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: She interjected about detail. The member for Scarborough could have asked for detail in that briefing, I suspect, but I do not think she did. We look forward to the Liberal Party's support. It could not deliver when it was in government; let us hope it can support us now in opposition.

ASHBURTON NORTH STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL AREA — CHEVRON WORKFORCE CAMP

771. Mr V.A. CATANIA to the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I refer to the Premier's comments yesterday in relation to the approval of Chevron's permanent workforce to be based at Ashburton North strategic industrial area. I quote from yesterday —

I note that under the previous government, the then Minister for Lands, the member for Warren–Blackwood, who is not in the chamber today, signed off on the arrangement in Onslow.

In answer to a question during the Legislative Council estimates hearings, the Minister for Lands said that approval was given for the residential camp on 26 July 2017 by the WA Planning Commission. Who is the misleading the house—is it the Premier or the lands minister?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The advice given to me by the Minister for Lands just now is that the LandCorp proposal was signed off in January this year. LandCorp —

Ms R. Saffioti: Put forward the proposal in January.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The proposal was signed off in January of this year. If we go back to January this year, the Liberals and Nationals were in government. When these issues were being discussed and debated back in perhaps 2016 or 2015, I also remember the member for Warren–Blackwood saying the then Premier was in the pocket of Chevron. Remember that?

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: In the pockets of Chevron! They were the words he used, were they not?

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes. "In the pockets of big oil and Chevron"; that is what he had to say. What that says to me is, firstly, the member for North West Central has his facts wrong, and, secondly, when they were in office, the Liberal and National Parties were at war with one another. Can members imagine the Leader of the National Party, in an arrangement with the Liberal Party in government, said that the Liberal Premier was in the pockets of Chevron because the then Premier decided to change the arrangements in relation to the camp at Onslow? That is what happened in government. Is it any wonder there was no confidence in the former government in relation to its management of the economy? I actually feel a bit of sympathy for the member for Cottesloe sometimes. I do. I feel sympathy for him sometimes. I do.

Several members interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Imagine in government, after you won that 2013 election, to try to manage the National Party. It must have been appalling. It must have been terrible to try to manage the National Party when the former Premier had the Leader of the National Party saying that about him.

ASHBURTON NORTH STRATEGIC INDUSTRIAL AREA — CHEVRON WORKFORCE CAMP

772. Mr V.A. CATANIA to the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I have a supplementary question. Will the Premier apologise for misleading the house and misrepresenting the member for Warren–Blackwood saying that he signed off on something that the now Premier's government signed off on?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

We all know what happened when the former government was in office. There was an agreement reached with Chevron in respect to the location of that camp. The then Minister for State Development moved to change the location of the camp. The Leader of the National Party at that point in time said the then Premier was in the pockets of Chevron. I will just give members a lesson: I know there are lots of new members in this house; 20 new Labor members, one new Liberal member —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Two.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Two—but the other one is not here. He obviously has no faith in the opposition, either. Twenty new Labor members and two new Liberal members, I will just give them a bit of advice: whatever the member for North West Central says is always wrong and not based upon fact!

Point of Order

Mr V.A. CATANIA: The Premier is not answering the question. He has misled the house. He has misrepresented the member for Warren–Blackwood

The SPEAKER: You are on three calls, I think. You do not get up and shout across the chamber. It is your last chance. You have been around here long enough, on both sides of the house, to remember what that means.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: He was elected as a Labor MP and he went and ratted on his mates. That is what he did.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — SUPPORT SERVICES

773. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence:

I refer to a 2015 national study, which estimated that violence against women costs the Australian economy more than \$20 billion a year. Can the minister advise the house how the McGowan Labor government is supporting those in the WA community who have experienced or are experiencing family and domestic violence?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

I am particularly pleased to take this question from the member for Murray-Wellington. At lunchtime I had the pleasure of being with the member as she met with a breast cancer survivor and her daughter. The member recently won a prize at a fundraiser of a return trip to Paris, which she was very excited about, but yesterday she came and said to me that she had made a decision to give that trip to Paris to the breast cancer survivor who had been speaking at a function.

[Applause.]

Ms S.F. McGURK: That is very generous of the member, so I am very pleased to take a question from her.

We are in the middle of 16 Days in WA, which is an awareness-raising campaign to highlight the reason that we need to redouble our efforts to prevent family and domestic violence. As the member said, the financial cost to the Australian economy of women experiencing physical, sexual and emotional abuse was estimated by PricewaterhouseCoopers to be more than \$20 billion. Of course, who bears the majority of this cost? Is it the federal government or state and territory governments? No. Is it employers or perpetrators? No. The study by PricewaterhouseCoopers estimates that it is the victims of family and domestic violence who bear the brunt of this cost of more than \$20 billion. That is just the financial cost. There are also emotional and physical costs. Children in out-of-home care are overrepresented in these statistics. Just over 90 per cent of children in out-of-home care have either personally experienced or witnessed domestic violence in their home. We need to do better. It is not just the financial cost. The physical, emotional and developmental costs are all reasons that we need to stop family and domestic violence.

The state government, through the Department of Communities, provides funding of more than \$7 million to services throughout the state, such as women's refuges, family and domestic violence counselling, and advocacy and support services. I would like to improve that contribution, but because of the state of the budget left to us by the other side, that is difficult. We do what we can. I will be very pleased to attend an event with the member for Mandurah tomorrow to commit more than \$1 million over four years to family and domestic violence counselling in the Peel region. We will be there tomorrow to talk about the need to support those services. We are backing up our support for them not only by visiting them and understanding the work they do, but also through financial support. I thank the member for Mandurah for his advocacy for services in his region. Part of the campaign that we are running is not just to highlight the need for a better response, but also to try to prevent family and domestic violence. We need to understand that we all have a role to play in our families, our communities and the organisations in which we participate to say that this violence has to stop. We need to give women and children who experience this violence some hope for the future.

MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK HISTORY

774. Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE to the Minister for Veterans Issues:

In this place, the minister said that he was certain that the military, police and academic background of the member for Darling Range was not in question. Did this show a complete lack of judgement?

Mr P.C. TINLEY replied:

I thank the member for the question, but I will not be verbally by him. If he is going to quote me, he should quote me correctly. He is very good at muckraking. He wants to lift his game and get out of the gutter. The B team up at the front over there could not even clean out the stables—seriously. I will reiterate for the chamber exactly what I said. I have been consistent in what I have said. I said that I support the member for Darling Range as a mate. When your mate falls over, you go and help him. That is what we did. What I said was not in question is his service. He served in three uniforms in two countries. If anybody has any accusation that that is not true, I will listen to it. I will withdraw my comments and apologise in this chamber if that is not true. That is what I said, so do not verbal me. And when I am not here, and the member for Scarborough impugns my courage to be in this place to front the accusations from her side, she should do it with a bit of accuracy! I said yesterday in a brief ministerial statement that I was going down to launch the Housing Industry Forecasting Group's report, and that is exactly where I was. The member said that I was hiding behind the Speaker's chair. That is beneath her as a member of Parliament and beneath everyone. I was walking back in here, having rushed back to Parliament after having been informed that the member for Darling Range was making a comment. I expect the member for Scarborough to write to me and apologise. She can do it in a Christmas card, because that will make it nice. Let us all get past this. Let us get back to the real business that this chamber should be getting onto—that is, the governance and future direction of this state. We should let the Procedure and Privileges Committee do its business and then members can have their say when it comes back with its report.

MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — QUALIFICATIONS AND WORK HISTORY

775. Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE to the Minister for Veterans Issues:

I have a supplementary question. Given that the minister has changed his mind on the need for a privileges inquiry into the member for Darling Range, does he think that he should apologise to the veterans community for his steadfast support of his Labor mate, ahead of veterans' interests?

Mr P.C. TINLEY replied:

The member cannot reinvent this. The member's own character is now on the line. He has worn a uniform; he knows exactly what is at stake here. Get a grip!

MASTER BUILDERS ASSOCIATION — SURVEY — FIRST HOME BUYERS

776. Mr M. HUGHES to the Treasurer:

I refer to the latest survey by the Master Builders Association, which shows that 20 per cent of the total residential market is made up of first home buyers, which is higher than it is in other states, and, furthermore, that builders are predicting a steady rise in construction of new homes in Western Australia. Can the Treasurer outline how this compares with opposition claims that changes to the first home owner grant would destroy the housing industry? Is the Treasurer aware of any other economic indicators that contradict misinformed comments by the opposition?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

I thank the member for that very good question. I am delighted to be able to deliver to the chamber a range of good news, much to the chagrin of the opposition, no doubt. I recall the debate when we brought forward the conclusion of the first home buyer boost—the reign of terror that was apparently going to come down on the first home buyer sector. The Leader of the Opposition said that finance would dry up, construction would dry up and jobs would be lost. I quote Master Builders Association of Western Australia housing director Jason Robertson, who said, "WA is the State for first home-buyers". There we go! We know that because we are seeing activity, which the Premier went through earlier about business confidence. The other point to be made is that whilst the first home buyer market is at about 20 per cent, it is only about 14 or 15 per cent in other states. I say to the shadow Treasurer that this is good news for Western Australia! I want him to be delighted by this news, because wherever I turn at the moment, the data is starting to look pretty good. Australian Bureau of Statistics figures released today show that seasonally adjusted private new capital expenditure has increased for the first time in three years. The private sector is awash with confidence in this new government and is investing heavily—finally—after 12 consecutive quarters of contraction. Seasonally adjusted unemployment has fallen from 6.5 per cent to 5.9 per cent during the term—all eight months of it!—of this government. The number of job vacancies is increasing. We have the highest Labor market participation rate of any state in the nation.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Mr B.S. WYATT: The number of people who are underemployed has been falling. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, the National Australia Bank and the Commonwealth Bank of Australia—all the confidence data! It is all good news. I sometimes feel as though I am Santa Claus with the good news that I get to bring to this place. I say to my friends on the other side of the chamber, who are annoyed with this data, that if I could fit down that chimney, I would give them all a present. Ultimately, as we conclude this parliamentary year, much to the annoyance of the shadow Treasurer and the Leader of the Opposition, the economic data of Western Australia is finally returning to growth and good news.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Although the member for Vasse is agitated by the lack of shark shields in her electorate, she should think about the number of people now getting a job, getting more work and contributing to broader economic growth in Western Australia. Ultimately, when I get down that chimney, drink that milk and eat those cookies, I assure members that the only thing that I will be thinking about is those Western Australians who are getting more opportunities in an economy that this mob on the other side left behind, which was in an abysmal state. I am delighted that Western Australia is returning to a healthy state of economic growth.

HOPETOUN HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

777. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Health:

I refer to reports that the Hopetoun home and community care services will effectively be withdrawn for three weeks over the Christmas and New Year period, including no transport to doctors, no gardening or cleaning, and no meals on wheels.

- (1) Why has this decision been made?
- (2) Is the issue more widespread than in just Hopetoun?
- (3) What is the minister doing to ensure that Hopetoun and other potentially affected communities across the great southern have access to aged care services over the Christmas period?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

(1)–(3) I thank the member for the question. It is obviously an important one. I acknowledge that home and community care plays a vital role in the daily lives of a lot of older Western Australians. I must confess that I do not have the details about Hopetoun. However, I observe that a range of local government authorities are moving from an insource system for home and community care arrangements to more outsourcing arrangements, consistent with the commonwealth government's decisions about this program. I am not sure what the details are about Hopetoun, but I am very keen to sit down with the member and have a close look at it to see whether we can resolve those issues.

HOPETOUN HOME AND COMMUNITY CARE SERVICES

778. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question.

How does the minister expect the residents of Hopetoun who rely on this service for medication and health treatment to have access to those services over Christmas?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

As I said, it is obviously a concerning and important issue. That is why I am very keen to sit down with the member and work with him personally to see if we can resolve those issues. I do not have a line of sight on the specific arrangements for Hopetoun.

PUPPY FARMING

779. Ms L.L. BAKER to the Minister for Local Government:

When I started, this question was going to be about puppies. It is now about pensioner pooches.

I refer to Western Australia's high abandonment and kill rate for dogs and the oversupply of puppies, and to the McGowan government's commitment to stop puppy farming and the supply chain that feeds it in WA. Can the minister outline to the house what role the implementation group, which met for the first time a couple of weeks ago, will play in delivering on this commitment?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for Maylands for her tenacity and for her perseverance. Before I answer, I would like to acknowledge representatives from the Mandurah Mums' Cottage in the Speaker's gallery. Kaye Seeber and her team are here and I welcome them to Parliament.

First of all, I want to acknowledge the respect that is held for the member for Maylands for her advocacy for animal welfare in this state. She is recognised by a very large number of stakeholder groups, organisations and individuals for her capacity and forthright advocacy for animal welfare. I think that should be acknowledged because it is well respected by many people in Western Australia.

As members will be aware, before the election the now Premier, the member for Maylands and others did a lot of research into the cruel practice of puppy farming in Australia and the fact that in Western Australia large numbers of puppies arrive in our state or are bred in our state cruelly. There is no other word for it. The practice is purely for profit. The welfare of the pups and, indeed, the mothers of those pups is secondary to profit. On coming to power in March this year, one of the McGowan government's election commitments was to ensure that this state puts an end to puppy farming because of the view held by many about the abhorrent practice and what it does to animal welfare. I am pleased that I can report to the house that we are progressing the implementation of this policy initiative—this election commitment. The member for Maylands has been appointed as chair of the working party, which includes various stakeholder groups that have a direct interest in the welfare of canines in the state. They have already met and are already forming the consultation paper, which I will seek to release as soon as is practicable and as soon as it is ready to be released. We want to release that document so that the community at large can make comment on it. It needs to be recognised that our commitment seeks to do a number of things. To stop puppy farming, it includes the introduction of mandatory sterilisation, the introduction of a breeder registration system, and transitioning pet shops to adoption centres. This is a very important aspect. We want to make sure that it is verified that puppies that are sold in pet shops across the state have been bred appropriately, safely and, indeed, humanely and are not from puppy farms. I commend the work of the member for Maylands. I assure the house that we are working very closely with the stakeholders to deliver on our election commitment to stop puppy farming in Western Australia.

MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — PERSONAL EXPLANATION

780. Mr J.E. McGRATH to the Premier:

Was the Premier, his office or the Labor Party aware of the member for Darling Range's personal statement prior to it being read in this morning; and, if so, when and what was the involvement?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I am a bit surprised that the member for South Perth would involve himself in this. It seems to me to be a little bit out of character for the member for South Perth. I thought he would leave the tawdry aspects of the opposition's attack to those more tawdry members.

The member for Darling Range prepared his statement and the member for Darling Range delivered it. I had no involvement in the preparation of the member for Darling Range's statement. If there is some grand conspiracy about the member for Darling Range's statement, why is it that within half an hour of him delivering it, I stood up and moved to refer him to the Procedure and Privileges Committee?

Dr M.D. Nahan: Because that was the plan.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Where was the Leader of the Opposition in November 1963? It is pretty clear he was in Dallas.

MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — PERSONAL EXPLANATION

781. Mr J.E. McGRATH to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Is the Premier aware —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Start again.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Is the Premier aware of any —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Is the Premier aware of any discussions or plans for the member for Darling Range to resign at any stage; and, if so, can he outline the exact nature of his understanding of those discussions or plans?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I think it is potentially against the law to try to make a member of Parliament resign from this place. If members research the Criminal Code, they will find that trying to do that to a member of Parliament is potentially a criminal offence. We saw the Leader of the Opposition trying to do it last week to the member for Cottesloe. It is actually

a serious matter. Members elected to this place are subject to regulation, if you like, by the Procedure and Privileges Committee and then they are subject to their electorates. The member for South Perth has come in here and again—it is out of character for him; I assume it is last-day-of-Parliament madness, on his behalf, to be doing this —

Mr W.R. Marmion: Come on!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Come on? You say, “Come on.” Here we have a government that is sorting out problems that the previous government created. We saw the Minister for Health yesterday sorting out a problem that was created —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you are on three. I will be Father Christmas and give you a half, but next time you are on your way.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yesterday, the Minister for Health was sorting out an issue that you had been involved in and you have been up to your necks in working with John Holland against the state government interest. We actually saw —

Dr M.D. Nahan: That is a lie!

Withdrawal of Remark

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Leader of the Opposition shouted out, “That is a lie.”

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, did you say it was a lie?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Thank you.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr M. McGOWAN: The Minister for Health is resolving issues that the former government could not resolve, and then I see the Leader of the Opposition in the paper this morning still claiming, despite all the scientific evidence, that it is this mythical dead leg. There he is on the side of John Holland again. I know what his colleagues would like to do; they would like to give him a dead leg some time! But here we have a government that is out there resolving major issues across Western Australia and an opposition trying to force two members of Parliament out of this place. It is trying to force the member for Cottesloe out of this house. Sometimes I wonder; I saw the member for Cottesloe standing there this morning attacking us when his worst enemies are sitting around him.

PAYROLL TAX TRAINING EXEMPTION

782. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Treasurer:

I refer to the concerns raised in September that companies were avoiding paying their fair share of payroll tax by misusing the payroll tax training exemption.

- (1) What action is this government taking to close any loopholes in this scheme?
- (2) What is the McGowan Labor government doing to support traineeships?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Bunbury for his very good question. Members will recall the media reporting on the clear and definite misuse—whilst not illegal—of the payroll tax exemption that we, as the government, and taxpayers of Western Australia provide to employers to encourage training. This currently applies to all employees on the premises. What has happened over the years—it happened under the watch of the former government as well, although it did try to limit this in 2014—is there has been clear exploitation of this particular very generous exemption provided by Western Australians. Although I cannot identify specific taxpayers, I will give a couple of examples. An employer advised the Office of State Revenue that it was only putting through employees on traineeships to reduce its taxable wages to less than the payroll tax threshold of \$850 000. We have 120 taxpayers claiming an exemption of more than 30 per cent of their total wages, and we have a range of employers that have been cancelling and re-entering training arrangements on a year-to-year basis.

Mr D.J. Kelly: It is a disgrace.

Mr B.S. WYATT: It is a disgrace, Minister for Water, and it is not what this exemption was designed to do. As a result, Western Australia—because it is employer driven, not government driven—is by far the most generous provider of support. In 2016–17 the value of that support was \$80 million, representing 2.4 per cent of the payroll tax take. The next nearest state was New South Wales, at one per cent. I was listening to the Minister for Transport

speak on the taxi sector earlier. Reform is hard. It is hard work, but we have made a decision to reform this sector. Effective of midnight tonight, stage 1 of this reform means that we will apply the exemption only to new employees. After midnight tonight it will no longer be available for existing employees. A transition period will be provided to allow for those who have already entered into those arrangements with existing employees. That is stage 1. It will also cap wages at \$100 000, because ultimately there were a range of chief executive officers also applying and getting a payroll tax exemption for their own training. I do not think that is the intent of it. That will save around \$100 million across the forward estimates. But we are getting \$100 million and putting that into the training sector, because since the expiry of our national partnership on skills reform the federal government has not come to the party. We need to make decisions around ensuring that we maintain our training levels that will ensure about 9 500 training positions for 2018, and over 43 000 training positions across the forward estimates.

Stage 2 of the reform, which I hope will be implemented in July 2019, involves potentially, because I want to hear from the sector, moving to a grant scheme, like other states do. The value of a grant scheme for training means it will open up the opportunity for state government support for those businesses whose payroll is smaller than \$850 000, because at the moment they do not get support because they do not pay payroll tax. It will open up to a vast number of extra employers support from the government to encourage training for new trainees, and of course leave apprentice support untouched. This is a good, necessary reform and although the activity of those employers I referred to earlier is not illegal, I think all members in this place will understand and accept, I hope, that that sort of behaviour is not on, and we need to make some fundamental changes—they are fundamental changes—to the exemption that we provide from payroll tax for those people who undertake legitimate training for new employers, and support those people taking on apprentices. I look forward to the support of all members in this place as we introduce those into Parliament.

PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE — MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — REFERRAL

783. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to the decision of the Legislative Assembly to refer the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Water, I call you to order for the second time. Start the question again, member.

Ms L. METTAM: I refer to the decision of the Legislative Assembly to refer the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee. Will the Premier front up to the Procedure and Privileges Committee and make available all information in the possession of his office relating to the member for Darling Range about his claims of entitlement to medals, his service, employment history and his educational qualifications, and all details of the investigations and inquiries undertaken by his office since he was made aware of concerns about the veracity of claims made by the member for Darling Range on 8 November this year?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

The opposition is now rolling out the members for South Perth and Vasse to do its dirty work. I mean honestly; I thought that the member for Vasse was better than that. I thought that the member for South Perth was better than that. I would not be surprised by any of the second-raters, as the member for Cottesloe says, sitting in the front row asking these questions, but, again, I thought the member for Vasse was a little bit better than that.

In relation to the question she asked, the Procedure and Privileges Committee runs its own affairs. Under the chairmanship of the Speaker, with, I think, the member for Geraldton and the member for Roe, on the committee, they will seek whatever information they seek. We have engaged in proper process here by moving that the committee examine the matters in question. I think that rather than trying to subvert that process, the opposition should let the committee do its work.

PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE — MEMBER FOR DARLING RANGE — REFERRAL

784. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Is the Premier confirming that if the committee seeks that information from his office, he will gladly make it available, and himself available as well?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

We will comply with the rules of the Parliament.

The SPEAKER: That is the end of question time.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE — MEMBER FOR DAWESVILLE*Answer Advice*

MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [2.50 pm]: I rise under standing order 80(2) and give notice to the house that the following questions to the member for Cannington in his various ministerial responsibilities are outstanding.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I will slow down. There are a lot of them, though!

Dr A.D. Buti: Chook raffle.

The SPEAKER: You just won the raffle! I call you to order, member for Armadale.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The questions on notice are 2309; 2292; 2275; 2258; 2241; 2213; 2067, due 54 days ago; 2048, due 54 days ago; 2031; 2010; 1986; 1955, due 74 days ago; 1938, due 74 days ago; 1921; 1904; 1887; 1870; 1853; 1835; 1834; 1833; 1832; 1831; 1816; 1811; 1798; 1781 —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! The Clerks are trying to write these numbers down.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: — 1641, due 124 days ago; 1640, due 124 days ago; 1639; 1630; 1604; 1533, due 125 days ago.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: The other questions on notice are 1548, due 125 days ago; 1504; 1487; 1470; 1276; 1259; 1439; 1421; 1404; 1387; 1370; 1213; 1230; 1188, due 131 days ago; 1171, due 131 days ago; and 1153, due 131 days ago. They are all questions that the member's other ministerial colleagues have had the ability to respond to.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington — Minister for Mines and Petroleum) [2.53 pm]: Question on notice 1548 is not mine.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: It is on the overdue list for you, mate.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: Question on notice 1548 is not mine.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: I refer the member to the standing orders and particularly to the footnote regarding questions on notice.

PAPERS TABLED

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

ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE*Second Report — “Perceptions and Realities of Regional Airfare Prices in Western Australia” — Tabling*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [2.55 pm]: As I was saying before 90-second statements, I was commending the government on doing this inquiry into something that is vital to regional Western Australia. Putting a submission in on behalf of my electorate North West Central and the National Party, and fronting the committee at a public hearing gave us the opportunity to have our say and get on record where we think the issues lie and why we have such high airfares right across regional Western Australia.

This report contains a lot of information; it really does. The inquiry, with people putting in submissions and the hearings, has really aired the dirty laundry of aviation in regional Western Australia. It definitely highlights where there are problems with the way the government goes out to tender, and some of those recommendations looking at the State Aviation Strategy are critical going forward. The committee set out with a lot of high expectations. The member for Swan Hills has done a fantastic job as chair of the committee. I know that when we fronted, on behalf the National Party, the committee's public hearing, we were asked a lot of questions that were pertinent to trying to drill down and get the information needed to establish this report. In the context, I think it is a decent report, and over time we will go through it. I think the recommendations could have been a bit stronger to help ensure that we can get some change.

One of the good things that has come out of this report, and the member for Swan Hills said it at the outset—it is great to see that the committee has taken on some of what we presented to the committee—is that we need to see aviation as more than just going from A to B, with the perception that we are lucky to have a flight going to each regional town. The report claims that aviation in regional WA is an essential service. I think that is a huge step forward. If we can get the Department of Transport to recognise that aviation in Western Australia is an essential service, given the distances we have to fly to get from one town to the next, it is a huge step forward.

I will not take up too much of Parliament's time, but it is disappointing that the Department of Transport went out to tender on a couple of regular routes when the inquiry was first announced, one being Carnarvon–Monkey Mia and the other is eastern goldfields–northern goldfields. It was disappointing that the government would go out to tender while we were doing the review and before this report could be handed down so some of those changes recommended could be reflected in the tender process. It is disappointing that we will not get real change in some areas that have return airfares of \$1 000. That is the problem—the cost of airfares.

In the evidence that the National Party gave to the inquiry, we basically said that a monopoly exists in Western Australia, with two major players dominating the airline system.

A government member interjected.

Mr V.A. CATANIA: It is a duopoly, but I say it is a monopoly that exists with Qantas and Virgin, just like with Coles and Woolworths in the retail market. One of the interesting points that we made was that when government goes out to tender for a train or bus service, the government will ask the companies to show it their books and their profit margin and it will negotiate on that profit margin. Because the government is offering a company a licence to operate, it can look at its cost structures. The same applies to a mining company when it goes out to tender for an airline company to service its mine site. It can ask the airline company to show it its books and its profit margin and it will negotiate on that profit margin to make sure that it can keep the airfare as low as possible or at cost. Our argument is that it is no different with aviation companies that fly to towns such as Carnarvon, Monkey Mia, Kalgoorlie, Broome, Karratha, Port Hedland, Paraburdoo and so forth. The government issues a licence for those companies to fly to those towns. The report states —

In the absence of clear information regarding costs and fare construction, it is difficult for the Committee to conclude that airlines are genuinely setting fair prices.

That is the problem. This committee could not get information on the fare structure of airlines. The National Party's argument is that because the government allows companies to have a licence to fly to those towns, they should open up their books so that the government can see how they construct their prices. During the committee hearings, it was interesting to hear aviation companies say that it is due to the cost structure of airports and local governments, but their cost structures are open and accountable and so we could see what they charge and why they charge it, which I think is fair and reasonable. One of the inhibitors for the committee was that airline companies were reluctant to open up their books to show how they determine their fares. One of the fundamental problems is the lack of openness and transparency in how these companies operate. I know that the committee tried to drill down and get that information. I would like to go through this report in detail because I think it highlights all the issues that exist.

One of the other issues highlighted in this report, but perhaps not to the point that I will go to today, is that the Department of Transport does not have any aviation expertise. Without expertise in and knowledge of the aviation industry, it is not able to ask the right questions when it constructs a tender process and discusses it with the companies and the communities. That is the fundamental flaw with the Department of Transport. That is why when the Department of Transport asks the airline companies what their lowest fare is, they will say that it is \$99, but it may be for only one seat. There is a flaw because the tender process does not ensure that the aviation companies indicate how many seats are available and at what price; rather, they can just give the best fare that they can offer, even though it may be for only one seat on a plane for the whole year. There need to be some changes. The Department of Transport needs some aviation expertise to ensure that aviation companies are open and transparent, because government issues the licences. They are beholden to the government to give them a licence. We need to see how they determine their fares to make sure that the people of regional Western Australia are not ripped off, because they are being ripped off at the moment.

I congratulate the committee. I hope the government takes on board some of these recommendations, but more needs to be done.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Sixth Report — “Town of East Fremantle Plastic Bag Reduction Local Law 2017” — Tabling

MS E. HAMILTON (Joondalup) [3.05 pm]: I present for tabling the sixth report of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation titled “Town of East Fremantle Plastic Bag Reduction Local Law 2017”.

[See paper 1021.]

Ms E. HAMILTON: The report that I have just tabled advises the house of the committee's view that the Town of East Fremantle did not follow the mandatory procedures prescribed in sections 3.12 and 3.13 of the Local Government Act 1995 when it made the Town of East Fremantle Plastic Bag Reduction Local Law 2017. In making the local law, the town breached section 3.12(4) by adopting a law that was significantly different from that which was proposed. Further, in that scenario, section 3.13 of the Local Government Act 1995 required the town to recommence the local law-making procedure prescribed in section 3.12. However, the town failed to do so. In the committee's view, the local law was made invalidly and, consequently, is not within the power granted by the empowering act. The committee recommends that the local law be disallowed.

Strictly speaking, an instrument that is made invalidly is void and of no effect and cannot be disallowed. With this in mind, the disallowance that is recommended by the committee may be viewed as unnecessary. However, there are a number of benefits in recommending the disallowance of invalid local laws, including ensuring that they are quickly removed from the public record, thereby reducing the risk of public misinformation.

I commend the report to the house.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

Third Report — "Putting VET to the test: An assessment of the delivery of Vocational Education and Training in Schools" — Tabling

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [3.07 pm]: I present for tabling the third report of the Education and Health Standing Committee titled "Putting VET to the test: An assessment of the delivery of Vocational Education and Training in Schools". I also table the submissions in relation to the report.

[See papers 1022 and 1023.]

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: I will spend a bit of time going through this report because I think it is quite important that we spend some time putting on the record the issues raised in the report. Before I start, I thank our committee staff: the principal research officer, Dr Sarah Palmer, and the research officer, Ms Jovita Hogan. I also thank the other members: the member for Nedlands, Bill Marmion; the member for Kimberley, Josie Farrer; the member for Moore, Shane Love; and the member for Wanneroo, Sabine Winton.

I will go through the foreword in detail and point members towards different sections of the report that will be of interest. I also thank the people who gave evidence. Their passion and commitment to students is valued by our Parliament and our community. The report was always very much about the outcomes for students.

As an aside, I take this opportunity to congratulate Dr Tracy Westerman, who was given the honour of Western Australian Australian of the Year. The reason I do that is that she gave evidence to the Education and Health Standing Committee on its inquiry into the mental wellbeing of fly in, fly out workers. This seems a good time to record my thanks to her for the evidence she gave to the Education and Health Standing Committee for our FIFO report. Her evidence was extraordinarily valuable and showed a high calibre of knowledge in this area.

Vocational education and training courses are nationally recognised qualifications, ranging from a certificate I to a graduate diploma. Usually, only a certificate I, II or III is completed at school. For a WA Certificate of Education, which a student is required to achieve in order to graduate, a student needs to achieve either four ATAR subjects or a certificate II in vocational education and training. This requirement was introduced in 2016. The requirement to gain a certificate II is a contentious aspect of vocational education and training in schools. The requirement to achieve a certificate II has increased the demand for vocational education and training. Appendix seven of the committee report provides a summary of WACE achievement requirements and gives examples of course options for students in years 11 and 12. Those examples were provided by the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. The examples range from student A to student I and show the different course combinations and computations required to achieve a WA Certificate of Education. Figure 1.3 at page 6 of the report shows the proportion of year 12 students enrolled in each pathway in 2017. It shows that 56 per cent of students were enrolled in vocational education and training as either non-Australian tertiary admission rank plus VET, or as Australian tertiary admission rank plus VET. Those figures are from the broader community, so it includes both private and public schools.

Evidence given to the committee from officers of the Department of Education quoted the number of students undertaking vocational education and training in schools at 80 per cent, but it is actually more around 75 per cent. A large percentage of students are enrolled in vocational education and training. The report of the committee illustrates the impact—as identified by the Auditor General in a 2016 report—of the increase in the number of students undertaking vocational education and training courses in schools. Vocational education and training in schools was introduced in Western Australia in 1997. In 2000, about 7 000 year 11 and 12 students were studying units in vocational education and training. By 2016, that number had increased to over 30 000 students; that is, 74 per cent of senior and secondary students were undertaking a vocational education and training unit, as I have said.

With the growing focus in the education sector on student-centred outcomes, it is important to assess whether combining the education and training sectors in secondary schools adequately meets the needs of students. The reason

this is important is that they are very different ways of delivering education in our schools. In particular, it is important to understand whether vocational education and training is being used simply as a source of non-ATAR curriculum, or as a less challenging option, or as a pathway to increased opportunities for employment—or all three of those options.

The Productivity Commission's report into Australia's future, *Shifting the Dial*, which was released on 24 October 2017, outlined the need for schooling to provide a strong basis for education and training throughout a person's life. Noting that the transitional economy will depend on high skills capacity, the Productivity Commission's key premise for educational focus was to ensure a school system that delivered key foundational skills and a capacity to acquire knowledge throughout the expected changing nature of careers. There is a lot of information and a lot of youth futures-type reports about the changing nature of careers. The report from the Productivity Commission points out that young people who are now entering the workforce will have several different career paths and career changes throughout their lifetime. It is, therefore, important that education is focused on providing students with the capacity to transition to different skills and to build a foundation of problem solving and the ability to gather and process information to meet the demands of future career options. That is particularly important given the rapid pace of technology and the changing nature of employment.

The vocational education and training system in schools is very much competency based. It is a pared-down, skills-based, screw-in type of training. It asks a student to show that they know that a Phillips head screw fits a Phillips head screwdriver—tick. It is pared down, as I have said, instead of being based on problem solving, so that if you have got a screw loose, you know what sort of instrument will fix it.

Several members interjected.

Ms J.M. FREEMAN: Sorry! That is probably not the best analogy, given that we are in Parliament, but members will understand what I am saying.

It is interesting that the Productivity Commission talked about the broad knowledge agenda, yet it also critiqued vocational education and training as “struggling to deliver relevant competency-based qualifications sought by industry”. It is fascinating that we have these two different educational frameworks, yet the Productivity Commission has said that vocational education and training is failing to meet the competency-based qualifications sought by industry. There needs to be a debate about competency-based training in vocational education and training. Competency-based training in vocational education and training was introduced in the 1980s. We have been using that system for the last 40 years, and there are criticisms of that system. That is not outlined fully in this report, but it does point to the complexities of that system.

The view put by the Productivity Commission underscores the complexity of delivering vocational education and training in secondary schools, in which there is a merging of education and training perspectives on delivery, content, curriculum and assessment. Although education is founded in developing aptitude and understanding, vocational education and training is applied work-focused learning based on training packages that concentrate student learning to tasks. This may undermine the broad range of educational outcomes called for to manage the diverse career pathways outlined by the Productivity Commission.

These different modes of education philosophies were clear from the evidence that was given to the committee by the Department of Education and the Department of Training and Workforce Development, with one emphasising teaching, which delivers knowledge and skills, and the other emphasising training, based on units with assessable tasks. I refer to page 11 of the report and the following quote from the submission from the Department of Education —

... for the majority of senior secondary students in public schools, the power of VET lies in the way it prepares them for a range of post-school options or pathways. For these students, what matters most are the generic skills and competencies they develop by participating in VET, more so than the specific industry area knowledge they gain by completing their qualification.

That can be compared with the Department of Training and Workforce Development's submission on page 12, which articulates a view of industry thus —

They have a very specific view that VET in schools is there as a pathway into employment, and to their sectors by and large, so they are very focused on that...

I will quote the submission from one VET trainer and assessor on page 13 of the report —

Industry expectation means industry believes that a VET qualification has given the student a good understanding and has developed the student's skills and knowledge which will allow them to fit in to industry with little or no training ...

I find this really interesting because many years ago, the higher education system was transformed from this binary system in which the traditional universities focused on academic research and institutes of technology—at that stage, the Western Australian Institute of Technology and the teachers' college—taught vocationally oriented

courses. The debate that ensued was about student outcomes and how they can be delivered. Those two systems were brought together. Student outcomes were the driver for the university sector's structure that we currently have. The debate that ensued around student outcomes as the driver for the university sector structure is surely one that needs to be applied to this growing sector of our secondary education delivery. Figure 1.4 on page 10 of the report shows the complexities that exist in funding from the Department of Education, the Department of Training and Workforce Development, and different funding from the Department of Training and Workforce Development. Perhaps more than anything, this inquiry has emphasised the vastness of the vocational education and training sector and the multitude of different entities that must work together to ensure it meets all the required standards as well as the needs of students and industry.

While we are talking about the needs of students, this inquiry did ask students, which is not an easy thing to do. We did it via an online survey and we had 53 student respondents and 20 parent respondents. That is outlined on page 66 of the report. I quote —

Quite a few students and parents indicated they would like to see a broader range of courses. Many chose the course they were currently enrolled in because it was the only option or the best option, and not necessarily because it was something they particularly wanted to pursue.

It goes on —

Students were generally happy with their VET teachers, and had had very positive experiences with work placements, even though this could be difficult to organise and to get to ...

Two quotes then outline the importance of work placements and also sometimes the difficulties with work placements.

More than half of Western Australia's senior secondary students enrolled in at least 230 nationally approved qualifications last year. This increase in demand for vocational education and training was driven by the higher school leaving age and the new qualifying requirement for a certificate II to gain the Western Australian Certificate of Education for non-ATAR students, which I have already talked about. That has come with an expansion in the range of courses. This results in staffing challenges, as teachers in secondary schools are not accredited to deliver vocational education and training courses without a certificate IV in training and assessment. With around 60 per cent of students in year 11 and 12 now undertaking VET courses, it would seem appropriate that graduate teachers have the capacity to meet the accreditation requirements included in their undergraduate programs. Page 43 of the report outlines a very strong argument around that. We asked the universities. Curtin University collaborated on a trial that offered certificate IV at the completion of teaching degree studies, but it was not successful. It continues to monitor the possibility of offering the program some other way within its School of Education. Curtin University was the most responsive to this because although Edith Cowan University and Murdoch University acknowledged the growing need and had investigated it, they did not deliver. The University of Western Australia pretty much dismissed it because it offers postgraduate programs. The recommendation we have made is that the minister considers that we ensure training for vocational education and training studies is in the curriculum of teachers, because we believe that is very necessary.

Vocational education and training qualifications are provided in a range of ways, which I have already outlined, but one of the biggest difficulties is that they are provided mostly by registered training organisations. Since most schools are not RTOs, they enter into auspicing relationships with private providers. The state training providers—TAFE colleges—have found it increasingly difficult to compete with private organisations and now provide only a small proportion of the training. The committee noted the demonstrated risk associated with private RTOs, given that a number of RTOs have failed, coupled with a renewed commitment by government to TAFE and recommends that TAFE play a greater role in VET in schools. Figure 2.1 on page 18 and page 20 outline that 70 per cent use private registered training organisations. It is very important that we know there is a risk and that this house notes that.

The committee was particularly concerned about the constraints on vocational education and training students in regional areas due to the smaller number of RTOs, workplace learning opportunities, transient students and the difficulty in attracting and retaining suitably qualified teachers. Figure 3.1 on page 51 outlines that the great percentage of students undertaking vocational education and training are in regional schools, as well as pages 50, 52 and 55. The recommendations need to be considered.

Having identified many challenges and tensions in delivering the vocational education and training program, the committee sought to offer constructive suggestions to place the student at the centre of delivery of vocational education and training in schools. We did suggest, in the recommendations and on page 14, that it is not considered to be VETiS, but that it is considered to be vocational education and training—not to separate those two because of the confusion. We can look at the federal government's framework that underpins the policy "Preparing Secretary Students for Work", which also makes this suggestion. The committee's report is quite considerable. We did it in five months. The recommendations are here.

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands) [3.27 pm]: I will begin by thanking the chair, the member for Mirrabooka. In fact, her comprehensive coverage of the report means that many people will just have to read *Hansard* and not read the report! Well done, chair. Can I also thank the other members: the member for Kimberley, member for Moore and the member for Wanneroo, for their contributions and, of course, the committee staff: Dr Sarah Palmer and research officer Jovita Hogan. I will not be very long but I want to emphasise that this is a very important report. It had fairly challenging terms of reference, which were to consider regarding the VET program —

- How well the program is meeting the needs of schools, students and industry
- Challenges for regional and remote areas
- Registration and ongoing monitoring of training organisations
- Resourcing of the program

They were fairly challenging areas. It is a very important area because the future of Western Australia relies on the education system we have in train. When I went through school way back in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the system was a lot different. Not everyone—in fact, probably only about 20 per cent of students—went on to 4th and 5th year in our day; I have to keep doing a mental calculation to say years 11 and 12. At the school I was at in years 8, 9 and 10 in Bunbury, people who left school after year 10 already did vocational training. The system now means that years 11 and 12 are still at school, hence the importance of vocational education and training. It is a lot harder now. It is quite interesting that we have gone from a situation in which everyone was doing ATAR, to a high percentage of students now doing the VET program.

I have five children, two of whom are still at school. In my experience it is more difficult for children not in the Australian tertiary admission rank system than it is for my children who are academic and doing ATAR. For someone doing the vocational education and training program it is very hard to know what to do and what is available, and it is quite complex. I say that as a parent.

The report is very nicely summed up on page 68 under the heading “Student needs must be at the centre”. If the VET system is to improve, it is essential that students are at the centre. I highlight page 68 of the report and the committee’s recommendations. Page 68 of the report states —

This inquiry has highlighted the complex nature of providing vocational education and training to school students. VET in Schools is a program of many moving parts, involving the public school sector, the independent and Catholic school sectors, two government departments, private state training providers (TAFE), private registered training organisations, industry training councils, employers, two regulatory bodies (TAC and ASQA), the SCSA, and of course teachers and their registration body. Having grown rapidly in a short period, it has not been surprising to find that managing this vast and diverse program has been a challenge.

Although employers could be considered the ultimate end users of VET in Schools (and industry groups certainly see their interests as central to the delivery of VET), the program is intended to serve the needs of school students. As such, the Department of Education needs to monitor effectively all aspects of the program to ensure it is meeting student needs. Some students, unsure about what kind of job they want to pursue, will be content to undertake generic courses that will be useful regardless of their future pathway. Others may have a specific industry or further qualification in mind, and ideally, they would be given the opportunity to undertake courses that will lead them there.

The Committee has heard that for a variety of reasons not all students are able to pursue the courses they would like, or that meet their requirements. If first choices are not available, schools must still do their best to educate students and to keep them engaged. The Department of Education can further support schools to assist them in navigating their way through the VET system, so that they can feel assured they are providing the best possible opportunity for students to achieve a valuable outcome.

Recommendation 12 of the report reads —

Consideration should be given to greater integration of the Department of Education and the Department of Training and Workforce Development to:

- a) Ensure philosophies on the education of secondary school students are aligned
- b) Focus resources on providing a range of course and workplace opportunities that will cater to the educational and training needs of secondary school students.

I see that as the challenge; it is not an easy thing to do. Basically, we have two silos. Members who have worked in the education system may want to speak on this because they know better than me, but as a parent I think there is a disconnect. I do not know how they can be brought together, but this report goes some way to putting all the issues on the table. I hope it is used as a resource document by anyone involved in the system in the policy area to see whether we can improve the current system moving forward. I congratulate everyone involved in this report, and I look forward to some change over time in the way we deliver education in Western Australia.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore) [3.33 pm]: I would also like to talk about “Putting VET to the test: An assessment of the delivery of Vocational Education and Training in Schools”. I start by acknowledging the work of the Chair of the committee, the member for Mirrabooka. I was on a former Economics and Industry Standing Committee when the Deputy Chair of the Education and Health Standing Committee was Chair; this committee had quite a different dynamic with the member for Mirrabooka as Chair. She is very, very much committed to the cause of furthering the education and health outcomes of the community. I would also like to thank the other committee members: the members for Nedlands, Kimberley and Wanneroo. I also thank Dr Sarah Palmer, principal research officer, and Ms Jovita Hogan, research officer, who put together the report. We come together with some ideas and they make it all work. Well done to them.

This report is very important. Other members have talked about the change in the school-leaving age and requirements, and VET now plays a very big part in the education of many children. It seems that the provision of VET in the education system, as the member for Nedlands finished off talking about, is still something of a work in progress in trying to make the aims of a training program fit into the educational program. It is not without its challenges. They are extensively dealt with in the report. I will not go into that too much, other than to support the view that recommendation 12 is very important; we need to try to get those two systems to work together.

As a regional member I was very keen to see that the particular needs of regional students were examined by the committee. I am very pleased that a report of four chapters has one—chapter 3—devoted almost entirely to the particular challenges, if you like, of delivering a VET program in regional high schools. Those schools, of course, come in various sizes and capacities, and are very diverse in their settings and the employment and industries that might also lie around those schools and in the resources available to them. There is also the major split between senior high schools and the old district high schools, which I think are relatively poorly resourced.

In chapter 3 the committee went through a number of the particular issues that regional students face and it learnt that there is a whole range of different reasons for it being a particular challenge. The overarching problems of trying to marry two types of service delivery exist in regional areas as much as they do elsewhere. The other fact that is quite interesting is there seems to be a higher percentage of students actually doing VET in regional areas. That depends on the region. Of course, a very high number of Aboriginal students participate in the VET program. In 2016, according to the report, 91 per cent of year 12 Aboriginal students completed a VET qualification, compared with about 60 per cent throughout the whole year 12 population. There is a marked difference between the non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal community in that respect. If we look at the areas with a higher level of Aboriginality, that seems to flow through into the participation in the program by region. The highest participation rates are in the Kimberley, midwest and wheatbelt. There are some differences between regions, and the size and industries available in the community affect the businesses that might be able to explore opportunities with those young people. VET seems to work better when there is a vibrancy and a sort of a relationship between the world outside of school and the school, and if there is a correlation between the demand for workers in a particular industry and an alignment of that with the courses on offer.

But of course then we come to that other fundamental difference between education and training: is the aim of the VET program simply to provide local workers for a local industry, or is it to help to educate those students and children to seek something a little wider than what is available just in the local area? There is a danger in looking at just what is easier for the school to provide rather than what is better for the well-rounded education of students. Unfortunately, when there are very thin markets and there is difficulty in sourcing staff and getting together the numbers to run programs, sometimes it does come down to what can be run rather than what will be best for the students in the area. We looked at some different models around the area. There is a quite unique circumstance in my electorate in the Morawa area, in what is known as the north midlands, in that we have an agricultural college with extensive VET facilities, which have been funded to provide for the needs of students who are looking to go into agriculture. That college has magnificent facilities. There is a great opportunity for some local students who are not going to that school to participate in and use those facilities and to gain some advantage from the synergy between the high schools in that area. The trick is in what that college can do for the rest of the region. Some of the other district high schools in the area, for instance Carnamah, find it very hard to run a VET program. If the schools were able to work in with one another and use some of the advantages that the other locations provide, it would be great for students. At the end of the day, this is all about what is best for the young people involved.

Overall, it was a very good exercise to look at some of these matters. Again, I reiterate my thanks to the committee for devoting basically a quarter of the report to the needs of regional students, for taking that issue somewhat to heart and for making some recommendations that will go some way towards improving outcomes for students in those programs. I commend the report to the house.

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo) [3.41 pm]: I, too, would like to make a short contribution to the report tabled today by the Education and Health Standing Committee titled “Putting VET to the test: An assessment of the delivery of Vocational Education and Training in Schools”. It is my first report as a member of Parliament. I would first like to thank the chair of the committee, the member for Mirrabooka, and all my colleagues—the member for

Kimberley, the member for Moore and the member for Nedlands—for the work we have done. We took a really collegiate and collaborative approach to this inquiry and it has been refreshing to do this work together. It is sad that the public do not see the good work that parliamentarians can actually do together. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the staff—principal research officer Dr Sarah Palmer and research officer Ms Jovita Hogan. It is a pleasure to work with such professional people who really support us well in our endeavours.

As a teacher, I am really delighted that this is the first report of the committee. I have to say that as a primary school teacher, it has been extremely enlightening but challenging to inquire into this complex and very unfamiliar sector, but it is a very important sector indeed. As members may know, there have been massive changes in the sector in the last few years. More than 60 per cent of year 11 and 12 students now participate in vocational education and training studies. The change to the school leaving age has increased pressure on this sector, and there have also been changes to the eligibility criteria for the Western Australian Certificate of Education, which has meant that students must now gain a certificate II qualification if they are not undertaking studies for an Australian tertiary admission rank. There is massive pressure on schools at a time of budgetary cuts. The Department of Education allocates about \$20 million to schools specifically for VET, but as the report clearly highlights, the true cost of delivering VET in schools is not known. This is a real concern. It is an area on which further work needs to be done, because unless we know how much money is being spent on VET in schools, we cannot really evaluate it properly or seek to support it further.

The other key thing that came out of the inquiry was, for me, the question of purpose. One of the main challenges highlighted again and again through submissions was that there is a division in the purpose of VET in schools. The Department of Education sees VET as preparing students for the future by developing a generalist education in career development skills, whereas the Department of Training and Workforce Development sees it as an introduction to employment-specific skills training for industry and trade. There is a clear mismatch there, and it is really important that we try to address that.

Teachers are the most important aspect of this. This sector faces some key problems with teachers being able to deliver VET in schools, which the report addresses. Teachers who undertake to deliver a VET certificate course are bound by the Standards for Registered Training Organisations to seek additional qualifications. Basically, that means that teachers can have a degree in teaching but may not be able to teach some of these courses. The impost on teachers and schools in trying to train teachers to deliver VET in schools is very limiting on the ability of many schools to run good VET programs. It is resource intensive for schools and requires teachers to not only get the qualifications but also continually maintain them. I want to highlight an example brought to us in a submission, which stated —

For example, a teacher who held Masters degrees in Agricultural Science and Education was requested by the RTO (in this case a private provider) to complete a Certificate II in Agriculture.

Can members imagine someone who has a master's degree having to do a cert II before they can teach secondary students? That is how bizarre the system has become. It is not working. Also, once that teacher with the master's degree has obtained a cert II, they have to maintain currency of that qualification. It is a huge impost on our schools and teachers, and is just a waste of money. I particularly support recommendations 6 and 7, which try to address some of those things. Recommendation 6 suggests that the Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia could make some changes to allow a bit more flexibility and commonsense in the ability of teachers to deliver courses in schools, and recommendation 7 suggests that the Training Accreditation Council amend its user guide so that registered training organisations take into account the skill set, experiences and expertise that teachers bring to the task.

I will not keep members much longer, but I will say a couple of things to finish. The Department of Education's performance indicators, which judge the performance in years 11 and 12 as well, refer to the rate of participation, retention, secondary graduation rate and student achievement levels in numeracy and literacy. The Department of Education does not actually measure VET and whether it is successful. Yes, more than 60 per cent of students are participating in VET, but we do not know if they are being successful. Success does not just mean getting a cert II, but also using that cert II post-school. We really need to encourage the department to track students who get these cert IIs so that we know that we are spending all this money on and putting all this energy into programs in schools that make a real difference for kids who leave with a cert II.

Finally, at the heart of some of the problems is the mismatch of philosophies between high schools and secondary schools that teach holistically and are interested in the students, and industry and vocational education, which is about preparing students for the workforce, which is quite different. Students are at the centre of what schools do. We need to make sure that students are at the centre of what VET courses do as well. Recommendation 12 states that we need to ensure that the philosophies on the education of secondary school students are aligned. That is a nice motherhood statement, but it will require a long and concerted effort by this government to make sure that we get a philosophy that is better connected between the two sectors.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION*Sixth Report — “Parliamentary Inspector’s report on the issuing of notices by the Corruption and Crime Commission under s 42 of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act” — Tabling*

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [3.49 pm]: I present for tabling the sixth report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission entitled “Parliamentary Inspector’s report on the issuing of notices by the Corruption and Crime Commission under s 42 of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act”.

[See paper 1024.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I will not speak at length about this report. It is self-explanatory. It deals with the power of the Corruption and Crime Commission under section 42 of the Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act to issue a notice to other agencies to ensure that concurrent investigations do not go on. The Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission outlines an issue that occurred on one occasion. I am pleased to say that with communication and a better understanding of the import of that section, there probably does not need to be any immediate change to that section of the act. The reports of the committee were tabled earlier in the upper house. The deputy chair, Hon Jim Chown, has had the opportunity to speak at length about them. With the indulgence of the chamber, I mention that a report of the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission about misconduct and unauthorised disclosure of confidential information was also tabled today. I give the opposition notice that its members can pick up a copy of that report, which has been tabled. When the committee finally considers the matter in the new year, they will be full bottle on the matter and will not need to seek an adjournment or some notice that we will hand down that report. I commend the report of the parliamentary inspector on the unauthorised disclosure of confidential information.

Seventh Report — “Unfinished business: The Corruption and Crime Commission’s response to the Committee’s report on Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms” — Tabling

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [3.51 pm]: I also present for tabling the seventh report of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission entitled “Unfinished business: The Corruption and Crime Commission’s response to the Committee’s report on Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms”.

[See paper 1025.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: At the outset I want to thank committee research staff, principal research officer Alison Sharpe and research officer Vanessa Beckingham, for their diligent and conscientious efforts, not only on this matter, but also for their work throughout the year. The output of the committee is considerable and the issues confronting us are wide and varied, and I thank them for climbing the steep learning curve so magnificently. I could equally make the same comments about the members of the committee: deputy chair, Hon Jim Chown, MLC; the member for Kalamunda, Matthew Hughes; and Hon Alison Xamon, MLC. All members are extremely actively engaged in our deliberations and, unlike some other committees I have served on, not a passenger is amongst them. I look forward to continuing to work with them.

This report follows our fourth report, which was tabled on 12 October 2017 entitled, “Parliamentary Inspector’s report on a complaint by Dr Robert Cunningham and Ms Catherine Atoms”. That report endorsed the Parliamentary Inspector of the Corruption and Crime Commission’s findings on the protracted saga of Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms. The Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission endorsed the findings of the parliamentary inspector and made two recommendations. We have since received a response from the Corruption and Crime Commission. The report that has been tabled today is the committee’s reaction to the latest determination of the CCC—that it does not intend to take any further action.

Before I reiterate the background to the matter, members will note that this report is not large. Key to understanding what has occurred in recent months is some correspondence between the parliamentary inspector and the CCC, and between the CCC and the committee. This correspondence is annexed to the report and those interested not only in this particular case, but also in how the oversight process operates in practice may find these letters instructive. I will refer to key sections of the correspondence shortly. As outlined at length in our earlier report, Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms were both subject to excessive use of force at the hands of Western Australian police officers, subjected to a prosecution that was later withdrawn, and have been fighting for acknowledgement, recompense or even a simple apology for their treatment for over nine years.

As we observed from the extensive findings of the District Court, some of which it is conceded were obiter dicta, and in our last report, this incident was not just an impulsive rush of blood to the head by young and inexperienced police officers on a busy night in Fremantle. A number of subsequent incidents compounded the use of excessive force, including intimidation of a witness, collusion in evidence, failure to disclose, and tampering with evidence. It represented a sustained course of improper conduct over many months, if not years. The incident, which occurred in 2008, has had reverberations since then, but as we note in the title to this report, this is still unfinished business. The committee found that the protracted nature of their quest for an acknowledgement of their treatment has materially exacerbated the distress of the complainants. In the committee’s report in October, two recommendations

were made and the committee has subsequently received correspondence from the CCC, which is annexed. The commissioner notified the committee that he did not intend to accede to these recommendations. Recommendation 1 stated —

That the Corruption and Crime Commission recommends to the Commissioner of Police that the conduct of the police in this matter is reinvestigated by experienced investigators unconnected to the original internal investigation. Focus would be on ascertaining whether any criminal conduct on the part of police occurred and if so, consideration be given to appropriate prosecution and disciplinary proceedings.

Recommendation 2 stated —

That the Corruption and Crime Commission reassess and report on the conduct of the police involved in the complaint made by Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms, in the light of all relevant facts, including those established upon investigation and having regard to the findings made by Her Honour Judge Davis in CUNNINGHAM —v—TRAYNOR [2016] WADC 168.

I would like to briefly quote the letter from Commissioner McKechnie received on 20 November, in which he stated —

I am aware of the criticism of the Commission about its perceived inaction on the use of force allegations.

I set out my general response in my letter to the Parliamentary Inspector dated 20 April 2017 partially, but accurately reproduced in his report.

I will refer to that shortly. The letter continues —

I assume that the Committee, in failing to seek a response from the Commission before tabling its adverse report, concluded that the failure to accord natural justice was because the Committee considered that the Commission could not usefully add to its letter of 20 April 2017.

If that was the Committee's reason for not according procedural fairness, it was correct.

I interpolate that that was in fact the case. The letter of 20 April, which is annexed to the report, is quite comprehensive and sets out the commissioner's objections to looking at the matter further. The letter goes on —

However, as explained to the Committee recently, the Commission has reorganised its monitor and review function generally and specifically in relation to use of force allegations.

The letter concludes —

As to the recommendation, —

This is about recommendation 1 —

— the Commission lacks a proper basis to make such a recommendation and so declines to do so.

In response to recommendation 2, the letter continues —

While I have considered the Committee's opinion, the reasons expressed in the letter of 20 April 2017, I respectfully decline to accede to the recommendation.

As the report states —

The Committee appreciates that a strict interpretation of the precise powers of the commission to direct police to act on the extensive findings of the District Court and Parliamentary Inspector may be circumscribed, however, the outright refusal to revisit the case even to examine whether its own processes were lacking is most regrettable. And clearly insufficient consideration has been given to the wider public interest.

In the Committee's report, two recommendations were made and the Committee has subsequently received correspondence from the Commission which is annexed.

...

The Committee considers the Commissioner's reference to this Committee's failure to provide 'procedural fairness' bemusing. The Committee had the benefit of reading his earlier and lengthy letter of 20 April 2017 to the Parliamentary Inspector in which the Commissioner outlines why the case would not be further pursued by the Commission. These reasons included the finite nature of the Commission's resources and the already comprehensive nature of the findings in the District Court.

Moreover, the Committee's report and its recommendations closely reflect the Parliamentary Inspector's report. As the Commissioner points out, the provision of the report to the Commission, whether before or after its tabling, has done nothing to change his position on this matter.

Telling in the earlier correspondence with the Parliamentary Inspector is the reference to the Commission's role to improve integrity of and reduce the incidence of misconduct in the public sector.

In fact, the commissioner's letter of 20 April states —

You say that there is a public interest in ensuring that the Commission is seen to fulfil its primary statutory purpose of addressing demonstrated cases of police brutality.

That, with respect, is not the Commission's statutory purpose. The relevant purpose is to improve continuously the integrity of and to reduce the incidence of misconduct in the public sector. This purpose is to be achieved, among other ways by investigating cases of serious misconduct.

Notwithstanding the views of successive Parliamentary Inspectors, my reading of some Commission files is that police excessive use of force has always been matter of concern to the Commission. However, that is of no moment.

The committee also noted —

The Committee is perplexed as to how the Commission's failure to exercise its functions at all on this occasion enhances standards and integrity?

How does consigning action on demonstrably flawed police practices by the internal investigation unit address standards and integrity when the Commission is intransigent by asserting there is no public interest to be served?

Similarly, how is a refusal to revisit its response to this case merely because decisions were taken by predecessors appropriate? How will that assist in improving outcomes in the future?

Also, in the letter of 20 April in that context the commissioner states —

I was not Commissioner when the original decision was made. I do not propose to defend the original decision or concede that it was wrong.

The responsibility for the present decision to take no further action is mine alone.

...

I have to determine how to use the Commission's finite resources over thousands of allegations, assigning priority to those which would appear require active investigation in the public interest.

That amplifies some of what was said in the later letter by the commissioner earlier this month. The report continues —

The Committee and the broader community holds serious concerns that in recent years the Commission has demonstrated little appetite for investigating police matters, in particular those involving alleged excessive use of force.

Although, there is an indication from the commission that it intends to do better in the future. The foreword continues —

It is appreciated that in other jurisdictions there are separate independent bodies to oversight allegations against police. But that does not relieve the Commission of its statutory duty and begs the inevitable question: —

As I have posed on previous occasions —

if this case is not worthy of the Commission's attention, what is?

The commissioner's letter on April of this year argues —

Unlike New South Wales and no doubt related to economies of scale, Western Australia does not have a Police Misconduct Commission separate from a Public Sector Commission. The definition of serious misconduct includes, but is wider than police misconduct.

The decision as to which of the multitude of allegations received should be the subject of an investigation, is informed by many factors including the Commission's intelligence as to where are current areas of risk to the State.

Possible inappropriate police use of force of which your letter instances an example, is obviously one such area.

There are however other areas of current risk to the body politic which must be considered by me in allocating the Commission's resources.

I do not have the luxury of choosing matters of personal interest to investigate but, aided by advice, must make the best decision I can in all the circumstances as to what matters in the public interest should be pursued. These decisions are made knowing that inevitably there will be occasions when the decision turns out to be wrong. Moreover, there are a significant number of matters which ought to be the subject of investigation but the Commission cannot investigate due to —

Wait for it —

its finite resources. That would probably be so even if the Commission's resources were magically doubled.

Those are the arguments of the commissioner in April 2017. He has considered the parliamentary inspector's report. He has considered the report, which basically endorses the parliamentary inspector's report recently tabled in this place, and he has rejected the recommendations.

The foreword concludes by stating —

It is arguable that had the Commission taken a more active, comprehensive and timely examination of this matter that it would have obviated the need for Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms to embark upon the emotionally taxing and costly District Court proceedings to establish the facts and to clear their reputations.

If not for their knowledge of the law and tenacity at pursuing a just outcome, this whole matter would have been swept under the rug years ago.

MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda) [4.06 pm]: I am conscious of the time and that the Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission has outlined the details of the report. I am most perplexed that we are in a situation, notwithstanding that the commission is an independent commission, that the observations made by the parliamentary inspector and the joint standing committee have, in fact, not been responded to in a more positive way by the commissioner. I go to the fourth report and quote from the parliamentary inspector's letter regarding this matter, which was dated 6 July 2017. He makes two points and in the second observation he is addressing the commissioner. The letter states —

The second observation is that you may find it persuasive that the Commission should again become involved so that its final reported assessment accords with the judgment of Davis DCJ, if that is indeed your conclusion.

If we look at some of the details of the findings of Her Honour Davis, in the matter of *Cunningham v Traynor*, [2016] WADC 168—I will not read all the findings, there were 11 of them—pertinent to the behaviour of the police and the police investigation, they state —

Very little of the evidence given by police officer Traynor as to what occurred on the footpath at the time of the incident was supported by CCTV footage; on critical issues his evidence was manufactured or reconstructed in an attempt to put himself in the best possible light or to justify what he did; his evidence was inconsistent and neither accurate nor reliable, and Her Honour was unable to accept any of his evidence unless it was inherently probable or corroborated by other acceptable evidence;

Finding 4 states —

The evidence of police officer Clark involved a reconstruction of events and had many inconsistencies, and on critical issues was neither accurate nor reliable. Her Honour was unable to accept any of his evidence unless it was inherently probable or corroborated by other acceptable evidence;

Finding 5 states —

The evidence of by then retired police officer Caldwell and his service history raised a real question as to his attention to detail, his honesty and whether his evidence could be relied on, given his propensity to lie, his disrespect for the work of tribunals and his cavalier tendency to give both inaccurate and self-serving accounts of events. Her Honour was unable to accept any of his evidence unless it was inherently probable or corroborated by other acceptable evidence;

Finding 11 states —

The police officer's use of excessive force against Dr Cunningham constituted battery and his imprisonment was neither lawful nor justified; the officers acted with malice in their dealings with him, and the bringing and continuation of the criminal charges by officer Clark amounted to a misuse, or wrongful or unreasonable use, of power for a purpose other than the proper invocation of the criminal law.

I think that in effect of the judgement and the civil proceedings are most damning. Both Dr Cunningham and Ms Catherine Atoms went through all the processes available to them at law to have this matter investigated both by the police and the Corruption and Crime Commission. What was available to them? They got no succour there. They went to the civil jurisdiction to make their case and we know what the findings were. I find it incredible indeed that the commissioner is unable to move on this issue, despite the opinion of the parliamentary inspector and the considered view of this parliamentary committee on the matter. I urge members present to read "Unfinished business: The Corruption and Crime Commission's response to the Committee's report on Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms", because it is indeed unfinished. Justice has not been served in relation to allegations of criminal activity against these two citizens of our state, and it is a disgrace. I also urge members to read the fourth report of October 2017 that gives give something of the context of the "Unfinished business" report. I thank you, Mr Speaker, for your indulgence.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.11 pm] — by leave: Once again, we stand in this place in opposition with no member of the Liberal opposition in the Legislative Assembly forming part of the committee that deliberated on and produced this report. This is a very important report. That is why the opposition still wants to hold the government to account with respect of its management of business and oversight. We would have liked to have had one of our members be able to rise for 10 minutes and speak to the body of this report. Instead, we have had 20 minutes to look at it and try to digest what is in it, and it is a very important matter.

Seven members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Members might recall this issue. It was scandalous. In November 2008, Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms were walking about Fremantle, having been out for dinner and some drinks. They stopped to assist a couple of individuals they did not know who had fallen into a garden bed. During that process I believe that Dr Cunningham was pulled into the garden bed while trying to pull out one of the gentlemen. Out of that a melee occurred, with a couple of police officers getting involved. This was a subject of a Corruption and Crime Commission report in 2011 and members might recall it. In the course of this activity, the police officers behaved in an appalling fashion. Dr Cunningham indicated that he had a sore shoulder, as I recall. At the time the police officer handcuffed him really tightly so his shoulder was pulled. Dr Cunningham said that the police officer was kicking him and trying to push him over. The police officers were swearing at Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms. Ms Atoms had both of her arms pulled up over her head and she was handcuffed and manhandled into the back of the police wagon and after she was tasered. She is five-foot-one and weighs 55 kilos and she was tasered by police officers. Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms were only being good Samaritans helping two individuals extricate themselves from the garden bed they had fallen into because, I believe, they may have been inebriated.

Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms went to court in 2010. The magistrate dismissed that court action and awarded \$15 000 worth of costs to Dr Cunningham and Ms Atoms. After this, Ms Atoms spent a significant period of time unable to work and needed rehabilitation, and I believe subsequently they have sued for damages. I also believe that they won, and good on them. I do not think that money will compensate Ms Atoms or Dr Cunningham for the interruption to the lives they have enjoyed or, indeed, for the physical pain that Ms Atoms suffered as a result of these actions. At the time, in late 2008, the CCC looked at the matter and determined that WA Police should interrogate it with respect to any form of misconduct and WA Police said there was no misconduct. During the court process in 2010, the judge was quite scathing of the two officers involved. The judge made some findings that he believed the officers had pretty much colluded on the statements to the point at which the statements were virtually a word-for-word copy of each other, including—to give some insight into the intelligence of the individuals involved—the same spelling error.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Yes, the magistrate was.

There was also an allegation in the CCC report of 2011 that Dr Cunningham had been given closed-circuit television footage as part of the disclosure component in preparation for court, and, oddly, for the first time ever in his career, his office at the University of Western Australia was broken into. The report stated that the footage was taken from his computer, which only left the police footage of the incident. Dr Cunningham asserted to the CCC at the time that the footage was missing three significant segments. Those three significant segments of footage included the footage that showed the officer kicking Dr Cunningham in the legs, which Dr Cunningham asserted happened and the police officers denied. Oddly enough, it was also missing the two segments showing the two individuals being tasered.

This is a very serious issue and that is why the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission looked at it as well as the operation of the CCC generally in looking at complaints of excessive use of force by police. The committee has seen fit to look at this matter again, because it is not happy with the response of the Corruption and Crime Commission. I understand that. We do not have a member in this place who can speak with any authority about what was uncovered as part of the deliberations of this committee. I want to draw members' attention to a couple of lines of the report that stood out to me, bearing in mind, that one of the reasons that we would like to have a member of Liberal Party in the Legislative Assembly on the CCC committee is that this government has made a decision to give additional powers to the CCC to look at organised crime and unexplained wealth. That is going to create a workload for the Corruption and Crime Commission, and we found out in the budget estimates process that no additional funds have been given to the CCC to perform this function. What did we find from Hon John McKechnie in the sensitive document that appears on page 6 of the report? He stated —

There are presently 11 matters the subject of preliminary investigation, although some of these are suspended due to lack of resources and more urgent priorities. There are 18 matters under active investigation, utilising the whole of the Commission's investigative capacity.

It will be interesting to know how the commission will take on that additional role in interrogating unexplained wealth. The sensitive document continues on page 7 of the report, and the commissioner goes on to state —

I do not have the luxury of choosing matters of personal interest to investigate but, aided by advice, must make the best as decision I can in all the circumstances as to what matters in the public interest should be pursued ... Moreover, there are a significant number of matters which ought to be the subject of investigation, but the Commission cannot investigate due to its finite resources. That would probably be so even if the Commission's resources were magically doubled.

That is interesting. We have this report. Once again, no-one from the Liberal opposition in the Legislative Assembly forms part of this very important oversight committee of CCC. We will not have a member of that committee to look at and interrogate the resourcing this government is providing to the Corruption and Crime Commission to perform all of its functions. The government-controlled oversight committee into Corruption and Crime Commission in this place and the chair are requesting of the commission to investigate this and the commission is saying it does not have the money to do it. The opposition would like to have one of its members in the Legislative Assembly on that committee to pursue this matter as part of the committee process. We will talk to Hon Jim Chown about this, as we track this matter over the course of this government and keep pressure on the government to resource the Corruption and Crime Commission consistent with the demands of the member for Girrawheen, who is the chair of the committee, so that it can do more and better—apparently in an under-resourced environment. We would like to have a member on the committee to interrogate that but we do not, just as we have not had acceptable responses on a range of matters of transparency that we have discussed ad nauseam in the first seven months of this Parliament. The Parliament is being used for stunts to get a political headline in the newspapers to try to take pressure off the government in another area. Parliament's time has been taken up in two motions to suspend standing orders because the government could not take the step on an opposition-initiated suspension motion yesterday to refer the member for Darling Range to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, so we have wasted Parliament's time today. Now, at 20 past four, Parliament is about to adjourn for the year and we still have not finished dealing with the business on the notice paper. We are hardly finishing the parliamentary session with a punch with the Appropriation (Recurrent 2010–11 to 2015–16) Supplementary Bill 2017.

APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2010–11 TO 2015–16) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2017
APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2010–11 TO 2015–16) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2017

Second Reading — Cognate Debate

Resumed from 28 November.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Treasurer) [4.22 pm] —in reply: I thank all members for their contributions to the Appropriation (Recurrent 2010–11 to 2015–16) Supplementary Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2010–11 to 2015–16) Supplementary Bill 2017. Obviously, quite a broad spectrum of issues were raised by members and I will spend the next 45 minutes dealing with them all, Mr Speaker, because some very important issues were raised! Mr Speaker is shutting me down, it would appear! I thank all members. Ultimately, the bills effectively deal with a range of Treasurer's advance spends since 2010–11. Just this week I introduced the appropriation bills for the 2016–17 year, which we can deal with when we come back in the new year. I do not intend to speak for much longer.

I just want to make one point of note, and I will make some comments outside this place. Those who follow native title may have noted the Federal Court decision on the Goolarabooloo and Jabirr Jabirr people of the region north of Broome, which was the site of a contentious proposed onshore gas plant by Woodside. The point I want to make is that a range of conservationists from the so-called green movement, not necessarily from Broome and, in fact, not necessarily from Western Australia, were very active during that time and used a range of Aboriginal people to pursue their own political ambitions and political claims. With the result of that decision by the Federal Court, I hope a lot of those people around Australia are reflecting on their behaviour during that time. I dare say that they are not. I dare say that they have moved on to ruining whatever economic opportunities people may have in other parts of Australia. It is a very interesting and important decision that highlights the behaviour of some of those people a number of years ago. I will make more comments about that next year in this place and perhaps outside this place. I thank all members for their contributions to the debate on these bills.

Question put and passed.

Bill (Appropriation (Recurrent 2010–11 to 2015–16) Supplementary Bill 2017) read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, and transmitted to the Council.

APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2010–11 TO 2015–16) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2017*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, and transmitted to the Council.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Motion*

Resumed from 28 June.

The SPEAKER: Members, the question is that the Address-in-Reply be agreed to.

Question put and passed; the Address-in-Reply thus adopted.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE*Special*

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House) [4.29 pm] — without notice: I move —

That the house at its rising adjourn until a date and time fixed by the Speaker.

Season's greetings, Mr Speaker —

The SPEAKER: And to you.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: — in the spirit of the member for Kalgoorlie, who has left us today with gifts, including beautiful Italian chocolates. I think the member for Kalgoorlie epitomises the spirit of Christmas, and I acknowledge him. I mean that sincerely.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes—and also the member for Girrawheen. The member for Girrawheen is always very generous.

In moving this motion today, I would like to take the opportunity to reflect on the year we have had. Today marks the last day of the 2017 sitting year for the Legislative Assembly. It has been a momentous year, marked by tremendous change on both sides of the house, and as a result it has been a period of significant adjustment for members and staff alike. The house welcomed 24 new members as a result of the retirement of four long-serving members of the chamber and the defeat of 20 sitting members. I would like to acknowledge the contribution to the last Parliament of those members who were not returned to this chamber. I also acknowledge and congratulate again the new members of this Parliament for the contribution they have made to debates throughout the year. I am sure this is a record number of new members elected to this place, all requiring board and lodging, and other things, not to mention training in the mysteries of the Parliament, under the stewardship of the Clerk, Kirsten Robinson, and her team, who have risen to the challenge in welcoming the new members and those returning to this place and addressing their needs with professionalism and courtesy.

I turn now to sitting statistics. The official opening day of the fortieth Parliament was Thursday, 11 May 2017. Today marks the forty-ninth sitting day, including opening day and the three days of budget estimates hearings. This translates to fifteen sitting weeks, plus one week of budget estimates. Forty-two bills have been introduced in the house, and I understand that after the passing of the last two bills, 31 bills have been passed. The Attorney General, who is on his way to Sydney for ministerial responsibilities, has been particularly prolific in his contribution. Fourteen of those bills have been his bills. That is one in three—an impressive strike rate for the Attorney General.

The first bill that was introduced in this house—excluding the Privilege Bill—was the Misuse of Drugs Amendment (Methylamphetamine Offences) Bill 2017. As a result of the passage of that bill, drug dealers apprehended with 28 grams or more of methylamphetamine may now, when convicted, be subject to a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. Other significant bills introduced and passed by this place include the Sentence Administration Bill 2017, more commonly known as the no body, no parole bill; the Western Australian Jobs Bill 2017; the Domestic Violence Orders (National Recognition) Bill 2017; the Dangerous Sexual Offenders Legislation Amendment Bill 2017, which increases protections afforded to the Western Australian community by, among other matters, providing that a court cannot make a community supervision order unless it is satisfied on

the balance of probabilities that an offender will comply with conditions imposed under the order, and placing the onus on the offender to prove that he or she will comply; and the landmark Civil Liability Legislation Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse Actions) Bill 2017. Twelve bills have received royal assent. Three bills are awaiting royal assent, and I expect there will be more bills when the Legislative Council rises next week.

As of 11.00 am today, around 2 455 questions on notice have been asked—many of them from the member for Dawesville—and around 2 271 responses have been provided. I note that 96 questions were asked yesterday alone, all by one member. By way of comparison, during the 2016 sitting year, which comprised 20 sitting weeks, 1 124 questions on notice were asked. That was a far more efficient opposition, some might say. By the end of question time today, around 777 questions without notice had been asked and answered.

I turn now to matters of public interest and non-procedural suspensions of standing orders. There have been around 13 matters of public interest and five suspensions of standing orders that were not of a procedural nature. I turn now to committee statistics. The five standing committees of the Legislative Assembly and the two joint standing committees hosted by the Legislative Assembly have between them tabled 23 committee reports.

I would now like to give a number of thank-yous. To you, Mr Speaker, and to your Deputy Speaker and Acting Speakers, and to the Executive Assistant to the Speaker, Jaclyn Berry, and the Speaker's Attendant, Anna Murphy, we acknowledge the important role that you and your Deputy Speaker and Acting Speakers play, along with your assistants. To the government Whip, the member for Balcatta, sincere thanks for his tremendous stewardship, ably assisted by Nathan Batskos.

Government members: Hear, hear!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: To the member for Churchlands, the manager of opposition business, and the member for Vasse, the opposition Whip, thank you for your contribution to the proceedings of this place.

To the Legislative Assembly team, comprising Kirsten Robinson, Clerk; Scott Nalder, Deputy Clerk; Liz Kerr, Clerk Assistant (Procedure); Mat Bates, Clerk Assistant (Committees); Isla Macphail, Sergeant-at-Arms —

The SPEAKER: Isla.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: As I said.

The SPEAKER: She carries a mace!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: — and Rachel Wells, Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms, who very abruptly woke us all up not long ago with her announcement, Mr Speaker, that you were entering the chamber. I had to comb my eyebrows, I was so startled by her loud and commanding voice. To Daniel Govus, Denis Hippolyte, Alison O'Shaughnessy, Maddison Barnsby, Nikolas Carbone, Glen Whitting and Anne Day, the Clerk's Executive Assistant, on the Legislative Assembly team, thank you very much for your tremendous stewardship and assistance to all of us in this place over this parliamentary year.

To the Parliamentary Services team, comprising Mr Rob Hunter, Executive Manager; Security, led by Tony Paterson; the gardening team, headed by Dave Boag; Building Services, led by Hugh McCaffrey; Reception Services, made up of the lovely Stephanie Nguyen, Michelle Heah and Rebecca Sofield; Information Technology, led by John Buchanan; Finance, headed by Elma Ozich; and Joe Lubout in the gym—a place that I have yet to venture into in the nearly 17 years that I have been here. But as members can see, my body is a tool, and it is sculptured naturally due to my impeccable genetics.

To Reporting Services, comprising Laurie Mansell and the enduring Hansard family, a magnificent team; to Judy Ballantyne and the Parliamentary Library team; to Dave Embry in audio/visual services, thank you very much, audio/visual services people, we salute you; to Catering Services, who contribute to the waistlines of many members over a period of time, and to Enno Schijf, Mark Gabrielli and the wonderful staff in the lounges and dining room of the Parliament of Western Australia; we sincerely thank you for your tremendous service and friendly manner.

To the Parliamentary Fellows, Harry Phillips and David Black, who should be, as Minister for Heritage, heritage-listed themselves, for their contribution to the parliamentary history and heritage of this place. They play an important role.

Can I particularly highlight the magnificent Parliamentary Education Office.

Members: Hear, hear!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: They are indeed an asset to this place. I acknowledge in particular all the staff, Peter Dooley, Sarah Smith, Michael Loney, Cherie Toovey, Tina Beale and Ben Machowiak.

I thank the staff of the Premier's office who of course operate here in Parliament during sittings, Nick Hagley and the wonderful Rebecca Neilson for her tremendous stewardship for me as Leader of the House.

A government member interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: She is looking very glamorous.

I thank the wonderful ministerial staff and my own Mandurah electorate staff who keep the Mandurah office fires burning while I am up here in Perth. I am sure that is shared by all our members who acknowledge the tremendous work of their electorate staff; I am sure the Leader of the Opposition will thank his staff. We thank them sincerely. To my own ministerial staff, I sincerely thank Gary and the team in my office for their work. To the media, who are of course here in abundance —

Several members interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: They are certainly listening through all sorts of technological devices. We thank them even though sometimes we do not like the way they write or broadcast their stories. We acknowledge their tremendous work. On behalf of the house and all its members, I also thank our partners and our loved ones and family members, and all members' partners and families, for the tremendous support that they give us all during our time here when Parliament is sitting and in our day-to-day professional lives as members of Parliament. It is always important to acknowledge our families, our loved ones, for their tremendous support.

I wish the member for Dawesville all the very best for his wedding to his fiancée, Michelle, in February next year. I wish he and Michelle the very best for their very special moment.

Members, this chamber is adversarial by nature, but we are all human beings. We have families, we have loved ones and none of us is perfect. I sincerely wish all members, staff and their families a very Merry Christmas, a very safe and happy festive season, and good health for 2018. I am going to sing a little song. I was inspired by the opera singer on Tuesday evening. I am going to sing a little song, which is from Monty Python, with your forbearance, Mr Speaker. To me, it reminds us all that we are very much—all of us—a tiny speck in this amazing universe. Normally, I would wear my fake teeth, but I will not pull them out today. I will start by simply —

The SPEAKER: Can you start and get it over and done with quickly!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, I will.

Just remember that you're standing on a planet that's evolving
And revolving at 900 miles an hour.
It's orbiting at 19 miles a second, so it's reckoned,
The sun that is the source of all our power.
Now the sun, and you and me, and all the stars that we can see,
Are moving at a million miles a day,
In the outer spiral arm, at 40,000 miles an hour,
Of a galaxy we call the Milky Way.

Our galaxy itself contains a hundred billion stars;
It's a hundred thousand light-years side to side;
It bulges in the middle sixteen thousand light-years thick,
But out by us it's just three thousand light-years wide.

The SPEAKER: Face the Chair!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Continuing —

We're thirty thousand light-years from Galactic Central Point,
We go 'round every two hundred million years;
And our galaxy itself is one of millions of billions
In this amazing and expanding universe.

Our universe itself keeps on expanding and expanding,
In all of the directions it can whiz —

The SPEAKER: Come on, member!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: In a minute!

The SPEAKER: The crayfish are waiting!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes —

As fast as it can go, at the speed of light, you know,
Twelve million miles a minute and that's the fastest speed there is.
So remember, when you're feeling very small and insecure,
How amazingly unlikely is your birth;
And pray that there's intelligent life somewhere out in space,
'Cause there's bugger all down here on Earth!

Merry Christmas, everyone!

[Applause.]

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [4.44 pm]: I honestly cannot follow that well. On behalf of the opposition, I support the motion and commend the song. There is no doubt that it has been a challenging year, perhaps more for our side, but I think members opposite have had their fair share of challenges. Of course, the year commenced with an election campaign and, as we know, a change of government. We have had robust debate across the chamber, none more so than today, but that is the nature of the chamber. We do share a common goal. We are at one being here to represent the people we were elected to represent and to make our state a better place.

On that note, I again congratulate the Premier and his colleagues, and I wish them a happy and safe Christmas, and that they return next year refreshed. I also take this opportunity to wish your staff well. I know ministers are reliant on their staff and they have been on a steep learning curve—many of them are new to the position—during a period of significant change. I know they are also here for the right reasons.

I thank you, Mr Speaker, for the courtesies—there have been many—that you have extended to the opposition during the year. I note, however, that you have been no more challenged than the former Speaker, particularly by a member of the former opposition who sat over there last year.

Mr I.C. Blayney: Who wouldn't shut up.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He would not shut up. Of course when, you, Mr Speaker, were sitting over there in opposition, it would have given you a thorough understanding of the standing orders. I thank the Deputy Speaker, the member for Maylands, and the Acting Speakers for the work they have done. I particularly thank the staff of Parliament, truthfully; the Sergeant-at-Arms, the clerks, all the chamber staff, the staff throughout the house, the caterers, the gardeners, security and the cleaners. They do an absolutely magnificent job. They have had a big year preparing the place for a new Parliament and too many new members. The chamber staff have also been of great assistance to this side of the house, providing advice on standing orders, procedural matters, and all sorts of advice that we need to have. The staff throughout Parliament are welcoming, helpful and great ambassadors to the place. I must say that, as we know, one of the most pleasant things is when school groups from our electorates come in and the schoolkids parade around and are shown throughout Parliament. The history they are given is probably the best history lesson they get at school. It is a remarkable service. I thank all the staff and I am sure they will welcome and appreciate the break when the house returns in 75 days.

To my colleagues, adjusting from government to opposition is not fun or easy. Some members opposite went through the same experience in the distant past. I thank Liza, my deputy, for her support, as I do all my colleagues. I am grateful to all my colleagues for their support, counsel, advice and friendship that they have given me. I wish all my colleagues and everyone in the place, and their loved ones and staff, a happy, merry and safe Christmas. Our loved ones are great supports not only in our daily life, but also in our parliamentary life when we sit here over long hours. As we leave here on Friday or otherwise to go back to our electorates, they often do as much work as we do, which is not often acknowledged. I would like to acknowledge them on behalf of the Liberal Party. Likewise, our electorate staff do great work doing the heavy lifting while we are doing the heavy lifting here. Once again, I wish everyone associated with the Parliament—members and non-members—a very happy, healthy and safe Christmas and a magnificent 2018.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [4.48 pm]: I would also like to extend my best wishes to everyone—all members of this house and even the other house. I wish them all the very best for Christmas. Christmas is a great time to recover and recharge our batteries, deal with Christmas shopping, and get ourselves back in touch with families and friends after a long parliamentary year and a lot of work for all members of Parliament.

I begin my remarks by acknowledging the Leader of the House. I was going to do it at the end, but in light of his magnificent speech a moment ago, I thought it was worth acknowledging his efforts. It reminds me of my first term here and the valedictory speech of the then member for Kimberley, Ernie Bridge, who was sitting over probably where the member for Kalamunda is. He stood up at the end of the year 2000, delivered his valedictory speech with a guitar, and he sang some of his greatest hits from his many albums, one of which involved—it was a ringer-something; something about a ringer —

Mr J.E. McGrath: *Helicopter Ringer.*

Mr M. McGOWAN: *Helicopter Ringer!* He sang *Helicopter Ringer* up there, and it followed on from an earlier late night parliamentary sitting—we used to have late night parliamentary sittings then—when at about three in the morning he cried effusively, telling us about how his dog had recently died. He was an interesting character, and I can see the Leader of the House is rapidly heading in that direction!

Mr D.A. Templeman: But mine wasn't a valedictory speech, but it was still magnificent!

Mr M. McGOWAN: It was magnificent!

As I said, I pass on my goodwill to all members of Parliament. I particularly acknowledge all the new MPs in the house, of whom there are many. I hope the parliamentary experience has been rewarding and I hope you have found your feet. It is an interesting experience, coming from the outside and never being here before and learning the way it works; indeed, I think it takes some time to learn how it works because it is a very unstructured—I will put it that way—process that we go through in here that you cannot possibly understand unless you actually do it. I hope you are all enjoying it, I hope it has been a good experience, and I have been very impressed by lots of the contributions of the new MPs in this house.

To the former MPs who are not here to hear it, I would like to thank them for their service. Last year I was sitting over there, and when I made my Christmas remarks I said words to the effect, “Oh well, you know, thanks everyone for your contribution. We are about to go into an election. There’s people who are here today who will not be here in March next year through no fault of their own”, and the then member for Belmont was sitting there and she said, “Why are you looking at me?” Well, she had a point!

In this context, I also wish the very best to MPs who have had some personal difficulties. The member for Hillarys is not here; he has had some medical difficulties. The member for Vasse has had some family difficulties, and the member for Central Wheatbelt has had some family issues as well. I wish each and every one of those all the best for Christmas. No doubt this will be a more difficult Christmas for those members than other Christmases have been.

Can I particularly—I do not want to single out members because you get in trouble when you do that—mention the story told today by the Minister for Community Services about the member for Murray–Wellington. It was the most generous act of kindness and decency I have ever heard. To win a trip to Paris and give it away to someone you do not know who has been through a traumatic experience of breast cancer is just simply magnificent.

[Applause.]

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am sure we would all do exactly the same! But she is the one who did it, and so congratulations to you, member for Murray–Wellington. It is a lovely story.

I also acknowledge all the people who have played a role here, particularly the staff of the building. I cannot mention all the names, but all the staff of Parliament, my staff, the public sector workers in this place—the gardeners, the cleaners and the kitchen staff and the people who make the whole place work and often do not get acknowledgment. I particularly acknowledge those people. I acknowledge one former staff member. I went to the funeral of Vince La Galia. Those of us who have been here a while all knew and loved Vince. I went to his funeral this year; can I pass on my regards in this context to his family.

To the Leader of the Opposition, his staff and members of the opposition, I pass on my regards and best wishes for Christmas. I also pass on my regards to the Speaker of the house and the Deputy and Acting Speakers. Thank you for the service you provide. I pass on my Christmas regards to the families of MPs. Before their partners were pre-selected, they had someone who came home at night; now they have a husband, wife or partner who does not come home at night, is often out at weekends and drags the children off to fetes, sporting events or the like. They go through a lot, and it is an adjustment process to have a family member who is suddenly not there anymore because parliamentary and political business drags them away all the time. I particularly acknowledge those family members. Thank you to all family members for their support and forbearance to their partners and spouses undertaking this role.

I acknowledge the press. The press drinks are shortly about to go on. The Leader of the House and I were discussing it earlier, but we look forward to the press drinks. I hope some of the press are out there currently. If they are, we are going up to their offices to take photos of empty chairs and publish those to demonstrate that they are not doing their jobs—they are out there drinking. While the important work of the house is going on, it is not being reported, Mr Speaker. At least the Leader of the House is going to do that!

I thank the people of Western Australia for electing the government. I thank them for the important trust and responsibility they have placed in me, the ministers and the government members of Parliament. I thank the broader Labor Party and Labor movement for their support. The first 70 days of this year were a very trying, traumatic, difficult and demanding time in my life, and indeed the few months after that were very demanding as well, getting used to this role. It is an important responsibility, and I never underestimate it and never take it for granted. So to the people of Western Australia, I thank you for your support. I wish everyone across Western Australia all the best for a happy and safe Christmas.

[Applause.]

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the National Party) [4.56 pm]: I rise very briefly because I am conscious that drinks are taking place in the courtyard. I wish to add on behalf of the National Party our thanks to everyone in this house for the work that they do to keep it running. To you, Mr Speaker, and your Deputy and Acting Speakers, it has been an interesting year—thank you for not throwing me out!

The SPEAKER: I still have time! I still have time!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: We will work hard to make sure that we do not give you cause to call us as many times next year! It has been a learning curve for us all, and we appreciate the work you and your deputies do.

To the Clerk—Kirsten and your team—we really appreciate the support that we get in this chamber, and of course to Hansard who make us sound far more sensible than sometimes we are in this place. It is wonderful to have the support of the very conscientious team working away while we are here. Thanks to the Parliamentary Services Department corporate management team, to security, to the dining room staff, to everyone who makes this place a really wonderful and special place to work. I know we are here every day, but when you have visitors who come into this place, you are reminded just how special it is. It is special because of the people who work here and make it that way, and we are always made to feel welcome by the staff. They work just as long hours, if not longer than us, in this place at times.

To my colleagues in the National Party, thank you for your support throughout this year in the role as Leader of the National Party both here and to my colleagues in the Legislative Council, of which I was previously a member. To the Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader of the Opposition and your team, well done; it has been a learning curve this year for everyone in this place. I look forward to continuing to work alongside you and your team as we do our job in this place, as we have been put here to do.

To the Premier, his cabinet and the new members of this place, well done. It is an enormous task, and I have absolutely no doubt that everyone is looking forward to spending some time with their friends and family. I would suggest that that is exactly the right thing to do. My advice to everyone in this place is that family is the most important thing, and do not forget that. As new members it is very beguiling and very easy to spend time doing things that you will never think about again after you walk out of this place. That is my advice as someone who has been here for a short time compared with others, but it is very important to take the time, particularly after a year like we have had this year, to spend with family and friends.

To my office staff who have worked incredibly hard and to all our electorate office staff out in the regions of Western Australia, we could not do our roles without you. As someone mentioned previously, our electorate office staff are essentially us when we are not in the house and they deal with an enormous amount. As members of Parliament, we could not function without them.

My parting comment is that I am sure many members will be heading to regional Western Australia for holidays at some point over the festive season. I wish you all the very best. Enjoy our beautiful state. Drive safely on our roads, make sure you come home to your family and friends, and we look forward to seeing you next year.

MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [5.00 pm]: It is my pleasure to wrap up. The Leader of the House opened with these Christmas best wishes and I, as the manager of opposition business, get to close. There will not be a song, Leader of the Opposition or Premier; I apologise! I try to perform on occasions in this place and hopefully members get to enjoy that at times.

One of the things that we as a team in opposition have had to adjust to very quickly—many of us have never been in opposition before; this is a first—is being elevated into positions of opposition responsibility. When some people on our side of politics talk to us outside, they say, “We’re noticing that you guys are moving up the ladder very quickly in your organisation in politics.” The collective answer more often than not is, “There are not many people left on that ladder!” For us, it has been very much a learning curve this year. We have all worked very well as a team.

As the manager of opposition business, I thank the Premier and the Deputy Premier. I pay particular thanks to the Leader of the House, who, with the government Whip, the member for Balcatta, our Whip and I often get together in the corridors to try to work through how the day will play out. Sometimes the Leader of the House will keep his cards close to his chest and sometimes I will be forced to keep my cards close to my chest by the leadership team on this side. On the whole, more often than not we have managed to get things done pretty effectively and smoothly with regard to the operation of the house. I thank you for your cooperation and support there.

As has been mentioned by many others here, I would also like to thank the Leader of the Opposition, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party for all the work they do, particularly on this side of the chamber. Of course, to government members and non-government members of Parliament, particularly all the new members, no doubt it has been a big year for you all. The Speaker, the Deputy Speaker, the Acting Speakers, the Clerk, the Deputy Clerk and all of the parliamentary staff deserve our gratitude for the effort that they go to to try to help this place work as smoothly and effectively as it can on behalf of the people of Western Australia. I think we all remember that Parliament does have a very important role to play in our state’s democracy. It is an important place to keep running smoothly.

I, too, would like to reiterate a thankyou on behalf of all of us to our electorate officers and research officers. Many of our electorate office staff pretty quickly took on the role of being a shadow ministerial adviser, some with up to five portfolios. When they were a government research officer or an electorate officer, they could just focus on local electorate issues. Suddenly in opposition they are not only doing that, but are also covering off as a principal policy adviser for shadow ministers on any number of things. An enormous amount of work goes into that. I am sure we all thank them very much for the efforts that they go to.

I thank the fourth estate for their efforts in trying to massage the public agenda on occasions with regard to what is important to the people of WA. They, too, have a relationship with all of us in this place. We all work collectively towards getting good outcomes for the state.

Again to the new members: the speeches and the interjections we have heard in this place throughout the year have been interesting. Some new members of Parliament are noisier than others; some are less irritating than others. On the whole, it has been fun to hear their contributions throughout the year on the many different topics that we have had. One of the things that I have observed throughout the year is that some of these new members are propelling themselves forward. They are very keen to advance themselves, and others are very quietly keeping their powder dry; they are not jumping out in a hurry. We will wait and see how they go next year. Certainly, from our side, it is always interesting to see government members interacting with the government ministers because we were there once. I wish you all the very best with your endeavours.

Likewise with everyone else, a big thankyou to our families and friends for supporting us throughout the year. There is no doubt that they need that type of thanks. I reiterate the point of everybody so far—that is, taking some time out. Probably the only time of the year that politicians get downtime is Christmas–New Year. That is when members of the public do not want to talk politics! We get a natural break between Christmas and New Year. No doubt all of you will take the time to spend some quality time with family and friends over that period to recharge the batteries, to set yourselves some goals and New Year’s resolutions, and come back fighting fit and ready for another parliamentary year. One down; three to go—they do go very quickly. I often think of parliamentary terms like dog years. I wish everybody the very best for the Christmas festive break and look forward to seeing you all back next year.

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): Thank you, members. They save the best till last, and here I go! Being a member for 17 years now, especially a country member, coming to this Parliament is like visiting your family. You are away a lot of the time. These people in the background, not necessarily in the chamber, do a tremendous job. I am going to mention most of them now. I do not want this to sound as though I am being crass; I will do it for the first of my four speeches.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Will you send them all a letter?

The SPEAKER: No, I will not send them all a letter.

I think these people are part of our community of Parliament. When we come through the front door, anything you want done, they will do. It is a family. I am going to mention the backroom family. First of all, I would like to thank the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Kirsten Robinson—the pocket rocket. Kirsten always has my back—she probably has the back of my knee! She is a very loyal person and her knowledge of the Parliament is fantastic. I also thank Scott Nalder, the Deputy Clerk. I will run through the rest of the list: Liz Kerr; Mathew Bates; Isla Macphail, the Sergeant-at-Arms, whom it is always good to have in front of me; executive assistant to the Clerk, Anne Day; my executive assistant, Jaclyn Berry; my steward, Anna Murphy; Rachel Wells; Daniel Govus; Denis Hippolyte; Alison O’Shaughnessy; Maddison Barnsby; and Nik Carbone.

I thank from the committee office: Patricia Woodcock, Pamela Clarke, Glen Whitting, Franchesca Walker, Dr Amy Lampard, Dr David Worth, Lachlan Gregory, Dr Sarah Palmer, Jovita Hogan, Jeannine Purdy, Marion Huntly, Michele Chiasson, Renee Gould, Alison Sharpe, Vanessa Beckingham, Timothy Hughes, Dr Kyle Heritage, Michael Burton, and our two Parliamentary Fellows whom we are all very proud of in Parliament, Professor David Black and Dr Harry Phillips.

The Parliamentary Services Department does a tremendous amount of work keeping the Parliament and its buildings going. I thank Rob Hunter and his team of Patricia Traegde, Belinda Corey, Katherine Galvin and Melanie Hackett.

Building Services keeps this building operating. It is run by Hugh McCaffrey, Vicki Patterson, David-Lee Canham, Rick Lees, Joe Fenech, Joe Lubout, David Boag, Ashley Buddee, Graeme Cuttriss, Paul Tupanceski and Luisa Silva.

I thank Catering Services: Enno Schijf; dining room manager, Mark Gabrielli; Roger Mouttet; the President’s steward, Deb Kapoor, who always gives me grief; and waitpersons David Griffiths, Aggie Lipari, Paddy Loney, Simon Doyle, Stephen Shepherd, Jacqueline Brownhill, Julia Cukrov, Megan Baker, Roslyn Haynes, Caterina Zoccoli, Madeleine Lewis, Maria Ogden, Jill Yim, Lee Humphrey, Anthony James, Mark Winstanley, Brett Barrett, Mark Bore, Preston Anderson—shame about his footy team!—Andrew Arnold, Amy Dombroski, Keith Barker, Dalia Bonfanti, Michael O’Sullivan, Aaron Ross, Carlos Goncalves, Meghan Walker, Jo Stankovic, Mitchell Peirce, Thomas Hastings, Jennifer Stewart, Eden Ellis, Greg Craib, Colleen See and Christine Gellatly.

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Hansard are the ones who make us look good. They have been making me look good for 17 years—not that they needed to! I thank the manager Laurie Mansell and the team of Belinda Andrews, Penny Walkaden, Zoe Cunningham, Darby Evans, Giles Johnson, Heather Willan, Alison Colgan, Bryce Moore, Olivier Breton, Jacqui Allan, Sandra Stockman, Geraldine O’Loughlin, Barbara Pickett, Caroline Van Beelen, Denise van de Velde, Melissa Pilkington, Kylie Wild, Judith Baverstock, Elaine Johnson, Wendy Wells, Amanda Simpson, Liam Coffey, Kelly Gregory, Emily Hewitt, Stina Thomas, Zoe Chambers, and Simon Evans. I thank broadcast operators Christopher Hetherington, Fred Akamatis, James Barker, David Embry, Geoff Miethe, Graeme Orr and Leslie Beck.

I thank our security guys. We come here every day and they are always here to look after us. I thank Tony Paterson, Andrew Harland, Basil Georgiou, Charles Vitnell, Constantine Garaba, Douglas Murcott, John Browne, Lance Rosich and Peter Boyd.

These are the people behind the scenes. They are part of our parliamentary family. I will not mention them every year because I will run out of breath and I will be a year older. We come to Parliament and everything is ready and we just slot into our jobs. For country members, they are members of the family. Some of these people have been here for as long as me.

Mr J.E. McGrath: And the city members.

The SPEAKER: And the city members—but especially for country members. The city members go home at night but we go home to an empty place. Have a little bit of sympathy for us country guys. It has been a tremendous year. The only bad thing is that we lost our good mate Vince La Galia. People who have been here for any period of time know he was a wonderful man. He whistled down the passageway, talked to everyone, knew everything, and knew every lady in the Parliament. He was a very Italian ladies’ man. He will be sadly missed.

I will say what everyone else has said here today. It has been a tremendous year for the Parliament. Obviously, it is very hard to come into opposition. Some members on this side of the house have found it very hard to be in government. Sometimes when I sit up here I think: that is the opposition and that is the government. It is a real transition. I thank my Deputy Speaker Lisa Baker and my Acting Speakers, who do a great job. To everyone here, just remember, as the member for Churchlands said, this is the time to be with your family. Family is very important. Members have lost family members through the year. Make the most of it because this is a job that can take over your life. You have to spend the time you can with your family because this is not the be-all and end-all. You have to work, but always put your family and your health first. My best wishes go to the member for Hillarys, who is not in the best of health. My thoughts also go out to the Leader of the National Party for what she is going through at the moment.

Members, it has been a great year. Congratulations to everyone. Congratulations to the members who did not get re-elected. Sometimes you can work your heart out and still not get re-elected. Some very good people left the chamber but it is great to see all the new young people and maybe middle-aged people who have come in now.

Mr J.E. McGrath: Make him stop—no more!

The SPEAKER: No more? There was always a chatterbox in this corner when I was in opposition. The member for South Perth has taken that over with a vengeance, but his voice is not loud enough to carry. Unfortunately, mine did. That is enough. Have a happy Christmas and a very safe new year, everyone. God bless!

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 5.15 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

ATTORNEY GENERAL — LK CREATIVE PTY LTD — CONTACT

2262. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Attorney General:

I refer to the Premier's answer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 250 and ask, since 17 March 2017:

- (a) has the Attorney General or his current Ministerial staff met or had any contact with representatives of registered lobbyist trading as LK Creative P/L, and if so:
 - (i) what are the dates for each meeting or instance of contact;
 - (ii) who did LK Creative P/L meet with or contact;
 - (iii) what was the topic of discussion for each meeting or instance of contact;
 - (iv) what third party, if any, was being represented by LK Creative P/L;
 - (v) was any follow-up action agreed to by the Attorney General or his Ministerial staff, and if so what action was agreed to; and
 - (vi) what form did the contact take (i.e. email, phone) or for meetings, where did they take place?

Mr J.R. Quigley replied:

None, not applicable.
