



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2017

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 28 June 2017

Legislative Council

Wednesday, 28 June 2017

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust) took the chair at 1.00 pm, and read prayers.

CLIMATE CHANGE — AMELIORATION MEASURES

Motion

Resumed from 21 June on the following motion moved by Hon Robin Chapple —

That the house notes the impact of climate change and gives consideration to measures that may be introduced to ameliorate its damaging and long-term effects on Western Australia's social, economic and environmental prosperity.

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [1.02 pm]: I am glad that I had been given the chance to have a break in my remarks on this motion because it gives us an opportunity to note that today is the tenth anniversary of the opening and commissioning of Perth's first desalination plant. A question was put to me yesterday by a member of the opposition who asked about potable water supplies for the Perth metropolitan area. I gave an answer on behalf of our Minister for Water, Dave Kelly, which pointed out that in Perth we get just two per cent of our water supply from dams, 48 per cent from groundwater and 50 per cent of our water supply now comes from desalination. That system with two desalination plants is in place because we recognised that what we were experiencing in the lead-up to 2001, when our dams were at a record low, was not just a drought. We were prepared to look at the data, the science and the way the stream flows had been declining so dramatically. They had been declining exponentially, not in just a steady, slow way, particularly since 1975. I remember Geoff Gallop, in particular, taking leadership on this point. We had inherited another Liberal mess—I think there were five deficits in a row—and as we are now, we were trying to rebuild the economy. Although we were in exceptionally constrained financial circumstances, Geoff Gallop recognised that what we had been seeing since 1975 was not a drought; it was systemic climate change and we would not have the ability to serve the needs of our community to keep our people watered and fed if we did not take action. A lot of critics said that it was just a drought and that it would break. The following year, in 2002, the water situation got a bit better, as it did again in 2003. But we did not go backwards because we understood that it was a systemic change. Are we not all glad that we had the foresight that climate change was causing systemic change and creating circumstances to which we needed to respond very differently? I ask members to think about the answer that was given in this place yesterday. I do not know whether Hon Jim Chown has reflected much on the answer, but the fact is that only two per cent of Perth's water supply now comes from dams.

Hon Rick Mazza: Where did you get that figure of two per cent from dams from?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: I found that surprising.

Hon Rick Mazza: I asked the question in budget estimates and the answer was 17 per cent. It was still very low.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: These are the figures that were provided to me. I have asked for them to be double-checked but for the Perth metropolitan area, Mandurah and the goldfields, they are the percentages for 1 January 2017 to 26 June 2017. Like Hon Rick Mazza, I was surprised by them so we are going back and checking them. I thank the member for the question.

There is no doubt that Western Australia absolutely relies on desalination. In about 2006, when it became obvious that one desalination plant would not be enough, we set the process in place and made the decision to build the second desalination plant. I have been looking for a press release from a former Minister for Water under the previous government in which there was a great declaration that the government had droughtproofed Perth. As I was campaigning during the recent election, I was amazed to find that the aquifer recharge program, which had started in the last years of the previous Labor government and had been the subject of numerous announcements under the Barnett government, had still not injected any water into aquifers. After eight and a half years of that government, its flagship project, the aquifer recharge program, had not seen any water go back into the aquifers. I do not know how it could claim that it had droughtproofed Perth. The Minister for Water has shown us some alarming statistics that the situation in Perth is getting even worse. Over the last five years, there has been another step change downwards in the stream flows coming in. The ability for our dams to provide for us into the future is highly problematic. I ask members to think this through very seriously and not say, "Oh, climate change—like, not very interesting." If Geoff Gallop and the Labor government had taken that position in 2001, we would be in very dire circumstances in Perth today. But we did not. We recognised the fact. We recognised that this was well beyond a drought and that it was something we would have to deal with more

systemically. I say to those members on the other side who are concerned about the farming communities, as we are, to make sure that their concern is directed in the right way towards addressing the fundamental problem of climate change, of how we can try to slow it down and mitigate it, and how we can adapt to it, and not randomly bleat about inconsequential stuff. What is going to undermine farming and agriculture in this state? It is indeed climate change. I would like to hear some of those members, beyond my good friend Hon Dr Steve Thomas, get up and show us that.

Several members interjected.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: Yes, funny things happen at truffle festivals! Hon Diane Evers and Hon Colin Tincknell were there too.

Several members interjected.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: It was a good turnout. We also had a couple of members from the other place.

If members are concerned and worried about climate change, I want to see them get up in here and talk about it and say what they will encourage their side of politics to do so that our farmers and horticulturists have a future. I have to say that during eight and a half years in government, there was not a lot of evidence that the Liberal–National government had done anything on climate change or integrated that into its thinking in the way it planned for our future. Indeed, as I may have said once before in this place, we understand that one of the quite numerous agricultural ministers during the last government actually told the department that he did not like the words “climate change”, and he would not like to see this used, and that if we had to somehow or other take note of these massive changes that self-evidently were going on, we would use the rather nicer words “climate variability”. If they used those words, they did not have to confront what the issue truly was.

I want to read some stuff that has come out in the last week from an international think tank—it was not from a left-wing organisation; it was Chatham House—that was looking at choke points in and the vulnerability of the global food trade. Chatham House found —

“While market forces have largely adjusted adequately until now, the capacity of international trade to correct for supply disruptions in a climate-changed world is less certain, ...

“Climate change will suppress growth in crop yields and make harvests more variable.

We discussed that the last time I commented on this motion. The report continues —

“It will threaten the reliability and integrity of the infrastructure on which international trade depends.

That is a grave alert, even from an organisation that is perhaps generally considered to be on the more conservative side of politics.

I noted that during their contributions on this debate, some members were sceptical about the notion of the sea level rising. In that regard, I reference a peer-reviewed journal, *Nature Climate Change*, which this month published an article on the data on the rising sea level. It showed that global sea level rise rates—the rate at which the sea is rising—has jumped 50 per cent from 1993 to 2014. Although there has been a steady increase, what we are seeing, paralleled in many areas, is quite a dramatic rise. Obviously this is averaged out around the world, but in 2014 the sea level rose by 3.3 millimetres—an eighth of an inch—while in 1993 it increased by only 2.2 millimetres. That is the rate at which the sea level is increasing. We are not just seeing steady growth; we are seeing a rapid move forward.

Interestingly, the paper found that the melting of the Greenland ice sheet is a major contributor. In 1993, the melt from Greenland constituted only five per cent of the rise, but by 2014 it was responsible for one-quarter of the rise. This data was based on satellite imagery, measurements taken from around the world and tide gauges. Indeed, as we are seeing the explosion in the number of microsatellites around the world and their far more detailed surveying of the lie of the land and the seas, we will get much more accurate data. I am not sure how many members heard last week about grave concerns about the number of Antarctic ice sheets that are in the process of breaking off, but quite obviously it is not only the Greenland ice sheet that will add considerably to the sea level; melts coming from Antarctica will be increasingly factored in.

We need to understand what the increase in the sea level means for our community and what that will do to areas like Mandurah and particularly the south west coast, and indeed what it will do to Perth. This is no trivial matter. We need to be very cognisant of and understand what is happening and we need to take steps to address it at a macro level. We need to be up there, standing behind sensible people from all sides of politics who accept that this is happening and see the need for us to take global action, but we have to be planning for our future here locally. We have to be asking what infrastructure we will have to put in place to make sure that in five or seven years our community is as protected as it can be against things such as the rising sea level.

I urge members—that is all of us—to take the great example of the leadership Geoff Gallop showed, inspired by many of the people who were advising him, and recognise that this is not a seasonal variability; we are going through something that is profoundly different now, and we have to be prepared to make those long-term decisions. In 2001, Geoff Gallop made a decision that was criticised and expensive, but by 2007—10 years ago today—it had absolutely proved its worth. Thank you very much, Madam President.

HON TIM CLIFFORD (East Metropolitan) [1.19 pm]: I rise today to support the motion. I would like to give credit where credit is due and thank Hon Robin Chapple for pointing out that from the late 1980s into the 1990s, we were a lot more forward thinking about reducing our carbon emissions than we are today. It is a bit unfortunate that we are left having to debate this motion because we should be ahead of the game and we should be in a position in which climate change is not just thrown across the aisles of this place as a throwaway item or a political football to score points with.

A few years ago I took the time to take part in an internship looking at climate change and security. I looked at how defence forces across the world are looking at climate change and what issues might come out of it, including what dangers we will face in the future if we do not address climate change. It is kind of unfortunate that in this place, in other Parliaments and for other legislators around the world, the climate change argument has been an echo chamber where we talk about it a lot, but no action is taken. In the background, defence forces of different countries have been working to get ready for the change. Looking at a lot of reports coming out of the United States, we can see that it is preparing for climate change because it knows it will cause serious disruption for western society. We can already see this disruption with people having to move away from the coast following disasters, water shortages, droughts and things like that. In Australia, if we look at the more recent example of refugees being an issue at a federal level, I find it quite galling that asylum seekers have become a political issue. On the other hand, the federal government has been very dismissive of climate change, but it will be one of the major drivers of refugees to the Western Hemisphere. If we think that refugees have been a headline issue in the past, they will become an everyday occurrence as literally thousands of people will come out of South-East Asia seeking asylum because they will not be able to live in their homes or on their lands anymore. These things have been highlighted.

I would like to quote a retired Army major, Michael Thomas, who is now a senior fellow at the Centre for Climate and Security. On climate change, he states —

“I think it’s the defining threat of this century. I can’t think of any other threat that is transforming the planet on this level or scale. It’s such a ubiquitous threat,” ...

It is a threat to our society and people and it is a great terror. That comes from an Army general—a former senior person in the Australian Defence Force. He is saying that if we do not do something about climate change, we will be in trouble.

Only yesterday, an article was published about Australian climate scientists who were talking about their plan to move further south. It might be good for the economy of the south west if more people migrate south, but it will not be very good for the people who are terrified about whether their children will have a place to live in the next century. Climate change is one of the major threats of our time.

In saying that, I think that climate change gives us a great opportunity. It is a fear and a threat, but it will force us to think differently about what we do with our economy and how we shape our energy systems. I am quite passionate about taking on board renewable energy for the Greens. I see energy as a tool to not only drive the economy, but also combat climate change. It will drive down emissions and get us to think about new technologies—destructive technologies, as Hon Dr Steve Thomas talked about last week. I have heard references being slung across the chamber about whether Western Power should be sold or kept in the hands of the government. Whether we like it or not, the disruptive technologies of battery storage are coming. That is great, but I do not believe that selling off Western Power would necessarily solve our problems. It would not solve our problems in preparing for the grid that we need to service the people, or the grid that we need to combat climate change and reduce emissions. Small-scale solar power systems can tap into the grid and large-scale solar thermal plants, hopefully in places such as Kalgoorlie, will be able to service thousands of people in regional communities. They will drive down electricity prices as well as reduce emissions. I look forward to the ongoing discussion around energy policy because I see it as a tool to reduce our emissions and promote a more prosperous society in Western Australia. This includes electric vehicles. A report last week states that the take-up of electric vehicles is only three in 1 000 in WA, which is quite appalling since vehicles are one of the largest carbon emitters in this state. This is something we need to address and encourage investment in electric vehicles as well as infrastructure to service these vehicles. When people drive down Kwinana Freeway to Bunbury, we are already looking at recharging stations and things like that to service these great initiatives.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: There is one in the south west centre of Donnybrook, right in the middle of the south west.

Hon TIM CLIFFORD: That is great; we need more of them.

I wish that in the Liberal government's previous two terms it had looked forward and prepared for this because the greatest frustration in the last eight years was that whenever we talked about climate change or whenever we wanted action, there was no talk coming from the previous government about what it was going to do. A number of friends had to put freedom of information procedures in place because they wanted to know whether the government had received a briefing on a report that stated that if we move towards a more renewable future, it will benefit the community. There was a black hole of discussion around climate change. I found that to be totally irresponsible. The government is supposed to serve the people and protect society. I found the level of arrogance shown by the previous Barnett government quite unfortunate. It is funny because the majority of the community wanted action on climate change and felt fairly displaced, and the government was very disconnected to how they felt about this issue. At the federal level, the previous Prime Minister, Tony Abbott, talked about how coal-fired power would benefit us in the future. I would like to see where he got his facts and figures from because that does not make any sense.

Going forward, I look forward to working closely with the Labor Party in the next four years to put forward these great initiatives. I fundamentally believe that if members of this Parliament work together, we can make a lot of great changes for a lot of people in Western Australia. As a part of that, I think my role in this Parliament is to push things along; hopefully, we can push them along a bit quicker than in the past. I believe that we need a climate change minister. The other morning, I heard Hon Dave Kelly from the other place on 720 ABC radio talking about water shortages and how important it is that we address climate change. I am pretty sure he mentioned climate change about 10 times. It showed how passionate he is about the issue. If there is a bit of discussion around introducing a climate change minister, I am pretty sure that he would like the job, judging by how passionate he was on the radio the other morning!

Several members interjected.

Hon TIM CLIFFORD: If it could be given to one of us, that would be great!

When we talk about the grid, we talk about Horizon Power servicing the regional communities and the south west interconnected system servicing the majority of the metropolitan region in the south west, which is where the majority of the population is in this state. A void sits just on the edge of the grid. Farmers and other people in smaller communities want to know whether they can plug into the grid or whether they should go off grid, with battery storage coming up. The other day I read that many farmers are looking at going off grid. A Kukerin farmer spent \$250 000 investing in solar technology to move her yabby farm off grid. Western Power costed joining the grid at \$75 000. Fortunately, Carnegie Clean Energy installed an eight to 20-kilowatt solar photovoltaic system with a 10 to 80-kilowatt lithium battery backed up by diesel generators. This is just one example. There are heaps of these every day. Different people in the community have told us that they are exhausted from the energy and climate debates.

One of my best mates in Bremer Bay is a third-generation farmer. He returned to Bremer Bay to take over the farm from his old man. When he came up, he was just shaking his head. He has had to deal with bushfires and drought, but farmers are dealing with things going wrong in the midwest and other regions. It smacks of complete arrogance to say that things such as water shortages are not happening and that there is nothing going on that is affecting our society and our lands; that nothing is going on to make places inhabitable and making it nearly impossible to grow crops or to look after different communities. I really hope that we can work together on this issue. Hopefully Western Australia will soon get a climate minister and a department to address these issues. By working together, we can put together some ambitious targets to reduce emissions. If we work on the worst-case scenario to protect society, we can achieve some of these great outcomes within the next four years.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.32 pm]: This is a very important debate. I thank Hon Robin Chapple for moving this motion. Climate change affects me every day. It is very important that we get a little serious about this. I wonder whether there are still any climate change deniers in the house because there are not many left in the community. Are there any left? It is generally accepted that climate change is a real phenomenon. It is generally accepted that it is caused by the immense release of carbon dioxide from fossil fuels—coal, fuel and gas—and that it has changed the atmosphere. Atmospheric carbon dioxide is now at over 400 parts per million. Those changes to the atmosphere have resulted in a change to our climate. I think that is generally accepted. Former Prime Minister Tony Abbott believes it is “absolute crap” and Senator Malcolm Roberts in the federal Parliament holds a similar view. But, generally speaking, the population has come to terms that climate change is real and that humans have caused it. The next question is: what will we do about it? It is a very good motion that the honourable member has brought forward today so we can talk about that.

I think I still hold the distinction of being the only working farmer in the Western Australian Parliament. I know the member for Roe still runs livestock on his property but has leased out his cropping, so I think that just leaves me. I can tell members now that there are several hundred thousand dollars' worth of seed and fertiliser sitting in the ground on my farm waiting for some rain. We have not had a start to this season yet. I am not the only farmer who is affected. There are about 4 000 to 4 500 of us in the same boat. It is very concerning not only financially,

but also emotionally and personally. It is a very tough industry. The margins are very low and the risks are very high. One has to wonder sometimes why we do it, but we have to produce food. The world needs food. In a good season, farmers can make a nice return on their investment. Farmers live a lifestyle second to none. That is why it is important to us. In that position, I make special mention of all of those farmers, especially those in the northern wheatbelt. The situation is particularly dire in the northern wheatbelt because the season finishes there the earliest. They generally harvest before the rest, so every day their growing season is reducing and every day from now on there is less chance of returning a profit in the northern wheatbelt. Windstorms up there have blown paddocks away, which is a most depressing sight.

Climate change is a phenomenon that we generally accept is caused by human intervention. As humans, we now have an obligation to deal with the changes we have caused. The central wheatbelt is very dry, especially the eastern wheatbelt where there has been no opening rain. Some areas along the coast have had some rain. I point out that an area in the wheatbelt, probably within about 50 kilometres to maybe 80 kilometres of the coast, in the south west and great southern, has had some rain. When I drove through Dandaragan last week, I saw there were some green paddocks. It was a very late start to the season but there are some green paddocks. The great southern is very dry, although some farmers had some rain recently. The south eastern wheatbelt along the coast is all right, but inland it is very dry and, of course, the south west is particularly dry. The south west bore the brunt of climate change because it once had much higher rainfall than the rest of the state. The amount of rainfall in the south west has dropped the most. In some areas that has not been a particularly bad thing, because there are areas in the south west, such as Cranbrook, that were once considered a bit too wet for broadacre grain growing and farmers down there mainly used to run livestock. They would grow a few oats for sheep feed and gradually, over the years, as the climate dried, an area such as Cranbrook became one of the premium grain-producing areas in the state. In fact, the Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd facility in Cranbrook has, on occasion, been the largest inland receival point in Western Australia. Climate change is moving the dynamics of farming south, especially grain production, and shifting the balance between grain production and livestock production. In the northern and eastern wheatbelt, there is the possibility of a move back to stock in areas where the rainfall is becoming too unreliable for high-risk cropping operations. There is an enormous problem in those areas with wild dogs that come in from pastoral areas. They can wipe out a mob of sheep in a very short time. We have a bit of work to do there. Livestock is still dependent on reliable rainfall.

I was not here for much of last week as I was away on urgent parliamentary business but I understand that this house has been speaking on this motion for about three and a half hours, yet there has not been a single contribution from the National Party. I think that is bizarre. The National Party represents the electorates that are most affected by climate change. I am flabbergasted that no-one from the National Party has got up to point this out in Parliament. I feel obliged on behalf of the agricultural sector to do that.

Hon Samantha Rowe: They don't care about the regions.

Hon DARREN WEST: It would appear that they do not really seem to mind whether there is climate change or not. I feel obliged to make a contribution on behalf of the agricultural sector.

As I have said, there will be large demand from here on for counselling, financial and mental health services. An awful lot of emotional pain is felt in the agricultural regions every time we get a dry year. Farmers are particularly resilient and are able to battle on through dry seasons. They are able to make arrangements with financiers to increase their borrowings, which is not necessarily a good thing. It ensures that we are able to keep on producing food and making our land productive but it comes at a cost. It is tough on families. Our children see this and do not really get enamoured with the profession, which is a shame. Many young people are draining out of rural areas at a rapid rate. One reason for that is they cannot see a future in agriculture. They prefer to work for another organisation, a corporation or a company, that provides agricultural services or agronomy. They prefer to work in sectors that have some guarantee of an income and a career because there is none in the agricultural sector as a result of climate change in much of the farming areas in Western Australia, particularly those in the north and east and the districts further out from the agricultural sector.

Climate change has been touched on in debate. I note what a rousing contribution Hon Alannah MacTiernan made to this debate. It is so good to have Hon Alannah MacTiernan in the Legislative Council again, and she certainly adds some substance to the debate. Of course, climate change also affects the metropolitan area and I heard Hon Alannah MacTiernan speak about approving the first desalination plant when she was in cabinet and how it was quite controversial at the time. It was built in Kwinana. Desalination plants are very energy intensive. As part of that project, the Emu Downs wind farm near Badgingarra was also constructed. Anyone who drives along the Brand Highway just south of Badgingarra will see the magnificent wind turbines spinning away, producing energy from the copious amount of wind in my electorate at certain times of the year. That project was built to offset the energy requirements of the desalination plant.

There was scepticism about that project. When I looked back through *Hansard*, I found an exchange on Thursday, 16 September 2004, between the member for Cottesloe, Colin Barnett, former Premier—thankfully, former—and Dr Geoff Gallop, arguably Western Australia's greatest ever Premier.

Hon Donna Faragher: You have got to be kidding.

Hon DARREN WEST: This is my contribution. Hon Donna Faragher can make hers in a minute and beg to differ who was the better Premier. If she wants to argue that Colin Barnett was a better Premier than Geoff Gallop, she can be my guest, but I do not think she will find too much support for that notion.

In *Hansard*, the Speaker gives the call in question time to the member for Cottesloe, Colin Barnett, who says —

That is a shameful thing to say in a Parliament.

I presume that something was said across the chamber.

He then goes on to ask his question of the Premier, Dr Geoff Gallop, as follows —

I refer the Premier to comments made on ABC radio today by eminent water expert Professor Jorg Imberger regarding the launch today of yet another government report on the future of water resources in Western Australia. Professor Imberger said —

... this is the last in a long list of reports ... there's been no action on any of these issues ... and all of a sudden now we sort of make a big spiel about it ... of all the options that were available, or are available, the desalination plant probably doesn't stack up on an economic basis, it doesn't stack up on a social base and also it just doesn't stack up from an environmental basis.

- (1) Will the Premier now admit that his recent announcement of a \$350 million desalination plant, which nobody supports, is simply a panicked, last-minute attempt to address a blatant failure in water planning by his Government over the past three and a half years?
- (2) Will the Premier now admit that the desalination plant, which will emit more than 100 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide or greenhouse gas into the atmosphere every year and is likely to cause significant environmental damage to Cockburn Sound, represents a poor, if not the worst, option to solve our current and future water shortages?

Hon Simon O'Brien: What year was that?

Hon DARREN WEST: That was in 2004. The desalination plant duly opened around 10 years ago.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: It is the tenth anniversary today.

Hon DARREN WEST: Is it the tenth anniversary today? Thank you, to one who was there.

Hon Simon O'Brien: You should have been paying attention.

Hon DARREN WEST: I do put a lot of research into my speeches and I do not always listen to what is being said. It was 10 years ago this very day.

I am told that the metropolitan area now relies on desalination for one-third of its water supply. How far off the mark was the member for Cottesloe, who actually went on to become Premier, for those who may not remember, and this was the attitude at that time of the coalition government. Members opposite might want to admit that perhaps they were a little bit wrong on that.

Hon Simon O'Brien: Mr Barnett has acknowledged that.

Hon DARREN WEST: The desalination plant has turned out to be a saviour for Western Australia's water supply. The important thing about the desalination plant is that it does not rely on rainfall. Every other water source that we have ever had relies on rainfall, including the proposed pipeline from the Ord River. Desalination does not require rainfall because we are "girt by sea"—remember, members? There is plenty of sea water. We can now desalinate it efficiently and environmentally safely. All the claims that we would be killing off Cockburn Sound was just a big fear campaign around an initiative and a vision by a Premier who had some vision. It is very important to note that Labor has been acknowledging climate change for many, many years; we believe it exists. I see it firsthand where I work and live. It is real, and we need to ameliorate it; we need to work on it and we need to do it fast. Climate change has an effect on agriculture, as I have pointed out, and perhaps something may come out of this run of a generally tough season in the agricultural sector. The introduction of Doppler radar technology—the minister opened the Doppler radars recently—enables a more accurate assessment of climatic conditions. It also allows us to measure soil moisture, which has been one of the very frustrating things about this season. Basically, the darker the colouring on the map, the more soil moisture is stored. On our farm, it is purple, and is really dark. About 80 millimetres of moisture is stored in soil on my farm, but I cannot get enough rain for seeds to germinate to get down and tap into that moisture. That is why many farmers are very frustrated. We are getting more summer rainfall and less winter rainfall right across the state. The dynamics of rainfall are changing as a result of climate change. We have all of this magnificent moisture in the ground that we cannot access. That is what is very frustrating to many of us: the seed is in the

ground, it is ready to go, the fertiliser is there; the moisture is down about 10 to 15 centimetres, and we can dig a hole and find wet ground, but it is dry on top. We just cannot get that 25 millimetres of water we need to germinate the seed so that it can push a taproot down into that moisture so that we can use it. That is what is frustrating most of us; we cannot even get that early winter rainfall that we need. One or two inches would set us up for the season. We are coming into July next week and many of us have not had rainfall greater than about six millimetres since that big rainfall event in late February–early March.

We need to act. What do we do? We have to stop burning coal. That is the first thing that we can do. I know that other parts of the world still burn copious amounts of coal. It is the cheapest way to create energy, and I acknowledge that. It is the most efficient and cost effective way to make energy. Gas is cleaner but still emits large amounts of carbon dioxide. There is an emerging technology called renewable energy. Renewable energy and the changes in technology are our way forward. I have asked many times in this house why the midwest of Western Australia is not the renewable energy capital of the world. We have plenty of sunshine, plenty of wind, and the big swells that come in from South Africa. We could harness all the energy from those sources and not need baseload power whatsoever. We would have a mix, if we were able to back that up with battery storage technology. We could do it now, but the vested interests say no. We still have the member for Warringah in the federal Parliament telling us that it is absolute crap. We still have arguments from Senator Malcolm Roberts in the federal Parliament. We still have commentators such as Andrew Bolt who do have some influence, arguing that we should not be doing this. We have some of our mainstream media along for the ride because there are vested interests in not doing this. It is appalling.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Precisely when do you think that Western Australia should stop burning coal?

Hon DARREN WEST: We have already started. As the member may know, because it is in his electorate, the previous government spent about a quarter of a billion dollars refurbishing a 1955 coal power station —

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Which we had closed down.

Hon DARREN WEST: — that we had closed down. We started reducing the amount of coal burnt in Western Australia by closing down Muja AB. The incoming Premier in the Liberal government gave us his views on desalination and climate change, and the then Minister for Energy, who sits across from me now, decided that it would be a good idea to blow \$250 million of taxpayers' money on a 1955 power station and ignore the renewable energy opportunities that were around. The Gallop government had already built the Emu Downs wind farm.

Hon Peter Collier: We doubled renewables in our term of government.

Hon DARREN WEST: Has the member made a contribution?

Hon Peter Collier: What about midwest—the largest solar farm in the southern hemisphere? What about that one?

Hon DARREN WEST: Here we go. The solar farm in the midwest was always designed to be an offset of the Binningup desalination plant.

Hon Peter Collier: Don't you like it?

Hon DARREN WEST: Of course I like it, because it was our idea. We had planned to build a second desalination plant at Binningup, it was always on the drawing board, and the renewable energy offset was always a solar farm in midwest.

Hon Peter Collier: What about the 111 turbines in Merredin?

Hon DARREN WEST: Okay, yes there are 111 turbines at the Collgar wind farm, a magnificent facility. We also have a really nice wind farm in the Mumbida wind farm in Geraldton.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: But what is our percentage, member, compared with other states?

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Are we the worst state?

Hon DARREN WEST: I think that may be the case, member, but I do not have those figures in front of me; I can research that.

What is pleasing about this debate is that all of a sudden the coalition thinks it is good on climate change and renewable energy as well. That is heartening; that is a change. That is certainly a change in the member for Cottesloe's views. Maybe we are getting somewhere here; maybe there is acceptance. I am looking forward to the Liberal Party's coalition colleagues, the National Party, making a contribution about what they think, because they are silent. There has been nothing from them in over three and a half hours of debate.

Several members interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: Yes, urgent parliamentary business!

I want to now talk about the effects on the economy. The agricultural sector is big in Western Australia; it is a big sector. We produce a lot of grain that we export for income into Western Australia. We employ a lot of people who pay taxes and spend their money in local towns. We are looking to do more of that to keep people in regional towns, because the drain over the last eight years has been so significant that an electorate has been lost out of the regions and come to Perth—it has followed where people are moving to. We need to keep people working in regional areas, and the worse this gets, the tougher is our task to keep people in the regions. All of us rely on the fact that it rains and that we have four inches of topsoil that we can grow things in. That is what our existence is about. We all think that we get a little bit important and smart, but we are here because we have four inches, or 10 centimetres, of topsoil and it rains. When it stops raining, we have all got a problem. There are big issues with the economy. Farm lending is rising every year and it does not look like stopping any time soon. It is difficult for people who make a living out of agriculture to get by. We had a relatively good season last year, agronomically, across most of Western Australia, but the price of commodities was extraordinarily low, historically low, last year. Many of us were carting plenty of hay and grain away, but it was not profitable due to rising costs. Despite having had a good season last year, we are not really well set up to keep our heads above water this year. With the opening of the Doppler radar there is the opportunity—this is where I was heading before—to perhaps look seriously at risk management and mitigation for the agricultural sector. I see a tremendous opportunity in income interruption insurance. It has had a variety of names over the years, but essentially most businesses—although agriculture is not particularly good at this yet—can insure against an interruption to their income. Hospitality and transport businesses can insure against something going wrong and causing their incomes to deteriorate. Now with the advent of Doppler radar, farmers can as well. I often remember the comments of the former member Hon Nigel Hallett, who was very passionate about growing the risk mitigation insurance business and industry in Western Australia. We as an industry, and probably the government as well, can work together to put all the pieces of the jigsaw together to encourage farmers to access this insurance product. I was speaking to one farmer who does this and he told me there is quite a convoluted and drawn-out process. The reinsurers wish to see five years of data. That is okay, we can get that. They also want five years of production records, income records and rainfall records so they can make a risk assessment on the farm, just as the bank does. It costs more to insure a car for a younger driver than an older driver, and it costs more to insure risk if a person has more. I think there is a great opportunity here to help the agricultural industry help itself and mitigate its risk. It is a very risky industry. Those in the riskiest areas will of course pay a higher premium for this insurance, but they are the very ones who cannot afford to have a year without income. I think we can do some work around this. I spoke to one farmer about this. The figures are a bit rubbery and he asked me not to give the fine detail, but for example if there is an income of \$500 per hectare from a farm and a farmer wants to ensure that, the insurers will generally insure about 75 per cent of that, so about \$375, as a minimum income, and that will cost around 20 bucks a hectare. For 20 bucks a hectare, if someone gets wiped out, they will get their \$375 a hectare. If they return only \$200 a hectare, they will get topped up to \$375 a hectare. If they get more than \$375 a hectare, they have blown their premium. Why do we insure our workers, cars and houses, and insure against fire and hail, but not against income interruption? I think we as a government can do a lot of work to bring all the players together—the banks, the insurers and the Department of Agriculture and Food, which has a lot of the data. We can work with farmers to help and to collate information. Generally, reinsurers want an upfront fee of \$500 000. They impose a fee to go through the exercise of working through all that data and making a risk analysis because they may not get the business. I would like to talk to them about that because we do not want any reasons for farmers not to take up this insurance. I will talk more about this in future contributions, but it is something I believe in. I will continue the work of Hon Nigel Hallett and Hon Kim Chance before him. This is certainly an issue that Kim was very passionate about and keen to move forward.

There are enormous effects of climate change on native flora and fauna. I noticed driving around my farm that wild trees come out in flower much earlier than we would expect them to. I see trees that may have been there for 300 years just turn up their toes and die as the composition of the soil and water changes. The less freshwater put in means there is generally a higher concentration of salty water in the soil. I have seen big old trees down by rivers just turn on their toes and die for no apparent reason after a couple of tough seasons. That is a terrible shame. Some of those big old salmon gums are from 500 to 700 years old. They are magnificent living things. We have certainly had a hand in reducing the lifespan of many of them by perhaps being a bit ambitious on the clearing, but climate change is also certainly having an effect on those magnificent old trees that have stood there for 500 years and all of a sudden find the current climate a bit tough. There has also been an effect on waterways, rivers and catchments. There is not the flushing of waterways that there once was as a consequence of less rainfall, especially in winter.

Climate change does not always mean less rainfall; climate change can also mean a different distribution of rainfall. As I mentioned earlier and as we are seeing, we are having tremendously heavy storms in summer. Sometimes we get up to 200 millimetres in a day—300 millimetres in the case of Ravensthorpe earlier this year where we saw washaways in the paddocks and whole bridges disappear. Climate change is not just about less rainfall; it is about a different distribution of rainfall that has been caused by climate change.

Hon Alison Xamon interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: The member raises a very good point, hence the term. It used to be global warming, but it is not all about warming; parts of the world are cooling as well. Having said that, photos of the Arctic ice shelf and even Antarctica show that the ice shelves are shrinking because the planet is warming up as a consequence of climate change.

This issue must be driven by the left. I do not have any confidence that the coalition, the conservative side of politics, will ever act on climate change. Federal Labor has a target of 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030. We had better get on with it; we are way behind that at the moment.

Hon Peter Collier: State Labor?

Hon DARREN WEST: No, federal Labor.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: That is our policy federally. I went to the federal conference in Melbourne and voted for 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030 because I think it is important. I have a son who is thinking about going into farming. That is why it is important. The left will need to drive this because, as we can tell, it will not happen from the conservative side of politics. We will keep pumping out carbon dioxide and ignoring the elephant in the room. The parts per million of carbon dioxide will hit 500 then 600. We need to get the stack back down to about 350 parts per million. I think we are a bit late; we should have done this 10 years ago when Geoff Gallop had the idea that we needed to act. That is when we needed to take action, but we have filibustered, put it off and found excuses for 10 years and I think the right would delay it for another 10 years and probably even more.

I thank the honourable member for the motion. We could talk about a lot more. Hon Tim Clifford talked about what a fascinating field energy is and how we can drastically change the mix and dynamics of the energy industry through renewable energy and battery technology. Our energy systems are some of the poorest in the western world and we are not doing very much about them. Our federal government is sitting on its hands and will not act on renewable energy and set meaningful targets and work towards renewable energy and cheaper prices for households. The price of renewable energy is falling while the price of other types of energy is rising and we will hit that sweet spot very soon, so we need to be ready. Germany produces a greater per cent of renewable energy than we do. Go figure! Look at its climate and look at our climate. Germany has understood the need to act. People in Germany are the can-do types. They have always been very clever at finding a way to make things work. They have been creative. We have not been creative because one side of politics that is just not interested.

I thank Hon Robin Chapple for bringing this motion forward. It is something I feel very passionately about, as members can tell. Climate change affects me, my family and my business, perhaps more than it affects anyone else in the Parliament, so I will always stand up and advocate on behalf of the agricultural sector, especially against inaction on climate change. It is time we got on with it and stopped saying that we do not need to do it; it is time we became more proactive and got the job done.

HON AARON STONEHOUSE (South Metropolitan) [2.02 pm]: I thank Hon Robin Chapple for putting this motion forward in a way that encourages debate and discussion. It is good to see. It was pointed out earlier that our solar uptake is fairly low, and not where we would like to see it. Electric car uptake is also low. The reason behind this, of course, is that it is too dammed expensive. I do not think anyone is shying away from that. Fossil fuels are cheaper. Coal is certainly one of the cheapest forms of energy we have.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

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

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: At the moment, coal subsidies are about 86c per megawatt hour. I do not think we should subsidise coal at all, and that is something members on the right side of the chamber would agree on. Gas is subsidised at about 30c per megawatt hour—again, that is no good. However, solar is subsidised at about \$412 per megawatt hour. We are subsidising solar by quite a ridiculous amount. I hear a lot from that side of politics about how they do not like corporate subsidies. However, it seems they are okay with corporate subsidies so long as it goes to their pet projects or to big green corporations.

If we increase taxes on cheap energy or prohibit cheap energy, poor people would inadvertently suffer the most, if not in this country, certainly in other countries. People use coal in places like India, despite it being very bad for their health, because it is cleaner than burning wood or dung, which, in a lot of cases, are the alternatives for those people. We must not forget that. Although coal is not ideal, perhaps for heating a home, it is certainly safer than burning wood or other materials. We also must keep in mind that among other things such as payroll tax and red tape, energy is one of the biggest costs imposed on business, so keeping energy prices low is very important, especially if we want to encourage manufacturing and other industries in this state.

Desalination was mentioned earlier as a great way to tackle declining rainfall or changing rainfall trends. I agree that desalination is something we should continue looking at. However, it is energy intensive, as Hon Darren West pointed out. That is probably the biggest roadblock to using desalination on a larger scale. An easy solution to the energy requirements for desalination would perhaps be nuclear. We are, after all, the third largest exporter of uranium—that sweet yellow cake—in the world. Unfortunately, our government is strangely anti-science when it comes to nuclear.

Several members interjected.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I expected some interjections, so I will point out a couple of stats. I have a couple of stats that some of my friends in the Greens might find interesting. Per trillion kilowatt hours energy produced, the number of deaths from coal is about 100 000. That is the global average. It is due to horrible lung diseases. However, in countries such as the United States, it is significantly lower at about 10 000 per trillion kilowatt hours, so there is a much lower death rate in places such as the US, where they have the Clean Air Act, for example.

Hon Alison Xamon: How can people die from solar?

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: That is a very good point. Rooftop electricity solar, I think, is about 440 per trillion kilowatt hours, and I think that is mostly from extraction of the minerals used to create solar panels.

On nuclear, if we include Fukushima and Chernobyl, the global average is about 90 deaths per trillion kilowatt hours. That makes it one of the safest forms of energy production in the world. There have been deaths in the past from nuclear energy but nuclear energy creates so much energy at the same time that the ratio of deaths per trillion kilowatt hours is very low. Unfortunately, every now and then someone falls off a wind turbine while doing maintenance, so given the very small amount of energy that wind produces, there are about 150 deaths per trillion kilowatt hours. We need to take into account how much energy the different technologies actually produce compared to the number of deaths attributed to them.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members! Hon Aaron Stonehouse has the call. He is not pausing to take interjections and I think it is getting to the point where he is unable to make his contribution.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Thank you, Mr Acting President. It leads to my next point that it seems almost impossible to hold sensible, reasonable discussion about nuclear energy in Australia. There is a very anti-science sentiment from some people in politics concerning nuclear. It may not be the best solution to our energy requirements but we should at least have a sensible debate about it, especially considering the risk changing climate poses to industry and agriculture. I do not want to debate the science; I am not a science denier. I have an open mind. I want to look at all different forms of technology that might help us tackle this issue. Coal seam gas, for example, is certainly cleaner than coal but we have a government that has an ideological bent against coal seam gas.

We talk about the struggle people in agriculture are facing with reduced rainfall or irregular rainfall patterns. Genetically modified crops can be designed to survive with less rainfall in more harsh climates. Again, with genetically modified organisms, CSG, nuclear energy, and even man-made reefs, we have technology that can address these issues. There are many technologies we can look at if we just get beyond our ideology and look at things sensibly and objectively.

That leads to my final point—I will not take much time—and that is the solution to these problems always will be innovation in technology. At the end of the day, the greatest driver of innovation in technology in particular is competition in a free market. Some people on one side of politics may downplay the risks of climate change and people on the other side want to perhaps play it up or try to pull the levers and dials of the economy and manufacture some kind of result, when, really, we should be getting out of the way and letting innovators and entrepreneurs develop the technology we need that will help us in the future.

HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West) [2.10 pm]: I will be brief. I thank Hon Robin Chapple for bringing this motion. I also mention Hon Dr Steve Thomas and Hon Aaron Stonehouse for their contributions to the discussion. I support their view about open debate. I think that is the problem with this whole discussion. When the left talk to the right, there is no open debate and that is where the problem is. Calling people names because of their view on something does not help the debate.

Climate change is happening. We disagree about the causes, but there should be an open debate on that. People should be talking about that and not being accused or called names. The political pointscoreing that goes on with climate change is the one thing that is stopping open debate. We remember Prime Minister Rudd, Kevin 07 or whatever they used to call him; when he was in power, climate change was the biggest issue facing our time. Why did it stop with him? It is because he turned the argument into political pointscoreing instead of opening up the debate to be about all forms of energy.

Hon Aaron Stonehouse mentioned uranium and nuclear power. Once again, I agree with him. We should be having that debate in this Parliament and in this state and right across this country. It is a different form of energy. Some people call it renewable energy, but it has been around a long time and the science is improving all the time. We need to look with open eyes at that whole energy source. It is one of the fastest growing energy sources in the biggest countries in the world, which are also doing renewables. They are also increasing their coal and gas use and every other energy. Somewhere in the region of 35 nuclear power stations are being built in India and China and these places and somewhere in the region of 70 others are at the planning stage. That is happening now. We have enormous amounts of uranium in this state and also in the rest of Australia and we need a complete and open debate on it. At least the South Australian Premier, Mr Jay Weatherill, had a royal commission, and that was a good thing. That was the start of the debate in this country. No-one previously had been prepared to have a royal commission and look at the facts and figures.

Many members have talked about desalination. I think it is fantastic that desalination exists, because we would be in a very bad state if we did not have that. But we should be looking at what we will do with those dams. I know Hon Rick Mazza has mentioned to me recently that if the dam water is too salty and cannot be used for other purposes, maybe we should be opening up our dams for recreational purposes. But we need to look at our resources and make the most of those resources. We also need to look at salinity programs. We know there are answers to salinity in the country regions and we could be a lot more productive in our farming regions if we look at some of the canal programs and seriously invest bipartisan-wise in these technologies and see where we can grow this into the future. Salinity is a major problem in this state and we need to make changes in that area.

Another thing I would like to mention is that science is always changing. All the technologies that we see today, including nuclear, are improving all the time. For instance, most of the nuclear reactors around today are either generation 1 or 2, but there are now generation 3 and 4 nuclear reactors that operate completely differently. Some that operate only on nuclear waste are coming online around the world.

We oppose the sale of Western Power. We are not necessarily against all asset sales. But when an asset sale increases the cost of living for low-income workers and pensioners and we have no plan other than to sell it because we spent too much money and got ourselves into a fix, we will oppose that. We are open to discussion on selling the TAB, but we cannot just close down coal-fired power stations with no plan about where we will put those workers and how those people will earn their living in the future. We have seen what a basket case South Australia has become. From this Saturday, South Australia will have the most expensive electricity prices in the whole world. They are in a race to the bottom with Denmark. We do not want that in this state. We need this open debate. When Hon Aaron Stonehouse spoke about nuclear energy, he got the usual reply and that is wrong. We need an open debate. I thank Hon Robin Chapple for opening up this debate because it is important and the political pointscoring needs to leave this debate.

We need to look at the speed of change as we close down old fossil fuel energy sources and open up renewables. Let us hope that renewables grow quickly and that battery storage really is a part of our future. We are all hoping for that, but I think the argument is about the speed of that change. Our number one resource in the world is people—not the climate, not the water, and not uranium. It is people. We need to look after them first. I love the way Hon Dr Steve Thomas mentioned that it usually comes from the industry. We need to get the industry involved in decision-making.

It is all about opening up the debate. Let us stop calling people names. Let us stop using this as a political football and let us have an honest, open debate and put everything on the table. Great democracies do that.

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [2.18 pm] — in reply: I take what Hon Colin Tincknell has just said. From the outset, the type of motion that I used is about a debate, rather than “he said, she said”. We tried to do that a number of times. I am sorry that the Nationals did not contribute because the last time we had a similar debate about policy direction, they contributed very well to that debate. I thank Hon Darren West, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, Hon Dr Steve Thomas, Hon Stephen Dawson, Hon Tim Clifford, Hon Aaron Stonehouse and Hon Colin Tincknell for their contributions. I must admit that I was a little concerned when we started going back to the old paradigm of who is right and who is wrong in this debate. But I am very, very proud that everybody in this place acknowledged climate change is real and that we need to move forward in this area.

I will briefly touch on the nuclear issue. Some in this place know that for three years I was the radiation health officer for the Radiation Health and Safety Advisory Council at Yallambie in Melbourne, so I have some expertise in that area. I want to clarify a couple of points. We have had 70 nuclear power plants in the planning stage for the last about 35 years. It is always trotted out by the International Atomic Energy Agency as the way we are going forward. We are about to retire approximately 140 nuclear reactors that have already had a 10-year extension on their life and are due to be wound back. We need a reality check on this. The only nuclear power station that is the new style tier 3 is being built in Norway. That is now some five to six years overdue. It has

gone three times over budget and is still not online. There are the fast-breeder reactors. Most of those—there were 70 of them—have been retired. Only one remains in Belarus, and it is used for generating hot water for houses because it was too unstable to do anything else. The American GIF III program was heavily subsidised by the United States government to provide massive subsidies—many billions of dollars—to Third World countries to start a new nuclear program. We have to remember that since 1972 there has not been a new nuclear power station built in the United States, and under the Carter administration they were all being wound back.

Hon Colin Tincknell: Can I say also that I agree with you on those figures—100 per cent. I also worked in the nuclear industry for many years. One of the things I wanted to remind you was just that they are growing in countries like India, China and others.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: We are still waiting for those developments. There is a program, but the net number of nuclear reactors will decline in the future.

I want to leave that aside because I think the key issue is that we have a burgeoning greenhouse gas emission problem in Western Australia. From Hon Dr Steve Thomas to Hon Alannah MacTiernan, all members have acknowledged that. I think the clear imperative for this government moving forward—I love that phrase; it has become some of the pet words, everybody is moving forward these days, but anyway—is to develop a program to address the burgeoning emissions in this state and to try to minimise our energy footprint. Having said that, I think it is very important to note that part of our concern about climate change is emissions. That is where we see we need to have a reduction. In this state in 1990 we produced 52 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum; by 2010 that had risen to some 74 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum for a very, very small state. By 2012 that was sitting at about 83 to 85 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum. Of that, 12 million tonnes came from Woodside Energy, nearly eight million tonnes came from Verve, 4.2 million tonnes came from Alcoa, and 3.7 million tonnes came from Worsley Alumina. The technology is available; I am an engineer, and I really agree that technology leads the way.

Hon Colin Tincknell: Yes.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: We could actually get Woodside to get rid of one component of an element of its emissions that is carcinogenic and accidentally remove, at the same time, one million tonnes of CO₂ per annum; we have that capability. The proposals for Browse Basin, Prelude and the floating liquefied natural gas systems do not have flares because they are dangerous. So they have developed technologies that do not flare. The new Woodside Pluto development on the Burrup Peninsula flares occasionally, because the plant has been developed on the basis of not flaring waste energy. The eight million tonnes that comes out of that one flame on the Woodside facility on the North West Shelf is actually getting rid of energy. Surplus energy is being burnt. How ridiculous! That should be turned into an energy source. It was going to be released as methane, so I am at least pleased that it is being lit. When we consider that that eight million tonnes of CO₂ per annum from one flare on a gas plant is almost equivalent to New Zealand's emissions, we realise that we should be doing better than that, and we can. The technology is there to reduce those sorts of emissions. If we reduced those emissions, we would be getting rid of somewhere in the region of 25 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum—almost half our emissions. We have to do it with energy and we have to do it through reducing our footprint, driving electric cars and the provision of electric batteries. We have already seen the massive changes since the battery was introduced by Tesla. In China, better batteries than Tesla's are already being developed. The exponential growth in the technology to resolve our problems is there. I encourage the current state government—I am not putting any blame on anyone; this is not a blame game—to take on board its responsibility as part of the nation and the globe to reduce our CO₂ footprint.

A point that was raised, which I take, is that a number of American generals have recently said that a global water shortage will be one of the most serious things. They actually attribute that as part of climate change, and have said that that is why security systems globally have to address the decline in water supplies and the increase in population. That is becoming one of the drivers in the thinking of the American military, and how climate change could lead to potential conflict and, as we have heard, mass translocation of people and things around that. We really need to address climate change for many reasons.

I am coming very close to the end of my time, and on that basis I urge all members of this chamber to think about climate change and our responsibility to future generations in trying to do the best we can to adapt to or ameliorate the impacts of climate change. That was something I was very passionate about when I was elected in 2001—it was part of my inaugural speech—and, hopefully, I will make a valedictory speech at some stage when I can say that at least we as a state and nation have actually taken on board the responsibilities of addressing climate change. After I have given my valedictory speech at some stage in the future, I hope these benches around me will be filled with other Greens who can carry on the charge I brought to this place in 2001.

Question put and passed.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT — FORMER LIBERAL–NATIONAL GOVERNMENT*Motion*

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [2.28 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the former Liberal–National government for its reckless mismanagement of the state’s finances.

I have moved a motion that was originally put on the notice paper by Hon Sally Talbot. There is a sort of technical issue, if I may. There is a buzzing sound that keeps coming out of my speakers. I do not know whether someone can pay attention to that, but anyway.

I am pleased I can do this in one sense, because I think it is important to set out exactly the state of the finances that we inherited when we won the election on 11 March this year. There were a number of reasons that the previous government lost the election. Members will be given different lists of reasons depending on who they speak to, but some of the reasons include the following. There was a perception that the government was arrogant, tired, a bit out of puff and had failed to capitalise on the boom. There was the Colin Barnett factor, if I can call it that. It would depend on where people had their conversations, but he was the focus, pretty much across the state, of a huge amount of ill will that was directed towards him personally. There was also the view that no succession plan was in place. To those people who wanted to support the Liberal–National government but thought that it needed a different leader, it did not appear that it actually had one. There was a view that the only plan that the Liberal–National government had to deal with the state of the economy was to privatise. Its solution to fix the damage that it had done over eight and a half years was to privatise. There was deeply felt concern about jobs, not only for folk who were in the workforce, but also about whether their children would be able to find jobs in the future. They could not see the Liberal–National government doing anything to address that. There is also the matter that is at the heart of this motion. There was genuine concern that the Liberal–National government, contrary to all stereotypes, had wrecked the finances. The core of many people’s concerns about Western Australia was that the finances were in a bad way and they could not see that the previous government would do anything to address it. Some three months post-election, a variety of new versions of history are being written. In the minds of some members opposite, there is a view that it was all about the media and that if the Liberal Party had got a better deal from the media, it might have stood a better chance of survival. I think that is a bit fanciful because the list of issues that people were thinking about when considering how to vote had little to do with the media’s reporting of the election campaign. People made judgements on deeply felt issues. Going back to 2013, the Labor Party was aware of people’s concerns about jobs. It was deeply and widely felt that the Liberal–National government was doing nothing to tackle the issue. We started to work on a plan for jobs in 2014. People engaged with us because they saw that we had an alternative. The notion that somehow the election was lost by the previous government because of the way the media reported on the campaign is, I think, a bit fanciful. Nevertheless, the state of the state’s finances was one of the major issues. The previous government’s inability to use increased revenues—I will talk in a minute about those increased revenues over the eight and a half years—to plan for a shift in the economy, to drive down debt and to deliver real outcomes for Western Australians was one of the most significant issues and one of the drivers of change.

People could see the difference in the state of the finances between when the previous government came to power and when it went out the door. These are some of the figures from when it came to government in 2008. The previous Labor government had paid down debt to \$3.6 billion in its last budget and had delivered eight straight budget surpluses. It had built the Mandurah rail line debt free, due in no small part to the efforts of Hon Alannah MacTiernan. It had set money aside in a special bank account to build Fiona Stanley Hospital and had built an average of 11 new schools a year. It had delivered five rounds of tax cuts in its last four and a half years and had budgeted for two more tax cuts and included them in the forward estimates. Those tax cuts were about grouping provisions in payroll tax for small and medium businesses and for stamp duty to be abolished for non-real aspects of business purchases. Western Australia had a AAA credit rating; do members remember those days? I will talk about that in a minute. The state’s unemployment rate was around 2.3 per cent.

Soon after 2008, the rot started to set in. The new government cancelled the planned tax cuts and broke its election promise to deliver \$250 million in tax cuts to business. It had promised that any windfall revenue would be put into tax cuts, but it got around that promise by redefining what it meant by “windfall”. A few years later, in 2013, it used the election slogan, “fully funded, fully costed”. Does that sound familiar to anybody? We did not realise it at the time, but it meant that the promises were not funded at all and no work had been done on the costings. That is what that meant. We thought it meant that the Liberal–National government had done some work on the costings, had put the money in the budget and had the money to pay for its promises.

Hon Samantha Rowe: I think the public thought that as well.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think that is what people in Western Australia thought as well in 2013.

Within weeks of being elected in 2013, the government started to run away from its promises. In fact, the Premier made the point that election promises were not really promises. It was running a million miles from its promises. Year after year, spending started to outstrip revenue. Premier Barnett made his infamous comment about the forward estimates, saying that they did not really mean anything. Forward estimates are the spread of finances over the four years that are set out in the budget every year. They are the government's plan. As much as the world is interested in a set of budget papers, they tell the world what the government plans to spend over the next four years, how it intends to split the money and what money it has. It is a very important document for planning and sending a message to those who look to the state government as a major lever-puller in the state's economy. According to the Premier of the previous government, the forward estimates did not really mean anything and nobody should pay any attention to them. If people took that view on the financials that they prepare for their business, a range of organisations would take a dim view of it. But that was the approach that the previous government took to managing the finances. It was a lackadaisical approach to what it needed to record and set out in its plan. The previous government started to show us that it did not need to follow its own forward estimates. It wasted some \$28 million on a thing called MAX light rail, which ended up going nowhere and being nothing but cost the state \$28 million in the process. It invested millions of dollars in apartments that remained empty. It spent more than \$300 million on Muja A and B power stations and then closed them. It managed, or mismanaged—however members want to characterise it—the Pilbara underground power project, which blew out by more than \$100 million because it was discovered that the ground was hard. Do you need to be a genius to figure that out? I was not looking at Hon Simon O'Brien when I used the word "genius"; I am sorry if I confused him!

Hon Simon O'Brien: No, sorry; I wasn't listening!

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is unusual and unkind for the member to even tell me that!

Hon Simon O'Brien: And tongue in cheek. Please go on; it's better listening to you rather than the original mover of this motion!

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is unkind as well!

Several members interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: She is not here to defend herself; she is away on urgent parliamentary business.

I was making the point that the grand plan for how we should spend hundreds of millions of dollars included a plan for underground power and then it went, "Oops, the ground's hard; we can't do it!" Debt started to climb —

Hon Simon O'Brien: You cancelled underground power schemes and —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Was it because the ground was hard?

The problem was that the previous government had story after story that led to a complete wreck of the finances after eight and a half years, and we now have to repair the damage. Debt started to climb. Right now, it is at \$33 billion. Remember, when the Labor Party left government, it was \$3.6 billion. As we come to the end of the financial year 2016–17, it is now \$33 billion, and it is projected to climb to \$41 billion in 2019–20. We had a Premier who did not care to pay attention to how he organised the finances. He was happy to spend and he was happy to make commitments during the caretaker period of the 2013 election. He was happy to keep spending but he was not happy to apply sensible, moderate, reasonable financial measures to how he managed the state's finances. As a result, he wrecked the state's finances and we lost the AAA credit rating. If members think about how rich we are as a state and our resources, capacity and diversity, we lost our AAA credit rating during a time of increased revenue. Year after year, revenues were increasing but we were losing our credit rating. How do those two things add up? We can only reach the same conclusion that the ratings agencies reached, which they talked about and which I will come back to in a minute. They basically said, "We don't think anyone in this government is paying attention. They are not sending us the signals that they are serious about addressing the financial state of Western Australia."

The previous Liberal–National government presided over and squandered the boom-time revenues. From 2008–09 to 2012–13, the state's total revenue grew by 32 per cent. From 2008–09 to 2012–13, state taxation grew by 47 per cent. This included a 55 per cent growth in payroll tax and a 50 per cent increase in transfer duty. Money was coming in; the problem was not that no money was coming in. At the same time as our own source revenues were booming, our debt increased by 501 per cent. When the Labor Party left government, state debt was \$3.6 billion in 2007–08, \$18.2 billion in 2012–13, and we now know it is in the range of \$30 billion, heading to \$40 billion. That means we, as an incoming state government, have an awful lot of work to do. We have to deal with not only the record levels of debt that were accumulated during a boom, but also the slowing economy and, depending on how we do our measurements, an economy that is in recession. We have to deal with trying to fix that, to catch up by diversifying the economy and fixing the debt problem we were left by the previous government. It is an absolutely diabolical set of circumstances. For the conservative parties who, in the history of

our politics in Australia, have always claimed to be the good economic managers, it is absolutely astonishing. They completely blew that stereotype right out of the water. Whatever the perception is, the facts show us that the Labor government, led by Premiers Gallop and Carpenter, and Treasurer Ripper, delivered the safest, best set of books. The Liberal–National government delivered the worst set of books and now the McGowan–Wyatt team has to fix it. Because our economy has slowed so significantly, we now have less revenue. We collect less revenue from things like payroll tax and stamp duty while, at the same time, the goods and services tax affair sees us getting 34 cents in the dollar, down from 37 cents in the dollar just before the election. Payroll tax is forecast to decline by some 6.7 per cent in the financial year we are coming to the end of now and transfer duty is forecast to decline by pretty close to the same—about 6.3 per cent in this financial year.

Earlier, I referred to the AAA credit rating and I want to have a chat about that. The state government held a stable AAA outlook for 15 years until the former government lost it in September 2013, and we remain on a negative outlook. Western Australian debt is now rated by Moody's Investors Service as the riskiest, equal to South Australia and the Northern Territory. A key reason for our poor credit rating is that the state has the highest total non-financial public sector net debt as a share of revenue of any state. It is worth looking at what the rating agencies said at the time that they made those changes. In September 2013, an article in *The West Australian* titled "Triple-A-Rated Crisis: Rolled-gold credit loss puts spending under pressure" states —

Ratings agency Standard & Poor's revealed yesterday that it would downgrade its assessment of the State's creditworthiness because it did not believe the Government had the "political will" to get its spending growth under control.

Further in the same article, it states —

... S&P said the Government appeared to "lack the political will" to stick to its fiscal plan in a clear reference to a string of policy reversals announced since Mr Buswell's Budget on August 8.

He was the then Treasurer —

...

"The downgrade reflects our view that while the fiscal action plan announced in WA's Budget improves the State's path, in our view there is likely to be slippage, reflecting our view of limited political will, as evidenced by the early revision of some Budget revenue and expenditure measures," ...

"The rating could be pressured if WA's consolidated cash operating balance looked likely to fall into deficit without a convincing plan to return to surplus," ...

That convincing plan to return to surplus never happened. The best proposal that the previous government could come up with to address its financial woes was to sell Western Power. That was the best it could do. The former government squandered the opportunity it had with the highest revenues—it squandered them. We can look at what the ratings agencies said over time. Currently, the total non-financial public sector net debt as a share of revenue is 82.3 per cent. When we were last in government in 2007–08, it was 19 per cent, and it is forecast in 2018–19 to go to 92.9 per cent.

If we go back to 1991, over that 15-year period, we can track how Moody's and Standard and Poor's have treated Western Australia. Things went awry in 2012–13 after record revenues. On 12 October 2012, there was a negative outlook. On 12 December, Moody's issued a negative outlook. On 13 September 2013, Standard and Poor's downgraded the state's credit rating to AA+. On 15 April 2014, Standard and Poor's put WA on a negative credit watch. In August that year, Moody's downgraded us to Aa1. In July 2015, Standard and Poor's issued another negative outlook. In June 2015, Moody's issued a negative outlook, and in February 2016, it downgraded us one step further. The credit rating agencies were sending serious messages to the government of the day and saying that they wanted to see the government's political will to demonstrate that it could set out a fiscal action plan and stick to it. However, the government of the day could not do it.

The debt and interest burden that we now have to address is staggering. In 2008–09, the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* forecast debt of about \$6.8 billion. Of course we now know it is in the 30s and heading to the 40s. The Liberal–National government left us with a forecast of some \$41 billion in debt by the end of the forward estimates period. When we were last in government, we delivered surpluses in the billions of dollars—\$2.6 billion in 2006–07 and \$2.3 billion in 2007–08. When we last left the Treasury office, our forecast annual average surpluses were around \$1.7 billion in the out years. But once the new government came into office, this structural imbalance was created, and we are now left with trying to adjust it. Between 2013–14 and 2016–17, general government expenditure increased by \$2.9 billion and revenue fell by \$761 million, leaving a gap of about \$3.6 billion. Interest costs will increase by about 50 per cent over the 2016–17 to 2019–20 period. By 2019–20, the state will be spending \$1.2 billion a year on interest payments—not on building the things that we need or paying the people who we need to do the job, but on our interest. That is what we will be paying. That is more, for example, than the total cost of the Disability Services Commission. General government interest costs are the fastest growing area in the state budget. Over the period that it was in government, the Liberal–National

government spent \$4 billion on general government interest payments—that is interest payments! That is more than a full year of funding for student education across the entire state. The net amount appropriated to the Department of Education in 2015–16 was \$4 billion, which is what the previous government spent on interest payments from 2008–09 to the end of 2016–17.

At the same time, when the economy started to shift, the previous government took no action to diversify the economy. It took no action to make adjustments and take advantage of the things that we had learnt and capitalised on during the boom. The previous government took no action. Employment rates started to fall and people looked to the state government for some direction on how this could be corrected or what levers the state government could pull to diversify the economy, but they saw nothing. The number of people in full-time employment remains well below recent highs, and a record proportion of those people want to work more hours. As at April this year, the number of people employed full-time in Western Australia has fallen by around 31 000 in trend terms since it peaked back in November 2012. The underemployment rate has surged from 5.8 per cent in 2011 to a record high in February this year of 10.4 per cent. The annual average participation rate in the state is the lowest it has been in over 11 years and Treasury is predicting a further decline in employment in 2016–17.

There were countless opportunities for government to take action to start to diversify the economy. There was low-hanging fruit. One example in my portfolio is international education. There are ample opportunities for us to expand what we do in not only bringing overseas students to Western Australia, but also selling our skills overseas. For example, in Malaysia, 16 schools deliver the Western Australian Certificate of Education. Those students complete our WACE and then they fly over us to go to a university in any other state in Australia. Had an investment been made some years ago into trying to turn that around, we would have started to see some results by now. Let us use the area of international education as an example. Work was done on developing a strategy but no money was put into making it happen. There were examples like that whereby the previous government could have done more and did not; it had the opportunity to diversify the economy and did not take it. We basically gifted those employment opportunities, that revenue and that sense of economic stability to the states with which we compete. There was lost opportunity after lost opportunity, which is why people in Western Australia started to think, “When I’m worried about my own job and my kids’ jobs, who do I look to to show me that they have the capacity to think beyond what is immediately in front of their face and plan for the future?” Those people saw nothing like that when they looked at the previous government. What they saw was increasing debt. They saw increasing revenue to the state, but, at the same time, an increase in spending. People saw economic mismanagement and that was in no small part why they made the decision that they made on 11 March.

I could talk for a long time about the GST, but I will not. I want to make a point about what happened at the time our revenues were increasing significantly. At that time we had record numbers of mortgage foreclosures. We had a record number of people living on Centrelink benefits and on limited and constrained incomes, and not being able to find rental housing. Every year in April, for about the past five years—it might be a bit longer now—Anglicare WA takes a snapshot of the ads for rental properties and then does the maths to work out what a person who is living on the variations of a Centrelink benefit could afford to rent. Anglicare does it across Western Australia and it adjusts its model for what could be rented in regional areas and whether the person is single or has kids et cetera, and it looks at various areas across metropolitan Perth as well. Over the period that the Barnett Liberal-National government was getting record revenues, the various April snapshots show that between zero and one per cent of rental properties were affordable for people who live on Centrelink benefits. At the time that the state was receiving the highest ever revenues and had the greatest capacity to help those in need, it was not helping them. Those people could not find rental properties to live in at a time when the state was going through its biggest boom. In that same period when our revenues were so high, mortgage defaults were also peaking. Every quarter the Supreme Court issues statistics about civil property possession applications lodged against people who have had to default on their mortgage. The statistics I have go back to 2008–09. At the peak period when revenues were at our highest, mortgage defaults were also at their peak. In 2012–13 some 1 046 mortgages were defaulted. That figure dropped a little in 2013–14 to 813 and went up again in 2014–15 and 2015–16. The number is still below 1 000, but at that peak in 2011–12, when our revenue was at its highest, some 1 500 Western Australians defaulted on their mortgages, which is an extraordinary set of circumstances in a state as rich as Western Australia.

Since the Labor government has been elected, due to circumstances completely beyond our control, things got even worse, if that is possible to believe. The *Overview of the Economic and Fiscal Outlook* released by the Treasurer on 6 April this year indicates downward revision to revenue of \$1.2 billion compared with that predicted before the election. The task before us to clean up the financial mess left behind by the former government has got worse because of the downward revision to revenue since the election. This motion makes the point that when the former government had the greatest opportunity to put money aside and plan for the future, diversify the skill base, improve opportunities for training and diversify the jobs market, it squandered it.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

SENTENCE ADMINISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL 2017*Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by **Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the House)**, read a first time.

Second Reading

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [3.23 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill implements a major election commitment. As honourable members may be aware, the history of this legislation starts with Margaret Dodd. Her daughter, Hayley, has not been found. Margaret Dodd started a public petition for no body, no parole laws and it gained the support of approximately 40 000 people.

The murder of Craig Puddy also comes to mind—the offender was convicted and received a life sentence with a minimum non-parole period of 18 years. Mr Puddy's father, Laurie, said that the verdict was a first step but that it would not bring the family closure as he still does not know the whereabouts of his son's body. It is clear that it is a matter of great importance, and a step towards closure, for a family to be able to bury their loved one.

No body, no parole legislation has been introduced in Victoria, the Northern Territory and South Australia and is being considered in Queensland and New South Wales. Importantly, the government's law reform initiatives policy includes an election commitment to introduce no body, no parole reform. This bill seeks to do this through amendments to the Sentence Administration Act 2003, a Western Australian act. Although commonly called no body, no parole provisions—I will continue to use that term—the provisions that are sought to be introduced by the bill will apply to all relevant early release determinations, not only to parole, in order to ensure a consistent and comprehensive application of the government's policy. This bill applies to prisoners who are in custody for murder or a murder-related offence. A murder-related offence refers to counselling or procuring the commission of murder; inciting another person to commit murder; becoming an accessory after the fact of murder; or conspiring with another person to commit a murder, insofar as these offences relate to the death of a person.

For the assistance of honourable members, in summary, the bill provides that in every case in which the Prisoners Review Board considers whether a relevant prisoner should be granted an early release order, the board must not make a release order or release recommendation unless satisfied that the prisoner has cooperated with a member of the Western Australian police force about either of the following two matters—first, identification of the location of the remains of the victim; and, second, identification of the last known location of the victim's remains. The aim of the proposed provisions is to enhance the likelihood of locating the body of the victim of a murder.

All honourable members will, I trust, agree that this is a very important, worthy and long overdue objective to achieve. Again, for the information of members, it should be noted that the no body, no parole provisions will not apply when the location of the remains of the victim are already known to a member of the WA police force. However, in this context, it is important to note that the usual considerations that the board takes into account when deciding, for example, whether to recommend to the executive government that a prisoner be granted parole, will continue to apply to such prisoners. Importantly, these new no body, no parole provisions will apply to all relevant prisoners as defined in the bill regardless of the date when they committed the offence.

The bill ensures that prisoners convicted of relevant historical offences under now repealed laws are also within the new provisions. The government has considered the implications of the no body, no parole provisions on an accused's right to silence. Consequently, the bill makes it clear that a prisoner can be found to have satisfactorily cooperated when the cooperation occurs after conviction, sentencing, and all appeals have been finalised.

The bill refers specifically to cooperation with a member of the WA police force, which at all times remains the authority responsible for investigation of murder. It is, of course, possible that a prisoner could attempt to indirectly cooperate through a third person. However, the onus remains on the prisoner to ensure that any relevant information is brought to the attention of a member of the police force. The proposed provisions require the Western Australian Commissioner of Police to provide a report that must inform the board's deliberations. Courts may, and often do, consider remorse, cooperation and the identification of the location of the body when sentencing an offender to a term of imprisonment. However, as honourable members will be aware, the sentencing of persons convicted of murder or a murder-related offence is separate from the early release of a prisoner prior to the expiry of the sentence imposed by a court. Under the relevant legislation, decisions about parole, for example, reside with the executive government, not the courts.

This bill will, I trust, go some way to restoring the faith of the families of the murdered victims. To their families I again extend the government's sincerest condolences and hope that these new no body, no parole laws will bring about the disclosure of their loved one's remains.

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

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

[See paper 318.]

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

SUPPLY BILL 2017

Second Reading

Resumed from 27 June.

HON ALANNA CLOHESY (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.10 pm]: The Supply Bill 2017 is an important bill. We do not often get to debate supply bills. In fact, I think I have had the opportunity to debate only one, and that was when the previous government —

Hon Donna Faragher: You're filling in time.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Thank you. It is an important bill and I was about to say that when the previous government—I was about to be nice, but I will not be now —

Several members interjected.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Okay, so those opposite have now learnt how to knock me off my feet by telling me that I am nice; thank you.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: That'll lose you votes!

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: That is it!

The previous government when it came back to office in 2013 had to put through a Supply Bill because it had pushed out the budget until September as well. Our government needs supply. We need authority for expenditure because our budget will be delivered in September. We need that time for ministers to scrutinise their budgets to bring to the Parliament because there is a lot to look at. The budget is in a very sad and sorry state, not only with the record debt and deficit left by the previous government, which is indeed a sad and sorry state, but also the way in which that has been recorded and the way in which individual programs have been treated, particularly the programs that have been funded for one year with nothing in the forward estimates. It is a hollowed out budget and that reflects the hollowed out nature of a lot of what the government has left us—the hollowed out nature of planning, the hollowed out nature of transport, and the hollowed out nature of individual communities because of a lack of good management and good planning. I will get to some details of that in a minute. In particular, I want to focus on East Metropolitan Region. I do not get the opportunity to do that too much.

Hon Donna Faragher: What a good region it is.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: #EastMetroBestMetro. I cannot claim that hashtag—Harrison Burrows can claim it, but I use it often. East Metro is a great region. It is a great region because of its diversity and because it is a great place to live and a great place to work. That is not to say that it is not without serious problems, particularly around transport, a lack of planning and jobs. For some people it is very difficult to be living in the East Metropolitan Region right now when they do not have access to a job and to safe and affordable housing, and, sadly, when they do not see that there is any hope in sight. To my mind, we can tell the focus of the priorities of the previous government in the way the budget is constructed, in the priorities of the budget. The previous government lost any focus for those most in need. In particular, the last budget in 2016–17 was skewed away from those most in need, from those needing a helping hand, and focused on a range of big projects at the expense of people who needed government assistance and support the most.

The other feature of the 2016–17 budget was that the government claimed that it was a focus on infrastructure. Of course it was not a focus on infrastructure; it was a focus on a couple of big projects in the inner city that left people, particularly in the East Metropolitan Region, high and dry when it came to public transport and roads and, in particular, in easing congestion. That is the legacy we have been left with and that is why it will take us through to September to really scrutinise what has been left behind, not only the way in which programs were accounted for but also the priorities of the previous government, which, as I said, are skewed away from those who most need it.

The other part of the legacy, which Hon Sue Ellery did a great job of summarising in the previous debate, is the difficulties that we now face because of the poor management of the Barnett government. We have been left with a record deficit and with record debt, but how we got there is beyond any imaginings, really. Hon Sue Ellery highlighted some of the main ways in which that occurred. In particular, anyone could have seen that the iron ore

prices were going to tank. Anybody could have seen that coming, and indeed they did. In addition, the state government changed the way in which the iron ore prices for the budget were calculated. It was not only the way that the iron ore prices were going to fall, but also the way in which the iron ore prices put into the budget were calculated to make the picture look a little bit rosier than it actually was. That is what we are left to deal with and that is why we need a Supply Bill now to take us through to September so we can scrutinise in detail some of those more complex matters.

We could also see that as a result of the changing economy, we needed to diversify the economy—long before Labor won government. Steps to diversify the economy could have been taken eight years ago but were not. As a result, there is significant unemployment, particularly in the East Metropolitan Region in areas around Midland and Ellenbrook. Those who are disproportionately affected by unemployment are, of course, young people. We had rapidly increasing unemployment at the same time that the previous government increased exponentially the fees to attend TAFE by over 500 per cent. That was unbelievable. That meant that young people were not able to access the training that they needed to get into the labour market, to get a foot in the door; they could not access the training to help them get on the road to a career. All of that was increased by over 500 per cent to manage a budget that was seriously out of whack.

Let me come back to the 2016–17 budget. One of the things that really perplexed me was that the iron ore price dropped only relatively recently, comparative to the size of the increasing deficit and the increasing debt. What I am saying is that the economy slowed down only quite recently; we were spending a lot more than we were getting in. I started to think: what are the revenues that we are getting? We know that the GST share has decreased, but surely we are still getting royalties. Of course, other people are thinking that too, such as Professor David Hayward from the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies at RMIT University. He found that in real terms Western Australia's revenues relative to 2007–08 figures were far higher than the population growth. He was saying that population growth increased and that meant that revenue increased. In addition to that, holding the price constant for 2012–11, royalties rose from \$1.8 billion in 2008 to \$5.8 billion in 2014. There were more people and, because of that, revenue was increasing and, in addition, royalties increased in constant prices. In contrast, we all know the sad goods and services tax story. We know that GST fell by about \$2 billion. On the one hand, GST prices were falling by \$2 billion but, on the other hand, royalties increased from \$1.8 billion to \$5.8 billion. The population growth was 19 per cent, and that brought a 26 per cent increase in revenue. All the way along, revenues increased, but we have not had a corresponding budget that is either in surplus or balanced, whichever we think is ideal. I know what I think it is.

We come back to: What is the point of that? How did that happen? There has to be only one reason and that is poor management. At the same time, there was a double whammy from the impact of the federal government's response to Western Australia. I will not go down the GST debacle debate; we probably all agree on that. I say only that we absolutely need a floor in the GST. The inequity is real for everyone to see. Labor has been calling for a floor in the GST for as long as I can remember. I can certainly remember Eric Ripper calling for it when the GST was debated.

Several members interjected.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: You were in government. Who was in government?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Who is on third?

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Members, when I say order, it means that everyone is to cease moving around the chamber and be silent. After all of that unruly interjection has settled down, I will again call on Hon Alanna Clohesy to continue her remarks on the question that the bill be read a second time.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Thank you, Mr Deputy President; it is nice to have some clear air to point out that the Liberal–National coalition government at a federal level has whacked Western Australia, not only with the GST, but also with cuts in budgets over two successive years. Last year a minimum of \$8 billion was taken out of this state's health and education budgets—\$8 billion. What is the impact of that at a local level? Let us talk about that. That is the hollowing out of services, and infrastructure slowdown—a complex mess for our local communities. We know that our local communities need a strong government with a fair hand to make sure that real development occurs in local communities and that those local communities get the types of services and infrastructure that will help them grow, sustain and flourish—something like a biostimulant because local communities need lots of input at a local level to ensure their growth.

Transport is one of those services that can affect the health of a local community. Look at Ellenbrook, for example, and the way in which that community has been denied solid, well-planned, local public transport for more than eight and a half years. Look at the way that community was played with and lied to by the previous government. We know that good public transport is good for the whole community. It is good for our health,

good for jobs and good for the environment. It addresses congestion. Let us look at some of the benefits. Public transport users—people who use public transport—get three times the amount of physical activity a day than those who do not. It is good for our health. After using public transport and then not using it, I know firsthand that it can have a serious negative impact on our health. Certainly, physical activity declines rapidly. There is research from Doctors for the Environment Australia, which produced a submission to the Australian Senate’s Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee in which it indicated that for each additional hour spent behind the wheel of a car in transit to and from work and to and from school, the likelihood of obesity increases by six per cent. For every hour we sit behind the wheel, the likelihood of obesity increases by six per cent. There are two reasons to address the real need for public transport, particularly in our outer suburbs.

Another area that benefits is jobs. The American Public Transport Association estimates that for every \$1 billion invested in public transport infrastructure, 36 000 jobs are created. That is in just the development, the build and the provision of public transport. That in turn creates a lot of flow-on transactions; for example, we go to the train station and shop at the local shop. Those flow-on transactions are estimated to earn another \$500 million in government tax revenues. Building public transport therefore makes sense because it helps not only the local economy, but also government tax revenue. In using public transport we spend more. We go to local shops, we help local shops and we help the growth of the local community. In addition, while spending, we are contributing to taxes. It is good not only for income for governments, but also for jobs, health and happiness. It is also good for the community.

Lots of research has shown that good public transport tends to improve overall security of local areas. There were purported to be some concerns that when we build a railway line and have it terminate in a certain area, some so-called “undesirables” might come to the local area. Sure, on some occasions less than desirable activities can occur around the central area. However, those concerns can be addressed through the design of the station, the community, the city centre or the local area centre. We also address it by the lighting, for example, that goes with that. Certainly, research has found that areas of high public transport use tend to have better overall security and less crime. For example, I found SNAMUTS—Spatial Network Analysis for Multi-Modal Urban Transport Systems. It is really interesting research. That model was applied —

Hon Aaron Stonehouse: Sorry, can you say that again?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: It is SNAMUTS—Spatial Network Analysis for Multi-Modal Urban Transport Systems. I got it! Researchers applied this spatial network analysis to the Perth–Mandurah railway line, which is one of the best railway lines this state has ever seen. It is a fantastic railway line. It was visionary, and reduced congestion and increased the good health and happiness of the people living in the area. It brought jobs in construction and brought jobs to the area when the railway line was opened. It is a visionary piece of infrastructure if ever there was one. This spatial network analysis was applied to the Perth–Mandurah railway line. The study found —

- an increase from 21 to 26 (or by 24%) in the number of activity nodes from where a minimum of 250,000 residents or jobs can be accessed within a 30-minute public transport journey;

That created activity and improved the economy of the area, if you like. It also found —

- an improvement in public transport speed competitiveness compared with road travel across the metropolitan area by 11%;

It is a really fascinating study on the way in which the railway line has improved not only the Mandurah community where the train line terminates, but also the communities all along the train line. Of course, we also know that a lack of public transport has a negative impact on our economy and on our health and happiness, and that has been quantified. The Department of Transport found that by 2020 the cost to our economy in Western Australia will be about \$2.1 billion. It is backward thinking not to put in place the strongest public transport that we could possibly think of to connect communities, provide communities with jobs and improve health and environmental outcomes. All those are good reasons to have good public transport.

If I needed any more convincing of that—of course, I did not—over the past few years I have been running forums with our local communities about what kind of public transport they want, where they want to travel to and from, how they want to travel and what kind of issues are of concern to them. I was not asking about the big macro issues around the economy or the impact on the environment, but about issues that are more particular to them. These forums were in local community halls and the interest from the community was just fantastic. I did not need convincing, but certainly the feedback from those communities was fantastic and what people wanted was very clear in relation to specific issues in their neighbourhood and where they wanted to connect to and from. The kind of information that people told us was very interesting. I asked where people wanted to connect to and from. For example, people in the Yokine forum wanted to connect from university to university. I will come back to why that is significant in a minute. They wanted to connect across suburbs—not only north and south, but also east and west.

People in that Yokine forum in particular were really concerned about congestion. As members might imagine, they were concerned about congestion on Walcott Street, Beaufort Street and Alexander Drive, which had increased exponentially. For some people it was almost doubling the time of their trip to work if they were going into the city.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: At least. You can take 45 minutes now to get from Mosman Park to Highgate.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: Yes; that is from single-lane congestion and double-lane congestion at particular points. For most people, of course, it is congested early in the day when people are going into the city for work and later in the day when they are coming out again. It can also be heavily congested on the weekends. People wanted something done to relieve congestion. They live there and I asked them to tell us what they think needs to be done. Interestingly, light rail was discussed and there were arguments for and against. Also, people were very angry that over \$28 million had been spent on the development of the Metro Area Express light rail and all for nothing; it came to nothing. It was all for nought. As we know, it was promised by the previous government. Local residents were really interested when they thought that they were going to get a new way to get in and out of the city that did not have a significant impact on the environment, but for that promise to those residents to be broken was unbelievable.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: They won a seat on the back of it. They promoted it hugely and then about two weeks later said, “Oh, sorry, changed our mind.”

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: It was not only two weeks later; it was \$28 million later. How many tracks could we have laid with \$28 million?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: They were not serious about it; they were never serious.

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY: No. That plan had a lot of flaws but we could have worked with it. We could have done something along there.

Residents were also concerned about the timing of traffic lights and the way in which there was no connection between state government and local government on the flow of traffic in certain areas. In particular, residents were really concerned about the corner of Beaufort Street and Walcott Street and the way that the previous government had successively ignored their pleas to do something about that intersection despite the increased number of motor vehicle accidents and pedestrian accidents. I will come back to why that is important a bit later.

In addition, residents also wanted to see changes in the way in which we travel across multiple modes of public transport. That is a really interesting and important suggestion which came directly from residents and which government could look at. It would help government reshape the way that it prioritises its transport planning. Another thing to come out of the transport forums was concerns about the rail crossing on Caledonian Avenue in Maylands. It scares the heck out of people and is of great concern, particularly when cars are often forced to sit across the railway lines while they are waiting for the lights to change. Sorry; Hansard cannot see my right hand going to the right-hand turn! That was raised by a number of people at the Maylands forum.

Residents also want to see Bayswater reinvigorated around the train station. How many times have we seen—despite the flashing lights and the ways the local council has tried to address it—trucks get stuck under the bridge at Bayswater? In addition, the people I have talked to around Bayswater are very concerned about the lack of amenity in the area, that the area has become quite run-down and that there is a lack of focus on the area by state and federal governments to allow local government to do some really solid planning and community-informed development there. Those were just some of the issues raised right across the inner part of the East Metropolitan Region. I also conducted transport and planning forums in Ellenbrook, and other community forums right across the East Metropolitan Region.

That information was incredibly useful, and was put to use in the development of Labor’s Metronet plan. We know that the new Metronet plan will address many of the concerns I have outlined that residents told us about. In particular, Labor will create a railway line from Morley to Ellenbrook. The impact of that on the inner northern area of the East Metropolitan Region will be absolutely huge. It will take lots of cars off the road and address congestion, and it will allow people to travel to and from major centres and points—from Morley to Ellenbrook. In addition, we will extend the railway line from Joondalup to Yanchep. Members might ask what on earth the Joondalup–Yanchep railway has to do with the East Metropolitan Region. I will tell members what it has to do with the East Metropolitan Region: Alexander Drive and Wanneroo Road. That extension will take a lot of pressure, and therefore congestion, off Alexander Drive and Wanneroo Road. We have gone about getting on with that job. Practically as soon as ministers were sworn in Minister Saffioti got on with the job—within the first couple of hours of being sworn in, I would say. She has already set up a team to oversee the delivery of the Metronet plan that I outlined, but that is only a very small part of it.

The minister has already gone ahead and called together multiagency experts who will plan and oversee the implementation of Metronet. That is really incredibly important, because remember I talked earlier about the intersection between planning and transport. We need to plan where our train stations and bus stops will be and

how they will intersect. But that also needs to be planned in relation to how a community wants to develop, how a community should develop, and the kinds of jobs that will be created not only by the rollout of Metronet, but also once passengers start to use Metronet and other forms of public transport. This multiagency specialist team will bring together specialists in transport planning, land development and town planning. I cannot emphasise how important that is. People told us that they wanted to make sure that the land use around the transport centre or hub was well thought through. Think back to Bayswater and to how I talked about the shop owners being concerned about community-centred developments that will assist that community. How do we build up that area to ensure that there are more jobs, that those businesses thrive, and that local people get in, move through and use that hub? That is why having people with those skills will be very useful in this area. I am very pleased that it will be headed up by someone with project management skills who is also a former Treasury official. It is important to demonstrate the relationship between managing a budget and having a transport plan that is manageable within the fiscal environment that we, sadly, find ourselves in. That is just one example in transport and planning of what listening to communities and acting on what they want can create. A small shift in focus to community-led priorities can have a real impact on the budget and on making sure that we are delivering the best for our community.

I could probably provide lots more examples, particularly around the area of good planning for education and economic development. This one really brings together for me and highlights just how well and easily that can be done by talking to communities, getting on with the job of developing a plan and bringing together the experts needed to do that. Prior to that, the previous government had a plan to have a plan. About this time last year, the previous government released some ideas around a transport plan. Prior to that there had been a transport plan to 2031 that was never endorsed. It was never, ever given the light of day. That created a kind of haphazard badly managed rollout of what transport projects there were. The previous government did not lay a track. In fact, when we consider the number of tier 3 rail lines it closed and subtract that from the promise of rollouts, I think the previous government achieved about minus 200 kilometres of railway track in eight and a half years.

That is why this Supply Bill is very important. It will allow the government of the day to look at what we have been left with in the face of bad planning and poor financial management, to reprioritise and focus on how to build strong communities while ensuring that the budget is fair and delivers for those most in need.

HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.49 pm]: I am delighted to rise this afternoon to make a contribution to the Supply Bill 2017. Some very interesting contributions have already been made in this chamber. Last night, Hon Dr Steve Thomas made a contribution, which, unfortunately, I was here for only part of and, of course, my good friends and colleagues Hon Alannah MacTiernan and Hon Alanna Clohesy also contributed to this debate. It is a great opportunity to talk a little about our electorates, which we do not always get to do. I am a very proud member of the East Metropolitan Region. During the election campaign, we were able to make some great commitments, both large and small, and I am pleased to rise this afternoon to talk about them.

I would like to start by making some comments about the electorate of Armadale and some of the great things that my good friend Tony Buti has done.

Hon Darren West: He's a very popular member.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: He is a very popular member.

Hon Darren West: The most popular member!

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I am told by Hon Darren West that he is the most popular member.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! The former member for Armadale can come to order because I am trying to listen to Hon Samantha Rowe who is speaking to the Supply Bill.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Of course, Tony Buti may be equally popular as the former member for Armadale. He has lobbied really hard for his electorate. In particular, one of the things he has been fighting for in Armadale is to fix the very dangerous level crossing at Denny Avenue in Kelmscott.

Several members interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: There are many reasons for that. Were those interjections directed at me? I could not hear them; I am sorry. I was talking to others so —

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! If the Minister for Regional Development and the Leader of the Opposition want to interject on each other, they can do it some time when I am not trying to listen to Hon Samantha Rowe.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. I am glad that you are interested in what I have to say; it is great. I love it when you are in the chair.

I was talking about Armadale. Tony Buti has lobbied for some time to fix the level crossing at Denny Avenue because it is very dangerous and has been for some time.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: It's a shocker.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: It is. Apart from being dangerous because the boom gates are down more than they are up, which is dangerous in itself, it also means that traffic flow comes to a complete standstill. This is not helpful at a time when we all know that congestion is a huge problem for not only metropolitan areas, but also regional areas.

Hon Colin Tincknell: There should not be any boom gates in metropolitan areas.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: That is right; there should not be any boom gates. I thank Hon Colin Tincknell for that interjection. It is important because it puts a lot of pressure on the flow of local traffic.

Hon Alison Xamon: It does, yes.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I am getting support from everywhere; this is incredible! Who would have thought, Mr Deputy President?

Hon Darren West: You're very popular as well!

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I am not as popular as Tony Buti, but that is okay.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Or as popular as the former member for Armadale.

Hon Darren West interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: No, but he might like to think so!

It is a serious issue and Tony Buti has lobbied for quite some time to fix the level crossing at Denny Avenue. Even a survey that was undertaken by the RAC confirmed Denny Avenue as being one of the most dangerous roads in the metropolitan region.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: It's in the top 10.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: It was voted the most dangerous.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Was it, really?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: According to the RAC, yes; there you go. The previous government took no action on this dangerous level crossing. As I said, in peak times, the boom gates are down more than they are up. During the recent election campaign, WA Labor made a commitment to address the dangerous level crossing. Since being elected, it has made a commitment to prioritise fixing the 31 level crossings in the metro region. I think that is a fantastic commitment for a government to make. It will make a real difference to the safety of these roads and also traffic flow and congestion, which, for many years, has been a huge concern for many Western Australians. I will not go too much down the path of traffic and congestion because my colleague Hon Alanna Clohesy already touched on that, but I want to refer to some of the great financial commitments that we are making in the East Metropolitan Region. We made some major infrastructure commitments in Armadale. One of the other commitments we made in Armadale was to dual Armadale Road through to the Kwinana Freeway. Again, this will have huge flow-on effects for traffic flow, congestion and, of course, safety. In line with that, we made a commitment to build the Armadale Road bridge. I think it will have a great affect by opening the south eastern corridor and linking the suburbs. That is a great outcome for our regions in Western Australia. The new Minister for Transport has committed to these really great infrastructure projects, which I am really pleased about.

Not all projects come with a huge price tag. Sometimes, the small commitments made in communities can also have very powerful effects on how communities come together and what they are able to achieve in each area. During the election campaign, we made large commitments and we also made some smaller commitments in the East Metro Region. I would like to briefly touch on what some of those commitments were because I think they will have really positive outcomes for the East Metro Region.

Hon Michael Mischin: Will you take an interjection?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Sure.

Hon Michael Mischin: You have convinced us that we should pass the Supply Bill; there is no need to continue to filibuster on it to fill up time today!

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I am absolutely happy to take the interjection, Mr Deputy President.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I am not happy about the level of interjection or some of the audible conversations around the chamber. Members might just like to listen to Hon Samantha Rowe.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: As I said at the beginning when I rose to make my contribution, I wanted to be able to place on the record, Hon Michael Mischin, some of the really great achievements and commitments that we made for the East Metropolitan Region—the region I represent. With the member's indulgence, we are debating the Supply Bill and this is the appropriate forum to be able to do that. I will continue to do that, but thank you, Mr Deputy President, for your guidance on the interjections. I am happy to take them.

As I was saying, I want to go through some of the smaller commitments that were made during the election campaign. I will start with Belmont and I also want to touch on some of the commitments that were made in the electorate of Forrestfield, if I have time. I think some of the commitments came about not because we want to force them onto communities or people, but because we, on the Labor side, believe in engaging with and listening to communities. We did not just pluck these commitments out of thin air; they came from the communities that we represent. In Belmont, for example, we doorknocked around 16 000 homes and we phoned nearly 40 000 residents. We listened to what they were looking for in their communities, what they wanted in their schools and what they wanted to get out of public transport. We asked whether the health system was working for them. We asked questions, listened to the answers and engaged. We held community street corner meetings and community forums and we listened. From that, we were able to go to our communities and offer some of these, sometimes quite small, financial commitments. Small commitments can make a real difference to the various organisations and not-for-profits that I am talking about. A not-so-small commitment that we made in Belmont was for a \$7 million state-of-the-art performing arts centre for the students of the only government local high school in the electorate, Belmont City College. Believe it or not, Belmont City College has ATAR students who specialise in music and drama. This is something that the students will receive great benefit from. These facilities will not just be used by the local high school students. Students from all the surrounding primary schools will also have access to this performing arts centre. When the high school is not using the performing arts centre, the local primary schools will be able to use it for their own drama classes and other purposes. Not only that, but the local community will be able to use the arts centre when it is not being used by the schools. This is a project that will not only primarily benefit the local high school, but also have a wider attraction for the Belmont community in general. It is great that this state-of-the-art facility could be a hub, if you like, for not-for-profits, different organisations and school students to use. It will give young people, in particular, an interest and something to do locally. It could form part of a hub for the electorate of Belmont. The WA Labor Mark McGowan government is pleased that we were able to make that commitment in the seat of Belmont.

We also made some local commitments on a smaller scale. One of those commitments was for barbecue services at one of the local parks, Selby Park in Redcliffe. For members who are not aware, it is a beautiful park in Redcliffe. It has a beautiful playground, but has no barbecue facilities, so residents contacted us and said that it would be great to have those facilities available and that it might make the park a little bit more user-friendly. That will not cost an arm and a leg; it will not bankrupt us. It is a small investment of around \$50 000 so that, hopefully, those who live near Selby Park in Redcliffe will be able to utilise it to its best potential.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: It's low cost for families.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: It is low cost for families and is a great way to get free entertainment. Young families, particularly in summer—but this winter weather that we are having is so mild—can take the kids down to the park on weekends. It is a beautiful open green space with beautiful play equipment and in due course there will be barbecue facilities for people to use. We are really pleased about that small commitment that we were able to make for that area.

We also made a commitment to the Belmont Men's Shed. I think that everyone in the chamber would agree that the men's shed association does wonderful work for its communities. It does important work and we want to make sure that it thrives. Men's health is a big issue and something that we definitely want to be able to support when we can. We made an approximately \$20 000 commitment so that the Belmont Men's Shed could have more of the woodwork machinery that is required for it to do all the things it does. It does some really great things. I have seen some of the work it has been able to do with woodwork for signage. I have a lot to do with the Belmont Sports and Recreation Centre. It has done some lovely signage for the Belmont Bowling Club. I think that the government should do anything it can do, within reason, to support these organisations and not-for-profits. I think that we have a responsibility as a government and as members of Parliament to make sure that these organisations are given every opportunity to thrive and to encourage people to participate.

Hon Donna Faragher: Can I ask what program that falls under in terms of funding? I agree that Men's Shed and other organisations like that deserve significant support. It is helpful to know from what programs—for example, the one that you have just referred to—that money is actually coming from so that we can, as members, inform other organisations.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: As we have said throughout the debate since we have been here in the last two weeks—we are now in the third week—all those details will be brought forward in the budget.

Hon Donna Faragher: I am not talking about the general budget. I am talking about a specific program.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Yes. I think that everyone is aware that we have different priorities of where we want to see funds allocated.

Hon Donna Faragher: I am not questioning that. I am questioning where the funds come from so when we have groups that come to us, they can seek those funds as well. Obviously, lots of people come to see us.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: The previous government had eight years to find funds —
Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! Hansard is probably battling a bit to understand what is being said and so am I. We will listen to Hon Samantha Rowe in silence.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Thank you, Mr Deputy President.

I also want to make comments about commitments that we made in Hazelmere and South Guildford. These were not things that we forced onto those communities. These were issues that were raised with us when we were at street corner meetings, doorknocking or speaking to the relevant local councils involved. One of the commitments we made was to upgrade Hazelmere Hall. Another was to upgrade a bridge that links South Guildford to Guildford. One of the reasons that residents wanted to see that bridge upgraded was that it floods during winter and is not usable. Clearly, residents want to be able to use the bridge in all weather conditions. We committed to upgrading the bridge so that residents who want to get from South Guildford to Guildford will be able to do so. It was really popular.

Hon Darren West: It was very popular.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: A lot of these things were popular, Hon Darren West.

I think it is really important that when we talk about the different groups in our communities we include our local sporting groups. We have a lot of local sporting groups in Belmont, as I am sure all members have in their different electorates. We have a local cricket club, the Belmont Cricket Club, and a football team, the Belmont Bombers, that require funding. The Belmont Bombers needed extra lighting. The team trains at Forster Park, which does not have enough lighting at the moment for them to train all year round. We made a commitment to have some extra lighting put in so that the players will be able to train at night.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: No, that is where the cricket club is. Peet Park is where the cricket club is.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Not the junior football club?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: No, this is for the senior football club, the Belmont Bombers.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I know the member will understand if I interrupt debate just now. The President has asked that I interrupt debate a few minutes earlier than I otherwise would to advise you that there will be a special presentation to take place in the anteroom outside the chamber during our break. I look forward to the continuation of the remarks of the honourable member after question time, but at this point I will invite members who would like to join us for that presentation to do so and I will leave the chair until the ringing of the bells.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 1908.]

Sitting suspended from 4.10 to 4.30 pm

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL — OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPHS

Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust): Members, before you jump to your feet for question time, I ask that each of you turn and look at our photographer and he will take a series of photos. Then we will start question time.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE — RECRUITMENT

310. Hon PETER COLLIER to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the process underway to select the next Commissioner of Police.

- (1) What was the number of applicants for the position on 14 June 2017?
- (2) At the short list meeting on 14 June 2017, how many applicants were short-listed?
- (3) On what date was the short list expanded to 10?
- (4) Who made the decision to expand the short list?
- (5) Without identifying the individual candidates, on what dates were each of the 10 candidates notified they were on the short list?
- (6) Were any applicants informed they were unsuccessful in progressing to an interview and subsequently advised they would proceed to an interview?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The Public Sector Commission advises the following.

- (1) There were 11 applicants.
- (2) There were six applicants short-listed.
- (3) It was on 19 June 2017.
- (4) The panel agreed to expand to all candidates who met the criteria at the suggestion of the Public Sector Commissioner.
- (5) Six applicants were notified on 14 June, and four were notified on 19 and 20 June.
- (6) Yes.

PERTH STADIUM — PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

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

I refer to the government's decision to abandon the construction contract of the Perth Stadium footbridge.

- (1) What alterations to the original contract with York Rizzani Joint Venture has the government sought to make since coming to office?
- (2) On what date or dates were these requested alterations made?
- (3) What are the disputes between the York Rizzani Joint Venture and its Malaysian subcontractor?
- (4) When was the minister given advice that the original contract could not be fulfilled?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question.

- (1)–(2) The government has not abandoned the construction contract for the Perth Stadium footbridge. York Rizzani Joint Venture has recently terminated its subcontract with BES–Toyota Tsusho Joint Venture. As a result, agreement has been reached with York Rizzani Joint Venture to enter into a varied contract for the balance of the project work.
- (3) The subcontract was terminated by YRJV for non-performance. The details of the matters in dispute are a commercial matter between YRJV and its subcontractor, and the state has no liability arising from that decision.
- (4) Advice that original time lines could not be fulfilled was first given in October 2016.

METHAMPHETAMINE — MANDATORY MINIMUM SENTENCES

312. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment for certain methamphetamine offences.

- (1) Did the Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, say that Labor would match the mandatory jail terms proposed by the Liberals on Sunday, 5 February 2017, as reported on page 9 of *The West Australian* of Monday, 6 February 2017?
- (2) Did the Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, offer support to the proposal as reported by the ABC news on Sunday, 5 February 2017; and, if not, what did he mean when he said that he was “fine with what they’re saying” when asked about the Liberal commitment?
- (3) Did WA Labor match the Liberal promise as reported by then Channel Nine news reporter Josh Jerga on 7 February as one of the “Promises BOTH Liberal and Labor have committed to so far”?
- (4) If the Premier, when Leader of the Opposition, was not committing to matching the proposal for mandatory minimum sentences of imprisonment, why did he not correct those reports and any misunderstanding that might arise from such incorrect reportage, or was he content to mislead the public about his intentions in the lead-up to the election?
- (5) If he did so commit, why has he reneged on that commitment?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

As the honourable member should be well aware, questions in this place must relate to actions taken following the swearing in of a minister, not before.

EDUCATION — AGENCY AMALGAMATION

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

I refer to the amalgamation of the Department of Education, Department of Education Services and School Curriculum and Standards Authority that will take effect on 1 July 2017.

- (1) Will the School Curriculum and Standards Authority Board and committees continue to exist in their current form beyond 1 July 2017; and, if not, why not, and what will replace the board and committees?
- (2) What procedures have been put in place to ensure that the current responsibilities of the authority continue to operate independently of the Department of Education?
- (3) What procedures have been put in place to ensure the protection of data, particularly as it relates to student records across the government and non-government schools sector?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The functions and powers described in the School Curriculum and Standards Authority Act 1997 support and provide the necessary guidance around separation. The act and, therefore, the board of the authority and its functions will continue, and the chairperson and board will continue to advise the minister on matters that are covered by the act. Under the act, the authority is responsible for curriculum, standards, testing, examinations and certification from kindergarten to year 12, and for advising the minister about these matters. Further, the authority is responsible for advising the minister about arrangements between the state and commonwealth where they intersect with the functions of the authority. The director general of the Department of Education will, as of 1 July 2017, be appointed the chief executive officer of the authority. All staff currently employed by the authority will, as of this date, become employees of the Department of Education. These employees will be made available to the board to enable the authority to perform its functions. The board will delegate the performance of functions to an officer other than the CEO—namely, the executive director of school curriculum and standards. The executive director will work with the board and staff to ensure that all functions described in the act are fulfilled. This will include attending board meetings, providing support in relation to policy and functional decisions of the authority. The executive director will report to the director general on administrative matters relating to staff and budget. The delegations will establish a level of separation between public schools, the director general and the exercise of the powers and functions of the authority.
- (3) Authority data will continue to be stored in a separate environment and access under current arrangements will be maintained.

WA COLLEGES OF AGRICULTURE

314. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to the Western Australian colleges of agriculture.

- (1) Who is the current director of agricultural education and what is that person's tenure in the position?
- (2) Will the position of director of agricultural education continue whilst the minister is in her role?
- (3) Will the agricultural education farms provision trust fund continue to be supported by the minister?
- (4) How does the minister intend to support secondary agricultural education in Western Australia given record enrolments in 2017?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) The acting director of agricultural education is Mr Bernard Beatty. The position is currently being advertised through an expression of interest with tenure to 31 December 2017.
- (2) The Department of Education is in the process of amalgamating with the Department of Education Services and the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. The organisational structure for the new Department of Education will be established this year.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) All schools receive funding according to the number of enrolled students. As enrolments increase, so does the funding allocated to the school.

SHARK DETERRENT DEVICES — SUBSIDY

315. Hon RICK MAZZA to the minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the government's \$200 subsidy for 1 000 personal shark deterrent devices as part of the shark attack mitigation strategy.

- (1) Given that hundreds of thousands of Western Australians seek regular access to our beaches, why is the subsidy limited to 1 000 devices?
- (2) As the cost of the personal shark deterrent device is typically in excess of \$600, does the minister agree that the subsidy is therefore available only to wealthier Western Australians and their families?
- (3) Given that this subsidy is highly indicative of the government's confidence in the effectiveness and reliability of these devices, has the government sought legal advice on the state's exposure to claims for compensation should a subsidised device prove ineffective in a shark attack event?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The Minister for Fisheries has provided the following answer.

- (1) The shark deterrent subsidy was launched on 26 May 2017 as a trial and has been extremely popular, with 447 claims already made. The government will review this initiative before 1 000 rebate claims have been submitted and assess whether the scheme should be extended to help keep Western Australians as safe as possible when in the water.
- (2) No. The purpose of the \$200 trial subsidy was to make proven shark deterrent devices more affordable for all Western Australians.
- (3) I understand the Department of Fisheries has sought legal advice on the rebate scheme.

METHAMPHETAMINE BORDER FORCE

316. Hon CHARLES SMITH to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

Since its election the McGowan government seems to have forgotten that one of its political promises to the people of Western Australia was a \$60 million meth border force unit within WA Police.

- (1) How does the government intend to achieve this while Western Australia Police are already significantly under-resourced in terms of numbers of frontline police officers?
- (2) Will the government now commit to recruiting a significant number of new police officers to cope with the increasing requests for assistance and offences against the person, which are increasing at an alarming rate?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1)–(2) The McGowan government is fulfilling its election commitments. The government committed to an additional 100 officers for the meth border force and is delivering on this commitment through budgetary, operational and recruitment processes.

MINERAL RESOURCES LIMITED — HELENA AND AURORA RANGES

317. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to former Minister for Environment Albert Jacob's overruling of a 2015 Environmental Protection Authority decision to reject a proposal by Mineral Resources Limited to mine in the Helena and Aurora Ranges.

- (1) Given that the former minister overturned a decision by the EPA, will the minister now overturn the previous minister's decision and allow the EPA to be the independent regulatory authority it is supposed to be?
- (2) Does the minister support the EPA's restated opposition to Mineral Resources' proposal to mine the Helena and Aurora Ranges?
- (3) If no to (1) or (2), why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) The Environmental Protection Authority is an independent statutory authority and today publicly released its assessment report on the Jackson 5 and Bungalbin East iron ore project proposal.
- (2) As I will have a statutory decision to make regarding the proposal in the future, it would be inappropriate to make any comment at this time.
- (3) Not applicable.

TRANSPERTH — BUS ADVERTISEMENTS

318. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the minister's answer to my question without notice on 20 June 2017, in which he informed the house that four advertisements were displayed on the interior of Transperth buses in April.

- (1) Will he table a copy of those advertisements?
- (2) If yes to (1), when?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) I table the attached advertisements.
- (2) Not applicable.

[See paper 319.]

GOLDFIELDS HIGHWAY — EXTENSION

319. Hon KEN BASTON to the Minister for Regional Development:

The goldfields highway extension, which will provide a sealed road between Wiluna and Meekatharra, was identified as a priority project by the Mid West and Goldfields–Esperance Regional Blueprints. The completion of this important transport link between the Pilbara and goldfields received funding through royalties for regions in the 2016–17 *Government Mid-year Financial Projections Statement*. Will the Minister for Regional Development confirm that this long-awaited highway upgrade will be funded and is still due for completion in 2020?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for notice of the question. Given the extremely challenging fiscal circumstances, all royalties for regions projects are under review, in particular those that were made towards the end of the life of the last government. Decisions on individual projects will be made in the lead-up to the 2017–18 budget.

BUNBURY WATERFRONT DEVELOPMENT — BUSINESS CASE

320. Hon COLIN HOLT to the minister representing the Minister for Lands:

I refer to the Minister for Regional Development's answer to question without notice 163, answered on 13 June 2017, directing me to the Minister for Lands for further information on the business case for stage 3 of the Bunbury waterfront.

- (1) What is the expected cost of the business case?
- (2) What funding is being used to prepare the business case?
- (3) When will the business case be completed?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided by the Minister for Lands.

- (1) An amount of \$100 000 has initially been allocated.
- (2) It is LandCorp funding.
- (3) It will be completed in December 2017.

AGRICULTURAL REGION — DROUGHT RELIEF

321. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to the minister's answer to question without notice 262, in which she outlined the financial assistance measures for drought-stricken farmers.

- (1) Does the minister agree that the state government needs to do more than administer the commonwealth scheme?
- (2) Is the \$310 000 announced for the Regional Men's Health Initiative on 16 June 2017 additional to the \$800 000 a year outlined in the 2016–17 budget forward estimates?
- (3) Will the minister commit to supporting the Rural Financial Counselling Service WA?
- (4) If seasonal conditions do not improve, will the minister commit to additional funding for these organisations?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

- (1)–(4) I thank the member for the question. I want to make it very clear that I have never, ever suggested that our role was simply in administering the commonwealth scheme. What I was outlining in the answer to that particular question was the body of work that we had to do to ensure that our farmers have some access to the federal scheme, because as I underlined in a debate in the house last night, there is a great deal of uncertainty about the access that farmers can have to that scheme. I am pleased that we have already committed to an additional \$310 000 for the Regional Men’s Health Initiative. That was announced by the Minister for Health on 16 June. That is in addition to those funds that were already in the 2016–17 budget. Of course, we have always continued to support the Rural Financial Counselling Service since we introduced it in 1989. We are working very closely with the Department of Agriculture and Food and all the grower groups to constantly monitor the situation. If the seasonal conditions do continue to deteriorate, of course we will look at any further support that might be necessary.

“TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE” — STATE TRAINING BOARD

322. Hon ALISON XAMON to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to “Training for the Future”, which states —

A McGowan Labor Government will revamp the State Training Board and Industry Training Councils ...

- (1) Has the government begun progressing this commitment?
- (2) If yes to (1), what work has been undertaken?
- (3) Which organisations or individuals are being consulted?
- (4) If no to (1), why not?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1)–(2) I have met with the State Training Board and affirmed its role in providing me with independent advice on the skills needs for Western Australia. State Training Board members were pleased to have a minister at its meeting. In fact, I was later told that I am the first minister to attend a board meeting since 2011. I have specifically requested its views and proposed strategies to address the government’s plan for jobs. As part of this process, I have also requested the State Training Board to work with industry training councils to ensure the most effective industry advice is provided through those industry training councils. As part of the normal cycle of membership renewal, I will be announcing some new members to the State Training Board in the near future.
- (3) The State Training Board, industry training councils, UnionsWA and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia.
- (4) Not applicable.

LOGGING — BARRABUP FOREST

323. Hon DIANE EVERS to the minister representing the Minister for Forestry:

I refer to plans to log in Barrabup forest near Nannup.

- (1) Will the minister table all surveys and reports done on the Indigenous heritage or cultural significance of the area to be disturbed; and, if not, why not?
- (2) If no to (1), will the minister please list the title, author and date of all reports done?
- (3) Does the government intend to conduct or commission any on-ground surveys of the area to be disturbed to check for sites of cultural or archaeological significance?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) What steps is the government taking in response to reports of scar trees having been identified in the proposed harvest area?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for notice of the question. The Minister for Forestry has provided the following answer.

- (1)–(2) Indigenous heritage and cultural significance of an area is determined by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. There are seven heritage survey reports relating to the Barrabup forest area. In addition, the Forest Products Commission conducted an on-site assessment with representatives of the south west Boojarah native title claimant group. I table the attached note from the on-site meeting with the native title claimant group. For tabling of surveys and reports undertaken by the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, please refer the question to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

- (3) Yes, further assessment is currently being undertaken. The Forest Products Commission adheres to the advice of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in relation to Aboriginal cultural and heritage significant sites. The Forest Products Commission has also issued an activity notice in relation to the Noongar Standard Heritage Agreement for the activity proposed to be undertaken.
 - (4) Not applicable.
 - (5) The Forest Products Commission has deferred disturbance activities until further assessment is completed.
- [See paper 320.]

LOTTERYWEST — CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

324. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to answers (1)–(5) provided to my parliamentary question 306 asked yesterday, 27 June, concerning the termination of Mr Paul Andrew’s tenure as Lotterywest CEO.

- (1) Does the Premier think Mr Andrew was doing a good job as Lotterywest CEO?
- (2) Did the Premier or any of his staff, including Mr Foster at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, have a discussion with the Public Sector Commissioner, Mr Wauchope, about the tenure of Mr Andrew and/or the work of Lotterywest in the period between the formation of government and the 14 June 2017 meeting?
- (3) If yes to (2), what was discussed and when?
- (4) If no to (2), what led Mr Wauchope to understand the need to bring Mr Andrew’s contract to “an early end”?
- (5) Following the 14 June 2017 meeting, to whom within the Premier’s office and/or the Department of the Premier and Cabinet did Mr Wauchope report that Mr Andrew’s contract had been terminated and when was this advice provided?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1) Questions in this place may not seek an opinion.
- (2)–(3) Discussions were based around the relationship of Lotterywest with Lotterywest retailers.
- (4) As has been stated before, it was mutually agreed that Mr Andrew would step down from the role of CEO.
- (5) As advised in (4), Mr Andrew’s contract was ended by mutual agreement. Ms Rebecca Harris of the Public Sector Commission informed Mr Dave Coggin, office of the Premier, on 14 June 2017. The Public Sector Commissioner informed the Premier and his chief of staff on 15 June 2017.

POTABLE WATER USAGE

325. Hon JIM CHOWN to the minister representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to the fact that we are looking at the driest commencement to winter in recent years, and the possibility that the lack of winter rain will continue as forecast.

- (1) How severe will the summer period water restrictions be for home owners and businesses?
- (2) What percentage of potable water usage is attributed to domestic use?
- (3) What percentage of potable water usage is attributed to industrial use?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for asking this question, which is particularly apposite on this tenth anniversary of the opening of the first desalination plant in Western Australia. The Minister for Water has provided the following answer.

- (1) There are currently no plans for temporary summer restrictions beyond the permanent two-day-a-week sprinkler watering roster introduced in 2007.
- (2) Between July 2015 and June 2016, 80 per cent of potable water usage is attributed to domestic use. This is typical of previous years.
- (3) Between July 2015 and June 2016, 20 per cent of potable water usage is attributed to industrial use. This also is typical of previous years.

SOUTH WEST INTERCONNECTED SYSTEM — SOLAR PANELS

326. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Energy:

- (1) What was the total number of residential connections to solar panels in the south west interconnected system for 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016?
- (2) What is the total number of residential connections to solar panels in the south west interconnected system at the most recent date in 2017?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The answer to part (1) is in tabular form, so I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated —

(1)

YEAR	RESIDENTIAL CONNECTIONS TO SOLAR PANELS
2010	Numbers cannot be readily obtained due to the merger of Synergy and Verve Energy. Numbers may be able to be retrieved if more time is given through the parliamentary process.
2011	
2012	
2013	
2014	The total number of residential solar premises connected across the SWIS as at the end of the calendar year was 155,632.
2015	The total number of residential solar premises connected across the SWIS as at the end of the calendar year was 179,237.
2016	The total number of residential solar premises connected across the SWIS as at the end of the calendar year was 201,921.

- (2) The total number is 213 475 as at the end of May 2017.

GST DISTRIBUTION

327. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the responses to my question asked on 22 June 2017 regarding the issue of improving Western Australia's share of GST.

- (1) Since the election, when has the Premier discussed with the federal Leader of the Opposition, Mr Bill Shorten, the issue of improving WA's GST share?
- (2) Given the Premier's refusal to reveal any precise commitment made by Mr Shorten to improve WA's GST share, is that because Mr Shorten has made no commitment to do so?
- (3) If he has made a commitment to improve WA's GST share, what precisely was that commitment?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1)–(3) The Premier is focused on achieving a positive outcome for Western Australia on the GST distribution as soon as possible with the government currently in power at the federal level. The Premier will continue to fight for a better GST share for Western Australia and will and has engaged with anyone who will assist, whether the federal opposition, Western Australian business or anyone else.

MENTAL HEALTH CO-RESPONSE TRIAL

328. Hon ALISON XAMON to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to the government's trial of police and mental health co-response teams.

- (1) Given the demonstrated success of the teams, will the government continue to fund them?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) Will the government commit to rolling out the co-response model statewide?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) If yes to (3), when?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) The mental health co-response trial is co-funded and co-resourced by the Department of Health and WA Police. The trial is ongoing and will conclude in eight months. No comment regarding funding can be made until the trial has been evaluated.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3)–(5) The trial will be evaluated and will form part of the joint business case to government, at which time a decision will be made.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN — EXECUTIVE TRANSPORT SERVICE

329. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the government's austerity measures being implemented across the public service.

- (1) Is the Premier aware that it costs the state approximately \$2 million per annum to provide the executive transport service to his ministers and does he have that cost under review?
- (2) Is the Premier aware that it costs the state approximately \$7 million per annum to provide ministerial air charter services and does he have that cost under review?
- (3) If yes to (1) or (2), what action has the Premier taken to reduce or eliminate the costs mentioned?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1)–(3) Due to the financial recklessness of the previous Liberal–National government, all elements of government spending are constantly under review.

MARGARET RIVER GOURMET ESCAPE

330. Hon DIANE EVERS to the minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the Margaret River Gourmet Escape and question without notice 183 asked in this place on 14 June.

- (1) For each of the years for which figures are available, will the minister please provide —
 - (a) the total number of Western Australian food and wine brands showcased at the event;
 - (b) the total number of interstate food and wine brands showcased at the event; and
 - (c) the total number of international food and wine brands showcased at the event?
- (2) If figures showing this analysis are not available, why not, given the previous government, which signed a contract to sponsor this event, claimed it provided broad exposure to local produce?
- (3) In assessing whether to renew government sponsorship for this event beyond 30 November 2017, will the minister consider ways of increasing the number of local products and brands showcased at future versions of this event; and, if so, how?
- (4) Will increasing the number of local products and brands showcased at future versions of this event form part of negotiations with the event's operators about sponsorship renewal; and, if not, why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for notice of the question. Madam President, can I seek some guidance? I have the figures that the member has sought; they have been provided to me by the Minister for Tourism. But, obviously, it is going to take quite a long time to read out those, so I was wondering whether I could just have the information incorporated for (1) and (2) and I will answer (3) and (4).

The PRESIDENT: That is fine.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: I seek leave to incorporate parts (1) and (2) of the response into *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated —

-
- (1)–(2) The following number of food and wine brands were showcased at the Margaret River Gourmet Escape in each year:

2012 Event	
(a)	Western Australia food and wine brands = 120 (95.2%)
(b)	Interstate food and wine brands = 3 (2.4%)
(c)	International food and wine brands = 3 (2.4%)

2013 Event

- (a) Western Australia food and wine brands = 123 (91.8%)
- (b) Interstate food and wine brands = 4 (3%)
- (c) International food and wine brands = 7 (5.2%)

2014 Event

- (a) Western Australia food and wine brands = 151 (93.8%)
- (b) Interstate food and wine brands = 2 (1.2%)
- (c) International food and wine brands = 8 (5%)

2015 Event

- (a) Western Australia food and wine brands = 138 (92%)
- (b) Interstate food and wine brands = 4 (3.3%)
- (c) International food and wine brands = 7 (4.7%)

2016 Event

- (a) Western Australia food and wine brands = 114 (96.6%)
- (b) Interstate food and wine brands = 1 (0.9%)
- (c) International food and wine brands = 3 (2.5%)

- (3) Tourism WA will continue to work with the event holder to identify any ways in which additional benefit for Western Australian companies and the state can be derived from such events.
- (4) Maximising the number of local producers and brands and benefits to Western Australian suppliers will remain a key outcome of the negotiations.

RECREATIONAL FISHING LICENCES

331. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

The state government has recently announced it will increase the number of recreational fishing licences by 10 per cent from 8 July 2017. When the licence was introduced in 2009, the current Premier stated in the other place that the fee would —

... remove the pleasure for a lot of people and it will impose a cost on some people who will have difficulty affording it.

He further stated that the —

... breadth of my electorate will be unhappy with this fee that the government is imposing on them, as it will not do anything to preserve fish stocks; it will just rip money off people for no good reason.

With these comments in mind —

- (1) Does the minister concede that increases to this fee will “rip money off people for no good reason”?
- (2) Does the minister admit this increase will “impose a cost on some people who will have difficulty affording it”?
- (3) Is the minister concerned this fee increase will encourage recreational fishers to “get their money’s worth” and result in unsustainable fishing practices?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for notice of the question.

- (1) No. These fees were introduced by the previous Liberal–National government and are reinvested in recreational fisheries management, research, compliance and community projects. Of the total revenue, 15 per cent goes to Recfishwest, the peak body representing recreational fishers, and 25 per cent goes towards the recreational fishing initiatives fund to fund projects to provide better recreational fishing experiences, such as artificial reefs and rock fishing safety initiatives. The increase to the license fee is only \$5 and it has not been increased in the last seven years.
- (2) No. A 50 per cent discount is already provided to seniors, pensioner and children aged under 16 years. Fishers are also entitled to a further 10 per cent discount if they take out two or more licences.
- (3) No. The existing bag limits are widely accepted by recreational fishers as they know their value as one of the measures in place to ensure that we have quality and sustainable fisheries.

SYNERGY — COST TO SERVE

332. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Energy:

I refer the minister to his response to question without notice 190 asked on Thursday, 15 June 2017, in relation to Synergy's cost to serve for 2014–17 whereby he asked me to place the question on notice as the information could not be provided in the time available, and to his response to question without notice 218 asked on Tuesday, 20 June, which identified that the Synergy board receives briefings on cost to serve at all of its meetings.

- (1) Why could the information asked through question on notice 190 not be provided given that the Synergy board receives briefings on cost to serve at all of its board meetings?
- (2) Will the minister now provide the information requested by question without notice 190; and, if not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) The Synergy board receives briefings on current cost-to-serve information. Past board briefings and historical cost-to-serve numbers required considerable effort to extract and could not be confirmed within the time frames provided through the parliamentary process.
- (2) The information will be provided in response to Legislative Council question on notice 71.

MINISTERIAL OFFICES — STAFFING

333. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to questions I asked on 21 June and 27 June regarding the employment of journalists in ministerial offices.

- (1) What steps has the Premier taken to obtain the information that I have sought to obtain in my questions?
- (2) Why, in the interests of accountability, transparency and honesty does he not reveal the information I have sought regarding the engagement of journalists in ministerial offices?
- (3) Even if he is concerned the information will be incomplete, why does he not supply what he can?
- (4) Is he afraid that by revealing information people will conclude that those journalists are being rewarded with jobs for having demonstrated, when engaged by media organisations, a bias in favour of the Labor Party in their reporting on the Barnett government or in the lead-up to the election?

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Leader of the House, before you answer that, there has been a tendency over the last couple of rounds of question time for members to seek opinions. I know that on each occasion that has been responded to appropriately, but I think that last part of the question might be veering towards that. Perhaps people might like to think about how they structure their questions.

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

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

- (1)–(3) I have previously directed the honourable member to the ministerial resourcing report. Individuals' previous employment, especially in the case of former journalists, is a matter of public record.
- (4) The premise of the question is ridiculous and fails to recognise the deep and many failings of the previous Barnett Liberal–National government.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — INITIATIVES

334. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the answer to my question without notice on 15 June 2017 in which the Leader of the House informed the house that family and domestic violence reform commitments within the Attorney General's portfolio are being addressed. What are those commitments?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for the question and the notice given. Pre-election commitments relating to family and domestic violence within the Attorney General's portfolio are contained in WA Labor's "Stopping Family and Domestic Violence Policy", which I now table for the members' reference.

[See paper 321.]

PLASTIC BAGS — MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT'S COMMENTS

335. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the Minister for Environment's statement's yesterday regarding plastic bags that it is the government's intention to have a ban for 1 January 2019.

- (1) Please clarify this statement. Will a ban be in place or is the minister simply stating the good intentions of this government to consider bringing forward legislation on the matter by 1 January 2019?
- (2) Why is there such a long lead time for consideration by the government of this important issue?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

(1)–(2) The McGowan Labor government is committed to reducing the use of plastic bags. I have sought and received initial advice from Department of Environment Regulation on options to achieve such a reduction. That advice considered that it was likely that a ban on single-use plastic bags could be implemented through regulations made under the Environmental Protection Act 1986 and be in place by 1 January 2019. A vital part of change of this magnitude is the industry and community consultation. In the event that legal advice confirmed that a new act was the preferred mechanism for implementing a ban, I would move to develop a bill for Parliament's consideration as soon as practicable, and in any case by 1 January 2019.

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING — STAFF —
WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS**

Question on Notice 23 — Answer Advice

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Minister for Education and Training) [5.10 pm]: Pursuant to standing order 108(2), I wish to inform the house that the answer to question on notice 23 asked by Hon Nick Goiran on 24 May 2017 to me as the Minister for Education and Training will be provided on 15 August 2017.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Question time has finished. The Minister for Environment is about to provide an additional response and he has the call.

QUESTION ON NOTICE 36

Paper Tabled

A paper relating to an answer to question on notice 36 was tabled by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Environment)**.

SUPPLY BILL 2017

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.11 pm]: Before we broke for afternoon tea and question time, I was making my contribution to the second reading debate of the Supply Bill 2017. During afternoon tea we made a presentation to Lorraine Coogan, so I will say a big thankyou to Lorraine for all her hard work during her time in this place. She has given almost 20 years of service to the Parliament of Western Australia. She did an outstanding job. She was always professional and very generous with her time. I just wanted to take this opportunity to quickly say a big thankyou to her.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Hear, hear!

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: All members in this chamber wish her all the very best in whatever the future may hold for her.

Hon Donna Faragher: Hear, hear!

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Before we broke for afternoon tea and question time, I was making a contribution about some of the commitments we made to the East Metropolitan Region during the election campaign. I had made some comments about Armadale and the great things we are doing around infrastructure in that electorate.

Hon Martin Aldridge: Tell us how many jobs a barbecue will create.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: That is typical! Members opposite had eight years in government and where did they leave us? With the highest unemployment and the worst management of the state's finances —

Hon Alanna Clohesy: Ever!

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: — in the history of Western Australia. The jobless rate skyrocketed. It is not only me saying this; we spent so much time during this campaign actually talking to people. We spoke to everyone in our community and our constituents to find out what they were concerned about. Do members know what the number one issue was? Jobs.

Hon Martin Aldridge interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: They were concerned about jobs and the economy, and that is understandable. It is really understandable, is it not?

Several members interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: Why is it understandable? Because —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Matthew Swinbourn): Do not take advantage of the changing of people in the Chair to carry on.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: I think they will do it anyway!

People, quite rightly, were concerned about jobs and the state of the finances, because they had seen the last eight years under this government and what it had done to the economy. Of course people are nervous and concerned about job security, whether it be in full-time or part-time work. So, yes, these were real concerns. I got distracted because I was going through the commitments —

Several members interjected.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: It is great to see the National Party involved!

I wanted to go through what we are doing in the great electorate of East Metropolitan Region. Before we stopped for afternoon tea and question time, I was talking about some of the things we are doing in Belmont. I just want to close off on that, and of course talk about some of the other areas in the East Metro Region.

I was talking about some of the sporting clubs in the electorate of Belmont, including the Belmont Junior Soccer Club. It currently trains at Miles Park in Belmont, which is a really lovely facility. It is junior soccer, so the kids are quite young—under five years old—and there is no fencing to keep the kids off some of those really busy roads, particularly Wright Street. The soccer club was really excited to have funding committed to putting a fence around the busiest part of that park. Kids aged under five playing soccer may be a little less road-safety conscious than older kids, and of course we do not want them playing near busy, sometimes dangerous, roads. That club was very pleased to receive a commitment for some fencing around Miles Park.

We also made a commitment to the Belmont Park Tennis Club for the resurfacing of its hardcourts that had seriously deteriorated over the years. Belmont Part Tennis Club is so popular that people travel from Mt Lawley to play at the local tennis club. It is a really lovely facility. I think it has some of the best grass courts in the region. I am really pleased to be able to support that tennis court in the resurfacing its hardcourts.

We also made a commitment to a smaller junior football club in Redcliffe, and assisted it with some lighting for its training grounds. That means the players will be able to train during the winter months because it gets dark earlier now, at around five o'clock. Again, that club is really pleased to have that. It was only a small contribution, but it goes a long way for some of these community groups and sporting clubs within our electorates. A lot of the organisations within our communities are run by volunteers. I think it is great that we are able to give back to our communities in that way, and support the volunteers who give up their time to make sure that we have these community groups in our electorates. I am really pleased to be able to support them.

We also made a number of commitments to local schools. Before the break, I spoke about what we will be doing with the Belmont City College performing arts centre. We are very excited about that. But we were also able to make some commitments to primary schools. Those commitments ranged from upgrading hardcourts for netball or basketball to providing shade cloths so that they have cover in the summer and winter months and also to things around nature playgrounds. We all know they are very popular nowadays in local schools. I was very pleased to be able to make those commitments to the local primary schools.

Apart from these commitments, many commitments were also made in the Forrestfield electorate. Again, they were for local schools in that electorate and some local sporting clubs and organisations. I want to touch on a group called FIRS, the Foothills Information and Referral Service. I have had a chance to speak about FIRS previously in this place when we were in opposition. It does an outstanding job in that electorate but it is very underfunded; they are just volunteers. We were able to commit \$50 000 so it can upgrade its office. The organisation has serviced families and individuals within the Shire of Kalamunda since 1992. It provides vital financial counselling services and emergency relief services for that catchment area. It is very important work for our communities. It does an outstanding job and is run by many volunteers. FIRS was hit particularly hard during the previous government's term when cuts were made to funding for financial counselling services. It

really struggled to stay afloat, but it is still going strong. It is always inundated with a huge amount of work, so we are really pleased to support this very important group within the Shire of Kalamunda. It is based in Forrestfield and it does wonderful work. I know that the new member for Forrestfield, Stephen Price, is really pleased to be working closely with this group.

Commitments were also made to different primary schools in the Forrestfield electorate. I will not go through them all, but I want to comment on one, Wattle Grove Primary School. For members who know the school, it desperately needed upgrades to its parking facilities for parents of students who attend the school. Funding of \$150 000 will be provided to the school for the upgrades. A lot of the parking bays will be put along St John Road in Wattle Grove. I think having parking space available will have a huge impact for the parents and students who travel to the school in peak times. It was a real concern for many parents when we attended the meetings of the parents and citizens association. Again, we are really pleased that we will be able to give back to those communities.

I will not go through every single commitment that was made in the East Metro Region but I think you get an idea, Mr Acting President, of what we were able to do in our communities because we listened. I am really proud to stand here under a Mark McGowan Labor government and deliver some of these commitments.

Hon Peter Collier: You haven't delivered them yet.

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE: We are in the process of delivering the commitments. I am sorry, Leader of the Opposition, but it is happening. I am really proud that we are making these commitments. Some of them are large and some of them are small, but each of them is important to the communities we represent. That concludes my remarks on the Supply Bill.

HON PIERRE YANG (South Metropolitan) [5.23 pm]: I rise today to make some remarks on and support the Supply Bill 2017 before us. I have no doubt that over the past three and a half sitting weeks members have learnt that I have a particular interest in the issue of homelessness. I hope that a big portion of the moneys in the Supply Bill will be spent on delivering the critical services to provide for the Western Australians who are, unfortunately, homeless. After hearing Hon Dr Steve Thomas's remarks yesterday, I think Dr Thomas is a very sensible man and that his remarks were very sensible. I welcome and encourage sensible debate on the issues that are critical to our state and the people of Western Australia.

As members may recall, last Thursday during members' statements, I informed the house that I was taking part in the CEO Sleepout. When I arrived there at about 6.00 pm on Thursday last week, I saw about 100 other people who attended the event, including the chief executive officer of the St Vincent De Paul Society, Susan Rooney. Her name is spelled "Susan" but it is pronounced "Suzanne". She also participated in the sleepout. The Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; and Community Services, Hon Simone McGurk, also attended the event as part of the launch. I can show the house a beanie—a hat—that I was given when I arrived to keep myself warm. On one side is written, "Vinnie's Sleepout" and on the other side is "I Slept Out". It is a good hat. It has a liner inside so it kept me pretty warm that evening. Over the last few sitting weeks, I have learnt that, from time to time, members seek leave to incorporate items into *Hansard*. From looking at the hat, I think it will impose some technical difficulties to include it in *Hansard*, so I will not seek leave to include my hat.

Hon Martin Aldridge: You can table it!

Hon PIERRE YANG: Can I table it?

Hon Martin Aldridge interjected.

Hon PIERRE YANG: Really?

Hon Stephen Dawson: No.

Hon PIERRE YANG: Okay. Thank you very much, Hon Martin Aldridge!

Hon Stephen Dawson: He's leading him astray!

Hon PIERRE YANG: I will move on to the next point, in any event, but I thank the minister.

Collectively, we raised over \$6 375 through my campaign and about half the money was from members of this Parliament. I thank the members who showed their support and those who donated to the event.

A few days ago I had a conversation with Hon Jacqui Boydell and shared with her my experience at the Vinnies CEO Sleepout. I told her that I was with a gentleman who had participated in the sleep-out for the last eight years. He knows the WACA inside out. We went to a place that was fairly cosy—reasonably warm—and we had a reasonable night. Being in the Army Reserve for 10 years, I had many, many nights and days running around in the bush, so I certainly know and have experienced firsthand how cold it can get in Perth and different parts of Australia for people sleeping without a roof over their heads. Hon Jacqui Boydell mentioned to me that perhaps in future years we should look at having a similar event in regional areas. I had a look at the event's website.

Apart from the capital cities across Australia, there are events in Newcastle, Wollongong and Launceston and one on the Gold Coast. I can see that it is a good idea to have one in regional Western Australia because I believe that the issue of homelessness is not restricted to metropolitan Perth.

The state is going through a difficult time economically and all parts of the state have been affected. This issue affects the state across the board, not just in metropolitan Perth or the electorate of South Metropolitan Region.

I met four people from Geraldton. They had driven all the way from Geraldton the day before, or maybe on the day of the event arriving before it started, participated in the sleep-out—they slept rough and looked pretty cold when I saw them in the morning, certainly colder than I was—put in their hard work and then drove all the way to Geraldton the next morning. My family and I have been to Geraldton a number of times. I must say that it is a beautiful place. I love the light tower and the seafood is particularly delicious. Those people who drove all the way to Perth showed their commitment to the sleep-out, and I fully support having a CEO sleep-out event in a regional centre.

I would like to thank members of the Labor Party, the Liberal Party, the Greens, the National Party and Pauline Hanson's One Nation for their support. Members of all parties chipped in and supported us in this event. From the bottom of my heart, I thank them all for their assistance. When I was at the event, the organisers told me that donations can be accepted until August, so members who are willing to support us still have plenty of time to make their donation. Moneys raised will go to the St Vincent de Paul Society to be spent on good and critical services to provide food, emergency accommodation and other services to those Western Australians who are unfortunately homeless.

From the support I have seen over the past couple of months from across the political spectrum, I think that we are incredibly lucky to live in a great democracy. We have different views but we come to this place to make our contribution with the same aim: we want to make the state a better place. We do not necessarily agree with each other all the time, and over the past couple of months, across three and half sitting weeks, we have divided a number of times. We do not all agree on all the issues all the time, but that is okay, because we live in a democracy; we live in a free country. I think we are truly lucky and believe that all members come to this place for the right reason: to try to make Western Australia a better place.

I want to raise another issue on homelessness. People who come across a homeless person may react in a certain way. Some people may think about why people become homeless and why they stay homeless. We are not in their shoes and we do not know what they have gone through and therefore we should not judge them. On one of my internet social media posts letting people know that I would be participating in the sleep-out, a particular post came back under the item simply stating that the people looked very healthy. I can deduce and infer from that post that the person was saying that if these people were healthy enough, why not get jobs. A lot of us in the community say that we need to be resilient; we need to rise up, dust ourselves off, get on with life and make the best of the situation we are in. Some people may think that way. However, in a speech to honourable members of this house last week, I referred to a gentleman who had had a very unfortunate childhood. He and his family were involved in an accident and unfortunately all his family died. He became a ward of the state, received very little education in his teenage years, became homeless when he was a young adult and stayed homeless for the next few decades.

People react to traumas and traumatic events differently. Life events happen that sometimes bring very unfortunate results, such as family changes or family members passing away, and other people go through family and domestic violence. There is something about the human mind in that if people are conditioned in a certain way, they will react differently. I want to share a little about my Army Reserve experience. I was in the Army Reserve for 10 years and did many training weekends, sometimes training away from home for weeks in the bush. I have had many sleepless nights. As I mentioned to the house, I would go through a cold night and get out of my sleeping bag in the morning after maybe five, four, three or even two hours' sleep and get on with the job, but I would remember what was happening around me. I would remember the smell of the vegetation around me on a cold morning. During June, on a few occasions when I was leaving my home in the morning, I would smell the trees and my lawn and for a split second the feeling brought me back to my Army days. I would then come back and open the gate on my fence, get into the car and get on with my daily routine. Although it was for only a very short time, I was in my body but my mind was elsewhere. My experience in the Army Reserve was a rewarding one, but when I was in that condition, I reacted in a certain way. I can certainly appreciate that people who go through very difficult periods in their lives can be affected mentally. Every person does and will react differently to events in their life, which will play a big part in their future.

I now want to share a story I heard on Thursday last week about a gentleman by the name of Lex. He is a Western Australian. He grew up in a middle-class family and went to a prestigious all-boys college. He had a pretty good start to life; however, his mother suffered from very serious mental health issues and when he was a boy, he was mentally and physically abused by her. He was passionate about rowing and that was his way to get out of the situation, so to speak. He participated in the school rowing team; he trained very hard and he loved it. However, on one occasion during a rowing competition final, I think, between schools, he was pulled aside

from his team by his mother, so he could only watch his teammates go on to win the competition while he was there sitting on the sidelines. He went through a very difficult time in his childhood because of his mother's mental health issues. He could not stay home anymore and he decided to leave home at the age of 16 years. I left home when I was 15 and a half years old, but I did not leave because I could not stay at home anymore; I left home because my parents wanted me to have a better education and so I came here to Australia. I had no worries in terms of financial backing because my parents supported me financially and paid my school fees and living expenses. I had some friends and relatives around me, so I was incredibly lucky leaving home at an early age compared with Lex. When he left home, he had to rely on himself. He managed to get some gainful employment in Darwin, and then moved to Townsville and then on to Sydney. Unfortunately, from time to time he had to spend his nights squatting in warehouses and living on the streets around Kings Cross. He was introduced to drugs and became a drug and alcohol addict. Several years later he moved back to Perth and wanted to change his life. He started a family and worked as a fly in, fly out worker. I think he had two children and he wanted to support his family by bringing in all the money he could generate. Unfortunately, his marriage fell apart, he lost all the money and he became homeless again. But for the services provided to Lex, he may not be alive today. I just wanted to share Lex's story to show that someone's upbringing or a traumatic event they have experienced at some stage of their life can have an overwhelming impact on their future. We are not in their shoes. We do not know how we would react if we went through the same tough stuff that they had been through.

There is a program showing on SBS today, which started yesterday, that is a special three-part series called *Filthy Rich and Homeless*. It shows five wealthy Australians who are participating in a 10-day experience of homelessness in Melbourne. As we all know, at this time of the year Melbourne is pretty cold. They basically moved from a privileged wealthy position to having nothing. They had absolutely nothing and they were moving and roaming on the streets of Melbourne. That was a life-changing experience for them. I encourage every member to watch the program. I am sure they can see the episode broadcast yesterday on the SBS website. I was having a quick look at the program's launch on Thursday last week and there was a short preview. A person on the show mentioned a homeless person who had had a very tough life. He was resilient and still soldiering on in his life; despite all the things that had happened in his life and were now affecting him, he was still soldiering on. The person participating in this experience said that he had never had anything like that happen in his life and he would probably not react in such a resilient way as this homeless person had these things happened to him.

It is good to see you in the chair again, Mr Deputy President. The more we talk about this issue, the more awareness we can generate. I certainly think it will help us to better look at ways to address this issue and help those Western Australians who unfortunately are struggling at this stage. I also thank the members who have expressed an interest in participating in next year's CEO sleep-out, in particular, Hon Colin Tincknell and Hon Robin Scott, who have had conversations with me about participating in next year's event. I thank them for their interest and I certainly hope that in 2018 we can have a parliamentary team participate in the event to generate more funding for the cause.

This issue will not be resolved overnight. It needs a lot of attention. We should all be part of the conversation and hopefully the solution. I do not have a magic solution, but I am willing to continue to bring this matter back to the house and to the attention of the government. I will continue to advocate on this issue. With that, I conclude my remarks.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.48 pm]: Thank you, Mr Deputy President; I note your enthusiasm in giving me the call and I promise to make this contribution worthy of that enthusiasm! We are now faced with the Supply Bill 2017. I note that we have passed two pieces of legislation in the Parliament in these two sitting sessions. The Loan Bill was passed. There were some immense contributions, enormous intellectual contributions, made by various members of the house and the bill duly passed. We also managed to finally clear up the Constitution Amendment (Demise of the Crown) Bill 2017, which is not what many of us thought or hoped it might be, but has to do with the passing of the monarch. That requirement has been hanging around for about 20 years and the McGowan Labor government got it through the house in about 15 minutes. We are now on to the Supply Bill and that is terrific. Today I want to talk briefly, because members may be aware that I have been quite unwell and have had some time away from Parliament. On one of those occasions I was unable to deal with some of the issues I wanted to talk about during the Address-in-Reply. I will talk about those issues because they relate to the Supply Bill; there are some very important issues both in my electorate and across the Parliament.

Over the past five weeks I have been very impressed watching the new members of Parliament. I say this because I have just sat and taken in the contribution of Hon Pierre Yang. How refreshing it is to have Hon Pierre Yang in Parliament with us. He brings diversity, he is a very intelligent man and he makes enormous contributions to both our party and the Parliament. It was a terrific gesture by Hon Pierre Yang to participate in the CEO sleep-out. I was delighted to be able to make a contribution to the fundraising effort. I understand that it was very successful and that over \$6 000 was raised. What a terrific thing for Hon Pierre Yang to do in his very early days as a parliamentarian, and what an example it is for everyone else.

That is not to take away from the other new members of Parliament, because it is terrifying when we first come into Parliament. I remember only four years ago feeling the same way myself. I very clearly remember my inaugural contribution, and standing up and coming to the terrifying realisation that everything we say in here is recorded for all time by the magnificent efforts of the Hansard reporters. We can look back 100 years and see what happened in Parliament. I found that quite overwhelming. It is a difficult role for new MPs, but they are making a great fist of it right across the house and that can only benefit Parliament.

Hon Laurie Graham is away today on urgent parliamentary business. He is at the celebrations, welcoming the new bishop for the diocese of Geraldton, Father Michael Morrissey, who has been a priest in Geraldton. He grew up on a station in the Mt Magnet–Yalgoo area, and what a story he has, because now he is Bishop Michael of the archdiocese of Geraldton. He takes over from Bishop Justin Bianchini. What a wonderful man Bishop Justin is, and what a terrific job he has done in his role as bishop. I look forward to keeping in contact with Bishop Justin as he becomes an emeritus bishop, and enjoys his retirement. I am sure it will not be full-blown retirement, because I know Bishop Justin quite well and I am sure that he will be doing a lot of good work in the community. It is great to have Hon Laurie Graham in Parliament with us. As members would have heard from his inaugural speech, Laurie is an icon of the Geraldton community. He managed the expansion of the port of Geraldton for many years in the old-fashioned way when we ran ports with the interests of the community and the workers in mind, which is a far cry from what we find today. I will touch on that a little bit later. Laurie has been involved as a city councillor in the City of Greater Geraldton and also as a councillor for the Shire of Greenough; he was also its deputy president. He was chairman of the Midwest Development Commission and has played a major role in his community, and now he gets to represent the Agricultural Region in Parliament. That is a wonderful story. I think Laurie had pretty much given up on the dream after he was the unsuccessful candidate for Labor for the seat of Geraldton in the 1996 election, but he dramatically cut the margin and we were able to win that seat in 2001. It is great to have him here.

It is great to have another 20-something in Hon Kyle McGinn. We have two 20-somethings in the Parliament, which adds to the flavour and diversity of Parliament because the young people are our future. It is great to have Hon Kyle McGinn here with us. I am sure he will do a sterling job in representing the Mining and Pastoral Region. The region needed another Labor representative. It was such a massive area for Hon Stephen Dawson to manage on his own, but now we have two Labor members for the Mining and Pastoral Region. It is great also to have Hon Matthew Swinbourn. As members heard from him, he brings a new life experience to the Parliament. It is important that we have members of Parliament who have been out in the community, carrying out good work doing their job and then bringing that experience to add to the flavour of Parliament. Let us be honest: we are here to represent the electorate. They are the Labor members and I am pleased to work with them on a variety of levels. It is great to have an increase in the number of Labor members. It almost reflects the view of the community in the recent state elections in which Labor was elected by a thumping landslide in March. New members have come in and obviously we have had a couple of members who have moved on, but it is great to have the new Labor members in the house with us.

We also have some new members on the crossbench. I have got to know some of them and I look forward to working more with them in the future. Hon Alison Xamon sits next to me and teases me during debates. It is great to have Hon Tim Clifford with us as well. He is another younger member.

Hon Alison Xamon: I'm young too. I'm very young.

Hon DARREN WEST: You are young too, Hon Alison Xamon. It is great to have Hon Tim Clifford as well and I have enjoyed the contributions of both of these members to the Parliament so far. Hon Diane Evers—I think I pronounced that correctly—is also a new member. The Greens have certainly been an avid group, asking questions and engaging in debate, which is what this is all about. Hon Dr Steve Thomas is also an enthusiastic new member. He has just popped out on urgent parliamentary business, but I have watched a bit of Parliament over the last couple of weeks and have noted him on my screen on several occasions. Often when he gets up, I find myself turning the sound up to hear what he has to say. He certainly has been a very enthusiastic new member and has engaged in the debate, especially on the Loan Bill and the Supply Bill. He has led the charge on those. I have not had a lot to do with Hon Tjorn Sibma yet, but I look forward to doing so and note that he has also been an enthusiastic questioner. That is important in fulfilling his role to hold the government to account. We did not find it very hard to hold the previous government to account, because they were awful members. Hopefully the opposition's job will be far more difficult than ours was.

Hon Rick Mazza: You're thrilled to see me back, of course.

Hon DARREN WEST: Of course, Hon Rick Mazza. One of the first things I checked when the announcements were made about who was elected was whether Hon Rick Mazza was back—my fellow member for the Agricultural Region. Of course I was thrilled to see him back, along with Hon Martin Aldridge sitting beside him. I am thrilled to see both of them back.

We also have a true crossbench this time in Parliament. The voters have chosen a diverse and talented crossbench. Before turning to them, I note that also on my list is the Nationals member and fellow former

farmer, Hon Colin de Grussa, who has engaged in debate and picked up his role well in representing the Agricultural Region. He brings a wealth of experience to the house from the south eastern wheatbelt around the Esperance area. It is a very productive and prolific area that generates a lot of income for Western Australia. It certainly has been a success story in the past 30 to 40 years since much of that land was cleared. It is interesting to note that the land in the Ravensthorpe–Esperance area was some of the last to be cleared in Western Australia, some of it as late as the 1980s. That country's produce and the amount of grain that goes out through the beautiful port of Esperance is something to behold. It is great to have Hon Colin de Grussa here with us because he knows a little about farming. I am pleased that the National Party has sought to preselect someone with farming experience. That is a very rare occurrence these days, but it is great to have Hon Colin de Grussa here.

Hon Aaron Stonehouse is a bit of an enigma in this place. I do not believe that a Liberal Democrat has ever been elected to the Western Australian Parliament.

Hon Alison Xamon: Or to any state Parliament.

Hon DARREN WEST: Is that right? Not to any state Parliament as well? Of course, we have a federal representative of that party. Someone who is so young, at the age of 26, comes across as a man much more experienced than his years. It has been a pleasure working with Aaron so far. I am not quite sure about everything that he believes but that is the beauty of Parliament.

If everyone agreed with me, it would be fantastic, but not everyone does, and I understand that. Hon Aaron Stonehouse has made some contributions that we sit up and take notice of and has brought a different view into the house with his beliefs and libertarian views. That is great and if that is what people wanted, that is great. Of course, the One Nation members are new, although there have previously been One Nation members. It is great to have Colin Tincknell, Robin Scott and Charles Smith in the chamber with us and I look forward to their contributions over the next four years. I have noticed that they are their own characters and certainly have made some interesting contributions to the debates we have had so far. I look forward to working with them further because we are all here for the same reason—to make things better. We have a bit to sort out in the first year or two. However, we all hope that after our first term—in their case—and second term in my case or the fifty-eighth term or whatever number of terms Hon Simon O'Brien has been here. I do not think it is quite that many but it is a lot, as father of the house. I think we all want to see the state's economy in a better position than when we found it. I think that is the common interest we all share. Whatever we can do or advocate for, we all should and we all will. That is most important.

I really enjoyed the inaugural speeches. It is a tradition of the house that members sit in silence and not interject. It reminds me of my inaugural speech during which there were two interjections. I am not sure whether it is a good or a bad thing.

Hon Martin Aldridge: You're special!

Hon DARREN WEST: I might be special, yes, in many ways. I am a student of political history and it is no secret that my political hero is Whitlam, who also had two interjections in his inaugural speech, so I feel quite privileged and chuffed about that. It is interesting to listen to inaugural speeches and hear the life stories of those who have come into Parliament. They are all fascinating because I am a lover of people and I love to hear about their experiences. I hear fascinating stories from people with migrant backgrounds who grew up in sheds and experienced tough environments and very different lifestyles. As I said earlier, they reflect the broader community. I encourage members because it is really interesting—I know we are all busy—to read some of the inaugural speeches of members who have been in the house longer than we have. I commented to Hon Jim Chown last night that I have read his inaugural speech.

Hon Jim Chown: Most enlightening.

Hon DARREN WEST: I found it interesting because there are a few abandoned principles there, but I read his inaugural speech. I have not read them all but I will.

Hon Jim Chown: I haven't read yours and I don't intend to.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Now he's being nice and you had to be nasty.

Hon Jim Chown: I'm not being nasty; I'm just being factual.

Hon DARREN WEST: Hon Jim Chown listened in silence to my inaugural speech. I can remember him hanging on every word. He was sitting over here somewhere.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I wish he listened in silence more often.

Hon Jim Chown: Noted.

The PRESIDENT: Minister, perhaps you should take your own advice.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Indeed, Madam President.

Hon DARREN WEST: Thank you, Madam President. I wanted to use this time—I will be totally open with members—on something I had intended to incorporate in my Address-in-Reply, but did not, so I thought it would be a good opportunity to acknowledge the new members of Parliament during this debate on the Supply Bill while we are all here. It is an absolute privilege to be here. We not only have to be endorsed by our own political group but also we have to be voted in by the people of Western Australia. How humbling is that—enough people in our electorates —

Hon Simon O'Brien: It hasn't worked in your case has it—humbling?

Hon DARREN WEST: I think I was slightly rude about Hon Simon O'Brien in his absence. How many terms has he done to become the father of the house? A lot. I suggested 50-something, but I do not think it is that many.

Hon Simon O'Brien: It feels like it, some days.

Hon DARREN WEST: Any way, I acknowledged him as the father of the house and was not going to hypothecate on how many terms he has served, but it is a lot. I must read his inaugural speech. I presume it is electronically recorded!

Hon Simon O'Brien: It's on a sort of papyrus roll.

Hon DARREN WEST: I will ask Hansard for a copy of the papyrus and try to interpret the hieroglyphics, member! As much as I have acknowledged the new members of the house, it is also important to acknowledge the father of the house and members who have served several terms, because this is not an easy gig. A lot of expectations and demands are made of us by members of the public and, sadly, we cannot always meet those demands, so it makes us sometimes seemingly unpopular in the electorate. Sometimes when we strike a difficult issue, people in the electorate have a view and they can be very vociferous with their view and we can have days when we feel really bad about a position we have taken or something we have done. There are good and bad days. I acknowledge those who have served several terms because it is a challenging job but a privilege and a joy to be here. We are all very lucky given each of us is one of only 95 people in the state who represent people in Parliament. I look forward to working with all members.

We will debate legislation that we agree with, such as the demise of the Crown, because, presumably, we all thought it meant we would get rid of the Crown, but we will not.

Hon Donna Faragher interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: I did, member. I thought we were going to become a republic straightaway.

Withdrawal of Remark

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I do not want to be a party pooper, but reflections on the Crown are disorderly and I ask the member to reflect on that and withdraw that last comment.

The PRESIDENT: I will take that point of order and ask the member to withdraw.

Hon DARREN WEST: I am quite happy to withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Hon DARREN WEST: I certainly never meant to cause offence to the Crown or anyone who likes the Crown. I was just making the point that the name of that bill got some people a little bit excited, but we passed that bill because—I was trying to make the point—we all agreed that should something untimely become of Her Majesty, we will need a set of procedures in place to move on and we all agreed with that legislation. Legislation will be introduced on which we do not all agree and we will have robust and rigorous debates, I am sure.

I want to do something that, admittedly, I was intending to incorporate into my Address-in-Reply, but I will incorporate it into my contribution to the Supply Bill. We have all acknowledged colleagues that worked with us in the election who were not successful and are not now in the fortieth Parliament because they were not fortunate enough to be one of the 95 people elected. Many of those are outstanding individuals who I am sure will have their time in the future representing their communities. There was a suite of outstanding candidates in the Agricultural Region who ran outstanding, positive campaigns and did their best. There are some ultraconservative areas in my electorate and it is sometimes an immense challenge to lift the vote, but all four of our candidates in the Agricultural Region managed to lift their vote to the point at which they accumulated to enable Hon Laurie Graham to be elected. We have never had two members of the Legislative Council from the Agricultural Region before. This is the first time our candidates in the lower house and the upper house were collectively successful enough to make that piece of history.

Hon Martin Aldridge: You promised to tell me about Renee Ellis.

Hon DARREN WEST: She was not a candidate at the time of the election. I take the member's comment on board and at another time I will engage with the member in debate about former Councillor Ellis. It is a very, very unhappy story, member. I think that it is not too classy to throw around those remarks, but I will talk to Hon Martin Aldridge and to the house in the fullness of time about the former candidate whom we were going to run for the election. But we ran an outstanding suite of candidates. I will go through them from south to north.

Roe is a very large electorate. It runs from about Narrogin down to Cranbrook and essentially east into farming country. It goes all the way out to Israelite Bay. Esperance is included, along with Katanning, Kojonup, Lake Grace and Ravensthorpe. As I have said before, Roe is a tremendously prolific area of the state not only in agricultural production; we have also increased mining. We are starting to find mining enterprises also coming into that region. There are major operations around Ravensthorpe and other towns. Our candidate in Roe was a gentleman from Katanning named Bradley Willis. Brad is a really clever guy; he refurbishes livestock-carrying crates across Western Australia. As we can imagine, what comes out of livestock is quite corrosive and for all the transport companies across the state, Brad is the man they see when they want their livestock crates refurbished and repaired. He is a terrific guy. He is a former TAFE lecturer and he brought a lot of business acumen and skill to the campaign and lifted the vote significantly in the electorate of Roe. Brad came onto our team fairly late in the piece. He was a pleasure to work with and it has been great getting to know Brad and I look forward to working with him again in the future because he is certainly a great advocate for his community in Katanning, which is one of the most multicultural communities in the state. It was terrific to have Brad on board. He did a great job. He got our primary vote up in the order of over 14 per cent, which for an ultraconservative electorate was an improvement, and contributed greatly to our success in the upper house. I look forward to working with Brad in the future when he raises issues directly with me that affect him and his community in Katanning.

Our candidate in Central Wheatbelt was Gary Templeman. Gary has had a distinguished career in the area of homelessness and crisis housing. He does tremendous work. He is a man of faith and has a strong following in the local area in not only the community of Wyalkatchem, where he lives, but also, more broadly, the western parts of the electorate where he does a lot of work. In areas such as Wundowie he is particularly well-known and did a good job. Similarly, Gary came on to the campaign at a relatively late stage and did a great job for us. Gary's primary vote was almost 20 per cent. I will provide a little stat here. We missed out on winning the big polling booth in Northam, which was a Labor town many years ago, by 10 votes. Gary did a fantastic job especially in Northam, York, Wundowie and Bakers Hill. He won several of those booths and really lifted the Labor vote. People were genuinely pleased with Gary's candidacy and he contributed greatly to our success in the upper house with that strong primary showing.

Our candidate in Moore was a lady called Barni, and that is relatively unique. I believe Barni is a niece of Lance Barnard who was in the duumvirate government when Whitlam was first elected in 1972. Lance Barnard went on to become the federal Attorney-General and Barni Norton is one of his relatives. She is a member of a very strong Labor family and has strong connections. Barni has a very strong environmentalist view and stood very firmly on the issue of fracking and was delighted to say there is a significant difference between the coalition and Labor on the issue of fracking across the electorate. Her vote lifted considerably as well.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Hon Darren West, if you could stop for a moment. I think Hansard is having some difficulty hearing you, given that a number of other conversations are happening around the chamber. If people want a conversation, take it outside or perhaps be quieter so that Hansard can hear the speaker on his feet.

Point of Order

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: My point of order relates to standing order 47 on relevance. I know that an appropriation bill allows for a member to talk about almost anything in relation to government expenditure, which is fine, but the member on his feet is talking about the election of Labor Party members. My memory of the expenses of government is that government does not contribute to any campaign, be it Labor, Liberal or any other party. I ask you to draw his attention to the fact that it is not relevant to the bill before the house.

The PRESIDENT: There is no point of order, but I think that the member was gradually getting to speaking on the bill and I have been certainly waiting for him to reference the bill. I know he has been very close to doing that.

Debate Resumed

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: He is explaining how we got to be in government.

Hon DARREN WEST: It is a very good point. I know Hon Dr Steve Thomas was out of the house on urgent parliamentary business, but I referenced him in my remarks—and they were kind words. Hon Dr Steve Thomas is sort of almost right. I pointed out to the house that I had been unwell and I was unable to finish my response to the Address-in-Reply because of that and that I want to finish off the final points in my response to the Address-in-Reply while addressing the Supply Bill because I have the opportunity. The member is right that it is a broad-ranging debate, but Hon Alannah MacTiernan makes a good point. Without these people whom I am talking about, we would not have the Supply Bill because they helped us win the election.

Barni Norton did a great job in Moore.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon DARREN WEST: I will be brief, members. She did a great job and ran an outstanding campaign and was able to get an almost 21 per cent vote in the electorate of Moore. Who would have thought that—21 per cent. That was significantly higher than the Liberal vote—in a seat like Moore. Moore used to be a Liberal seat and nearly got knocked off by the Labor Party because we had a great candidate. She sought out the issues in Moore and attacked them vigorously and was able to influence policy for better outcomes in Moore. Most importantly, the voters of Moore agreed.

Finally, I touch on the seat of Geraldton. As members would know, my office is in Geraldton and I lived in Geraldton for many years and I have a very strong connection with that community. We had one of the best candidates I have ever seen run for Geraldton. Somehow the seat in Geraldton had a margin of 22.8 per cent. Our candidate in Geraldton, Lara Dalton, ran for that seat like it was one per cent. She got a 21.5 per cent swing to Labor in Geraldton. That is the second-highest swing ever recorded in Western Australian history to Labor, beaten only by the 23 per cent swing that Don Punch achieved in Bunbury. That is an outstanding result and we fell agonisingly short—1.3 per cent short or 500 votes. We hands down won the primary vote in Geraldton with 7 100 votes to the Liberals' 5 800—overwhelming. The poor old Nationals were 3 000 and something and everybody else came after that. Overwhelmingly, we were hands down the choice of the community. But we were defeated by preference harvesting by six of the eight candidates running together. All those six lots of preferences were directed to the Liberals.

Hon Martin Aldridge: Did you not preference the Liberals?

Hon DARREN WEST: No, we finished first. I will give Hon Martin Aldridge a little lesson on how preferences work. We finished first, so our preferences do not get distributed. When a party finishes third, as the National Party did, its preferences get distributed. Those preferences went to the Liberal Party and, sadly, resulted in the agonising defeat of Lara Dalton, our candidate for Geraldton, who would have made an immense difference to that seat.

Hon Simon O'Brien interjected.

Hon DARREN WEST: I quite like Ian Blayney, but I think we needed a change in Geraldton, and so did the community. Sadly, we were very close. But I am sure—I am very hopeful—that Lara will run for us in Geraldton again because I do not think the community will make that mistake again.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

AMY TREASURE — ESSAY

Statement

HON MARTIN ALDRIDGE (Agricultural) [6.20 pm]: It is not often that I detain the house to make a member's statement when we all want to go home, but tonight I wish to have a few moments of the house's time. I wish to report to the house that this week I received an email from a mother in Wandering in my electorate, now in the Legislative Assembly seat of Central Wheatbelt. She sent me a copy of an essay that her daughter, Amy Treasure, had written for her year 10 English class. I will read this essay to the house—it is short—and make a few remarks at the end.

This is by Amy Treasure and it is titled "Get'cha Head in the Game". The essay reads —

Do you think Australia is a just country? That is what we claim to be, a democratic country where we strive to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity at life. Do you think that the next generation will grow up understanding what freedom means? Most likely not.

The country is being neglected, the Australian Labour Party and the wider majority of city citizens are dismissing it as inferior. Country WA is one of our iconic features that differentiate us from the world, and it is being subjected to negligence. There is no freedom or equality in the remote, rural and regional areas of Australia. None.

Veronica Perry, aged 14, has lived in Cottesloe, Western Australia her whole life. Every morning she boards the sleek silver and green bus, travelling past Shenton College and King Edward Hospital, to arrive at the prestigious Perth Modern for her netball training. After an intense 6 period day, she makes her way to her violin lesson, where she is hard at work preparing for the Eisteddfod in a few weeks' time. After, her mum Shelly picks her up and together they head home.

Meanwhile 267km away, in the tiny town of Tincurrin, Elise Parker, aged 13, is waking up to darkness, quietly getting ready for school. At around 7 am, the vivid orange school bus, appears along the dusty road. She passes through Harrismith and Wickepin, to finally arrive at Narrogin Senior High School, just in time for the siren. The original timetable of 6 educating periods has been disrupted, due to a fight breaking out between two students. After school, she rushes to the bus, to arrive home just on dusk. Elise has no opportunities for sport, music or extra-curricular activities due to her home being an hour and a half from the nearest town with these opportunities.

This is the jaw-dropping reality of the contrasting lives that city slickers and their country cousins live. In the country, there are minimal education options, with some public education being quite disruptive, sports facilities are weak and health services are only seen once in a blue moon. Due to the recent election changes, everything has gotten worse. The Labour government are living under a rock, believing that the country is fine and our towns are as good as you can get.

And yes, when you live in the country, there will always be some sacrifices that you will have to make. But there shouldn't be as many sacrifices as there is currently; education and health? No way. Therefore in 2008, the National Party issued a plan, to redirect State Government spending's, moving it away from major cities and into the remote areas that need it most. This plan was an amazing thing for country towns, \$32.9 million has been provided to the Royal Flying Doctor Service, to help keep the flying doctor flying. \$43 million was committed over 4 years to construct a new court house in Kununurra, to improve justice services for the town and it's surrounding's. Then to tie it all together and to keep the communities going, they funded the Community Resource Centres, which are a network of centres built on WA's longest running and most successful regional community programs, Telecentres, they were distributed \$8.2million across the state. Many communities would probably have faded into the abyss, without this constant flood of money pumping through their systems. It has stabilised country towns and looking to the future, it will continue to nurture them back to good health.

So why would the state government want to change this? Why would they want to take away and change the lifeblood of the state? Well after the election Western Australia saw a rare sight, the position of Minister for Agriculture and Food was won by a Labour Party member, instead of its usual National back bencher. Alannah MacTiernan stated in an interview that she believes that the "money is going towards town beautification" or infrastructure, when it should be "prioritising economic and productivity development". However, what they don't understand is that this money has created jobs, the Ord-East Kimberly Expansion Project has boosted tourism in the area, and jobs in the tourism sector. Let's also not forget all those health centres and services. Who do you think runs them? Fairies? No, members of the community who have gotten a job.

One of the architects for Royalties for Regions has stated that the project has been a great thing and that "the West Australian Government [has] actually invested in solving the problem rather than shrugging their shoulders about it". But now the plan is for serious cuts to be made to Royalties for Regions and for the money that still does go to the country, to be spent in line with the new government's policies i.e. only going towards projects that will provide instant jobs. No more cash funding infrastructure. But here's the catch, who would want to work in a town that has cruddy facilities?

So, what do you think, should we have this injustice play out, should country girl Elise, live with minimal standards and community conditions? Or should she have an equal opportunity to live a life like the fortunate city woman Veronica? The question is yours WA, what do you think of this negligence the state government has shown country Western Australia? It's not fair and it's not just. Labour, get'cha head in the game.

That was written by year 10 student Amy Treasure from Wandering.

I have never met Amy. I received that email from her mother, and so I did not solicit the work she did. I thought it was interesting and timely to present that to the house as we are about to embark on the winter recess, and, as I am sure, the government throws together its first budget.

I will make some observations about Amy's essay. What she has said in her year 10 English class assignment is something I hear every day in my electorate. Whether I am talking to local governments, community resource centres, men's sheds or people in the street, they are very concerned about this new Labor government. They can remember when we last had a Labor government, and its track record then was not all that flash. I think the Leader of the House was today talking about the \$3.6 billion in debt the former Labor government left after the Liberal and National Parties won the 2008 election. But I think we need to contrast that with the level of services and infrastructure we saw outside Perth at that time. I must remind the house that in health alone, when the former Labor government's senior bureaucrat for the WA Country Health Service left shortly after that election she described the conditions in regional health as, quote, "bloody blatantly unsafe". Since then we have seen significant investment, particularly in health services, in country Western Australia. That is something I would not think we would have to argue for but would expect, like making sure we have a Royal Flying Doctor Service funded to transport those in most need to specialist medical care in Perth or other places in Australia.

Since the election it has been interesting to hear a lot being said by the Minister for Regional Development about what she considers to be waste from royalties for regions, but when she is put on the spot and asked to name the projects she describes as "petunias" or waste, she never names them. Just about every day of the week we see the minister or her parliamentary secretary out there, cutting ribbons at these projects and posing for photographs for the local paper, and almost pretending they were involved in delivering that project, but really they had nothing

to do with it. It is interesting that they come into this place and say one thing, but are happy to go out there and speak at the morning teas and cut ribbons for all these projects around regional Western Australia. Of course, in my electorate, the Agricultural Region, almost no election commitments were made by the Labor Party, with the exception of Geraldton. It is interesting to follow on from Hon Darren West. The only election commitments made in my seat, which runs from Kalbarri to Esperance, by members opposite was in one town—Geraldton. It is interesting to reflect on this. The Labor Party was the third party to commit to the redevelopment of Geraldton Hospital; I give it that. It was the third party; it was not quick out of the blocks, but it was a follower and finally committed. We will see whether the government delivers on that hospital. Remember, members, when the Labor Party last redeveloped Geraldton Hospital it came at the expense of Moora Hospital. I went to school in Moora. I was involved in the campaign to present bricks to the then health minister, Hon Jim McGinty, as the hospital continued to degrade and its upgrades were put on hold because of the overspending that had occurred at the Geraldton redevelopment.

I think it is important to put these things on the record as we head into the winter recess. I thank Amy for the essay she wrote and her mum for forwarding it to me. I hope I get to meet Amy one day when I next visit Wandering, which is a very beautiful town in my electorate. To encourage members who travel outside Perth, Wandering is not that far. It has a couple of wineries and a great local show. It is a lovely small town to visit and it does not take long to get there.

CLIMATE CHANGE

Statement

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [6.30 pm]: I rise because I want to make a few comments that I did not have the opportunity to make in the debate today around climate change. I am quite pleased that I did not get the opportunity to speak during the debate because so many members decided to stand and speak. I think that is very positive. I also want to express my pleasure at the fact that nobody who spoke questioned the very science of climate change, which is refreshing. It augurs quite well for our attempts to deal with this monstrous issue for our times. I think there is plenty of debate to be had on climate change, but it should never be about whether climate change is occurring. I would not pretend to be the person who has all the solutions for how best to mitigate the effects of climate change and, of course, to adapt to its effects. I think very important discussions are to be had on that. I also appreciate the fact that members are taking a pro-science position, as am I in my opposition to uranium mining and the use of nuclear power. As we know, there is no safe way to store nuclear waste. In my very strongly held opinion, it is absolutely unacceptable to leave a legacy of 10 000 years of highly toxic waste for future generations.

I stand because I want to make a few additional comments around why we need to deal with climate change. As members will have no doubt gathered by now, I am very concerned about mental health in the community. Mental health is a part of the challenge of climate change that is increasingly getting attention, particularly in research, and it is one that I would like to bring to the attention of members today. There is increasing evidence that the increased risks of climate change bring with them increased rates and risks of mental health issues within our community. These can occur because of a number of issues. We know, for example, that there is a direct correlation between temperature rise and aggressive behaviour. Temperature increases can also be manifested by increased rates of suicides, especially violent suicides. This area is starting to get quite a bit more attention and it is recognised as a particular risk factor as the climate continues to heat up. Heatwaves are also associated with mental and behavioural disorders. A number of studies, including one from Australia, suggest that heatwaves are associated with increased rates of admissions for mental disorders, as well as physical health issues. There are very big concerns that we will see an increased risk of mood disorders and anxiety disorders and that this will continue to put additional strain on our mental health budget and the health system.

The psychological impacts of climate change disasters are another element of concern around mental health. We know already that cases of flooding, hurricanes and very severe bushfires are increasing. We do not like to talk about climate change directly following a disaster because people object to us talking about it immediately following a tragedy, and I completely understand that. Nevertheless, there is a direct correlation between what is happening and the increased risks. In communities that have been through such disasters, increased levels of post-traumatic stress disorder will follow. Individuals who have been through the experience of climate-related natural disasters will be at higher risk of developing PTSD and will also have a greater risk of developing acute stress reactions and adjustment disorders.

We heard today some comment around the issue of drought and farmer suicide. It is something I have already spoken about in this place. This is a genuine risk factor that is likely to be exacerbated in years to come, particularly as viable farmland becomes less viable. The sorts of economic stresses that come for a lot of farming communities increase levels of mental health risk. I acknowledge that farmers are an enormously resilient bunch but sometimes the stresses can be too much. We know that this is an issue. Climate change also affects people economically because of the decrease in productive land at the same time as economic constraints mean that sometimes people are less likely to seek health care because of costs. It all becomes an increasing risk.

Climate-change related issues can also mean that people need to move, whether it is because they are in areas of flooding or because they are no longer able to live on productive land. That creates stress around migration and enculturation. People are ripped away from communities, histories, space and areas that are important to them. There is a direct correlation between those experiences—the loss of connectedness—and ongoing mental health issues, particularly depression.

It is well documented that there is an increased risk of a number of health issues, and increased health issues mean increased risk of mental health issues. I suppose I also need to acknowledge, particularly for our young people—our millennials—that research is increasing about the level of despair people are feeling about the impact of climate change. It also lends itself to a loss of hope for the future. This increases levels of a whole range of depressive and anxiety disorders.

This is pretty depressing stuff, but I feel it is really important that when we talk about the big picture issues of the day, we recognise that mental health is always affected by the social determinants around us. The reality is that climate change and the changes that come with climate change, including the risks, do and can have an enormous effect on the wellbeing of communities and the wellbeing of individuals within those communities.

I wanted to get up and make these comments. I think it adds to the urgency with which we choose to address climate change because we need to have healthy communities and, unfortunately, climate change is not conducive to achieving that.

LOTTERYWEST — CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Statement

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [6.39 pm]: I rise this evening to reflect on answers provided to parliamentary questions asked in this place by not only me but also other members. It is simply unsatisfactory for the Premier, or any future Premier, for that matter, to breezily claim to run an open and transparent government and then fail to deliver on that promise. The government has obfuscated, misdirected, deferred or grudgingly provided only piecemeal disclosure of facts when legitimate questions have been asked of it in this place.

For the better part of my life, this state has grappled with the challenge of ensuring executive accountability. It is, therefore, appropriate to reflect on some expert historical guidance in this respect. The report of the Commission on Accountability, which was provided to the then Premier, Hon Peter Dowding, in January 1989, said the following about answering parliamentary questions. I quote from this verbatim and ask members to forgive the gender-specific language —

... accountability is accountability to the Parliament and, as will appear, the Parliament is the place within which the idea of public scrutiny must find its fulfilment.

...

... whether the responsible Minister recognises that he is under a duty which he owes to Parliament—a political but not a legally enforceable duty—to answer proper Parliamentary questions which relate to the information which he has or which he has the authority to obtain.

In the brief time in which I have been a member of this place, answers provided to parliamentary questions have demonstrably fallen short of this ideal of accountability. It is, therefore, impossible to claim that public scrutiny is finding its fulfilment in the fortieth Parliament.

As we make preparations to rise for the winter recess, I would like to ask members of the opposition and the crossbench to reflect on the many questions that remain unsatisfactorily answered, if they have been answered at all. A pattern of behaviour has been established very early, and it bespeaks the government's attitude towards external scrutiny. It also makes the Premier's claim to administer an open and transparent government ring hollow.

I have asked questions in this place concerning a number of important public issues. There is a sense that answers provided by ministers are designed to evade proper public scrutiny, or to discourage forensic examination of its actions. I am not so easily discouraged, and I very much doubt that I am alone.

In recent days, there has been significant disruption at the most senior levels of the Western Australian public service. This includes the departure of the Road Safety Commissioner. It also includes the shambolic recruitment process for the new Commissioner of Police, a process marked by the political intervention of the new member for Burns Beach. The opportunity to inquire further into these matters is somewhat limited by time and the impending winter recess.

The example I would like to highlight concerns the sudden mysterious disappearance of the Lotterywest chief executive officer, Mr Paul Andrew, from his position. I have now asked about this matter on four occasions—on 20, 22 and 27 June, and again today. Question by question, answer by answer and piece by piece over the last two weeks, we have been told the following information. We have been told that Mr Andrew performed strongly as

CEO, achieving the “organisational change” he was appointed to bring about. We have been told that the Premier and his deputy chief of staff met with Mr Andrew on 21 March, and that despite Mr Andrew’s strong performance as CEO and the fact that news of his termination had been broken by Sean Smith in *The Weekend West* of 17 June, apparently no discussion ever took place regarding Mr Andrew’s future in the role of CEO. We have been told that the decision to terminate Mr Andrew’s contract came about by virtue of a spontaneous “mutual agreement”. We have been told, further, that as a consequence of this supposed “mutual agreement”, Mr Andrew will be paid 12 months’ remuneration of approximately \$340 000 as a termination entitlement.

Yesterday we learned that the Public Service Commissioner, at a previously undisclosed meeting on 14 June 2017, was the person who suggested to Mr Andrew that his contract “come to an early end”. That disclosure, and the fact of the payout, reveals the purported “mutual agreement” to be a convenient, if temporary, fiction concocted by the government to explain away Mr Andrew’s departure.

Today we learned that apparently the only topic of discussion that ever took place about Mr Andrew’s performance as CEO and the performance of Lotterywest concerned the relationship between Lotterywest and Lotterywest retailers. We also learned that the termination of Mr Andrew’s contract precipitated two separate reports to the Premier’s office, which took place on 14 and 15 June, concerning the end of Mr Andrew’s contract. I make the observation that it must have been of real interest to the Premier and his staff that Mr Andrew’s contract came to that termination.

The answers provided by the government on this issue are a demonstrable nonsense, designed to waste time in the chamber, misdirect attention and hide the true role of the Premier in the removal of Mr Andrew from his position. This is a contemptuous attitude to adopt to Parliament, and it means that scrutiny of an important matter of public interest has been difficult to fulfil.

Hon Sue Ellery: What do you think that role is? You have made a serious allegation.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I would urge the minister to come clean about the facts. She has had that opportunity. I have asked about this matter on four occasions. What is the minister hiding?

Hon Sue Ellery: If you think you know, you should say it. You have made a serious allegation.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I am waiting for the minister to come clean. Some of this nonsense has been brought undone by subsequent answers provided to follow-up inquiries. If those questions had not been asked, I suspect the government would have been content to let the matter rest in the knowledge that no-one was any the wiser about what machinations actually transpired to remove Mr Andrew from his position. I will not rest until the full story of Mr Andrew’s politically-motivated removal is revealed. Members in this place need to be vigilant with the executive, as the practice of evasion and obfuscation becomes the norm by the government in providing information to this house. Thank you.

House adjourned at 6.46 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

MINISTERS OF THE CROWN — MOTOR VEHICLE ALLOWANCE

19. Hon Peter Collier to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the answer given to question without notice No. 34 on 17 May 2017, in which the Premier confirmed he wrote to the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal on 12 May 2017 about car allowances for Government Ministers, and I ask:

- (a) will the Premier provide a list of Ministers, including the Premier, who were contracted by a novated lease agreement through their vehicle allowance prior to 17 March 2017; and
- (b) if no to (a), why not?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

Information regarding allowances of Members of Parliament is a matter for the Parliament, and I request that the member direct the question to the presiding officers.

TREASURER — PARLIAMENTARY PENSION SCHEME

20. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Environment representing the Treasurer:

I refer to the Parliamentary Pension Scheme established under the *Parliamentary Superannuation Act 1970*, and ask:

- (a) which current Members of Parliament are members of the scheme; and
- (b) of the current members of the scheme, which Members had the option under transitional provisions to transfer to the new superannuation arrangements which now apply to Members of Parliament?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) There are five current Members of Parliament who are members of the Parliamentary Pension Scheme.
- (b) All members of the Parliamentary Pension Scheme were given the option during the period from 10 October 2000 until 30 June 2001 to cease participating in that scheme.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH — STAFF — WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS

22. Hon Nick Goiran to the Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the requirement that Department of Health (DoH) employees in child-related work have a Working With Children Check (WWCC), and I ask:

- (a) how many DoH positions are identified as child-related work;
- (b) how many of these employees do not have a valid WWCC; and
- (c) further to (b), how many of these employees do not have an application in process?

Hon Alanna Clohesy replied:

The Department of Health advises:

For the WA health system, comprising of Child and Adolescent Health Service, Department of Health, East Metropolitan Health Service, Health Support Services, North Metropolitan Health Service, South Metropolitan Health Service and WA Country Health Service:

- (a) 1829 positions (24,630 employees) are identified as child-related work as defined in the Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004.
- (b)–(c) All employees currently working in a position identified as child-related work have either a current Working With Children Check (WWCC) Card or a current application for a WWCC which is pending.

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT — WORKING WITH CHILDREN SCREENING UNIT

24. Hon Nick Goiran to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

- (1) I refer to the Working with Children Check Screening Unit, and I ask, where unit staff are allocated applications of people they know for processing or assessment, are they required to notify their line manager?
- (2) If yes to (1), how many such notifications were made in the calendar year 2016?
- (3) Further to (1), once a notification has been made, is the application reallocated?
- (4) If yes to (3), how many applications were reallocated in the calendar year 2016?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Statistics are not kept; the fact is noted on the case file.
- (3) Yes, this must occur.
- (4) Statistics are not kept; the fact is noted on the case file.

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT — SCREENING UNIT

25. Hon Nick Goiran to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

- (1) I refer to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support Screening Unit, and I ask, is this unit responsible for screening staff and foster carers?
- (2) Is this unit a separate team from the Working With Children Check Screening Unit?
- (3) Does this unit coordinate actions required to ensure compliance in relation to negative notices?
- (4) How many negative notices were brought to the attention of the unit in the calendar year 2016?
- (5) Do any compliance actions remain outstanding from those negative notices from 2016?
- (6) If yes to (5), how many?
- (7) Were any employees or carers, who did not have a valid card or application in process, reported to their line management in the calendar year 2016?
- (8) If yes to (7), do all now have a valid card?
- (9) If no to (8), why not?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (1) Yes, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support (the Department) Screening Unit conducts screening for people engaged by the Department, including staff and foster carers.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) There were 17 Negative Notices in the 2016 calendar year.
- (5) No.
- (6) Not applicable.
- (7) Yes. The Department monitors Working with Children card compliance for staff and carers on an ongoing basis.
- (8) Yes.
- (9) Not applicable.

DEPARTMENT FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND FAMILY SUPPORT — STAFF —
WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECKS**26. Hon Nick Goiran to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:**

I refer to the requirement that Department for Child Protection and Family Support employees working with children in the Director General's care are required to have a Working With Children Check (WWCC), and I ask:

- (a) how many departmental positions are identified as child-related work;
- (b) how many of these employees do not have a valid WWCC; and
- (c) further to (b), how many of these employees do not have an application in process?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) There are 2 135 child-related work positions.
- (b) Three.
- (c) Two – one is a casual residential care worker who will not be engaged until they have applied for a WWCC and one officer who has been advised to immediately renew their WWCC and has been withdrawn from child-related activities until proof of application is provided.

ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS — LOT 12383 — TELECOMMUNICATIONS FACILITY

36. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Environment representing the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

I refer to Lot 12383, Forrest Hills Parade, Bindoon and the application by NBN Co. for the construction of a telecommunications facility, and ask:

- (a) has a referral been made under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* for assessment of the site;
- (b) on what date and on what grounds has a referral been made;
- (c) who has made the referral to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and will the Minister provide a copy of the referral to the House;
- (d) has the Department of Aboriginal Affairs made a decision in relation to Aboriginal heritage at the site, and what is that decision; and
- (e) if no to (d), when will a decision be made and published?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) The Heritage Information Submission Form was submitted on 22 May 2016, to have the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee consider DAA 36742 (Bell Reserve) under section 5 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*.
- (c) The Heritage Information Submission form was submitted by the Friends of Bell Hill Reserve Bindoon. Yes. [Please see tabled paper no 322.]
- (d) DAA 36742 (Bell Reserve) was considered by the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee at its 11 April 2017 meeting. The Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee considered DAA 36472 (Bell Reserve) as not being a site under section 5 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972*. Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee deliberations are publicly available on the Aboriginal Heritage Inquiry System.
- (e) Not applicable.

CHILD PROTECTION — AT-RISK MINOR — KALGOORLIE INCIDENT

37. Hon Nick Goiran to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the article, *At-risk child 'turned away' from hospital*, published in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* on Saturday 29 April 2017, which details the case of a child being sent home from Kalgoorlie Health Service after openly admitting to attempt suicide, and I ask:

- (a) was the Department of Child Protection notified of this incident;
- (b) if yes to (a), when; and
- (c) if yes to (a), what steps were taken by the department following notification?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) The Department for Child Protection and Family Support (the Department) did not receive a notification of the incident.

It is not a requirement for the Department to receive notifications from a health service if a child presents as suicidal and/or with mental health concerns, unless there are child protection concerns or the child is in care. This child is not in care.

- (b)–(c) Not applicable.
-

