



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2018

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, 12 April 2018

Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust) took the chair at 10.00 am, and read prayers.

MURDOCH DRIVE CONNECTION PROJECT

Petition

HON TIM CLIFFORD (East Metropolitan) [10.02 am]: I present a petition containing 114 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled. We the undersigned 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. Further the increase in traffic flows may be used to reinstate Roe 8 in years to come.

We therefore ask the Legislative Council to 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 Centre and at Fiona Stanley Hospital. And your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper 1281.]

PAPERS TABLED

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

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — FINANCIAL PLAN

Motion

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [10.05 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house expresses its concern that after more than 12 months in office, the Labor government has not established a credible financial plan, as promised prior to the 2017 election, which has forced it to make rushed decisions that have impacted negatively upon numerous areas of the Western Australian community.

It has been more than 12 months since the change from the Liberal–National government, which governed for almost nine years, to a Labor government. That change was on 11 March 2017. Since that time, there has been speculation and analysis about why the Liberal and National Parties lost government and why the Labor Party won government. Obviously, there were issues such as leadership with the Premier and across the board in the Liberal Party, the tired factor—the “it’s time” factor—without a shadow of a doubt, and the debt, which the Labor Party spent a lot of time on, particularly the last four years of the previous government and certainly in the election campaign. Labor spent pretty much its entire time during the campaign talking about debt and its plan to resolve the debt issue. It had no problems saying it had a plan to resolve the debt issue. The financial issue was apparently all ours. We had full responsibility for it. Nothing else was responsible—only the Liberal–National government. The goods and services tax revenue distribution was simply not an issue or a problem that led to our debt. If members do not believe me, they can believe the members of the then opposition, who relentlessly carried on about the fact that the GST was not an issue. Let us look at a couple of examples. On Thursday, 15 September 2016, the new Deputy Premier, Hon Roger Cook said —

We have always known what was going to happen with the GST. There are no surprises around where the state’s share of the GST was going to go.

On the same day, the now Hon Ben Wyatt —

What we do know—I pointed this out earlier—is that Treasury always gets pretty much right what GST revenue will be each budget year. There has never been a budget shock from the budget GST of each year. We know what we will get.

Then the now Premier also said on Wednesday, 18 May 2016 —

The second point is there is no GST shock. The deal is appalling. We understand that but each and every year the GST receipts of Western Australia are what was predicted by Treasury.

If members look through *Hansard*, they will see that it is littered with examples of members opposite saying that the GST was not the issue; it was entirely our responsibility. That is interesting and we have to remember that; I will come back to that in a little while. The ALP went into the election with its eyes wide open. We had a debt issue. It was our problem. It was a spending issue, not a revenue issue. We kept on hearing that. It is not a revenue issue; it is a spending issue. It is not the GST. It is that we are spending too much. Labor went into the election with commitments and honourable members will all remember this: it said quite categorically that there would be no new taxes. It had \$5 billion worth of election commitments and a promise to pay down debt, but the GST was not the issue; it was only a spending issue. It still went into the election with \$5 billion worth of election commitments and no new taxes, and it said that it would pay down debt. Labor spruiked that all over its election paraphernalia.

Members, remember this flyer that went out in *The West Australian* in mid-January titled “How WA Labor will pay for our plan”. It states —

LABOR WILL PAY FOR OUR FRESH IDEAS BY:

Then—remember this members—it uses this cute terminology —

LABOR WILL REPAY DEBT AND PROTECT JOBS

- Labor will repay debt slowly and carefully, like paying off a house

As if that is not enough, the second dot point states —

- We won't sell vulnerable assets like Western Power.

That was its plan. It was going to pay it off, like paying off a house. All of us have at some stage paid off a house or continue to pay off a house, so we know what that means. Lo and behold, we had an election in March 2017. The public of Western Australia were emphatic with its choice. It chose the mob opposite. Fair cop; we take it on the chin. There will only be a problem if we do not learn from it. That is what we are doing. I remind members opposite that the result was 31 per cent, exactly the same election outcome as it was in 2001. As cocky as I know you guys are, don't get too cocky. As a result, Western Australians woke up the next day to the true believers, the true socialists, the true Bolsheviks. They said, “Yes, at last the Bolsheviks are back in town. We can start to govern appropriately again.” We can understand that, their mob is back in town—just as our mob would have done if we had won. However, I will say that it is a hallelujah moment for the Bolsheviks.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I am not taking any interjections from you, I do not believe a word you say and I am not listening to you.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Will you stop shouting.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Member, you might stop shouting —

Hon PETER COLLIER: I am trying to talk over her, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT: I know; it is difficult sometimes, but if you drop the tone in your voice, other people might listen quietly.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Thank you, Madam President. It is a bit difficult, but I will try.

Of course, the other parts of Western Australia will be very, very happy because there is a change of government, and I can accept that. They have decided the other mob wants to have a go. They are even happier because there will not be any new taxes, will there? There will be absolutely no new taxes. The mob opposite will pay down debt just like paying off a house and it has made commitments worth \$5 billion. I do not know how members opposite will pay down debt, but they say they will. After one week in office, there is a lot of backslapping and high fives from members opposite. Some of them are sworn in as ministers and they get their Caprice cars and the rest of it. That is fine. They go to Dumas House and I have no problems with that.

Several members interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: But blame was still with “the members opposite”. They blamed us. Blame was fairly and squarely on our shoulders. In week two, it was the same thing. They are finding what floor they are on in Dumas House, but they have a bit of difficulty in Parliament House, and there is a lot of backslapping and high fiving while they continued to blame us. I can understand that; it was only two weeks into the term. A month on, they are still constantly blaming the former government. We can understand it because it is only a month in. Three months on and, at last Parliament is sitting. After three months, we finally get to sit. Then the mob opposite starts leaking. It took only three months and we start getting their speaking notes. Fastidious psychic. I have got heaps

of these. As if they did not know what to do or what to say—they were told what to say. I keep reminding members opposite that they were told to say the following —

- We have no option but to fix the mess left behind by the Liberal–National Government.
- Everyone will share the burden to help pay for the Liberals and Nationals out of control spending.
- Fixing the mess we have inherited will take time, but we will do everything possible to minimise the impact on struggling families and small businesses.

There is still no plan, I have to say, because, “We are going to pay down debt.” But Parliament is back and members opposite are still carrying on with these negative affirmations. Every media release and every response to every question is all about the former government. They cannot govern themselves; they have to be entirely consumed with us. Six months down the track, we get our first budget. Great! At least we might have a plan. “We will pay down debt like we are paying off a house.” We would not read about it—there is no plan. As a result of that first budget, we increased debt, we increased spending and we increased taxes, which we did not hear about when we went to the election.

By this stage, the Western Australian public is starting to get a little bit tetchy. They are getting sick of the glib lines from members opposite about how it is the fault of the terrible Liberals and the government has to fix their mess. In addition, the mighty West Coast Eagles lost its semifinal. The even better West Perth Falcons lost in the first semifinal. The government is starting to get a little bit concerned at this stage. By the end of the year, there is still lots of backslapping and high fiving from members opposite. They are still focused entirely on the fact that they have won government; they could not quite get it. They do not have a plan; no plan has been articulated at this stage. I will say more on that in a moment. But it is still the opposition’s fault.

The government then has one year in office. What does it do? Does it show a bit of discretion after one year in office given the severity of this terrible financial situation? Not at all. The Australian Labor Party has an almighty knees-up at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, with the women in their expensive frocks and men in their penguin suits scoffing on their sirloins and Moëts, as I have said before. What can I say to members opposite? This is in true working-class tradition; the champions of the working class were down at the convention centre with the corporate sector tweeting fastidiously all night.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER COLLIER: For goodness sake; she is like a wounded crow.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Member, you might want to focus on the motion in front of you.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I am, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT: And perhaps do not yell across the chamber.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Thank you, Madam President.

At the celebration, members opposite were tweeting. I encourage honourable members to look at the “We are Labor” website. There are dozens and dozens of photos of members at the convention centre all sipping on champagne with the corporate sector. Right in the middle of this site is a little compelling tweet after “Putting our kids first”. It states —

Today, Mark McGowan’s Government is celebrating their first year in office, but we don’t see that there’s much to celebrate. Decisions to make cuts to public education will have an enormous impact on teachers, schools and ultimately students education.

Unhappy birthday!

That is right in the middle of dozens of tweets, while they were in their penguin suits, scoffing on their vlaskaas. I can tell members right now that this is what this is all about. The government has already lost sight. There is absolutely no plan. It has completely lost sight of what it is there for. That was most definitely the Labor Party’s “Let them eat cake” moment. The group opposite, the champions of the working class, were down in the convention centre while cutting funds to education, yet it has a plan.

Let us say that members opposite are about a month out of their second budget. With the second budget, they are halfway through their term, even though in calendar years they are not. Governments are only as good as their last budget. This government’s second budget will be handed down and if members opposite continue the way they are going, debt will continue to increase. The government has still shown no plan and the recipients of that budget will be the public of Western Australia. As far as the plan is concerned—hello, hello, after the election we find in fact that the problem was the GST; it was in fact a bit of an issue. I will say it was an issue, guys, if there had been equity in the distribution of the GST, as we saw in the paper today, we would have been \$28.6 billion better off. But members opposite say that it was not an issue. They cannot have it both ways. For years before the election,

you guys were saying that the GST was not an issue. If we scan through *Hansard* since the election, we get, for example, the Premier on Tuesday, 8 August 2017 saying —

That was made worse in the last couple of weeks when it became plain to us, following advice from Michael Barnes, the Under Treasurer, that because of the recent census figures, we would have a reduction of \$1.9 billion in our GST share.

There are dozens of these quotes. Do not forget the quotes I mentioned earlier from the guys opposite when they were saying that Treasury always gets it right—remember? According to the Premier, Treasury does not get it right. Now the GST is an issue. Dear me, we have been caught out; we cannot do anything about it. Let us look at this great plan after 12 months. The GST is not an issue: it is a spending issue; it is not a revenue issue. The Labor Party went to the election with \$5 billion worth of commitments and said that it would pay down debt just like paying off a house. What have members opposite done during that time? They have increased spending and increased debt and have not made a single inroad into reducing that debt.

Hon Simon O'Brien: They have gone backwards.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Exactly. What have they done? Let us look at the plan to pay down debt. The first thing they did was launch an inquiry into the former government's projects—the Langouant “Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects: Final Report”. They are so obsessed with the Liberal–National government that they spent every second of private member's business this year talking about this. They have nothing positive to say about their own government. It is almost an indecent obsession. All they do is focus entirely on us. The Langouant report cost \$3 million, but they cannot afford \$500 000 for Moora Residential College. This report cost \$3 million; it was not \$1.5 million. They did not count the 17 public servants they used. It was \$3 million.

Look at all the questions the opposition has asked about business cases and procurement. I tell you guys! This will be held up as the Holy Bible for government integrity. I can tell members opposite that they have failed at every stage thus far. What else is in their plan? They froze members of Parliament's wages. That will really have an inroad into reducing debt. Why did we spend a week on the Salaries and Allowances Amendment (Debt and Deficit Remediation) Act 2017 towards the end of last year when we ignored bills from the other place that were purportedly urgent?

The State Administrative Tribunal had already ruled that members of Parliament would not get any salary increases. However, despite that, that bill was the government's priority. The government moved the office of the Premier from Hale House to Dumas House, because leading up to the election it had been known as the “Premier's Palace”. That will save absolutely nothing, because public servants are going into Hale House. This is the government's plan.

The government opened Optus Stadium, Yagan Square and the Scarborough foreshore development. They were all achievements of our government, yet government members were at the opening, with their high fives and backslapping, still carrying on about the debt levels. The government talks about how our government lost all this money. It should have asked the 40 000 Dockers supporters at the football last Saturday and the 55 000 Eagles supporters at the football last Sunday whether they think we have wasted their money. Those infrastructure projects will stand the test of time, and ultimately—I have said this before—the public will reflect very fondly on the Barnett government for those achievements.

I come now to the Forrestfield rail line. Three months ago, the Premier and the Minister for Transport were in the media, wearing their hard hats, saying how wonderful that project was. That was our project. What happened? We gave it to the Labor Party, and the driller failed! The Premier and the transport minister were there, arm in arm, but the driller was not working! They did not tell us that. They messed that up.

Government members do not mind taking selfies with Roger Federer. I would love any member opposite to say they were responsible for getting Roger Federer to Western Australia. They were not responsible for that. I know who was responsible for that. I am waiting for that.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: You have relevance deprivation syndrome!

Hon PETER COLLIER: No! I am not deprived at all! I am relishing watching you guys sink!

The government has said that the problem is the GST. That argument is completely devoid of logic. Another element of the government's financial plan is the gold tax. Prior to the election, was there any mention of a gold tax? No. Was there any mention of a payroll tax? No. The only thing that was mentioned was that there would be no new taxes. Was there any mention of education cuts? No. The only thing that was mentioned was that there would be no cuts. Why did the government try to introduce a gold tax, payroll tax, and cuts to education? The government said before the election that Labor would repay debt slowly and carefully, like paying off a house. The government simply has no plan to reduce debt. Ask the literally thousands of children who will be impacted by the cuts to farm schools and camp schools about the government's plan to reduce debt. The government can afford to spend \$39 million on a slush fund for Labor projects. It can afford to spend \$40 million to employ an

extra 300 education assistants. Western Australia already had more EAs than any other state in the nation. It was the government's decision to make those education cuts. It was the government's decision to say that the problem is the GST. It was also the government's decision to become absolutely obsessed with the opposition. The government has spent more time focusing on the opposition than it has on governing. That is why we have the ridiculous situation of the education cuts. The government has increased debt, it has increased spending and it has increased taxes. Thirty children at Moora Residential College would still have their residential college after 2019 if these guys opposite had gone into the election and been honest with the public of Western Australia. They were not honest; they were deceitful.

I will conclude with a comment from Gary Adshead in *The West Australian* of 24 January, just prior to the last election. He said —

In Saturday's *The Weekend West* you might have noticed a glossy, albeit rather flimsy, magazine-style advertisement spruiking "Mark McGowan — Fresh Ideas for WA".

The first two pages were dedicated to telling readers who Mr McGowan is and what he's done since entering Parliament in 1996.

What followed were nine pages of Labor pledges and plans, including a higgledy-piggledy double-page spread of 200 ideas, all designed to tell voters Mr McGowan is ready to govern.

The establishment of urgent care clinics, medi-hotels, a new industries fund and tourism investment were all part of the positive push to the March 11 poll. But what about debt?

If this is the greatest financial crisis in WA history and the Government has been "grossly irresponsible", then surely Labor has a responsibility to tell the voters of WA what it can do to bring debt down, bring the State back to surplus and set us on a path to winning back our AAA credit rating.

The only reference to the colossal challenge of undoing what Mr Barnett has done to WA was found on page 11 under the heading "How Labor will pay for our plan".

"Labor will repay debt slowly and carefully, like paying off a house," it read. That was it. One line that offered nothing. A shallow, almost patronising statement. No matter how much Labor complains about the debt problem, the party has no constructive, innovative way out.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [10.24 am]: Madam President, what can I say?

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The minister has not yet had the opportunity to start his speech.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: What can I say? We have had 20 minutes of absolute rubbish from the Leader of the Opposition. This comes from the mob that has saddled us with the greatest debt in this state's history. The Leader of the Opposition obviously has a short memory. He forgets that his government spent eight and a half years on this side of the chamber, and it saddled us with debt.

Several members interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Madam President, I intend to speak to you this morning.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I intend to place on the agenda my views and the views of the government, so I will not be encouraging interjections and I will not be taking them.

I say from the outset that Labor's plan was articulated very clearly in the Treasurer's first budget. In fact, it was my pleasure last year to deliver that plan to this house on the Treasurer's behalf. In case anyone is confused, one of the headings in our first budget was, "The path back to surplus." This government has a plan. The key plank of our plan is low expense growth year on year on year. As the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, we did say that we would pay back the state's debt as we would pay back a housing loan. We do not want to scare the economy. We will pay back state debt methodically and in the right way. Members opposite had eight and a half years in government, and they did not look after the state's finances. Our government has a plan to pay back debt. Containing expense growth is the only credible way in which to return the state budget to a position of strength over the long term.

The government has not just said that we will reduce debt. We are delivering that. The proof is in the pudding. Financial results released by Treasury for the first six months of 2017–18 show that expense growth was just 0.3 per cent, or \$45 million, compared with the first six months of 2016–17. In the first six months of the Barnett government's first term in office, expense growth was 13.3 per cent. Expense growth was 13.3 per cent under the Barnett government and 0.3 per cent under our government. In the McGowan government's first year in office, underlying expense growth is forecast to be 2.2 per cent. To put that in context, in the first year of the Barnett

government, expense growth was 10.9 per cent. It is no wonder the economy was stuffed. The Barnett government spent like drunken sailors for the eight and a half years it was in office, and it has saddled us with this mess. The 2018 midyear review has forecast average annual expense growth over the next four years at just 2.2 per cent. Again, compare that with the former government's first term, when average annual expense growth was 7.4 per cent.

Confidence is returning to the Western Australian economy. That is because the adults are back in charge. I want to bring to the attention of the house this morning a number of overall indicators that show that economic conditions are improving. We are seeing green shoots in our economy. Leading indicators such as consumer and business confidence and internet job vacancies suggest that economic growth will strengthen in the near term. The NAB measure of business confidence was positive throughout 2017 after being flat or negative throughout 2016. Even the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia's survey of consumer confidence revealed that Western Australians' confidence in the economy is continuing to grow, reaching its highest level in four years. People have a level of confidence that they did not have under the last government. In fact, Deloitte's investment monitor identified that \$63.1 million worth of projects were under construction in the December 2017 quarter. That is the highest figure in the nation. We are already seeing improvements in the labour market. The Australian Bureau of Statistics' data for January shows that Western Australia recorded employment growth of 1.7 per cent in the year to January 2018. That is the strongest growth since September 2013.

The unemployment rate averaged 5.7 per cent over the year to January 2018—down from 6.2 per cent in 2016–17 and is the equal second lowest of all states in this nation. I remind opposition members in this place that they created the mess—not Hon Tjorn Sibma, who was not here, but the rest of his crew over there.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: He helped, I'm sure.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: He probably helped in the first term when he was a staff member, but certainly most frontbench members over there now sat on the front bench over here and they have to take some of the blame for the state of the economy. They saddled us with massive debt. Let me remind members that the state had a AAA outlook for 15 years until the former Liberal–National government came to power. We cannot forget, of course, that the National Party was on the frontbench over here at the same time too, and they have to take some of the blame. I cannot let the blame rest alone on that mob over there. The Liberal–National government left us, saddled us, with this debt. As I was saying, we had 15 years with a stable AAA credit rating and the last Liberal–National government lost it in September 2013, and, thanks to them, the state remains on a negative outlook. But we, and the Treasurer in particular, are working very hard to fix that and to deal with that issue.

Western Australia's debt is currently rated by Moody's as the riskiest, equal with those of South Australia and the Northern Territory. We were saddled with that. It is our intention to fix it. The drop in GST is not the Liberal and National Parties' fault; I am the first person to say that.

Hon Peter Collier: It's is not what you said before the election.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I am happy to say that.

Hon Peter Collier: So your Premier was wrong?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am telling the Leader of the Opposition today that the drop in GST cannot be homed back to the former government. But the former government chose to spend as though the good times were going to continue forever and as though the GST was going to improve. They kept spending like drunken sailors, and I will continue to remind people about that.

Recently the Productivity Commission, as part of its review of the GST system, quoted former WA Treasurer Hon Christian Porter on the now opposition's financial mismanagement. Mr Porter was quoted in that report as saying —

What we reasonably anticipate is that in 2013–14 the CGC will have brought in a new GST system. We expect it will produce a floor of around 75 per cent of our population share of the GST.

The former government's budget management was based on a wing and a prayer, or a wish and a prayer. It based spending decisions around the hope that something might change. The hope that the government would suddenly transform the GST system was plainly wrong. It should have known that from the outset, but it did not take any heed of it. It certainly did not acknowledge it and it kept spending.

Let us turn to debt. The Liberal–National government left this state with a \$41 billion debt problem forecast for 2019–20. It was massive. Members sitting over there are living in a bubble and suggesting that they had nothing to do with this. They did. It is their problem. But we are committed to fixing it, and we are doing it methodically and sensibly, as we said we would. We are paying it back methodically because we do not want to scare the economy.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I can barely hear the minister who is on his feet.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Thank you, Madam President; I can barely hear myself either, so I appreciate your assistance.

When Labor was last in government, it delivered surpluses in the billions of dollars. In 2006–07, it was \$2.6 billion; in 2007–08, it was \$2.3 billion. When we were last in government, the 2008–09 *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* forecast debt at just \$6.8 billion. Where did we end up? A long way away from that, thanks to that mob on the far side of the chamber.

I will briefly touch on structural imbalance. A structural imbalance emerged, again under the Liberal Party's watch, in the state's budget that we have to resolve now. The Treasurer is working extremely hard. Members will have seen in the first budget, and we will see it in the budget delivered in the weeks to come, that we are working very hard to tackle that. We are not living with our heads in the cloud or living in a bubble. We are actually trying to fix the mess that the former government left us, which just makes me even more incredulous about the motion and the gall of the Leader of the Opposition in bringing this motion before the house this morning. He must have amnesia or something else must have happened to him since last year, since he was on the treasury bench. He has forgotten; he has amnesia or something. But I have not forgotten. I am going to keep reminding the Leader of the Opposition and his former cabinet colleagues that they left us with this mess; they have saddled the state for a very long time. Nevertheless, we are working extremely hard to fix the problems and the mess that the former government left behind.

I will continue to remind members about the history of the former government and how bad it was at taking responsibility for the treasury bench and about the constant increases in charges. Charges for power and water increased enormously under the former government.

Hon Peter Collier: What was yours?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It certainly was not the 90-odd per cent increase in utility prices that we saw when the Leader of the Opposition was on this side.

In fixing the problems that the former government left us, we have had to make some difficult decisions, but we are making them in the best interests of the people of the state and in the best interests of fixing the economy.

What has the government been doing for 12 months? Since coming to office it has created more than 39 000 new jobs in this state, which has resulted in a record number of Western Australians in work. The last time I checked, it was about 1.345 million people. That is the highest figure in a long time—a record number. WA has the second lowest unemployment rate in the country and the highest participation rate in the workforce. What else has the government done in those 12 months? It has passed the WA local jobs bill. That means that local businesses now have the best opportunity of getting work on government projects, instead of them being sent over to Malaysia to build our bridges or to wherever else the former government sent that work.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: South Australia.

Hon Stephen Dawson: That is even worse—South Australia, which gets our GST. The government is building stuff here. It is creating jobs here for Western Australians.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Absolutely! We are not shipping in people from overseas; we are training people in Western Australia so they have the skills to do the jobs here. The former government did not do that. The government has frozen TAFE fees. What did the former government do with TAFE fees? They went up; they continued to go up, so much so that many people were frozen out of the market and could not go to TAFE. What happened under the former government? People could not afford to go to TAFE, so they were not trained and could not get the jobs. The former government did not think of training people, did it?

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Instead it sent the jobs overseas, and that is shameful. Shame, shame, shame! I will keep reminding opposition members of that.

What has this this government done and what will it do? It is continuing to create jobs for Western Australians. It has frozen TAFE fees and it is working hard to make sure that people in our state are trained and able to take up jobs locally.

What else has it done? It has put WA jobs first. It has ripped up the skilled migration list. The former government was bringing in people from overseas—“Let's bring them in; they can do the job”—instead of looking after the people in our own backyard and training them to do the jobs. Members only have to look at the Kwinana strip and the high levels of unemployment there. I cannot blame only the Leader of the Opposition, as a former Minister for Training, because he was not there at the end, but he certainly has to take some of the blame. We need to get Western Australians back in work. Western Australians should be doing the jobs, and we should be building things here. What else have we done? We have established Infrastructure WA. We have made a record investment

in road projects in this state. We are building Metronet. We have established Defence West and employed a defence advocate. We are implementing an international education strategy. There is more, and I am sure some of my colleagues will take the chance to say it.

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [10.40 am]: How I look forward to Thursday mornings these days. It was absolutely splendid, and I enjoyed the Minister for Environment's jazz riff—a hoi polloi hodgepodge of facts, figures, claims, misrepresentations, reinterpretations and the claiming of credit. I found it instructive and entertaining, because in the process of the minister's address, three economic plans were revealed, not one of them credible. The first was to blame the previous government; the second was to pay debt down slowly like a mortgage; and the third was to take credit for uplift in the macroeconomic environment, and when business confidence is high, obviously that is because of the McGowan government. Those seemed to be the three plans.

There are three plans because the one viable plan that the government does have cannot be implemented. I will make a suggestion to members opposite. If they are to remain on the Treasury bench, their best chance of a viable economic plan is to install the Treasurer as Premier, so that the government will not be hamstrung. I am sure he would like to undertake a number of measures but he cannot because United Voice controls the Treasury bench and dictates the economic argument. The government knows it, we know it, business knows it, and *The West Australian* knows it. The government is searching for an economic plan that is right in front of it, but it does not have the courage to pull the trigger. It is happy to go along as it is.

I want to very briefly address each of those economic plans, because they were entertaining but quite revealing. The first one is to blame the previous government. The previous government has accepted about as much blame as any government can. There was a comprehensive election defeat for us, which we have accepted. It does not appear, however, that the government has accepted it, after nearly 400 days in government. It is still looking in the rear-vision mirror to the good old days, when it was all care and no responsibility. Now that the weight of responsibility has fallen on the government, it knows that it is not up to the task.

The second claim is to pay debt down like a mortgage. If I paid my mortgage at the rate that the government is paying down state debt, my house would be repossessed. That is not a viable nor a credible financial management plan, and the government knows it. I know that it is convenient for the government to suggest that it has been left with a \$41 billion debt, but that is a fiction. The government has added \$11 billion worth of debt in its first budget. On its own figures, it has added 25 per cent to the debt, and it is doing nothing about that.

The third most disingenuous, facile, ridiculous economic plan that the government perpetuates is that if business is confident, there is an uplift in the economy and more people are being employed, ipso facto it must be because of the great working class hero Mark McGowan and his jobs plan. What utter nonsense.

Hon Aaron Stonehouse: Did he hire all those people himself?

Hon TJORN SIBMA: He must have. It does not stack up.

The best assessment of this government's claim to any credible economic plan is in the implications of the financial decisions it has undertaken. As we have discussed previously, every Thursday morning for the four weeks that we have been back, the Labor government has money, but is not actually seriously engaged in any budget repair. It has been adept at taking money out of other budgets to fund election commitments that I know it did not have oversight of. In answering a question on notice, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier was tasked with contacting every member of the government who had made a commitment under the Local Projects, Local Jobs scheme to verify the nature of that promise. As I have mentioned before, over the estimates, in the last budget the government took \$4 million out of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, about \$6.5 million out of the Department of Education, and \$2.5 million out of the Department of Communities; and it raided the then Department of Sport and Recreation, now the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, to the tune of \$13 million. The money is there.

I will speak to the second part of the motion, on the negative impact upon numerous areas of the Western Australian community. I can speak of the 40 per cent reduction in funding to regional community resource centres. I know that the Minister for Regional Development has been busy visiting them.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Is that a bad thing? Are you concerned about me doing that?

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I give the minister fair warning. I will be interested in the notes that were taken in those meetings, so she can expect a freedom of information application from me about what deals were done, what topics were discussed, who are being good boys and girls, which community resource centres are behaving themselves, and which might find favour under this government. I will also talk to Scouts WA.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: You don't like us going out to the country to talk to the people, do you?

Hon TJORN SIBMA: No, I have moved on, as I wish the minister would.

I will talk to Scouts WA—a 25 per cent reduction in KidSport vouchers announced on Boxing Day—not in any courageous, open, transparent or accountable way by the Minister for Sport and Recreation, but by an update on

a webpage in the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. KidSport vouchers have been reduced from \$200 to \$150 as part of government efforts towards budget repair. What a fantastic contribution that is. While the government is at it, it will deny access to scouts, girl guides and cadets for children from disadvantaged backgrounds who might want to pursue a recreation option that has been made available to them since 2011, because they are not engaged in any competitive sport. The government is hurting its own constituents—treating them with utter contempt. I might dive a bit deeper into this issue, because the story seems to change. First of all, it was about savings, then it was not. Second, this program was designed to facilitate access to sport and recreation, and that is unchanged, but the recreation options provided by scouting, guides and cadets no longer find departmental favour, with the minister's complicity. The third change has been an adjustment to the phasing in, with claims now that that was never the case. This new regime was supposed to come in on 1 July, but I know that the minister has now been writing to groups suggesting that that transition period will now take place from 30 November. When I asked the minister, in a question directed through the Leader of the House, whether he had changed his mind on the transition point, he answered no. There is a prima facie case that he has misled Parliament. The government is not being open and transparent in any of its conduct. Its absence of a plan means that it will do nothing more than hurt people and viable community groups, be they regional community resource centres staring down the barrel of a 40 per cent reduction, or scouts and girl guides who cannot access KidSport vouchers. The government is closing camp schools and Landsdale Farm School for absolutely no economic benefit whatsoever. The government's absence of a plan drives it to the only plan that it has, which is to hurt this state's most vulnerable. Government members are a shameful, contemptible, inept mob of unruly economic illiterates. I will not take any lecturing or posturing from them. They have no capacity. They will drive this state further into the ground. They are a disgrace. That is all I have to say today.

HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West) [10.50 am]: I thank Hon Peter Collier for bringing up this non-government business, because it highlights to the public of Western Australia exactly where we are at. Before the election, the Labor Party said that the Liberal–National government was a bad economic manager and pointed out that it was pretty sure that anyone could do better. After 12 months in office, that has not been the case. We have seen two or three major problems. One major problem is that the government has a spending problem. The government cannot repay debt if it has a spending problem. That is an issue. This government has had no plan, as previous speakers have talked about. Part of the reason there is an issue is that, from my observation, Treasury is understaffed, under-resourced and under pressure. That has manifested itself in the government not consulting. It has not been consulting. It has been coming up with arbitrary decisions and imposing them on the people of Western Australia, with very little consultation. That has created a major problem for the state of WA. We saw how bad the previous government performed and we are now seeing very much the same thing. That is the reason the crossbench and One Nation are growing and getting bigger in this Parliament every election; the people of WA are looking for alternatives to the major parties in government. We have seen payroll tax go up; that is job destroying. I will not talk much about the gold tax because my fellow member for the Mining and Pastoral Region will talk about that, but that would have been job destroying if it had gone through. Energy costs have gone up. There are issues with training levies, taxi levies, vehicle licences in regional shires and cuts to road funding. It has been a major problem for the public of WA and for all the people who need to work with the public of WA.

The government has never had a sound plan to bring the budget back to black and reduce the state's debt. What it has been doing is finding a way to pay for the \$1.5 billion of election promises that it knew it did not have the money to deliver. That has opened up the floodgates for extra taxes and extra costs. The machinery-of-government changes to government departments sounded like a good idea—the government would cut the fat from bureaucracy by reducing the number of senior bureaucrats by 20 per cent—but how much has gone to senior executives through golden handshakes? We really do not know the cost of that yet. That is a major problem. A good case of what has happened is the replacement of Mr Wood from the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation. His contract was supposed to finish in 2021 but will end this week. What are taxpayers paying for that?

Let us fast-forward to after the election. We were told how bad the previous government was. The reason I say that the government has a spending problem is that we heard Hon Tjorn Sibma talk about the \$11 billion in debt that has been passed through the Loan Bill to this government. It has added that debt to the people of WA. Some of it is forced. The problem is that some of it is not. A lot of money is being spent on nonessential things. I know that governments and Premiers like to honour their promises, but when those promises are straightforward and very clear pork-barrelling—everyone can see that; it has been reported quite clearly in *The West Australian*—the public is not stupid. As I mentioned before, the number of crossbench and One Nation members in this house will grow over the next few elections if that sort of behaviour continues in any government. The people are looking for change. We have not seen that change through the McGowan government at this stage. I hope we will see that in the future. I have no more to say. There are many other members who would like to add to this debate. I thank honourable members for the chance to speak.

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Agriculture and Food) [10.55 am]: I am really excited to have the opportunity to talk about our local procurement plan and how this is such an important part of the McGowan government's agenda to deliver to this state and, in particular, to deliver growth

to the businesses in our regions. This really is an important project. Everyone talks about local procurement. I know that members on the other side had a local content strategy. However, the reality is that it delivered very little—it certainly delivered very little for regional Western Australia. Hon Darren West did an analysis of the former government, and 80 per cent of the contracts for royalties for regions were won by Perth companies. Of course, the issue is much bigger than that. We know that many of the projects that could have been delivered in Western Australia, such as the Doppler radars, were in fact built in South Australia, because the architecture to really drive the delivery of a really gutsy local procurement strategy was not put in place. I have been very proud to be part of the McGowan team that has recognised that we have a real problem in this state. We no longer have the ability to do what the previous government did, which was to drive around the state with a pile of gold coins in its ute and shovel them out in each town it came to. We actually have to be a bit more strategic than that.

I was very pleased last Friday to be with my good friend Kevin Michel and the Civil Contractors Federation to go through and explain exactly how our local procurement strategy works. It is important to understand that even within our constrained environment, each year the WA government spends \$27 billion on the procurement of goods and services. If we get this right, if we can really drive the participation of local industry, there is an enormous opportunity for us to have some uplift. Members will recall that we put in place the Western Australian Jobs Act. The jobs act is really important, because it means that for the first time all government trading enterprises, the port authorities, LandCorp and the energy utilities are required to be part of our procurement plan. We set out in detail the way in which we now require participation plans to be prepared in major contracts. Those participation plans, which set out how local business is going to be entrenched in a contract, become part of the contractual obligations that successful companies lock into. That is not the situation that we currently very often have, whereby big contractors—big construction companies—go out and talk to the local contractors, then come back and say they have spoken to local contractors but, at the end of the day, give the job to someone in Perth. We will drive this hard. It is not easy to turn around the culture of not doing this level of supervision and ensuring local content, but we will deliver on it. Relatively senior people will be put into each regional development commission. They will be charged with developing an understanding of local capability and ensuring that local businesses are well aware of upcoming opportunities. They will also provide feedback to the procurement agencies, advising them on how best to structure a contract so that all these local businesses can be involved. It will not be done easily—we do not pretend it will—but if we go back to that first principle and acknowledge that we have \$27 billion per annum of procurement, we can do a lot more to leverage that for our local and regional businesses to drive growth and diversity within the state. That is the fundamental gutsy part of our economic plan over the next couple of years.

I will now veer off from the substance of the motion to an issue that Hon Tjorn Sibma for some reason or other thought was central to the idea of economic growth—community resource centres. This is very interesting. The National Party and Hon Jim Chown become very upset when I meet people like agricultural scientist and intergenerational farmer, Charles Massy. That exercises their minds. They think I should not talk to people like him because he has new ideas. Apparently, a whole lot of people in the National and Liberal Parties are very concerned that I go out and meet with people from the Gnowangerup CRC and eight other small CRCs in that region. That has them a bit nervous and worried, and it is the subject of criticism. Of course I want to go out and particularly talk to CRCs in those very small communities to understand firsthand how they see the role of the CRC in their community, how they are structured, what sorts of things they do and how they might be able to manage them in future. We do not deny it. We have made it very clear that we have had to scale back the budget in this area. The moneys going to each CRC increased fivefold—500 per cent—over the space of eight years. In this straitened environment we just cannot afford that. Of course it is important that we go out and talk to those CRCs. My colleagues, including Hon Darren West, Hon Laurie Graham, Hon Dr Sally Talbot and no doubt Hon Adele Farina, have been doing a great job of going out and talking to CRCs, particularly across the south west, great southern and the wheatbelt. They have these conversations so that we can work out a strategy to manage them. I find those engagements really very rewarding. I just do not understand why this has become such a big issue. A whole lot of members seem to be the thought police. I am not allowed to talk to anyone about glyphosate, for example. I am not allowed to talk about alternatives to using agricultural lime. These are really bad things for an agriculture minister to be talking to people about! Guys, get over it. There is a big wide world out there with lots of people and lots of different ideas, and we are not going to narrowcast how we work in this portfolio.

I am extremely proud of the work the McGowan government is doing to really get our economy back on track. We do not pretend it is easy and that we can resolve these issues overnight, but I think we are working with purpose and with a very, very credible plan to achieve it.

HON MICHAEL MISCHIN (North Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [11.04 am]: I rise to speak in support of Hon Peter Collier's motion, which I might remind the Minister for Agriculture and Food seeks this house's expression of concern that more than 12 months after the Labor government was elected, it has not established a credible financial plan as promised by it in 2017. I confess that my attention wandered somewhat while Hon Alannah MacTiernan was talking, but I do not think she really addressed the motion; rather, she expressed an awful lot of opinions about what is going on in other people's minds. That really is a reflection on her lack of having anything to contribute on this point. But I must congratulate —

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: So you didn't actually understand the point about procurement? You don't understand —

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Oh, I understood that. Thank you —

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I will not take interjections, but I will say that in travelling around the state, most ministers go to places to put their names on a plaque for opening something. This minister and the Minister for Education and Training go around to put their name on a plaque for closing them down.

Hon Peter Collier: Or to Albany.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Or to Albany. I wonder what is happening down in Albany when everyone's down there!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Martin Aldridge): Order, members!

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: But there are a couple of things —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members! Hon Michael Mischin has the call.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I must, however, congratulate Hon Stephen Dawson. He at least is passionate, reads the script and knows it well. He almost convinced me that he believes it. Some of the stuff he was talking about was quite astonishing. Firstly, he compared the first 12 months of this government, which was fully cognisant of the financial straits it was entering into when it sought election and which complained about the financial situation we were in as a result of our reduced goods and services tax share and other things, with the first six months of the Barnett government in 2008, at a time when the Labor Party continually told us we were in a boom time and ought to be reinvesting the proceeds of that boom. Well, we did invest the proceeds of that boom. Remember, we came into government when the campaign was to name three things that had been done by the Gallop-Carpenter government, and no-one could name more than one. So we did things. We invested during the boom time, if it was a boom. We built hospitals, schools and police stations. The best this government can do is open police stations for 24 hours, as if that is somehow a savings measure, whether it is necessary or not. There was no business case for it. We hired police officers, we put a teacher in front of every classroom—something the previous Labor government could not do. We built courthouses. I remember going to the opening of Law Week in the Supreme Court, speaking on behalf of the then Attorney General. The Chief Justice went through a list of about a dozen courthouses around this state that were falling to pieces. The best that could be done by the previous government, apart from the District Court complex, was to say that it had a plan to do something in Kalgoorlie. Well, we did it, and we rebuilt dozens of others around this state, including building the David Malcolm Justice Centre, which had been cried out for by the courts for something like 40 years. Nothing had been done except making plans and having ideas. We did it. That is how we invested the boom.

We built transport infrastructure, in case members opposite have forgotten that. Within weeks of this government coming into office, a whole raft of Labor members of Parliament were up in the northern suburbs marching proudly down the Burns Beach Road to Hester Avenue Mitchell Freeway extension as if the Labor Party had built it, saying, "This is another addition to our Metronet plan." Look what they did overnight! Well, I have news for them—that was ours. We did that. That is the stuff we did.

I will tell members a few of the other things we did. We had to make the Office of Shared Services work. It was supposed to save us \$85 million a year once it was established and got going. It could not. In fact, it ended up costing us close to half a billion dollars. We tried to make it work; the Labor government could not. It was a disaster. We finally had to close it down. It was supposed to be going within two years. It never got going at all. That is what we were left with. We had to fix that, if we could. Remember Perth Arena; we had to fix that. That is what we inherited. Before he starts talking about how we spent money, he should look at some of the stuff we inherited. It cost us \$660 million to fix the infrastructure for Western Power because poles were falling down in the country. That was Hon Fran Logan's legacy to the Barnett government—\$660 million. The original estimate was in the order of \$1.5 billion, as I recall. We managed to do it. That is some of the legacy that we were left with. Do not talk about the first six months of the Barnett government in comparison.

Let us look at what is being done here. We hear about creating jobs. The government claims to have created 30 000 jobs. No, it has got rid of public servants. Hiring public servants is the only way governments can create jobs. It has hired 330 education assistants for which there is no business case. The government justifies that as some kind of election commitment and therefore the rules about whether there needs to be a sound way of spending money do not apply.

Hon Peter Collier: United Voice.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: That is right. United Voice and the other unions do the actual governing for this government. I swear that this Premier is the sort that if his dog had six puppies, he would name them all the biblical name Job and then announce another six “jobs” had been created under the McGowan government! That is the level that we get to. I remind members on the other side of this place that at the time of the election, newspaper reports were coming out about how the job market was improving and the economy had turned around and we were starting to see the benefits of that. There is no credit to this government for jobs being created in the mining industry. The government is stifling investment in that field. It is all very well to talk about local procurement as though it is the answer to everything, but remember that at the end of the day we also have to show value for money for the taxpayer, and that is not being done.

How does one pay off a debt carefully like one pays off a house? If a household happens to have an income and one of those incomes disappears or the income drops, it starts making economies. People do not go off spending more money. They look around for some of the assets that they do not need anymore or where they can get that particular benefit from some other source. They might sell it off, just like we might sell off a partial share in Western Power, because the job can be done just as easily and just as well and possibly more economically by someone else. We do not lose control over it necessarily, but we get rid of the bits that we do not need. But this government has said that no, it will not do that because the unions will not let it. How else do we pay off a debt like we pay off a house? It was a good little slogan because it seemed to resonate with people. They thought that they understood what it meant. However, it was so vague and sneaky, like every other election commitment by this government, that it allows a lot of latitude for doing other things or for ignoring it ultimately.

Other commitments included no new taxes or fees. They disappeared early. We had a campaign in 2015 about how any increase in gold royalties would cost jobs. It would show how much the Liberal–National government hated Kalgoorlie. Within months of taking office, the government had whitewashed or airbrushed that out of history. One thing it has not set up yet, but it is doing a good job of it, is a ministry for truth, just like in that novel *1984*, whereby it can change history whenever it feels like it and ignore the bits in the past as it suits it. We have had a number of election commitments, all of which have been conveniently ignored. We keep getting told that election commitments are important. What about the one for police? That one was ignored, yet the one to United Voice has to be obeyed. The police need a better union. But there is no plan in this. We keep hearing in vague terms that there is a plan, but we see exactly the contrary. We have seen debt increase. We have seen nothing for it. We have had talk about plans.

Bill Shorten was on the radio this morning saying that Metronet is a great idea and that the business plan is very well put together. I do not know what he has seen. All we have seen are some lines on the map. If there is a business plan, this government has resisted all the way along the line showing us that business plan. Either this government is lying about there being one or he is talking off the top of his head in order to support a dishonest government.

HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural) [11.15 am]: I rise to speak on the motion moved by Hon Peter Collier and in particular to have a little look at the latter part of that motion, which refers to rushed decisions impacting negatively on numerous areas of the Western Australian community. I think that is a very important part of this motion. I thank the member for moving the motion, because it is clear that there is no plan beyond the Perth hills and for regional Western Australia. I will refer to some examples in education. The Labor policy document on education states —

Without proper support regional students and families often leave their communities in order for their children to get the education they deserve.

The government thinks: We do not really have a plan to fix the state’s finances, so we will cut some funding from schools out in the bush such as Moora. We will take some funding away from Moora Residential College to go who knows where. We will close that college. That will save money. Hang on a sec—the government’s own policy document refers to not wanting families to leave communities to get an education for their kids, yet because the government has no plan, that is exactly what will happen. It has no plan, so it made a rushed decision on Schools of the Air. The government quickly backflipped on that. Again, it highlights that the government has no idea. It has no plan at all. It thought: We will just plan to be elected. We will say what is populist to get us into power. We will talk about regional education being important and all sorts of things before the election. But when it gets in, it thinks: Hang on a minute, how are we going to implement this? That is right; we do not have a plan. Let us make it up as we go.

We talked about raiding the agricultural education farm provisions trust. This is a pittance in the scheme of the state budget, but for those ag and farm schools out there, this is their operating revenue. This is what allows them to upgrade their machinery and to keep their equipment modern so that students are getting the best possible education at those colleges and farm schools. The government will rip the guts out of them. It will take money off them and, in the end, there will be no saving because that equipment will still need to be upgraded. The money will have to come from somewhere. I hazard a guess that at the end of the day those schools will have to beg the government to help them fund those things. It is robbing Peter to pay Paul. It is not a plan. Again, it is a good example of how the government develops policy on the run without having a plan.

The change to the boarding away from home allowance is another example to show that the government does not have a plan. This is very important financial assistance for those who live a long way from the schools to which they send their children. It was boosted through royalties for regions. We made sure that happened because we recognise that education is important to people in regional WA and that no matter where people live, they deserve access to quality education. It seems that although the government's policy document released before the election is called "Quality Education in the Regions", it is not really. I think is a bit of a misnomer. It is quality education in the regions qualified by where someone lives because we cannot give a quality education to everyone in the regions.

I will talk a little bit about some of the comments made by other members about education. First, I will comment on Hon Alannah MacTiernan's comment during a debate in this place on 14 March about education when she said —

... if there is a silver lining in all of what has happened out of our requirement to deal with the budgetary circumstances we find ourselves in, it is a real focus on rural education ...

It is a real focus on rural education, except she is sorry for the kids of Moora; they do not count.

Hon Darren West interjected.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: For students at Moora Residential College, education does not count. I am glad Hon Darren West agrees. The government was going to cut Schools of the Air funding: "We will cut that—no, we won't cut that. The education of students of an agricultural college or those at the Esperance Farm Training Centre does not count either, so we'll cut some funding from there as well." This government's plan is all about those who live in Perth but not if they live over the scarp. For those who live in regional Western Australia, it is, "I'm sorry, you're not part of our plan." That is the reality of this government's focus. It is very much focused on those in the metropolitan area.

One of the other commitments the now Premier made in his campaign launch was his plan to keep Western Power in public hands, and that would keep power bills down for Western Australian families. That has been a fantastic success! I am sure everyone would agree that not selling Western Power has really helped keep power prices low for everyone! I think a lot more people will put solar panels on their roofs under this government, if that was the intended outcome. Maybe that is a good thing.

In closing, I want to say that I think it is incumbent on all of us to hold this government to account over its failure to have a plan and its failure to address debt. Its own budget papers show state debt growing far more than would have been the case under the previous government. It has to own this. It is the government's failure to have a financial plan that is causing state debt to increase and will contribute to making our financial situation far worse than it already is. It is therefore incumbent on us on this side of the house to hold government members to account to show the people of Western Australia that when in government, they need a plan. They cannot pay lip-service to some notion of a piece of paper or a policy document that has the word "plan" on it. Unless there are some bones behind that or some meat on the bones—some tangible things to deliver—it is not a plan; it is not worth the paper it is written on; it is nothing more than hot air and lip-service.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [11.23 am]: I want to congratulate members on the other side of the house for talking for over an hour on this motion and keeping a straight face the whole way through! That is an outstanding effort; I wish I had that skill! We have just heard a lecture from predominantly Barnett government members who did not have a plan in eight and a half years. The only thing they delivered was forty thousand million dollars in debt for Western Australian tax taxpayers. This was a government that had seven Treasurers in eight years. There was no financial continuity or plan—no financial credibility. We had them all over that time—Doc, Dopey, Bashful, Grumpy, Happy, Sneezy, Sleepy—the whole seven. I could say a lot about this, but good on Hon Peter Collier for bringing on the motion. I have missed his contribution but I presume he could keep a straight face, as were other members. It is ridiculous for us as an incoming government to be cleaning up the financial mess we inherited after one year and to be lectured by members from the Barnett Liberal–National government—the worst in our history.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Motion

HON MATTHEW SWINBOURN (East Metropolitan) [11.24 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house notes the findings of both the Langoulant report and the report from the Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee in relation to the new Perth Children's Hospital and —

- (a) recognises the poor project management by the former Liberal–National government; and
- (b) commends the current Minister for Health for taking charge of the project to ensure the problems with the new construction are promptly dealt with.

My motion relates to a matter that is very close to me, and that is the provision of best-practice health care for our children in Western Australia. It is about how the previous government let down those children with its poor management and poor oversight of the construction of the new Perth Children's Hospital. We have been fortunate to have a world-leading medical facility in this state to provide for the health needs of our children for a very long time. But in the physical sense, Princess Margaret Hospital for Children is an outdated medical facility at best and at worst it is a dilapidated and run-down facility that fails to meet the standards expected by our community. Of course, that is why in 2008, the Carpenter Labor government first committed to building a new children's hospital to replace PMH and why when the Barnett Liberal-National government came into government, it went on to commission the building of that new hospital.

I recently spoke in the chamber on the meaning of value when I outlined our opportunity to improve government procurement practices. This opportunity—the change—has largely arisen from the failings of the previous Liberal-National government's years of poor procurement management. The issue that has captivated Western Australians, me included, is the Perth Children's Hospital debacle. The spotlight on this project is well justified as it directly affects the lives of hundreds, if not thousands, of children in Western Australia. We stand here today only weeks from the opening of the hospital and we must ask ourselves where it all went wrong and why it took so long for it to be fixed. We need to remember that we were initially promised practical completion of the hospital in June 2015, then August 2015. Another 15 dates were promised for practical completion until practical completion was finally reached on 13 April 2017. I think we need to briefly pause and reflect on those 17 promises of practical completion and the failure of the previous government and the head contractor to meet those commitments. Often in this chamber, Hon Nick Goiran has used the term "shifty". If that is not shifty, I do not know what is—17 promises of practical completion and not one was met.

The narrative here is one of poor project management, poor procurement practice and abysmal delivery leading to real world consequences. Nothing sums up this fiasco more than a photo recently posted in an online ABC article. It is a picture of an empty hospital room and an empty bed with a rather lonely teddy bear sitting on the bed. The bed is surrounded by expensive and what was new hospital equipment. For almost three years, that equipment could not be used for its intended purpose. Every day for almost three years, this critically important infrastructure has sat idle, not being used for its intended purpose. Every day that there has been an empty bed at the Perth Children's Hospital, a child in this state has not been receiving the best treatment available.

The Langoullant "Special Inquiry into Government Programs and Projects: Final Report" was tabled on 20 February, which members of the Legislative Council have heard much about. This report was damning of the previous government's procurement practices and project management. During the inquiry, 31 programs were looked into. Although Perth Children's Hospital was referred to in the report, I believe it was left mostly for the Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee report to deliver the findings on that. It is clear that in reflecting on the practices of the previous government, we must learn from its mistakes and ensure that, in future, the state is more capable of handling important projects like Perth Children's Hospital.

The title of the Legislative Assembly Public Accounts Committee's report on Perth Children's Hospital is very apt—"PCHA — A Long Waiting Period"—although unfortunately in a rather sad way. The committee report explores the project with vigour and detail, which was not undertaken in the Langoullant report, of course. It provides a thorough account of key events, failings and stakeholder accounts, which is pivotal to developing a coherent conceptualisation of the building of Perth Children's Hospital. The report notes the despair and frustration of not only the Western Australian government, but also the people of this state. The committee focused on the effectiveness of governance structure, specifically in identifying and responding to risks; the processes in place to ensure that materials and systems adhered to the required standards; and the risks and benefits associated with granting practical completion.

Even though it was not the committee's aim to examine this matter, it was clear that one of the central issues in this whole debacle was the awarding of the contract to John Holland Pty Ltd. John Holland's name was mentioned no less than 295 times in the report. The then Liberal-National government accepted an extremely low tender from John Holland. John Holland had no experience of handling a project of such scale and complexity. This was effectively the first failure in this project. Other major findings in the committee's report include the convoluted and overly complicated governance structures, which led to confusion and conflict throughout the project. These findings were a symptom of poor project management by the previous government.

In reviewing the failures in this project, we need to ask what are the real-world consequences of these decisions and practices so that we can comprehend the necessity for change. The Langoullant report clearly outlines the general fiscal and managerial ineptitude of the previous government. The Public Accounts Committee report relates this to a real world example of Perth Children's Hospital. Who has borne the brunt of the consequences of this ineptitude? I can tell members it is the people of Western Australia—the mums and dads, but, most importantly, the children, who have coped the consequences. It is the children of this great state who have missed out the most.

For me, the long waiting period has had real practical effects. I have spoken previously about my middle son, Mitchell. He has a range of complex medical issues, and my wife and I have been regular users of the wonderful facilities at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. In May 2015, Mitchell was diagnosed with two tumours growing in his little body—one in his stomach and the other attached to his vena cava. In July 2015, a month after the new hospital was to have reached practical completion, he underwent major surgery at PMH to remove the two tumours. I do not wish those hours of waiting on anybody, but when the surgeons came out and told us that they had been successful in removing the tumours, to say we were relieved would be a gross understatement.

However, as anybody would know if they have been, or have supported a person, through major surgery, the recovery can be just as hard as, if not harder than, the procedure. This was certainly the case for Mitchell. His pain was so bad that one of his lungs collapsed, forcing him to go into the PMH paediatric intensive care unit for four days as they tried to inflate his lung. When we sit in the PICU for hours on end with the doctors and nurses, we get the opportunity to learn things that we otherwise would not know. One alarming thing I learned was that in the event of a code black at the hospital—which is a life-threatening emergency that usually requires resuscitation—the PICU staff are required to grab a resuscitation pack and attend to the child in whatever part of the hospital they might be. If I remember correctly, the PICU is on the fifth floor of Princess Margaret Hospital. Princess Margaret Hospital has nine floors. Normally, the PICU staff would use a key to recall one of the lifts and take it to whatever floor they need to attend. Unfortunately, this function has failed, and the hospital does not intend to repair it. When I asked why it was not intended to be fixed, I was told they anticipated to be moving to the new Perth Children's Hospital very soon and the decision had been made not to invest further money in significant maintenance at PMH. The consequence was that the great staff at PMH have to use the stairs. I do not know whether members have used the stairs at PMH, but they are rather steep. If my child was in a ward on the ninth floor and went into cardiac arrest, the staff who were trying to save him would have to run up the stairs all the way from the fifth floor. They would then have to engage in an extremely stressful and high-energy procedure to resuscitate my child. I would not like to think what the consequences might be for the staff and the child. However, the staff are dedicated and devoted to their jobs. They do not complain. As is often the case when people are waiting for long hours, we just talked about these things. That was in July 2015. It is now April 2018 and children are still being treated at Princess Margaret Hospital. I am not sure whether the lift was ever fixed, but the thought that some child might have died because the staff were too puffed out after running up several flights of stairs or did not get to the child quickly enough is almost too hard to bear. Regrettably, my wife and I are likely to find out whether the lift is working, or whether the economic rationalists have decided that the cost of repair outweighs the possibility of the death of a child, because on Monday we will be back at Princess Margaret Hospital for Mitchell to have further surgery on his metastatic tumours.

This motion makes me angry. The previous motion that we dealt with makes me angry as well. There are real-world consequences for the decisions of previous governments. There are real-world consequences for the decisions of all governments. It makes me angry that due to the dismal failure of the former government in delivering on a new children's hospital, my child and other children have not been getting the best care that can be given to them. As I have said, the care that is delivered at Princess Margaret Hospital is world class. However, there is a reason that a new children's hospital has been built. PMH is dilapidated. It is falling down, for want of a better term. We need that new children's hospital. However, I am grateful that Mitchell will be attended to by some of the best medical practitioners in the world and that the care he will receive will be first class.

Governments do not undertake projects like Perth Children's Hospital as a public relations stunt or for a headline. Governments undertake these projects out of a sincere intent to address a need in the community. I am sure that is why the previous government committed to building Perth Children's Hospital. An essential requirement is that these projects be completed to the highest standard. The failure to deliver that project to the highest standard is at the heart of the mismanagement of the former government. Despite the good intentions of the former government, it failed to grasp the need for quality, experience and certainty in its decision-making about who should be responsible for building this hospital. The consequences of this failure are reflected not only in the delays, but also in the lead and asbestos content scares at that hospital. How exactly a hospital for children can be caught up in a lead and asbestos content scare in this day and age is completely beyond my ability to comprehend. If it were not so serious, people would think we were having a lend of them—lead in the water and asbestos in the materials of a new children's hospital. Firstly, it is dangerous, and, secondly, it has damaged the reputation of Perth Children's Hospital. Parents are apprehensive about their children attending that brand-new facility on the basis of what they think might still be contained in that hospital. Who could blame them for being apprehensive? I will run out of time to go through the many reasons for this, but I would like to say in closing that I appreciate that the government and the Minister for Health have announced that Perth Children's Hospital will soon be open. That is not soon enough for Mitchell, and he will still be treated at Princess Margaret Hospital. It is time to put aside party politics and think about how we can best deliver for the children of our state.

HON ALANNA CLOHESY (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [11.40 am]: I thank Hon Matthew Swinbourn for bringing this important motion to the house for members' consideration. I acknowledge his, his family's and his son's experiences throughout the years. I also recognise what families,

children and the staff of Princess Margaret Hospital for Children have had to put up with over the years while waiting for the new hospital to open. Hon Matthew Swinbourn rather poignantly described his experiences, and that is why I am very pleased that Perth Children's Hospital will soon be open. Unlike the previous government, the McGowan government took control of the project and got the job done. I am so very proud of that. Western Australia will have a world-class facility that it so deserves. More importantly, that hospital will provide the most important service that any government can provide—that is, helping sick kids. That is what is important; that is what we have to remember. The government has done that by doing what the previous government failed to do—that is, to fix the water issues and to set an opening date.

I am sorry that the honourable member's son Mitchell will not be able to have his surgery in the new hospital and I hope that he will not have to use the new hospital. But what is really important is that the new hospital will be available to our kids at the earliest possible date. That could only have been done through the decisive action that the government took in accepting and taking on practical completion of the hospital. I note that that decision to take practical completion continues to be questioned, but I think the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. The decision to take practical completion continues to be questioned, particularly by the opposition, but the facts are that if the government had not taken practical completion of the hospital, it might still be sitting there idle. I cannot fathom how long it may have taken for that fantastic facility to be made available for sick Western Australian kids and their families if that decision had not been made.

I acknowledge that it was a difficult decision to take practical completion. The Public Accounts Committee inquiry into the management and oversight of the PCH project highlighted successive failings within the scope of the project. That committee and the Education and Health Standing Committee inquiry highlighted successive failings in governance and other management issues. Both reports highlighted consecutive delays and failure to meet what at the time were 16 proposed practical completion dates. In fact, as the honourable member identified, there were 17 practical completion dates. None of them were questioned by the former government. The Langouant report looked in part at Perth Children's Hospital. It highlighted that Perth Children's Hospital was one of the many projects stunted by the former government's poor management. When we came to government, we were committed to ensuring that government infrastructure projects were managed tightly and effectively. PCH, as I said, is proof that we are achieving this goal.

Part of our government's success in getting such a good outcome has been its strong liaison with stakeholders. In particular, it listened to staff and union representatives. The honourable member raised the spectre of asbestos. It was the union that first raised concerns about the use of asbestos in the Perth Children's Hospital building. The government listened to unions, staff and community members involved in the day-to-day activities of Princess Margaret Hospital. The government noted their concerns and took their advice; it took steps to fix the mess left by our predecessors.

I now want to talk about how the government went about fixing the water problem and its decisions to get to this important point. The government wants Western Australians to be confident that it is opening a facility that is safe for children. As I said, since the government came to office, it has been resolute in its commitment to fix the remaining issues at the hospital. Fixing the water problem was the key issue.

The hospital has now undergone one of the most rigorous water testing regimes in the world. The remediation work approved by the minister to replace thermostatic mixing valve assembly boxes and brass components, which were leaching lead into the system, was completed in March. I would like to highlight the selection of a Western Australian company chosen to supplement the parts required to remedy the excess lead in the potable water. The Australian Valve Group delivered all outcomes ahead of schedule. Extensive water testing and sampling throughout the process culminated in the Chief Health Officer's second-stage testing. A total of 304 water samples were taken at randomly selected locations across the hospital using approved methodology. Those samples were sent to the ChemCentre for initial analysis. The pass mark remains the same as that set by the Chief Health Officer prior to baseline testing in June 2017. On 27 March, the Minister for Health announced that the water at Perth Children's Hospital was safe to drink after the Chief Health Officer signed off on the hospital's potable, or drinking, water. It complies with Australian drinking water guidelines. That achievement could not have been made without the hard work and perseverance of Western Australian Department of Health staff and project staff who worked tirelessly to deliver those outcomes. I commend and thank all those involved in delivering that outcome.

As I said, a priority of the government has been to confirm the safety of the hospital, and that has been assured. I echo the Minister for Health's delight that we can move in and finally open this wonderful facility so that we can continue our commitment of putting patients first.

The staged opening will run over four weeks. PCH is set to receive its first patients throughout outpatient appointments from Monday, 14 May this year, followed two weeks later by the commencement of elective surgery on Monday, 28 May. The final move for all remaining patients at Princess Margaret Hospital is due to take place on Sunday, 10 June, when the Perth Children's Hospital emergency department opens. This is a significant milestone and is a result of our decision to take control of the project, fix the problem and get the hospital open.

I thank everyone who has been involved in that process, and I say to the sick children of Western Australia and their families that I look forward to 10 June, when everyone can have access to this wonderful world-class facility.

HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan) [11.50 am]: I rise on behalf of the opposition to speak to this motion, moved by my learned friend Hon Matthew Swinbourn. At the outset, on a personal note, and on behalf of the opposition, I wish Mitchell the very best for his treatment on Monday. Our thoughts and prayers will be with him and his family.

There are effectively three parts to the motion. Firstly, it notes the findings of the Langouant report and the Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee. Secondly, it seeks to pass judgement on the former Liberal–National government. Finally, it seeks to commend the Minister for Health for taking charge of the project to ensure that the problems with the construction were dealt with promptly. Unlike the moderate contribution from the mover of the motion, the parliamentary secretary could not help but make the debate political. I note that the parliamentary secretary wants us to note the findings of the Langouant report and the Legislative Assembly's Public Accounts Committee, so I ask: Will her government now commit to adhere to all those findings? As such, will her government immediately table business cases for every infrastructure project before it is commenced? When will the government table the business case, for example, of the Morley–Ellenbrook railway? Will the government table the business case for returning the management of the Wandoo reintegration facility to the public service? Will the government make public all tender information and contracts resulting from ripping up the Roe 8 contract and repurposing the funds? Will the government make public the contract and all other information associated with changing the contract for the stadium pedestrian bridge? If this house is being asked to note and celebrate the findings of Langouant, we can start by calling on the McGowan government to start adhering to them. Otherwise, what is the point? Labor is in government now, and it is well and truly time for its standards to apply to its decisions. The government is well entitled to go over decisions of the former government and seek to learn lessons by doing so. However, I trust it will do likewise with the decisions from when Labor was last in government. After all, who could forget the fiasco that was the Perth Arena project?

I will make a brief comment about the report from the Public Accounts Committee from the other place. It is not readily apparent to me why this house would want to note a report from the other place. I note that the report contains some 52 findings. This highly time constrained debate during private members' business seems to me to be an inadequate mechanism to give due consideration to the 52 findings, in addition to noting the Langouant report. This, of course, is before we even get to the second and third limbs of the motion. It might interest members to note that the drafting process for committee reports in the other place is significantly different from that adopted by committees of this house. I intend to have more to say about that on another occasion, particularly as it pertains to decisions made by this house when being asked to agree to messages seeking to establish joint select committees.

Meanwhile, this motion seeks to allege that there was poor project management by the former government. Members opposite have the right to assert such things. If members opposite want to make allegations based on project management, I will simply ask these questions of the government. Firstly, if the project management on Perth Children's Hospital was as bad as the government declared, who has the government terminated from government project management? Secondly, if the answer to the previous question is nil, what professional development has the government provided to government project managers over the past 12 months? Thirdly, if the answer to the previous question was nil, does the government realise how hollow its assertions are about this project? Meanwhile, in contrast to the complexity of a paediatric hospital, I once again remind members of the far simpler project that was Perth Arena. We remember the budget blowouts and delays that were overseen by the last Labor administration. Even today there are issues with that building. That was a Labor project.

Rather than looking at politicised reports such as that of Langouant and the report of the committee of the other place, I prefer to look at the independent report by the independent Western Australian Auditor General on the Fiona Stanley Hospital project—report 5 from June 2010. I will just quote a couple of things about key findings for the attention of members. This is a report on the build of a significant piece of hospital infrastructure for Western Australia. Key findings from the independent Auditor General—sorry, Mr Acting President (Hon Martin Aldridge), I have momentarily forgotten who was in government between 2004 and 2007 —

Hon Peter Collier: It was Labor.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Thank you. The Leader of the Opposition is always so helpful in this house. The key findings read —

- Between 2004 and 2007, the capital budget for FSH grew from \$420 million to \$1.76 billion as project definition improved:
 - ...
 - the original cost estimate for FSH was unrealistic because it was based on a minimal understanding of what services the hospital would deliver
 - ...

- The \$1.76 billion capital budget covers the cost of construction and some fit-out, but not everything needed to open a working hospital.
- ...
- The opening date for the hospital is between three and a half and four years later than originally planned. Inadequacies in planning the project delayed the start of construction, and the increases in scope extended the construction timeframes.

I do not have time to go through all of that report, but I note that, on page 21, the independent Auditor General states —

An acceptable business case which was expected in December 2006 was not completed until the end of December 2007, and was not approved by government until June 2008. The procurement strategy was separately approved in late 2007, ahead of the business case approval. Normally, this would not occur until after the business case has been approved.

I prefer, when we are trying to assess the performance of governments on major infrastructure projects, to look at the independent reports of the Auditor General, not the highly politicised reports of Mr Langoulant and that committee from the other place.

Perth Children's Hospital is one of the most complex building projects ever undertaken in this state. The 298-bed hospital will have expanded clinical, research and educational facilities and greatly improved amenities for families and staff. This is the only tertiary paediatric hospital in Western Australia, and it will provide services to the sickest children across the state. Perth Children's Hospital will be Western Australia's premier paediatric facility and will provide first-class care for future generations of young Western Australians and their families. I note that we are quickly running out of time, but I want to note that Western Australians will enjoy one of the best paediatric hospitals in the world, thanks to the former Liberal–National government. Over coming decades, generations of Western Australian children will benefit from a world-class hospital, thanks to that government. That Liberal–National government was responsible for delivering all of those things.

It is unfortunate that there is no capacity to amend motions during private members' business; otherwise, the opposition would have moved amendments so that the motion would more properly read as follows —

That this house —

- (a) notes the findings of the Langoulant report and calls on the McGowan government to commence complying with those standards forthwith;
- (b) calls on the McGowan government to learn the lessons from all past government infrastructure projects, including but not limited to the Perth Arena project and the Fiona Stanley Hospital project; and
- (c) thanks the former Liberal–National government, without whom there would be no new Perth Children's Hospital.

HON PIERRE YANG (South Metropolitan) [12 noon]: I rise today to make a contribution in support of the motion before us. I thank Hon Matthew Swinbourn for moving this motion in the house. It is well known that the former Barnett government mismanaged the economy and the state's finances, so that we have state debt of over \$40 billion. It is also well known that the former Barnett government mismanaged a number of projects, such as the footbridge to the new stadium, the royalties for regions program, the local government amalgamation process and the Perth Children's Hospital. That was all under the disastrous reign of the former Barnett government. For the parents of sick children, nothing is more important to them and no other mismanaged project had a more profound adverse impact on them than the Perth Children's Hospital. I am a parent of two little kids. Unfortunately, children get ill from time to time. I have been to hospitals with my children. I have been to Fiona Stanley Hospital and Princess Margaret Hospital for Children. I can put my hand on my heart and declare that the staff—the nurses, doctors and all support staff—were fantastic. They were doing all they could to assist and help parents and sick children. However, there was a stark contrast between the two hospitals—one is flashy, new and modern; the other, unfortunately, is very tired and literally falling apart. The children of Western Australia deserve better, the families of Western Australia deserve better and the staff who work in those hospitals deserve better.

Western Australians have been waiting for a very long time for a new state-of-the-art tertiary specialist hospital for children. It is clear that the Perth Children's Hospital project was plagued with issues during the construction phase. First it was the asbestos scare and then it was the lead contamination in the water. This state-of-the-art hospital has been built, but it could not be used. That is a fact. That was the fault of the former Barnett government; no-one can deny that. In a parliamentary democracy, the buck stops with those who are responsible—those who are in charge. The former Barnett Liberal government and its ministers were responsible for this. I could not believe that what was said in *Yes Minister* about an empty hospital could happen in the twenty-first century in Western Australia. We have not only an empty hospital, but also an empty car park. This empty hospital is costing

the state \$6 million a month, while the empty car park is costing the state \$700 000 a month. After reading parts of the report of the Langoulant review and also the Public Accounts Committee review of Perth Children's Hospital, I could not for the life of me understand why the former government was so scared to stand up for the interests of the people of Western Australia. It was scared to stand up to John Holland when the issues arose. Those problems were not put forward to John Holland. It is well documented that John Holland failed to respond to, and routinely ignored, the government's requests for information. Why was the former government so scared to stand up for the people of Western Australia?

Hon Michael Mischin: What is your evidence that we were scared?

Hon PIERRE YANG: If the member looks at page 62 of the report, he will find that information.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Robin Chapple): Members! We have a speaker and I am intently listening to him. If we can move in that direction, that would be great.

Hon PIERRE YANG: Thank you, Mr Acting President. I was distracted by the interjections for a moment, but I will carry on with my contribution.

I am also baffled by the contract with Capella Parking. The terms were so favourable as to be just unbelievable. Why would anyone enter into a contract that would pay \$700 000 if the car park was underutilised? That is a sellout. What about the people of Western Australia? What about the people who are suffering? I will give an example. I live in Langford. I am pretty proud of the fact that we are a good bunch over there. There was a family centre over there. During the closing days of the last government, the centre had to be closed because of funding cuts. The centre was providing a lot of essential and good services to the people of Langford and surrounding suburbs, but it had to be closed. It was providing counselling services. It was giving parents of young children a chance to mingle with other parents; otherwise, they were unable to have contact with the wider community. I was told by the management that it had to be closed because of funding cuts. On the one hand, funding was cut from all the family day centres and they had to be closed, and, on the other hand, the government was handing \$700 000 to a private company to manage an empty car park. That is not on. That is just ridiculous.

The good news is that the Western Australian public is finally going to have a world-class, state-of-the-art children's hospital that will service the people of Western Australia. But for the McGowan government's decisive action at about this time last year to grant practical completion and take control of the situation and remedy the issues, God knows when we would have had the new hospital ready to service the people of Western Australia. The McGowan government and the health minister deserve the credit and our congratulations for that. Thank goodness we will finally have a hospital that will serve the families and children of Western Australia.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [12.08 pm]: I am a little unsure how best to approach this debate, so I am going to simply comment on several levels. I listened to the words of the mover of the motion with some interest. He concentrated on giving an account of how his immediate family requires access to medical facilities for some complex and enduring problems related to his child. We all have a strong empathy with Hon Matthew Swinbourn in connection with that. I mean that genuinely; there is no-one in this house who is not touched by the difficulty of the situation confronting his family and one of its youngest members in particular. We wish Hon Matthew Swinbourn every blessing in dealing with that. We can all appreciate how difficult that is to work through and how frustrating it can be to try to work through questions, including access to expertise and access to facilities. I do not think there is any issue with that. It also makes it difficult to address motions such as this in a hothouse political environment while we all have sympathy and sensitivity about the story that we have just been told. We all want to keep those separate.

I make an observation from the perspective of someone who in past years had ministerial charge of a number of major construction agencies. Not one of the projects that I was involved with was Perth Children's Hospital, I am rather glad to say at this time. That was an Office of Strategic Projects, I think it was called, project. I had many other hundreds of projects under my charge from time to time, so I know a little about this. It is easy to be politic, as we have heard from a number of members—we will hear again and have heard before—about some perceived deficiency in some project or other. I am sure we will do that about future projects in the presence of governments of either persuasion; that is just the nature of politics. However, I wonder what the purpose is of rehashing this at this time and in these terms. I suggest, with the greatest respect to a number of members, that there is not a great deal of mileage to be gained from it. There are plenty of arguments and counterarguments with any large complex public project. If it gives members on the government benches any satisfaction in respect of Perth Children's Hospital, yes, a few things are quite unsatisfactory about that project and leave a nasty taste in the mouth. I am aghast by the parking issue, as any normal, reasonable person would be. I reckon that was a complete stuff-up. I am angry about it because I do not like to be associated, even indirectly, with a government's record that has to claim ownership of that stuff-up. I am not happy at all. But when governments get ahead and do things, occasionally these sorts of things crop up on their watch.

The situation is similar when governments are held responsible for things such as someone discovering that something is wrong with a contaminant in a building product that some contractor, subcontractor or sub-subcontractor is using. That might seem unfair to government members with charge of the project, but they have to wear it. Indeed, former ministers—I think most of whom have now gone—have worn it for this. I do not know why we have to rehash it. Our rejoinder could now be that given that the current government demanded to take over the project—that was a bit controversial, but I will not go there—why has it taken so long to fix the outstanding problems that needed to be fixed to get this hospital open? We could argue these sorts of things in a partisan way from now till doomsday, but I do not think it would achieve a lot.

We have to acknowledge that the former government built this children's hospital. I went and visited it yonks ago. There have been issues with the water and a few other matters, but there is always a shopping list of matters left over at the end of a project of this complexity as commission approaches. There will always be a list of things such as something being wrong with the door locks on level 3—all these sorts of things. We can keep going on and raking it over forever if members opposite want to, but I would like to concentrate on making sure that children, be they members of Hon Matthew Swinbourn's family or anybody else, get access to good facilities, whether in hospitals or in schools, whether they are safe to walk the streets or whether they have the best water to drink. I do not mean in just the hospital; I mean across the state. We need to concern ourselves with those sorts of things. Members opposite need to understand that they are now in government and they have to set some standards. Every time they open their mouths to criticise the former government, they set themselves a clearer standard by which they will in due course be judged—as long as they understand that that is part of the game of what goes around comes around.

In conclusion, we will discuss all these things in the future. I do not know whether there is much more to be said today. From what I can see, this is a blame and counter-blame game. I want to acknowledge firstly the human element raised by our colleague, but also the understanding that these are complex matters. I have plenty of counterarguments to the one raised in this motion that I can have resort to if members opposite keep bringing these matters up in the future, and they will not want to be reminded of them.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [12.17 pm]: I know the Leader of the Opposition wants to talk, so I will do my best to be brief.

I begin by sincerely thanking Hon Matthew Swinbourn for moving this motion today. Hon Simon O'Brien just said that we are in a very adversarial business. We play politics harder than anyone else and regularly look at issues with a political eye. But it is refreshing for all that to be stripped away and to look at this very important issue through the eyes of a family that sadly needs the very important services offered by Princess Margaret Hospital for Children and the future services of Perth Children's Hospital. I think that changes everything. We represent the public, and that is certainly how it looks at issues such as these. I am very proud to be a colleague of Hon Matthew Swinbourn; he has been a breath of fresh air in Parliament. I am proud of all my colleagues on the government benches. We make a very strong team, and we have the ability to look at issues such as this in the manner that the public expects us to. I wish Mitchell, the extended Swinbourn family, friends, colleagues and everyone who knows you all the best because members know that my family's life was also touched by a very sad event. When we go through these things it makes us realise that although politics and matters of the state are very important to us, we all have one thing in common—our families certainly come before all that.

I will deal with part (b) of the honourable member's motion first because time will beat us today. Hon Simon O'Brien said that we can get up and whack the previous government around the head until the cows come home—sometimes deservedly, sometimes not so—but I think in this instance there is certainly a case to do that. I also acknowledge my colleague the Minister for Health, Hon Roger Cook, for taking charge and taking decisive action on this project and turning it around. It took a year, but he turned it around to finally give the public some comfort that this much needed facility will be open soon. I do not know whether members opposite realise this, but the Minister for Health comes from a very, very strong medical background. The Minister for Health's father is a local doctor in Perth and the Minister for Health's grandfather was a life member of the Australian Medical Association—the doctor's union, if you like. The Minister for Health's family has a very strong medical history. I think that may be one of the reasons that this was such an important issue to get involved in to take practical completion of the hospital. Those members who took enough interest in this would realise that he was quite widely criticised for doing that by the media and other members of Parliament, but it proved to be right. It proved to be bold.

Hon Michael Mischin: What did he do exactly?

Hon DARREN WEST: I know the member does not have a great understanding of this, because I have an information pack in here about part (a) of the motion in which the member features quite prominently, but taking practical completion meant that he could get the Chief Health Officer into the hospital to find out what went wrong. That was something the previous government had not thought about doing. The government was able to identify the source of the lead in the water. We all know that the lead and the asbestos were the issues. I think the asbestos had been sorted.

Hon Aaron Stonehouse: The Chief Medical Officer?

Hon DARREN WEST: The Chief Health Officer. The source was identified as dezincification of brass fittings. We were able to get in there and find out what it was, replace the thermostatic mixing valves and undertake all the testing and all the things that could not have occurred had John Holland retained control of that site. That is significant. That means that on Monday, 14 May, the Perth Children's Hospital, two and a half years after it was predicted to open, will open its doors to its first patients. That is a direct result of the Minister for Health's interventions and action of taking practical completion of that site amid criticism. Elective surgery will begin on 28 May, which happens to be my mother-in-law's birthday so I will remember that date. The final transition to that hospital will happen on 10 June when the emergency department opens. The Minister for Health deserves some credit for that. The government also deserves some credit for that, because the minister clearly did not make that decision on his own. Everybody involved in that decision deserves credit where credit is due. It would not hurt for the opposition to stand up every now and then and say that the Minister for Health has it right this time. It would not hurt to give credit where credit is due.

Hon Michael Mischin: Are you going to acknowledge that we built the hospital?

Hon DARREN WEST: Of course.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon DARREN WEST: The former Premier was at the opening of the new Perth stadium and that was noticed. Members opposite would know that these projects take a long time in planning and preparation, even when there is no mismanagement in construction. It is often the case —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Robin Chapple): Members! Hon Darren West, I note that you have very little time left.

Hon DARREN WEST: Often the opposing party of the day when the decision is made, gets to open the hospital. It happens a lot. I will not go as far as members opposite want me to, but I acknowledge that the planning and scoping and the awarding of tenders and the construction was done by the previous government. However, I also acknowledge that some dreadful mistakes were made during the construction of that hospital. This boils right back down to the families such as the Swinbourns, who have had to use that old facility for much longer than was anticipated, and it has a personal cost. I thank the honourable member for bringing the motion forward. It is a terrific motion. I thank the member for personalising a very political issue and bringing it to a level that everybody understands.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

LIQUOR CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2018

Receipt and First Reading

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by **Hon Alannah MacTiernan (Minister for Regional Development)**, read a first time.

Second Reading

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [12.26 pm]:
I move —

That the bill be read a second time.

The Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2018 includes amendments that will deliver the McGowan government's election commitments to liquor reform. The amendments in this bill further deliver on our government's plan for jobs by growing opportunities. Our tourism and hospitality sector already employs over 109 000 people. It is essential to our economy and must be supported through effective laws that support job and business growth and drive visitation to our wonderful state. Importantly, this bill builds upon the revolutionary legislation, introduced by the Carpenter government in 2007, that saw the growth of small bars in Perth and ushered in a significant change in Perth's hospitality landscape. The bill also addresses a number of remaining recommendations from the 2013 review of the act and several technical and operational amendments that will reduce regulatory burden.

This bill will free up licensing restrictions for licensees by amending the act to authorise all producers to trade in the same manner; for example, wine, beer and spirit producers will all be authorised to sell liquor for consumption on and off the licensed premises. The bill also amends section 50 of the act to simplify the process for restaurants' applications to obtain an extended trading permit to serve liquor without a meal. To address concerns of established

venues and accommodate modern consumer expectations and the increasing popularity of pop-up bars, the bill will streamline licensing arrangements for existing, established, local licensees to cater at temporary and pop-up bars at short-term events such as micro-festivals. In relation to club licences, the bill includes provisions to allow clubs to sell and supply liquor to people who are visiting a club. For the purposes of this amendment, a visitor must pay a fee to the club for the use of its facilities and must be at least 40 kilometres from their place of residence. This will stop clubs having to turn away genuine tourists and visitors to our state, and bring us closer to other jurisdictions under law.

To further complement the McGowan government's focus on a tourism-friendly hospitality culture, the act will be amended to allow the licensing authority to take into consideration any effect an application might have in relation to tourism, community and cultural matters. The bill also establishes a mechanism that will allow the chief executive officer of Tourism Western Australia to introduce evidence or make representations regarding the tourism benefits of an application or other matters relevant to the proper development of the tourism industry. The amendments will give tourism a greater opportunity to be heard during the decision-making process.

In the area of reducing regulatory burden, the bill amends section 38 of the act so that only prescribed applications will be required to satisfy the licensing authority that the grant of an application is in the public interest. This will significantly reduce the impost for low-risk licence applications such as restaurants and small bars. Those applications considered high-risk, such as hotels, liquor stores and nightclubs, will still be subject to the current public interest assessment requirements to ensure responsible development in Western Australia. Additionally, licensed clubs will no longer be required to have their constitution or rules approved by the licensing authority as a prerequisite for the grant of a club licence. Instead, the licensing authority will rely on the issue of a certificate of incorporation by the Commissioner for Consumer Protection as evidence that a club's constitution is acceptable.

A number of recommendations resulting from the 2013 review of the act had an emphasis on harm minimisation. In this regard, a new secondary object of encouraging responsible attitudes and practices in the promotion, sale, supply and consumption of liquor further supports and complements the primary object of the act to minimise harm. In addition, to reduce the likelihood of liquor being delivered to juveniles, the bill provides for a head of power to enable regulations to be made to prescribe requirements relating to the delivery of liquor. It is the aim of the bill to ensure no juvenile receives alcohol through a legitimate business.

Expanding on this, the McGowan government is concerned about the impact that a proliferation of large packaged liquor outlets can have on the community. To address this issue, the act will be amended so that the licensing authority will not be able to hear or determine an application if the proposed premises is larger than a prescribed size and an existing packaged liquor outlet that also exceeds the prescribed size is located within a prescribed distance. In addition, to prevent the further proliferation of small and medium packaged liquor outlets across the state, the act will be amended so that the licensing authority must not grant an application unless it is satisfied that existing premises in the locality cannot reasonably meet the requirements for packaged liquor.

The government's commitment to reducing harm caused by liquor, particularly in remote Aboriginal communities, is often thwarted by the practice of sly grogging. Sly grogging typically occurs in the Pilbara and Kimberley regions in areas in and around dry communities, or towns subject to some form of liquor restrictions. To address this serious issue, the bill will amend the act to make it an offence for a person to carry liquor above a prescribed quantity in prescribed areas anywhere in the state. In this regard, the act will contain a head of power to allow the quantities of liquor and areas of the state to be prescribed. Such regulations will be developed based on advice from the Western Australia Police Force to target areas where sly grogging is occurring, and consultation will be undertaken with relevant stakeholders. Importantly, these provisions will empower police to do their job to protect vulnerable people.

The new provisions provide a defence for a person carrying liquor for the purpose of a lawful sale, such as liquor being delivered to the holder of a liquor licence, and also provide for appropriate defences to be prescribed in the regulations. In this regard, depending on the area of the state, a defence for the carriage of liquor by genuine tourists may be prescribed.

Finally, the bill contains a number of technical and operational amendments to accommodate contemporary business practices and improve the administration and application of the act for both customers and the licensing authority. The minister has undertaken extensive consultation throughout the development of this bill with several key stakeholders from the small business, hospitality and tourism sectors, including the Australian Hotels Association Western Australia, the Tourism Council Western Australia, Clubs WA, the Small Bar Association, the WA Nightclubs Association, the McCusker Centre for Action on Alcohol and Youth, and the Liquor Stores Association of Western Australia. The minister would like to thank them all for their valuable input and support and acknowledges that each of these organisations had to balance their own members' views and undertake analysis on what was in the best interest of Western Australia. The minister believes this bill achieves a good balance between the responsible consumption of liquor, together with the tourism and employment benefits of a dynamic and prosperous hospitality industry, while also recognising the potential harm that liquor can cause in the community.

During consideration in detail in the other place, the minister moved a number of further amendments, including an amendment to increase the maximum term of an ongoing extended trading permit from five years to 10 years. I understand the minister also accepted an amendment moved by the opposition in the other place and we are open to considering further amendments in this place during the consideration of the bill.

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

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

[See paper 1282.]

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

TRANSFER OF LAND AMENDMENT REGULATIONS 2017 — DISALLOWANCE

Discharge of Order

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [12.36 pm] — without notice: I move —

That order of the day 2, Transfer of Land Amendment Regulations 2017 — Disallowance, be discharged from the notice paper.

By way of explanation, I have had discussions with the minister's office on this matter, and we have agreed that a bulletin will be put into effect to provide some transitional provisions to enable people to continue with the manual system from 1 May to 1 December. The Registrar of Titles has advised that it will be ready to publish materials early to mid-next week to declare that those transitional arrangements will be in place. I have also had assurances from the registrar through the minister's office that there will be an emergency contingency arrangement so that the paper system can be used after 1 December should emergency matters arise. Therefore, I thought it appropriate to discharge the order.

Question put and passed.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES

Committee

The President (Hon Kate Doust) in the chair.

The PRESIDENT: Members, we are in Committee of the Whole dealing with the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges' forty-sixth report, "Acknowledgement of Country".

Forty-sixth Report — "Acknowledgement of Country" — Recommendations 1 and 2 — Motion

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN — without notice: I move —

- (1) That the Legislative Council adopts the following form of words for a Legislative Council acknowledgement of country —

This House acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today—the Whadjuk Noongar people—and pays its respects to their Elders both past and present.

- (2) That Standing Order 14(1) be amended as follows —

To delete paragraph (a) and insert —

- (a) acknowledgement of country and prayers;

This motion gives effect to the recommendations of the forty-sixth report of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. That report was presented to the house by you, Madam President, last November. Members have no doubt read that report but may wish to reacquaint themselves with it. This report touches on an important and sensitive matter. The report details how the committee came to investigate this matter in the first place. We were following on from a prerogative of the Legislative Assembly, which has contemplated this matter through its Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges and has embarked on a particular course of action. The report acknowledges that the committee was provided with further information from the Legislative Assembly about its exploration of this issue, and we thank it for that. The report of the committee is self-explanatory. I know members are taking a keen interest in that report, so I do not intend to repeat what many members are re-reading at this time. However, I wish to provide some guidance to the Committee of the Whole about how it might wish to view this matter.

First, the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges form the basis for the consideration of this matter by this chamber. The motion that I have moved without notice is based on the recommendations of the committee and therefore provides a forum and framework for this debate. It is not necessarily a given that the chamber will adopt the committee's recommendations or any part of them. I remind members that it is entirely in their hands, as a collective body, to make whatever determination the chamber

determines to make. That will ultimately necessitate an amendment to the standing orders of this chamber, which will, of course, require a majority of members to be in agreement. I think it has been the case, certainly in recent years, that the chamber contemplates matters such as this with a view to obtaining a consensus that is respectful of all points of view, while seeking to move ahead with the job at hand. The recommendations of the committee are now before the chamber, and it falls to members to contemplate whether they want to agree to those recommendations, move to amend them, or reject them outright.

The report states in paragraph 4 that all 36 members of the Legislative Council were surveyed and asked some simple questions. The survey form is reproduced in appendix 1 of the report. Paragraph 4.2 at page 2 of the report refers to the results of the survey and states in part —

... 74 per cent of Members supported the reading of an acknowledgment of country at the commencement of each sitting day, and 61 per cent of Members were in favour of reading an acknowledgement of country before the reading of the Council prayer and the Lord's Prayer. 87 per cent of respondents preferred that the acknowledgement be in English.

I draw members' attention to paragraph 4.1 of the report, which states that only 27 of the 36 members of the Legislative Council responded to the survey. As I have said, the report refers to 74 per cent of members and 61 per cent of members. I do not know what the nine members of the Legislative Council who did not respond to the survey would have had to say, because we have not had the benefit of their input. Therefore, we do not know the view of a significant portion of members of this chamber. I make the following speculation, but I think it is a reasonable speculation. If those members whose surveys are missing—either because they were not completed or because they were lost in the mail—was an expression by those members that they were not interested in pursuing this course of action, that would put the matter in question on a more even playing field, because rather than have 74 per cent of members in support, it could peg out at about 50–50, and the 61 per cent of members in favour of reading an acknowledgement of country before the reading of prayers could be a minority. I do not know whether that would be the case, because the survey results are incomplete. However, the full membership of the chamber is now present so we will find out about that in due course.

I offer this comment as a private member, and also as the Deputy President of this chamber. I note that not only every state Parliament but also the commonwealth Parliament has adopted an acknowledgement of country. That acknowledgement is not always read every day on which the Parliament sits. The report cites the Tasmanian example, which is very interesting, because in the Tasmanian Parliament the acknowledgement of country is read on certain specified days but not generally. We are contemplating those same questions today. I say also, not on behalf of the committee but as a private member, that there are often expressions of sentiment about reconciliation. It is a reasonable expectation that if people want to talk about reconciliation, they should walk the walk, as it were. At the same time, we also need to realise that there is a variety of views. I would hope that as a mature society, we can work this through without it becoming controversial.

As you would know, Madam President, the committee went to some pains to come up with a form of words that it considered would be most likely to be accepted by the Legislative Council at large. That remains to be seen. I am sure we will hear from members in a moment about that. The other question is whether the acknowledgement of country should take place up-front at the opening of the parliamentary session or after prayers. The motion that I have moved is a reflection of the only information that we have obtained from the body of the Legislative Council membership—the 61 per cent of members who responded to the survey and said that they would like the acknowledgement to be read before the reading of prayers. I want to make it clear that I have moved that part of the motion, on behalf of the committee, in good faith to give members a framework in which to proceed with this debate. My personal view is that I am not sure that is the best way to go about it. I will need a few moments more in which to conclude, if you would not mind, Madam President.

I draw members' attention to this final point and to appendix 2, and the practice in other Australian jurisdictions, where almost without exception acknowledgment of country occurs after prayers—that is, prayers take precedence. The notable exception is the commonwealth Parliament; but, of course, its ways are a mystery to us in other ways as well. In New South Wales, in both houses, prayers are first. In Victoria, in both houses, prayers are held first. In Queensland, in its one house, prayers are first. The same applies in South Australia, and it is not clear from some of the information what happens in smaller jurisdictions. Other minds have contemplated this as well. There is deemed to be a need to be consistent in how we as a broader society approach this matter, so if we are to do that, perhaps we ought to give considerable weight to the view, as I do personally, that prayers should be the first thing that we focus our minds on, followed then by an acknowledgment of country.

With those words, I hope I have managed to condense some complex matters into a short space. I think they are the issues that we need to confront and hopefully resolve this afternoon.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Before I give the call to the deputy leader, I advise members that although Hon Simon O'Brien has moved this motion, which has two parts, when we come to deal with it after everyone has had an opportunity to make a contribution, we will be dealing with each part of the motion separately—so part (1) and then part (2).

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am confused. There have been some conversations behind the Chair about an amendment to Hon Simon O'Brien's motion. Do I move it now or when we get to the part that I am proposing be amended?

The PRESIDENT: You can speak generally to the motion in front of us, and if you would like to flag your intentions about your amendment, when we get to dealing with the motion, we will put the first question and then when we get to the second question, you can move your amendment at that point and we will deal with it.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Thank you for your guidance, Madam President. First of all, I congratulate the work of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. In 2015, this place passed legislation that incorporated the recognition of Aboriginal people into the state Constitution, which essentially acknowledged Aboriginal people as the traditional custodians of the land. From my perspective, that was a proud day for this place. This chamber, the Legislative Council, has been in operation since 1832, so I am pleased that 186 years after commencing in one form or another, this chamber is again making progress on not only the treatment, but also respect of Aboriginal people in Western Australia.

An acknowledgment of country is a way of not only showing Aboriginal people that we respect their heritage and them as the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, but also recognising their continuing connection to their country, so I am very pleased that we are dealing with this issue this afternoon.

Although what we will arrive at is not the preference of many people in this chamber—I think lots of people share the view that we should be acknowledging country before prayer—in the interests of consensus and in the interests of actually acknowledging country in this place, I indicate that I will be moving an amendment shortly that will seek to essentially put the prayer before the acknowledgment of country. I think that deals with the issue that the previous speaker, Hon Simon O'Brien, raised in his contribution. A number of people on both sides have strongly held views on this issue, but today is an opportunity for us to make progress. Members would be aware that our friends in the Legislative Assembly have moved on this issue already. I hate to be outdone by the people in the other place, so it is very important that we move on this today and that we finally have the acknowledgment. As I said, I will move an amendment later on that seeks to put the prayer before the acknowledgment of country. I just wanted to bring that to members' attention.

The PRESIDENT: Before I give the call to anyone else, would the minister like to distribute a copy of the amendment to others in the chamber so they have time to consider it before we deal with it?

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: I want to speak briefly on this motion. When I first came to Parliament, I was very surprised that we did not already have this in place. I thought that when the legislation was passed in 2015 to acknowledge Indigenous people's right to this land, this would have been a part of that legislation. I am very happy that the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges has put recommendations 1 and 2 before the chamber. It is good that the other states of Australia have acknowledged the need for recognition. As Hon Simon O'Brien mentioned, if we truly believe in reconciliation, this is just one step—it is a part of that movement, as we say.

In many ways governments need to lead the public and provide leadership very much in areas like this and very much in a bipartisan way. That is why I was surprised that an acknowledgement of country was not already a part of the start of each day in this place.

I also have personal views about whether it is said every day or said before prayers, but I am looking forward to further discussion on that matter, if there is any. As a party, we will be supporting this motion.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: This is a very important day for me and for many people in my electorate, which has a significant Indigenous population. I agree with Hon Colin Tincknell that it has been a long time coming. I thank the committee for the work it has done. At a very personal level, in essence because of my constituency and the work I have done over many years with Indigenous communities, I would prefer that acknowledgment of the traditional owners of this land come prior to prayers. I am mindful that this is not a voting issue but a consensus issue for the chamber, so I accept the recommendations. However, I make it very clear that at a personal level, I would like to see acknowledgment of country before prayers.

Hon DIANE EVERS: I also want to speak from a personal point of view, first of all, to say how pleased I am that we are going to be acknowledging country and how important that will be for many people. I also have to say that when the survey came back with support for it at 61 per cent, I could not assume one way or another how those people who did not respond would feel about this. I also understand that there is a need for consensus here. For me, the acknowledgment of country applies to all of us across the country and the prayers apply to only some of us, so it does not seem right that we reverse that order. I needed to put that on the record. I will support the motion as it stands.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I rise very briefly to speak to this motion. I commend all members who have provided their contributions in such a thoughtful, constructive and sensitive matter, considering the issue at hand. My observation, very briefly, is that we proceed not so much at peril but cautiously. As a nation, we have a complex, dynamic and, in large part, unresolved history. I concur to some degree with Hon Colin Tincknell's remarks that

this is part of a journey of reconciliation not only between peoples, but also with an appreciation of our history that there needs to be some reconciliation with our historical legacy in both a positive and negative way.

I will make two remarks concerning the timing and the format. I have to defer to precedent here.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I take this opportunity to resume my earlier remarks. I will not detain the chamber for long, but I want to make two or three not insignificant observations that I was going to make anyway but I feel I am now compelled to make on the basis of contributions by other members. The first pertains to the report and the proportion of support that members of this chamber have indicated for an acknowledgement of country. The proportions are not insignificant. If we endorse this motion, it needs to be done in good faith and with the acceptance of all members of this chamber. I do not think that is indicated to the degree that others might think it is by virtue of this report. A 75 per cent approval rating in a survey of 75 per cent of members is only 55 per cent of members.

A more serious issue is with the timing of the acknowledgement. I think there is a degree of inevitability, and indeed it is appropriate that we include this acknowledgement of country as part of our standing orders, but I want to record my support for the remarks made by Hon Simon O'Brien and the deeply held views of Hon Nick Goiran and other members of this chamber that an appropriate acknowledgement of country should take place after prayers. I do not think that obligates anyone toward any kind of religious belief or acceptance of a metaphysical creator. Instead, it compels us to work with a higher purpose in this chamber, as we are compelled to do in prayers—to be guided by wisdom and good judgement in all our deliberations for the benefit of all the people of this state. I think that is the appropriate frame in which to begin our business at the commencement of each sitting day.

I want to register my support for the acknowledgement of country, but I do so with some mixed feelings, and I want to articulate why that is. My reservations are not predicated on any lack of respect for the traditional owners of this country or for the elders of the Whadjuk Noongar people—quite the opposite. My reservations are about the precedent that this establishes for the special recognition of particular cultural groups to the exclusion of others. I refer here as well to other Aboriginal groups within the state of Western Australia that do not include the Whadjuk Noongar people. This country and this society have been built on waves of migration, and those who have come to this land through those waves of migration have made significant contributions to this state and community. I would not want to see their contributions or their Australianness questioned or potentially diminished by virtue of the length of time that they themselves or their families have spent in Western Australia or in Australia. I say this quite unabashedly as the grandson of two post-World War II migrants of European heritage.

My real fear in making this acknowledgement is that it will become the endpoint; it does not compel action. It is very easy for us to assuage conscience or a sense of moral culpability by a very late acknowledgement of a historical reality of this country, and to take no further action to improve the lives of Aboriginal people, particularly Aboriginal children, in this community. I speak as the proud uncle of two Noongar nieces and a nephew, and as the very proud brother-in-law of an exceptional Noongar man. In my heart of hearts I do not see that this acknowledgement adds anything to their personal dignity or contributes to the improved welfare, education, safety and health outcomes of the Aboriginal children in this state. It is time to start walking the walk when it comes to our relationship with Aboriginal people and not just think that we can make an acknowledgement at the start of the day and leave it as an empty, tokenistic gesture. I hope that does not become a reality, but only time will tell. With that, I will submit to this motion. It is the right thing to do, but it is not necessarily as easy or straightforward as has been made out. That is all I have to say.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: I want to add my name as an enthusiastic supporter for what we are doing here today. I want to reflect on some of the comments made by others. Like Hon Diane Evers and, I think, my colleague the Minister for Environment, I take the view that I would like to see the acknowledgement come first, before prayers, as something that frames the day. However, I must say that I was quite persuaded by the argument of Hon Tjorn Sibma that by starting off with prayers, it is not about a religious belief; it is about causing us to reflect on a higher purpose. I thought it was quite a skilful argument, and I would be one of those who would love to see us perhaps transform the prayer into something that would focus us in a religiously neutral way on that very concept of reflecting on the reason we are here and the job we are discharging.

This is getting a bit embarrassing because I agree with Hon Tjorn Sibma on about three things! He made the comment that he was a bit concerned that this acknowledgement was confined to the Whadjuk Nyoongar people—I say “Nyoongar”, and I will talk about that a bit later—and not the other traditional peoples of Western Australia. I have to say that when I was filling out the form, I supported the form of language that I think might be in South Australia and that manages to do both those things. Anyhow, we did not necessarily win that one, but I think that was a valid point. Maybe in the fullness of time we might want to reflect upon that again.

The third question Hon Tjorn Sibma posed, which I think is a significant question, was: is this really going to do anything for the Aboriginal people of this community? I think that it does. I profoundly believe that one of the

most difficult problems we are dealing with is the lack of engagement with the Aboriginal community. The more one comes to understand the history of what has happened in this land—I have been working on this for 45 years—one learns that it was the very rapid obliteration of their community, their culture and their technology. That, really, has been at the heart of the problem that we are all absolutely still struggling with. It is quintessential that if we are to make progress, we need to recognise that which was there so that we can build on it. In this case, I think the symbolism is hugely important. I appreciate that Hon Tjorn Sibma reflected on this. The vast majority of us in this house have, at the core of our hearts, an understanding that to be Australian is to really want to work with Aboriginal people to advance their interests. Can I say how pleased I am with the remarks of Hon Colin Tincknell and the fact that the One Nation party in this place is so strongly supportive of the recognition of the Aboriginal community.

Just one small point: I must say that I am one of those people who absolutely remembers all the old people saying “Nyoongar”. I do not know at what point the “w” sound was dropped from the name and the “y” was left out. If members talk to older people, they will say “Nyoongar” and not “Noongar”. It is with a little bit of regret that we are enshrining “Noongar” and not “Nyoongar”.

I thank the house for the goodwill that has been shown. Members have been prepared to compromise on their particular positions in order for us to get unanimity of response. It reflects very well on us.

Hon COLIN HOLT: Now it is my turn to be embarrassed, because I find myself in agreement with the statement that the Minister for Agriculture and Food just made. I first thank the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges for doing the work on behalf of the house and for bringing this report to this place for us to consider. It is for us to consider. As the deputy chair of the procedure and privileges committee said in his opening remarks, this is an opportunity for debate, based on the variety of views not only reported in the report from the survey, but also expressed in this chamber. There is a variety of views on the way forward. It is disappointing in some ways that only 75 per cent of members responded to the survey, but that is a choice that people make and that is fine. I take it to be majority support for the introduction of a welcome to country in this house. I note that the survey found that 61 per cent of members were in favour of reading an acknowledgment of country before the reading of the Council prayer. Obviously, a variety of opinions was expressed in the survey. I take Hon Simon O’Brien’s proposition that if every member had responded, that figure might have been around 50–50. That is unknown, because we cannot crystal ball gaze. Those surveys were not potentially lost in the mail. On the other side of that, it could well have been closer to 70 or 75 per cent who said that they wanted the welcome to country in front of the prayer. We have already heard a number of views on that issue. It is quite remarkable that even though we have a variety of views and opinions, we can actually arrive at what the Minister for Environment, on behalf of the Leader of the House, called a consensus position. I would say consensus has been arrived at by way of compromise. Different views were indicated in the survey and the speeches made to the house. I have a preference that we do the welcome to country before the prayers—that is why I find myself in agreement with the Minister for Agriculture and Food—but I am willing to make sure that this welcome to country occurs in this house as a compromise and consensus to say that this is the way forward for this house to adopt it at the start of formal business in this house. We can do these things when these matters are brought on for debate. We can do this when there is a signal that we are going to debate. We can work through the issues and options to come to a compromise position that has some consensus.

I believe that this will make some difference to Aboriginal people. It is a strong signal that they were the first peoples of this nation and that they have a great deal to offer. Part of our esteem for their place in our society is marked by a decision to do a welcome to country. I thank the PPC for its work on this matter. It is not easy to arrive at a position that the house will adopt. A lot of work was done behind the Chair to reach that consensus position. I look forward to implementing this and changing the standing orders.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I will just make a few comments on this motion. First of all, the Liberal Party will be supporting the acknowledgment and also the amendment foreshadowed by the minister. The way in which we have settled this issue is tremendous. It is a wonderful testament to this house that such a powerful message will go out to Aboriginal people. We have finally been able to settle it. That is a wonderful thing. A number of members have today articulated the view that it is not unanimous in some areas, but that is irrelevant. The point is that we have landed at a point that is acceptable to everyone and, most importantly, is very, very welcome for Aboriginal people. That is a wonderful testament to this chamber.

Hon Tjorn Sibma articulated the point that I was going to relate, but he did it so well that I will keep mine very brief. We all know that this will not do one single thing to alter the quality of life of an Aboriginal person in Western Australia. The gap in the quality of life of Aboriginal people is still so significantly large that it is almost embarrassing. I was privileged to be Aboriginal affairs minister for over six years and education minister, dealing with Aboriginal children, for almost five years. The disparity between the quality of life of Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people is embarrassing in the twenty-first century. It will be a magnificent time in this country’s future when Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can stand together and we do not have to talk about closing the gap, as the health standards for Aboriginal people will be identical to those of non-Aboriginal people, the

educational standards and NAPLAN results for Aboriginal students and non-Aboriginal students will be the same, and the housing conditions for Aboriginal people will be the same as those for non-Aboriginal people. Right across the nation we will no longer need a department of Aboriginal affairs, because the opportunities presented to Aboriginal people will be identical to those presented to non-Aboriginal people. To get to that point, we desperately need that rich tapestry of everyone working together. I think we have done that as a community. We have made giant strides in the Aboriginal space, particularly over the last 25 years, within the state, in other jurisdictions and nationally. However, as I have said, this, in isolation, will not help to close that gap, but as far as Aboriginal people are concerned, it is such a powerful message that the Legislative Council of Western Australia will acknowledge Aboriginal people as the oldest living culture on this earth with a very, very proud history, culture and heritage. They will be acknowledged. As a member of this chamber, I am proud to be here today. We will definitely support the motion.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: I rise to remark on the report we are dealing with. I, too, place on the record my support for an acknowledgment of country at the commencement of each sitting day. At the outset I put on the record my response to the survey provided to me by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, and I will speak on a number of those things. My response was that we should do it every day prior to prayers, and that it should be in English. I will canvass my reasons for that in my brief remarks this afternoon.

I was unable to be in the chamber prior to the break in sitting so I was unable to listen to all members' contributions to the debate, but I understand an amendment was moved by the Deputy Leader of the House that reflects an agreement between party leaders behind the Chair. I bring to members' attention, as other members have, that, interestingly, the majority of the members surveyed and those who responded supported the acknowledgment of country occurring prior to prayers. Recommendation 2 in the PPC report reflects the position of the members surveyed. I know the committee would have reflected on the weighting of those surveys in making the recommendations it brought to the chamber.

Similar to Hon Colin Holt, I can live with it—although it is not my preference—but I am concerned that although some may argue that having acknowledgment of country after prayers is consistent with more Australian jurisdictions, some may also draw the comparison that it is inconsistent with the other chamber of the Western Australian Parliament just down the hallway. I am concerned that people may conclude that the other place puts greater weighting or greater strength than we do on the acknowledgment of country by saying it before prayers in that chamber. That weighs on my mind.

The Minister for Agriculture and Food made some comments about recommendation 1 and the words that ought to be used. If I recall correctly, my survey response stated that my preference was to recognise all traditional owners of Western Australia. The members of this Parliament represent many regions, people and traditional owner groups from across our vast state, and my preference was to have a more broad-ranging or more general acknowledgment, rather than just the place on which the Parliament sits. Thinking back to my induction as a member of Parliament by the Clerk some five years ago, one of the first things we learned was that this chamber in a physical sense is irrelevant to Parliament. Parliament is 36 members of this chamber meeting at any place. That could be in another location within the parliamentary precinct, or it could be anywhere within Western Australia. Those are the two reasons I framed my response in the way I did.

From reading the report, recommendation 1 came from the procedure and privileges committee after consultation with a cultural expert, Dr Richard Walley, OAM. His preference and recommendation, which members will see at appendix 3 of the report, was for site-specific wording to be used in the acknowledgment of country. Having said that, members ought to consider that the Legislative Council could meet at a place that is not within the Whadjuk Noongar people's lands. I have been advised that the passage of recommendation 1 as a resolution of this chamber will give adequate flexibility for the President, in presiding over the opening of the house, to reflect the traditional owners of the lands, whoever they may be, wherever we may meet, at that particular time. I have been advised that recommendation 1 will give you, Madam President, adequate flexibility to do that; however, I put those comments on the record because I think it is important given that the recommendation deals with quite a specific acknowledgment to the Whadjuk Noongar people.

Hon Jacqui Boydell interjected.

Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE: Hon Jacqui Boydell is right. We have not recently met in other places in Western Australia, but certainly this and the other place have a history of meeting in other locations.

In the remaining time I will talk about the issue of dealing with standing orders. I am increasingly uncomfortable with the way the house manages the amendment and consideration of particularly procedure and privileges committee reports, particularly reports dealing with amendments to the standing orders of this place. The notice paper shows orders of the day 23, 24, 25, 26, and of course order of the day 27, with which we are now dealing. Five reports from the procedure and privileges committee remain outstanding. At least four out of five of those reports have been reinstated from the thirty-ninth Parliament. They are getting very old indeed. I am concerned with the approach taken in recent times. There almost seems to be a concern that consideration of these reports

might take considerable time of the house, and therefore considerable time of the government. It concerns me that the approach taken is that until we get everyone to agree, we will not do anything. In my view that is not the right approach to these things. Standing orders amendments, or indeed dealing with PPC reports, should not be something that we are scared of having a robust and strong debate about in this chamber. I fear that that debate now happens outside this chamber. I said in my opening remarks that the amendment before us today reflects the agreement of all parties, but it has come almost as a *fait accompli* to this chamber before we can even engage in the debate or convince others of a different point of view, and before we can even put an alternative view or position. This is the course that dealing with these reports has now taken. I encourage the government to consider the other orders of the day that are on the notice paper—that is, orders of the day 23 to 26. They include some really important matters for consideration, including the rights of witnesses appearing before parliamentary committees. E-petitions is a really important one that the Parliament ought to discuss, whether we like it or not. Why have we not had that discussion? Not to take away from today's debate, hopefully we can all reflect on those things, particularly party leaders as they meet as a group to decide how to deal with the management of the reports and amendments to standing orders. We should start to chip away at some of these reports, because it is in our interests and the interests of Western Australians that we address some of these important issues that have been on the notice paper for quite some time.

I wish to reiterate my support for the acknowledgment of country being read in the Legislative Council, and I express some concern, if not embarrassment, that it has taken us this long to reach this point. The motion today has my support.

Hon ALISON XAMON: I rise to indicate how pleased I am that we will finally have an acknowledgment of country read into the opening of Parliament on a daily basis. I think it is a really important step towards reconciliation with the First Australians. I think it is more than symbolic. Part of achieving reconciliation is about coming to terms with our history and acknowledging that this land was never ceded. It is Aboriginal land and will always be Aboriginal land and, as such, it is important and appropriate for this chamber to be acknowledging that that is the case.

I also think that it would have been useful to have had a form of words, for the reasons that have been articulated, that would have incorporated all the Aboriginal peoples within Western Australia, because if we end up holding Parliament outside this place and this building, it will be important that we acknowledge the lands on which we meet. Having said that, we are meeting specifically on Whadjuk Boodja, the lands of the Whadjuk Noongar people. As such, it is appropriate that respect is given specifically to those people on whose land we meet.

I do not believe that an acknowledgement of country takes away from or denigrates those people who have come to our shores, and will continue to come to our shores, to create what is now Western Australia. I am a direct descendant of four of the original members of the Swan River Colony and the original generations of people who came here and created Perth and Northam, as it turns out, in the form that we can see today. I do not believe that acknowledging our First Peoples in any way takes away from the achievements of people who have come to Australia since, and I feel no need to denigrate my personal family history in that regard. However, it is important, as an act of reconciliation, that we acknowledge that this is a colonised state and that as a result of this, the First Peoples of this land have experienced a level of disadvantage, marginalisation and poverty that is yet to be appropriately reconciled today. By no means should this ever be seen as ensuring that we have met our obligations to the First Peoples. Indeed, I do not think that anyone who supports these sorts of measures would ever think that that was the case. We are talking about an entire people who are less likely to live as long as others and who are more likely to be incarcerated and experience disadvantage, homelessness and poverty.

It is a really important step to ensure that we are, at the very least, acknowledging whose land it is on which we meet. As such, I am pleased that we have been able to achieve a consensus within this chamber to come to a form of words that will be spoken every day in this place so that we do not forget upon whose land we meet. Hopefully, that will also serve as a regular reminder of the obligations that we hold to always have the best interests of Aboriginal people at the forefront of our thinking.

HON AARON STONEHOUSE: Initially, I had not planned to speak on the forty-sixth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, "Acknowledgement of Country", but I feel that I should, given its historical importance and given that every other member of the chamber has laid their thoughts on the record. Briefly, I will cover territory that I feel others have already trodden, so forgive me if I repeat some of the sentiments that others have expressed. I believe we should always proceed cautiously when amending the standing orders and we should always take our time when considering changes. Going by the report that has been prepared by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, I see that a great deal of time and energy has gone into the consideration of how we might approach a welcome to, or acknowledgement of, country. I see that this is a largely symbolic change and I do not feel that it will not have a tangible impact on closing the gap. It may go some way towards reconciliation, but it will not address the large differences in economic, health and education outcomes. I echo the sentiments of Hon Tjorn Sibma and perhaps the caution he gave that this cannot be the last step. This is perhaps a step in the right direction for reconciliation, but we need to do more to close the gap. We cannot rest on our laurels after passing this motion and introducing a welcome to country.

In regard to the order in which we have our welcome to country and whether it should occur before or after prayers, I support the amendment by the Deputy Leader of the House to have the welcome to country read after prayers. I again share the sentiments of Hon Tjorn Sibma that the prayers in Parliament, even for those who are not religious, is a reminder of those higher ideals and higher values that we all hold. We should seek to uphold a transcendent value in our lives that informs our decision-making and our view of this world. I feel that if we have those transcendent values, they should come first in that they encompass and should apply to all peoples of this state equally. As a classical liberal and a libertarian, I believe strongly in the natural right of all peoples to life, liberty and property. This country, this state, has a chequered past. I would call our past and the treatment of Indigenous people in this state as nothing short of human rights abuses. It is important that we never forget that past and never ignore it and that we make efforts towards reconciliation. Despite my scepticism about the impact that this might have on closing the gap and achieving more equitable outcomes for Indigenous Australians, if this serves reconciliation and ensures that no-one forgets the past human rights abuses in this state, I am happy to support the motion.

HON NICK GOIRAN: I am pleased to contribute to the consideration of the forty-sixth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, “Acknowledgement of Country”, in this fortieth Parliament. The report brings the attention of the Committee of the Whole to recommendations made by the committee. I thank the committee and the five serving members for the work that they have done and the effort to which they have gone to collaborate with members of the chamber. I note that several members today, in the substantial number of contributions that have been made, have placed quite a bit of emphasis on their disappointment that there has not been an opportunity to debate this matter until now. In fact, I recall one or more members during the course of their contributions indicating that they were disappointed about that because it did not enable them to put their position and then potentially persuade others on the merits of their position. That is what I understood several members to say and I have a degree of sympathy for that position.

However, I find it somewhat ironic that some members during the course of this debate have placed quite a bit of weight on the results of the survey. I draw to members’ attention that the survey has been completed and provided to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges without any opportunity for any member to persuade another member on what their view might be. It strikes me that we either hold the view that it is important to have a debate and persuade each other on the merits of something or we give great weight to a survey whereby there has been no debate and no ability to persuade people. Nevertheless, pleasingly, the matter is before us now and we have the opportunity to debate it and, strictly speaking, members still have an opportunity to persuade one another. However, I acknowledge the sentiments of other members throughout the course of this debate. A series of useful discussions have occurred behind the Chair to ensure that the outcome today will be a positive one. It is an outcome that I think I would characterise best as one that every member can live with. For the purpose of the record, I would like to give my views on recommendations 1 and 2. In doing so, I hasten to add that I am supportive of the recommendations in principle and I am supportive of the foreshadowed amendment to be moved, I believe, by the Minister for Environment or somebody on behalf the government.

With respect to recommendation 1, Madam President, the committee that you chair and the report that has been tabled before the house dated 30 November 2017 recommends —

That the Legislative Council adopts the following form of words for a Legislative Council Acknowledgement of Country —

This House acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today—the Whadjuk Noongar people—and pays its respects to their Elders both past and present.

I note with great interest the contribution made by Hon Martin Aldridge this afternoon. It is a perfect example of what some members have raised—that is, the need and the benefit of being able to persuade one another about things. I listened to the contribution of Hon Martin Aldridge with great interest when he said words to the effect that he has obtained advice that the acknowledgement in recommendation 1 will be sufficiently flexible to be able to be used in whatever context the Legislative Council finds itself. That is my pretty elaborate paraphrasing of what Hon Martin Aldridge said, but I think I got the gist of what he had to say. It is a classic example of a matter that I confess I had not turned my mind to, and I thank him for bringing it to our attention. At this moment in time, I am somewhat perplexed to understand the basis on which there is advice that the form of words that the Legislative Council seeks to adopt today can somehow be materially altered at a later stage without the proper consent of the Legislative Council. That is a matter that needs to be considered, but I do not think it needs to hold us up today. I understand, because I have not been given any indication by the Leader of the House or yourself, Madam President, that there is no intention in the near future for us to sit in any location other than where we are today. Until such time as some notice is given that there is an intention for Parliament to sit elsewhere, I do not know that this matter is one of great urgency. However, it is a matter that requires, at the very least, an explanation. Preferably, if what Hon Martin Aldridge told us earlier is to be the position and that there is some, in my words, flexibility in the use of this acknowledgement of country, at the very least a ruling to that effect will be in order.

My preference is that the matter be considered by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges and that a formal report be made to the house for our consideration. The honourable member has raised an excellent point that should not be dismissed by members. At the end of the day, standing orders and resolutions made by the Legislative Council either mean something or they do not. I am incredibly uncomfortable with the suggestion that somehow we would adopt the form of words prescribed in this report today—the form of words that we are all agreeing to—and that they can somehow be materially altered at a later stage. For starters, I do not think that is correct, but if I am wrong about that, I do not think it is desirable. I hope that members will agree with me that it is not desirable and that a further report by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges would be useful in the fullness of time. As I say, I do not consider it to be a matter of great urgency.

The second matter I would like to address is the form of words outlined by the committee in recommendation 1 and goes to the consultation undertaken with Dr Richard Walley. I draw members' attention to appendix 3 of the report.

The PRESIDENT: Hon Nick Goiran.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I was just outlining to the chamber the advice from Dr Richard Walley at appendix 3 of the forty-sixth report of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, "Acknowledgement of Country". I found it interesting that Dr Walley states —

I agree with the options:

LC option 1...

This House acknowledges and honours the traditional owners of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today—the Whadjuk Noongar people—and pays its respects to their Elders both past and present.

LC option 3 ...

I respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the ancestral lands upon which we meet today—the Whadjuk Noongar people—and pay my respects to their Elders both past and present.

At paragraph 5.13.2, the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges has explained why it has recommended the wording of the first acknowledgement of country rather than the third one. It states —

This acknowledgement reflects the entire membership of the House as opposed to one given by its Presiding Officer in the first person.

I agree with that. I think it is desirable that each day when the President recites the acknowledgement of country that it is said on behalf of the whole house rather than in the first person. That would be entirely consistent with how prayers are articulated in the house.

I note that Dr Richard Walley, the chief consultant to the committee on this issue, has said he would agree with either of those options. One option refers to the "traditional owners" of the land, and the other refers to the "traditional custodians" of the land. My personal view is that "traditional custodians" is a better choice of language than "traditional owners". Therefore, my personal view would receive the support of Dr Richard Walley, because he has indicated that he would agree with either of those options. Therefore, there is nothing particularly controversial about my personal preference for the words "traditional custodians" rather than "traditional owners". Like other members in this place, in the spirit of compromise, and in order to get this done, I do not think I need to die in a ditch on whether we use the language "traditional custodians" or "traditional owners".

I will give a brief explanation. I do this because I note that in a lot of the contributions today, members have expressed a preference, without explaining why they hold that particular view. The reason I think "traditional custodians" is a superior form of language to "traditional owners" is that I believe we are all mere custodians. We are all on this earth and in custody of certain things and certain lands for a period of time, and it then passes to the following generations. In that sense, I believe we are custodians and not owners. However, that is my personal view and it need not hold up the passage of the acknowledgement of country.

The committee also recommended to the chamber that standing order 14, which deals with formal business, be amended. Paragraph (1) of standing order 14 contains 11 subparagraphs. Subparagraph (a) simply reads "prayers". The committee recommended that subparagraph (a) be deleted and a new subparagraph (a) be inserted that reads "acknowledgment of country and prayers". Those two items would be combined or conflated. I understand that the Minister for Environment will be moving an amendment to that. I am not sure that I have seen the amendment.

Hon Stephen Dawson: It has been circulated, member.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: I now have the proposed amendment, and it is very helpful, because it answers my question. I was about to say that I am not enamoured with the conflation of those two items. I believe that out of respect for those two parts of formal business, there is merit in separating those items. I note that the foreshadowed

amendment would do exactly that. Therefore, I flag to the Minister for Environment my support for his proposed amendment. I thank the minister and the government, and whoever else has been involved in the drafting of that amendment, and say that is work well done.

To conclude my comments on the order in which the acknowledgment of country and prayers should take place, I indicate to members that this is the one and only area in which I responded to the survey. I did not complete the survey per se. However, I did send an email to the committee and put my view clearly and concisely. My view is based on two things. The first is that a significant number of jurisdictions in Australia read the acknowledgement after prayers. I draw members' attention to appendix 2 of the report, which deals with that matter. However, that is not reason enough. Far be it for me to say that just because the Victorians, the New South Welshmen and the South Australians and so on do something one way, we should do the same thing. I certainly do not hold the view that just because the other place of the Parliament of Western Australia has chosen to do something in a certain way, we should march to its tune. I will give members the simple reason that I responded to the survey by indicating that prayers should be read before the acknowledgement of country. Members may or may not hold the view that there is a God. If they do hold that view, as I do, clearly prayers should be read first. It makes no logical sense and it is completely unnatural for it to happen the other way around. If members hold the view that there is no God—I respect their right to hold that view—all that would happen at the reading of prayers would mean nothing to them. It would just be a nothingness. We would then move to the acknowledgment. For those of us who think that the reading of prayers means something and is not just a nothingness, the reading of prayers absolutely needs to take place first, because otherwise it would make a complete mockery of the reading of prayers, and I would find that extremely irreverent.

HON JACQUI BOYDELL: I rise briefly to put on the record my support for this motion and for the amendment foreshadowed by the Minister for Environment. I was very privileged in the last Parliament to be a member of the Joint Select Committee on Aboriginal Constitutional Recognition, along with, from this place, Hon Dr Sally Talbot and Hon Michael Mischin; and, from the other place, Murray Cowper, the former member for Murray–Wellington; Josie Farrer, member for Kimberley; and Hon Ben Wyatt. That was a very historic moment for that Parliament. The committee took a bipartisan approach to the recognition of Aboriginal people in our Western Australian Constitution. That was very much the right decision to make. It placed on the record the intent of the Parliament and the leaders of the state of Western Australia to acknowledge that Josie Farrer, the member for Kimberley in the other house, had brought to the Parliament an important piece of legislation that was supported by all members of this Parliament. To me, what we are doing today in the Legislative Council is also a moment in time that all members of this chamber can be proud of. It is an acknowledgement that the history of this Parliament reflects the importance of Aboriginal people and their place in our history, which we all must recognise and own. Acknowledgement of country is about recognising the traditional owners of this land. It is also a moment of reflection while we acknowledge the relationships that we have with Aboriginal people and our duty as members of Parliament, friends and relatives to ensure that, wherever possible, we promote the interests of Aboriginal people in our state. I think that is entirely the right thing to do. Some members have reflected on whether this will alleviate any closing the gap issues. I do not think this motion is intended to do that. The action of acknowledging country every day in this Parliament will allow members of this Parliament to reflect on what we do every day to promote the rights of Aboriginal people.

I have two godchildren. They are young Aboriginal men and I love them both very dearly. I know that they feel that welcome to country, or acknowledgment of country, acknowledges their history, their family and the place in which they sit in Western Australia. It is a proud thing for them to reflect on the Parliament of Western Australia acknowledging their place in Western Australia. Indeed, I am very privileged to be part of this debate. I thank all members for their contributions. I do not think a comment has been made that I have not agreed with. It will be a great thing for members of this house to be able to reflect in the future on this moment in time because we all believe that we are taking a step that each one of us knows will at every opportunity promote the rights of Aboriginal people.

Hon KYLE McGINN: I also put on the record that I believe that this is a very historic moment. When I first came to this place, I was shocked to learn that acknowledgment of country did not take place. I believe we need to continue to move forward in this space. It is an honour for me to be part of a Parliament that is making this decision. I believe it is a step towards further reconciliation.

Hon ROBIN SCOTT: I would like to put on the record, too, that I am in favour of this report and to comment on Hon Aaron Stonehouse's comments. Enough time has been spent on this matter. I would like to get this over the line as soon as possible without any further debating or committee meetings. Hon Aaron Stonehouse also said that he does not think it will help close the gap. I assure him that the Indigenous people who come to my office every day when it is open will be very, very happy about this. The gap is not going to close with a bang. This will go a very small way towards helping to fill that gap. Recommendation 1 is perfect. If this chamber has to set up shop somewhere else, I am sure that we will be able to change the name of the traditional landowners. I agree with Hon Nick Goiran on recommendation 2, that prayers should be said before welcome to country.

Amendment to Motion

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON — without notice: I move —

To delete all of the words after “To” and insert the following —

insert the following after paragraph (a) —

(b) acknowledgement of country;

And to renumber the following paragraphs accordingly.

I do not propose to speak for long. As I indicated earlier, a number of people have different views about this, but we all want an acknowledgement of country. It is for that reason that I move this amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Motion, as Amended

Hon SIMON O’BRIEN — in reply: On behalf of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, I thank members for their respectful, thoughtful and entirely constructive contributions to the debate this afternoon. I think we have achieved some things just by going through the exercise and I hope that all members have grown a little personally as a result of participating in that.

A number of matters have been raised that I think can be left as they are—they were matters to be raised and members have respectfully considered each other’s contributions. Only two substantive matters raised in the course of the debate require a response. The first is the adoption of a form of wording in the first part of the motion that I moved, specifically, that we identify the traditional owners as the Whadjuk Noongar people. Considerable thought went into those words in the course of the committee’s deliberations and that is reflected in its report. I have not seen any disagreement with this, but that is why there is a specific given there, and it is based on the advice with which we were provided to preserve a cultural sensitivity. In the case that the Legislative Council ever sits somewhere outside Whadjuk Noongar country, seriously, is something that we will deal with easily if and when it ever happens. It has happened once that I am aware of, when we sat in Kalgoorlie. I do not know when our next regional sitting will be, but we managed it once in 186 years, maybe we will get to do it again in another 186 years.

The PRESIDENT: I am sure you will still be here, Hon Simon O’Brien; I am looking forward to that!

Hon SIMON O’BRIEN: Do not worry about that; it is not a substantive concern. That is not to make light of it.

Members, be aware that there are all sorts of standing orders, and, yes, our standing orders are black letter law. That being said, the customs and usages of the house are such that the President can from time to time achieve all sorts of things to make the house run smoothly, even for things that are not prescriptively laid down. I can think of a recent example in which we made some alterations just to make absolutely sure of a problem that might never arise, and I assure members that the President or I would have dealt with it if it had somehow arisen anyway. Nonetheless, this will not be a problem.

The second matter that was raised is not directly related to this motion but is about the speed of dealing with Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges recommendations. May I suggest, in response, that that is a matter for the house. It is a matter collectively—I will not say for “you”—for us. I have not looked up the statistics on this, but, indeed, in many cases, although this was a sort of own motion or own initiative referral by the committee, matters are actually directed to the procedure and privileges committee in the first place by the house or by way of a request from the house that it look into a matter; either way, it is up to the house when it wants to deal with things. Members, do not think for a moment that things have to be dealt with on the floor of this chamber to be dealt with. So much happens away from our plenary session that that is the way things work. I offer that not by way of argument, but by way of reassurance.

It is clear that we all feel that we have achieved a lot in this debate. I thank members for their support of the motion, as amended.

The PRESIDENT: Members, when we first started this debate, I said that I would split the motion into two parts and we would vote on each separately. We have now already amended part (2), so we will not do that. Therefore, the question is that the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Report

Resolutions reported, and the report adopted.

LAND TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2017*Second Reading*

Resumed from 13 March.

HON Dr STEVE THOMAS (South West) [3.13 pm]: On behalf of the opposition, I am pleased to let the house know that we will support the Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill 2017. I know that we have just had a fairly big debate, and it is good to see that everybody is still in the house for this economic discussion about taxation.

I know that everybody gets very excited about that. I was a little concerned to hear in the last debate that Hon Simon O'Brien might be in the house for another 186 years. That was a little concerning. I am going to presume that the Presiding Officer suggested that it was going to seem like 186 years and not actually be 186 years, and I was going to ask whether it would seem like 186 years to Hon Simon O'Brien or to the rest of us—but I am afraid that question has not quite been answered.

I hope not to take too long in this process. I do not know whether any other members intend to speak, but this is not a very complicated bill. It has only eight clauses. It is my intention, unless somebody else decides that they want more technical detail, to bypass the committee stage, and therefore go through the clauses in a bit more detail during my second reading contribution. The debate in the other place was particularly succinct. The second reading debate in February took, I think, about six minutes in total, of which four minutes was the response from the Treasurer himself. The third reading debate took about one minute. It was a fairly rapid process to get the bill to this house. We might not reach that same rapidity, and I am sure at some point we will get back to the discussion of literate economic policy, and we may even get back to horizontal fiscal equalisation at some point during the process.

Let us start with a bit of history, and a discussion about land tax; that is, what is land tax, and why does it apply? It has quite a long history, and there is a very simple answer to the question of why we have land tax. Taxes on land have applied in this country for the entirety of its European history, and have applied through British history for a very long time. It goes back all the way to the time of Magna Carta. Land tax applies, like any other tax, because governments, kings and queens all want to spend money, and they have to find a way to obtain that money. It is often difficult to tax things that we cannot see and touch, but land is very hard to hide. Someone who owns land generally must be registered somewhere, and it is not very often that land can be picked up and towed somewhere else. Land is very hard to hide away, is taxed because it is convenient, and it is very obvious when somebody owns land. The first versions of land tax in Australia were probably related to death duties, so when a landowner passed on, the state would apply a tax to the transfer of that land to the next generation. That began in the mid-nineteenth century, and it was not that long ago that death duties were removed from the taxation lexicon of Australia.

The state governments themselves then decided that they would apply a more apt version, and so decided to tax land itself. Members might not be aware, but for a brief period the commonwealth government taxed land as well. It is not a well-known fact that, in about 1910—a decade or so after Federation—the commonwealth government found itself fairly skint. We might argue that the commonwealth government finds itself fairly skint today, so not much has changed, but at the point of Federation the commonwealth government struck an agreement in the Constitution that the commonwealth would effectively take the residual taxation. The states would continue to be the main taxing bodies and the commonwealth would try to live on a minimalist model. That is how we defined Federation at that time. The states would remain the largest taxing bodies, and the commonwealth would subsist on the transfer of the right to collect import duties, et cetera. The commonwealth, in its initial stages, did not have a lot of cash, so about 1910 it decided it would attempt to tax land along with the states. We found that the colonies then had dual taxation of land, again for no other reason than that taxation of land is quite easy. Sometime in the 1950s—I think about 1954—the commonwealth decided that taxation of land was a very complicated business. The registers were all held by the states and the administrative process was quite unruly. The commonwealth government withdrew from the taxation of land in 1954, and has left it up to the states ever since.

The debate on how we tax land is very interesting. There is a general admission among those involved in the taxation debate that land would have to be taxed in one form or another. The biggest taxation of land generally occurs at the point of the transfer of land. Stamp duty is a significant source of taxation for most jurisdictions. The argument then goes to whether we should move from the taxation of the transfer of land to the taxation of land generally. If we do that, do we tax all land or only land that is held for investment? I will just take a few minutes to look at the reasons for that. Obviously, the largest group of landholders are those who are purchasing their primary place of residence, but do they have the capacity to pay significant additional taxes on top of the taxes that they pay? The reason we pay stamp duty at the point of transfer is convenience. That is the time the landowner who is selling land suddenly has a lot of cash at hand. If the government is going to take money off them, the obvious time is when the cash is sitting in their hands. It is very hard to take money off a taxpayer who is struggling to make their repayments. Stamp duty of \$10 000 or \$20 000 is very hard to take from people once they are back into the basics of making the repayments that the bank requires from their weekly or fortnightly income. Obviously, for convenience sake, taxation of land through stamp duty occurs when the land is transferred, because the money is sitting there in cash and it is the easiest time to take it. Tax collection is largely set at the most convenient time for those who have to collect it, as has always been the case. Just before we move on, for those members who are not aware, it was not always simply land that was taxed. There have been some very interesting versions of land tax. For example, through the Middle Ages in Britain, something called the window tax was applied. The argument was that the more bricks and mortar one had, the richer one was, the bigger the house would be and the more windows there would be in it. Therefore, the more windows one had, the more money one had, and the more money one had, the easier it was for the government to take a bit more. This was a trend that some members might

see continuing today. Of course, the window tax did not survive all that long because there was a fairly obvious solution to it—they simply bricked up most of their windows and there were not many windows left, so it was not a particularly efficient way of raising revenue. The window tax lasted a few short years and then had to be replaced by something else. It is just an example of taxation often being applied at the most convenient level for those taking the tax and not necessarily because it is the most honest or propitious way to collect it.

The debate continues over the appropriate place to tax land. Members might be aware that in 2010, the Henry tax review came up with the suggestion of abolishing stamp duty on the transfer of land and applying an annual land tax. That is not the first time that has come up; it is a regular suggestion. It happens all the time. The difficulty is that with an annual land tax, the government needs to decide whether to apply it to all land or simply to investment land. The difficulty is that if it is applied simply to investment land, it is an easier tax to avoid. It has never been taken up. An annual land tax across the board is a very difficult thing to implement, despite being a recommendation of the Henry tax review. I suspect we will never see a uniform, universal annual land tax. What we have in land tax is what we see today; that is, land tax applies to all land, apart from that which is exempted. One has to love those clauses that apply to everything and then exemptions are applied, rather than necessarily identifying what they apply to. Members will know, particularly those who have invested in land and buildings, that a taxpayer's primary place of residence is exempt from land tax. Land tax does not apply to the home of a general wage earner who has not moved on and invested. Again, land tax is obviously aimed at those with the capacity to invest and grow their own personal wealth, and therefore are in a position, in theory, to make a greater contribution to the tax take of the state. As we know, it is purely a state tax. There is an exemption for one's primary place of residence. It is a tax that applies particularly to business premises and investment properties above most other things. For that purpose, we accept that it is one of those necessary evils, along with some of the other necessary and abhorrent evils like payroll tax. That is not a tax that should be encouraged but it is a tax that is there because it is a convenient place to pick up money. It is not necessarily the way to stimulate economic growth. Land tax applies to land apart from that which is exempt. I note that it brought the state \$846 million in the last financial year and is projected to bring in about the same amount in the next financial year. It is not an insignificant amount that gets paid in land tax. It is approaching \$1 billion out of a \$27 billion to \$28 billion budget. It is not an inconsiderable amount—about five per cent of total state revenue. The bill before the house will not make a significant change to that. Land tax is a significant fundraiser for the state of Western Australia.

This bill is before us today to make a fairly technical, administrative change because of changes that occurred in the Land Tax Assessment Act 2002, particularly in the definition of who is the person who will pay the tax. The amendment is effectively the same as an amendment proposed by the previous government in 2015. I am told that this government examined the process and decided that it is fairly similar and worthy of progressing. In effect, this is something the previous government would have done and which this government will do. The opposition will support it because it does not have a significant negative impact. We are doing this to establish, in some detail, who is required to pay land tax. There are two ways in which we hold land. We hold land in fee simple. We think we own the land, but we do not actually own it. There are people in the chamber who have been involved in real estate and who would understand that we really only lease the land from the Crown—we do not actually own the land that we purchase. For those old enough to remember the old Queen Victoria titles, landowners had some significant power over the land they held—they held it to some significant depth and actually had some power over the air above them. Under the modern title system, one owns about the top four inches of soil and not much outside that, and certainly there is no impact on anything else. In fact, people lease that land from the Crown; they hold it on the Crown's behalf. It is a surprise for a lot of landowners to realise that they do not own the land outright. When people say, "It's my land; I should get to do what I want", they are a bit surprised to learn that they lease the land from Queen Elizabeth II, who is represented by the Governor General and the government, and that they have relatively limited entitlements over that land.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I think you are exaggerating that a bit.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: No. Landowners do not have absolute power over their land. People assume that when they purchase land they have absolute power over it, but they do not.

Hon Rick Mazza: It can be resumed.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: It can be resumed. It does not have to be resumed. It can be impacted upon. A lot of things can happen to it and a person still owns it. Land clearing regulations are a prime example. I am not opposed to land clearing regulations. Western Australia has probably led the way over the past 25 to 30 years—perhaps even a little longer—in being progressive in land clearing regulations. I compare the situation in other states, and in particular Queensland, which is going through the kind of battles that this state probably went through 30 years ago.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: You should come over to our side. Can we recruit you?

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: No; I am perfectly happy where I am. I am prepared to call a spade a spade, but I do not think I am going to lean to the left—certainly not that far.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: We are a broad church.

Hon Nick Goiran: What? In United Voice?

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: We have digressed a bit, Mr Deputy President.

We have got to the point at which land tax is going to be applied and we need to correct the definition of who actually owns the land. The intent was always to provide an exemption from land tax to certain organisations, particularly statutory bodies with a state government link, on the basis that they were providing a public service. What happened, of course, was that there was a difficulty in the definition of who owned the land in the situation in which a statutory authority was entitled to the land but leases, agreements and contracts might have been signed with other individuals. In theory, the exemption could apply to organisations and individuals running a profitable business on land attached to a statutory authority that had an exemption from land tax. I understand—the minister may be able to confirm it—that although the legislation has a hiccup, it has been applied largely in the spirit of the act rather than its literal wording. I understand there will be almost no financial implications from the changes because of the way it was applied. But it was perhaps applied in a not strictly literally legal sense. When the minister jumps up to respond, hopefully he will be able to confirm that. I think that is important. This small bill will correct those fairly minor but still important technical points. I will run through a couple of the clauses during the second reading debate so that we do not have to go through the bill clause by clause in the Committee of the Whole House. Obviously somebody else can jump up and decided that we will go through it in some detail, but I thought we might be able to avoid that.

I turn to the current act and the proposed amendments. The bill has two critical clauses. The first defines the taxable authority, and the second simply relates to retrospectivity. I will make a comment about that later. Effectively, there will be a couple of relatively simple changes to the current act. Clauses 4, 5 and 6 will amend sections 7, 8 and 31 of the act. I will go through them fairly briefly so we have an understanding. I am sure members are particularly interested in the technicalities of the bill, being, as we are, a very interested economic bunch.

Clause 4 will amend section 7 of the act, which defines the liability to pay land tax. It will remove the dual ownership provision in section 7. Basically, the original act states that the owner or user of the land under contract or licence can be the taxable entity. Obviously that does not make sense, and it allows transfers that should not apply. That part of section 7 will be removed. The uncertainty is taken care of in the next clause, which amends section 8. Clause 5 will amend section 8 by providing that the taxable authority is the owner of the land for the purposes of land tax. That clause will remove confusion over who is responsible. If a statutory authority is leasing land, the statutory authority remains the entity to which the land tax applies. The uncertainty will be removed from the act.

The third clause of substance will amend section 31 of the act. Section 31 relates to exemptions for land owned or vested in the Crown. The exemption is not available to a person who owns or manages the land if that person or entity is a taxable authority. This amendment will remove the exemption for land vested in a government statutory authority, particularly a public statutory authority, that is under contract of some form and being used and held by another organisation unless the organisation is running for the public good. In that circumstance there will be a reduction in the exemption to land tax.

It appears, as was the position under the previous government, that there will be no significant economic impact on the community because the rules were applied as if that were the case anyway. This bill will have no significant financial impact. It will remove a fairly technical exemption that existed only because of a change to the Land Tax Assessment Act 2012 that created something of a dual entity.

With those brief words and explanation of the intent of the bill, and a more general discussion about land tax and why it is one of those necessary evils applied to the community, I again indicate that the opposition will support the bill. I think we managed a little more substance to the debate than in the other place, but we have probably come to the end of meaningful discourse on this bill. I recommend that we proceed.

HON DIANE EVERS (South West) [3.36 pm]: I rise on behalf of the Greens to speak on the Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill 2017 and address two issues. One is the retrospective nature of the bill, which can often unfairly disadvantage some people. The other is that for the past three years a policy has been followed in applying a tax that is contrary to the law under which that tax is supposed to be applied. That does not sit well. It seems outrageous that we would continue to use a policy while a law in place said otherwise.

The longstanding policy intent of this land tax exemption was to apply only to statutory authorities carrying out public purposes under government authority or direction. However, in 2015 the Commissioner of State Revenue was advised that the current exemption was broader, and that technically it exempted any statutory authority, including private ones—for example, churches, private universities and schools. That arose from the definition of “public statutory authority” in the 2002 version of the act. It was an inadvertent consequence of the 2002 update of the 1976 version of the act.

In July, following that challenge by a private statutory authority, the then Minister for Finance announced that the government would introduce amendments to bring the act into line with the policy, with retrospective effect to

1 July 2003 when the act came into operation. However, I understand from the briefing that until now a bill had not been introduced, leaving us for three years following that challenge with the land tax being assessed in accordance with the policy rather than the act. That seems outrageous.

The government agreed that amendment was needed and introduced this bill. The bill narrows the definition of “public statutory authority” to refer only to statutory authorities for a public purpose, as stated in clause 7. The bill also states that the amendments will apply retrospectively back to 1 July 2003—the date on which the 2002 version of the act commenced operation. It will exclude any land tax assessments that were the subject of objection or review proceedings before the previous minister’s 2015 announcement. That means the one person who came forward is exempt from this, and that makes sense because they brought their issue forward. But it still leaves all those who have been taxed under the policy rather than under the act or the law since 2016.

The government has also taken the opportunity to correct another inadvertent consequence of the 2002 act. Section 7(3) provides that if a person and a taxable authority are both taken to be the owner under section 8(1) and 8(2), the taxable authority must pay the land tax. However, as I understand it from the briefing, if a taxable authority owns the land so that section 7(1) applies, and a person uses that land so that section 8(1)(b) also applies, as the act stands, technically they are both taken to be the owner and both are liable to pay the tax. This bill remedies this problem, so that in either case, if section 8(1)(b) applies, and the arrangement is with a taxable authority, the taxable authority must pay the land tax, not the tenant. It is great that we are correcting this anomaly. I am quite pleased that we are finally getting this bill through; I assume it will go through.

However, it just does not sit right. Normally, the Greens would oppose such a bill with retrospectivity, because we feel that it can discriminate against people who are not aware of the situation before the retrospective law is enacted. The effect of the land tax having been assessed since the commencement of the 2002 version of the act in accordance with policy rather than the wording of the act suggests that some private statutory authorities may have been assessed to pay land tax even though under the act they were technically exempt. I acknowledge that before the error was discovered in 2015, it was not deliberate. In the period following 2015, we continued to assess tax based on the policy.

I understand from the briefing that the only way to identify who has been affected is by someone objecting or seeking a review of the assessment. Other than that one person, no-one has come forward. The rights of that one person who came forward will be preserved. For all other land tax assessments that might have been affected, there is a 60-day limit for objection or to seek a review of the assessment and that time has expired without any objection or review application being made. Accordingly, there is no identifiable person or body being disadvantaged by this bill.

It comes down to deliberately assessing the land tax according to policy inconsistent with the act. It is disturbing that this went on for so long. I understand the government was made aware of this problem in 2015 and it said it would introduce a bill. However, it is now 2018 and that puts our public servants under pressure. They are told to keep assessing this way, even though a law says otherwise, with the rationale that we cannot really identify who might lose that opportunity to be covered under this exemption. I acknowledge that the policy intent was to have the exemption apply only to the public interest statutory authorities. In general, the Greens would tend to oppose laws with retrospective application because such laws can be unfair. The effect of this land tax having been assessed in accordance with policy rather than the wording of the act suggests that some private statutory authorities may have been assessed to pay land tax, though under the act they were technically exempt. I note that before this error was discovered in 2015, this was not deliberate.

During this time, no-one has come forward and we cannot identify them and our intention was always to go back and make it retrospective to 2003. Anybody’s opportunity to ask for a reassessment or seek correction has now expired. Therefore, it makes sense that we would support this. Although, as I said, it seems a cavalier and contemptuous attitude towards our laws that we could override those and continue to enforce the policy rather than the law. However, I understand the difficulty of trying to find out who those people were. It is far below the standard the community ought to expect of the government, but I will not be pursuing Committee of the Whole or anything else like that. I think it is an unfortunate situation that has gone on for so long and we knowingly continued it, but I am pleased to see this bill go through. I hope that it passes today.

HON RICK MAZZA (Agricultural) [3.45 pm]: When I first saw the Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill 2017 on the notice paper, I thought: here we go again; more land tax. We have seen some increases in land tax over the past few years, so it is good to see this is not an increase in land tax. I listened with interest to Hon Dr Steve Thomas’s contribution and the accurate history of property ownership in Western Australia. It came to mind that land tax was initially put in place in New South Wales in an effort to break up landholders’ great vast tracts of land that were held in New South Wales not long after settlement. Many of those landholders did not even live in Australia, but the only way the government could break up the property was to apply a tax to force them to subdivide and sell off the land. One family that comes to mind is the Wentworth family. It owned a lot of land at that time.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: There are two schools of thought on that it. One is the one you just enunciated and the other is simply the desire for more money.

Hon RICK MAZZA: It ended up being a good opportunity for more money, member, because like a lot of these taxes that are put in for a particular purpose, maybe for a temporary time, it ended up staying for near on 200 years.

Hon Michael Mischin: Federal income tax.

Hon RICK MAZZA: Yes, we still have federal income tax for the war effort.

This is a very brief bill. It moves to close an obvious loophole that was discovered since 2003. In the very brief discussion I had with the minister with carriage of this bill, there was no indication that that loophole had been exploited. It was found by a government authority. The exemption was intended for government authorities. Now the government has moved to close that loophole. The minister can correct me if I am wrong. I will support the bill if the minister can clarify whether there are any issues with somebody other than a government agency who has taken advantage of this. The explanatory memorandum states —

The effect of this is that, provided an objection or appeal was lodged before 15 July 2015, the taxpayer will be entitled to have the matter determined in accordance with the legislation as it stood before these amendments came into effect.

If there are any issues there, maybe the minister can cover that for us. Besides that, I support the bill.

HON AARON STONEHOUSE (South Metropolitan) [3.48 pm]: I will not be supporting this bill. We are one of the highest taxing jurisdictions in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. State and federal governments tax our land, our fuel, our alcohol and our smokes. They tax our income and if someone is an employer, they are unlucky enough to have their payroll taxed. Through tariffs, taxes, levies, royalties and duties, successive governments have an addiction with other people's money. The government is a compassionate master. Through its benevolence, it will sometimes let us keep a bit more of our own money through tax exemptions, which leads us to the contents of this bill. To quote the second reading speech —

The Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill 2017 seeks to amend the Land Tax Assessment Act 2002 to address a deficiency in the land tax exemption for public statutory authorities, which has the unintended effect of extending the exemption to private sector organisations.

Why on earth would I want the government to have more money? As it is, it certainly does not do a great job of spending it through wasteful spending, mal-investment and distorting markets. If any private organisation is able to make use of an exemption made available through government incompetence when the 2002 act was brought in, I say more power to them.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [3.49 pm] — in reply: I can tell members that that is more exercise than I have done in a long time!

I thank members for their contributions this afternoon and their indications of support or non-support of the Land Tax Assessment Amendment Bill 2017. I thank Hon Dr Steve Thomas again for an enlightening contribution in a taxation debate. I know that he takes a keen interest in taxation legislation and certainly in all issues of taxation, so I appreciate his contribution and support for the bill.

The Treasurer is on the record as saying that this is an important but technical amendment. Hon Dr Steve Thomas was correct in his explanation of the clauses. Thank you. I want to place on the record that the genesis of this bill was under the previous government. The then Minister for Finance, the current member for Nedlands, Hon Bill Marmion, announced in 2015 or 2014 that work was being done on legislation such as this. The problem was picked up then. A bill was not finalised; however, we have taken up the issue and brought forward legislation to the house.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: That does not automatically mean that we will support it.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Of course not, but I wanted to make the point that this issue was identified under the previous government and we are now dealing with the problem, but the work had started under the previous government.

I am advised that Hon Dr Steve Thomas was correct in his assertion that the amendments will not change how we apply the law. I want to place on the record that there are no revenue implications from making the amendments the subject of this bill. Bodies lacking the necessary public purpose will continue to be denied an exemption from land tax going forward. Past assessments made since 2003 on the basis that a body must satisfy the public purpose test in order to be a public statutory authority will be evaluated. The objection that was allowed when this issue came to light will not be overturned. I think that answers a couple of comments by other people who made a contribution.

I thank Hon Diane Evers for her contribution. I appreciate her comments on the retrospective nature of the bill and for her support. Ideally, we would not have to deal with something like this in legislation; however, a problem has arisen and we are trying to fix it. I can also say that Hon Diane Evers is wholly correct in her understanding of the bill. That advice was given to me by my advisers. Well done; her understanding is correct. Hon Rick Mazza will

appreciate that this is not a new land tax. It would be a very different debate this afternoon if that were the case. I thank him for his support. A public statutory authority raised the issue. Hon Aaron Stonehouse, we are a compassionate government, can I say. He made comments about compassion. However, this legislation has arisen because a problem was brought to our attention and this is the opportunity to fix it. People will not be adversely affected by the decision before us. With those comments, I commend the bill to the house.

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 **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Environment)**, and passed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Addition to Business Program — Motion

Pursuant to standing order 17(3), on motion without notice by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Environment)**, resolved —

That order of the day 28, Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review — Report No. 112 — Committee's Treaty Function, be added to today's Business Program.

Order of Business — Motion

On motion without notice by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Environment)**, resolved —

That order of the day 28, Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review — Report No. 112 — Committee's Treaty Function, be taken forthwith.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON UNIFORM LEGISLATION AND STATUTES REVIEW

112th Report — "Committee's Treaty Function" — Recommendation 1 — Referral to Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges — Motion

Resumed from 27 March on the following motion moved by Hon Michael Mischin —

That recommendation 1 contained in the 112th report of the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review, entitled "Committee's Treaty Function", be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges for inquiry and report.

HON MICHAEL MISCHIN (North Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.56 pm]: To put this into context very briefly, the continuation of my remarks follow from the tabling of the 112th report of the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review, "Committee's Treaty Function", which was the result of a self-referral to the committee for examination of its treaty function under the standing orders. That report was discussed in some detail yesterday during the period set aside by this house for consideration of committee reports. The point made during that was not only reaffirmation of the futility of the committee being charged with a function to review treaties, but also the canvassing of the prospect of the treaties function being reviewed by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges of this place. If it is thought fit that treaties be examined by this house at some point, a better system should be devised for it. A corollary motion is before the house today—that the committee recommend that the Legislative Council delete clause 6.3(c) in schedule 1 of the standing orders of the Legislative Council and renumber the remaining subclauses accordingly.

Before we could get to that recommendation being considered by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, the corollary motion of recommendation 1 of the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review's report on the treaty function is that it be referred to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. I am very grateful to the government and for the work done by the Deputy Leader of the Government, Hon Stephen Dawson for bringing on this matter. What emerged from yesterday's discussion of the committee report was that the function was one that was otiose and futile. However, to relieve the standing committee of the function, it needs to be done by way of a change to standing orders by this house. Before we could get to that stage, it is something that ought to be properly considered by the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges and a recommendation made to this house on what to do in that regard. Hon Stephen Dawson has done some work behind the Chair to bring this order of the day forward so that this business can be passed to the procedure and privileges committee in a timely way and so that it can be dealt with and the committee can come to a decision on what recommendation it should make to this house. I am grateful for his efforts. I understand that some comment will be made by one or two members about this matter, and there is broad consensus that the committee be charged with that function.

I stress that the passage of this motion will not result in any change to the standing orders. All the motion will do is give the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges the job of considering the treaty function of this house, and in due course we will receive the committee's recommendations and will be able to act on those recommendations.

On that note, I thank the government again for finding the time in its legislative schedule, amongst orders of the day, to bring this matter forward in a timely fashion and to be so responsive to the report of the committee, which was tabled back on 27 March and discussed yesterday. I commend the motion to the house.

HON COLIN HOLT (South West) [4.00 pm]: On behalf of the National Party, I support the referral to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. Yes, we do ask our committees to do the work of the house. Therefore, this is an appropriate referral. The Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review has identified an issue and has done the right thing by recommending that this matter be referred to the procedure and privileges committee. I was interested to hear the remarks of Hon Michael Mischin. He said that the referral to the committee is timely. It is timely, so let us get on with the job. However, I point out that we still have to deal with a number of outstanding matters that are listed on the notice paper. Those outstanding matters include four or five reports from the procedure and privileges committee. Obviously the committee will need to meet, determine what needs to occur and come back with some recommendations. However, as it stands, committee reports tend to sit on the notice paper, unless some agreement is reached behind the Chair, especially around orders of the day, to deal with those matters in a timely manner. I note the previous debate about the proposed amendment to the standing orders of this house to recognise a welcome to country. I would hate to think that another referral to the PPC will result in a report that will sit on the notice paper when there are still outstanding matters from the previous Parliament that we need to deal with. If we are asking the PPC to do work on behalf of the house, we should deal with its reports in a timely manner. I support the referral and wish the PPC luck in its deliberations on this matter. Question put and passed.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND INJURY MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Second Reading

Resumed from 13 March.

HON MICHAEL MISCHIN (North Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.02 pm]: I rise as the lead speaker on the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Amendment Bill 2017 on behalf of the opposition to indicate our support for the bill. As was mentioned in the second reading speech, the bill picks up on work that was done by the previous government as a consequence of a review of the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981. That review involved a considerable amount of work and consultation. There was also a considerable amount of consensus about how the act ought to be rewritten and restructured. This bill picks up a small part of that very comprehensive review. The Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act has been a keystone of this state's workers' compensation and injury management system for more than 40 years. It has worked satisfactorily since that time, although from time to time it has been necessary to improve the operation of the act and refine it in various ways. The act has also become an agglomeration of amendments, with pieces grafted onto it and excised from it as needs must. The review of the legislation was completed under the former government in about 2014, under the management of WorkCover WA, and with its input. I pay tribute to the work done by the officers of that organisation, including the then chief executive officer, Michelle Reynolds, because it was exemplary. The rewrite of this legislation was a massive task, and unfortunately other legislative priorities got in the way and it could not be completed by the former government.

This bill deals with a fairly discrete part of the act, namely entitlements for the dependants of deceased workers. Those entitlements have become inadequate over time; or, if not inadequate, out of step with what is customary in other jurisdictions. The bill proposes several key changes. The first is that the lump sum that is awarded to dependants of a deceased worker will increase from the current \$308 339 to \$562 303, in effect an increase of some 250 per cent on the current maximum amount payable to dependants of workers with non-fatal injuries who are permanently disabled. That sum will be paid to dependants. The lump sum payable to dependent partners and children will be subject to a formula for apportionment as set by statute. That will provide certainty and clarity about the amounts payable to each dependant. Under the current arrangements, the level of dependency also needs to be determined. Under the proposed changes, the partners of deceased workers will no longer be required to prove their exact financial level of dependency and will no longer have their entitlement reduced significantly because they happen to receive a modest income. Unlike the current arrangements, under this bill dependent children will receive a share of the lump sum, in addition to the child's weekly allowance. That latter will be significantly increased from \$58 90 a week to \$133 a week. Both the lump sum payment to dependants and the weekly allowance for children will be subject to annual indexation on 1 July each year, based on the consumer price index. The minister will, no doubt, be able to clarify and confirm that arrangement.

I want to mention another difficulty that has been particularly vexing and is in need of reform. Fortunately, although in this state there are up to 20-odd workplace fatalities every year, this difficulty arises in only a small number of cases. That is the need to rationalise and modify access by de facto partners to workers' compensation benefits. Currently, any de facto partner must have been living with a deceased worker for at least two years immediately prior to the worker's death to qualify for compensation. What will happen—what is proposed and what has been endorsed by the previous government, albeit we did not get to enacting it—is that the definition of a de facto partner will be rationalised by picking up the meaning given in the Interpretation Act 1984. The arbitrary two-year limit will no longer apply. There will still be a necessity on the part of the claimant de facto partner to

prove dependency, which is proper, but the arbitrary limitation on the length of the relationship will no longer apply. I have not looked into the reasons for that arbitrary limitation. It may well have been because the concept of recognising de facto partnerships in law was a relatively new development and a novelty at the time, and it may have been through caution on the part of the government of the day. Nevertheless, it is something that the courts and tribunals are very comfortable with assessing on the basis of other evidence nowadays, so there seems to be no reason that the definition should be different amongst statutes in which the benefit is to provide some economic certainty in the tragic event of a partner's death when the recipient is a dependant. Otherwise, clarity is being established—a more clear and easily navigable process for assessing claims and for fast-tracking these sorts of claims.

The opposition supports what is being proposed by the government and welcomes the legislation. There are a few questions about it. One matter I hope the minister will be able to clarify is the reason for the proposed commencement date—a date fixed by proclamation, effectively. Part 1 of the act, which are the formal bits, will commence on the date the act receives royal assent. Part 3, which concerns some minor amendments, will come into operation on the day after that. But the rest of the act, being the important operative parts that will reform the process and also provide for the reforms that are intended by the act, as announced in the policy through the second reading speech, will be on a date or dates to be fixed. Different days may be fixed for different provisions. I seek the minister's advice about why that might be necessary, rather than it coming into operation at a fixed time. I make the point that, as far as I am aware, it is my understanding—again the minister may be able to clarify this in due course—there will be no retrospective operation. Until these operative provisions come into effect at some time in the future, whenever the government chooses is a meet time to do it, those who may have been bereaved will not have the benefit of these provisions. It would seem proper, indeed desirable if at all possible, that this legislation come into effect at the earliest opportunity, so that if there is an unfortunate incident, a tragedy involving a worker, that worker and his dependants who are subject to this legislation can get the benefit of this and are not excluded on the basis that the legislation has not yet been proclaimed and become operative. In cases such as this, in particular, every day counts. We cannot predict when a worker will come to harm in a workplace. Fortunately, with the occupational health and safety laws that have been put in place in this jurisdiction since 1984, we have seen a marked reduction in injuries in workplaces. The number of fatalities—which are injuries that have had an extreme result—fluctuate, but it would give some comfort to people to know when this legislation will come into effect.

I can see that Mr Acting President is going to call time on me, so I will reserve the remainder of my remarks until after the recess.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 1968.]

Sitting suspended from 4.15 to 4.30 pm

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

OPTUS STADIUM — PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

267. **Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

It is very sparse over there, I have to say!

I will give it a go this time. I refer to question without notice 243, asked on 11 April 2018.

- (1) Has Main Roads Western Australia now received commercial and legal advice in relation to the tabling of the revised contract for the Perth Stadium pedestrian bridge; and, if not, why not?
- (2) Will the minister now table the revised contract; and, if not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I seek leave to table the document.

Hon Peter Collier: Yes!

The PRESIDENT: First of all, we are not at a football game, Leader of the Opposition; there are to be no Mexican waves in here!

Hon Peter Collier: I know; I apologise, Madam President.

The PRESIDENT: Minister, you do not need leave to table the document.

[See paper 1283.]

The PRESIDENT: Leader of the Opposition.

Hon Peter Collier: I get another one!

The PRESIDENT: Yes, you do, surprisingly, after that.

Hon Peter Collier: That one took me about five questions, but I did get an answer in the end.

TOURISM — ETIHAD AIRWAYS — PERTH—ABU DHABI — DAILY FLIGHTS

268. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the decision of Etihad Airways to withdraw its daily Perth service and to the Minister for Tourism's comments on ABC radio yesterday that he is only a little disappointed with this decision.

- (1) When was the Minister for Tourism first made aware of the decision by Etihad Airways to withdraw its daily Perth service?
- (2) Did the minister receive any advice from the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation regarding Etihad Airways prior to yesterday's announcement?
- (3) If yes to (2), will the minister table that advice; and, if not, why not?
- (4) Has the minister met or had any contact with Etihad regarding its decision to withdraw its daily Perth service; and, if so, on what dates; and, if not, why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1) It was during the afternoon of 9 April 2018.
- (2)–(3) Yes, Tourism Western Australia verbally advised the Minister for Tourism's office of the pending announcement of the commercial decision of Etihad Airways to withdraw services from Perth on Monday, 9 April 2018 at 1504 hours.
- (4) No. When Tourism Western Australia was notified by the airline, it and Tourism Australia asked Etihad whether anything could be done to change its decision, such as further marketing support. The airline advised that the decision was made for commercial reasons as part of a global network review and would not be changed. It is not just Perth that is affected, but also destinations around the world, including Edinburgh in Scotland; San Francisco, Dallas and Fort Worth in the USA; and São Paulo in Brazil.

Reductions in aviation capacity are never good; however, it is important to remember that Etihad is one of three airlines servicing Western Australia through the Middle East. Qatar Airways also services Perth and will upgrade its aircraft to A380s next month. This represents an increase of more than 1 000 seats a week.

DOUBLEVIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL COMPLEX — OPENING

269. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the minister's answer to my question without notice on 11 April regarding the opening of Doubleview Primary School.

- (1) Is the minister, after consulting her diary, able to now say when she will be officially opening the new Doubleview Primary School complex, given that it has been operating since the start of the school year?
- (2) When was that date settled upon; and, if no date has been set, why not, and will it happen before the end of the second semester?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the Minister for Education and Training, I provide the following answer.

- (1)–(2) A date for the official opening of the redeveloped Doubleview Primary School has yet to be scheduled. Dates of official openings are determined in consultation with the schools involved.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — SAVINGS MEASURES

270. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the information provided by the minister on 10 April in relation to question without notice 143.

- (1) What are the identified savings against the student-centred funding model referred to in table (2), and how will schools be impacted?
- (2) What is the targeted program that is being impacted at Belmont City College referred to in table (2)?
- (3) Will the minister provide more detail on each of the internal department budget savings identified in table (3); and, if not, why not?
- (4) Will the minister list the one-off savings referred to in table (3); and, if not, why not?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide this answer on behalf of the Minister for Education and Training. I warn members that it is very long.

- (1) The identified savings relate to specific funding to schools, which will not impact the per-student funding rates through the student-centred funding model. They comprise a \$250 000 reduction from 2019 for targeted initiatives at Yule Brook College and Balga Senior High School. Balga Senior High School will not be impacted by this adjustment, as an offsetting adjustment has been made as part of the equity changes to the student-centred funding model. The impact to Yule Brook College will be \$50 000 per year from 2019, representing approximately 1.25 per cent of its annual budget. There will also be a \$167 000 reduction to an allocation for the Curtin Theatre at John Curtin College of the Arts. The adjustment reflects a 20 per cent reduction to the operational response and less than 0.4 per cent of the school's total annual budget.

When the student-centred funding model was introduced, most individual school programs were rolled into the SCFM. However, a determination at the time was made for allocation to continue until the model was well established. Local access funding is additional to that provided through the student-centred funding model for each student. Its purpose is to enable remote community schools, district high schools and primary schools that enrol secondary students to provide face-to-face teaching to small groups of students in years 11 and 12 who do not have daily bus access to a senior high school and do not complete their studies through the School of Isolated and Distance Education. A review of local access funding identified that many schools were receiving the additional funding for students who did have daily bus access to a senior high school or were completing their education program through the School of Isolated and Distance Education. Commencing in 2019, local access funding will be provided only to those year 11 and year 12 students receiving face-to-face teaching in the designated schools where daily bus access to a senior high school is not available. This will address the duplication of funding that has been occurring. It should be noted that there is no cost to these schools where they enrol students who complete their entire year 11 and year 12 education program through the School of Isolated and Distance Education.

- (2) Units to provide specialist support for deaf education were historically established in a number of metropolitan senior high schools, including Belmont City College. In 2001, Shenton College Deaf Education Centre opened as a school in its own right. Over time, demand for places increased and a cap was placed on enrolment. In 2013, the unit at Belmont City College received additional targeted funding to expand its unit into the Belmont City College deaf education program. However, demand on places at Shenton College Deaf Education Centre remained high and a process was established to determine enrolment. This resulted in increasing dissatisfaction from parents unable to enrol their children in the program they considered to be the most appropriate for their children. The current upgrade of additional facilities on the Shenton site has meant the cap on enrolment will be lifted from 2019 to establish one comprehensive and sustainable deaf education program for all eligible students with hearing loss. Funding for the Belmont City College deaf education program will conclude at the end of 2019. Students and families in the deaf education program at Belmont City College will be supported to transition to Shenton College Deaf Education Centre; enrol at their local school, with visiting teacher support from the School of Special Educational Needs: Sensory; or remain at Belmont City College, with visiting teacher support.
- (3) The savings have been outlined, by category, in the answer provided to question without notice 198.
- (4) There are one-off savings of \$1.504 million. These savings relate to the department's central office and reflect one-off salary savings achieved through the transition of some parts of the department to a new structure and general efficiencies in non-salary costs. These savings will not impact schools.

CHILD PROTECTION — CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE — ROEBOURNE

271. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the minister's answer to my question without notice on 11 April 2018, in which she informed the house that the Minister for Child Protection has received regular updates regarding Operation Fledermaus from the director general and the assistant director general, child protection and family support.

- (1) Were any of these updates verbal?
- (2) If yes to (1), during any of those verbal updates has the minister ever asked whether any of the 184 victims of child sex offences in Roebourne are currently residing with a person either charged or convicted with one or more child sex offences?
- (3) If no to (1) or (2), given that this would make the minister's answer to my question without notice on 10 April 2018 misleading, will she support a referral of her answer to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges to investigate this possible contempt of the Council?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

On behalf of the Leader of the House, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. This answer has been provided by the Minister for Child Protection.

- (1)–(3) I refer the member to previous responses regarding this matter. This kind of public debate is not helpful to the community of Roebourne and continues to put additional pressure on a community that is currently managing very complex issues. It is also likely to discourage victims and community members to disclose abuse and seek the support they require. The minister is satisfied that the placement of additional child protection resources is ensuring officers are working with police and other government agencies, as well as with the community, to closely monitor children in Roebourne and surrounding areas to ensure that they are not exposed to risk. The minister would be happy to offer a briefing to the honourable member regarding the West Pilbara plan. Should the honourable member have any information about any child or children who may be at risk of harm, I trust he will take appropriate action to report these concerns to the Department of Communities and/or Western Australia Police Force.

Point of Order

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Madam President, I ask for your ruling on who is responsible for the answer that has just been delivered to the house. My question was to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection. I note that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Education and Training delivered the answer. I need a ruling on this, Madam President, although not necessarily immediately. This is a matter that I believe will, in the not-too-distant future, end up before the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges due to the debacle by the Minister for Child Protection, and I need to know who is responsible for the answer that has just been given.

The PRESIDENT: Hon Nick Goiran, I will look at that and I will come back to you on another occasion with that ruling.

LOCAL PROJECTS, LOCAL JOBS — MINING AND PASTORAL REGION

272. Hon JACQUI BOYDELL to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the Local Projects, Local Jobs program.

- (1) How many projects have been delivered in the Mining and Pastoral Region?
- (2) Will the minister list all those projects and their value?
- (3) How many of these projects were not election commitments?
- (4) Will the minister list all the projects that were not election commitments, and their value?
- (5) How many projects have changed in any form from their initial election commitment announcement to the final delivery?
- (6) Will the minister list all projects referred to in part (5), the scope and cost of their initial iteration, and the scope and cost of their final delivered iteration?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1) Sixty projects are to be delivered.
- (2) I table the attached document.

[See paper 1284.]

- (3) All projects are election commitments.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) As the member would expect, the risk assessment, due diligence and funding agreement processes undertaken by the regional development commissions for each grant have resulted in some refinement of project scope and costs. However, I am advised that all projects are being delivered in line with the general intent of the election commitment.
- (6) Not applicable.

WILUNA TOWN BUSH FIRE BRIGADE

273. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to an article published by ABC Online today about the Wiluna Town Bush Fire Brigade being unequipped to respond to structural fires.

- (1) Will the minister respond to the shire's request for more resources and an equipment upgrade for the town fire brigade?

- (2) Can the minister outline how he intends to assist firefighting response capability in Wiluna?
- (3) Does the minister believe the risks to lives and structures posed by fire in Wiluna is different from that in other parts of the state?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

That question does not appear in my folder today, and it is a very big folder. If it is found, it will be brought in, and I will give the answer at the end of question time.

BUSHFIRE SUPPRESSION — WATER-BOMBING

274. Hon RICK MAZZA to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the minister's response to my question without notice 56 on 15 March 2018, which stated that although no analysis of the cost-effectiveness of water-bombing is made for individual bushfires —

At the end of a bushfire season, overall operations are reviewed as good practice to ensure they are safe and efficient.

- (1) Will the review examine and compare the cost-effectiveness of water-bombers used in different categories of fire, namely —
 - (a) small fires burning under mild conditions; and
 - (b) large, high intensity fires?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) Are cost-efficiency targets set for the use of water-bombers during a bushfire season; and, if so, what are they?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) When is the review likely to be completed?
- (6) Will the review be made public?
- (7) If yes to (6), will the minister undertake to provide me with a copy?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1)–(2) As referenced in my response to question without notice 56 on 15 March 2018, the review is of overall operations only, and is not conducted at a finer scale. The cost-effectiveness of water-bombers has been studied and reported on by the CSIRO in a report titled “The effect of aerial suppression on the containment time of Australian wildfires estimated by fire management personnel”, which I will table.
- (3)–(4) There are too many variables, including fire locations, vegetation and fuels, water availability, and season and contract length, involved in bushfire suppression for such targets to be meaningful. Aircraft are dispatched according to pre-established risk criteria and their effectiveness is then constantly monitored by ground and aerial operations staff in real time. It is standard practice for the air attack supervisors to provide feedback to the ground regarding effectiveness of aerial operations as outlined in section 8.10 of the “Aerial Fire Suppression Operating Procedures”, which I will table. Effectiveness is also reported on by the AAS post-incident as part of the flight log that covers a range of operational matters, and I will table this.
- (5) It is expected that the review will be completed by the end of this financial year.
- (6)–(7) It would not be appropriate to release the review publicly as it will contain commercially sensitive information related to contractors. However, the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions is willing to provide a briefing for the member on its operations and the review process.

[See paper 1285.]

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME — TRANSITION

275. Hon ROBIN SCOTT to the Minister for Disability Services:

I refer to the 1 July 2018 National Disability Insurance Scheme rollout in Western Australia, which will see the National Disability Insurance Agency assuming responsibility for the delivery of the scheme in WA.

- (1) Given that other state jurisdictions are providing sector transitional funding support, will the state government acknowledge that the sector requires support and follow the lead of other states?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) If yes to (1), what additional sector transitional funding will be provided?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) The state government acknowledges that the disability service sector will require support to facilitate a successful transition to the NDIS.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) This matter is currently under consideration by the government.

INFRASTRUCTURE AUSTRALIA — PERTH'S POPULATION

276. Hon CHARLES SMITH to the minister representing the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the state government's response to question without notice 161 asked on 27 March regarding Perth's projected population growth.

- (1) Will the state government now revise its population forecasts, given the recent projections by Infrastructure Australia that Perth will hit 4.4 million within three decades?
- (2) Is there any coordination at all between this state government and the commonwealth when it comes to managing population growth?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1)–(2) The Infrastructure Australia projection refers to an Australian Bureau of Statistics population projection prepared in 2013. New WA Tomorrow population forecasts are being prepared based on the most up-to-date data available.

CLIMATE CHANGE — POLICY

277. Hon TIM CLIFFORD to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the document available on the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's website titled "Adapting to our changing climate".

- (1) Does the minister consider that this 2012 publication developed under the previous government adequately reflects the current government's approach to addressing climate change?
- (2) Does the minister intend to publish an updated strategic document in relation to climate change; and, if so, when?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1)–(2) The McGowan government is carefully considering its policy position on this important issue. We acknowledge the role of the commonwealth government in leading on national climate policy. We also acknowledge the responsibility of governments at all levels, industry, businesses and the community to consider the effects of climate change when planning for the future.

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS — PAY EQUITY UNIT

278. Hon ALISON XAMON to the minister representing the Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations:

I refer to my question on notice 342 regarding the pay equity unit, and to the minister's response that the government was examining appropriate equal remuneration strategies to address pay equity issues:

- (1) Which strategies have been examined?
- (2) Will any strategies be implemented?
- (3) If yes to (2), please advise which strategies will be implemented.
- (4) If no to (2), why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations has provided the following information.

- (1) The ministerial review of the state industrial relations system is currently being conducted by Mr Mark Ritter, SC, assisted by Mr Stephen Price, MLA. One of the eight terms of reference for the review reads —

Consider the inclusion of an equal remuneration provision in the Industrial Relations Act 1979 with the objective of facilitating the conduct of equal remuneration cases and other initiatives in the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission.

The interim report of the review was released on 20 March 2018.

- (2) The government will consider any equal remuneration strategies recommended by the review after the final report is provided to government.
- (3)–(4) Not applicable.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES — CORPORATE FUNCTIONS

279. Hon SIMON O'BRIEN to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Community Services:

- (1) What parts of the Department of Communities report to the Minister for Disability Services?
- (2) If a member has questions to ask about the Department of Communities' corporate functions, which minister should be asked?
- (3) Is it the government's intention that the Disability Services Commission and/or former Department of Community Protection and/or former Department of Housing's corporate functions be subsumed into a consolidated corporate affairs function within the Department of Communities?
- (4) If yes to (3), when will these changes occur and how many jobs will be affected?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

On behalf of the Leader of the House, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. This answer has been provided by the Minister for Community Services. The Department of Communities advises the following.

- (1) This matter falls within the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Disability Services and should be referred to him for a response.
- (2) The Minister for Community Services should be asked.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The Department of Communities will have a consolidated corporate services function in place by 1 July 2018. The corporate services functions will remain the same in the amalgamated department.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA POLICE FORCE — KIMBERLEY

280. Hon KEN BASTON to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to an article in *The Kimberley Echo* dated 5 April 2018 regarding the spike in crime occurring in Kununurra. Will the minister be providing a permanent increase in resources for the Kimberley police force in the upcoming budget?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Police. All information about police appropriations will be contained within the 2018–2019 state budget to be tabled on Thursday, 10 May 2018. However, it should be noted that decisions regarding the deployment of officers to individual stations are made by the Commissioner of Police.

MOBILE BLACK SPOT PROGRAM — PRIORITY LOCATIONS

281. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the federal government's announcement last week that 125 priority locations will be funded by the federal government's Mobile Black Spot Program.

- (1) Did the state government submit priority locations to the federal government?
- (2) Did the state government offer to commit any new funding for this announcement?
- (3) Has the minister contacted the federal Minister for Communications or the federal Minister for Regional Telecommunications to discuss priority blackspot areas in Western Australia this year?
- (4) If yes to (3), please provide dates of contact.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

- (1)–(4) Well, come in, spinner! I have been hoping you might ask a question like this, because this is a demonstration that the federal National Party has no interest in Western Australia. In fact, member, that list of priorities, those seven out of 125 sites—that is all we were getting—were actually announced unilaterally by the Turnbull government in all its marginal seats during the 2016 election. I can assure the member that absolutely there is no way that our government will be chipping in to fund

Malcolm Turnbull's election commitments. We are not intending, in fact, to be in a position of being required, without any consultation whatsoever, to participate in a program. This is a completely different process from any that was adopted before. I believe that all the other states are of the same view. These were election commitments and they are going to be funded. Indeed, yes, I did write to Hon Fiona Nash, who was the minister and I believe one of your National Party colleagues at the time when she was thought just to be an Australian, and I did express my concern about the very paltry share of the pie that we were getting here in WA. I asked her for clarification on those funding arrangements, and guess what? We never, ever got a reply. We understand that the National Party has had a bit of a problem keeping its members in federal Parliament, but we do not apologise for the fact that we have no intention of pouring money into a scheme in which we have no ability to be part of that decision-making. The department formally sent a document to the federal minister, outlining our concerns about those particular proposals and pointing out that these were not the priorities that had been established in Western Australia.

WOODSIDE — KARRATHA GAS PLANT — ELECTRICAL FAULT

282. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to my question without notice 31 asked in the Legislative Council on 16 May 2017 to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, regarding Woodside's Karratha gas plant and the electrical fault incident and the answer provided for part (2).

- (1) Has the investigation concluded?
- (2) If no to (1), when will it be finalised?
- (3) If yes to (1), what was the cause of the incident?
- (4) Will the minister table the report from the investigation?
- (5) If yes to (4), when?
- (6) If no to (4), why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The material for this answer has been provided by the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) It was an earth fault in an air compressor motor.
- (4) No.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) The investigation report is not the property of the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety.

LIVE EXPORT — MV *MAYSORA*

283. Hon DIANE EVERS to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I understand that the live animal export ship the MV *Maysora* departed Fremantle port last evening.

- (1) Is the minister aware of this; and, if so, what was the cargo and quantity of that cargo?
- (2) Have any additional procedures or conditions been introduced to ensure that the health and welfare of the animals loaded and exported from WA?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(2) It is a testament of her faith in my ability that she would ask me to report on the exact number of sheep that were on that vessel. That vessel departed. The service is run by Livestock Shipping Services, not by Emanuel Exports, so it is a different company. Officers from the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development boarded and inspected the ship. For some months, as a matter of course we have had an animal welfare inspector on site when the ships are being loaded. We put that in place in around November last year. Because of the heightened concern, in this case we took the opportunity to board that vessel and to inspect it and to ensure that it was compliant with the very modest Australian Standards for the Export of Livestock.

MOORA RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE — HON DARREN WEST — COMMENTS

284. Hon JIM CHOWN to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to informal discussions Hon Darren West had at the Western Australian Local Government Association conference on 5 April 2018, with two Moora Shire Councillors, regarding Moora Residential College.

- (1) Is the minister prepared to have an independent assessment take place into Moora Residential College, over the upcoming school holidays in April 2018, as stated by Hon Darren West to two Moora shire councillors?
- (2) During that that same conversation, Hon Darren West provided assurances that \$500 000 would be found, if the independent assessment indicated that the expenditure of this amount will allow the college to operate. Does the minister agree with this statement?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

On behalf of the minister, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Education and Training.

- (1) Detailed reports on the condition of Moora Residential College have been tabled and are available for review. These reports provide comprehensive information prepared by independent consultants on the facility.
- (2) I do not agree with the premise of this question or that Hon Darren West gave such a commitment.

SCHOOL OF SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS: BEHAVIOUR AND ENGAGEMENT

285. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the Department of Education's behaviour management program in the Busselton area.

- (1) How many students in the electorate of Vasse or the City of Busselton, as appropriate, have been referred to and then taken on by the School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement in the past 12 months?
- (2) What is the process following referral to SSEN:BE?
- (3) What is the justification for exclusion from the school environment and engagement within SSEN:BE?
- (4) What is the success rate of students referred to SSEN:BE and how is success measured?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

On behalf of the minister, I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. This answer has been provided by the Minister for Education and Training.

- (1) Twelve students have been referred, six of whom have been provided with intensive support by the School of Special Educational Needs: Behaviour and Engagement.
- (2) Information is collected from the school, the school psychology service and, where applicable, regional, department and/or other external services, to assess the specific needs of the referred student. A tailored response or intervention is then developed and implemented.
- (3) Students with complex and challenging behaviour may require an intervention that provides direct support delivered on a SSEN:BE site for a time. This is determined in consultation with all relevant parties, including the student's parents. Reasons for supporting a student off-site may include the risk they pose to the safety of others, risk to their own safety, fear and/or high anxiety, or the need to assess the student's needs away from the environment that triggers his or her negative or extreme behaviours.
- (4) Each intervention is tailored for the individual student through a needs assessment. Individual goals form the basis of the intervention plan and success is measured against these defined goals. Hence, no one metric is used to measure the overall success of SSEN:BE's interventions. One measure SSEN:BE monitors for students with the most challenging of behaviours is suspension history. The cohort of students who received the highest amount of intensive SSEN:BE support in the 2016 and 2017 school years have had a significant reduction in suspensions. Average suspension data for this cohort in 2015 was 20.42 days, but in 2017 this dropped to 5.04 days. SSEN:BE also surveys school principals every two years. In the most recent survey, 86.6 per cent of principals who had accessed SSEN:BE services indicated they would continue to do so to assist meeting the behaviour and engagement support requirements of high-needs students.

INSURANCE COMMISSION — JESSICA LITTLEWOOD

286. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the minister representing the Treasurer:

I refer to the Insurance Commission of Western Australia's handling of the case of Jessica Amye Littlewood, who was in a motor vehicle accident in 2015 when she was struck by a drunk driver and left with catastrophic brain injuries.

- (1) Does ICWA accept that Ms Littlewood requires care on a daily basis?
- (2) If so, why was the last support payment made to Ms Littlewood on 25 July last year?
- (3) How does ICWA expect Ms Littlewood to support herself?
- (4) Why is ICWA requiring additional evidence to be presented?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Treasurer.

- (1) The Insurance Commission accepts that Ms Littlewood requires some care on a daily basis. The number of hours of care required is the subject of expert evidence obtained by both parties to her District Court action. The Insurance Commission is currently paying for two hours a week of case management and six hours a week of care—support—as recommended by the rehabilitation physician that Ms Littlewood consulted at her solicitor's suggestion.
- (2) The Insurance Commission continues to make payments to, or on behalf of, Ms Littlewood. The Insurance Commission continues to pay for eight hours a week of case management and support in accordance with the initial recommendation from Ms Littlewood's rehabilitation physician.
- (3) In addition to the case management and support funded by the Insurance Commission, Ms Littlewood has been in receipt of advance payments—that is, payments in advance for likely past losses that will be offset against any settlement or judgement payment—from the Insurance Commission. Advance payments continue.
- (4) The nature and extent of Ms Littlewood's injuries and their effect on day-to-day activities is complex. The additional evidence sought by the Insurance Commission pertains to Ms Littlewood's care—support—requirements and the nature and extent of injuries. Ms Littlewood recently refused to attend an occupational therapist arranged by the Insurance Commission. Further medical appointments have been scheduled. The Insurance Commission is attending a pre-trial—settlement—conference in the District Court on Thursday, 12 April 2018, at which time settlement of Ms Littlewood's claim will be explored.

OPTUS STADIUM — PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

287. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Optus Stadium pedestrian bridge.

- (1) Was Civmec or York Rizzani required to submit an industry participation plan as part of the revised contract; and, if not, why not?
- (2) Can the minister table a copy of the industry participation plan?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Advice is being sought.

SUBCONTRACTORS — INDUSTRY REFORMS

288. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the minister representing the Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations:

I refer to the minister's answer to my question without notice of 22 March 2018 regarding the McGowan government's election commitments in its "Protection for Subcontractors" policy document.

- (1) Noting that it was formally established on 22 February 2018, when did the minister decide to establish an industry advisory group?
- (2) What are the other steps in the "comprehensive strategy put in place by the McGowan Labor government on coming to power" so far as they relate to subcontractor protection?
- (3) What is Mr John Fiocco's experience in building and construction law?

- (4) In what manner has the government increased support and education to industry participants on the use of the Construction Contracts Act 2004?
- (5) Has the government maintained the Western Australian building and construction code monitoring unit; and, if so, what is its complement of staff and current budget?
- (6) If no to (5), why not, and when and who decided to terminate its operations?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations.

- (1) The decision to establish the industry advisory group was approved by cabinet.
- (2) In addition to the process for industry-wide reform, work is being undertaken with key works agencies to implement measures to protect subcontractors working on state government-funded projects. The McGowan government is committed to implementing its election commitments.
- (3) Mr Fiocco has extensive experience in commercial, contract and insolvency law, having practised as both a solicitor and a barrister over many years.
- (4) The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety has undertaken a campaign to raise awareness within the industry of the Construction Contracts Act. This includes the delivery of information seminars to interested groups in metropolitan and regional areas, and enhanced online materials. It will also deliver face-to-face seminars to the industry on construction contract management.
- (5) Yes. The budget and resourcing allocation approved by the former government has been maintained.
- (6) Not applicable.

OPTUS STADIUM — PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

Question without Notice 119 — Supplementary Information

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [5.11 pm]: Pursuant to standing order 109, I wish to provide additional information to question without notice 119 from Hon Peter Collier, which was asked on 22 March 2018.

[See paper 1286.]

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 266, 759, 900, 904, 905, 906, 926, 930, 931, 943 AND 1050

Papers Tabled

Papers relating to answers to questions on notice were tabled by **Hon Alannah MacTiernan (Minister for Regional Development)**, **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Environment)** and **Hon Samantha Rowe (Parliamentary Secretary)**.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 654, 735, 932 AND 933

Answer Advice

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [5.11 pm]: Pursuant to standing order 108(2), I wish to inform the house that answers to questions on notice asked by Hon Martin Aldridge to me as the minister representing the Minister for Police; Road Safety will be provided on the next sitting day, 8 May 2018.

WILUNA TOWN BUSH FIRE BRIGADE

Question without Notice 273 — Answer Advice

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [5.12 pm]: Hon Colin de Grussa asked a question earlier on. It was asked of one minister but it was sent to another minister late in the day. I will provide an answer to him behind the Chair in the next few days and I will provide the answer to the house the next time we sit.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH PROJECT — ORD VALLEY

Question without Notice 253 — Answer Advice

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [5.12 pm]: I would like to provide an answer to Hon Robin Chapple's question without notice 253, which was asked yesterday. I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated —

- (1) The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is contributing an in-kind contribution of \$1.881 million over three years to the Commonwealth Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) Project, Developing sustainable cropping systems for cotton, grains and fodder.
- (2) The scope of the project is to:
 - Develop a robust cotton management system for well drained soils that can respond to intra-seasonal climate variability, produce reliable yield and quality with input requirements quantified. This includes a modelling capacity to assess investment feasibility and production risks;
 - Identify double cropping options and production challenges, including crop species selection, managing crop transitions, pre-emptive plant protection, tillage and water requirements;
 - Identify, trial and develop complementary crop species genetics, agronomy and rotational requirements for chia, millet, sorghum, corn, chickpea, mungbean, quinoa and others;
 - Develop and extend best management practices for growers and other industry partners; and
 - Explore risk management options for biosecurity and other impacts on selected northern crops.
- (3) The reporting requirements are with the CRC for Developing Northern Australia and are based on achieving defined milestones.
- (4) The first report was due in January, 2018 and has been delivered.
- (5) No. Release of the report will require approval of the Northern Australia crop Research Alliance and the CRC for Developing Northern Australia.
- (6) Supporting the growth of Aboriginal Agriculture, including the development of bush foods, nutraceutical and pharmaceutical markets is a major priority for the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development.

Through both the Pilbara and Kimberly Development Commissions, we are working closely with the Aboriginal pastoral estate and other Aboriginal stakeholders to progress bush food harvest opportunities.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — SAVINGS MEASURES

Question without Notice 143 — Correction of Answer

HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.13 pm]: I refer to advice that was provided to Hon Donna Faragher on Tuesday, 10 April 2018 after question time. The Minister for Education and Training advised that the information she was providing was in response to question without notice 143, which was asked on 22 March 2018. The incorrect question number was used. The information she provided was in response to question without notice 198, which was asked on 29 March 2018. I have some information for Hon Donna Faragher in relation to question without notice 143 asked on 22 March 2018, which the minister undertook to provide, and I table the information.

[See paper 1297.]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

2018–19 Budget Estimates Hearings — Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust): Before we return to orders of the day, I have received a letter from the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, which states —

Dear Madam President

2018–19 Budget Estimates

Thank you for your letter dated 29 March 2018 granting use of the Legislative Council Chamber for the Estimates and Financial Operations Committee's hearings into the 2018–19 Budget Estimates. The Committee requests you advise the House the following information as part of the Committee's consideration of this year's estimates.

- (1) The hearings will be held in the Chamber from Tuesday 19 June to Friday 22 June 2018.
- (2) The Electronic Lodgement System (ELS) will open on Thursday 10 May 2018 for Members to submit a reasonable number of questions prior to hearings. It will close at 5pm on Thursday 17 May 2018.
- (3) The ELS will re-open the week of hearings for additional questions and close at 5pm on Wednesday 27 June 2018.
- (4) A Procedure Policy and the timetable of hearings will be emailed to Members in due course.

The Committee appreciates the accommodations made by you and the Leader that enable the 2018–19 Budget Estimates hearings to be held in the Chamber over this period.

Yours sincerely

Hon Alanna Clohesy MLC
Chair

WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND INJURY MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2017*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON MICHAEL MISCHIN (North Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [5.16 pm]: Before the recess, I asked whether the minister could clarify why the commencement date of the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Amendment Bill has been left at large in the manner it has. Perhaps she could assist by also indicating when it is expected that the bulk of the bill, particularly the operative bits we are concerned about that has prompted its being brought to this place, are expected to come into operation. If it is because some regulations or some other subordinate legislation has to be prepared, can she indicate when it is likely to be ready and the extent of that subordinate legislation?

It is mentioned in the second reading speech that there are roughly 20 cases of fatalities every year. I understand from the briefing we received from WorkCover that some extra cases would also fall under the jurisdiction of this act and benefit from these provisions. I would appreciate some indication of the number of those cases and how they fall under the jurisdiction of the act.

We are dealing with a significant increase in the death benefits, not quite doubling but not far short of doubling a lump sum payable for dependants now. Plainly, that will have some kind of impact on the insurers. Over the last several years, premiums have been decreasing because of the efficiencies within our workers' compensation system and the manner in which those claims are dealt with and the increasing safety in the workplace, which has meant there is less draw on the funds. I would be interested in the overall cost of this increase in benefits towards the dependants of bereaved workers and the increase planned for child weekly benefits so that we can get some idea of the potential imposition in the scheme. What will that mean to an increase in the cost of premiums and how has that been calculated? Otherwise, I have an interest in the progress of the rewrite of the bill. It is my understanding that it is not very far into that drafting exercise, albeit the drafting instructions would be fairly well advanced; they having been developed over the last several years. Could we get some indication about what progress has been made in the rewriting of the legislation and to what degree instructions now are departing from those that had been established before the change of government? I would particularly like to know what consultation has taken place since then in order to ensure that whatever is produced in this house in due course reflects not only best practice, but also has been refined in a way that will not produce unexpected and undesirable results and will take into account the views of those who are meant to make this legislation work satisfactorily.

The PRESIDENT: Member, as you draw breath, I am going to interrupt the debate for the taking of members' statements.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: If I might just say, they are my remarks, Madam President. We can finish the debate from my point of view and I will not require the call when we resume. Otherwise, I look forward to the passage of the bill.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

ANZAC YOUTH PARADE AND SERVICE — RSL CITY OF COCKBURN*Statement*

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [5.20 pm]: I am delighted to report to the house that yesterday I had the very great privilege to join the RSL City of Cockburn Anzac Youth Parade and Service. This was a project introduced by RSL life member Arthur Stanton back in 2001. Mr Stanton was present, as he always is, yesterday, along with all of the stalwarts that members from the South Metropolitan Region may be acquainted with, including Digger Cleak, OAM, RSL president, and Mrs Kay Cleak, who of course does all the work! It was great to catch up with them, together with representatives from a whole range of service departments and service organisations including all the helpers and volunteers from the RSL City of Cockburn sub-branch and so on. Those who helped or assisted included police, St John Ambulance and the City of Cockburn.

The things that will interest members, I am sure, about this day was the scale of the operation. There were 1 500 schoolchildren from 32 different schools. I must say, when they were calling them up four at a time by the name of the school to lay their wreaths, it sounded to me like a rollcall of all my polling booths, which made me a bit twitchy! These were real, dinkum Aussie kids from all sorts of backgrounds in the South Metro Region sharing in a very special occasion—not only sharing, though, but participating actively.

I want to mention some of the people who were involved. A special mention would have to go to Seton Catholic College. I was awfully impressed with the contribution from Seton Catholic College. I even said to one or two people, "If I had kids and I was looking for a school, I would look at sending them to Seton Catholic College." It provided, firstly, the masters of ceremony in Natalie McArthur and Jerry Mathias. They were absolute professionals in conducting the proceedings and a credit to their school. I was also impressed by Grace Arthurson, a senior student from Seton Catholic College, who gave the Anzac Day address and did so very well indeed. The

Seton Catholic College choir also performed with distinction. I would like to give a mention also to Shanyka Parker from Coolbellup Community School who did the acknowledgement of country, something that the Parliament itself was considering earlier today. Grace Ricetti from Jandakot Primary School recited an Anzac Day resolution. I have mentioned Grace Arthurson, who gave the Anzac Day occasional address. Luna Har Paz from Spearwood Alternative School recited the poem *In Flanders Fields*. Gemma Sherlock from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Primary School recited the Prayer of Remembrance. The Ode to the Fallen duties were shared by Eva Antic and Lauren Cicanese from St Jerome's Primary School. I was very impressed, as were all present, with the way in which these young people conducted themselves. They conducted themselves with aplomb, polish and dignity, and their respective schools and their parents can be very proud of them.

It was also a special occasion for many of us present because we enjoyed Vice Regal patronage again this year. Her Excellency the Governor, Kerry Sanderson, AO, graced the occasion in every sense of the word. It was a delight to have her present as her term as Governor draws to a close. For many who were present, this may have been their last public occasion to enjoy the Governor's presence. It was appreciated. She went to a lot of trouble to be there. The duties of Governor are onerous, but I know that she enjoys doing this sort of thing. She was conspicuous in greeting everybody, and particularly making sure that she got to see as many schoolchildren as she could. Given that there were about 1 500 schoolchildren at that event that was held just off Spearwood Avenue, that was no small undertaking. Our Governor attempted that with her usual grace, dignity and commitment. That was a great occasion. Congratulations to the RSL, the City of Cockburn, and the 32 schools and others involved on this occasion, on which we did indeed remember those who have made the supreme sacrifice for our country.

CHILD PROTECTION — CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION SYSTEM

Statement

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [5.26 pm]: I rise tonight to raise my concerns, which I am sure all members share, about our responsibility as a community to ensure that we do everything we can to protect children from harm. I specifically want to speak tonight about some of the deficiencies in the Western Australia child abuse prevention system, most notably the lack of independent oversight to prevent child abuse in institutional settings; the lack of child advocacy services; and the need to put in place child-friendly complaint systems.

The Greens policy in this area is very strong. It states —

Children have a right to a loving and nurturing environment free of neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse, exploitation or discrimination.

It states also that the important task of raising and protecting children is a shared responsibility of the community as a whole.

We know that child abuse, whether physical, sexual or psychological neglect, is absolutely unconscionable. It can, and must be, prevented. According to the Australian Institute of Family Studies, Australia is one of the only developed countries in which there has been no methodically rigorous, nationwide study of the prevalence or incidence of child abuse and neglect. Members should be concerned about that. The Australian Institute of Family Studies estimates that in Australia, between five and 18 per cent of children are physically abused; between 1.6 and four per cent are neglected; between nine and 14 per cent are emotionally maltreated; between four and 23 per cent are exposed to family violence; and between five and 26 per cent are sexually abused. These estimates vary significantly. Therefore, we clearly need to do more work to establish an evidence base in this area. However, even if we take the lowest estimates in these ranges, it is clear that child abuse is occurring at significant levels. I note the particular vulnerability of children in care, including foster care, residential care and youth justice detention.

We know that the number of children in out-of-home care in Western Australia has increased from 2 630 in 2007 to 4 795 in 2017. That is an enormous increase of 82 per cent. We also know that children are now entering care earlier, staying there for longer and exhibiting increasingly complex behaviours. In addition, within Western Australia, over 1 000 young people are being managed through our youth justice system. The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse raised concerns about the ongoing deficiencies in our regulation and oversight of institutions caring for children. I quote the Honourable Justice Peter McClellan, AM. He said —

... the research appears to indicate that, overall, there does not appear to be either frequent or wide-ranging engagement by oversight bodies with matters concerning institutional child sexual abuse.

The royal commission also went on to recommend the establishment of dedicated services for victims and survivors of child sexual abuse to make sure that they were able to receive ongoing advocacy and support. This is nothing new to members. I and other members here were in this place in 2012 when the Blaxell inquiry came down. It examined the abuse that occurred at St Andrews Hostel in Katanning and made for pretty harrowing reading. It outlined the importance of, and the need for, individual advocacy and support for children and also for

the public sector to better protect children against sexual abuse. In addition to that, in June 2016, the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People released a report that discussed this need. I acknowledge the work of Hon Donna Faragher and Hon Dr Sally Talbot who were on that committee and played a key role in that really important report. That report, “Everybody’s Business: An examination into how the Commissioner for Children and Young People can enhance WA’s response to child abuse”, is comprehensive and important. It identifies what is already in existence, what is working, what is not working and where the holes are. Importantly, that report highlighted that, again, there is a glaring gap when it comes to individual advocacy for children. Since then we have also had the “Statutory Review of the Children and Community Services Act 2004”. That report was released last year in November. It considered the functioning of the main piece of legislation that provides for WA’s child protection system. That report also identified the need for independent child advocacy services, a child-friendly complaint system for children in care, and independent oversight of out-of-home care, in particular secure care. Released that same month was the Commissioner for Children and Young People WA’s report “Oversight of services for children and young people in Western Australia”. Amongst that particular report’s recommendations was that we need to establish a robust and comprehensive system of independent oversight for all children and young people in out-of-home care. It went on to make a series of recommendations for establishing or increasing independent oversight for other cohorts of vulnerable children, including children who are in the education system, children, importantly, within police custody, and children who are accessing disability services. It recommended that children engaging with child and young people services have access to an independent individual advocacy mechanism.

I note that we already have some excellent agencies within Western Australia. I think primarily the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services, the Mental Health Advocacy Service and the Ombudsman are some excellent models. But there are some significant gaps still in our oversight, particularly in secure care and police custody, and also that we do not have the capacity for individual advocacy for children. We know, as demonstrated by the Blaxell report and the royal commission, that it is too easy to dismiss, ignore or simply not believe what children are saying about abuse. It is really important that we consider establishing an individual child advocacy service, and that that also, like the other entities I have just referred to, is created independently of government to ensure it is able to respond appropriately when concerns about government agencies are raised.

I acknowledge that there is no clear model to follow for establishing this service, and I am not proposing to tell members what that service should be; that should be subject to broad consultation. But we know that it could be an expansion of an existing service or a new one. It could also undertake oversight of children in care, or that role could be done by a separate body. At the moment the Commissioner for Children and Young People’s role is one of systemic advocacy. It does not have a role in individual advocacy so it cannot deal with any complaints that come to its office. I recognise, of course, that this could be changed.

I recognise also that establishing a service will require significant investment and that is not something that is likely to be contemplated very seriously in the near future, but this is something that has come out of multiple recommendations over a considerable period of time. We know that investing in children is really essential, because, ultimately, we know that child abuse destroys lives. We have an obligation to ensure robust systems are in place so that everything possible is being done to protect children and to prevent child abuse. The royal commission has put forward some comprehensive recommendations and there is some really good work happening at the moment. I note again that the Commissioner for Children and Young People is already working with various agencies, businesses and organisations to try to increase practices that will improve child safety, but that is not going to fill the significant gaps that have been identified in successive reports. A number of reports have already identified those gaps. We need to start shining a light on this issue and get agreement to start addressing them as an absolute priority.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTIONS

Statement

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [5.37 pm]: I rise to raise continuing concerns about some answers provided to me by the Minister for Education. Madam President, you will recall that on the Thursday before we rose a couple of weeks ago I raised some concerns about the continued non-answers by the Minister for Education on the remaining budget cuts estimated to cost around \$41 million. For two weeks I had been asking the minister very straightforward questions about the cuts that form part of the \$41 million that remained and that were and continue to include Moora Residential College, the camp schools and others. It was clear, though, that other cuts had not been announced as part of any press statements the minister released either on 13 December or 11 January. For two weeks I was given a variety of non-answers. I remind the house of a couple of them. An answer provided on 20 March states —

The figure of \$41 million is an estimate that is subject to the budget process undertaken ahead of the publication of the 2018–19 state budget. The Department of Education continues to review its internal operations as part of the 2018–19 budget process to identify further internal savings.

Another answer, earlier on 15 March, states —

As stated in the media statement of 13 December 2017, the Department of Education will continue to review programs. Decisions relating to the department’s budget are occurring as part of the 2018–19 budget process and remain confidential until the release of the state budget on 10 May 2018.

Madam President, you will remember that on the last sitting Thursday I raised some significant concerns about the minister’s non-answers. The simple fact is I was not asking about further cuts, as I said at the time, as outrageous as they may be—further cuts that the minister is obviously intending to announce as part of the state budget. I was asking about all the cuts that had been part of the original cuts of 13 December. Finally, on Tuesday this week, I got a list. I will say though, I found the preamble kind of interesting. According to the uncorrected *Hansard*, the preamble was —

All the savings measures totalling an estimated \$41million have been made public through a variety of avenues.

Really? It took two weeks of asking questions. I could not get an answer, but apparently they were all public. This is how they were public—“through a variety of avenues”. The incorporated answer continued, according to the uncorrected *Hansard* —

The communication has encompassed the following:

- (1) Media statement dated 13 September 2017 and later updated on 11 January 2018 listing changes impacting multiple stakeholders;

Fair enough; that is public. I accept that. It continued —

- (2) Departmental correspondence relating to changes to existing programs and services; and

Interesting. I am not sure whether that is necessarily public in the way that we would think it to be public, but we will take that. The answer continued —

- (3) Advice to internal Department staff relating to adjustments to the Departments budget allocations.

The last time I checked, having a chat to the department does not account for full and public disclosure. To suggest that, to write that, to even say that that is the case, is ridiculous. The answer continued —

There has also been much media commentary about the budget repair measures which were not individually listed in the media statement but nonetheless is on the public record including in this place since the 13 December 2017.

According to the minister, departmental correspondence and having a chat to one’s department accounts for full and open public disclosure of the remaining cuts. I have to say, if they were all public, as has been suggested in this response, why did we have to wait more than two weeks to get the list that was then provided to me? Why did I get answers to questions referring to the 2018–19 budget process that everything was confidential if they were already public? It is just ridiculous.

Today the farce continued. The minister, to her credit, finally provided a list. It did not provide a lot of detail in respect of some of the cuts, so today I asked for some more information regarding a few of them. One of them was pretty clear, and I accept that Hon Samantha Rowe later corrected one of the numbers attributed to the questions because that caused some confusion. I asked a particular question, according to the uncorrected *Hansard* —

Will the minister provide more detail on each of the internal department budget savings identified in table (3); and, if not, why not?

I want to refer to that table. In the information that was provided to me on Tuesday afternoon, table (3) was headed “Internal Department budget savings cease or reduction”. According to the table, for the SWITCH program, a three-year program replaced by LEAP, there was \$3.75 million. For professional learning support, there was \$4.549 million. For specialist learning program areas, there was \$5.325 million. We are not talking about small amounts of money here. For the establishment grant, there was \$1.65 million. For student support services, there was \$1.2 million. Further along, for the dividend from the agricultural trust, there was \$550 000. We all know about that, but it was not in the press statement; we found out about it later on. The last item in the table was one-off savings, which the minister outlined in part of the answer given today. But I want to refer to professional learning support, the specialist learning program, the establishment grant and student support services. That was the only information that was provided in that table, with the figures. I asked, “Will the minister provide more detail on each of the internal department budget savings identified in table (3); and, if not, why not?” The answer provided to me was that savings had been outlined by category in the answer provided to question without notice 198, which I take to be the one that I am actually asking about. The minister has provided me with absolutely nothing. There are programs within the department that have been either ceased or reduced, according to this table, some by as much as \$5.3 million. There is no detail in relation to it. I have asked quite a sensible question, I would

have thought—just give me some more detail on what these cuts entail—and I was told that they have been outlined. There is no detail in this. We find ourselves in a farcical situation. I feel as though I am going around in circles here, on one big merry-go-round. At some point in time, someone has got to get off, and the minister continues to provide an answer here, an answer there, talks about a budget, says something is public, which apparently is talking to the department, and just thinks that I am going to stop asking these questions. I am going to continue asking questions of the minister about this matter. It is simply not good enough that she can provide answers to me that contain absolutely no information. How can she refer me back to an answer that is the question that I am asking about and wanting more detail on?

I am going to keep on doing it. I say to the deputy leader that I appreciate that the Leader of the House is out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business, but I would appreciate him letting her know that I am not happy with these answers. We cannot go through a situation of not being able to even talk about it because it is confidential, in the 2018–19 budget, and then finally providing me with a list, saying that it is public, and then, when I ask for more detail, referring me back to the table about which I am asking for more information. This is just not good enough. The minister has to be far more transparent on this issue. She cannot say that something is public when it refers to departmental correspondence and talking to the department. That is just not full public disclosure of these cuts. People need to know what these cuts actually mean. Unfortunately, it means that when we come back, we will be heading into the budget, so not only will people have to get over these cuts, when we finally find out exactly what they mean, they will get more come 10 May.

SCOUTS WA — 2018 YOUTH AWARDS

Statement

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [5.47 pm]: This is something of a variation on a theme, since it concerns the young people of this state. It was my great privilege, on 25 February, to attend the Scouts WA 2018 youth award presentations. I did so with my colleagues Hon Michael Mischin, Hon Bill Marmion, Terry Healy, the member for Darling Range, and Minister Mick Murray.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Terry Healy is the member for Southern River.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Southern River? Thank you; my east metro and south metro geography require some correction. I will take that advice on board.

Hon Darren West: You're from the western suburbs.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: No, I am from the northern suburbs.

During the presentation of awards, Ms Rebecca Mawson and Mr Richard Pilgrim received the Baden-Powell Scout Award, which is the highest scouting award available to youth in Australia. In order to receive this award, a scout has to display physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual development of the very highest standard. It is indeed a very rare and significant achievement, and I subsequently conveyed the congratulations of the parliamentary Liberal Party to both those recipients. In addition to those two individuals, 64 young people were recognised with an Australian Scout Medallion, which is awarded for completion of a leadership course, leadership activity and competition of the adventure accord. These young people were drawn from the metropolitan area and also from Australind, Geraldton and Liddelow. It was a broad representation. It was most pleasing that so many young people in our community engaged in useful activity, displaying leadership qualities that were recognised and will stand them in good stead for their futures. In addition, 21 Queen's Scout certificates were awarded, mainly for achievements in the areas of personal growth, leadership development and community involvement in outdoor activities.

As these awards were being presented, it was my hope that the Minister for Sport and Recreation was paying particular attention to the fact that outdoor activities and engagement are broad and universal concepts.

I draw attention to that fact only because of the government's decision in December last year to deny access to KidSport vouchers to children who prefer to engage in scouting, guiding and cadet-like activities. Why is that important? It is important because not every child from a disadvantaged background wants to pursue a competitive sport, and that might be for a range of reasons. After the awards presentation, I was approached by a gentleman who recounted to me a story about his granddaughter who was born with a congenital bladder condition. It made the pursuit of competitive sport far more difficult, challenging and embarrassing for her, but she found an opportunity to engage in community activity and teamwork in a useful and healthy way through participation in the guides. These are the children we are talking about. It appears to me that the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, I think more so than the minister, has taken a particular view about who should be eligible for these vouchers and who should not. I asked a series of questions in this place about what the scope of this program is designed to do. On Thursday, 22 March I asked the Leader of the House representing the minister what the program was designed to do. The minister replied —

- (1) It is to increase opportunities for young people aged five to 18 years from financially disadvantaged families to participate in sport and recreation in a club environment. The objectives of the program have not changed.

They may not have changed, but they have certainly been reinterpreted to foreclose opportunities for children who are not particularly interested in competitive sport and are looking for a healthy outlet to engage in a constructive, affirming developmental activity. This will impact on Scouts WA in a significant manner because between 18 and 20 per cent of scouts on its books have taken advantage of the KidSport voucher scheme. Scouts WA is obviously very concerned about what that will mean for not only the welfare of those children and their future development, but also its organisational capacity to continue to deliver programs, so much so that it has now applied to the Australian Sports Commission for registration as a nationally recognised sporting body in the hope that the ex-Department of Sport and Recreation—now the department of cultural industries and sundry other activities and pursuits—will take a more positive view and continue to provide that kind of eligibility to effectively the scouts, girl guides and cadets who are interested in remaining engaged. I do not think that is an appropriate course of action. It is a course of action that it has been forced to undertake and, in so doing, it strikes me as being somewhat ridiculous that Scouts WA has had to develop protocols to comply with World Anti-Doping Code guidelines. We are talking about children aged between five and 18 years. Nevertheless, that is the avenue that Scouts WA feels it has had no other option but to pursue.

All I wish to do is continue to encourage a constructive dialogue between the minister and Scouts WA. I have no reason to doubt the minister's integrity. I think he wishes to work towards a solution. At the moment, he has gracefully extended the transition period, which will effectively increase the eligibility period until 30 November, when the guillotine was originally going to come down on 1 July. I think that at very little cost the minister has a great opportunity to reconsider this policy decision and ensure that 750 scouts, perhaps 200 guides and perhaps 30 or 40 cadets can continue to access the KidSport voucher scheme and give their future development a bit more certainty. I encourage both sides to continue that dialogue.

PAY-ROLL TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (EXEMPTION FOR TRAINEES) BILL 2018

Receipt and First Reading

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

Second Reading

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [5.55 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The bill seeks to amend the Pay-roll Tax Assessment Act 2002 to tighten the payroll tax exemption for wages paid to trainees. This bill limits the exemption to new employees who are trainees earning up to \$100 000 per annum. In accordance with the government's public announcement on 30 November 2017, the proposed changes apply from 1 December 2017. The exemption for wages paid to apprentices is not affected by these amendments.

Under the current law, the wages of all trainees paid under an approved training contract with the Department of Training and Workforce Development are exempt from payroll tax. The exemption is available to both new and existing employees undertaking training, and there is no upper salary threshold at which the exemption ceases to apply. These exemptions are generous compared with the considerably more limited exemptions available in other Australian jurisdictions. The original intent of the exemption was to encourage businesses to hire and train new staff. Contrary to this intent, a significant proportion of the cost of providing the exemption has been subsidising training of existing workers. This bill will refocus the exemption in line with the original policy intent.

Given the immediate effect of the government's announced changes, transitional arrangements have been made available for existing employees. The exemption will continue to apply for employers who have lodged a training contract for their existing employees with the Department of Training and Workforce Development prior to 1 December 2017. Transitional provisions will continue to provide an exemption from payroll tax for the remaining term of the contract, provided the employee's ordinary annual wage did not exceed \$100 000 at the time the contract was lodged. Immediate changes were necessary to address the tax avoidance behaviour of many employers who have been using the exemption primarily for the purpose of minimising their payroll tax liability, rather than using the exemption to address real skill gaps in their business.

The current design of the exemption does not allow the state to target financial support towards priority training areas. Rather, the magnitude of financial support and the areas in which these are directed towards are being driven entirely by employers. This is because any training contract registered with the Department of Training and Workforce Development is automatically eligible for a payroll tax exemption. Although demand-driven support is not necessarily a bad thing, there is overwhelming evidence that these exemptions were being used to avoid tax. These motivations do not deliver value for money for taxpayers, nor are they necessarily delivering the right skills for the economy. This bill seeks to build upon the changes made by the former government, which capped the number of employees whom an employer can enrol under a training contact at 100 per calendar quarter. Before these changes were made, there were examples of large organisations enrolling 1 000 existing employees, or its entire workforce, in similar training courses. No doubt members opposite shared similar concerns as ours back when these changes were made.

These previous changes did help curb the cost growth of the exemption. The cost associated with payroll tax exemptions grew from around \$11 million in 2005–06 to around \$80 million in 2016–17, after a peak of around \$90 million in 2014–15, coinciding with the time when the previous government's cap was introduced. Although I applaud the former government for making what must have been an unpopular change at the time, further reform is needed to ensure that the original policy intent of this exemption is fulfilled.

Government training policy and expenditure must be carefully targeted, affordable and directed to expand the range and strength of industries in Western Australia. Although some organisations that benefit from the current law will not support these changes, we cannot impose the heavy task of budget repair and then simply ignore overt tax avoidance. We have a duty as a government to deliver fairness and value for money for taxpayers.

Following on from these proposed changes, the state government is exploring options to replace the remaining payroll tax exemptions for apprentices and trainees with a grant scheme. The Department of Training and Workforce Development will be engaging with industry and key stakeholders in the design of the scheme prior to its possible commencement from 1 July 2019. A grant scheme is a more transparent and equitable approach to providing assistance to employers. A major benefit of the grant scheme is that it will make assistance available to all businesses, including small businesses that fall beneath the payroll tax threshold. Further legislative amendments will be required to implement the grant scheme.

The current amendments are expected to deliver additional revenue to the state government of around \$100 million over the period 2017–18 to 2020–21. This additional revenue will be completely reinvested into funding around 43 350 training places over the same period to help offset the gap created following changes to commonwealth funding for training places.

In closing, this bill, as described, will build on changes made by the previous government to focus on the original policy intention of supporting training for new employees. It takes an essential step towards implementing better targeted training support and will put an end to growing instances of payroll tax avoidance. Following this, the government will be working closely with industry and other stakeholders to design an efficient and more equitable training grant scheme to support the training needs of WA industries, including small businesses.

Finally, these measures are consistent with the McGowan government's focus on creating jobs for the future. They are consistent with decisions taken to date, including the freezing of TAFE fees; passing the WA Jobs Bill, which supports local businesses tendering for government contracts; establishing the new industries fund to support and accelerate new and emerging businesses in Western Australia; working closely with industry, such as the partnership between TAFE and Rio Tinto, to ensure vocational education and training keeps pace with technology and innovation; and developing the Emerging Leaders in Agriculture, Technology and Enterprise program, to improve productivity and develop a highly skilled rural workforce with clear employment pathways.

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

[See paper 1298.]

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

House adjourned at 6.01 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES — FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS**566. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:**

I refer to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, and I ask:

- (a) how many applications has the Minister's Office received, and for each department or agency under her direction received, per month, since 11 March 2017;
- (b) of those identified in (a), how many were dealt with within the 45 day statutory timeframe;
- (c) of those identified in (a), how many applicants were charged a fee beyond the initial \$30 application fee; and
- (d) what is the total sum of additional access fees charged with respect to (c)?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(d) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 576.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUESTS**567. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:**

I refer to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*, and I ask:

- (a) how many applications has the Minister's Office received, and for each department or agency under her direction received, per month, since 11 March 2017;
- (b) of those identified in (a), how many were dealt with within the 45 day statutory timeframe;
- (c) of those identified in (a), how many applicants were charged a fee beyond the initial \$30 application fee; and
- (d) what is the total sum of additional access fees charged with respect to (c)?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(d) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 576.

MINISTER FOR SCIENCE — MOBILE DEVICES**583. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Science:**

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR INNOVATION AND ICT — MOBILE DEVICES**584. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Innovation and ICT:**

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;

- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR FORESTRY — MOBILE DEVICES

585. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR FISHERIES — MOBILE DEVICES

586. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR WATER — MOBILE DEVICES

587. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR YOUTH — MOBILE DEVICES

592. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Youth:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR VETERANS ISSUES — MOBILE DEVICES

593. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Veterans Issues:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — MOBILE DEVICES

594. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS — MOBILE DEVICES

615. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;

- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 628.

MINISTER FOR HERITAGE — MOBILE DEVICES

616. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Heritage:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 628.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — MOBILE DEVICES

617. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 628.

MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES — MOBILE DEVICES

618. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Refer to Legislative Council Question On Notice number 628.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — MOBILE DEVICES

619. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Refer to Legislative Council Question On Notice 628.

MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT, JOBS AND TRADE —
MOBILE DEVICES**629. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:**

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Refer to answer provided to question on notice 628.

MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD — MOBILE DEVICES

630. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Refer to answer provided to question on notice 628.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — MOBILE DEVICES

631. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;

- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Refer to answer provided to question on notice 628.

MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES — MOBILE DEVICES

632. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Disability Services:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 628.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — MOBILE DEVICES

633. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to mobile devices, including tablets, that are provided to the Minister by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC), and I ask:

- (a) what devices are used by the Minister that are funded by DPC;
- (b) what applications are installed on each device;
- (c) what is the mobile data usage associated with each device, per month, for the last six months;
- (d) with respect to messaging applications that may be installed on the device(s), are these used for official communication purposes with the Ministers' staff, departments or stakeholders; and
- (e) how is the Minister ensuring if messaging applications are used, that the communications are secure, and records are maintained as required by the *State Records Act 2000* and the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 632.

EMERGENCY SERVICES — 2.4 URBAN TANKERS

657. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the 2.4 urban tankers provided to the Career Fire and Rescue Service (CFRS), and I ask:

- (a) which CFRS stations are provided with a 2.4 urban tanker;
- (b) of those identified in (a), how many have been retrofitted with crew protection systems;
- (c) how many 2.4 urban tankers does the Department of Fire and Emergency Services have within its fleet for deployment to CFRS stations;
- (d) on how many occasions and, for what length of time, has a 2.4 urban tanker not been available to a CFRS station in the last 12 months; and
- (e) with reference to (d), on those occasions what appliance was provided to the CFRS station?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) advises:

- (a) Albany, Joondalup, Kalgoorlie and Malaga.
- (b) Two.

- (c) Six.
- (d) Nine for a total of 73 days in the last 12 months.
- (e) Light Tanker.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING — TEACHER DEVELOPMENT SCHOOLS

675. Hon Alison Xamon to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to Teacher Development Schools (TDS), and I ask:

- (a) how many TDS were there in 2016;
- (b) how many TDS were there in 2017;
- (c) how many TDS are there currently;
- (d) how many TDS are planned for 2019;
- (e) will the Minister please advise the areas of expertise and number of TDS focussing on each area of expertise for:
 - (i) 2016;
 - (ii) 2017;
 - (iii) 2018; and
 - (iv) planned for 2019;
- (f) how many TDS professional learning events were held for teachers in:
 - (i) 2016;
 - (ii) 2017;
 - (iii) planned for 2018; and
 - (iv) planned for 2019; and
- (g) For each part of (f)(i)–(iv), will the Minister please provide the area of expertise each event focused on?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

The aim of the Teacher Development School (TDS) initiative is to ensure that expertise is shared and applied across schools and the system. In addition to TDS, the Government supports a number of programs that encourage shared learning and best practice between schools. This includes:

the Department's professional learning support for schools across Western Australia, which is provided by consultants from the Statewide Services Centre, school-based experts, the Leadership Centre; and external agencies;

teachers sharing learnings and best practice through Connect, the Department's online communication system; and

online professional learning that is delivered to teachers through Saba and video conferencing. Saba is an online learning environment available to all Department of Education schools. Collaborative workshops delivered on Saba can be either attended in real time or after the event via the playback link.

- (a) 69.
- (b) 69.
- (c) 44.
- (d) 35.
- (e) (i)–(ii) Note: Many TDS have more than one area of expertise.

FOCUS AREA	2016	2017
Arts	5	5
Early years	13	12
English	15	15
English as an additional language or dialect	3	3
Health and physical education	4	4
Humanities and social sciences	9	9
Languages	3	3

Level 3 regional school support (small schools with multi-aged classes)	2	1
Mathematics	10	10
Science	11	11
Special educational needs	13	14
Senior secondary, engagement, vocational education and training (VET)	2	2
Technologies	10	10

(iii)–(iv) Note: Many TDS have more than one area of expertise.

FOCUS AREA	2018	2019
Arts	2	2
Design and technologies	2	2
Digital technologies	12	12
Early years	4	4
English	7	7
English as an additional language or dialect	1	1
Health and physical education	2	2
Humanities and social sciences	2	2
Languages	11	2
Level 3 regional school support (small schools with multi-aged classes)	1	1
Mathematics	7	7
Science	2	2
Science, Technologies, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)	9	9
Special educational needs	2	2

- (f) (i) 605.
(ii) 482.
(iii) As at 16 March 2018, 107 had been planned. This number will increase progressively throughout the year as TDS receive more requests for support. It is common practice for TDS to develop professional learning in response to school and network needs.
(iv) No events are yet planned for 2019. TDS will plan their events for 2019 as part of completing their operational plans for the 2019 school year.
- (g) (i)–(iii) Focus area for each event. One event may include more than one focus area.

FOCUS AREA	2016	2017	2018
Arts	28	39	3
Digital technologies	0	0	20
English	165	119	19
English as an additional language or dialect	20	15	1
Early years	100	118	16
Health and physical education	17	26	6
Humanities and social sciences	35	33	1
Languages	18	22	27
Mathematics	78	85	11
Science	99	67	3
STEM	43	34	14
Special educational needs	87	62	1
Senior secondary, engagement, VET	43	27	0
Technologies	62	62	1

- (iv) No events are yet planned for 2019. This number will increase progressively throughout the year as TDS receive more requests for support.

MINISTER FOR LANDS — BRIEFING NOTES AND SPEAKING POINTS

691. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Lands:

I refer to briefing notes and speaking points prepared, or approved, by your office and distributed to Members of Parliament, and I ask:

- (a) for the last 12 months, please provide a copy of all documents as detailed above;
- (b) please advise who was the recipient of each document; and
- (c) please advise who authored and approved each document?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 724.

MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES — BRIEFING NOTES AND SPEAKING POINTS

714. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to briefing notes and speaking points prepared, or approved, by your office and distributed to Members of Parliament, and I ask:

- (a) for the last 12 months, please provide a copy of all documents as detailed above;
- (b) please advise who was the recipient of each document; and
- (c) please advise who authored and approved each document?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 724.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — BRIEFING NOTES AND SPEAKING POINTS

715. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to briefing notes and speaking points prepared, or approved, by your office and distributed to Members of Parliament, and I ask:

- (a) for the last 12 months, please provide a copy of all documents as detailed above;
- (b) please advise who was the recipient of each document; and
- (c) please advise who authored and approved each document?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 724.

EMERGENCY SERVICES — GERALDTON FIRE STATION

759. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the former Geraldton Fire Station site at 59 Durlacher Street Geraldton, and I ask:

- (a) does the Department of Fire and Emergency Services have control and responsibility for the site;
- (b) what is the land tenure and appropriate classifications of the site;
- (c) is the site contaminated and, if so, by what;
- (d) what assessments have been conducted at the site, by whom, and at what cost;
- (e) will the Minister please provide a copy of any contamination assessment of the site;
- (f) is there an estimated cost to remediate contamination at the site and, if so, what is the estimated cost; and
- (g) what is the Government's intention with the site now that the Geraldton Fire Station relocated some time ago?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) advises:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) The former Geraldton Fire Station site is held by DFES under a 'Crown Grant in Trust' that deemed it could only be used for the purposes of a fire station.
- (c) The site is currently registered as possibly contaminated (under the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003*) as a result of the use of B-class firefighting foams, namely Aqueous Film Forming Foam, to extinguish fires involving flammable liquids such as petrol and oil. The age of the facility also warrants that the buildings may contain Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM) which are managed through DFES' ACM Register.

- (d) DFES has commissioned GHD environmental consultants (through the Project Managers LandCorp) to undertake initial investigative works. On 22 January 2018 DFES received a Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) Report. The PSI Report recommends that further Detailed Site Investigations (DSI) take place to assess potential risks posed to relevant receptors which may include waterways, adjacent sites etc. The DSI may also recommend development of management strategies including remediation if necessary. The Geraldton PSI was part of a broader package of investigations that was awarded to GHD. In this context the cost for the Geraldton site is estimated at \$5,798.00.
- (e) Yes. [See tabled paper no 1287.]
- (f) No there is no estimated cost to remediate the site.
- (g) DFES referred the site to the now Department of Planning Lands and Heritage (DPLH). DPLH was in the process of granting a Management Order over the former site to the City of Greater Geraldton (the City) for community purposes. DPLH has advised DFES that it will not accept transfer of the former site until the City is satisfied that it is suitable for its purposes.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES — AGENCIES — VOLUNTARY TARGETED SEPARATION SCHEME

813. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the Voluntary Targeted Separation Scheme (VTSS) and with respect to public sector agencies under your direction, I ask:

- (a) how many offers have been made to public sector employees per month, per agency, since the scheme's commencement;
- (b) of those identified in (a), how many per month, per agency have been accepted by employees;
- (c) of those identified in (b), how many employees have departed the public sector per month, per agency arising from the VTSS; and
- (d) what specific targets has the Government set for each public sector agency under the VTSS?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 823.

EMERGENCY SERVICES — AGENCIES — VOLUNTARY TARGETED SEPARATION SCHEME

814. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the Voluntary Targeted Separation Scheme (VTSS) and with respect to public sector agencies under your direction, I ask:

- (a) how many offers have been made to public sector employees per month, per agency, since the scheme's commencement;
- (b) of those identified in (a), how many per month, per agency have been accepted by employees;
- (c) of those identified in (b), how many employees have departed the public sector per month, per agency arising from the VTSS; and
- (d) what specific targets has the Government set for each public sector agency under the VTSS?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 823.

MINISTER FOR YOUTH — PORTFOLIOS — TWITTER ACCOUNTS

850. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Youth:

I refer to Twitter, and I ask:

- (a) does the Minister have a registered Twitter account;
- (b) what is the Ministers' Twitter handle;
- (c) does the account describe you as a Minister and the portfolios that you hold;
- (d) other than the Minister, who else has access to the account;
- (e) do any of the Ministers' ministerial or departmental staff access and/or maintain the Twitter account;
- (f) how many Twitter users has the Minister blocked from accessing the account;
- (g) will the Minister please list the Twitter users that have been blocked from the account; and
- (h) how is the Minister ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* with respect to public and private communications received and sent via Twitter?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) @TinleyMLA
- (c) Yes.
- (d) The Minister's Twitter account is a public account. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
- (e) Yes.
- (f)–(h) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 886.

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — PORTFOLIOS — TWITTER ACCOUNTS

852. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

I refer to Twitter, and I ask:

- (a) does the Minister have a registered Twitter account;
- (b) what is the Ministers' Twitter handle;
- (c) does the account describe you as a Minister and the portfolios that you hold;
- (d) other than the Minister, who else has access to the account;
- (e) do any of the Ministers' ministerial or departmental staff access and/or maintain the Twitter account;
- (f) how many Twitter users has the Minister blocked from accessing the account;
- (g) will the Minister please list the Twitter users that have been blocked from the account; and
- (h) how is the Minister ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* with respect to public and private communications received and sent via Twitter?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) @TinleyMLA
- (c) Yes.
- (d) The Minister's Twitter account is a public account. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
- (e) Yes.
- (f)–(h) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 886.

MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS — PORTFOLIOS — TWITTER ACCOUNTS

873. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

I refer to Twitter, and I ask:

- (a) does the Minister have a registered Twitter account;
- (b) what is the Ministers' Twitter handle;
- (c) does the account describe you as a Minister and the portfolios that you hold;
- (d) other than the Minister, who else has access to the account;
- (e) do any of the Ministers' ministerial or departmental staff access and/or maintain the Twitter account;
- (f) how many Twitter users has the Minister blocked from accessing the account;
- (g) will the Minister please list the Twitter users that have been blocked from the account; and
- (h) how is the Minister ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* with respect to public and private communications received and sent via Twitter?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) @DavidTempsMLA
- (c) Yes.

- (d) The twitter account is a public account, anyone who chooses to follow the account has access to the content posted.
- (e) Yes.
- (f)–(g) Social media accounts, as is standard with social media management across Australia, block other accounts from time to time. In Government, accounts are usually blocked due to instances of, including but not limited to, vulgar language, excessive spam or direct or indirect threats. While the Government welcomes vigorous debate, we will not tolerate or give a platform to the aforementioned.
- (h) Ministers are aware of their obligations under the State Records Act.

MINISTER FOR HERITAGE — PORTFOLIOS — TWITTER ACCOUNTS

874. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Heritage:

I refer to Twitter, and I ask:

- (a) does the Minister have a registered Twitter account;
- (b) what is the Ministers' Twitter handle;
- (c) does the account describe you as a Minister and the portfolios that you hold;
- (d) other than the Minister, who else has access to the account;
- (e) do any of the Ministers' ministerial or departmental staff access and/or maintain the Twitter account;
- (f) how many Twitter users has the Minister blocked from accessing the account;
- (g) will the Minister please list the Twitter users that have been blocked from the account; and
- (h) how is the Minister ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* with respect to public and private communications received and sent via Twitter?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(h) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 873.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — TWITTER ACCOUNTS

875. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to Twitter, and I ask:

- (a) does the Minister have a registered Twitter account;
- (b) what is the Ministers' Twitter handle;
- (c) does the account describe you as a Minister and the portfolios that you hold;
- (d) other than the Minister, who else has access to the account;
- (e) do any of the Ministers' ministerial or departmental staff access and/or maintain the Twitter account;
- (f) how many Twitter users has the Minister blocked from accessing the account;
- (g) will the Minister please list the Twitter users that have been blocked from the account; and
- (h) how is the Minister ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* with respect to public and private communications received and sent via Twitter?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(h) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 873.

MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES — PORTFOLIOS — TWITTER ACCOUNTS

876. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to Twitter, and I ask:

- (a) does the Minister have a registered Twitter account;
- (b) what is the Ministers' Twitter handle;
- (c) does the account describe you as a Minister and the portfolios that you hold;
- (d) other than the Minister, who else has access to the account;
- (e) do any of the Ministers' ministerial or departmental staff access and/or maintain the Twitter account;
- (f) how many Twitter users has the Minister blocked from accessing the account;

- (g) will the Minister please list the Twitter users that have been blocked from the account; and
- (h) how is the Minister ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* with respect to public and private communications received and sent via Twitter?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) No.
- (b)–(h) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — PORTFOLIOS — TWITTER ACCOUNTS

877. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to Twitter, and I ask:

- (a) does the Minister have a registered Twitter account;
- (b) what is the Ministers' Twitter handle;
- (c) does the account describe you as a Minister and the portfolios that you hold;
- (d) other than the Minister, who else has access to the account;
- (e) do any of the Ministers' ministerial or departmental staff access and/or maintain the Twitter account;
- (f) how many Twitter users has the Minister blocked from accessing the account;
- (g) will the Minister please list the Twitter users that have been blocked from the account; and
- (h) how is the Minister ensuring compliance with the *State Records Act 2000* with respect to public and private communications received and sent via Twitter?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) No.
- (b)–(h) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

903. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 900.

MINISTER FOR YOUTH — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

904. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Youth:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;

- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Minister Tinley

(a)–(e) [See tabled paper no 1288.]

Department for Communities

(a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 900.

MINISTER FOR VETERANS ISSUES — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

905. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Veterans Issues:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Minister Tinley

(a)–(e) [See tabled paper no 1289.]

Department for Communities

(a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 900.

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

906. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Minister Tinley

(a)–(e) [See tabled paper no 1290.]

Department for Communities

(a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 900.

ATTORNEY GENERAL — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

926. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

[See tabled paper no 1296.]

MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

930. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

The Department of Justice advises:

[See tabled paper no 1291.]

The Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services advises:

No gifts were received during this period.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

931. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) advises:

(a)–(e) On 27 March 2017, DFES accepted a gift of a BOSE wireless music system from CSO Perspectives valued at \$299. DFES has no commercial or financial relationship with CSO Perspectives. The gift was donated to the Salvation Army.

On 28 March 2017, DFES accepted a gift of a free movie screening of ‘Guardian of the Galaxy’ from Telstra valued at \$120. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with Telstra who currently provide telephony and ICT services.

On 19 April 2017, DFES accepted a gift of five pairs of hotel slippers from the Tradewinds Hotel and invitation to the launch of their refurbished hotel valued at \$50. DFES has no ongoing financial relationship with the Tradewinds Hotel but has hosted external corporate leadership planning days at the premises.

On 19 April 2017, DFES declined hospitality of networking lunch on ‘Future Vision’ from KPMG valued at \$50. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with KPMG being its contracted internal auditor.

On 12 May 2017, DFES declined hospitality and accommodation from BGC Development at the Aloft Hotel valued at \$300. DFES had a financial relationship with BGC who was a building contractor for capital works.

On 29 May 2017, DFES declined hospitality of a networking luncheon from Ernest and Young valued at \$50. DFES had a financial and commercial relationship with Ernest & Young as a contractor.

On 29 May 2017, DFES declined a gift of a free webinar from KPMG valued at \$50. DFES had a financial and commercial relationship with KPMG being its contracted internal auditor.

On 6 June 2017, DFES accepted hospitality of a networking breakfast offered by ESRI Australia valued at \$50. DFES had no financial or commercial relationship with ESRI Australia.

On 13 June 2017, DFES accepted hospitality for two employees to a networking breakfast offered by Datacom, valued at \$50. DFES had no financial or commercial relationship with Datacom.

On 26 June 2017, DFES declined hospitality for three employees to a cocktail dinner from People-sense, valued at \$240. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with People-sense as a contractor.

On 27 June 2017, DFES accepted hospitality for two employees to a cocktail dinner from People-sense, valued at \$160. DFES has a financial relationship with People-sense as a contractor.

On 5 July 2017, DFES declined hospitality of Dinner at the Telstra WA Business Awards from Telstra, valued at \$250. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with Telstra who currently provide telephony and ICT services.

On 1 August 2017, DFES declined a gift from Telstra of a signed Carlton AFL football jersey, valued at \$500. DFES has a financial relationship and commercial with Telstra who currently provide telephony and ICT services.

On 14 August 2017, DFES accepted a gift of an invitation to a CIO disruption forum offered by Omni Channel Media, valued at \$120. DFES has no financial or commercial relationship with Omni Channel Media.

On 14 August 2017, DFES accepted hospitality executive assistance networking event offered by KPMG, valued at \$34. DFES had a financial and commercial relationship with KPMG being its contracted internal auditor.

On 8 September 2017, DFES accepted hospitality of a networking lunch from GIVIT, valued at \$40. DFES does not have a financial or commercial relationship with GIVIT.

On 13 September 2017, DFES accepted hospitality to attend the RAC Presidents Cocktail Reception, valued at \$100. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with RAC as the sponsor of the RAC Rescue Helicopter Service.

On 10 October 2017, DFES declined hospitality of a dinner for two from Omni Channel Media, valued \$200. DFES does not have a financial or commercial relationship with Omni Channel Media.

On 24 October 2017, DFES accepted hospitality of a networking lunch with ATOS, valued at \$40. DFES has no financial or commercial relationship with ATOS, but ATOS is a contractor of the GovNext project.

On 26 October 2017, DFES accepted hospitality to attend annual awards diner by the Australian Institute of Management (AIM), valued at \$75. DFES has a commercial agreement with AIM.

On 1 November 2017, DFES accepted hospitality to attend Welcome Summer of 2017 by the Surf Life Saving WA. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with Surf Life Saving WA for funding from the State and mutual aid partner.

On 6 November 2017, DFES accepted hospitality of a breakfast meeting with NEC Australia P/L, valued at \$59. DFES has no direct financial or commercial relationship with NEC Australia P/L, but NEC is a contractor of the GovNext project

On 22 November 2017, DFES accepted hospitality for one employee to attend an Industry Cocktail Party by CIO Network Pty Ltd, valued \$75. DFES has no financial or commercial relationship with CIO Network Pty Ltd.

On 23 November 2017, DFES declined hospitality for one employee to attend an Industry Cocktail Party by CIO Network Pty Ltd, valued \$75. DFES has no financial or commercial relationship with CIO Network Pty Ltd.

On 29 November 2017, DFES accepted hospitality for annual award dinner from the Committee of the Mining Emergency Response Competition (MERC), valued at \$200. DFES has no financial or commercial relationship with the MERC.

On 19 December 2017, DFES accepted a gift of one Christmas Hamper from Perquiro, valued at \$80. DFES has a commercial and financial relationship with Perquiro as a specialist psychological service provider. The Hamper was donated to the Salvation Army.

On 19 December 2017, DFES accepted a gift of one Christmas Hamper from Perquiro, valued at \$200. DFES has a commercial and financial relationship with Perquiro as a specialist psychological service provider.

On 20 December 2017, DFES declined a gift of vouchers to a health club by Price Waterhouse and Cooper (PwC), valued at \$240. DFES has a commercial and financial relationship with PwC as a contractor.

On 21 December 2017, DFES accepted a gift basket from Innovations Catering, valued at \$50. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with Innovations Catering as a contractor.

On 22 December 2017, DFES accepted hospitality from RAC of two tickets to the Hopman Cup Tennis, valued at \$140.60. DFES has a commercial and financial relationship with RAC as the sponsor of the RAC Rescue Helicopter Service.

On 2 January 2018, DFES accepted a gift hamper from WASTAY Properties, valued at \$100. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with WASTAY as a contractor

On 8 January 2018, DFES accepted flights and accommodation to speak at Genelee Mazarello International, Quality & Productivity Centre, Sydney about the DFES CAD project, valued at \$1064. DFES has no commercial or financial relationship with Genelee Mazarello International and attended as a guest speaker.

On 16 January 2018, DFES declined a gift of \$50 from Mrs Yvonne Sheriff for services of animal rescue. DFES has no financial or commercial relationship with Mrs Sheriff.

On 30 January 2018, DFES accepted hospitality of a Professional Development sundowner from the Australian Institute of Management (AIM), valued at \$105. DFES has a commercial agreement with AIM.

On 7 February 2018, DFES accepted a gift of ten sets of Newport deck shoes from Stewart and Heaton Clothing Co P/L, valued at \$1500. DFES has a financial and commercial relationship with Stewart and Heaton as the uniform contractor. The deck shoes were donated to the Volunteer Marine Rescue Service.

On 2 March 2018, DFES accepted hospitality of networking breakfast by the Australian Institute of Management (AIM), valued at \$115. DFES has a commercial agreement with AIM.

On 10 March 2018, DFES accepted hospitality of a celebration dinner by the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council (ERMC), valued at \$200. DFES has no commercial or financial relationship with ERMC.

The Office of Emergency Management advises:

(a)–(e) On 4 August 2017, two OEM staff accepted a thank you gift of Elementi Vinegar and Porcini Oil and Apple Chutney from the Western Australian Local Government Association valued at \$25.00 each. No commercial or financial relationship exists.

On 25 August 2017 the OEM accepted a hospitality lunch from Travis Finch of the Givit not-for-profit organisation valued at \$40.00. No commercial or financial relationship exists.

On 29 September 2017, OEM accepted a gift of an ergonomic mouse from Evoluent valued at \$138.45 as an additional replacement for a defective mouse. No commercial or financial relationship exists.

For the Ministerial Office [see tabled paper no 1292.].

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS —
GIFTS, BENEFITS, HOSPITALITY, ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

943. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Regional Development:

For each department, agency and government trading enterprise within the Minister's portfolio of responsibilities, including the Minister himself/herself, I ask in regard to the registration of the receipt of all gifts, benefits, hospitality, accommodation and travel by officers since 11 March 2017:

- (a) what was the nature of the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel received;
- (b) what was the date of receipt of each gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (c) what is the name of the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel;
- (d) what is the estimated individual value of gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel; and
- (e) does the organisation have any commercial or financial relationship with the individual, organisation or private company that offered the gift, benefit, hospitality, accommodation or travel and, if so, what is the nature of that commercial or financial relationship?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

(a)–(e) [See tabled paper no 1294.]

MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS —
ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

966. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

MINISTER FOR DEFENCE ISSUES — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

967. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Defence Issues:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

MINISTER FOR SMALL BUSINESS — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

968. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Small Business:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

MINISTER FOR RACING AND GAMING — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

969. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

MINISTER FOR TOURISM — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

970. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

ATTORNEY GENERAL — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

978. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

(a)–(d) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

MINISTER FOR CULTURE AND THE ARTS — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

979. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Culture and the Arts:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

(a)–(d) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 992.

MINISTER FOR HERITAGE — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

980. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Heritage:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;

- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(d) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 992.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

981. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(d) Please refer to Legislative Council question on notice 992.

MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

982. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice number 992.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

983. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice number 992.

MINISTER FOR ROAD SAFETY — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

984. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Road Safety:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) No – not in relation to publicly funded travel.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) There is no DPC protocol.

MINISTER FOR POLICE — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

985. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(d) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 984.

MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT, JOBS AND TRADE —
ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES**993. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:**

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to answer to question on notice 995.

MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

994. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to answer to question on notice 995.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

995. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (c)

Date	Supplier	Destination	Cost	Staff Member
31 st August 2017	Darwin Coachlines Pty Ltd Private Sedan Transfer	Pearl Hangar (Maroomba Airlines) to Doubletree Accommodation	\$ 135.00	Minister & Cole Thurley
9 th December 2017	Manjimup People Movers	Manjimup Cherry Festival	\$ 135.00	Minister
26 th June 2017	Manjimup People Movers	Truffle Kerfuffle	\$ 105.00	Minister, Jackie Jarvis & Mark Scott

- (d) There is no DPC protocol.

MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

996. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Disability Services:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) No.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

997. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 996.

MINISTER FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING — ON-DEMAND TRANSPORT SERVICES

998. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the use of on-demand transport services, such as Uber, undertaken by the Minister or members of the Minister's staff, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister or the Minister's staff utilised such services;
- (b) were the costs of such service borne by the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC);
- (c) please identify in each case the name of the person utilising such services; and
- (d) what is the DPC protocol with respect to the use of on-demand transport services?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

Refer to answer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 992.

MINISTER FOR CORRECTIVE SERVICES — OPTUS STADIUM VISITS

1034. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the recently opened Perth Stadium, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister visited the stadium, if so, on what dates, and for what purpose;
- (b) was the Minister attending as a guest of another person or organisation, if so, whom; and
- (c) for each occasion identified in (a), how did the Minister travel to and from the stadium?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

Please see LC Question on Notice 1035.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — OPTUS STADIUM VISITS

1035. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to the recently opened Perth Stadium, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister visited the stadium, if so, on what dates, and for what purpose;
- (b) was the Minister attending as a guest of another person or organisation, if so, whom; and
- (c) for each occasion identified in (a), how did the Minister travel to and from the stadium?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) Yes. 20/10/2017 Stadium tour— Prior to the completion and opening of the facility.
- (b) Minister for Sports and Recreation.
- (c) The Minister drove himself.

MINISTER FOR ROAD SAFETY — OPTUS STADIUM VISITS

1036. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Road Safety:

I refer to the recently opened Perth Stadium, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister visited the stadium, if so, on what dates, and for what purpose;
- (b) was the Minister attending as a guest of another person or organisation, if so, whom; and
- (c) for each occasion identified in (a), how did the Minister travel to and from the stadium?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) As of 13 March 2018: Inspection of Stadium Police Deployment Centre; 21 January 2018: Official Opening; 8 February 2018: Today Tonight Report on the Police Deployment Centre.
- (b) No; State Government; No.
- (c) Driver; Walked; Driver.

MINISTER FOR POLICE — OPTUS STADIUM VISITS

1037. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to the recently opened Perth Stadium, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister visited the stadium, if so, on what dates, and for what purpose;
- (b) was the Minister attending as a guest of another person or organisation, if so, whom; and
- (c) for each occasion identified in (a), how did the Minister travel to and from the stadium?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) As of 13 March 2018: Inspection of Stadium Police Deployment Centre; 21 January 2018: Official Opening; 8 February 2018: Today Tonight Report on the Police Deployment Centre.
- (b) No; State Government; No.
- (c) Driver; Walked; Driver.

MINISTER ASSISTING THE MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT, JOBS AND TRADE —
OPTUS STADIUM VISITS

1045. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I refer to the recently opened Perth Stadium, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister visited the stadium, if so, on what dates, and for what purpose;
- (b) was the Minister attending as a guest of another person or organisation, if so, whom; and
- (c) for each occasion identified in (a), how did the Minister travel to and from the stadium?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to answer to question on notice 1047.

MINISTER FOR AGRICULTURE AND FOOD — OPTUS STADIUM VISITS

1046. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the recently opened Perth Stadium, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister visited the stadium, if so, on what dates, and for what purpose;
- (b) was the Minister attending as a guest of another person or organisation, if so, whom; and
- (c) for each occasion identified in (a), how did the Minister travel to and from the stadium?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to answer to question on notice 1047.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — OPTUS STADIUM VISITS

1047. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the recently opened Perth Stadium, and I ask:

- (a) has the Minister visited the stadium, if so, on what dates, and for what purpose;
- (b) was the Minister attending as a guest of another person or organisation, if so, whom; and
- (c) for each occasion identified in (a), how did the Minister travel to and from the stadium?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

(a)	(b)	(c)
10 February 2018 – Fremantle Dockers vs Collingwood AFLW match	Went in private capacity with a personal friend	Walked
1 March 2018 – Optus Executive Leadership dinner at Goodwood Restaurant	Optus	Ministerial vehicle

LEGAL AFFAIRS — ARTHUR BOYCOTT GREER — PAROLE CONSIDERATION

1048. Hon Michael Mischin to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the prisoner, Arthur Boycott Greer, the murderer of Sharon Mason, who has never co-operated with the police regarding his crime, and report of his having had his consideration for parole advance from 2019, and I ask:

- (a) when, in the ordinary course of events, was his case next due for consideration;
- (b) why and on whose instructions, direction or request was the review brought forward;
- (c) what has the Prisoners Review Board recommended and what are the reasons for that recommendation; and
- (d) has the Attorney General made a decision on whether he will accept the recommendation and, if not, why not and when will he do so?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) 8 November 2019.
- (b) Mr Greer wrote to the Prisoners Review Board on 2 October 2017 requesting an earlier review pursuant to s12(2)(b) of the *Sentence Administration Act 2003* (WA).

This request was granted by the Chairperson and listed for review on 19 January 2018.

- (c) The Prisoner's Review Board has prepared a report for the Attorney General's consideration.
- (d) The matter is still under consideration.

FORESTRY — SAWMILLS

1050. Hon Diane Evers to the minister representing the Minister for Forestry:

For sawmills operating since the signing of the Western Australian Regional Forest Agreement in May 1999, will the Minister please list the names of the sawmills:

- (a) that were operating at that date and are still in operation;
- (b) that have opened since that date and the date on which they opened; and
- (c) that have closed since that date and the date on which they closed?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

- (a) [See tabled paper no 1293.] The Forest Products Commission only has information on sawmills with a contract with the then Department of Conservation and Land Management as at May 1999.
- (b) [See tabled paper no 1293.] The Forest Products Commission does not have the dates that a sawmill opens, only when the contract with a customer started and ended.
- (c) [See tabled paper no 1293.] The Forest Products Commission does not have the dates that a sawmill closes, only when the contract with a customer started and ended.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES

1052. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the planned review of the Community Resource Centres (CRC) Network, and I ask:

- (a) how many CRC has the Minister visited since being sworn in to Cabinet, on 17 March 2017;
- (b) please list the locations and dates of the CRC the Minister has visited, in the same time frame; and
- (c) given the Minister has already said the CRC program funding will be cut by 40 per cent, how many jobs and traineeships does the Minister believe will be lost due to these budget cuts?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

- (a) Two.
 - (b) Katanning 13 September 2017 and Gnowangerup 23 March 2017.
 - (c) A review of the CRC program is underway and expected to be completed in mid-2018.
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