



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 28 June 2017

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson) took the chair at 12 noon, and read prayers.

DIRT BIKE RIDERS

Petition

MS C.M. ROWE (Belmont) [12.01 pm]: I have a petition from 68 petitioners regarding illegal dirt biking in my electorate. It reads as follows —

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

We, the undersigned, say that illegal dirt bike riders in the suburbs of Cloverdale, Redcliffe, Ascot and Kewdale present a significant public safety issue in our parks and on our walkways, and discourage many residents from using these public spaces.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to work with Police and the local council to find a solution to this issue so that residents feel safe using these community facilities, without the fear of being run down or knocked over.

[See petition 11.]

LOAN BILL 2017

Returned

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

CONSTITUTION AMENDMENT (DEMISE OF THE CROWN) BILL 2017

Receipt

Bill received from the Council.

ECONOMICS AND INDUSTRY STANDING COMMITTEE — MINING LEGACY STATE AGREEMENTS

Notice of Motion

Ms M.J. Davies gave notice that at the next sitting of the house she would move —

That this house refers to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee an inquiry into mining legacy state agreements struck prior to 1970, with the terms of reference including but not limited to —

- (a) the nature of past and current commitments and responsibilities between the companies and the state;
- (b) whether current commitments and responsibilities are contemporary in the context of modern state agreements, mining practices and topical issues such as environmental responsibility;
- (c) whether the agreements still represent a fair deal for the people of Western Australia as the owners of the resource;
- (d) the impact of sovereign risk, should it be in the interests of the state to instigate changes to state agreements; and
- (e) the nature of any residual value-adding commitments in the state agreements and by extension assurances to the people of WA that such commitments are honoured.

POLICE — STAB-PROOF VESTS

Statement by Minister for Police

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland — Minister for Police) [12.04 pm]: The safety of Western Australia Police officers is paramount to the McGowan Labor government. Western Australian Labor governments have a strong record of supporting frontline officers. In 2002, we extended the coverage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984 to police officers. We equipped police with personal issue Glock service revolvers, Tasers and oleoresin capsaicin spray. There are now calls for our police officers to have personal issue, anti-stab, ballistic

vests. The state government and Western Australia Police are committed to equipping our police officers with the safety equipment that they need. WA Police currently has over 1 500 overt ballistic vests, including 250 new vests that arrived on 19 June 2017. In addition, there are also a number of covert vests in circulation. I am assured by senior police that officers attending jobs with a known risk, such as executing warrants, make tactical decisions based on those risks, including whether or not to wear these vests. Generally, specialist units have more vests per officer than police stations, given the nature of their work. These specialists are often deployed to boost local responses based on operational requirements.

Police officers have raised concerns about the wearability of body armour, as it can be heavy and hot in our climate. Police are currently issued with load-bearing vests but not all choose to wear them, preferring their accoutrement belt. The Commissioner of Police has said that the workforce is divided. There are questions about whether body armour is suitable for officers working in the north of our state, whether it is suitable for officers on bikes patrolling in the CBD or whether it is suitable for detectives working in child abuse. These issues need to be worked through and balanced with the extra protection that body armour provides. From a safety perspective, the commissioner will also consider whether, and in what circumstances, the wearing of body armour should be mandatory.

Recently, I met with the acting Commissioner of Police and agreed that WA Police will work through these issues with frontline officers and the WA Police Union, involving the WA Police health and safety branch. The WA Police executive can then determine the optimal rollout of vests in stages based on risk assessments and operational requirements. Cost is not the issue here. We will always put the safety of our officers first. I look forward to the WA Police executive and WAPU progressing this issue for the benefit of all our officers. Times have changed and the preparedness of police officers as frontline responders is critical. WA Police officers will continue to be supported to serve our community, to fight crime and to apprehend criminals.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, before I go to the Leader of the House, I am sure the Attorney General forgot to acknowledge the Chair when he walked in, but he will not forget it next time.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

Statement by Minister for Local Government

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [12.07 pm]: Local governments play a vital role in the delivery of services and the creation of engaged and vibrant communities throughout Western Australia. To do this, they require strong and effective elected members and that is why the local government elections, which will be taking place on 21 October, are so important to communities across Western Australia. Encouraging greater voter turnout continues to be a challenge, with around one in four eligible Western Australians voting in the 2015 elections, and only one in five people in suburban areas of Perth making use of their democratic right and responsibility to have their say in decision-making. We must also do more to encourage young people to participate in local government elections. Around 15 per cent of votes cast in 2015 were from people aged 18 to 34 years—less than half the number cast by people aged 65 and over. There have been positive changes, however. In Capel, we saw the youngest councillor elected, Sebastian Schiano, at 18 years of age, which is a fantastic achievement. Also, more women were voted into local government, with women making up just over 35 per cent of councillors elected in 2015, up from 30 per cent in 2013. This is a significant increase and great for local democracy.

The McGowan government is committed to further increasing engagement and diversity in local government elections. Particularly, though, we will be encouraging participation amongst those sections of the community that may be under-represented, including women, Aboriginal people, young people and those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities. We will also be strongly encouraging eligible Western Australians to stand for council and to consider how they can make a real difference in their local communities. Competition breeds excellence, and a greater number of candidates will contribute to a higher standard of community representation and the effective governance that communities deserve.

I am pleased to say that the Department of Local Government and Communities is partnering with the Western Australian Electoral Commission and the Western Australian Local Government Association to increase awareness of the importance of voting in local government elections. It is essential that everyone, regardless of their age, gender or cultural background, has their say. I encourage all members of Parliament to urge their local communities to get informed and involved. Western Australians have until 5.00 pm on Friday, 1 September to enrol to vote, and candidates can nominate themselves for council between 7 and 14 September. More information is available from the website of the Department of Local Government and Communities and the Western Australian Electoral Commission.

CHILD SUPPORT (ADOPTION OF LAWS) AMENDMENT BILL 2017*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr J.R. Quigley (Attorney General)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Attorney General.

Second Reading

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [12.11 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

As honourable members will be aware, the commonwealth child support scheme was introduced with the object of ensuring that separated parents shared equitably in the financial cost of supporting their children. The scheme provides for the assessment of the financial support required to support the children and the enforcement, collection and transfer of child support payments. Prior to the implementation of the scheme, child support could be obtained only by parents reaching agreement or by instituting proceedings for an order in the Family Court. The scheme operates under two commonwealth statutes, the commonwealth Child Support (Registration and Collection) Act 1988 and the commonwealth Child Support (Assessment) Act 1989. However, as members may be aware, in this context the commonwealth Parliament has constitutional power to legislate with respect to only children of a marriage. For the commonwealth child support scheme to apply uniformly to married and unmarried couples and their children, state Parliaments must refer legislative power to the commonwealth or afterwards adopt the commonwealth scheme by state legislation.

All states except Western Australia have referred legislative power to the commonwealth Parliament. Western Australia has not referred power but has adopted the commonwealth acts, initially by the Child Support (Adoption) Act 1988 and subsequently by the Child Support (Adoption of Laws) Act 1990. The adoption method means that the commonwealth amendments to the commonwealth child support acts, and therefore changes to the child support scheme, do not apply to unmarried couples and their ex-nuptial children in WA until the Parliament of Western Australia amends the Child Support (Adoption of Laws) Act 1990 to adopt again the commonwealth child support acts once those commonwealth amendments have come into operation. The Child Support (Adoption of Laws) Act 1990 of Western Australia was last amended in 2015 and adopted the commonwealth acts in the form in which they existed on 1 July 2015.

Since the last adoption date of 1 July 2015, the commonwealth child support acts have been amended by several commonwealth acts including the Norfolk Island Legislation Amendment Act 2015. As members will be aware, Norfolk Island has been an external territory of Australia since 1913. The commonwealth Norfolk Island Act 1979 established a limited form of self-government for Norfolk Island and imposed responsibility for all local and state and some federal services. An inquiry in 2014 by the Commonwealth Parliament Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories determined that Norfolk Island was unable to deliver the services for which it was responsible and was reliant upon the Commonwealth of Australia for survival. As a result there have been substantial changes recently to the governance arrangements for Norfolk Island. Residents of Norfolk Island are now considered to be residents of Australia for the purposes of the child support scheme.

Similarly, the commonwealth Territories Legislation Amendment Act 2016 extended the operation of the child support scheme to Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands by including residents of those external territories in the definition of “resident of Australia” in the commonwealth Child Support (Registration and Collection) Act 1988 and the commonwealth Child Support (Assessment) Act 1989.

Until adoption by the WA Parliament of the commonwealth acts as amended by the commonwealth Norfolk Island Legislation Amendment Act 2015 and the commonwealth Territories Legislation Amendment Act 2016 the definition of a “resident of Australia” that is to apply to ex-nuptial cases in Western Australia continues to exclude residents of Norfolk Island, Christmas Island and Cocos (Keeling) Islands. This affects ex-nuptial children where the child resides in WA with one parent and the other parent resides in Norfolk Island, Christmas Island or Cocos (Keeling) Islands. Currently, and until adoption by the WA Parliament, the other parent of the WA ex-nuptial child is not a resident of Australia for purposes of the commonwealth child support scheme and the WA parent is unable to obtain a child support assessment for the child in WA. Once the commonwealth acts as amended are adopted by the WA Parliament the other parent will come within the definition of “resident of Australia” and have enforceable obligations under the commonwealth child support scheme to support the WA child.

The commonwealth Courts Administration Legislation Amendment Act amended the commonwealth Family Law Act 1975 by changing the titles Chief Judge of the Family Court to Chief Justice, and Deputy Chief Judge of the Family Court to Deputy Chief Justice. A consequential amendment was to make those title changes where required in the commonwealth child support acts. The commonwealth Statute Law Revision Act (No. 1) 2016 made technical amendments to both commonwealth child support acts to correct cross-references and

a typographical error, and to modernise the language. The commonwealth Civil Law and Justice (Omnibus Amendments) Act 2015 amended the commonwealth Child Support (Registration and Collection) Act 1988 consequential upon minor technical amendments to the operation of the commonwealth Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975.

I trust that all members will agree that it is appropriate and desirable that the recent commonwealth amendments be adopted by Western Australia, as proposed in the bill. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms L. Mettam**.

CORONERS AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr J.R. Quigley (Attorney General)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Attorney General.

Second Reading

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [12.18 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

In 2012, the Western Australian Law Reform Commission completed its review of the Western Australian coronial jurisdiction and published its report, “Review of Coronial Practice in Western Australia”. The Coroners Amendment Bill 2017 will give legislative effect to recommendations 55 and 56 of that report.

The Law Reform Commission of Western Australia investigated and carried out extensive research and consultations, which identified a number of problems affecting the coronial system, including lengthy delays in completion of coronial cases. Delay frequently causes unnecessary hardship to the family of the deceased. The proposed amendments to the act will give effect to two measures that will reduce delays and remove the current unnecessary impost on the resources of the Office of the State Coroner and Western Australia Police.

The problems identified by the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia arise because the act presently imposes an obligation to investigate all deaths that are reported to the State Coroner. Deaths due to natural causes are non-contentious and do not come within the coronial jurisdiction; therefore, they are not required to be reported to the Office of the State Coroner. However, a large number of deaths due to natural causes are reported each year to the coronial jurisdiction. That is because the act imposes an obligation to report a death due to natural causes if there is any perception that the death was unexpected, unnatural or violent, or resulted, directly or indirectly, from injury. For example, the death of an elderly person following a fall in hospital may be reported to the coroner in case there is a causal connection between the death and the fall. Upon examination of that death, it may become apparent to the forensic pathologist that the cause of death was coronary artery atherosclerosis and that it was due to natural causes and not attributable to the fall. Currently, notwithstanding that it is open to the State Coroner to make a determination that the death was due to natural causes, the State Coroner, and, therefore, the officers of the coronial investigation squad of WA Police, are statutorily required to fully investigate the circumstances of the death, which will involve seizing medical records, obtaining reports, and taking statements from hospital staff, family and witnesses. The continuation of the investigation of a death from natural causes is a waste of limited resources, causes delays on important investigations, and is unnecessarily intrusive for the family of the deceased.

The proposed amendment will remove the obligation to investigate, or continue to investigate, in circumstances in which the death was due to natural causes and comes within the definition of a reportable death solely because it appears to have been unexpected. This recommendation was confined to deaths that occur from natural causes. The obligation to investigate remains in circumstances in which there is a duty to hold an inquest or the death occurred during an anaesthetic.

A related reform recommended by the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia to reduce delay will also assist to reduce the considerable backlog of matters resolved administratively—that is, without inquest. Presently, allied to the State Coroner’s obligation to investigate all reported deaths, the Coroners Act 1996 requires a coroner investigating a death to find, if possible, and to document, the identity of the deceased, the cause of death, how the death occurred, and the particulars needed to register the death under the Western Australian Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 1998. In circumstances in which the reported death is determined to be due to natural causes, the practice of the State Coroner is to document the “cause of death” as, for example, coronary artery atherosclerosis, and to document how the death occurred as “by way of natural causes”.

An amendment that was recommended by the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia to ensure legislative clarity was that a more extensive description is not required in circumstances in which there is no duty to hold an inquest and the coroner determines that there is no public interest in making a more detailed finding as to how the death occurred. This recommendation was not confined to deaths that occur by way of natural causes.

The Law Reform Commission of Western Australia made many other recommendations, which are being considered. These two recommendations are deemed to be the most urgent and will serve to eliminate much delay and unnecessary impost on resources.

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

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms L. Mettam**.

FIRST HOME OWNER GRANT AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Minister for Finance)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Minister for Finance) [12.24 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks to amend the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000 to temporarily increase the first home owner grant payment from \$10 000 to \$15 000 from 1 January 2017 to 30 June 2017. More specifically, the \$5 000 boost payment applies to contracts entered into between 1 January 2017 and 30 June 2017 for the purchase or construction of a new home, as well as owner builders who have laid the foundations of their home between those dates. Furthermore, to be eligible for the additional \$5 000 grant, construction of the home must commence within 26 weeks of the owner signing a building contract and the home must be completed by 1 July 2019. For owner builders or purchasers of off-the-plan homes, construction must also be completed by 1 July 2019. The existing eligibility criteria for the first home owner grant will also apply. This includes that the home must not be valued at more than \$750 000, or, if north of the twenty-sixth parallel, more than \$1 million.

Payments of the additional \$5 000 grant are being made by the Commissioner of State Revenue under an administrative arrangement. These amendments seek to provide legislative support for the additional grant and are necessary to ensure that the commissioner has authority to recover the \$5 000 grant payment if the eligibility criteria for the grant have not been met.

The first home owner boost was originally announced by the previous government and was to be available for transactions entered into between 1 January 2017 and 31 December 2017. The previous government estimated that the boost would cost the budget around \$48 million from 2016–17 until 2019–20. As announced on 17 May 2017, the effective cost of providing the \$5 000 boost for 12 months, to induce 380 first home buyers to buy or build a new home, would be around \$120 000 for each additional new home. This is not a cost-effective way to stimulate new home building. Furthermore, in this very difficult budgetary environment, it is more important than ever to exercise expenditure restraint and target concessions to where they are most needed. The total estimated savings to the budget of ceasing the \$5 000 boost from 30 June 2017, relative to the cost that was included in the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement*, is approximately \$22 million from 2016–17 until 2020–21.

The Western Australian government will continue to provide generous transfer duty concessions to first home buyers. These exempt first home buyers from transfer duty on the purchase of established and new homes valued up to \$430 000, phasing out at \$530 000, and on vacant land up to \$300 000, phasing out at \$400 000. For a new home in Western Australia valued at \$430 000, the stamp duty concession, combined with the \$10 000 first home owner grant, will provide first home buyers with assistance of over \$24 000.

These amendments are proposed to commence retrospectively from 1 January 2017. This is consistent with the commencement date announced by the previous government on 27 December 2016.

This bill also makes other amendments to the First Home Owner Grant Act to address the outcome of a 2013 decision of the State Administrative Tribunal. The tribunal's decision had unintended consequences in which an applicant's eligibility for the grant is not affected by a co-purchaser who either does not have a right of immediate occupation of the land within 12 months of completion of a transaction, or who holds their interest in trust for another person. The co-purchaser is not required to be an applicant in these circumstances.

The amendments will restore the policy intent of the legislation for all owners of the land on the completion date of the transaction to be applicants and satisfy the criteria for the grant unless otherwise excluded by regulation. Other minor amendments are also being made to improve the efficiency of administering the first home owner grant scheme.

The associated explanatory memorandum contains further details on the amendments. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms L. Mettam**.

PORT KENNEDY DEVELOPMENT BILL 2017*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Ms R. Saffioti (Minister for Planning)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Planning) [12.31 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The Port Kennedy project involves an area of crown land, the development of which is governed by the Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act 1992 and a state agreement. The original agreement contemplated private sector developers delivering public works, such as golf courses, a clubhouse and boating facilities, in exchange for crown land of equivalent value. Unfortunately, the original development proved unviable due to changing economic conditions and, most recently, predicted sea level rise, which has reduced the amount of developable land. However, it has proved impossible to implement an amended proposal, due to the restrictive nature of the act. Accordingly, the former government has worked closely with the private sector developers and their project manager, Mirvac, to reach a negotiated outcome. This took the form of a sale and development agreement, termed SADA, which reframes the project contemplated for Port Kennedy. The agreement was signed in January 2017. The SADA also contemplates the introduction of a bill, to achieve a contemporaneous rezoning of the revised project development area under the metropolitan region scheme and the City of Rockingham local planning scheme. This approach is similar to that taken in the Sunset Reserve Transformation Act 2014.

For these reasons, the Port Kennedy Development Bill 2017 has now been prepared. It repeals the restrictive Port Kennedy Development Agreement Act 1992 and the state agreement. Further, it simply and effectively rezones the revised project development area under both the region and local planning schemes. Formal public consultation will occur at the structure plan planning stage via the local planning scheme. This bill allows the state and public to benefit from the provision of remaining public works and infrastructure at Port Kennedy, which are now long overdue, and it is to be done in a manner that is projected to deliver a return to the consolidated account of approximately \$9.22 million. The \$9.22 million represents the value of the development land to be sold, less the costs of agreed public works of approximately \$15 million delivery, which will be protected by bank guarantees, including regional beach works, boat moorings, a public jetty in addition to the existing boat launching ramp and finger jetty, a surf club storage facility, western beach access and carpark and a golf course clubhouse for the reconfigured 18-hole golf course. In addition to the land purchase and public works, the state will retain two fully serviced sites, being a western ecotourism site and a short-term accommodation site in the town centre. These sites are valued at approximately \$4 million and will enable the state to explore sale or lease opportunities as the project is further developed.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms L. Mettam**.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Motion*

Resumed from 25 May on the following motion moved by Ms J.J. Shaw —

That the following Address-in-Reply to Her Excellency's speech be agreed to —

To Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson, AC, Governor of the State of Western Australia.

May it please Your Excellency —

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before the member for Kimberley rises, I advise the house that the member for Kimberley has already sought permission from the Speaker to deliver part of her speech in her first language, Gidja. The Speaker has agreed to this on a one-off arrangement, as it is appropriate to make all speeches in English so that other members can understand what is being said and the Chair can ensure that it is both relevant and appropriate. The member for Kimberley has been asked to commence her speech in English and, when she wishes to speak Gidja, seek the permission of the Chair to address the Assembly in Gidja, and to give an undertaking that there is nothing unparliamentary in her speech. After the member makes a short part of her speech in Gidja, she will repeat that part of the speech in English so that it can be properly reported by Hansard.

MS J. FARRER (Kimberley) [12.35 pm]: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. I rise today to add briefly to those comments already made in response to our Governor's address. I would like to seek permission to use my language, which I have done.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Permission granted.

Ms J. FARRER: Thank you, and there will not be anything bad or unparliamentary in it, I can assure you!

In Gidja, I would like to say the following —

[Words spoken in Gidja language —

Kilingen —

Which means today —

ngeningka jarrak-jarrak ngenarn taam-pe purru Oombulgarri ngarrem warringarrim manamparrem, ngali-ngalem ji-jilem-pe wanyanyakem-pe nymbilo-m julam-pe thu-thum-pe bulbam nguwan purru-ku. Kilingen linga-linga purrun warren-pe purren-pu.]

And it still goes on. I would like to explain to members in English. I have written it down, but I would like to explain to members what I have said —

Today I rise to speak at this place.

I am speaking about the home country of the Oombulgarri people. Plenty of people lived out at Oombulgarri—manamparrem, which is the older group of people; ngali-ngalem, all women; ji-jilem-pe, men; wanyanyakem-pe, children; and nyimbilo-m, babies. Not forgetting julam-pe, which are the dogs that belong to the people. Thu-thum-pe, everything that they had, bulbam, their property—in the end nothing was theirs, nguwan purru-ku. Today, Kilingen linga-linga purrun, they are still remembering and they are still thinking. Warren-pe purren-pu—they still ache in pain from the trauma that they have had.

And it still goes on. Thank you. That is all I wanted to say in my language.

I am proud to be part of a government that is dedicated to standing firm in its commitment to the people we represent. They are some of the people that we represent. I am glad of the Premier's commitment to not forcibly close remote communities. Unfortunately, there is a legacy of the previous Barnett government that I would like to draw to members' attention, and that is the sad and cruel treatment of the Balangarra traditional owners and other people who knew Oombulgarri country as their home.

I would like to acknowledge Tammy Solonec, who wrote an opinion piece in *The Guardian* of 27 November 2014, titled "The trauma of Oombulgarri's demolition will be repeated across Western Australia". I have used this in preparation for this speech.

Oombulgarri lies on the banks of the Forrest River across the Cambridge Gulf from Wyndham. This community once had a thriving community of strong people. It had a clinic, a shop, a police station, a school, an office, a power station, about 60 homes and large water tanks. Removing people from Oombulgarri was a gradual process—but for what? The truth is that Oombulgarri has always been a site of trauma. It has seen massacres to the stolen children brought from there to the mission and the more recent issues of drug and alcohol abuse and community dysfunction. At one time the community was peaceful and dry, but along the way that changed. The negative culture was known by people in different levels of government, departmental staff, the police, welfare—you name it. They all turned a blind eye. They swept those serious destructive issues under the carpet and ignored their responsibilities and duty of care. They used the excuses of child abuse, alcoholism, suicide and domestic violence, which was highlighted by a police sexual assault task force and resulted in the conviction of three individuals—three people from a population of over 100. When Oombulgarri was closed in September 2011, the official line was that the community was unviable. Communication from the Western Australian government to Amnesty International states that Oombulgarri was closed due to severe dysfunction and to ensure community safety. "Unviable" was the term used by the Barnett government to start justifying closing another 150 remote Aboriginal communities. However, as I have seen firsthand—it has happened to me—there is nothing more unviable for Aboriginal people than for them to be forcibly evicted from their traditional lands and assimilated into white townships. To this day, access for me and many others to traditional lands is blocked or restricted. I have been told by people who should know better, "Josie, you need to learn to share your land."

I return to Oombulgarri. The Barnett government first closed the services in Oombulgarri. It closed the shop so that people could not buy food and essentials. It closed the clinic so that the sick and elderly had to move. It closed the school so that families and children had to leave or face having their children taken away from them. The police station was the last service to be closed, and then, eventually, the electricity and water was turned off. Finally, the 10 residents who had stayed to the end were forcibly evicted. They were given just two days' notice of eviction and were allowed to bring only one box of belongings each. They had to leave behind cars, whitegoods, tools and personal possessions. The whole time the government told these people that they could

stay if they wanted, but it was a lie. Community members were asked to provide receipts for all their property; if they could not find them, they were told that the property must belong to the community and it was confiscated. Members, ask yourselves: Do you have receipts for everything in your house or yard? How do you think you would go if you were in these people's shoes? The government claimed that the prescribed body corporate was dysfunctional and, so, created another board. The government filled it with people whose understanding of the English language and governance was poor, and tricked them into disposing of essential community infrastructure, like the barge that was used to travel across the Cambridge Gulf from Wyndham to Oombulgurri to deliver all their food and carry people. The barge was needed to move people across and allowed access to suppliers and services in Wyndham and Kununurra. If those lies and that deceit were not cruel enough, the government promised housing for every Oombulgurri resident when they left. Today, Oombulgurri people are still living in the Wyndham mangroves and parks or, if they are lucky, sharing a house—but it is in secret so that the Housing people do not evict them for overcrowding.

The circumstances leading to the closure of Oombulgurri were unfortunate, but the really sad and cruel aspects of closing that community were the feelings of the people who lived in that area, which, indeed, the Kimberley felt. Aboriginal people have a connection to country; an undeniable association of belonging to the land. The Oombulgurri people felt as though they were failures. They were afraid and they also felt hopeless. It is not easy to rebuild in or to belong to an area that you simply do not belong to, but that is what was expected. People in the rest of the Kimberley were also afraid that they would be removed from their homes. The Barnett government was dangerous in that it had power over people's lives and the power to oppress an already oppressed people. Forced displacement also creates dysfunction in the communities where those people are relocated to. The Wyndham community, for example, is annoyed with the Oombulgurri people because they have nowhere to live or they are living in residences that do not have any room.

What can be done? Changes have already started to happen with the election of a new government, a government I am proud to be a part of. There is a difference in this chamber, which is more than the obvious change in numbers; it is in the shared values that we all heard from the new members of this government. For example, the members for Kingsley and Burns Beach come to mind: one spoke passionately about her disbelief that in this day and age our children are still haunted by racism and the other gave us a timely reminder that questions we consider in this Parliament can be life and death questions for others. Members, the land of the Oombulgurri settlement is owned by the Western Australian government's Aboriginal Lands Trust, extinguishing native title. That is what enabled the Barnett government to forcibly evict traditional owners from their community, and the results we see are people still camping under trees in the mangroves or on the marshes. In saying that, I am very pleased to be able to work with Minister Ben Wyatt in starting discussions with traditional owners and stakeholders to look at the divestment of ALT land so that it benefits people through opportunities in business and through security in land and culture. Perhaps, finally, there can be a new start for Balanggarra people in Oombulgurri and throughout Western Australia.

In conclusion, I will be seeking an inquiry into what really happened with the closure of Oombulgurri, either through this Parliament and its committees or by some other means. Like every member in this place, you will hear from me on suicide, jobs, education, traditional owners' access to government-leased lands, chronic diseases and much more. I would like to congratulate all new members elected to this place. Remember, our work is to fight racism and understand that sometimes we do make life and death decisions.

MR M.P. MURRAY (Collie–Preston — Minister for Seniors and Ageing) [12.48 pm]: I rise to make a few comments in the Address-in-Reply debate. It seems as though it has been 12 months since the election, but it is only three months. This is my first opportunity to thank those people in my electorate who helped not only me but also the Labor Party at the election. Members know that some of the most important people in their electorates are their staff, so I now take the time to say thank you to Kristy Smith and her husband. He was very patient and helpful during the election period. He welded signs, and put up with her crankiness at times and smiled a lot when she was yelling at me. Bevan, thank you very much for doing that. I also acknowledge another staffer, Ross Verne. I feel like a bit of a dad to him. I educated him a fair bit. He came down to Collie as a new journalist and was with the *Collie Mail* when I offered him a job and showed him the pay rates of a research officer compared with those paid by Rural Press. He could not get in the door quick enough and then wished to Christ that he had not. We shaped him and tidied him up along the way. He learnt very quickly and has become an important member of my staff. At the same time as the election campaign, his now wife was organising their wedding. I think it was lucky that he could stay down our end and did not have to get too involved with that. Just before the wedding, it was finally all dumped on him and he had to get very, very organised. Ross, in between the election and your wedding, you have done a great job and thank you.

I mention a couple of other special groups. I acknowledge the 80 booth workers in my area. The region I have to look after has been extended and the number of towns has increased. I think we had to man 16 booths and every one of them was manned for every hour of the day, so special thanks to the booth workers. Along with that, there was a couple of other what I would call action groups. We did not always agree, but certainly they put Collie at

the forefront whether on TV, in newspapers—the whole lot. The women’s action group made some very, very good comments about the impact on families who are attacked by companies because they are part of the union movement. The issue is still not resolved with 40 per cent and 50 per cent wage cuts still being offered today. It is disheartening to say the least that small businesses are really suffering because people are not sure of their futures. It has been a protracted dispute over nearly two long years. It was disappointing that a commissioner, who probably could have helped out, resigned halfway through because he found it too hard; he probably ran off to spend his pension. Those sorts of things have not been sorted. If anyone believes Fair Work Australia is fair, they should follow the case of the Griffin Coal workers. The way they have been treated is appalling. I will provide a specific example. If someone has a sickie on a Saturday, they do not get paid, but if they do not put in a sick leave form for that Saturday, they get the sack. Do members think that is fair? I do not think that is fair in any way, shape or form. I am not talking about wages. I am talking about the pressure put on workers to conform and be puppets and not have a view. Many of the women in the action group, whom I will name shortly, were also active on Facebook. Their husbands were threatened with the sack because they were commenting on what was happening in the community and the effects the changes were having in the community.

Collie has long prided itself on being not only a union town but also a fair town. It has gone 20-odd years without a strike. In 20 years, in what we call a very hard union area, there have not been any strikes because they negotiate before it gets to that the point. That is now all gone. As soon as overseas companies were involved and people were flown in from around not only Australia but the world, the attitude to the workforce has been absolutely disgraceful. People in this house have had a go about the union connection to politicians on this side. I did not see the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia or any of those groups supporting the workers. Not once did I see that—not at all. I was disgusted to see the CCI’s booklet about drug testing. Did that booklet have any recommendations for rehab? No; it stated that workers who tested positive should be sacked and got rid of. The CCI does not worry about the individual or their family; it wants to get them off the books so companies are not liable. I have had a go at the CCI about that. It was going to come back with some other program. It did not. It went to ground. That is disgusting behaviour from what I will call the boss’s lead group. It shows us why we must have people with a union background in Parliament.

I pride myself on my background and its very strong union influence; I have worked with my hands, including 12 and a half years underground, while some members on the other side would not know what a shovel is. I stand here with great pride and say thank you to the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union, the Collie mineworkers, the Electrical Trades Union, the Australian Services Union and a couple of other smaller unions that offered support and told me to stand up and be counted. I intend to do that inside this government. The change is already evident, with discussion being held on this side. It is not always pretty and it is not always kept internal, but we will have that discussion. We will not impose on workers straight down the line, like Liberal governments have done previously, and reject the rights of workers. We have only to look at the federal government to see that.

I go back to the women’s action group, which is composed of Jane Beauglehole, Leonie Scoffern, Rhoda Roberts and Carys Golding, and which puts the real side of what happens in families. Sometimes that has been dismissed, but it was great that this time the press picked up the issue of what happens in families. What happens when kids say, “Does dad have a job?” I just cannot fathom some of the actions that have been taken down at the coalfields.

I also make it very, very clear that although we talk about the miners as a group, there are 3 000 direct jobs on what people in the south west call the hill, which extends from Worsley to the Collie A power station. That is half a power station, as the former Premier knows. He built half a power station. He pulled the other half off. We have Collie A, Bluewaters Power, Muja and Worsley power stations, and two coal mines. The impact of those 3 000 jobs extends beyond Collie. A lot of people tend to think it impacts only Collie, but problems are also felt in Don Punch’s electorate of Bunbury and in the Harvey area. Most of the contractors come from the coastal strip and live in Bunbury, Eaton, Australind, Harvey and those areas and travel on a daily basis. For anyone who wants to get up early enough and go on the Coalfields Highway at six o’clock in the morning, the traffic is not much different from what it is in Perth.

Mr C.J. Barnett: A lot safer than it was though.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: The former Premier pushed them all down the hill and got rid of them. He should hang his head in shame.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You didn’t do a thing in the Coalfields Highway. We basically rebuilt it.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Let us have a go. This is why the former Premier’s government got into trouble. It is still being built. It started five years ago and it is still being built. That shows us where the member for Cottesloe has been; it has not been the south west. The member for Cottesloe should not worry about what he has done and has not done. It is like everything else. It is like a dunny with a door still swinging, as I have said to members before. Everything is half done.

The member for Cottesloe ought to be very careful when he gets onto that ground because we know what he did to the 600-megawatt power station that was supposed to be built when he became Premier. I will move on because I do not have a great deal of time. We can see the result of the Liberal and National Parties choosing not to appoint a minister from this seat at any time despite the number of times that it has been in government. It is with great pride that after 103 years, I am the first minister in the seat of Collie–Preston. I take that very seriously. I will name the main towns in my electorate, otherwise I will get into trouble—Collie, Donnybrook, Balingup, Kirup, Dardanup, Boyanup, Mullalyup—the Leader of the House knows very well that Mullalyup has the best peaches and apricots in Australia; they were that good that he even bottled some—Burekup, Capel, Australind and Allanson. Each village has a different want and many of the newer members in Parliament should take notice of that. Each suburb has a different want. We treat each and every one of the people in those towns as individuals, rather than lumping them in together and saying that one size fits all—it does not. The wants of each of those groups in those towns—they are growing—need to be accommodated, whether they be sporting facilities, job creation, residential areas, light industrial areas or heavy industrial areas. It does not matter; they have to be treated as individuals. This is something that the other side of politics forgot, and that is why there was a rout in the last election. I am not sure that “rout” is the right word, but six months out from the election I was very concerned and considering my future. The boundary changes had put me once again back behind the starting block, at minus three. I was thinking that the then Premier might take that up to plus five per cent. Was I surprised at a 17 per cent swing? Yes, I was, but it just shows how on the nose the previous government was.

I must relate a story that I have told many times to my colleagues. I was doorknocking in Donnybrook, and a very sprightly 80-year-old lady came out and said, “Mr Murray, you’ll be pleased to hear what I’ve got to say. It’s the first time ever I’m going to back the red side.” At 80 years of age, she changed her vote. I asked why she would change her vote at this time of her life. She said, “That Premier has gone and done a deal with Pauline Hanson. I cannot stand her politics. It’s only grandstanding and trying to gather a few votes.” Doing a deal with Pauline Hanson was one of the biggest mistakes the Liberal Party made, because it gave people an excuse not to vote for it. Solid Liberal people walked away because the previous government got into bed with dirty politics. I make no apology for saying that.

Mr C.J. Barnett: You can have a go at me but —

Mr M.P. MURRAY: I will have a go all right. I have never backed off, and the member for Cottesloe has never frightened me. With all the star jumps and things that he has done over the years, all he has done is make me laugh, because he has put me in the position in which I am today. If it were not for the former Premier, I would not be here, so thank you very much.

Let us have a look at this house. We still have the remnants of Pauline Hanson on the other side, with the shadow Treasurer saying that we should not allocate more education assistants to schools to help the students who most need help. That is what he said, and it is along the lines of Pauline Hanson saying that autistic kids should not be in mainstream schools. That is the same as the shadow Treasurer saying that kids should not get support in the classroom. What a disgrace that is! What a disgraceful Liberal Party we have!

Mr C.J. Barnett: You ignored the inclusion of children with disabilities; we did it in the 1990s.

Mr M.P. MURRAY: What does the shadow Treasurer say now? Did the member not read the *Hansard*. Did he not listen, or was he just out there counting his pension? I am not sure what he was doing. I can tell him what the shadow Treasurer said, because I went back and had a look in *Hansard*. It was a damned disgrace, and every person with a child with a disability or learning problem should never forget what the shadow Treasurer said. Pauline Hanson in disguise—that is what he is.

Mr C.J. Barnett: If you did half of what we did —

Mr M.P. MURRAY: Half of what you did! I am not going to send the state broke like you did.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Member for Cottesloe, I call you to order for the first time. Minister, can you speak through the Chair, please?

Mr M.P. MURRAY: I will move on and say that on the industrial front in the Collie–Bunbury region, change is afoot, and people recognise that. They recognise that the world is changing. There is recognition of climate change and the different views on how we can go forward with that. I am very proud to say that we are going to manage that, and money has been put aside to manage that. In the future, people will not be frightened about where they are headed. That is where they are at the moment. They are not sure whether they will have a job every Monday. With the position that Lanco is in at the moment worldwide, it could be shut down sooner rather than later. We will manage that change, and we will make sure that people have a say. We will make sure that they are consulted about other industries that can be brought into the region. I am talking about the region because, let us face it, Bunbury has stalled and jobs have been lost at Collie. I walked up Blair Street, which is the main light industrial or shopping area in Bunbury, and I was waved down by four or five business owners, asking what we could do to get people back into the shops in Bunbury. Regional people are not coming in; they are not shopping. The business owners were worried about their future. I can say that we will work through it.

As always, the last people I want to thank are my family. It is always difficult at election time; we are not easy to live with. But we got through, and my wife still lives with me, so I suppose that is a bonus, but I do not know whether it is for her. The last thing I will say is that we have had some very long-serving members, including Arthur Alan Wilson, who served the electorate of Collie for 39 years. I will tell the Premier now that I might try to break his record.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms S.F. McGurk (Minister for Child Protection)**.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (AUDITING) BILL 2017

Second Reading

Resumed from 16 May.

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [1.07 pm]: I am the lead speaker for the opposition on this bill, and it gives me great pleasure to speak on the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017. It also gives me great pleasure to be the shadow Minister for Local Government as one of my shadow portfolios. I have a lot of respect for people in local government. They do a very difficult job, and in the past they have not been adequately recognised or rewarded. One of the pieces of legislation that went through in the last term of government was for the remuneration of councillors and mayors. That was a big win for the local government sector from the Liberal–National government in acknowledging the importance of that sector and the contribution it continues to make. As we know, local government has its finger in lots of pies. It administers funds from not only ratepayers, but also state and federal governments, and delivers services across a range of areas in the community, including roads, parks, community facilities, the management of cats and dogs and a number of other environmental issues and factors. Unlike many members in this house, I have never been a councillor in local government, but I actually consider it an asset in my position as shadow Minister for Local Government because I do not have a history or, in some cases, a tainted view of my experience in the local government sector.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Are you saying we are a liability if we do?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I was saying that, as a member of Parliament over the past nine years, since September 2008, I have had lots of dealings with councillors in the City of Stirling and the City of Joondalup, as well as other councils. I had dealings with the member as well.

Mr D.R. Michael: You were a regular visitor.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is correct; I was a regular visitor to the council chamber. I used to come and give my support to the councillors and encourage them to continue to make good and sound decisions for the benefit of the community. On pretty much every occasion I came to see them, I was very happy with the decisions that they were making for my local community. I understand that they have a thankless task with the many hours they put in and the difficulties that they experience, not just finding the time and the energy required to do the things that they need to do, but also dealing with the administration, the CEOs and the various officers, trying to steer them in the right direction to get things done and to oversee a sector that is not just important to Western Australia but critical to the success of this state in so many ways.

Having a strong, healthy and positive working relationship between the state government and local government is critical to the delivery of the many services. Together with the minister, I will continue to champion the cause of local government by giving it the necessary support and making legislative changes so that it can raise the bar and deliver to the next level. Our communities are getting bigger, more complex and more informed, and they have more access to information. They have much higher expectations of all tiers of government, not just the state government and federal government. The demands on local government are increasing more and more every year. It is important to make sure that we acknowledge that. That legislative change, through not just the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017 but also the Local Government Act, is critical to the future success of local governments in an ever-changing world. The world is changing very quickly and people have much higher and different expectations. We have an ageing population. We are all grappling with a range of factors nowadays to try to come up with solutions. No one tier of government has all the answers. We need to make sure that we have all the expertise through not just the government sector, but also the private sector and the community so we can harness that wealth of knowledge to achieve the outcomes that we need.

[Quorum formed.]

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I am glad that the members who were present in the chamber were so engaged with my speech that they thought it was important for others to listen as well. It is an important topic and I have no doubt that many members in this chamber will contribute to this bill, no doubt from a personal experience, having worked in local government. They can talk of the financial difficulties that they have experienced over the years and maybe some of their personal insights and experiences, which, hopefully, will go a long way to shaping future legislative reform in this house. It is very, very important.

When we first came back to Parliament, I bumped into the minister in the corridor and said that I was very eager to see the Local Government Amendment Bill 2016, which lapsed in the last Parliament, brought back by the new government. I was seeking his support for that bill.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Which one?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I am talking about this bill.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I've done exactly what you've asked.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The minister delivered on that result.

Mr D.A. Templeman: See how much influence you've got!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is good to hear. I pulled out both bills and looked at them to make sure there were no major alterations or changes.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I was going to try to slide in the demise of the parliamentary superannuation scheme, but I couldn't quite find an angle.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The minister would have got a lot of support from most members on this side of the house for that.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I think we would have had the support of most members on both sides of the house.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The only fundamental difference between the two bills is that this Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017 includes regional subsidiaries, which the 2016 bill did not have because we obviously passed legislation in 2016 relating to regional subsidiaries so they needed to be added to the 2017 bill. It is also important to note that up to this point, I do not think a regional subsidiary has been established. I know from speaking to people in the sector that they have some concerns about regional subsidiaries in the way the regulations are being put together. The department is reading the second reading speech in a particular way, which is discouraging the sector from creating regional subsidiaries. The department said that under the current regulations, unless changes are made, it doubts that a regional subsidiary will be put together. I put that on the record for the minister to take note of if he has not already heard that from the sector. A couple of people came to see me and said that they had some issues in that area and they wanted the minister's help to make sure they became a reality rather than a piece of legislation that passes through this Parliament and does not achieve an outcome. I do not profess to be an expert in that area but I had a general discussion when I raised that concern.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Regional subsidiaries were gazetted only in January but I agree; I am encouraging the model to be used.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: There needs to be some re-tweaking. They said that there were some issues with the regulations. Maybe the minister can take that on board and talk to people in the sector who know in a bit more detail the exact complications of the set-up of that structure. I believe that the view is that they were fine with the legislation and the second reading speech, but the way it has been interpreted by the department has caused it to put these restrictions on it, which basically make it turn away from that particular model. If we want to encourage that, it is important to look at the inhibitors to that succeeding. Hopefully, just a stroke of the pen by the minister should fix that very easily.

It is also important to note the second reading speech, in which the minister spoke about the McGowan government being committed to good and just government for the benefit of all Western Australians. He went on to talk about transparency and accountability of local governments. From speaking to people in local government, they expect the same level of transparency and accountability from state government as we expect from them.

Mr J.N. Carey: We have absolutely more than local government.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is good. I am just saying that members of local government I speak to say that they think the microscope is put on local government a bit more and not so much on state governments.

Mr J.N. Carey: That's their form of defence for not supporting measures.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I support reform and lots of measures that need to be included. The member is right. I have not heard any complaints about the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill. From what I have been able to ascertain, a majority of the stakeholders in the sector that I was able to talk to are very supportive of this bill. It is also important to note the hard work that was done by the previous government and former ministers in bringing this bill to Parliament in 2016, but then obviously it did not get through. On that note, I would like to say that after I was elected in September 2008, I became a member of the Public Accounts Committee in 2009. One of the first things I did on that committee was to speak to the staff and ask, "What's going on with local government? How come the Auditor General isn't looking at this? Can we do an inquiry?" It was one of the first things I kicked off. They said to me, "Well, an inquiry was done back in 2006", and —

Mr J.N. Carey: It didn't go anywhere!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is right; it did not go anywhere. I suppose many state governments have allowed that to lapse along the way, but when I became aware of that inquiry, I got a copy of the report and went to the then Minister for Local Government, John Castrilli, and said, “Hey, did you know that this had been done?” I do not want to mislead the Parliament; I am not sure whether he was or was not familiar with it at the time, but I gave him a copy of the report and I spoke to subsequent local government ministers to say that I thought it was very important and that we needed to do some work in the area—not just for the sake of the ratepayers, but also for the sake of the sector, the councillors and the local government officers. It needed to be looked at more vigorously because it was an important piece of legislation. I quietly pushed that ball along and it took a long time for the ball to eventually roll into Parliament in 2016. Obviously, I am glad that the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017 is one of the first pieces of legislation to come into the Parliament in 2017. I think it will go a long way towards helping the sector.

We know that there are 137 local governments out there, not counting Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands—we need to acknowledge them as well—but there are 137 mainland local governments and Christmas and Cocos Islands. I am not sure whether the Auditor General will be flying out to the Christmas or Cocos Islands to do any audits anytime soon —

Mr D.A. Templeman: If he does, I’ll be going with him!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Yes! Of course, there are also nine regional councils, so it is a big sector. There is a huge cross-section of expertise and complexities, because every local council has its own issues and factors to deal with, whether it be the tyranny of distance for country and regional councils or the City of Stirling being the largest council in Western Australia. Obviously, there is also our capital city —

Mr J.N. Carey: Too big!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That debate has come and gone, so we move on.

Mr J.N. Carey: You killed it! You slaughtered it!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I just know that there are many different councils, and when one talks to those councils, they will give reasons why their particular model is the best model and why other models may not be as good and should reflect theirs. Again, that is a debate for the sector to have and obviously it is for the state government to make sure that the sector is supported as much as possible in what it needs to do, but obviously the sector itself needs to ensure its own financial sustainability and the models within which it works, because it needs to deliver to the community. That is something on which the state government can work in collaboration with the sector to try to make sure that we get the best outcomes.

More than \$2 billion in rates are collected by the sector and it also receives more than \$280 million in financial assistance grants each year, so a huge amount of money comes into that sector and is reinvested in the community in many different ways. When I was first elected, Hon George Strickland came into my office and told me how the City of Stirling was a debt-free council and was one of the most financially sound councils in Australia because when he was there as mayor, he had established that protocol. I can only repeat what he said to me at the time about how proud he was of the work that he had done at the City of Stirling. I am sure that the member for Balcatta will agree that many of the councillors who have come through the City of Stirling have made it the council that it is today, and they have done a great job. A lot of them have gone on to bigger and better things, so that is obviously testament to some of the good things that have been done in that council.

In saying that, councils are bureaucracies and they sometimes forget who they service —

Mr J.N. Carey: That’s an understatement! Are you kidding? That’s an understatement about local government!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I am not here to be harsh! I will leave that to people with more expertise!

Mr J.N. Carey: Are you kidding me? As I say, they are like an episode of *Little Britain*—“computer says no”! The City of Perth won’t even abolish alfresco fees. It’s a farce.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: It is; that is right. That is where things need to be changed and improved. Local governments need to move into the modern age in many different ways. The minister spoke about younger people and diversity in councils; some councils maybe have not had generational change for many, many years —

Mr J.N. Carey: You are the king of understatement today!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I am! But I am not here to be harsh about the local government sector or to critique —

Dr A.D. Buti: Just be honest.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Exactly; that is what I am doing. I am being honest in a gentle way. I am not here to throw stones or make assertions; I am —

Mr J.N. Carey: What about an honest assessment?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I will leave that to people who have been in the sector for a long time. I know what I know only from my dealings with the City of Stirling and the City of Joondalup over the last nine years and from what I have observed through the media and parliamentary debate and through talking to people in local government. There are lots of things people have told me, I suppose; I am not sure whether I would want to share them all here in Parliament because, as with anything, if people keep things to themselves, others tell them more, and that is usually a good thing. If they want to learn more —

Mr J.N. Carey: So this is your approach to politics!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: No, it is not! It is about learning and understanding and using that knowledge in a constructive way to try to get outcomes without alienating people, and it has worked a lot in my life—working with people rather than against them and trying to work in a more collaborative way. Ultimately, it is not about throwing stones. I know that that is predominantly what we do in this place, and we try to beat each other down, but in reality we are trying to achieve something positive and constructive for the community. I know that people out there in voterland do not appreciate some of the behaviour in here, such as the stone throwing. They want to know about solutions, they want to hear the positive side of things and they want to see improvements, and that is what this legislation is part of. Local governments, collectively, have an asset base of some \$40 billion; I am sure the state government would be happy to see that sort of positive growth in its asset base for its financial sustainability. Local governments also employ some 16 000 staff, so they are also a great employer in our community. Again, from talking to people who work in the local government sector, I know that they are paid very well and looked after very well and they do not have any complaints about their terms and conditions of employment, so —

Mr J.N. Carey: Again, an understatement!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: It is an understatement! Of course, they are very happy, and I know —

Mr J.N. Carey: Some of the CEOs have been there for 20 years.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I am not talking about just CEOs; I am talking about staff and all levels —

Mr J.N. Carey: And senior directors.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Some senior directors have been there for a long time. One has to ask oneself: where do the changes need to be made? Obviously, the second reading debate on an auditing bill is not the forum for that question, but a review of the Local Government Act will go a long way towards looking at that question. The minister has some big challenges ahead of him in getting this legislation right for the future, but he can be confident of my support and guidance, where I can offer it.

Mr J.N. Carey: I look forward to your support of transparency in the City of Perth!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Transparency is definitely critical; there is no doubt about that. I am definitely keen on that; there is no doubt about it. The fact that we have acknowledged the remuneration of mayors and councillors, the hard work and hours that they put in, and the professionalism that is required to be a councillor is testament to where the sector is going, but we obviously need to do a lot more. The sector needs to become more agile and, as the member for Perth is so keen on this area, I am sure that he will help drive some positive changes through the minister to make sure that some of these areas I have raised—in a gentle way!—are resolved and can be —

Mr D.A. Templeman: You are a clean and gentle member!

Mr J.N. Carey interjected.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is up to the minister. I can only bring issues to the minister's attention, as I have with the regional subsidiaries. I can give the minister only support to beat the drum. If he is leading the charge, I am sure a lot of us will be behind him watching him fight through the jungle of complexities out there. I am sure the local government sector will embrace the minister.

This bill is about the Auditor General. The Auditor General reports to Parliament and reviews government agencies and trading enterprises. Obviously, the Auditor General is one of the most professional people and heads one of the most competent agencies in this state that reviews many different areas of state government responsibility. I always look forward to the Auditor General's reports coming to this Parliament. I mostly enjoy the reports in which the Auditor General refers to ministers not wanting to share information and his assessments of whether that information is cabinet-in-confidence. My view is that we very much need to be open, accountable and transparent on every level, especially ministers. If there is anything we want to hide from Parliament, maybe it is something that we should not be doing. If we cannot mention something in this place, it is not appropriate in the first place to be doing it and it is the wrong decision. That is my view of the world; maybe not everyone has that view of the world. I am here to try to get some positive outcomes and serve the people of Western Australia as best as I can.

It is important to note that the Auditor General's role will be to supervise the audits. The Auditor General indicated to me that roughly 10 per cent of audits will be conducted by the Office of the Auditor General and about 90 per cent will be outsourced. Of course, there will be a transition period in which this will come to fruition. All existing council contracts will be nullified in 2020–21 and all audits will come under the direct control of the Auditor General. I think it is good to have that transition period. As we know, there are two main sorts of audit: financial audits and performance audits. One might say that the sector's problems over many years have been in its performance area rather than necessarily its financial area, but, obviously, for various reasons, there have been situations in both. I will go through that very shortly. Financial audits will be paid for by the councils, which I think is appropriate. In the past, some councils have gone for the cheapest quote to get an audit done and kept the scope of the audit very narrow. If they get the cheapest and the narrowest audit, they are definitely not getting the best. There is no doubt about that when it comes to getting auditors in or professionals of that standard. It is great that the Auditor General will be able to set the parameters of the audit and review the work the auditors are doing to make sure that they are meeting his standards—his standards are very, very high. It is great that he will do that.

Performance audits will be done by the Auditor General. Obviously, the Auditor General will need money—a budget—and resources to do that. I assume that we are talking in the millions of dollars for what may be necessary. Performance audits will be done over time, but we need to do a lot more upfront, because, as has been indicated by many members in this house, which I am sure will be debated over the next day and a half, there are lots of areas that need improvement. The sooner the better that performance audits can be done across the sector, especially in procurement, because it will go a long way towards building some confidence back into the sector as a result of the Corruption and Crime Commission reports over a number of years that have tarnished the sector to a degree; albeit, lots of councils are doing the right thing. Once a number of councils are hauled over the coals, I suppose the sector gets tarnished. That is when benchmarking and comparisons will come into play for the councils. Obviously, the MyCouncil website is a perfect example of a way for people to get information on and compare councils, and to see some of the councils' key data. I have been to council meetings at the City of Stirling and its financial statements and lodged documents make the text of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* look small. I have my glasses here, but I need a magnifying glass sometimes to see the font used in some of these financial records; it is a little bit hard to see. I am not sure whether it is the size of the font or me needing glasses earlier than I thought; albeit, I am not wearing them at the moment. That is interesting. Of course, publishing audit results on an official website and making the process available and transparent is very, very important. Again, all aspects of local government should be transparent. They should be published on a website and available to ratepayers, because there should be nothing to hide.

Mr J.N. Carey: But they refuse to! Councils vote down having online registers all the time.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is ridiculous, and hopefully we in Parliament —

Mr J.N. Carey: The City of Perth consistently voted against it, and they are all your mates.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: They are not my mates.

Mr J.N. Carey: It's a Liberal-majority council. A Liberal-majority council voted against transparency before—your mates.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I did not see the debate on that issue. If councils are not doing the right thing, I would be happy to support the minister to amend that part of the act to allow for that transparency. That is not an issue and the member for Perth should try to understand that I am not a former councillor and I have my views and I am expressing my views here. I think it is inappropriate for councils not to share information openly and honestly. If someone were to ask me for my advice, I would say: do it, be transparent, be open and be honest.

Mr T.J. Healy: Are you instructing the council?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I am instructing all councillors—right here, right now.

Mr J.N. Carey interjected.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Mr Acting Speaker, I have only 32 minutes left and I have hardly had any time to get into the debate to any significance. Can I please have some protection against the savage member for Perth who keeps interjecting?

Mr W.R. Marmion: He's only on page 1.

Mr J.N. Carey: Finish off your speech.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I look forward to hearing the member's contribution to the debate.

Mr J.N. Carey: I've written a paper on it.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Member for Carine, direct your comments through the Chair, please.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: My pleasure, Mr Acting Speaker. The Acting Speaker's level of enthusiasm listening to this speech is duly noted.

It is important to note that all the auditors that will get jobs in this sector—the Auditor General will decide which auditors will get which jobs for which councils—will need to be accredited by the Office of the Auditor General. At the moment, only about half of auditors are accredited to meet the standards required to audit the local government sector. That may be an issue for some regional firms, which may need to do some upskilling. The Office of the Auditor General is there to help regional councils in that respect. I think one of the big issues will be with regional councils and how to support them in this process. The Auditor General is the auditor of last resort. If a regional council cannot get an auditor, the Auditor General will need to do the audit, which may well push up costs, because the Auditor General may need to fly people to remote areas and provide for accommodation and additional costs. I know that the costs associated with audits are a concern of some smaller councils in the regions. I am told the Auditor General charges very fairly and he will discuss fees and charges with the relevant auditors, but when the Auditor General needs to be involved, there may be an issue with costs. I know that he charges only for cost recovery, so that is good. The Auditor General will also need resources to supervise all these audits and to report to Parliament. He will need to be furnished with perhaps half a dozen staff to cope with the financial audit aspect. We talked about cost recovery, which is very important. It is important that the Auditor General has the final say on the audits. We do not want anyone to interfere in any way, shape or form with the process around who should get the job. I know that the Auditor General's focus will be on buying local wherever possible, which is good. The Department of Local Government and Communities probably needs to step up a little here as well to help councils transition through this period. I know that training and other issues are going to be important —

Mr J.N. Carey: Does the member support mandatory training?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I do support mandatory training. It is very important and critical to the process because, at the end of the day, councils —

Mr J.N. Carey interjected.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Mr Acting Speaker, I am being verbally by the member for Perth again.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Yes, member for Perth!

Mr J.N. Carey: The member does not support it.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I do support training.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Perth, please give the member for Carine the opportunity.

Mr J.N. Carey: I was making his speech more interesting.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Thank you very much. I look forward to contributing to the member's speech as well. Perhaps when he speaks, I will be harsher with my comments.

Another important component that has probably let councils down over the years is the audit committee, and I will go through some examples. Some councils did not even form audit committees or were discouraged from forming them. An audit committee obviously plays an important role and is made up of three members—generally three councillors. Those people may have no idea of what an audit committee does until they meet on the first day and are told what their roles and responsibilities are. They may have no background or knowledge in financial dealings, statements or responsibilities. I suggest it would be difficult at best for them to fulfil that role properly. It is important that audit committee members have the right skill base and for one member of the committee to be an independent person—someone who is external to the council would be even better. I am sure that members opposite would support the idea that it is important to have on the audit committee not only people with independent oversight, expertise and professionalism, but also people who have received compulsory training to understand their role and what an audit committee does to make sure they provide oversight on the activities of the chief executive officer, the officers and the financials of the council. Again, that is critical.

I want to quickly touch on a couple of things that we are obviously all familiar with. I want to touch on some of the reports of the Corruption and Crime Commission and their findings. I will not say that these findings have brought us here today, because we have been heading in this direction for a long time. Unfortunately, we have not got here as quickly as we should have. These reports and other pressures have encouraged us to get to where we are with this Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017. I look forward to it passing through Parliament. I will not make too many comments about some of these examples because some of them are yet to go through the courts. I do not want to make any statements beyond highlighting what has occurred and then drawing the obvious link between these events and the benefits of the Auditor General having control over the auditing of a council's accounts and the effect that that will have on these things not occurring in future, which is very important.

It beggars belief how some of these events were allowed to occur. The first one involves the Shire of Dowerin. In October 2016, the CCC came out with its report and I will just refresh members' memories on it. I will not labour over too many points but I will touch on some of the key points in the report. It states —

- (1) On the morning of 6 October 2015, Ms Sonia King, Finance Manager for the Shire of Dowerin, received a disturbing telephone call from the fraud prevention unit of the National Australia Bank ... The caller advised that a Shire credit card had been used to pay into gambling accounts. Ms King and the Deputy President, Mr Ralph, immediately notified the Commission that serious misconduct was suspected.

It was very admirable behaviour on their behalf to get straight onto the commission when that occurred. The report states —

- (3) In June 2008, the Shire of Dowerin employed Mr Dacre Alcock as CEO ...
- (4) For four years, from 2011 until he was arrested in October 2015, he stole almost \$600,000 over 665 occasions. His actions went unnoticed until the phone call.

It is amazing that for some four years, a small regional council failed to discover anything wrong with the accounts—\$600 000 over 665 occasions. The report states —

- (6) The embezzlement occurred over four years. Successive audits had failed to discover anything wrong with the accounts.

That is amazing—successive audits! That just shows how urgent the need is for the Auditor General to be working in this sector. The report states —

- (11) The evidence showed breathtaking levels of ignorance as to the role and responsibility of councillors over the governance of a CEO. If there had been proper policies in place, if the Council had complied with the Local Government Act 1995 ... and appointed an audit committee—

It did not have an audit committee —

if the auditors had asked for or simply glanced at the credit card statements—

It does not take Einstein to work out these things.

which Mr Alcock kept to himself, the probabilities are that the embezzlement would have been discovered much sooner and the losses mitigated.

...

Dowerin was not vigilant and had few policies. All the blame cannot be laid at the auditors' feet.

It is interesting to note that the commissioner said that the blame cannot be with the auditor. At the end of the report the commissioner stated —

What happened in Dowerin over four years is a cautionary tale and a warning to other local authorities.

Going by what the Corruption and Crime Commissioner said, Dowerin has learnt its lesson. This is an example of what can happen when there is no audit committee. The councillors did not have oversight of the CEO's activities. It is a very interesting example of what can occur.

A more recent example occurred in the Shire of Exmouth in May 2017. Just quickly, the CCC report states —

- (1) Mr Bill Price was appointed CEO of the Shire of Exmouth in July 2010.
- (2) By 2016, any good that he had done was overshadowed by his arrogation of power. He was a law unto himself.
- (3) Mr Price approved his own leave, sometimes not even logging it. Away from Exmouth, he misused his Exmouth corporate credit card for his own benefit.
- (4) He had agreed to rental arrangements to enable his friend and employee, Mr Andrew Forte, to reduce his income tax ...
- (5) Well aware of the legal prohibition on doing so, Mr Price signed a contract for over \$1 million with a company without assets and without carrying out any due diligence ...
- (6) To cover up this wrongdoing, Mr Price created a false document and presented it to Council.
- (7) Meanwhile the Council, which is supposed to exercise oversight, did nothing ...

...

- (12) As a direct result of the examinations, the Hon. Paul Miles, Minister for Local Government ... took decisive action.
- (13) Mr Price was dismissed as CEO by Council in December 2016. The Council was suspended ...

Obviously, the Minister for Local Government recently spoke in this place about what is going on. In conclusion, the report states —

Mr Price's actions in enriching himself at Exmouth's expense illustrate ... weakness in controls over CEOs. It must be acknowledged there is limited ability for a council, even when conscientiously carrying out an annual performance review, to properly supervise a CEO who disregards the policies and procedures and who deliberately lies to council.

That just goes to show that councillors need more power to interrogate and oversee the activities of the CEO. Councillors have frequently said to me that it is difficult to deal with some strong CEOs because they wave the act at them and say, "You don't have the right because that's an administrative —

Mr J.N. Carey: Some CEOs mislead their councillors about what information they can get. That is disgraceful.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is right. It is a disgrace. CEOs are very highly paid.

Mr J.N. Carey: Some are a law unto their own.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Yes, they are. That is very true. That may be because, again, councillors are not trained, councillors are not aware, and councillors are not informed by an independent body. There is no doubt that councillors may also be limited by the Local Government Act. I have heard that said frequently. There is no doubt that this needs to be looked at seriously. Many councillors have come to me over the years and commented on that. Obviously, the member for Perth is very passionate about the City of Perth and the saga that is going on in that council.

Mr J.N. Carey: So are the residents and small businesses.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Obviously, everyone is concerned about that. I will not labour that point, because that is currently going through the process. I have made my views known previously on what I think should happen there.

Mr J.N. Carey: Sack the council!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The now Minister for Local Government had indicated prior to coming to government that the council of the City of Perth should be sacked, and he had criticised a succession of ministers for not doing their job.

Mr J.N. Carey interjected.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I have not been a local government councillor. The now minister was a councillor and a deputy mayor. I assume he would have been across the act when he made those statements as the shadow minister about what the then Minister for Local Government should and should not be doing. Assuming the now minister's statements in opposition are correct, one wonders why the minister has not taken decisive action. I am not here to criticise the minister, because I understand —

Mr J.N. Carey interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Member for Perth, please allow the member for Carine to continue uninterrupted.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I am not here to criticise the minister for what he said in the past and what he is doing now. That is not what this bill is about. This bill is about trying to work together in a more positive way. The minister now has the mantle. If the power to achieve what he wanted us to achieve was not there previously, then, yes, maybe we should have reviewed the Local Government Act sooner. I think 1995 was the last time that act was reviewed. When we look at a lot of the legislation that is enacted in this Parliament, that is not that long ago. In saying that, I agree that the act does need to be reviewed; that is always a factor.

In February 2015, the Corruption and Crime Commission released a report titled "Report on Misconduct Risk in Local Government Procurement". Procurement is a big concern for the Auditor General and for the community. It is obvious from some of the examples in the report that a lot of councils are touched by the problem of procurement. The City of Stirling had a problem over a seven-year period with fraud in the procurement process. The Town of Cottesloe, the Shire of Murchison, the Shire of Kalamunda and the City of Bayswater also had a problem with procurement. The report states in part —

In the Commission's view these investigations indicate a systemic weakness across the local government sector. In 2013–2014 the Commission undertook 13 investigations into allegations of serious misconduct in local governments. Eight of those were into procurement related misconduct and/or revealed serious flaws in the management of procurement by a local government.

When we read some of the examples included in the report, it beggars belief.

Mr J.N. Carey: The local government sector says it is best practice.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: If this is best practice, we are in trouble; that is all I can say. This is definitely not best practice. I think it goes without saying that all members of this place have a great deal of interaction with their local council. A lot of people come into our office to raise issues with us, and even if we have not been councillors in a previous life, we roll our eyes when we see some of the decisions and barriers that are put in the way of the community. That is particularly important when we consider that the local government sector prides itself on being the closest to and most in touch with the community. It is clear from some of the decisions made by local governments that they could not be more disconnected from their community or more wrong in what they are doing. In some cases, it seems as though they are trying to make a profit out of their community. If it was only cost recovery, one would say okay. There are serious concerns about the focus of many local governments. I have noticed that councils seem to be shifting away from their core activities and getting involved in national debates, such as whether the day on which we celebrate Australia Day should be changed. I do not think that is necessarily how councils should spend their time and effort. When I look at the micro level in my community, a lot more needs to be done at that level.

Mr J.N. Carey: Abolishing al fresco dining fees!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Exactly. I like al fresco dining. The member is correct. I said earlier this week that in these tough economic times, councils need to be more aware of their fees and charges, and their rate increases. Sometimes councils pride themselves on not having huge rate increases. However, there is an issue with the cents-in-the-dollar rate, which is a different figure from the percentage that we are given.

Mr J.N. Carey: It is the in-dollar rate that is important.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is exactly right. It is the in-dollar figure that is important, not the percentage. Councils need to be transparent and honest and tell their ratepayers the in-dollar figure by which rates are going up. Those members who have been in local government will know this better than I do, but one would assume that councils work out how much they need to spend, how much they need to pay their staff, what pay increases they want to give their staff, and how much they want to pay their CEO, and then work out by how much they need to increase rates to pay for what they want to do. It is an inverse model from that point of view. That is how they determine what rates they will charge. That is opposed to looking at where they can tighten things up, where they can improve services, where they can work on a regional basis, where there are opportunities for improvements or efficiencies, and whether they need to give their staff a 2.5 per cent pay rise every year. I will use the City of Stirling as an example because that is a council I am familiar with.

Mr J.N. Carey: They give a bonus to their CEO every year.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The staff at the City of Stirling recently entered into an enterprise bargaining agreement under which they will get a 2.5 per cent pay rise every year. That is 2.5 per cent, market value, or CPI, whichever is the highest. In other words, it is a minimum of 2.5 per cent, or market rate, or CPI. I think they have now also gone to a nine-day fortnight. We had some discussion in this house yesterday about the concession on motor vehicles. I think the City of Stirling has 551 motor vehicles. That is not counting their light and heavy vehicles. I would say that almost everyone who is employed by the City of Stirling gets a free car. I could be wrong.

Mr J.N. Carey: Ask about the mayor's car!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: I know that in this place I am not allowed to drive a Merc—it is not a good look.

From that point of view, a lot more needs to be done to improve the transparency of local government across many different levels. I look forward to the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill setting a new standard for local councils. I realise this is only the first step in that process. In 2006, the Public Accounts Committee presented a report titled "Local Government Accountability in Western Australia". The now Attorney General was Chair of the Public Accounts Committee at that time. Our hardworking Treasurer was on that committee as well.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: That was 2006 or 2007.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: It was 2006, yes.

Several members interjected.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: It has taken a long time. In 2015, the Public Accounts Committee presented a report titled "Improving Local government Accountability". That report was presented by the now leader of opposition business. That report reinforced the good work that was done by the committee in 2006. Unlike the Public Accounts Committee in 2006, the Public Accounts Committee in 2015 did not travel around Australia to do its inquiries. I am sure that New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria were able to provide good insight. I am not criticising. It is good to travel; it is good to see what others are doing.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: I think I came in halfway through.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The Treasurer might have missed out on that. Some good recommendations were made. Interestingly enough, this Auditor General's report does not cover compliance audit returns. I note the reports of 2006 and 2015.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 1957.]

VISITORS — GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): I would like to welcome to the Speaker's gallery today, Rohan Kapoor and students from the Good Shepherd Catholic School in Lockridge. We welcome them to the chamber today.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE — RECRUITMENT

226. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Police:

Did the minister —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms M.M. Quirk: Didn't you go home last night; you've got the same pashmina on today?

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

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am pleased the member for Girrawheen is so interested in my wardrobe!

Did the minister or any of her staff approach, or is she aware that any government ministers, members or staff approached, the Public Sector Commissioner or the merit panel to expand the shortlist of interviewees for the position of Commissioner of Police from six to 10 or any other number?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

No. I am not aware of anyone doing that, and, as I understand it, nor is the Public Sector Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE — RECRUITMENT

227. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Police:

I have a supplementary question. To confirm, is the minister saying that the Public Sector Commissioner unilaterally initiated the expansion of the interview shortlist, without prompting or prior engagement?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

That question would have been better addressed to the Public Sector Commissioner.

SCHOOLS — ELECTRONIC SPEED ZONE SIGNS — FUNDING

228. Mr R.R. WHITBY to the Treasurer:

I refer to funding for flashing speed signs outside schools. Was there a funding shortfall for those speed signs; and, if so, how did that occur?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

I thank the member for the Baldivis for the question.

I was not aware that there may have been some funding problems with the flashing speed signs outside schools or the maintenance thereof until I asked Treasury for some advice. Also, the Minister for Road Safety expressed some interest in the fact that, quite unusually, very late in the term of the former government, just before the caretaker period, an interesting arrangement was entered into between the Road Safety Commission and Western Force. I was surprised at the time because it was a significant sponsorship package and I was unsure of the road safety implications, because sponsoring a tier 1 sporting code is probably outside the core activities of the Road Safety Commission. Members cannot imagine my surprise when Treasury came back with its report, which I forwarded to the good Minister for Road Safety. I want to read in a couple of points from that report. It states —

Treasury was not aware that the RSC was considering the Partnership prior to the former Minister's —

That is the member for Scarborough —

announcement, and was not consulted (either formally or informally) in the development or assessment of any supporting documentation. It was not raised during the 2016–17 Mid-year Review or put before the former Government's final two Cabinet meetings in December 2016 and January 2017.

Furthermore, at no stage has Treasury provided advice indicating that it would be supportive or that it would be appropriate for additional campaigns, including the Partnership, to be funded through the use of the Road Trauma Trust Account ... project underspends.

One of the interesting things that the Treasury report to me highlighted was this fact, and I quote again —

Main Roads WA has confirmed that savings have been achieved in the Electronic School Zone Project. However, it has also highlighted that there is urgent maintenance required on a number of the Electronic School Zone signs and it is likely to seek RTTA funding in 2017–18 to ensure they remain in proper working order.

Of course, the former government, unbeknownst to Treasury, in the dying days of the former government made the decision, somehow, to take \$1.5 million and give that to the Western Force. The business case upon which that was based, interestingly enough at exactly the same time as the ministerial advice to proceed with it, was presented to the RSC. This is what Treasury had to say about that business case. It states —

Treasury has reviewed the Partnership Proposal and business case and offers the following comments: —

There are a range of comments, but I will highlight a couple —

- As with previous campaign proposals submitted by the RSC, the business case does not propose impacts on road safety to be realised through the Partnership.
- The claimed 178% rate of return on the \$1.5 million investment is not substantiated with adequate supporting evidence or sufficient detail of the value of the individual components.

Further, it states —

- It is concerning that the business case does not contrast the proposed use of RTTA resources for the Partnership with other road safety strategies, such as road infrastructure improvements, enforcement activity or traditional education campaigns.

Finally, it states —

... Treasury would not have recommended this reallocation of RTTA expenditure based on the proposal presented.

I make the point that without any form of cabinet endorsement, without any role of Treasury and without any credible explanation of exactly how \$1.5 million from the RTTA was going to influence road safety, the former government somehow concocted a case upon which it threw \$1.5 million —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr B.S. WYATT: Sorry?

Several members interjected.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I thought something was said from the other side. It threw \$1.5 million to the Western Force.

Tabling of Paper

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Could the Treasurer table the document he has been reading from?

Mr B.S. WYATT: Is the Leader of the Opposition sure?

Dr M.D. Nahan: I am very sure.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I want to ensure that the Leader of the Opposition is sure.

The SPEAKER: Member!

Mr B.S. WYATT: Mr Speaker, I would be delighted to table the document. Just give me one more moment until I finish the words I have to say. Actually, take it now.

[See paper 384.]

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr B.S. WYATT: We remember the former government's actions in a range of areas. We have heard the Premier talk about the Lotterywest slush fund used by the former government and we remember the Vasse by-election, do we not, member for Vasse? Similarly, with the road trauma trust account, there was no interest in road safety outcomes; it was just simply to get its name up in lights.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE — RECRUITMENT

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

Did the Premier or any of his staff approach, or is he aware of any government members or staff approaching, the Public Sector Commissioner or the merit panel to expand the shortlist of interviewees for the position of the Commissioner of Police from six to 10 or any other number?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

No. I am unaware of any such approaches.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE — RECRUITMENT

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

I have a supplementary question. The Premier expects us to believe that the Public Sector Commissioner —
Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The Premier expects us to believe that the Public Sector Commissioner, a person with 40 years' experience —

Point of Order

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I refer to standing order 77(1)(b). The supplementary question by the Leader of the Opposition contains allegations, inference, imputation and argument.

The SPEAKER: We have not heard the question yet, so once we hear the question, I will make a ruling.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The Premier expects us to believe a person of 40 years' experience —

Ms M.M. Quirk: You expect us to believe?

The SPEAKER: I beg your pardon, member for Girrawheen? Are you querying my judgement?

Ms M.M. Quirk: Absolutely not, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: I will give you a second call to order just in case.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I will start again. In response to the Premier's last answer, does he expect us to believe that the Public Sector Commissioner, a person with 40 years' experience and nine years as Public Sector Commissioner, first, culls the interview applicants to six and then, by his own willingness, expands it to 10?

The SPEAKER: Member, can you get to the question, please?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: He expands it back to 10 without the Premier's involvement.

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I have answered the question honestly. I had no involvement. I have had no involvement in expanding any list or anything of that nature. The Public Sector Commissioner is running a process. He advised me on Saturday morning that the entire process was completely aboveboard. He advised me again yesterday that the entire process is completely aboveboard, and the Leader of the Opposition is impugning his integrity with this line of questioning.

Dr M.D. Nahan: I'm questioning your actions, and your behaviour.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member's questioning is odd, strange, full of conspiracy theories and not based upon fact.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Did you have any hand in expanding the panel?

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have answered the question, and I have consulted the commissioner, as I should, on two occasions in relation to it.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

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

Mr M. McGOWAN: To that extent, he consulted me on two occasions in relation to it. In light of the answer just given by the Treasurer, I think the Leader of the Opposition is the one who has questions to answer here today. He and the deputy Liberal leader are the people with questions to answer here today, when it turns out that a sponsorship arrangement was entered into the day before the caretaker period without going to cabinet, and Treasury has serious concerns about it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: All I can hear is a wall of noise. You asked a question; just listen to the answer please.

Mr M. McGOWAN: What is completely instructive in this issue —

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

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

Mr M. McGOWAN: I think what is completely instructive in relation to this issue is that the first two questions today do not ask a question about it. I would have thought this might be the question the Leader of the Opposition might ask, but I note he did not ask a question.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

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

Mr M. McGOWAN: I think the Leader of the Opposition has not asked a question on these issues because he has something to hide in relation to this sponsorship deal. I would urge the independent Langouant inquiry to get to the bottom of what went on in relation to that sponsorship deal.

GOVERNMENT INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS —
CYBERSECURITY

231. Mr Y. MUBARAKAI to the Minister for Innovation and ICT:

I refer to the ongoing ransomware attacks that have struck computer systems across the world in the past 24 hours. Have any information and communications technology systems of the Western Australian government been impacted by the attacks; and what is this government doing to address cybersecurity issues?

Mr D.J. KELLY replied:

I thank the member for Jandakot for his question. Most members would be aware that we are currently, around the world, dealing with another ransomware attack—the Petya attack. I am advised that, to date, no Western Australian government agencies have been penetrated by this ransomware. There is evidence in at least one agency that that bit of malware, or ransomware, has been detected, but the security protocols in place have prevented that bit of ransomware from entering the system. We are fortunate that the current cyberattack is based upon the same vulnerability that the earlier WannaCry ransomware attack used a few months ago, and our systems successfully repelled that attack. I might say that we were very fortunate that on that occasion the ransomware attack occurred on a Friday night, so our systems were down. I am advised that we would have been much more vulnerable had that ransomware attacked our systems during the day on an ordinary business day.

Since becoming minister, I have looked at our preparedness for these types of attacks and digital security in general, and I am disturbed that the Auditor General has released not one, but eight annual reports under the previous government that have all indicated that, as a public sector entity, we are not well prepared in the areas of digital security. In information protection, one of the criteria that the Auditor General checks, only 40 per cent of our agencies meet the required standard. Over the eight years that the Auditor General has done those reports, there has been virtually no improvement in that area. Information that the government holds is not protected to the satisfaction of the Auditor General, and for eight years the previous government did nothing. The Auditor General also released a specific malware report in December 2016. That report painted a very poor picture of the previous government’s performance—a lack of training, a lack of coordination and, importantly, a lack of a cross-government approach to digital security.

One of the first issues I raised with the Government Chief Information Officer was how we were to address, in particular, the most recent Auditor General’s report. As it would happen, we released today an updated digital security policy that improves significantly upon what was done under the previous government. It begins the implementation of the recommendations made by the Auditor General in this area. Further, the Premier has written to each minister urging them to ensure that the agencies they are responsible for take this issue seriously. The one thing that the previous government did was to create the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, but—surprise, surprise—it funded it for only three years, as though the question of cybersecurity was going to be dealt with within three years. Members opposite may be surprised to realise that the issue of digital security is not getting any easier. It is getting more complicated, and as a government we have an obligation to deal with it. Under this government, in its first 100 days, we are getting on with that job.

ROYALTIES FOR REGIONS — *BUDGET STATEMENTS*

232. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Treasurer:

In the interests of meeting the Treasurer’s own standards of running an open and transparent government, and the Premier’s campaign promise to maintain “every single cent of royalties for regions”, will the Treasurer commit to keeping a separate section of the budget papers detailing royalties for regions expenditure, as it is in its current form?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

It is all about a separate section of the budget, not so much about how much money is being spent, it would seem. It is all in the presentation rather than the programs, it would appear, which is why, when I wander around this great state, I keep seeing the National Party green on the royalties for regions signs, pretty much in every nook and cranny of regional Western Australia, to make the point that perhaps there might have been a political overtone to the way in which the previous government spent royalties for regions. The promise and the commitment of the Premier and the Labor Party is crystal clear. We are not changing the royalties for regions legislation; we are committed to that legislation and we are committed to royalties for regions, but we will be putting our priorities into royalties for regions. That is something that we made crystal clear, and I am working with the Minister for Regional Development almost every single day to ensure that our priorities get squeezed into that royalties for regions focus.

ROYALTIES FOR REGIONS — *BUDGET STATEMENTS***233. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Treasurer:**

I have a supplementary question. I take it that the Treasurer's answer to that question is no. Does he therefore concede that it is his intent to get rid of royalties for regions and bury it in the budget papers, where it is not open to the scrutiny of this Parliament or the public of Western Australia?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

Do I concede that I am therefore not committed? A double negative makes a positive, so I must be committed to royalties for regions. We are committed; we will be delivering royalties for regions.

Mr D.T. Redman: In this?

Mr B.S. WYATT: I know that document; it is an awful document. It tells me awful things about the fiscal management of the former government. We will be presenting our budget on 7 September—I wish I knew exactly how many days, because I have been wanting to say this for a long time. On 7 September, we will be delivering a budget, and all things that the Western Australian taxpayer funds—the budget—will be presented in that budget for all to see.

WATER SUPPLY

234. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Water:

I refer to the dry winter that Perth and the south west are experiencing and the impact it is having on our water supplies.

- (1) What is the current situation with WA's water supplies?
- (2) Is it true that the previous Liberal–National government droughtproofed Perth?
- (3) Is it true that there has been bipartisanship on water policy for the past decade?

Mr D.J. KELLY replied:

I thank the member for Murray–Wellington for that question.

- (1)–(3) It is no surprise, given the fantastic weather that we have had, that we are having an extraordinarily dry winter. Prior to 1975, 300 billion litres of water would fall out of the sky and run into our dams, and that basically supplied Perth. This year the runoff into our dams is 1.5 gigitalitres. That is a massive change. If the Water Corporation gets 25 gigitalitres —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr D.J. KELLY: The Leader of the National Party might want to listen to the answer.

The Water Corporation is now lucky to get 25 gigitalitres of water a year. The drying climate is having a terrible impact on our water supply. We are one of the three places on the planet most affected by climate change, but that is something we never heard from the previous government. We did not hear it from the former Minister for Water or the former Minister for Environment. In fact, after almost two decades of successive governments trying to send the message that we need to conserve our water, the previous Minister for Water claimed that we had droughtproofed Perth. What a disgraceful comment to make by a Minister for Water! Honestly, she will go down as probably the worst Minister for Water in two decades. To claim that we had droughtproofed Perth —

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for South Perth!

Mr D.J. KELLY: — was a grossly irresponsible statement. When she made that comment, I thought that that was just the National Party going a bit crazy—that was just a bit of National Party craziness. I was absolutely shocked when the then Treasurer, the now Leader of the Opposition, in a 2015 budget speech, repeated the claim that the then government had droughtproofed Perth. It had gone from being National Party fantasy to official government policy.

Those opposite have no idea of the impact that climate change is having on our climate. This morning I visited the Perth desalination plant—the plant that was opened by the Gallop and Carpenter Labor governments 10 years ago.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Carine, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr D.J. KELLY: The Perth desalination plant now provides almost 17 per cent of Perth water's supply—45 gigalitres. At the time, the then Leader of the Opposition, the member for Cottesloe, described this decision of the former Gallop Labor government as the worst option available to deal with Perth's water supply. In his previous career, the Leader of the Opposition predicted that the Perth desalination plant would be a monument to waste. He also said in the same quote that the Mandurah rail line would be a monument to waste.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, I will make a decision on whether the question or answer is too long. Anyone on the front bench who keeps interjecting and thinks I cannot see them because they have their hand up to their mouth will get called to order.

Mr D.J. KELLY: The current Leader of the Opposition clearly has no comprehension of the importance of these sorts of water measures and no comprehension of the current situation that Perth in particular faces with its water supply. Like many other policies that the Liberal Party had in the previous government, it should acknowledge that on water security, its claim to droughtproof Perth was probably the worst possible policy setting in the history of water policy in Western Australia.

ROAD SAFETY COMMISSIONER — KIM PAPALIA

235. **Dr M.D. NAHAN to the Premier:**

I refer to the Premier's comments yesterday that the Road Safety Commissioner, Kim Papalia, elected to depart of his own accord because he was unhappy with the machinery of government. I also note Gary Adshead's comments on 6PR this morning that he believes that the director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Darren Foster, contacted Mr Papalia late on Thursday night or Friday. What was the nature of that conversation or is the Premier again saying that Gary Adshead got it completely wrong?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Just to clarify, yesterday Mr Kim Papalia decided that he would no longer continue as the head of the Road Safety Commission. I learnt about that at a press conference when an ABC journalist read out some breaking news from her phone to me. I have subsequently learnt since yesterday morning that for some weeks Mr Papalia had been in discussions or at least indicated his intention to various people in the public sector that he was going to leave that position. To be honest, I learnt about it only yesterday. What I said yesterday was entirely true. That is the course of events. The reason he indicated his intention to leave for some weeks was that he was unhappy with the merging of the Road Safety Commission's back-office functions with police. He indicated that he did not want to go back into an organisation of that nature. The Leader of the Opposition's imputation that Mr Papalia has departed is wrong; he is still in the public sector.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I am more than happy to answer the Leader of the Opposition's question.

I understand that the acting director general spoke to Mr Papalia on Thursday evening. The reason he spoke to Mr Papalia was that a rumour had circulated that Mr Papalia had written to the Leader of the Opposition and was intending to injunct the documents being released to the Langoulant inquiry into various dealings concerning Western Force and the sponsorship arrangement with the Road Safety Commission. The acting director general rang to find out whether this was true and on what basis a public servant was seeking to injunct the release of government documents to an independent inquiry. That was the cause of that phone call. It is more than reasonable that the head of Premier and Cabinet might want to find out what a public servant is up to. That is the basis of all that.

The fact that this issue is around and the Leader of the Opposition is not in favour of the release of that information indicates to me that he has something to hide; otherwise, why would he not want the information released? It turns out, according to my understanding, that the documents in question did not go to cabinet. It would be my view that those documents should be released to the Langoulant inquiry.

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Hold on. Did the Leader of the Opposition not write back to Mr Papalia to indicate that the documents should not be released? Is that true?

Mrs L.M. Harvey interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Is that not true? Dr Nahan is the Leader of the Opposition, not the member for Scarborough. She did not have the courage, remember. Did the Leader of the Opposition write back? He wrote back to say that he did not want the documents released. Why would he not want those documents released? We have another pretender to the Leader of the Opposition's job down the back. The dark horse is coming through down the back.

The decision to sign up the sponsorship —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I call you both to order.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The decision to release the funding for the Western Force sponsorship deal was made on 30 January and announced on 31 January. The government went into caretaker mode on 1 February. It was decided basically one day before the government went into caretaker mode, and it did not go to cabinet. According to the Treasurer, Treasury has indicated that the entire deal was a farce. Why did this happen? That is what the Langouland inquiry needs to get to the bottom of, and that is what the Leader of the Opposition is trying to run away from, my friend.

ROAD SAFETY COMMISSIONER — KIM PAPALIA

236. **Dr M.D. NAHAN to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. Is it not true that Mr Papalia was moved on from his position by the Premier or his acting director general because of his actions? The Premier moved him on; he did not leave of his own accord.

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I am advised that, from 7 and 8 June, Mr Papalia had started indicating that he was not keen on an ongoing role for himself at the Road Safety Commission. What is that? It is two or three weeks ago. He had indicated that to the steering committee and to people in the Public Sector Commission.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Answer the question. Did you move him on?

Mr M. McGOWAN: That is the answer to the member's question: it was weeks ago. I had no involvement and Mr Foster had no involvement in these issues. The real issue here is the Leader of the Opposition trying to hide why that sponsorship deal was done. It did not go to cabinet; it was entered into the day before caretaker mode. What is in these documents that the Leader of the Opposition is trying to hide? Why did he write to Mr Papalia to indicate that he did not want the documents released? Why is it that he is not being open and accountable on the expenditure of public money? How is it that the former —

Several members interjected.

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

Mr M. McGOWAN: How is it that the former government entered into these arrangements? I think the public has a right to know.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the third time. This is not a shouting match. You have asked a question and you are getting your answer.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have explained what occurred. There was nothing more in it than changes to government to make it stronger and to get rid of the plethora of agencies that existed under the Liberal–National government to make sure that there is a more robust, collaborative government. Some people in the public sector do not like that and choose to move on.

AUSTRALIAN CONSUMER LAW — FAIR TRADING ACT

237. **Ms J.M. FREEMAN to the Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations:**

Is the state's Australian Consumer Law in line with other jurisdictions; and, if not, why not; and, if not, what are the consequences for consumers and small businesses of the failure by the previous government to update the state's Australian Consumer Law?

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON replied:

That is a very good question from the member for Mirrabooka, who has raised this issue over a number of years and has kept on the back of a number of commerce ministers, including me, on this issue. The ACL in Western Australia is applied through an act of Parliament passed in 2010, and I want to quote from the then commerce minister, the member for Nedlands, in his second reading speech for the Fair Trading Bill 2010 —

... it is in the interests of all Australian consumers and businesses to ensure that the Australian Consumer Law remains uniform ...

Western Australia has its own ACL, which reflects the federal ACL. Therefore, we need to amend it every time the federal one is amended, but that has happened only once since 2010; it happened in 2013 through the Fair Trading Amendment Bill 2013. That means that five sets of amendments were ignored by the former state government, but it is worse than that. This is a cooperative arrangement, so the minister had to attend meetings of commerce ministers and vote in favour of those changes, but then he did nothing. Let us understand this. The former Minister for Commerce would attend Council of Australian Governments meetings, vote in favour of changes to the ACL, and then do nothing about it. What are the consequences? It means that Western Australian consumers do not enjoy the same protections that consumers enjoy in every other state and territory of the country. It means that businesses in Western Australia have to comply with different laws than those of everyone else in the country and that small businesses dealing with larger businesses do not have the same protections that are applied to small businesses in other states. Indeed, if consumers buy a product from one retailer, their consumer rights are different than they are if they buy the same product from a different shop. That is the ridiculous position that we have in Western Australia because the former government was too lazy to do anything on this matter. In 2010, the member for Nedlands came in here and emphasised how important it was for Western Australian consumer law to match the consumer law in every other state, but of the six federal amendments since that time, only one was ever implemented in Western Australia. Five of them were voted on by the former minister but never implemented. It is chaos in the Western Australian consumer law area, as with so much else left by the former government. It was a lazy minister who was not doing his job properly.

ROAD SAFETY COMMISSIONER — KIM PAPALIA

238. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Police:

With regard to the response just provided by the Premier, can the minister please advise when the former Road Safety Commissioner, Mr Kim Papalia, advised her that it was his intention to leave the position; and can the minister also update the house with regard to the Supreme Court injunction he was seeking against the release of documents and his advice to the minister on that matter?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

I thank the member for Scarborough for the opportunity to provide some advice. I was very interested in the Premier's answer, particularly his reference to the \$1.5 million the previous government announced on 31 January, the day before the writs were issued —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I am not hiding you; I am calling you to order, member for Hillarys, for the second time. Minister for Housing, I do not want you to comment on everything I do today. I know you enjoy my work, but you do not need to comment. I call you to order for the first time.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: The problem with the member for Scarborough is that she judges other people by her own dodgy standards. My answer will be brief and complete. We know that this was announced on a Tuesday, the day before the writs were issued. It was announced on a Tuesday and the writs were issued on a Wednesday. What happened on the Monday? The cabinet met. Ask the Leader of the National Party whether or not it went to cabinet, because it did not. I hear she was pretty unhappy about it; she was very angry about it. She was Minister for Sport and Recreation and she was not consulted about it.

Several members interjected.

Point of Order

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Under standing order 78, the answer is not relevant.

The SPEAKER: I take the member's point of order, but there is relevance because it is about the issue the member talked about.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: These are the standards of the former minister —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman, I call you to order for the first time, and it is pronounced "Papalia".

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: This was then —

Mr D.C. Nalder: When did Papalia advise you?

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman, I call you to order for the second time. You got the name right, but I have called you to order twice.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: These were the actions of the former Minister for Police. She had the opportunity on the Monday to take it to cabinet and did not take it to cabinet. She did not refer it to Treasury and did not involve the sport minister by taking it to cabinet. That is how the member for Scarborough operates, and now she is trying to judge people by her own dodgy standards.

The answer that I am very happy to make clear is that Mr Papalia still has not advised me.

ROAD SAFETY COMMISSIONER — KIM PAPALIA

239. **Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Minister for Police:**

I have a supplementary question. Given Mr Papalia did not advise the minister that he intended to leave the agency, did he advise her that he was seeking a Supreme Court injunction against the release of government documents?

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS replied:

No, Mr Papalia did not advise me of that, and he should have.

HOSPITALS — PATIENT OPINION

240. **Ms J. FARRER to the Minister for Health:**

What is this government doing to allow public patients and the public to have more say in the running of our hospitals?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I thank the member for her important question, particularly in relation to the work that has gone into Broome Hospital around introducing such programs as Patient Opinion. At the last election the Labor Party committed to put patients first; to moving beyond the bricks and mortar of our health system and actually looking to provide a way that patients can drive the change they want to see in their health system. Patient Opinion is an independent, anonymous, online feedback system that allows patients to have a say in the way they receive health care. Committing to such a system is about listening to patients. It is about actually allowing patients to drive the cultural change that they want to see happen in their health system. I am very pleased to say that on Monday the South Metropolitan Health Service board agreed to sign up to Patient Opinion; the last such board to do so. All health service providers have now become part of Patient Opinion, with North Metro and South Metro to come online in the next six to eight weeks.

The important thing about Patient Opinion is that it allows patients to provide ongoing, dynamic feedback mechanisms to the hospital leadership about the way they receive their health care. This will drive change in our health system and will bring about the cultural change that we want to see take place right across our health system. It will provide information about the way patients receive their level of care. It will also provide information about the facilities, including food, and about the attitude of staff towards them. It will provide a way for hospital leaders to engage directly with staff to ensure that they are constantly looking at their services and improving them on an ongoing basis. In addition to that, we will be designing a Department of Health dashboard so that Patient Opinion can be seen in a system-wide manner. We will be able to see at a glance which health service providers are doing well in terms of providing good patient care and which are falling behind the others. We can therefore correct those behaviours and make sure that we are constantly seeking improvement. This is about empowering patients. There can be no stronger drive of cultural change than an empowered health consumer. We are really looking towards Patient Opinion to bring about that change. It empowers patients and puts their experiences at the centre of how government and hospitals develop their policies and services. This is a key election commitment from the McGowan Labor government. It is about putting patients first. It goes beyond the bricks and mortar of our health system. It is about ensuring we continue to provide a health system for the future.

WATER FOR FOOD PROJECT — MYALUP–WELLINGTON AND SOUTHERN FORESTS

241. **Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Water:**

The Minister for Water seems pretty popular today. I refer to the Water for Food project, specifically the Myalup–Wellington and Southern Forests projects.

- (1) Does the government support these two projects proceeding?
- (2) How much state government funding will the minister commit to?
- (3) Has the minister advised the commonwealth government of the state government's support?

Mr D.J. KELLY replied:

Thank you very much. Yes, I do feel popular today.

(1)–(3) I think I have answered a question on this issue —

Several members interjected.

Mr D.J. KELLY: Just for the moment.

I think I have answered a question about these projects before. One of the problems of the previous government, particularly National Party ministers, was that in the lead-up to the last state election it went around trying to spend as much money as it possibly could under the banner of royalties for regions. The Water for Food program was one of those examples. It was a \$40 million program for most of the term of the previous government, but in the dying months of government it was ramped up to a \$127 million program. It committed to an additional —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party!

Mr D.J. KELLY: The member might just want to listen.

In the dying months of the previous government, it committed another \$80 million to the Water for Food program. It committed to another four programs. Two of those —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, one of your own members has asked a question. You might want to listen to the answer. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.J. KELLY: There were two programs. One was the project to try to make better use of the water in Wellington Dam, which is currently too salty to be used to its maximum economic effect. The other was the Southern Forests irrigation program—a new program to boost agricultural production around Manjimup. They are projects that we have been considering, along with all of the royalties for regions programs. I can tell members that we have indicated to the commonwealth our continuing support for both of those projects.

Mr D.T. Redman: It is not such a pet project after all!

Mr D.J. KELLY: Sorry, member?

Mr D.T. Redman: You spent the first five minutes saying how bad it was and now you're saying you support it.

Mr D.J. KELLY: That is interesting coming from a former Leader of the National Party. When a government spends as much as the former government did, it is hard not to spend some of it wisely! It has to achieve something. From the amount of cash that the former government threw away, it would be almost impossible for some of it not to be of some use! We are currently sifting through those projects, as numerous as they are. In respect of those two projects, we have met with the communities that put them forward. We have taken advice. We have spoken to the commonwealth and have actually decided that we will continue to support those two projects. We have indicated to the federal minister that there will be ongoing support. The member will have to wait for some announcements a bit later about the level of that support. Members of the National Party were so irresponsible leading up to the last state election. It was as though they deliberately tried to spend all of the royalties for regions funds for the next four years on projects that only they seemed to think were worthwhile. Members should just relax; let us and some of the other grown-ups on this side of the house work through the mess that the former government created with royalties for regions and they will find that some of those projects will in fact be supported.

WATER FOR FOOD PROJECT — MYALUP–WELLINGTON AND SOUTHERN FORESTS

242. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Minister for Water:

I have a supplementary question. I think I have sifted that out as a yes.

When will the proponents be notified of the minister's support and what is he doing to make sure that the state has not missed out on federal funding due to his delay in making a decision?

Mr D.J. KELLY replied:

As the member said, throughout this whole process we have been in constant contact with the commonwealth so it is already aware of our ongoing support. If the National Party has any friends in the party federally—I know that relations there are often strained—it should —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

Mr D.J. KELLY: I was asked a question. I am trying to answer it, but all I am getting is interjections. We are doing what we can to support those two projects in particular. As to when an announcement will be made —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr D.J. KELLY: One of the interesting decisions that we have also made in respect of Water for Food is that I will no longer be the lead minister for that project; it will in fact be the Minister for Agriculture and Food. In opposition, I always thought it was called the Water for Food program. It was basically a program —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, you have this irritating thing where your side asks a question and you answer for everyone. You do not know all the answers. I know the answer—I call you to order for the second time.

Mr D.J. KELLY: The Water for Food program was a program to promote agriculture in Western Australia, but the Minister for Agriculture and Food under the previous government had no say in it. The only reason I can figure out and the only reason I can determine why is that the Minister for Agriculture and Food was not a member of the National Party. There was a program to promote agriculture in Western Australia and the Minister for Agriculture and Food was completely sidelined. The two ministers who had responsibility were the Minister for Water and the Minister for Regional Development, who both happened to be members of the National Party.

The SPEAKER: Minister, through the Chair; please.

Mr D.J. KELLY: So the Water for —

The SPEAKER: I think that is enough.

ROTTNEST ISLAND — ANIMAL CRUELTY

243. **Ms L.L. BAKER to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to cases of cruelty inflicted upon quokkas on Rottnest Island, which have seen these harmless and unique marsupials tortured, abused, kicked, set alight and thrown into the ocean.

- (1) Why does the minister intend to ban the perpetrators of these crimes from Rottnest Island for life?
- (2) Is the minister aware of any opposition to this response to animal cruelty?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for her question. She is undoubtedly the most passionate and dedicated advocate for animal welfare in this Parliament.

- (1) It is very disappointing to have witnessed the appalling treatment of quokkas on occasion in recent years. Most recently, there was the much-publicised incident of an individual kicking a quokka and having his friend film it and then post it on social media. It is extraordinary and I am sure that no-one here could comprehend why someone would do that or some of the other cruel acts to which the member referred. It appeared, and I think the sentiment was widely expressed across the state at the time, that despite the fact that a severe penalty was imposed by the courts—I think it was a commendably significant fine for the most recent act in the order of \$4 000 or thereabouts—anyone with goodwill towards small furry animals that are notoriously or famously the friendliest animal on the planet was concerned whether a greater penalty could have been imposed.

Noting that section 30 of the Rottnest Island Authority Act enables the authority to remove people from the island for a period of seven days, regardless of any other charges and without that person having appeared in a court, there is an opportunity. The government believes that the potential for that opportunity to extend another penalty to these people should be explored. We raised it with the acting chief executive officer of the Rottnest Island Authority, Michelle Reynolds, and she was enthusiastic about exploring the idea as to whether we could ban such people for life. I suggested that we should not ban them for life but, in the course of imposing this potential penalty, we should offer an alternative to people. I do not think banning someone for life would educate them or change their behaviour necessarily. We should offer them the opportunity to make amends, to make recompense and to demonstrate that they have changed their behaviour by volunteering for an extensive period to assist rangers or other people on the island to support the little quokkas. That is the advice I gave to the acting chief executive officer. She was enthusiastic in her response and will be looking into it.

- (2) I am aware that I was criticised at the time. Extraordinary though it may be, I was subject to criticism. There appears to be someone who is not quite as enthusiastic and not quite as pro quokka. I understand that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition leapt into the media in response to our announcement and questioned whether we would be able to do what we were proposing to do. I do not understand it. All I can suggest is that perhaps the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has become one of those people in opposition who is just always negative.

ROAD SAFETY COMMISSIONER — KIM PAPALIA

244. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

Does the Premier still have confidence in his Minister for Police; Road Safety given that she said that she had no idea that her director general wanted to leave the agency and no idea that he was seeking a Supreme Court injunction against the release of papers to the inquiry?

Mr M. McGowan: I am sorry; I missed the second half of the question. I could not hear the second half of the member's question.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The minister said that she had no idea that he was seeking a Supreme Court injunction against the release of papers to the inquiry.

Point of Order

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I have been misrepresented. I said that I had not been advised by him on both of those instances, which is a lot different from saying that I had no idea.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order.

*Questions without Notice Resumed***Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

I think the Deputy Leader of the Opposition has confirmed the allegation made against her by the Minister for Tourism—that is, that she is always negative.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have full confidence in the Minister for Police; Road Safety. There is the answer to that part of the member's question. In relation to the remainder of the question on the Supreme Court injunction issue, I find it highly unusual that a public servant would ignore the State Solicitor's advice and seek an injunction on an independent inquiry to prevent government information being released to it. I find it unusual that a letter would be written to the Leader of the Opposition. The minister would not be advised, the Premier would not be advised, the director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet would not be advised, but the Leader of the Opposition would.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: But you knew three weeks ago and didn't do anything.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member has not listened to the arguments and the issues. I will explain that, too; if the member likes.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Hillarys, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I find all of that highly irregular and highly unusual. I find the fact that the Leader of the Opposition wrote back to the Road Safety Commissioner stating that he did not want to see government documents released to be a blemish against his name. The fact is that he would not have government documents released to an independent inquiry about a decision that did not go to cabinet and that released a large amount of money from the road trauma trust account for a sponsorship deal that obviously has no benefit for road safety. I think, on all of that, the Leader of the Opposition has questions to answer.

In relation to the point made by the pretender over here, the member for Churchlands, about what I found out and what happened on 7 and 8 June, the Road Safety Commissioner, Mr Kim Papalia, indicated to the steering committee on machinery of government that he did not contemplate an ongoing role for himself in the Road Safety Commission. On 13 and 14 June, he indicated to the Public Sector Commission executive director that he was not interested in working there. On 19 and 20 June, he indicated that he had no intention of being there. The allegation as I understand it—I understand it this way because it is the way the member said it—that somehow on Thursday or Friday of last week, I and the acting director general decided to get rid of him holds no weight, because he indicated that he did not want to remain in the agency weeks and weeks ago. The reason he indicated that is that he does not support the reforms we are putting in place. We are going to make reforms to the public sector that need to happen. The Liberals and Nationals are obviously of the view that they do not support reform. That is a big difference between us and the opposition. We want effective, robust government. Opposition members want it to be chaotic and useless, like it was when they were in office.

ROAD SAFETY COMMISSIONER — KIM PAPALIA

245. Mrs L.M. HARVEY to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. How can the Premier have confidence in his minister when he knew and apparently the acting director general of the Public Sector Commission knew that the Road Safety Commissioner, Mr Papalia, wanted to leave his job but his minister did not; how can the Premier have confidence in a minister who has no idea about the thinking of her director general?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I only found out about his decision to leave yesterday.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: He found out before she did. He's meant to be reporting to her!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Deputy Leader of the Opposition, member for Scarborough, what is apparent is that there is a range of moving parts in this issue. There are issues surrounding the Western Force sponsorship. There are issues surrounding the amalgamation of the Road Safety Commission and WA Police. There are issues around when Mr Papalia decided he was going to leave. There are issues around when he made these unusual decisions to contemplate an injunction on government policy. The member cannot process it all. That is the truth. The member is having difficulty processing all of these issues and arguments. The thing about opposition is you have to work hard and get yourself across arguments and issues. The member for Cottesloe would understand this. He has been there. He is the one on the member's side who understands it. You should not just always look for the easy option. On Sunday, you were defending Quokka kickers. You were out there on Sunday, attacking our decision to build the bridge in Western Australia. You are always out there looking for the easy media.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members, you asked a question. You are getting the answer. You might not like it, but that is the answer you are getting.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Members opposite are always out there looking for the easy media grab. Let me tell the Deputy Leader of the Opposition and the opposition leader: they need to understand the arguments and issues. At this point in time, they are a one out of 10.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND JUSTICE STANDING COMMITTEE

*Inquiry into WA Electoral Commission's administration and management of 2017 election —
Terms of Reference — Statement by Speaker*

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): I have received a letter dated 28 June 2017 from the Chairman of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee advising that the committee has resolved to conduct an inquiry with the following terms of reference —

The committee will inquire into and report on the Western Australian Electoral Commission's administration and management of the 2017 state general election. In particular, the committee will assess the adequacy of the commission's procedures in relation to —

- ballot security, including paper ballots and electronic ballots;
- the participation of communities with traditionally low levels of enrolment or turn out, and/or high levels of informality;
- remote polling services; and
- the operation of polling places, including early voting centres, campaign advertising, and the distribution of campaign material.

In doing so, the committee will consider the responsiveness of the Electoral Act 1907 to the electoral needs of Western Australia.

The committee will report the outcome of this inquiry to the Legislative Assembly by 30 November 2017.

EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

*Inquiry into delivery of Vocational Education and Training in Schools Program — Terms of Reference —
Statement by Speaker*

THE SPEAKER (Mr P.B. Watson): I have received a letter dated 28 June 2017 from the Chairman of the Education and Health Standing Committee advising that the committee has resolved to conduct an inquiry with the following terms of reference —

The Education and Health Standing Committee has resolved to inquire into the delivery of the Vocational Education and Training in Schools—VETIS—program. The inquiry will consider —

1. how well the program is meeting the needs of schools, students and industry;
2. challenges for regional and remote areas;
3. registration and ongoing monitoring of training organisations; and
4. resourcing of the program.

The committee will report by 30 November 2017.

I love the quiet in the chamber!

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (AUDITING) BILL 2017*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [3.03 pm]: It is great to get back on to the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017. That is probably an hour of my life that I will not get back! I did say to the Minister for Local Government that we will go into consideration in detail on this bill. We will not move any amendments. However, if the minister was keen to move an amendment to allow the Auditor General to do a performance audit on question time, I would be happy to support that just to see how that went and whether it would improve the quality of that experience.

I have referred to the 2006 report of the Public Accounts Committee titled “Local Government Accountability in Western Australia”. I want to touch on two recommendations that were made by the committee. Recommendation 2 states in part —

The Public Accounts Committee strongly recommends that the Auditor General conduct the audit of the local government sector in Western Australia.

That is what we are talking about in this debate.

Recommendation 1 states —

The Department of Local Government and Regional Development should, in conjunction with key stakeholder groups, conduct a review of the Compliance Audit Return to address concerns about its complexity and relevance.

It is not part of the Auditor General’s ambit to audit the compliance audit return. That is a mistake. The compliance audit return previously contained about 300 questions that had to be answered. Under the then director general of the Department of Local Government and Regional Development, Jennifer Mathews, the number of questions was reduced to about 78. That issue was also identified in the 2015 report of the Public Accounts Committee titled “Improving Local Government Accountability”. That report refers to not just financial audits and performance audits but also compliance audit returns.

Mr J.N. Carey: It’s just a tick and flick. That’s all it is.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The member is right. It is just a tick-and-flick process. However, it is a very serious tick-and-flick process. My understanding is that when that document is submitted to the Department of Local Government, it pretty much just files it in a box and puts it away.

Mr J.N. Carey: There is no enforcement.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is right. There is no enforcement. The department does not look at it, and nothing happens. I will not go through the compliance audit process or the report in detail, but it deals with some significant issues. It is all about compliance. One of the serious issues in local government is compliance. Therefore, it is amazing that the compliance audit process is dealt with so flippantly. The Minister for Local Government needs to look at that. If the compliance audit process is not going to be picked up by the Auditor General, the department needs to look at this issue more seriously and engage with the various local governments to ensure they are pulled up when issues are identified and highlighted in those reports. If we were to look at those reports, I am sure we would find a lot of inconsistencies between those reports, and a lot of areas of concern. We might even find things that have been flagged in those reports that no-one has chased up. The member for Perth said that it is just a tick-and-flick exercise. I do not know how we can treat a compliance audit as a tick-and-flick exercise and no-one can do anything about that.

The 2015 report states in points 3.9 and 3.10 that the department has advised that since the 2006 Public Accounts Committee report, it has continued to streamline the process. That is great. It has also taken on board stakeholder engagement in an effort to find a balance between accountability to the community and not overburdening the sector with compliance. As I have said, under the then director general of the department, Jennifer Mathews, the number of questions has been reduced to 78. The process has been looked at stringently, it has been streamlined, and it has been narrowed down to what is critical to compliance in the local government sector. The report states in point 3.11 —

The CAR remains a self-assessment tool and the responses still do not appear to be subject to independent figures. The compliance return is generally not included in the annual audit of a local government unless a local government negotiates with the auditor to include it within the audit’s scope. The Department was not aware of any instances where this had occurred and confirmed that it would not be standard procedure for an audit to consider a CAR.

The Department of Local Government has said it would not be standard procedure for a compliance audit report to be included in a financial or performance audit. That is wrong. We need to make sure that compliance audit

reports are included. I am not sure whether the then Minister for Local Government reviewed this issue when he reintroduced this bill in 2016. The response of the former government was that it did not support the auditing of compliance audit reports. The government response states in part —

Although there is merit in the Office of the Auditor General ... having a role in reviewing local government Compliance Audit Returns on a periodical, targeted basis, it is not considered feasible or of significant value for the OAG to audit all such returns on an annual basis.

That implies that they can be audited ad hoc. Who will determine whether they will be audited on an ad hoc basis? The bill does not clarify the requirements for compliance with the audit reports. I implore the Minister for Local Government to make sure that they are included in that process, because they are important—otherwise, why do them? If nobody treats them seriously—if it is, as our expert over there, the member for Perth, tells us, a tick-and-flick exercise—I am not sure why the government would support a tick-and-flick exercise. I am interested to hear why the minister would still support a tick-and-flick exercise, unless of course he has changed the procedures and it is no longer a tick-and flick exercise.

Mr J.N. Carey: It is part of the review of the Local Government Act.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: The Public Accounts Committee report of 2015 mentioned that that should be given to the Auditor General to cover as part of the financial and/or performance audits. I think there is merit in that. I cannot see a huge additional cost for an auditor to access a document that has 78 questions on it, to flick through it quickly and to confirm that, yes, they seem to have met all the targets and objectives, and, as part of a financial performance audit, something needs to be followed up or not. That would not take a long time. It would not cost a lot of money. It would add value. I ask the minister to please see what he can do in that area because it is very important. History has proven that compliance is one of the most serious issues facing not only local government but also federal and state governments in meeting their obligations, and the checks and balances are in place to make sure that we are doing the right thing.

In conclusion, I commend the minister for quickly reintroducing the bill from the last Parliament and for not making any wholesale changes to it. I can only assume that he is very supportive of the work that the previous government did in this area. It is fantastic that he has done that.

Mr D.A. Templeman: I was very compliant!

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Yes, the minister did a great job. It would be fantastic if the minister, somewhere in his reply to the second reading debate or in the third reading debate, acknowledged the wonderful work done by the previous government in this area. I look forward to teasing out some of the details of the bill in consideration in detail to get more clarity for the sector and the community on how some of these things will turn out in practice. I look forward to the first audits being completed by the Auditor General and standards within the sector rising considerably. I also look forward to any future reform we can hopefully undertake in the local government sector in years to come.

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.13 pm]: It is my pleasure to also speak to the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017. Firstly, I acknowledge the work of the Minister for Local Government, who is off to an incredible flying start with this well-needed legislation and his commitment to review the Local Government Act.

I am here today because I want to try to bust some of the myths espoused about local government and accountability, but I first want to say why this bill is so important and why this first measure is so important. At the core of democratic local government is that information should be made readily and easily accessible to ratepayers so that they can understand, and, more importantly, are able to question and challenge the decisions made by local government. There still is a desperate need for transparency reforms in local government for numerous reasons. There is a lack of consistency and completeness of recording standards across local government; there is basic difficulty for ratepayers to obtain information; there is a lack of understanding by elected local government members about their current obligations under the act; and there is, unfortunately, a culture within some local governments, within some CEOs and councillors, who have no interest at all in making information readily available to their ratepayers. It is interesting that other countries and states are far ahead of Western Australia in the area of local government transparency reform. The United Kingdom introduced the Local Government Transparency Code 2015, which states —

This Code is issued to meet the Government's desire to place more power into citizens' hands to increase democratic accountability and make it easier for local people to contribute to the local decision making process and help shape public services. Transparency is the foundation of local accountability and the key that gives people the tools and information they need to enable them to play a bigger role in society.

I have to say that I wish the local government sector was willing to embrace such reforms, but I know from personal experience that the reality is varied and difficult. When as the Mayor of Vincent I went to

a Western Australian Local Government Association conference asking not for a commitment to exact reforms but for consideration of a package of reforms that WALGA could take to all political parties for consideration before the next election, it is well reported that that was defeated at WALGA by 172 votes to 46. I was astonished that the leadership within the local government sector would not even consider developing reforms that could go out for consultation. I get tired of those in the local government sector arguing against reform for many reasons. Firstly, they argue that the current provisions are adequate. That is absolutely false. There are a huge number of problems. In particular, significant changes are needed in CEO contracts and financial reporting procedures. They also say that some information is available. The act has not kept up with technology. For example, it is an intimidating experience for ratepayers to walk into a CEO's office, who may or may not advise them correctly about the information they may obtain. The last point of resistance is the argument that there is no significant corruption in the sector, so we do not need more transparency reform. I find that an extraordinary argument. As an organisation, one should always seek to do better. One should have a culture that is prepared to be open to new ideas and prepared to look at new transparency reforms. As the member for Carine put well, we should have nothing to fear about transparency. Some constituents may not like all the decisions a council makes, but, ultimately, they have a right to that information.

I also want to bust the fallacy within the local government sector that it has the highest levels of scrutiny when compared with other tiers of government. That is absolutely false. I put it this way: state and federal Parliaments and governments have well-resourced oppositions—they may disagree with this. We have question time, estimates committees, the Financial Management Act and the Auditor General Act. Local governments do not have that level of scrutiny. If it is lucky, a local journalist and two residents might turn up to a meeting and ask pesky questions, but, overall, there is not the same scrutiny of local government decision-making—and, frankly, I am tired of the sector peddling that false claim.

We also know that WA is behind other states in this area. Significant reforms in transparency and financial accountability were introduced in South Australia in 2005, and in Victoria in 2014 and 2015. What I love about the Victorian system is that local governments are subject to the auditor, and have to publicly report on a range of performance indicators—from asset renewal through to delivery of services. I think that is ultimately the way that we should be going.

In terms of greater oversight and consistency in financial reporting, we know already, and we have heard from the member for Carine, that two reviews were previously done on giving oversight to the Auditor General. This is very welcomed by the sector. This quote from the first report, on the difference between state and local government, best captures the problem with the current system —

The key difference lies in the fact that minimum requirements for local government audits focuses largely on straight financial checks, whereas state government agency audits involve efficiency, effectiveness and probity measures, the results of which are tabled in parliament.

The member for Churchlands headed up a very noble review in 2015, which made an incredible number of findings. For any members who are interested, I wrote a transparency report in my spare time as the Mayor of Vincent, and part of that was taking those findings seriously. The findings include —

- A notable inconsistency in the level of detail and general quality of financial audit reports prepared for local governments ...
- A Compliance Audit Return process that is ultimately undermined by the fact that responses from individual local governments are not subject to verification or independent scrutiny.
- A lack of rigour and a seemingly inconsistent approach by the Department in its monitoring ...
- A lack of transparency across the sector around the findings of financial audits.
- A lack of transparency on the non-compliance among local governments...

More extraordinarily, this review found that 59 local governments over three years did not provide their annual audited financial reports within the prescribed time frame. In 2013–14, 45 local government audit management reports included comments around issues of noncompliance with the Local Government Act. At the time of that review, four local governments had still not submitted independent financial audit reports for the 2013–14 period. I find that extraordinary, and this is a sector that claims—I will repeat—that it has best practice in financial accountability. It simply does not.

The way the Victorian system works under the Auditor-General is far more effective. The best example is that every year a public report is tabled in the Parliament about the state of play and the financial reporting of councils. I note that the 2013–14 audit report found that 61 per cent of the previous year's audit findings related to high and medium-risk internal control deficiencies were yet to be rectified. The report found that these control deficiencies remaining unremedied was a poor reflection of both the management and governance of these councils. That is not a great result from Victoria, but the difference is that at least it was assessed and put on the public record, so that ratepayers could make decisions about the financial performance of their councils.

I am very pleased to see both sides of politics coming together to support this legislation. We also know that the minister—it will be a ballsy challenge—is going to do a review of the Local Government Act. I will raise other issues now that I believe are interwoven with financial accountability and local government. The first is chief executive officers—a critical issue that has not been addressed. Some local governments in Western Australia I can only say act like feudal fiefdoms; that is, mayors will come and go, but the CEO remains. I say to people in the private sector that it is pretty extraordinary to see a CEO stay in office for 15 to 20 years, but unfortunately this is often the case in local government. As a result, the organisation ultimately builds itself as a culture around the CEO. Innovation is not a performance indicator; nor are doing things differently and being open and transparent. The biggest rewards come from showing loyalty to the CEO. That is what the culture is. I came to this view because I went through a similar experience with a CEO whose contract came up for renewal after 20 years. I made the decision not to renew it on the basis of innovation for our council. I must admit that it almost caused a rupture in the staff and the organisation because, in my council at the City of Vincent, the CEO and every director had been there for 15 to 20 years. I would argue that that is not healthy local government. When we made that decision, we got a lot of media and I copped a lot of criticism. Interestingly, I started to get calls from other local government councillors and mayors asking how I did this. How was this possible? What were the processes?

Mr P.J. Rundle: I think I called you.

Mr J.N. CAREY: Yes, I think you did.

Some of the stories were more extraordinary. This needs change. If we are going to do financial auditing, this has to be in tow, I hope, as part of the review of the Local Government Act. There were extraordinary situations with CEO appointments, when councillors were approving CEO contracts without reading them. No-one would buy a house without reading a contract, yet councillors in regional and metropolitan councils were appointing CEOs for five years—the only appointment that they can make as a council—and they had not read the contracts. They did not even know the disclosure requirements for payouts. I know that because that happened at the City of Vincent, and I found it extraordinary. Worse still, CEO contracts were being renewed just before council elections. A CEO might have two or three years to go in their contract, but suddenly the contract is renewed a month out from council elections. That is unacceptable, and we need a couple of measures in the act to make it meaningful and to provide greater financial accountability. We need to see the act tightened so that there are very clear processes for the appointment of CEOs, down to the act prescribing that the council must meet, consider the brief and the old contract, and before appointing a CEO it must see that contract again. The obligations become very clear.

I am also more radical in that I believe that we should go to the open market on CEO contracts. It is my view that there should be a provision within the act that after two terms of a CEO the position must be re-advertised. The incumbent CEO would be welcome to apply for the position, but this provision would allow the council an opportunity to test the market to see what other CEOs are available. This is one of the areas that are holding back local government and innovation. I know that I am being Mr Radical, and I am sure that the minister is already throwing darts at me, and every CEO will be throwing machetes at me. I do not think I will be going to the Western Australian Local Government Association conference this year. I think I might be pelted. They turned their backs on me when I put up that motion for reform.

We also need greater transparency across the board in the senior executive service. This is about online reporting. At the City of Vincent I brought in a massive raft of reforms aimed at getting as much information as I could online, so that it was easily accessible and ratepayers could make a judgement. One such measure was that the positions, salaries and details of any allowances of all senior executive service members should be online. We know that, at the state government level, the Parliament and often the opposition will ask those questions. In line with the information on the chief executives' salaries and allowances, that information should be readily accessible. The information should include the position of the employee, salary or scale, start date and end of contract and the primary function of each officer—just basic information.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr J.N. CAREY: A raft of other online reporting is needed to assist financial reporting and the audit process. I believe that every local government in Western Australia should have a governance and accountability portal, which includes a list and range of expenditure by local government. That should include travel. At the moment there is only a requirement to declare contributions to travel. We should have an online travel register that includes all expenditure. We should also have an online register on the public record for all council allowances that includes phones, IT, clothing and so forth and all details of expense reimbursements made to councillors. We should also—this is an important one—have public reporting of all disclosures of conflicts of interest. When a councillor at each council meeting discloses a conflict of interest, an impartiality interest or a financial interest, that should also be put on an online and standing record. Again, it is about informing the community and ensuring that it has a right to know.

Leasing arrangements, such as who gets what sportsground, are highly controversial in local government. They should also be on the record, including the name of the lessee, the name of the venue, the start and end date and so forth. We should also be looking at how to encourage more accountability in council meetings. I find it extraordinary that there is such a variance in local government around asking questions at public question time. For example, at the City of Perth I received many complaints from residents and small businesses about the lack of democracy in access. They simply cannot go to a public question time and ask a question. Things have to be written down and they have to give advance notice. I find that extraordinary. Local government is the local tier. It is the closest tier to state government. The fact that local governments prohibit or minimise the opportunity for ratepayers to ask basic questions is extraordinary.

I commend the previous minister. As an anecdote, I was backing the former minister on local government reform so much that a listener on talkback radio said that —

Ms A. Sanderson: The kiss of death.

Mr J.N. CAREY: No; they said that I was a Liberal candidate and that was why I was bashing local government. I honestly think that former Minister Simpson tried his best but was held back. I am getting some evil daggers from the other side of the chamber. One of the things about which I agreed with the former minister was mandatory training for all councillors. We have to be very clear that councils are not governments. They operate like a board and the mayor is the chair of the board. I do not support, perhaps like some others, greater politicisation by having endorsed political candidates running for councils because it would limit those people who wished to nominate as they would have to go to a political party to seek endorsement. I was always open in admitting that I was a member of the Labor Party, but I ran as myself and so did everyone else on the Vincent council. It is clear that we need mandatory training for councillors. Again, the local government sector says that it cannot be done. But it is already being done because the South Australian government amended its Local Government Act to require all members of local councils to undergo mandatory training, as well as strengthening the oath of office. I find it bizarre that the local government sector opposes this. What is the reason to argue against it? The South Australian model really works. It refers to the roles and functions of local government, legal obligations and responsibilities under the South Australian Local Government Act, council meetings and financial management and reporting. If we had mandatory training in local government, we could avoid some of the disasters that have affected local government. I look at the York situation and what has happened there over a period and the dysfunction in the community. I wonder whether it could have been avoided if we had mandatory training for local government. I hope that the sector changes its mind on this because, again, I believe it is a critical reform. If we just bring in the financial auditor, with the Auditor General having oversight, and not make all these other sweeping reforms for local government, I am afraid that it will not be totally effective. If we do not provide mandatory training to councillors so they are aware of their obligations, and if we do not perform the appointment of CEOs and ensure the accountability and transparency around that, I suspect that we will not get the full effect that is required.

Another area that we need to finally resolve is the broader review of the Local Government Act. I am not getting into voting; I know that is contentious. Some of my colleagues may disagree with me, but I believe that we need greater transparency in the selection of mayors. I find it unacceptable that we still have mayors who are not directly elected by the people. The reason for this is very simple. It is fundamentally undemocratic. It is about allowing a group of councillors to trade and wheel and deal to secure the position of mayor. We then develop a culture in a council in which it becomes more factionalised. Ultimately, councillors are more interested in servicing the needs of their colleagues and trying to get their support rather than servicing the needs of their ratepayers. Again—I find this hilarious—we get these people who argue against it. For some reason, they think we will not get a working council and we may have a mayor who is separate from the rest of the council. I have not seen that personally. I would rather a far more transparent and open process that ultimately says that we have trust and confidence in our ratepayers to make the decision to elect our own mayor. That is the fundamental debate. I note those councils that oppose it. Why? It is because they love it. Some of them are probably lined up ready to be the next mayor. In fact, I know of cases in which we have four-year deals among councillors. There is no transparency and a factionalised culture. It is not good for local government. I genuinely believe that with the review of the Local Government Act, we must smash that lack of transparency and bring in the direct election of mayors. That is a critical democratic reform.

The other area I want to talk about in general is codes of conduct in local government. Of course, I cannot go on without mentioning the City of Perth, unfortunately.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Oh!

Mr J.N. CAREY: I know that the member is disappointed. They are his mates.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: That's right.

Mr J.N. CAREY: They are the member's mates. I am happy to go through his mates on council: Lily Chen, failed Liberal candidate; Janet Davidson, failed Liberal candidate; Judy McEvoy, former staffer to Julie Bishop; Jim Adamos, fundraiser for Eleni Evangel; and Keith Yong, aspiring Liberal candidate. The majority of the

council is run by Liberals who oppose abolishing alfresco fees, who kept the media gag and who oppose media transparency. That is the member's legacy at the City of Perth. That is his culture at the City of Perth that denies ratepayers basic information. The Liberal Party should be ashamed. It is no wonder that the former Premier of Western Australia said nothing about someone with 45 cases of serious misconduct. Why? That is because it was a protection racket. The Liberals were protecting their own. That is what it was about. The member for Dawesville is shaking his head. If a Labor or Liberal minister was found to have engaged in 45 cases of serious misconduct, would they still be a minister?

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: No.

Mr J.N. CAREY: So why did the member's former Premier say it was acceptable? Why was that acceptable? I find it extraordinary. There is one rule for the inner cabal and a different rule for everyone else, and we wonder why ratepayers in the City of Perth felt so disenfranchised. There appeared to be one rule for the City of Perth and a completely different rule for everyone else. I have to say that this was a constant issue when I went doorknocking in the electorate. On the City of Perth side, this was raised as the number one issue. When we lose accountability and transparency in local government, ratepayers totally lose confidence in all local government decision-making.

I genuinely want the City of Perth to do well, but I want it to open itself up to new ideas and have an open culture that embraces other ideas and says, "We're not the smartest people in the room; we want to embrace what the small business sector is saying about alfresco fees. We want an open media policy. We want to consider changes to parking." However, if it does not come from that group, it will not be considered, and I find that poor local government, on both sides—whether it is a Labor council or a Liberal council. When we start getting that factionalised culture in which any idea that does not come from the centre majority or the main group, it kills local government and people feel disenfranchised. I am sure it has happened in both Labor-aligned councils and Liberal-aligned councils, and that is what transparency reform is about. It is about trying to shift the culture of councils and organisations.

In conclusion, I genuinely hope that we see, on both sides of Parliament, a willingness to embrace the first phase of reform we are seeing here today. I also hope that, with a full review of the Local Government Act, members opposite will not be pressured by local government interest groups or councils to stop reform. I hope that people will be genuinely open to seeing greater transparency and greater accountability, and that they will be prepared to embrace ideas such as the direct election of mayors, chief executive officer contracts and all the measures required for online reporting, and will not go the opposite way and maintain the status quo.

MR D.R. MICHAEL (Balcatta) [3.42 pm]: It is a pleasure to rise this afternoon in support of the Local Government Amendment (Auditing) Bill 2017. I will talk a bit later about some of my experiences in local government, in support of some of the things said by both the member for Carine and the member for Perth. Just to reiterate, this bill provides for the auditing of local government by the Attorney General and the contracting out of some or all of the financial audits that are currently required under the act, but under the supervision of the Office of the Auditor General. I note that many local governments would already have contracts in place for financial audits; at the City of Stirling it has been done by Grant Thornton Australia for the last couple of years. There will be a staged transition for those auditors, many of whom, especially in the metropolitan area, will probably be contracted by the Auditor General. I know that local governments in the regions will be very keen to support auditors. As part of this bill, the Auditor General will hopefully be able to train auditors in the regions to allow that to happen. Importantly, the bill has a new category of audits known as performance audits, which will examine the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of any aspect of a local government's operations. I will talk a bit more in a moment about why I think that is important. The bill also places an obligation on local governments to publish their annual reports on their official websites. Many local governments do this already, and have done for many years, but obviously in this day and age it is something that needs to occur if it is not already happening.

How did this legislation come about? It came to the last Parliament and has now come to this Parliament. The member for Carine spoke about the Corruption and Crime Commission's "Report on Misconduct Risk in Local Government Procurement" of 2015. I will quote a bit of that report. The recommendations in chapter 5.1 state, in part —

Independent and external oversight of authorities is an effective means for identifying and preventing misconduct.

The report recommends that local governments come under the jurisdiction of the Auditor General in respect of those audits. The recommendations continue —

Doing so would align the local government sector with the State Government sector.

As the member for Carine said, the Auditor General frequently tables reports in this house that look into various performance and financial matters with regard to government departments. The CCC was effectively saying that there is no reason why local governments should have lower standards of accountability than state government authorities.

In the past, during the local government reform debate, there were some in the community who said that local government is effectively a state government department. Although local government is very different in some ways, at the end of the day it exists because of an act of this Parliament. That is one reason why, as the CCC recommended, local governments need to have the same levels of accountability as state government authorities.

The CCC also referred to two Public Accounts Committee inquiries—one in 2006 and another in 2015. The 2006 inquiry was carried out under the then Carpenter government and the report of the inquiry, “Local Government Accountability in Western Australia”, recommended expanding the scope of the Auditor General’s powers to include the audit of local governments, with a view to holding councils to a similar level of accountability as public sector agencies. That also was the CCC’s recommendation.

Unfortunately, that report has not exactly been acted upon in those terms in the subsequent years. In 2015 the Public Accounts Committee again reported and found several shortcomings in the current local government accountability framework, one of them being notable inconsistencies in the levels of detail and general quality of financial audit reports prepared for local governments. This is not something that many members of this place, especially metropolitan ones, would see very often. I know that the big councils, the City of Stirling being one of them, have become used to seeing the likes of Grant Thornton and other big-end-of-town accounting agencies or auditors doing those audit reports. I am sure not many members go through annual reports of local governments on a regular basis to see if there are inconsistencies, so that was an interesting finding and one that I would not have expected.

The committee also found that a compliance audit return process is ultimately undermined by the fact that responses from individual local governments are not subject to verification or independent scrutiny. Again, there are self-compliance checklists; I have seen them many times. Obviously a change was made a few years ago to make the councils responsible for a large portion of those compliance returns, as part of some red tape reduction. It still required the council to do the work; it just meant that quite a few compliance areas were no longer sent to the department, or not as often. I am sure most local governments would do that correctly and that there would be no issues, but there was no checking mechanism with regard to mistakes or any other issues that might arise. It also means that if those self-assessments are not being made public, the department is not in a position to see any patterns across local government. It may be that local governments are falling down on very small compliance issues across the board—because the act is out of date, or because they are just not as aware of their obligations as they should be—for which the department could issue compliance notes.

The committee also found a lack of rigour and a seemingly inconsistent approach by the department in its monitoring and follow-up of local governments with regard to compliance and statutory requirements. I have to say that that is concerning, if things are being brought to the attention of the department. There was also a lack of transparency across the sector around the findings of financial audits and a lack of transparency and compliance amongst local governments with regard to key statutory requirements of the Local Government Act. Again, some of these things are very concerning, and hopefully the department was able, at the time, to counsel the local governments the committee referred to. That is where greater transparency and oversight by the Auditor General might deal with those things. Problems will occur. Local governments sometimes will not be compliant. That is what will happen. Hopefully, these things can be nipped in the bud as quickly as possible so that they are rectified and do not happen again.

Recommendations were made. The committee called for the Department of Local Government and Communities to provide public sector-wide reports on the outcomes of the compliance audit returns; the final results of all probity audits; the financial and asset management ratios to be presented in a manner that offers the potential for consistent and comparative analysis; and comparative financial data. That is where we have got to in terms of the Corruption and Crime Commission report and the two reports of the Public Accounts Committee.

From a City of Stirling context, which is what I know about, I was elected back in 2005. Members who were here for my inaugural speech would have heard that. When I was elected at the age of 25—the youngest ever councillor at the City of Stirling—it was not the done thing. The City of Stirling is not a council with too many members from the Labor Party. I was elected along with Jann McFarlane, a former federal member for Stirling. She was there for two years. Except for Jann, as far as I know I have always been the only member of the Labor Party out of 14 on the City of Stirling council. There were members and ex-members, and candidates, from the Liberal Party. At the age of 25, I was really excited when I was elected. One of the first things that happened was I had dumped on my council table a lever arch file. I was elected in a May election, back when elections were held in May. Dumped on my desk was the City of Stirling budget for 2005–06, which was basically how to spend about \$150 million at that stage. Here was I, with an economics degree—I had some idea about how finances worked, but obviously I had not studied local government finances in depth before—in May being told that in a month and a half’s time council will need to pass this so we can send the rates out. For a new, very young and inexperienced councillor, that was a daunting thing to happen. I remember at the time thinking that so much can be achieved in local government. Very early on I found that even changing the budget, which was an officer draft, was very difficult.

The member for Carine said that councillors need more power. Councillors have a lot of power through the budget process. It is just difficult to do, especially with an administration that is united and who, in their professional opinion, are all doing the right thing. It is difficult when others disagree with the direction the council may wish to go in. The reform of the Local Government Act is a good opportunity maybe not necessarily to give councillors more power, but to work out a better way for councillors to have input into some of these major decisions and to reflect the needs, wants and expectations of their communities. All councillors come from their local community and mostly live within their wards or councils. Sometimes there is a bit of friction on financial matters.

The member for Perth talked about mandatory training. I will not go down that path today. Ensuring that training is accessible across the state, either online or in person, is so important, especially on financial matters. The Western Australian Local Government Association does a very good job. The Department of Local Government and Communities probably needs to partner a little bit more with WALGA and promote some more with new councillors across the state. The City of Stirling's budget is now way over \$250 million. It is a big budget. By population, Stirling is the eleventh biggest council in Australia. For any person coming onto that council, no matter what their background, to be given a document that is unlike anything they have seen before, which refers to roundabouts all the way up to investing council funds, training is really important. I would have benefited from it if I had received training back in 2005.

Within a couple of years, I was put on the City of Stirling's audit committee. I stayed on the audit committee until March this year. For the last four or five years, I was the presiding member of the City of Stirling audit committee. It was known as a reasonably powerful committee within the City of Stirling. Some officers called it the Spanish Inquisition because that is what it ended up being like sometimes, which I know no-one expects. Pretty quickly, after I think around 2007 when I was on the audit committee, it was brought to the council's attention by an external auditor—essentially a contractor who was conducting an audit into an area of the city—that there was an issue. I will not go into that because, unfortunately, before the gentleman could testify before the Corruption and Crime Commission—back when it used to do things differently—he took his own life. I will not go into that too much. During the next few years, just after we got a new chief executive officer, Stuart Jardine, the City of Stirling had an increased focus on misconduct and some of its internal controls. These are the things that I have seen work well in Stirling in the intervening period. Oversight by the Auditor General of both finances and performance might improve things across the board for local government.

I note that the 2015 CCC report had a special section on a review of its investigation into what happened at the City of Stirling in 2010. It noted that the CEO had taken a lead role in driving the city's misconduct resistance agenda. The city had developed a comprehensive policy and procedures framework to deal with misconduct and had responsibility for progressing that the city's misconduct resistance agenda be vested in senior executives. If ever members visit the City of Stirling, they will find it is in the lifts and in the loos there: the education of employees is a corporate priority. There are posters, there is a misconduct hotline and there is training about misconduct, proper ethical behaviour and things that officers should know in their workplace, and compliance with the officer and council code of conduct. The city has a misconduct, corruption and fraud control plan. It is good to see the CCC report acknowledged that the executive and council at the City of Stirling had taken steps.

I have some records from the City of Stirling audit committee at home. It is a closed committee at the moment; it is not public. Although I probably could get away with talking about it this afternoon, I thought I would visit the website to find an older example so that I do not get myself in too much trouble. The audit committee is a very robust committee at the City of Stirling. It worries me that some councils do not have an audit committee. It also worries me that some councils' audit committees do not meet that often and do not do half the things that a big council such as Stirling does. I understand that Stirling is a big council. Some of these things can be done on a smaller scale but still done. I know this from attending WALGA conferences. I would frequently receive phone calls from mayors in the metropolitan area asking me, "How do you operate your audit committee? It has a good reputation within the sector—how do you do it?" I assumed for many years all councils operated in the same way as the City of Stirling did. Traditionally, the city's audit committee meets five or six times a year. It has a three-year rolling plan of internal audits. The City of Stirling has a full-time internal auditor. I know that is not something every council could have, but Stirling has an independent internal auditor.

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: The City of Stirling has an external auditor and it also has an external member of the audit committee, Mr Steve Linden, who has been in audit for many years. Elected members on the audit committee talk about certain things. Sometimes having someone who is not an elected member but an appointed member to the audit committee is so good, just for their advice on auditing matters. He could say, "No, councillors, you've got the wrong end of the stick. This is the way it should be done. This is how auditing works in a company or like organisations." Having that extra advice in a political setting is so valuable. The City of Stirling has an internal auditor who does many internal audits. He sits directly under the chief executive officer and is independent of the rest of the organisation. He is not under a directorate or a manager; he is completely separate. He reports directly to the audit committee and the CEO, which keeps that independence.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.R. MICHAEL: Looking through the report, the internal auditor looks at late order issues in which a purchase order is issued after an invoice. He looks at quotation compliance to make sure that officers in procurement especially comply with policies at the city. He also looks at employees and vendors, and then he actually does audits. This report is from 2013, but at that particular meeting there were audits in process on financial services, asset stocktaking, non-stock goods and physical security at the depot.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

HOUSEHOLD FEES AND CHARGES — MCGOWAN GOVERNMENT

Motion

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [4.00 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the McGowan government for the impact its increases to household fees and charges and changes to concessions will have on seniors, self-funded retirees, low-income earners and the 218 000 Western Australian households that have installed solar systems just to pay for the government's \$5 billion of election promises.

This is the first debate of probably many on the increases in fees and charges announced late last week; they were very comprehensive and very large. From the opposition's perspective in the first instance, this is hard to take because it was not too long ago that I stood on the other side and listened to four years of screaming about the previous government's increases in fees and charges, particularly for my area in water rates, but also on changes in assistance to seniors. Every year we would come up with a forecast of seven per cent, and each year we would bring on prices much lower than that—three, four, four and a half and three per cent, all much lower than seven per cent. Each year the opposition—now government—would scream that we were miserly and mean-spirited, and it would campaign against it in the community. It was not clear on what it would do but it promised to do better. One such quote was that lower electricity prices are part of the Labor Party's DNA. Obviously, they are not, given what happened today. We also went through a reform of the people who received Seniors Card benefits and a whole range of cost-of-living assistance payments. The commonwealth cut its contribution—it provided half; we provided half—but then it withdrew its contribution. The opposition screamed that we should make up the difference and, indeed, double our contribution. That was during some really tough times. We were in a tough fiscal position, which the government is now experiencing. The Treasurer of the day is experiencing what I did with a double "cal cal" in that the government also has to fund \$5 billion of additional promises. However, in opposition they ruthlessly complained about any increases, even if they were half of what they were in the forward estimates. Now it is a bit shocking to see what this government has done. The A1 tariff has had an 11 per cent increase all in the fixed fee—I will come back to that. Residential hot water fees have not gone up by much, but home business fees went up by 11 per cent. Charities' fees went up by nearly 11 per cent, small business fees went up by 10 per cent and water fees went up by another six per cent. These are very large increases at a time when inflation is one per cent, household income is not growing, and, more importantly, non-discretionary spending in households is negative—it is going down. Households are doing it tough. The Labor Party knows this because that is the reason it won the last election. Households were doing it tough and Labor did not think that we, the government of the day, were adequately attuned to their problems. The now government expressed recognition and concern, and promised to do something about it. The decisions of last week went directly against that promise and commitment. The government will be held accountable for it over time, and that is what we are doing here today. Labor promised in opposition that it would keep fees and charges low and reasonable, but it has not.

Let me go through the history of electricity charges. My colleague the member for Bateman, the shadow Minister for Energy, will deal with this area mainly. When we came to government in 2008, a couple of years after the so-called reform of the electricity industry, the industry was in chaos. Before that, electricity prices were held constant for a long period of almost 15 years with no increase, but maybe one increase in the 1990s. There was a requirement after reform that the Economic Regulation Authority would look at it and find out the cost reflectivity. It then put out a report. Clearly, I was not in government, but I had put my hand up for the seat of Riverton. In July 2009, the ERA said that prices had to go up by nearly 80 per cent to be cost reflective, so the Carpenter government put in the forward estimates an increase of 10 per cent each year for eight years. We came into government and, at the same time, we increased prices during that first term of government by 51 per cent, a little more than the forward estimates. At that same time, the subsidy to Synergy went up from \$60 million to \$550 million a year—there were fundamental problems with that. In our last term of government, which is the relevant one, we had a seven per cent forecast for each year. Each year it was less, but, importantly, as we went towards full cost reflectivity we focused on driving the costs out of Synergy rather than higher prices. The subsidy for Synergy peaked at \$550 million—the tariff adjustment payment. We had it down below \$300 million, and in 2019-20 it is forecast to go to \$30 million—almost full cost reflectivity. We did that largely by reducing the costs in Synergy, and reform. We went in with a commitment to go to competition on 1 July 2019. Although early on we were equivocating about the reform, in the last year I declared that that would require structural change to Synergy including splitting it up not into an old Synergy—the old retailer and

generator, Verve—but into gentailers in some form or fashion. We cannot have competition in a market when the government-owned entity controls or owns 81 per cent of electricity generated in the state; it cannot work, so we focused on reform. The government, in some rhetoric, has said that one reason it is going for these massive increases is that it wants to prepare the pathway towards full competition. If that is the government's policy, state it; I am not sure whether it is. I have read in the paper that there is a tussle within the government about that. All I can say is that if the government of the day wants support from this side to go to full retail contestability, we support it but it really requires not only the continual reform of Synergy including reducing costs, but also structural change of some sort. The government needs to map out the agenda and we will follow it. If all it is doing is jacking up prices to keep the monopoly going, that is just treating electricity prices as a tax mechanism and we are not going to support that. I argued very strongly for a focus on increasing the up-front payment for electricity, a per diem charge to pay for essentially the fixed cost and the variable, and ours is overweighted on the variable. We argued strongly—ploughed the field if you wish—for that case in the community. It is not easy and there will be a lot of resistance. The government has now got totality of the 11 per cent increase, or \$169 a year, on the fixed charge. I support putting most of the weight on the fixed charge. The problem is with the magnitude of the charge. A \$169 lump sum fee in one year is too large. People cannot avoid this charge if they are in a cash-constrained housing environment because of the fixed charge. They cannot reduce their electrons or their consumption of electricity, and they cannot use solar cells to reduce the charge; they cannot do anything but just wear it.

My complaint is not about the pathway of the change, it is about the magnitude of the change. An 11 per cent increase, or an almost 100 per cent increase in the fixed charge, which is what I think it is, is too large in one go. That is the problem. The direction of the change is right; it is the magnitude that is the problem. It is particularly hard when it is a lump sum, because lump sums are hard to deal with. Our problem is not so much the form of the price increase, it is the magnitude of it.

On this pathway, the government is on the way to get to full retail contestability as long as it continues to reform Synergy as has been built into the budget. In fact, as I remember it, Treasury was not allowed to treat some of the Synergy reforms in the forward estimates because Treasury wanted to see the reforms achieved before it booked them, which is appropriate, and I agreed with that. On the forward estimates, the government should be on a pathway to remove the tariff-adjusted payment altogether and on 1 July 2019, or thereabouts, have competition in the market, but the government has to get on to reform this industry. The real problem is that the government rushed this reform with these very large increases. It will hurt households in the community because it brought on \$5 billion of additional expenditure that it is struggling to expend. That is the problem.

We have gone through this before. I know government members are in denial about it, but the Labor Party went to the election knowing exactly what the forecasts were, which have not varied from that at all. Labor said that it had sent its forecasts to these experts, who gave it a tick of approval that it could not only fund its \$5 billion of additional commitments—that is the government's figure, not ours—but also be able to return the budget to surplus, and level off and reduce debt. When the Labor Party got into government, it found that that was all fiction, and it is desperately flinging around for every source of revenue it can get, including hitting households with excessive fees above forward estimates. I will make this quite clear. I repeat: the Labor Party went to the last election and said that it would keep increases to wages and fees and charges on the basis of the forward estimates. The increases in the forward estimates were seven per cent. The government has gone way above that—by 50 per cent or more—at a time when households are struggling for cash flow, struggling for employment, struggling for an income and struggling to keep the electricity and other services on. The government is going too quickly.

In the electricity area, the government has inherited a situation in which the problems of the first term of 2008–12 and of 2012–14 had been resolved, and the government was on a sustainable path going forward. The Minister for Water, when in opposition, stood up on this side of the chamber and decried every move we made to increase water prices on the basis of the forward estimates, and now he has done the same thing. He has done the same thing that he decried us for doing for four years. Members on this side of the chamber think the government has gone far too far in hitting Western Australian households. The government has gone against its clear rhetoric, if not explicitly its commitments at the last election, indeed over the last four years. The government has not given consideration to the situation of the economy that Western Australian households face. The government did move one tariff to a fixed charge rather than a variable—we support that—but it went too far. An 11 per cent increase in a single year is too large, particularly at the fixed charge. Another government reform is to reduce the Seniors Card benefits. I do not know the detail of it, but I think the government is capping rebates on local government rates to about \$100. The government's excuse was that most of the recipients of that rebate were in the western suburbs, but I assure members opposite that quite a few people outside the western suburbs get that rebate. When we did something similar to that, all we heard from the opposition side of the chamber were howls of outrage and campaigns in the city against the changes we made. We are, however, a more reasonable opposition.

Mr P. Papalia: What are you doing in the upper house?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Let us hear him scream.

Government members know that they are being hypocrites by increasing electricity prices by 11 per cent in a single year and supporting a \$169 hit on every household. Government members support that. The Minister for Water supports a six per cent increase in water charges, despite spending four years decrying us for doing exactly that. The minister should not give me a lecture about hypocrisy because he is dripping in it. We have just had an election in this environment and the biggest issue that households were telling us and Labor members was that they were doing it tough and that we should listen to them. Do you know what? The government has not listened to them on this issue. The government's excuse is that it is going to full retail contestability in electricity, and that is the biggest issue. I understand that the government is not doing that. It is not government policy. It was not a Labor Party policy at the election. The Minister for Mines and Petroleum, who was then the shadow Minister for Energy, made it quite clear that it was not Labor policy. The current Minister for Energy has said that he is thinking about it. We hear that the unions will not allow it. If the government is not going to full retail contestability in electricity, there is no justification whatsoever for the large increase in electricity charges that it has put in place, which will hurt a lot of households.

Certain households will be hurt significantly, particularly those people who are on modest incomes and are not on welfare payments, such as self-funded retirees. They do not burn much electricity, but the whole increase is on the fixed charge, and the overall increase will be much more than 11 per cent—probably pushing about 16 per cent—in a single year. These households will also probably be hit by the Seniors Card changes, water charge increases and others. I might add that increases to public transport charges really surprised me. Student fares, which are the fares for the buses that take kids to school, will go up by nearly 16.7 per cent in a single year. That is a large increase of \$52 a year. Standard zone fares for public transport will go up by essentially nine per cent in a year. We kept increases to fares to 2.5 per cent because the Public Transport Authority told us that its passenger numbers were declining and it was very sensitive to the cost of transport. Treasury had some doubts about this, but we accepted a 2.5 per cent increase during this period because there were major structural adjustments in the economy and people who were on lower incomes or under strain would use public transport. We kept the increase to fares at 2.5 per cent. The Metronet party will increase fares by nine per cent in a single year. Overall, as part of the representative household model, public transport will go up by 11 per cent. That increase shocked me.

We stand in this chamber and the government has come out with a range of huge increases in fees and charges. These are the first tangible actions of the government. They are over the top in the context of the household's ability to pay, the need for them, Labor's statements in the election campaign and its statements over the last four years. The government will be held accountable for that.

MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman) [4.18 pm]: I rise in support of this motion that this house condemns the McGowan government for the impact that its increases to household fees and charges and changes to concessions will have on seniors, self-funded retirees, low-income earners and the 218 000 Western Australian households that have installed solar systems to pay for the McGowan government's \$5 billion of election promises. Based on some of the information that has come out more recently, we should add small business to that list as well. I will come back to that.

I must express surprise at the extent to which the new government has gone to walk away from its rhetoric and the commitments that it made to the Western Australia people during the 2017 election campaign. The level of back-flipping and reneging on commitments in this government's first 100 days is staggering. The increases to household fees and charges is just one element of that.

We often talk about the rhetoric of governments. We need to judge governments on their actions rather than their rhetoric. I am sure the people of Western Australia will judge the Labor government on the actions it is undertaking, based on the commitments that it made prior to the election.

The Labor Party made a commitment before the election that it would herald a new era of gold-plated transparency. Over the last two weeks, we have seen anything but transparency, whether it be gold plated, silver plated or whatever plated. I do not think we have had much transparency from this government. We have seen the swinging door of senior public servants. That begs the question: what is this government really up to? In question time today, the answers that were provided by the government bore little relevance to the questions that were asked. That is a concern for a government that stated prior to the election that it would establish a new era of gold-plated transparency.

Before I get to what has happened with household fees and charges, it is important to look at the comments that were made prior to the election by the current Premier when he was Leader of the Opposition and by the current Treasurer when he was shadow Treasurer. On 23 October 2016, in an article in *The Sunday Times*, Mark McGowan, the then Leader of the Opposition, said —

I know families cannot afford higher power bill increases.

That is pretty straightforward. On 9 May 2014, in an article in *The West Australian*, the now Premier said —

When people have to pay more and more, way above the inflation rate ... it is a Budget that is hurting the people who can least afford it ...

He went on to say —

This is a mean and painful Budget ...

He said that despite the fact that the increases he was talking about were about 30 per cent lower than the increases we are seeing from this government.

On 21 June 2012, on ABC news, the now Treasurer talked about the Labor Party electricity policy and said —

I can certainly say that the policy will be much more considerate to Western Australian families to ensure that we don't get these sorts of rapid increases that we've seen over the last four years ...

Mr B.S. Wyatt: When was that?

Mr D.C. NALDER: That was on 21 June 2012.

When we talk about the size of the increases that occurred in 2008, 2009 or 2010, members opposite point the finger at what the Liberal–National government did and say the government is just doing what our government did. They seem to forget that those costs are already built into the system. The new costs that they are applying are compounding those previous increases. Therefore, the impact on families is far greater than the impact of the original price increases. It is absurd for members opposite to complain about the price increases that were imposed eight years ago by the former government and say they were unfair, when they are compounding those price increases with an 11 per cent hike on households.

There has been some commentary about cost reflectivity. On 25 June 2014, the now Premier said in this place —

... state government do not apply a fee that fully recoups the cost of most things they do. That is what state governments do. That is part of the Australian way ...

The government has said that part of the reason it has increased electricity charges is so that we can move towards cost reflectivity. However, the now Premier said in *Hansard* on 25 June 2014 that that is not what governments do. There are gaps between the true cost of electricity and the charge that is levied, and those gaps are deliberate. If the reason for this increase in electricity charges is not to move towards cost reflectivity, as the Treasurer has stated, that begs the question: what else is this increase for?

On 9 May 2014, the now Premier said on Channel Seven news, when speaking on the 2014–15 budget —

Mr P. Papalia: Who was speaking?

Mr D.C. NALDER: The now Premier, Mark McGowan. He was talking about our government, and he said —

They are using West Australian families and ordinary West Australians as financial punching bags ...

Was the increase in electricity tariffs at that time about four per cent?

Dr M.D. Nahan: It was about 3.5 per cent.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The now Premier said that the former government was using Western Australian families and ordinary Western Australians as financial punching bags. If that is how the now Premier views a 3.5 per cent increase in electricity tariffs —

Dr M.D. Nahan: It was four per cent.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I thought it might have been four per cent. It averaged four per cent over the previous four years. If the now Premier viewed that as treating the Western Australian public as financial punching bags, what does he consider an 11 per cent increase in electricity charges to be?

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Yes. I make that point, because this is what has occurred in history.

I move now to the impact on the community of the new electricity charges that are being advertised. The A1 tariff will increase by \$169. That is basically the connection fee, which is a set payment; it cannot be diluted. That will have a big impact on small users of electricity, such as aged people with no kids in the house. The people who will benefit from this tariff increase are people who have a swimming pool, or more than one television, and use a large amount of electricity. Those people will not be penalised by this method of charging for electricity. The people who will be penalised are self-funded retirees and people who use only a small amount of electricity. That includes the 218 000 households in Western Australia who have tried to reduce their energy costs by putting solar panels on their roofs. It is fascinating to see such a targeted approach on the less well off in our community, particularly self-funded retirees. The accusation has been made that all self-funded retirees are wealthy people. I assure members that they are not. They are proud people who have worked hard to get what they have got.

The biggest issue is the size of this impost over such a short period of time. That is the major concern for people. This will disadvantage people who use little energy from the grid, such as seniors, low-income earners and people who have installed solar panels. Conversely, it will have minimal impact on consumers of a large amount of electricity. This increase in the tariff will not encourage people to modify their electricity use. That is very interesting. The Labor Party said last year that it was mean spirited to increase prices by around 3.5 per cent.

Dr M.D. Nahan: It was three per cent last year.

Mr D.C. NALDER: If it was mean-spirited to increase prices by three per cent, how can it not be mean-spirited to increase prices by 11 per cent? It is blatantly clear that this is not just about restoring the budget. Another piece of rhetoric from this government is that it needs to restore the current budget situation. What we see from these increases in tariffs is that it will improve the forward estimates by around \$238 million over four years, or \$60 million a year. In the last couple of weeks, the government has increased the number of education assistants by 300 at a cost of about \$46 million a year to the budget. From a financial perspective, if our budget is in such financial disrepair and if WA has the lowest ratio of students to education assistants in Australia, it begs the questions: If we are in such financial disrepair, how can we sustain that increase if we already have the best ratio of EAs to students in Australia? Why do it now? We have failed to hear why the government is doing that. When we question the government, it says that we do not care for kids. What we do care about is that if any activity is undertaken, it can be sustained. The government keeps arguing that the finances are in such disrepair, yet it is using 75 per cent of the gains from increases in electricity tariffs to fund 300 EAs. If it is not to fund EAs, it will be there to fund an additional \$5 billion in election promises that the Labor Party made during the election campaign. This has nothing to do with restoring the current budget situation. It does not go anywhere near it, yet this tariff is being imposed on a lot of people who are battling to make their way in life. I think that doing it in one year as the government is doing will cause a huge impost on people.

It is interesting that the press release put out by the government is all about the impact it will have on households. The press release refers to a number of issues, including public transport, motor vehicles, emergency services and changes to concessions. We could be mistaken for thinking that the government was advising us that the tariff increase would apply only to households. But, surprise, surprise, on the weekend we worked out that it would apply not only to households, as there would be tariff increases for businesses as well. The government has been deathly silent on the impact of power price increases on small business in particular.

Mr J.E. McGrath: They accused us of not supporting small business!

Mr D.C. NALDER: Yes, it accused us of not supporting small business.

I draw members' attention to a Synergy advertisement on page 20 and 21 of *The Weekend West* that details the new tariffs. From that alone, we were not able to determine the change unless we had some knowledge about the impact businesses or households. We could have been mistaken and assumed that it was all about household tariffs. It is not. It was not until we went to the Department of Finance website and pulled out the 2016 tariffs, and broke them down that we understood where the tariffs would apply. We found that —

Mr D.J. Kelly: Inspector Clouseau is over there doing his detective work!

Mr D.C. NALDER: I think this is embarrassing, and the member should be embarrassed about it.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Thank you.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Member for Bateman, you have the floor.

Mr D.C. NALDER: We worked out that the tariff increases will apply to not only small businesses but also charities. Not only will there be a massive price hike on low-income earners, but also the McGowan government will hit charities with an 11 per cent increase in supply charges and an additional 11 per cent on consumption charges from 1 July. No-one heard this anywhere. The McGowan government did not come out and tell us that it was going to hit charities. It was not until we pulled apart a Synergy ad and looked at how the tariffs are to be allocated and what that means that we determined that the government was smacking charity organisations as well.

The government is planning to pay for its \$5 billion election commitments by slugging not only charities, but also small businesses, the largest employers in the state, with increases of 10 per cent on both supply and consumption charges. Where has the government been? Where is the government's gold-plated transparency and sharing? If members look in *Hansard*, they will find that I asked the Treasurer when he would let small businesses and households know about these increases so that they could budget accordingly. What we got was, "Here's the households", but there was nothing about the impact tariff increases would have on small business.

It is fascinating going through this and exploring it. The government has hit small business, but it has not increased by very much tariffs for big business. That is really interesting. In the monopoly situation in the energy

market the government is focusing on small business, yet in the competitive energy market it is not putting up tariffs by anywhere near the same amount. The specific areas being targeted are those in which there is monopolistic control and influence over the marketplace.

When talking about gold-plated transparency, I would have thought that when it was making changes to tariffs and increasing power charges, it would have been appropriate for the government to share the impact across all sectors of the community. Small business plays an important role in our community and it is only fair that it should be advised about these changes. The government should not try to hide them in a tariff schedule in a Synergy ad in the newspaper and say that it has communicated with everybody. It is a disgrace and the government should be apologising to all Western Australians.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P. Papalia: This new-found interest in small business is commendable. The notification of power increases hasn't changed since the last government.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member!

Mr D.C. NALDER: I find that comment fascinating. I assume the member for Warnbro stood up in cabinet and fought for small businesses.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Member for Bateman, you have the floor.

Mr D.C. NALDER: As I said, I think it would have been appropriate for the government to have focused on what it had committed to the public of Western Australia about its gold-plated transparency, and that it would have shared with all elements of the community the changes in electricity tariffs. That is definitely something we have not seen. I think we need to ask: why is this happening?

It will be interesting to know where the Treasurer is heading with this exercise, and it will be interesting to compare what is happening in the electricity sector with what is happening in the price war in the gas sector. Labor criticised the privatisation of Alinta and the opening up of the gas market, but households are now enjoying gas price discounts of up to 25 per cent. As we saw in today's *The West Australian*, larger businesses consuming over 50 megawatt hours can choose their electricity arrangement and can enjoy a 30 per cent discount on their electricity bill. This is where the matter will become interesting. It seems that the Treasurer is battling opposition from the unions. The Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union, the Electrical Trades Union, the Australian Services Union and United Voice have all said that we cannot go to cost reflectivity, as it is not right; it is not Labor policy. I was pleased to hear the Premier say that he supports the Treasurer, but I look forward to seeing how this will play out over time, but we need to see how the Minister for Energy can deliver his long-term plan for affordable, reliable and secure energy to avoid the chaos that happened on the east coast with blackouts and sky-rocketing prices. He needs to articulate how we will cut out the heavily unionised energy corporations and how he will attract new businesses to reduce the marginal cost of electricity. We have heard that we need to move to cost reflectivity, but we have put the burden straight onto households. In the last six months we have seen that on the east coast, with issues of blackouts, security of supply, gas and renewable energy, with wind or solar not being able to provide enough of a baseload, an opportunity has presented itself.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Are you blaming renewables?

Mr D.C. NALDER: No, I am not blaming renewables. If the member stopped and listened for a minute and stopped being so ignorant, he would see that when the cloud cover comes and there is no wind blowing, there is still a baseload requirement of energy, and South Australia found that it did not have the ability to deliver on that because it has shut down the turbines that would deliver that baseload, and so there are blackouts and issues with security of supply in that state. They have come up with this issue around security of supply.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Once, twice, I have to stand up because you keep going. Do members want three times? Member for Bateman, you have the floor.

Mr D.C. NALDER: We have an opportunity. The government is currently looking to put the burden on households. We have an opportunity with massive price hikes in gas and energy supply on the east coast to make an effort to target industry to come here. We have an opportunity, with property prices and the employment situation on the east coast that mean the economy there is a lot stronger than ours at this time, to attract industry here with lower wage rates, cheaper property and access to cheaper supplies of secure energy. We generate over 1 000 megawatts of excess capacity in our electricity system. Why is the government not focused on getting industry here, instead of just putting the total burden onto households and, as we have discovered today, small businesses? We are calling on the government not to simply rely on households and put on the pressure and load it all into one year. Think smart, and develop a plan or strategy that takes our state forward and creates opportunities for all.

With that, I will take my seat and allow the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to continue this debate.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Scarborough, you have the floor.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [4.43 pm]: Thank you, Madam Acting Speaker; I appreciate your protection. I rise to add my comments to debate on this motion. I have been listening with interest to the contributions of both the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Bateman. I will start with the background to this issue and the disappointment the community of Western Australia must be feeling at the betrayal by this government with these fee increases. In October 2016, when we were talking about the sale of Western Power in the lead-up to the election campaign, the now Premier, Mark McGowan, was quoted in *The Sunday Times* as follows —

“If I’m elected Premier I will keep Western Power in public hands and ensure Western Australians retain its ongoing revenue,” Mr McGowan said this week.

He has certainly guaranteed he is going to improve the ongoing revenue of Western Power with these fee hikes. The article continues —

“I know families cannot afford higher power bill increases. But selling Western power will mean bills go up and service quality will go down.

He made other comments, but it is probably important to get on the record now that, in the same article, published on 23 October 2016, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission chairman Rod Sims told *The Sunday Times* —

... network electricity prices in WA were regulated by the ERA, he did not believe power bills would rise in WA if Western Power was sold.

“My thoughts are clear on this,” he said.

“I think prices will actually go down post privatisation.

He was quoting examples from the east coast. Infrastructure Partnerships Australia referred to a 2015 report by Ernst and Young for the New South Wales government looking at the poles and wires businesses of Victoria and South Australia. Members would be interested to know that that report stated that network prices for typical residential customers in Victoria and South Australia had fallen in real terms since privatisation.

We lost that argument. We took it to the electorate, and the electorate said it believed the rhetoric of the now Premier that he would keep power prices and household costs stable. People were not expecting that he would break that promise so early in his tenure as Premier of the state. There is a lot of history here. *Hansard* is a wonderful place to go back and look for the commentary of individuals on issues that matter and are of concern to the community. I thought I would have a look back at June 2014, when a motion similar to the one we are debating now was moved by the now Premier. It stated —

That the house condemns the state Liberal–National government and the federal Liberal government for making the lives of seniors and pensioners increasingly difficult through increased cost of living and the withdrawal of concessions.

In that debate, we were lectured on unfortunate commentary by some government ministers implying seniors were somehow living it up, were on easy street and were being treated overgenerously. There was reference in the now Premier’s speech to a forum that he was going to attend. In that speech, there were some really interesting insights. He said —

Some seniors are self-funded retirees, some are pensioners and some are a mix of both ... A range of them receive benefits from governments to provide a certain standard and quality of life, and for a long period it has been the case in this country that a range of benefits have been provided to seniors across the community. Those benefits are now under attack.

It is like groundhog day. Further on in the speech, the now Premier said —

State governments do a range of things for which they do not impose a user-pays arrangement on the people who receive the benefit; in fact, state governments do not apply a fee that fully recoups the cost of most things they do. That is what state governments do. That is part of the Australian way; state governments provide services to the community, and people may well access them depending on their individual needs. That is what state governments do and have always done.

That was a very interesting insight. This debate was initiated by changes to the seniors’ concessions in this state. Some reference was also made to a cost-of-living allowance and a seniors’ security rebate that were finite schemes offered to the community for security improvements to their households and other cost-of-living

pressures. We did not hear much of this when the Premier talked about changes to seniors' benefits that were announced over the past two weeks, but in 2014 he said —

The concessions review is underway and quite obviously seniors will cop it again. The eligibility for the Seniors Card, which was a very good initiative by Kay Hallahan in the late 1980s, is under threat. The most recent budget has resulted in a massive increase in cost-of-living pressures through the price of electricity and water, motor vehicle registration fees and tip fees—you name it; it is across the board—of around \$350 per household.

That was back in 2014, and we look at the first act of this government around setting fees and charges, and we find that the increase in fees and charges to a representative household in this state is \$438.39. That is significantly higher than the \$350 increase imposed in 2014 that we were told was utterly unacceptable and an attack on seniors and families. The Minister for Fisheries interjected earlier that owners of holiday homes would be hit by this surcharge. Every home owner in the state will pay the 11 per cent increase in electricity charges. Whether consumers are conservative users of power or excessive users of power, the supply charge will increase by around \$169 a year.

In 2014, people were saying that the increases we were putting in place at that time were mean and painful and people would have to pay more and more—way above the inflation rate. When the former Premier broke his promise not to increase electricity charges, it was said to be part of a budget that hurt the people who could least afford it. Goodness me; we have to be so careful about the words we utter in this place because they can come back to haunt us when we break promises to the electorate around keeping prices and cost increases affordable and ensuring that we keep the interests of families in our community at the forefront.

I would like to draw members' attention to the claims of the government that all it is doing is implementing the increases that were already set down in the forward estimates that we would be implementing had we won government and had we been in the same position. That rhetoric does not stack up with the reality of what occurred when we were in government. Often the forward estimates reflected price increases for electricity but when push came to shove, we looked at the affordability of increases through the eyes of seniors, people on fixed incomes, pensioners, families and the working poor in our community—that is, the people in low-paying jobs trying to pay their mortgages, with a couple of kids, just getting ahead and one crisis away from being on the breadline. We considered all those people when we looked at increases to the electricity tariff. The forward estimates for 2011–12 showed a five per cent increase in the electricity tariff, with an increase of five per cent the following year, 12 per cent in 2013–14 and 12 per cent in 2014–15. We looked at what was happening in our community and when we handed down subsequent budgets, the increase in tariffs that we delivered in 2013–14 was four per cent, not 12 per cent that was predicted several years earlier. When we handed down our budget in 2014–15, we delivered a 4.5 per cent fee increase. In previous years, the increase in the forward estimates was 12 per cent, 10 per cent or seven per cent, depending on the year of the budget. In 2016–17, importantly, in response to the economic circumstances that many families were finding themselves in, instead of the projected seven per cent increase in tariffs, we kept the increase at three per cent. Those were the sorts of decisions we needed to make as a government. Obviously, those decisions were made in difficult circumstances for the government but our view was that we should not cast unaffordable increases —

Mr D.J. Kelly: Will you take a question?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: No, I am not interested in the member's interjections; sorry.

Despite the predictions of the forward estimates, we responded at the time.

Let us look at what some of these household increases now equate to. During our period in government, the total increases in the 2010–11 budget for a standard representative household was \$368.86. In the following year, as a result of our government's decisions around fees and charges, the increase in a standard representative household's budget was \$205.66. In 2012–13, it was \$163.20; in 2013–14, it was a couple of cents under \$235; in 2014–15, the increases totalled \$324.18; in 2015–16, it was \$198.54; and in the most recent budget, the household fees and charges for a representative household would look at increasing by \$257. Every single year we were lectured by those who are now in government about how disgraceful it was that we were gouging households and about how unaffordable living in Western Australia was becoming under our government. Then this year, the increase for a representative household is \$438.39. The Premier set himself a gold standard of transparency. It is really disgraceful that all the hidden fees and charges were not discussed. I would expect that there would be some transparency around these fees and charges. Instead, we have had to dig around a bit to understand what the impact will be.

The government can publish the fees and charges and put out information in the media as part of its campaigning. Then there are fees and charges that it can remain silent on, hoping that the opposition is not checking too hard and that the media is too busy to check its facts and the government gets away with it. The government has not got away with it because we have done our homework.

Of particular interest to me are the increases in public transport fares. The increase to student fares is a whopping 16.67 per cent. If families have a couple of kids at school, that equates to an extra \$52 a year. For a household committed to public transport, a standard fare covering two zones equates to an increase of nine per cent, or \$80.60. For a household of two parents and two children, with the kids catching school buses to and from school and mum and dad catching the bus and train or whatever to and from work, they will be paying an extra \$132.60 as part of the fee increases of the McGowan government. These fee increases were in the context of a landslide electoral win in which the Premier said that he would not charge families and he would not increase fees for families because families had had enough under the previous administration. Yet there will be a 16.67 per cent increase in fares for kids catching buses to and from school, motor vehicle charges will increase around 5.67 per cent, and insurance will go up a bit. That is an extra \$30.84 for a standard representative household with one vehicle. If households have a couple of vehicles, they can just add that on—layer it up. We have talked about the utilities charges, including a \$169 increase in electricity for the standard representative household and increases of nearly \$100 for water sewerage and drainage—\$266 with a few cents to spare for utility charges. These are the sorts of increases that every household has to pay. No-one can escape them. When we look at the increases in utility charges, we are looking at \$238 million over and above what was budgeted for in the forward estimates.

I will go back again. One of my concerns with these increases in public transport fees is that we have experienced a decline in public transport patronage. Some huge commitments have been made by this government on public transport infrastructure.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There have been commitments to extensions on rail lines and other big commitments around public transport, but when we look at the Public Transport Authority's annual report from last year, we see some concerning trends. Perth public transport patronage has dropped for the second time in three years. It is currently at 145.5 million boardings, which is the lowest it has been since 2011–12. In 2003, when the PTA was formed, total Transperth paid and unpaid boardings, transfers and all forms of concessional travel were at 90.6 million, of which rail was 31.1 million. In 2012–13, the figures were 149.7 million, up 65 per cent over 10 years. The figure for rail patronage was 65.7 million, an increase of 11.25 per cent.

There are reasons for that, including the decline in the economy and the decline in the number of jobs in the CBD as some of the mining companies downsized. That is part of the reason we have seen a decline in public transport patronage. However, when we hit people in the hip pocket with fare increases, they start to make different decisions about whether they are going to catch public transport. With the government expanding the public transport network at an unaudited cost of around \$5.6 billion, we have to question the affordability and wonder if the government has done any modelling on what impact fee increases will have on public transport patronage numbers. That is one of my concerns.

When we look at the PTA figures for 2014–15, we see that state funding was \$740 million per annum. Users contributed \$214 million and there was some other income coming into the PTA for the \$1 billion worth of services it delivered. In 2015–16, the state subsidised the PTA to the tune of \$780 million. There was \$210 million collected from users, which reflects the decline in patronage I referred to. There is a significant sustainability issue if the subsidisation by the state of the public transport network is to continue at the current rate. If the current fare increases are to become part of the annual fee gouging by the state government, there is the potential for PTA boardings to decline even further. That brings into question the merits and sustainability of the government's agenda for the state rail expansion.

The previous government made a decision on the Ellenbrook railway line based on the subsidisation that would be required et cetera.

Mr D.J. Kelly: You paid the price.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We did pay the price; however, my concern is that into the future, every single taxpayer in Western Australia will be paying the price for the rapid expansion of the public transport network at a time when patronage is declining and fees are going up. As far as I am aware, there has been no analysis done by the government on the impact of fare increases on public transport patronage. Do fare increases influence people to make different decisions? I know that they do, just from the experience of members of my family. If one can bundle four people into a motor vehicle, drive them into the city and park on the outskirts of the city, one can actually save money rather than paying increased fares for students and adults on the public transport system. That is the vexing challenge we have in trying to encourage individuals onto public transport.

I do not dispute that the government was elected by a landslide and that it has the authority to implement its agenda, but I offer a word of caution: the government made commitments to the tune of \$5.6 billion, give or take a billion or two, and there was no strategy for how they those commitments were going to be paid for. In the lead-up to the last election a commitment was made to slowly pay off the debt, just like a mortgage, and to rein in the deficit. I do not know how the government is going to rein in the deficit when it is going to have to continue increasing its

subsidisation of the public transport network against declining patronage numbers. That is going to be an interesting conundrum for the government, and it is the government's job to sort it out. Paying for those new commitments while promising not to increase the size of state net debt is going to be a very big challenge.

I go back again to the comments made by the now Premier prior to the last election, in a *Sunday Times* article of 23 October 2016 —

“I know families cannot afford higher power bill increases.

So what does he do? He increases power bills and the supply charge so that no-one can escape it. One cannot even turn one's heater off and put ugg boots on and walk around in a blanket to try to avoid this 11 per cent increase; it is the supply to the building. Everyone has to pay it.

The now Treasurer was quoted in an ABC News article of 21 June 2012 as saying that Labor's electricity policy would be “much more considerate”. Let us have a look at what the previous Liberal–National government did. We asked for a three per cent increase last year; 4.5 per cent the year before; 4.5 per cent the year before that; and 3.5 per in 2012–13, not a whopping —

Ms A. Sanderson: And before that?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I know the member does not like it. It is 11 per cent. The government has to explain to the electorate why the Premier, who promised not to increase electricity prices, has increased them. I know members opposite do not like the fact that they have to explain to their electorates that electricity prices went up without privatisation, because not privatising Western Power was going to keep the prices down. Well, guess what? It did not happen; they went up, because of the government's decision. They went up so the government could get another \$238 million in its back pocket to help pay for the \$5.6 billion in unfunded commitments. Members opposite can explain that to their electorates and we will explain it to ours. We will talk to the seniors who are sending us emails saying, “We had no idea we were going to be attacked like this. We had no idea, after engaging with the Premier and the now government over a couple of years about our issues, that they would come in and change the seniors' concessions. We had no idea that they would increase electricity prices, because they said they wouldn't. We had no idea they would increase the fees and charges to the standard representative household by a whopping \$438. We had no idea about that, because the Premier said he wouldn't do that, and we voted for him because he said he would not do this.”

Mr D.J. Kelly: You voted for us?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: That is what the seniors said. The seniors said, “We were sold a pup. They said they'd keep electricity prices down and that if we didn't sell Western Power, prices would go down.” That did not happen.

The quote used by the member for Bateman was from a Channel Seven news report of 9 May 2014, in which the then Leader of the Opposition was quoted as saying, according to my notes —

They are using West Australian families and ordinary West Australians as financial punching bags ...

Goodness me! Perhaps the government did learn something from its own rhetoric.

I do not have too much more to contribute to this debate at this time, but members opposite need to understand that these fee increases will not come back to bite householders for a few of months, so the bill will come in, there will be a bit of an increase, and people will look at their bills and start to understand what has occurred. As subsequent bills come through and people find it more and more difficult to pay, that is when this decision will come home to roost with the now government. We will make sure that the community is reminded of the commitments that the Premier made; the commitments that got him and every single one of his 41 members elected to the Legislative Assembly. Those commitments were that the Labor Party would not increase electricity prices and it would not put a further impost on struggling Western Australian families because they could not afford it in the current economic environment.

It has been thrown in our face that these increases were made when we were in government. When the Liberal Party came into government, electricity prices had not increased for several years. Yes, we increased them, but when our increases were going through, the economy was booming. People had money in their pockets; they could afford to pay it. The evidence for that is that after those increases had been implemented, affordability was proven when we won the 2013 election. But now times have changed. The Western Australian economy is not buoyant like that. I hope it turns around quickly; I really do. I hope it turns around quickly for small businesses. I hope it turns around for every single struggling household in Western Australia, but the ability for those Western Australian families to get ahead is being eroded by these fee increases that are absolutely contrary to what the community was promised during the election campaign. The reason we are on this side of the house is that the community was hurting financially. These fee increases are coming at a time when the community is struggling. There are tradies who do not have work in the pipeline and there are businesses closing doors. There has been a contraction. It will turn around. People in business have been through

these cycles before. They occur about every 10 years. It will turn around and it will recover. To impose increased fees and charges on a struggling populace, contrary to an election commitment made only three months ago by the Labor Party that it would not increase household fees and charges, is appalling. In a year's time, when people have accumulated these increases and they start to realise the actual cost as they struggle to pay their bills, we will continue to keep the pressure on the government with respect to its commitments. We will wait for this budget to be delivered at the final possible moment.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Treasurer) [5.12 pm]: I rise to make some comments on this motion. Unsurprisingly, the government will not support this motion. I want to start off by pointing out where the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is correct: the financial and economic circumstances that we face at the moment are fundamentally different from those the former government faced when it started its time in government in 2008. Through the vast majority of its time in government we faced multibillion-dollar operating deficits as a result of the wreckage of the former government. When the former Liberal government came into power, it had significant operating surpluses. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition says it happens every 10 years—actually, it does not. What we went through over the last decade was, without doubt, one of the biggest periods of wealth creation in the history of Western Australia. We have come out of that with a balance sheet crippled by record debt and record deficits. I have said time and again, in the lead-up to the election campaign, during it and since the election of this government, that we will treat the finances seriously. I think that is probably why we are on this side of the house and the Liberal Party was moved over to the other side. I too engage with seniors and I too engage with people who have been impacted by tariffs, fees and charges.

I now want to make some broad comments and focus on specific issues. Broadly, three issues were raised by the opposition. The first was a complaint about increases to fees and charges mainly around electricity prices. I will make some further comments around that. The second issue was about some decisions that we made around concession reform. The third issue related to comments in the energy space that were mainly made by the Leader of the Opposition but were followed up by the member for Bateman, the shadow Treasurer. I will make some comments around all of these. I am not going to ignore the financial circumstances that we face. I have outlined in this house and in the media a range of revenue writedowns across the forward estimates. I think I have articulated that to be to the tune of about \$2.5 billion. Whilst I am yet to land on a figure, members may have seen yesterday the Australian Bureau of Statistics came out with its population figures for Western Australia. I dare say the Leader of the Opposition might have followed that with some interest. The former Treasurer will know the impact of population decline and what that may do to revenue expectations. Let me tell members that that is likely to have a further impact on the \$2.5 billion that I have already indicated. The decline in Western Australia's population was larger than I think most people anticipated. It was certainly larger than the budget, midyear review and *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* are predicated upon. Watch this space. I will no doubt make some comments about that in due course.

What is also adding to the government's difficulty in trying to address the financial circumstances we face is we have a Liberal Party now in the upper house that is making decisions to reverse out its own savings measures. It does not make life any easier when they were savings that the former government booked in its 2016–17 budget. The Liberal Party is now voting with its One Nation coalition colleagues, its National colleagues, its Liberal Democrat colleague and its Greens colleagues to vote out its savings measures!

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: Your mates!

Mr B.S. WYATT: That is an interesting interjection, member for Churchlands. That is who the Liberal Party is voting with to reverse out its own savings measures. I have to say that it will not make life easier if the Liberal Party plays a position of financial wrecker. Members opposite are not even willing to stand to defend their own savings measures. They are not ours. In fact it is important that members opposite analyse and critique decisions made by government, that they put them through the rigour of critique and analysis, but I do expect them to stick by their own savings measures. There is no way we did that during our last term in opposition. We would not have done that. But the Liberal Party made the decision to vote with the Greens, as it pointed out. At the same time, to its credit, it allowed the Loan Bill to go through in its form, as it said it would, but the Liberal Party voted with the Greens. A Greens member—I have forgotten their name—said that they cannot let the Loan Bill through. The Liberal Party then voted with that member to reverse out savings. I have to say that it is not making life easier. Perhaps with some annoyance, I listen to that pontification around decisions we have made about fees and charges, knowing full well that in the upper house the Liberal Party is playing the role of financial wrecker.

Believe me, the Labor Party is very well aware of the impact of fees and charges. As the opposition pointed out, we have had this discussion, mainly from my political experience on that side of the house, around the impact of increased fees, mainly in debates around electricity and water as they form part of the representative household. As I have said, the representative household publicly hides all manner of impacts but that is what has been reported on in the budget for a long time. I want to quickly go through that. As the Leader of the Opposition knows, when decisions are made around fees and charges, they relate to literally thousands of fees and charges; most of which will only be seen when people visit a government agency to purchase something, a service, and it

is generally cost reflective. The vast majority of decisions are made to maintain that level of cost reflectivity. The ones that impact households cannot be avoided, and make up the representative household. I have made that point. I have, as has the Premier, gone through the various decisions the government has made to find savings. It has been hard, but we will continue to do it because we have an opposition that is wrecking its own savings measures in the upper house! It is hard but we will continue to do it because that is the responsible thing for this government to do.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: Will you correct the thing in your budget that you are concerned about?

Mr B.S. WYATT: What—the savings the Liberal Party voted against in the upper house? Yes. I will find a way; do not worry about that. So, tariffs, fees and charges.

I now refer to electricity. I want to again point this out: there are two components to the electricity tariff—fixed and variable. The Leader of the Opposition made the point that it is weighted to the variable significantly. Indeed it is about 80 per cent to the variable—maybe a bit higher. We have corrected that. As of 1 July, it will be about 70 per cent to the variable. Of course, the costs are almost the reverse where most of the costs apply to all of us. Regardless of how much energy we consume, we are connected to the grid and we therefore have a cost to maintain our connection to, and upkeep of, that grid. This is not new. I have gone through some of the briefing notes that the former Minister for Energy, the now Leader of the Opposition, was given and for many years he was told to fix this up because that low fixed charge effectively did not change since the disaggregation of Western Power. That meant that to get that charge up to the amount that Western Power had charged Synergy for all of us, it had to increase significantly to \$169 for every house. As members and I have pointed out, that charge will have a differing impact on each household depending on how much energy is used, obviously. For the representative household that is based on the assumption of 5 198 kilowatts of electricity usage per annum, which has come down a lot, that works out to be a 10.9 per cent increase. If a household uses significant amounts of electricity, the percentage increase will be small but the household will still be paying \$169 more. If a household does not use much electricity, it will still pay \$169 but the percentage will be higher. I spent some time on this because there is not a clear correlation between energy usage and our socioeconomic status. I sought the advice of the Western Australian Council of Social Service, the Public Utilities Office and Treasury to get an understanding around this and there is no correlation. The member is correct, it will impact the single person at home doing all they can to reduce their energy usage, with or without solar panels, just as much as it will impact holiday homes around Western Australia that are not used a lot and have a low variable charge, and just as it will impact people with solar panels—absolutely. People with solar panels generally find that their high-variable charge is low. When I made this decision I thought of my mother. She has solar panels and generally she gets a cheque from Synergy every few months—she is on the old renewable energy buyback scheme, I think it was called—so she is generally grumpy with me. However, she will have to pay \$169 a year extra, and she will no doubt pass that on to her son. The point I make is that there is not an obvious winner or loser out of this other than the energy system. This is an important reform that the former government was begged to make for years by not just Synergy, but also the Public Utilities Office. The Leader of the Opposition, as Minister for Energy, wanted to make this decision back in 2013–14 but over four years, so applying it in four and a half per cent increases applied to the fixed charge every year for four years, and that would flow through to the next budget. Unfortunately, he squibbed the decision, which meant that I had to make it. I am not particularly pleased about that because it does have a variable impact on households, but it was important reform. Ultimately, and the member for Bateman made this point, in terms of a competitive environment, any retailer will effectively have to pay that charge because this is a fixed charge that we simply cannot avoid paying. This is a solar debate. It is not a solar tax. The solar industry has, without any shadow of a doubt, been a huge benefit to the energy system in Western Australia. The point I made on radio is that on 1 March this year, the hottest day in summer, all those solar panels lobbed 7.2 per cent off the peak usage, which is from memory 300 megawatts off the top of that peak usage. That means that we did not have to invest into the system and the peaking generator to make up for that usage. Solar has had a dramatic impact and highlights the fact that Western Australians are making a choice around how they seek to provide energy to their house. This is not an attack on the solar industry but the value of investing in solar is still dramatically flowing from, “You should do it. You should put solar panels on your roof to maximise or reduce the usage of energy”, but the business model takes advantage of those without solar panels who subsidise those with solar panels. Somebody from the opposition mentioned an unusual phrase that I have not heard from the Liberal Party in some time when they referred to the working poor. I do not think that the working poor, if they do not have solar panels, should have to subsidise those who do. That is why we made the decision—an important reform—to match the fixed costs with a mixed charge regulated by the Economic Regulation Authority in which Western Power charge Synergy per connection.

I just wanted to deal with that, and, of course water charges are outlined in the current budget at six per cent. By way of background and memory for people —

Mr D.T. Redman: Does the increase in water charges take it above cost recovery?

Mr B.S. WYATT: No. The ERA report from some years ago —

Mr D.J. Kelly: From 2012.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I want to say it was an ERA report from 2012, but it was some years ago a member highlighted that part of the water charge is over-recovery—that has been the reality for a long period. At the moment there is in play an ERA review of water tariffs. I think a draft report will probably come out in July with a final report in November. That report will highlight all those points. As the Minister for Water helpfully interjected, the answer is no.

I just want to highlight what has happened since 2008–09 with energy charges. In 2008–09 there was a 2.5 per cent increase, as budgeted in Eric Ripper’s last budget. In 2009–10, the first year of the Liberal government, energy was increased by 25.6 per cent. In 2010–11 it was increased by 16.1 per cent, in 2011–12 by five per cent, in 2012–13 by 3.5 per cent, in 2013–14 by four per cent, in 2014–15 by 4.5 per cent, in 2016–17 by 4.5 per cent and in 2017–18 it was budgeted for seven per cent but came in at 10.9 per cent because of the fixed charge application. Water charges generally sat around six per cent for most of that time. In 2010–11 it went up by 11.8 per cent under the former Liberal government, in 2011–12 it went up by 8.5 per cent and then it went up a couple of times by four and a half per cent in 2016–17, but in 2017–18 it went up by six per cent, as per the budget. Along with the Minister for Water and cabinet, I made the decision that any reduction in that charge, from memory a \$20-odd million cost, would be kept as expected by the budget. It galls me that the Leader of the Opposition now critiques the decision made by this government to fix up that anomaly around the fixed and variable charge. It does gall me some because he, while he sat over here as Minister for Energy, talked about this ad nauseam. He talked about it in public and in the media but he never actually did it. I have done it and I want to remind members of what he said back in 2015 after the Synergy chairman, Lyndon Rowe, had given what I assume was a Committee for Economic Development of Australia speech. I want to quote what the now Leader of the Opposition was reported to have said —

Dr Nahan, who identified the need to reform electricity pricing two years ago only to shelve action this year, said the issue was particularly difficult and complex and there needed to be a proper case made for it.

He has talked about it since 2013 but just not done anything about it.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Every Christmas time.

Mr B.S. WYATT: That is right, every Christmas time. As the Leader of the Opposition said, the reason he needed to fix it, as I pointed out, is because of the impacts on people without solar. He said —

“It’s about fairness,” ...

“I’ve repeatedly indicated and stated ... a reform in this direction is needed.”

Unfortunately, despite his rhetoric and despite the advice he was getting, he refused to do it. Despite the fairness or the equity argument that he articulated publicly, he simply refused to do it. I have not balked at that decision. It is not a decision that I am particularly pleased about but it is a decision that has been made and it is important reform.

It is an important reform. By and large, consumers have borne the brunt of the various increases, mainly under the former Liberal government, of 25 per cent and 16 per cent. Now, of course, there is our 10.9 per cent increase.

I cannot let this pass by. Some references were made—not in great detail—to the former Labor government’s decision to freeze tariffs. I think that anyone in this place would accept that freezing the cost of anything that is actually increasing in cost substantially is probably not a good thing to do. Ultimately, at some point there will be a reckoning. Of course, Liberal Party members forget that that is what they demanded for the passage of the legislation to disaggregate Western Power, which was another very important Labor energy reform. I have all the quotes here from the member for Cottesloe, the former Premier, and his then deputy, Mr Barron-Sullivan, owning with great pride the decision to force the former Labor government to freeze those tariffs. I want to put that in the context of this broader debate.

We have made some changes to concessions. Again, they were not changes that I particularly enjoyed making, but I will outline some of them. There is not a direct link between energy usage and socio-economic status, but we have made some decisions to increase support for the most vulnerable Western Australians who will be impacted upon by these decisions. We have increased the energy assistance payment by 28 per cent to \$300 in 2017–18. Importantly, we have fixed up the funding for the hardship utility grant scheme; it was grossly underfunded by the former government. For the 2016–17 financial year, we have had to tip in some \$6.5 million to cover it for this year alone. We have topped the fund up by another—from memory—\$7 million for 2017–18. There will be \$20 million available in 2017–18. We have also increased the grant limit for HUGS by eight per cent, which will be \$581 for most Western Australians. The limit for those living above the twenty-sixth parallel will be \$962. We have introduced funding across the forward estimates—not for just one year—for financial counselling support. That is an important part of ensuring that if people have got themselves into some financial difficulty, they can seek some advice and support that, perhaps, will be linked with HUGS payments to get them through a period of financial difficulty.

I want to put the changes to the seniors' concessions into some context. There were efforts for a period by the former Liberal government to take control of the Seniors Card. The Seniors Card in Western Australia is unique. Compared with most states in the nation, ours is particularly generous, and I think that is a good thing. No other state provides, for example, rebates for local government rates or for water rates. That is a uniquely Western Australian thing, probably because it came in during a time of significant revenue, which, of course, we do not enjoy now. The previous government, particularly in 2014 and in the 2015–16 budget, made some efforts to impact on the cost of the card. In June 2014, the former Liberal Party government halved the cost-of-living rebate in response to a commonwealth government decision. It did that for that year and maintained it in the 2015–16 budget across the forward estimates, saving \$92 million. It then means tested that payment. Again, I will say that that was a good decision that resulted in savings of \$80 million.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: Do you think you might've said that at the time?

Mr B.S. WYATT: I probably did. I have always been a supporter of that. I think that is why the member for Scarborough did not quote me in her speech. I think the member will find that I probably did say that.

The former government also introduced caps on the 50 per cent rebates for local government and water rates. The argument that was made echoes mine; perhaps I am echoing it. I will read the media statement put out by the current Leader of the Opposition, the then Treasurer, and Hon Tony Simpson, the then Minister for Local Government, that accompanied those changes to the Seniors Card. It states —

With Western Australia's seniors population set to double over the next two decades, the State Government has reviewed its concessions on local government rates, electricity and water to better target those most in need in today's 2015–16 State Budget.

Seniors and Volunteering Minister Tony Simpson said with WA's population of seniors expected to increase from 458,000 now to 865,000 in 20 years, the current State Government expenditure on concessions for seniors was not sustainable in its present form.

"The Government values the contribution of seniors to WA and is committed to supporting their active participation in the community," he said.

"However, with the population of seniors continuing to grow, it is vital we ensure we can provide support to those seniors who have the greatest need." □

That is exactly right.

Dr M.D. Nahan: What did you say at that time?

Mr B.S. WYATT: I was just making the point that I supported the means testing.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Your leader did not.

Mr B.S. WYATT: The Leader of the Opposition's problem, as I have said in here before, is that he has not landed from the sky and plonked himself in that chair with no record of commentary. He was not in here, so I will revisit it. Despite the fact that he spent years from 2013 talking about fixing up the split of the Synergy bill in fixed versus variable charges, he never did it. Despite advice after advice coming to him, he squibbed the decision. When he did not make the decision when he had the advice back in 2014–15—here it is—to do it over a four-year period, he squibbed it. That meant that the decision imperative became more serious. When ministers, such as Leader of the Opposition, do not make decisions, they fall to someone who eventually will. That fell to me so I made a decision. As I have pointed out, I am not particularly pleased with the impact that will have, but because the Leader of the Opposition squibbed the decision, I made it.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, you are on three calls.

Dr M.D. Nahan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Can I ask him a question?

The SPEAKER: No, you cannot—and you cannot talk when I am on my feet. That is your last warning, Leader of the Opposition. You will be going home early.

Mr B.S. WYATT: The Leader of the Opposition used to say that the reason we need fixed versus variable charges was —

"It's about fairness," ...

"I've repeatedly indicated and stated ... a reform in this direction is needed."

The Labor Party has delivered it. Before the Leader of the Opposition came back into the house I went through the various concession changes that we made along the way. Although the Leader of the Opposition said that he ploughed the field on fixed charges, unfortunately, he did not plant the seed. We have done that.

I will not cop any complaint from the mob who not only left us with the largest debt and deficit on record, but is now actively wrecking its own savings measures in the upper house. It comes in here and says that it is all just unfair. The argument was put by all opposition members who spoke that, “You don’t have to get your full cost reflectivity. What’s the point? There’s no harm done.” Harm is done; it is called the subsidy. At some point someone will pay. In his speech, the Leader of the Opposition went through how big that subsidy got; it got large and continued to grow. It is coming down for a range of reasons including electricity price increases and costs drawn out of the system et cetera. I note that the Leader of the Opposition now has a position on splitting Synergy; his government joined Verve and Synergy together. Now the opposition position is that it wants to split Synergy. This is another issue that was raised in a roundabout way in the broader energy debate. There is a lot to it and I am already getting questions from members on the other side about the implications and impact of, for example, Finkel, as it has become known, and what impact that may have. By and large, Western Australia should take some pride in some of the recommendations from Finkel, because they are almost going down a path in some areas that Western Australia went down some time ago. Yes, the issue of contestability has generated some debate. Perhaps my clumsy language has helped that. The reality is that we had the great Labor reform by Eric Ripper and the former Gallop government to disaggregate or split Western Power. I should say that was against the fierce opposition of the Liberal Party. The Liberal Party ended up supporting the disaggregation only when the Labor government agreed to its insistence that tariff freezes be locked in. Let us not forget the history of this debate. Do members remember Mr Barron-Sullivan? I am sure that is his name. I have on my phone the *Hansard* of 30 June 2005. It says that Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan, the member for Leschenault, put forward the idea of a price cap. It was the price cap that the Liberal Party owned. I could quote ad nauseam what the member for Cottesloe said at the time about the cap or freeze that the Liberal Party insisted upon. He is not in the house, so the fun is probably lost.

The Gallop Labor government and Eric Ripper delivered significant reform in the energy sector. I apologise to the member for Warren-Blackwood, because I think he wanted to get up and speak by 5.30 pm, but give me another few minutes and I will be done. Eric Ripper made the point in all his media statements and all the dialogue that he had that the point of disaggregation was to put Western Australia in the same position as every other state in the nation by enabling it to provide retail choice. Even the Australian Capital Territory with its 300 000 residents—I will guess—has retail choice. That was the path that the Labor government set us upon back in the early 2000s under that bold reform led by Eric Ripper and Geoff Gallop. Now it is only the Northern Territory that stands with Western Australia in not providing retail choice.

As the Leader of the Opposition has said, correctly, ultimately when we get to retail choice, we will need to make a decision about what we will do with Synergy. Unfortunately, because of the re-aggregation of Synergy and Verve by the former Liberal government, I have to deal with a big player—a big dominant generator and retailer. I am not going to simply throw open the gates while we are in that situation. That situation has to be dealt with. There is a range of ways in which we can deal with that. The Liberal Party has a new policy position to split Synergy. I am not entirely sure whether that is into a gentailer—a generator and retailer—or back into the old Verve–Synergy style. Eric Ripper in his media statements in 2004 and 2005 talked about the fact that people who consume more than 50 megawatts of electricity have the advantage of choice of provider. Government makes the choice about who will provide government agencies with electricity. Large businesses that use over 50 megawatts are also given that choice. We in this place should not try to deny that choice to Western Australians in due course. That has been the aim of the Labor Party ever since we disaggregated Western Power.

A series of dates has been given along the way. The dates were originally 2008, 2013 and 2014. The former government set a date of 1 July 2019. I have made the point that the former government did not do a lot to get us to that date. Dates have been set by both political parties while in government about when Western Australians will be given choice about who provides their electricity. We are seeing in the gas space in particular an incredibly competitive environment in which people are taking advantage of the price discounts offered by the various providers of gas. I note that at the end of this week, AGL will move into that space as well. People can go to various websites to choose their provider. Queensland has a particularly good website—I cannot remember its name off the top of my head. New South Wales also has a website. People can go on the website and click, click, click, pick gas, pick electricity, and pick a bundled price. That provides certainty in their bills because one bill deals with all their energy requirements.

Ideally, that is what we want to get to. How long that will take depends on how quickly and easily we can make decisions about this issue. We need to bear in mind that we have inherited a very bad balance sheet. This impacts the decisions I make every single day. Every single day, I am dealing with issues around the balance sheet that the Liberal Party left us. We all warned the former government that it would leave a debt not just for the government that was elected a few months ago, but for future governments, maybe until 2021, or beyond, if the economy does not pick up and the finances do not get better. The former government has constrained the decisions that this government can make. That is because the former government, incredibly, in a period of record revenue growth and extraordinary economic growth, left the balance sheet riddled with debt and deficit and left the finances of the state exposed to unforeseen downturns.

I started my speech tonight by making the point that the data that the Australian Bureau of Statistics released yesterday highlighted a larger than expected decline in Western Australia's population. That will have an impact on the finances of the state above and beyond the \$2.5 billion I have already talked about. That decline in population was larger than was expected or forecast, including by the federal government. That will have an impact. However, we will continue to make good decisions for this state. In making those decisions, we will keep in mind a couple of things. First and foremost is the impact of those decisions on Western Australians. The second is how we can fix, or at least do no harm to, the balance sheet that has been left to us. I do not get the right as Treasurer to spend without constraint. I note the strange world in which we now find ourselves, in which the shadow Treasurer repeated the same line that I got from some media commentators and said we are only saving \$238 million; it is not that much money. We are in this space, people, because of what has happened over the last eight and a half years. It is only 238 million bucks; what does it matter? It all matters. Each and every dollar that we can save to reduce our deficit is one dollar that we do not need to go overseas to borrow. Therefore, it matters a lot. That is why members of the Liberal Party need to have a good, hard look at themselves and at how their upper house members are behaving in wrecking the savings measures that they put in their own budget. That was a decision that they made and supported in their budget. The member for Nedlands defended this decision publicly as an important decision that needed to be made. The upper house members of the Liberal Party are now voting to pull out those measures. I am not going to let members opposite forget that any time soon; I assure them of that.

We understand that the increases in fees and charges will have impacts. That is why we have increased the hardship utility grant scheme and the energy assistance payments. We have also provided increased support for financial counsellors, the funding for which was cut by the former government. I do not think we should be condemned for making important reform decisions that the former government avoided or was reluctant to make. That was despite the fact that it talked about these things ad nauseam for many, many years. We have made important and valuable decisions to make the Seniors Card sustainable across the forward years. I want everybody in this place in due course to enjoy the benefits of the Seniors Card. Some of us may already do that, Mr Speaker!

Several members interjected.

Mr B.S. WYATT: The media statement that was issued by the now Leader of the Opposition and the then Minister for Local Government refers to what is happening to the demographics of this state. This is an amazing statistic, and perhaps is not a great surprise. Western Australia's seniors population is expected to increase from 458 000 to 865 000 in 20 years. We need to make these decisions now to ensure sustainability in the Seniors Card. The Seniors Card will still be incredibly generous. Members should notice that we have not touched the public transport privileges that I think seniors enjoy and that I want them to enjoy, because the trains will be running, and if we can pack them full of seniors, that will be outstanding.

We have not on touched that; it has just been in those areas in which there has been a cash cost to the budget that I tried to make more sustainable into the future. Future Treasurers, hopefully, may thank me for that decision. I know that future Treasurers and future energy ministers will thank the cabinet for its decisions to rebalance the fixed and variable tariff. That is an important reform that I am particularly proud of because it is something that the previous government squibbed on. Of course, we will not support this motion. I note that all the decisions I as Treasurer and this government makes will be very much focused first and foremost on the finances that we have inherited. That is very much on our minds.

Debated adjourned, on motion by **Ms L. Mettam**.

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — ROYALTIES FOR REGIONS PROJECT

Motion

MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren–Blackwood) [5.51 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the McGowan government for creating uncertainty and confusion in regional WA by refusing to confirm ongoing funding for royalties for regions projects.

There was an interesting debate during the earlier motion, and although this motion is about a different topic, a very similar theme will emerge in the debate. The Liberal Party's earlier motion was about fees and charges going up and I guess that that is what the people of Western Australia expected after the election—that would have been the expectation when they voted for the Labor Party.

The SPEAKER: Members, if you want to have a meeting, go outside. The member is on his feet and I want to hear what he has to say.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The people of Western Australia voted for the Labor Party overwhelmingly and now they are facing significant increases in charges. The previous motion was about what their expectations were. Similarly, in this motion, the National Party is suggesting that the same issues apply to regional

Western Australia. At the election, voters had high expectations that the Labor Party would support royalties for regions. However, as we have learned in answers to our questions in both the upper and lower houses, there are a number of reasons to be concerned about that position, and I intend to raise a number of those concerns. I think it is important to get a bit of an understanding of the history of royalties for regions and how we got ourselves into this position.

Members know about royalties for regions. A lot of new metropolitan members would certainly be aware of the royalties for regions' name, but they probably do not know or do not have a full understanding of where it was initiated. In essence, royalties for regions was a National Party policy that was taken to the 2008 election, whereby 25 per cent of mining and petroleum royalties would be spent in regional Western Australia. We know what happened in that election, and throughout the last two terms of government the Liberal–National government has delivered that program.

Royalties for regions as a policy position has been supported by all parties. In fact, the Labor Party supported it going into this election. Right in the middle of the Labor Party's "200 Fresh Ideas for WA", is number 157, which states, "Support and maintain Royalties for Regions with a focus on jobs". I have no problem with that. That was a commitment the Labor Party made. What goes with that is what I currently see in the forward estimates—the 2016–17 budget year and the forward estimates that reflect that—that there is an expense limit for royalties for regions of \$872 million in this financial year, \$914 million in the 2017–18 financial year, and as the fund hits the legislated cap, \$1 billion in each of the last two out years. That is what the Labor Party has committed to. In the discussions now we hear about savings and the fiscal and financial challenges facing the government. The government keeps blaming the previous government for its expenditure, yet the Labor Party went to the election with a \$5 billion election commitment on the back of that. As the Treasurer just touched on, the forward estimates contained \$2.5 billion writedowns, yet the rhetoric still refers to the previous government and is saying, "Look at what you did", including what happened with royalties for regions. I want to work through some of that.

The theme for this hypothecated fund for regional Western Australia was a decentralised focus on government policy and a dedicated fund for the regions through which growth in regional Western Australia could be supported. It is interesting to note the political histories of other states, most notably Queensland, which has some substantial regional centres and a state government that has had a very strong focus on decentralisation and investment in regional areas. That state now has a very broad base of significant regional centres. When we look back on that we can say that that was very good policy, but I am sure it was pretty tough getting to that point. WA is a very centralist state. If I have the numbers right, the current planning statistics has the population of Perth sitting at about 78 per cent of the state's population. That is predicted to increase in the next decade to something like 82 per cent, so the population is going to get even more centralist. Unless we actively do something about that, we will finish up with everyone living in one big centre and not many people outside, and there will be costs to our society from the implications of those outcomes. The royalties for regions fund and the policy position that was supported by all parties focuses on addressing that particular challenge.

In the last eight and a half years we invested in substantial hard and soft infrastructure in regional Western Australia. Different people have different views about the value of those investments. Indeed, it is interesting that the commentary that has gone from "Look how much you have spent," to trying to pick holes in particular projects—hence the internal review by the now Minister for Regional Development. To my mind, that appears to be trying to find some holes to substantiate some cuts.

Let me go through some of the investments that were made. Let me start with the Ord River irrigation expansion stage 2. When I sat where the Attorney General now sits, I remember there was a debate in this house on a report on Ord River stage 2 and what was deemed to be a concern about that investment, but to me it was second to none. The member for Kimberley is in here. It was an outstanding investment of \$300 million that unlocked a significant investment from an overseas investor and created huge job opportunities for the Aboriginal people in particular who live up there, many of whom do not have many opportunities to pathway themselves into the economy. Of course, that project saw the development of a part of the state that probably has not moved in any significant way for the last 40 years.

Pilbara Cities is another project that has come in for criticism. In fact, I think there was an article in *The West Australian* either yesterday or the day before in response to the census that referred to families living in Karratha who are now enjoying being there because of the amenity and services that that particular city presents for them. Again they are royalties for regions investments that have supported people making decisions to move there and to be a part of that city.

The Minister for Regional Development has talked about paving bricks and petunias and has criticised some of the soft infrastructure that might not be deemed to be important to investments—but they are. Mr Speaker would know we need to invest in those things, even in Albany, to add to the amenity and liveability of those communities. It is exactly the same in smaller regional centres, and I strongly argue the importance of that.

In Carnarvon, flood levy banks were built at a cost of \$60 million to mitigate the impact of floods that occur from time to time in that community. Carnarvon is a large and important horticultural centre for Western Australia. It is a biological island, which allows it to keep some of the bugs away that would perhaps attack horticulture products in other areas, and that is a business opportunity that does not present itself in other parts of Western Australia or the nation. There have been upgrades to the water infrastructure to support those horticultural growers also in Carnarvon.

I refer to the \$36 million Augusta boat harbour project in my electorate. It is an outstanding development. I remember talking at a Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia function when I was, I think, the then agriculture minister and receiving some criticism about royalties for regions. The chief executive officer of the CCI at the time, James Pearson, was very quick to point out that he was critical of royalties for regions with the exception of the Augusta boat harbour, because he happened to have a house in Augusta and he reckoned there could not be a better place to invest in such a significant facility. Before that harbour was built, there had been no tangible protected harbour for boats going from Albany to Bunbury. Again, that significant investment has made a difference by drawing other investment into the business sector.

I turn to the sporting facilities in many of our smaller regional communities. Sport is a big part of the regional psyche. It is important that we have facilities to reflect that. The country local government fund provided a lot of investment into those areas, which again gave purpose and a sense of belonging to people in those communities, which had a level of infrastructure, support and facilities, making them want to remain a part of those communities.

If members have not been to Esperance lately, they should go and see the Esperance waterfront. It was a \$20 million investment, I think, that protects the foreshore from erosion. My colleague the member for Roe seated behind me was very supportive of the royalties for regions investment into that redevelopment. It has also enticed people to choose to live in Esperance. I had a haircut down there the last time I was on holidays. It was not the haircut I have now, but the one I had before.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The member missed it. He should have been there; it was great. The lady who cut my hair made the point that she had shifted from Kalgoorlie to Esperance. I asked her why she shifted. She said she shifted because of the waterfront. How the hell would one come to the conclusion that the waterfront was a reason for someone moving to Esperance to live? She lived there before but did not think it had the level of amenity that supported her making that longer term commitment, but she did. I thought that was outstanding.

I wish the member for Mandurah was here. I think \$8 million went into the Mandurah bridge. That will be an iconic bridge. The member for Dawesville is in the chamber. It connects his part of the world to the other. It might be a debate for another day whether that is really regional.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Absolutely!

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I am sure the member for Dawesville is making that case.

Royalties for regions also extended to other things such as the rebuilding of Warmun. When Warmun was hit by a substantial flood, it was effectively rebuilt. Again, where would that town be without the support of royalties for regions?

Fitzroy Crossing has significant infrastructure. If members saw that community eight years prior to the end of last year, it was chalk and cheese compared with what it is now.

Mr P. Papalia: A brand-new high school and a brand-new hospital under Labor.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I make the point that it is chalk and cheese, certainly from what I saw before. There are many regional communities like that. The other one is Gascoyne Junction. It was flattened by a flood. It is a little community and it would have been so easy for a decision-maker to put a cross on a map and say that it would not be kept going. For people who live and work around there, in many cases the distances are such that they have to drive for two to two and a half hours in order to get to the closest facilities, especially if they live on some of the pastoral leases that surround it. They are all hard infrastructure-type investments.

Then there is the soft infrastructure, which is sometimes overlooked as something that is important for building and developing communities and genuine regional development. The member for Kimberley will be aware of the short-stay accommodation in Derby. I hope that the member keeps on the heels of her government to make sure that the Broome facility gets up and going. It is critical for Aboriginal people who move to those bigger centres to get some service support.

There are regional incentives such as the district allowances for soft infrastructure. I am talking about incentives for government service providers or people who work in our government to live in those communities. Based on a cost analysis of a basket of goods, which includes food and all the differentials that apply in regional WA,

people can get a loading in their pay. One of the most stark things I saw when I was the Minister for Corrective Services was people lining up to work at Roebourne Regional Prison. Prior to that, working at the prison would have been the toughest gig around and people would not stand up and say they wanted to work there. They were lining up because the district incentives were such that there was a financial benefit for taking up such a posting. The same thing applies for other essential workers such as police living in regional areas, particularly up north where the distances and sometimes the cost of living are substantially higher than living in metropolitan Perth. A range of regional incentives were introduced to support essential workers in regional Western Australia.

We have heard that the current government supports the Country Age Pension Fuel Card. We have not received any signals on whether the same rate will apply, whether it will be reduced or whether it will still go up in line with the consumer price index. The jury is still out as to what that might look like.

I turn to the Southern Inland Health Initiative. Health services is one of those things that people consider when choosing where to live. As some of my colleagues have said in the past, people will not move towns because the road is no good or because something is not quite right with the local sporting infrastructure, but they will move towns if they do not have access to health and education services. Some investments are critical to people making those decisions. Health services are one of those.

I wish to talk about the investment in telehealth. Using technology to access health services when people are a long way from accessing those services fundamentally changed how business is done in regional Western Australia. In a little while I will make the point about what royalties for regions has been able to achieve to reform how business is done. The Southern Inland Health Initiative is an example of using a resource to fundamentally change how those services are delivered. Little communities protected their hospital—the bricks and mortar bit—vehemently. People never wanted to lose their hospital and felt they needed to keep a hospital as it is so important, yet that was not the basis of the services that those communities needed. In many cases involving chronic diseases, chronic health services are needed and aged-care services can be delivered in different ways and in many cases much more effectively. Again, the royalties for regions program was able to reform how services were delivered into regional Western Australia through that initiative.

Royalties for regions supported a range of community groups. The natural resource management groups and the smaller not-for-profit social support groups picked up resources to help deliver services into areas that otherwise would have experienced market failure. In many cases they were effective in doing it.

We saw investment in communication, and an extra 344 mobile phone towers built. It is fundamentally a federal issue. It is a federal challenge, not a state one, but it was so critical to regional Western Australia that at the end of the day we supported the investment of \$105 million from royalties for regions in 344 towers. I am pleased to see that the minister is supporting that ongoing program. For the member for Kimberley's benefit, an extra 12 mobile phone towers were built in the Kimberley. When they were in place, we monitored their use each month. One million calls a month were made using those 12 new towers, with 400 calls a month to 000. We can see the implications of communications technology in an area that is quite isolated, for us to not just ring a mate but also phone emergency services.

Royalties for regions has been used for training and skills development, with funds going to the Muresk Institute out at Northam, along with investments in the upgrade of many TAFE facilities, the Agricola Residential College in Kalgoorlie, a combination facility for those attending the Western Australian School of Mines and TAFE in Kalgoorlie, and schools around the state, particularly supporting the change of year 7s going into high school. Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture is an initiative that attracted an extra \$300 million investment in agriculture and supported a range of initiatives that positioned Western Australia in the context of the Asian century and where the opportunities are. I hear good commentary from the Minister for Regional Development on where those opportunities lie and hence the challenges of where we invest to make that difference. We laid out a plan. We believe it was a good plan. The government might have its twist on that but I think there is consistency in where those opportunities lie. Again, royalties for regions was the unique resource that supported investments in those soft infrastructure areas to make a difference.

In the past the Royal Flying Doctor Service was described by someone as an interest group. Wherever we are in Western Australia, we are three hours away from the best hospital we have. That is why the little R4R logo is on the side of the Royal Flying Doctor Service jet. A little while ago I talked about the use of program reform to change how business is done. I make the point again that it is often very difficult when we are putting out budgets and working with various groups, both government and non-government, to try to change how business is done. Again, the advice I received as the Minister for Regional Development from the Western Australian Regional Development Trust was to consider using it as a tool for reforming how business is done. An example of that is the regional services reform. In my view, a lot of very good work was done on that. I have had some off-the-record conversations with ministers. I am certainly opening up my support and certainly the support of the National Party to consider continuing some of the key themes of that reform because multiple governments are needed to support a pathway for change to get better outcomes for Aboriginal people in those remote areas.

To me, the foundation has been laid. There is an alignment there now, there is support from Aboriginal leaders and a lot of work has been done. It was easy for me to stand on that side and ask the opposition to be bipartisan; I am now standing on this side and I am prepared to be bipartisan, provided there is no significant shift from what happened previously, and I do not think there will be because we have some good heads around the table for that. Again, royalties for regions has been used as a tool and a resource for supporting reform in how we do business in an area that needs fundamental change because what is there now is unacceptable. There are also things like the Water for Food initiative and rangelands reform. Rangelands reform is one initiative that will be supported by the current government, and that will open up opportunities through which royalties for regions can actually make a difference.

Royalties for regions has delivered some fantastic outcomes so far. We are in a unique situation in this state in having legislative support for a fund that can actually make a difference. There is commitment from the opposition and commitment from the government, and we want to see that continue. There have been some changes to royalties for regions; as a result of the Duncan review, there has been a more strategic focus on how business is done. I note the member for Bunbury's interjection when I spoke a while ago about the content of the Duncan review. I guess there were a couple of key outcomes from that. One was the importance of being more strategic, and developing regional investment blueprints was one element of that. Again, that is good work to build on. If we are going to see the regions change over time, we need to have some sort of consistency in how we apply resources. Those blueprints offer a platform for exactly that. There was also a recommendation about the development commissions. There was criticism of the recommendation to centralise them and bring them under the Department of Regional Development with one global development commission. There was a lot of criticism from regional Western Australia and we rejected that recommendation and maintained a level of autonomy within the state's development commissions so that they can advocate and take approaches in support of their regions. They can push their strengths and make their cases without fear of coming under a bigger agency. There has been some commentary around development commissions and it is a bit of a movable feast. Not long ago we heard that CEOs in the development commissions had been told that they would be finishing up at the end of June this year, which is not that far away. The Public Sector Commissioner phoned them and also said that staff would be employed under the new Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, so that will be a shift. Now we hear that the CEOs will be carrying on, so I am not sure whether a position was taken that might have been a bit premature, but it certainly seems to be a bit of a change, and we are yet to really see what is going to happen to the development commissions. In my view, they are a fundamental component of the information that is needed to support investment priorities in the regions and they add a level of governance to the processes for applying this hypothecated resource. We have this resource and it is supported by the major parties. It was supported by the Labor Party coming into government and, in my view, it has a good history of making a difference.

On the back of the last election campaign the Premier said that he would support and maintain royalties for regions, with a focus on jobs; that comes straight out of a Labor Party document. He also said in his campaign launch speech that he would maintain every single cent of royalties for regions, which is a strong commitment. I wish the Treasurer were still in the chamber, but he responded to a couple of questions, one of which was asked yesterday with regard to whether he would use royalties for regions to pay for the tariff equalisation contribution. The other question was a question I asked him today as to whether he will maintain chapter 7 in the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* so we can actually see what this dedicated resource is about. I have two concerns. The Treasurer made the point yesterday that funding the TEC out of royalties for regions or the consolidated account would not make any difference, as it was all government money. That is right in principle, but it actually does make a difference to regional Western Australia; it is different. The TEC is currently funded out of a levy applied to all Western Power users—all those on the Western Power network. If we were to change that and fund it through royalties for regions, it would effectively be a cut to the royalties for regions program in regional Western Australia, so the source of funding for the TEC does make a difference. The Labor Party took to the 2013 election a policy that it would use royalties for regions to fund the TEC and thereby reduce everyone's bills by seven per cent; I think that was the platform. I understand now why the Treasurer is saying that he will not do that. If he were to fund it out of another source, whether royalties for regions or the consolidated account, he would lose something like \$130 million in revenue that would come in to those paying the TEC charge on the Western Power network. He would effectively be taking that off the books, so I can appreciate why he has come to that position now.

In answer to my question today, there was no commitment to having a chapter called "Royalties for Regions". Chapter 7 in the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, budget paper No 3, outlines the royalties for regions program. It is the best and most simplistic way of demonstrating commitment to, support for and transparency around royalties for regions. It is the best way to do it. I note that we have emails coming into our electorate offices saying that we are going to have some briefings for new members of Parliament so they can learn how to read a budget paper. I was a minister for eight and a half years and these things are bloody hard to read. I would be very surprised if there are more than four or five people in this chamber when it is full who could actually comprehensively understand a set of budget papers. Things can be buried in them and they just disappear. Therefore, if the Treasurer and Premier are genuinely interested in supporting this program of regional development—a program that all

parties have supported and that is making a difference—on the basis of transparency around election commitments, retaining chapter 7 would be one step in that direction, because what the fund actually funds and what is going on in those accounts will be on display. That would be a major step towards ensuring that there is public accountability for what was committed to prior to the last election by all parties.

Those sorts of signals do not give us confidence at this stage, but the Treasurer made the point that we are still going to the budget and we are still working through it, and that all will be revealed. Hopefully, chapter 7 will be revealed and it will be part of budget paper No 3, which will make it a darn sight easier for everyone who has an interest in this space, including people who live in regional Western Australia and, of course, the 16 members who sit in this place and live in regional Western Australia.

There is quite a rigorous process—certainly there was under our government—for getting a funded project underway in regional Western Australia. First of all, the budget has to be agreed to, so it goes through the budget process. Second, every project comes back to budget and in many cases, two ministers sign it. If it is an education project, for example, the Minister for Regional Development and the Minister for Education and Training sign the cabinet submission, it goes into cabinet and the cabinet processes, and finally is agreed to, and then it is announced. As time has gone on, that has improved; the level of sustainability, particularly for local government projects, has been embedded in the business cases so there has certainly been an improvement there over time, where it has been needed. There is also the Regional Development Trust, which sits as a peak body that overlooks the whole lot. There are the chairs of all nine development commissions who get together as the Regional Development Council. There are the individual boards of the commissions, the Department of Regional Development, the Minister for Regional Development and, of course, cabinet, so there are quite a few people looking at this space.

There has been a change in government and obviously just because we go to an election, it does not mean we stop governing. Yes, there is a caretaker period—I understand that—but we do not stop making decisions. We do not stop having projects and programs that come through. There was a lot of commentary from the Minister for Tourism, the Treasurer and the Minister for Water today to say that in the last stages of our government, we were rattling all this stuff through. That was just a matter of course. We were doing the business that a government should. Certainly at that stage I made the assumption I would still be in government. Maybe it was a bad assumption; maybe I did not read the tea leaves. We were doing business as though we were going to be in government. That is how I would expect to do business.

There has now been a change of government. Rightly, a review of all projects is occurring. Those projects fall into a number of categories: been through cabinet; been approved; a financial assistance agreement has been signed; contracts have been let. We would expect that signed contracts for parties to deliver services would be honoured. That is probably what is happening. I have not seen any cases where it has not happened, with the exception of Roe 8. I understand that the Labor Party made that commitment before the election, so that is an understandable position. Contracts that have been let for projects are probably safe.

There are also projects that have had a financial assistance agreement signed. For example, a group has put effort into a submission; it has been through a rigorous gate process to get to a cabinet decision; that cabinet decision has happened; and the Department of Regional Development has signed a financial assistance agreement with the party, whether it is local government, a not-for-profit group or a government agency. We have heard that that is all up for review too. I will go through a few projects in a minute that fall into that status; that is, there is an expectation those projects will be resourced with their own moneys and other moneys raised. We have heard that those projects might be stopped. That would be disappointing. I can understand how that might be up for grabs in situations in which a financial assistance agreement has not been signed. There is nothing formally in place. Yes, there might have been a cabinet decision. There were certainly expectations. Because no agreement is in place, there would be some concerns about whether that will continue.

A fair bit of uncertainty sits out there now. The government has made some decisions about what will be funded, but there is a long way to go to take away the uncertainty and the angst that sits with groups that have various projects in the ether. One of those is the Western Australian Community Resource Network's Kununurra Community Resource Centre. If I am quoting rightly, there are about 122 CRCs. For those members who are not familiar with it, the Community Resource Network typically operates in a lot of smaller communities in regional Western Australia. It provides services that are not able to be provided by the businesses in those towns simply because they are non-existent. It could be argued there is market failure. It is a shopfront for people to access a range of government services. In many cases it is the only internet connection some have. They tend to reflect the service needs of those communities. The Kununurra CRC looks like closing its doors this weekend, if I am reading this right. The reason that it looks like closing its doors is uncertainty with royalties for regions funding. That network is not there to make a profit; it is there to deliver services and it is very connected to those communities. I would be really disappointed if that decision was made on the basis of uncertainty with royalties for regions funding. We are aware that the minister is aware of it. We hope that we can get a better outcome on that front.

Aged care is another one. About eight out of the nine blueprints from the development commissions talk about the importance of aged care in regional Western Australia. The Wheatbelt Development Commission did a report called “Ageing in the Bush”. It is worth a read if members are interested in that space. A couple of key stats came out of it. One was that the number of people aged 70 years and older in regional Western Australia will double in the next decade. The number is increasing at a faster rate than in metropolitan Perth. The number of people aged 85 years and older will more than double in the same period. There will be a 124 per cent increase in the number of aged people in that decade. The number is growing significantly faster than in metropolitan Perth. In the group aged 85 years and older, one in four is at high risk of moderate to severe dementia. Those stats show that there is quite —

Mr S.A. Millman: Does the report also go to whether their kids and grandkids are staying in country towns, or does it not cover that?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: This particular report is called “Ageing in the Bush”. There are four key strategies communities can use to keep people living in their area. As people age, they have particular needs. Part of it is about age-friendly communities, part of it is about age-friendly housing, part of it is about in-home care and part of it is about high-level residential care. It is a really good report. To me, it was the basis of about a \$70 million investment that the former government made. One investment made in the last 12 months or so was into a number of aged-care facilities. We received a question on notice about the status of this. The total figure was \$46.2 million. That investment would construct 150 specially designed age-appropriate houses across 28 local governments in the wheatbelt, great southern and south west. That was obviously coupled with private sector funding. It included stages 1 and 2 of the Central East Aged Care Alliance—CEACA for short—senior housing project; Collet Barker Court, Mt Barker; the Avon Well Aged housing project; Beverley, Brookton and Pingelly aged housing; Brunswick River Cottages; Midland Centres aged housing development; the Cunderdin, Tammin and Quairading Well Aged precincts; the Wheatbelt South Aged Housing Alliance aged housing; Bridge Street affordable housing, which is in Donnybrook, the member for Collie—Preston’s seat; Waroona Housing Options Village; Killarney Retirement Living, Hannans, Kalgoorlie; expansion of aged care for the Esperance community; the Leonora Ageing in Place project; and the Laverton primary health and aged-care facility. They are all under review. To me, it involved a range of communities such as Victoria Plains, Toodyay, Goomalling, Dowerin, Beverley, Brookton, Pingelly, Moora, Dalwallinu, Wongan—Ballidu, Cunderdin, Tammin, Quairading, Wandering, Cuballing, Narrogin, Wickiepin, Corrigin, Kulin, Narembeen, Kondinin, Broomehill—Tambellup, Cranbrook, Gnowangerup, Katanning, Kent, Jerramungup and Cranbrook. Again, this is uncertain. If there are so many people with such a critical issue that their communities have to try to keep them living in those communities, it can be understood how that angst might be something that is very much alive. That is an issue.

There is also a little uncertainty around the Water for Food project. I was really pleased that the Minister for Water confirmed today that he had written to the federal government supporting state investment in two significant projects—the Myalup—Wellington project and the Southern Forests irrigation project. I was a little disappointed in the minister because he had criticised royalties for regions and other stuff that in his view had been “rushed through”, but when he looked at it he was happy to support it. Clearly, it was not rushed to the point at which it did not garner his support. There is a lot of private sector investment and hooking into federal funding investment that is hopefully going to line up to make a difference in those communities.

The National Party is concerned about a number of projects. I will go through another couple that I think are fairly critical. One is Busselton airport. The member for Vasse is not here at the moment. This is important to not only her electorate but also the south west region. An investment of \$60 million was made to support upgrading Busselton airport to take air traffic from the eastern states. It means that in the next 10 years over 100 000 extra visitors will come to regional Western Australia. The member for Bunbury is right over this. I am sure that he is there supporting it loud and strong. It also got some money from the federal government to support international freight. It is a project that captures almost all the shires in the vicinity. There is an alignment of the tourism sector to build the level of capacity and also support so that when the first eastern states planes land, they are ready to do business. All that alignment needs to happen. I am concerned there is a little uncertainty over \$10 million of that funding. If the minister chooses to hold that back—I think the Department of Transport funding component was going into a new terminal—it will have a facility where the plane lands, pulls onto the tarmac and passengers have to jump on a bus to go down the other end of the airstrip to get into the terminal. That is not something that we want to have happen. A level of planning has gone into that project that in its entirety will deliver. Once we start taking pieces of that out, we start to compromise that effort. Again, it is a genuine regional development project that unlocks economic potential.

The tourism sector is a strong theme for this government. I assume that the Minister for Tourism has been briefed on this and is again supporting the south west part of the state, which is not only in my electorate, but also a fairly iconic part of the Western Australia that we find once discovered by people, they actually come back. I know of the deliberations that the minister is going through about the Margaret River Gourmet Escape and a number of other projects down that way that put Western Australia on the map. I talk from a Margaret River viewpoint—it is in my electorate so it is easy to talk about that. However, I remind the house—

I cannot remember if I have said it here before—that on one occasion a few years ago when I was in Japan as Minister for Agriculture and Food on a trade trip, I had the good fortune to be helping the wine industry to profile some of the great wines we have in Western Australia. I did that not only in Japan but also Shanghai. On the Japanese trip someone asked me, “Where is Perth?”—I was talking about Perth. I said it is three hours north of Margaret River and they knew exactly where it was. Margaret River has an international hook. It is recognised and it is known, and we need to utilise that. There is a level of maturity coming into the tourism sector in the south west and great southern and recognition of the importance of those hooks and how to utilise them in order to get people to come to our state. Again, these are initiatives strongly supported by royalties for regions.

I now turn to the agricultural space and grower groups. Resources under the Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture initiative have been supporting a range of grower groups. There are many grower groups around the state in the agricultural space. When I was the minister there were 74. Last Friday night, Minister Alannah MacTiernan said to me that she thought there were a couple of thousand—it depends on what groups are included and what is not included. Certainly a dozen of the bigger grower groups have substantial capacity to put in their own resources to do research and development and a whole lot of supply chain work, and to run field days to support the sector from an industry-ownership basis. That is a very appropriate point at which to inject some public funds because, in many cases, the research and development capacity of all states has dwindled. Supporting the private sector to make those investments is one strategy to improve that capacity. When I refer to a dozen of the bigger groups, I am talking about the Mingenew Irvin Group, the Facey Group out at Wickepin-Narrogin, the Liebe Group around Dalwallinu, Southern Dirt—one more to the south west and great southern—and the South East Premium Wheat Growers Association. A lot of these groups have the capacity to invest. They are sitting there, right now, uncertain about the resources that have been committed to them to support investment into research work in the whole supply chain. Again, that uncertainty is creating concerns. We are moving into a very difficult season. It is an area that should be supported with this resource to ensure that what is the second biggest sector in our economy remains strong.

I want to quickly talk about a couple of projects that have received some criticism from the Minister for Regional Development, and I want to make a bit of a case. I refer to two of the SuperTowns projects: one at Katanning and one at Manjimup. The thinking behind the SuperTowns initiative—members might not like the name—was a planning strategy involving the hub-and-spoke-type model in which a level of service and infrastructure is put into some of the bigger regional centres. They then deliver those services to a broader hinterland. By maintaining those services and ensuring that they have health and infrastructure, we can get a model of service delivery whereby people have to travel only 50 to 100 kilometres—not 300 to 400 kilometres—to get to the services that they need. Of course, the SuperTowns initiative picked out nine regional subcentres in the southern part of the state. They were supported by some government investment and a growth plan, which involved not only government but also the private sector, to make a difference in those communities. I used the Manjimup example because I have with me a document titled, “Transforming Manjimup — Revitalisation of Manjimup’s Town Centre Stage 2”. It could be criticised as one of those amenity projects in which the main street is done up, and one could ask: how can that be important to us? However, I will quote from the document that refers to stage 1, and states —

The public investment of \$5.9 million into the Stage 1 of the Manjimup Town Centre Revitalisation project encouraged private businesses to invest \$18.7 million. This private sector investment has directly resulted in 188 total new jobs (both direct and indirect) as well as adding a total of \$21.2 million into the local economy, which represents 4.4% of the current total economy.

This work was done by Lucid Economics to demonstrate the value of investing in such projects that have drawn in private sector investment. I recommend that members go down there and have a cup of coffee at Tall Timbers, one of those investments, which is a fantastic facility profiling the produce and the wines from the region. Again, it is a facility that we could easily see on the main street of Claremont or Subiaco. Of course, stage 2 is what is up for grabs and of concern. The documents states that stage 2 of the project is expected to grab an additional 324 jobs. This development could easily be dismissed as amenity or paving bricks and petunias, but if the government is genuine about regional development, there is very good data to support such investments as job creators that can attract investment into regional Western Australia and into a community such as Manjimup that was smashed. Changes to the way in which old-growth forest was logged smashed the community of Manjimup. I was on the Public Accounts Committee with the Attorney General that looked into the \$160 million spent by the Gallop government at the time on restructuring that industry. I can see only one legacy leftover from that investment; that is, a call centre. If members go into Manjimup, they will see a lotto shop and the newsagent in the middle of town. What they will not be able to see is that right above those shops is the call centre with probably 30 people working up there. It shows that we can operate a call centre out of regional Western Australia—the only legacy from such a significant restructure of that industry. That town was smashed. Now there is a level of confidence coming back into the town. Investment is coming back into the town despite Auswest Timbers shutting down in Pemberton, and despite its timber processing mills shutting down in Manjimup and Deanmill. Those processing facilities and mills had been supporting that economy, but despite

that there is a level of confidence in the community brought about by royalties for regions. The uncertainty across a whole range of projects is of concern. We get mixed messages when we ask questions. I recognise that we have to see the budget to see what is going on. The biggest step that could be taken for transparency is to make sure that a section in the budget allows the public to scrutinise and see what the government is doing in this space. We certainly want to see these decisions and the uncertainty sorted out because a lot of people have been affected. They are very passionate about making a difference in their community, delivering services and attracting people to a part of the state that we value, and a part of the state that is so important to our state economy.

MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe) [6.38 pm]: I would like to rise to speak on the motion moved —

That this House condemns the McGowan Government for creating uncertainty and confusion in regional WA by refusing to confirm ongoing funding for Royalties for Regions projects.

A couple of the key points that I would like to raise is that royalties for regions is delivering real outcomes for regional Western Australia. The Labor Party is creating uncertainty and chaos in regional WA by refusing to commit to essential royalties for regions projects. The review that the minister is undertaking to legitimise the cuts is of real concern. The Treasurer has in some ways signalled the death of royalties for regions. As the member for Warren–Blackwood mentioned, we would very much like to see what is coming up in the budget and a decrease in uncertainty around royalties for regions funding. When some of our members have asked questions in not only the Legislative Assembly but also the Legislative Council, we have had a stream of answers mainly confirming that every project is under review.

I want to go over a little of the program's history. I compliment the member for Warren–Blackwood, in his previous role as Minister for Regional Development, in the way he handled the portfolio, and the way in which money was distributed over the nine regional development commissions and regions throughout the state. Western Australia has only five non–capital cities with a population over 30 000, compared with our eastern states' counterparts with 32. It is important that we look at the decentralisation scenario. As I mentioned in my maiden speech, every person we can keep in a regional area is one less person blocking up our freeway. I am sure many of our city members opposite will appreciate that.

The royalties for regions program is a strategically targeted program delivering investment into not only the state's most neglected areas but also those areas that produce the significant mining royalties that the state enjoys. As the member for Warren–Blackwood mentioned, the royalties for regions program was brought in in 2008. One of its first initiatives was the country local government fund. As a previous member of the Western Australian Regional Development Trust, I know that an \$8 billion backlog of infrastructure was identified, which I believe the country local government fund addressed very well, providing for the upgrading of roads, sporting facilities and town centres, and many other vitally important regional headworks. That got some of the vibrancy back into our regional communities so they could enjoy a similar lifestyle to our city cousins. The royalties for regions program has developed to a new level and is being looked at on a more regional level. The nine chairs of the regional development commissions come together as part of the Regional Development Council to look at cross-regional projects, which is very important. I know that the member for Bunbury, on the government benches, is well aware of that, having been a previous member of the South West Development Commission. We tried to focus on a number of projects on a cross-regional basis so we could get much better value for money from our royalties for regions investment. The Country Age Pension Fuel Card has been a fantastic initiative. The doorknocking I did in the Roe electorate indicated the value of the card and how much people in our regional areas treasure and appreciate it. I very much hope that the new Labor government stands by its commitment to retain the fuel card.

I would like to talk about a number of other issues, including the community chest fund and the regional grants scheme, which administers the smaller grants that come through the development commissions. These initiatives gave smaller community groups the opportunity to get smaller projects off the ground with some funding that was not otherwise accessible. A lot of good quality projects were rolled out throughout the regions. I have a list of some of the smaller projects that were election commitments in some of the Labor areas, and I will mention a few if I may. The Armadale electorate was promised \$40 000 for a dog park in Kelmscott. In Swan Hills, members opposite committed to expanding the Ellenbrook Men's Shed and the State Equestrian Centre, and to upgrading the Mount Helena Skatepark and the Gidgegannup Recreation Club. In Morley, we are looking at upgrades to the Morley Sport and Recreation Centre and the Pat O'Hara Reserve. In Gosnells, a commitment was made to upgrade the town centre. In Wanneroo, \$500 000 was committed to the Kingsway Sporting Complex. In Belmont, \$7 million was promised for a performing arts centre, which obviously is not in the small grants category. In Bicton, members opposite committed \$300 000 a year for the next four years to assist community volunteer groups with foreshore restoration. In Darling Range, a commitment was made to transfer land to the Shire of Serpentine–Jarrahdale for a regional sports facility in Whitby. I note the comments of the member for Darling Range yesterday about the increased population in his area, so I am sure that will be well received. In the electorate of Joondalup, royalties for regions provided singlets and jerseys for the

Joondalup Lakers Basketball Club and Joondalup Women's Football Club. In Baldvis, a commitment was made around mobile phone coverage. I know the member for Baldvis recently said that mobile phone coverage in that electorate was worse than in some Third World nations. This subject is dear to the heart of many of our regional members and their constituents. As the member for Warren–Blackwood said, the royalties for regions program rolled out 113 towers in the initial program and now the number is potentially 334 towers. I will add a few other projects in the metropolitan region that have been promised funding, including the Leeming Bowling Club in Jandakot and Piara Waters Junior Football Club. The member for Mount Lawley will be familiar with the Alexander Park Tennis Club, which I have had the privilege to play at many times in the past during Country Week.

Mr B. Urban: Did you win, member?

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Occasionally! What I am alluding to is that many of these small projects that are Labor commitments in the metropolitan area are important, and they are very important for their communities, but we also have many important regional smaller projects and many regional sporting clubs, community groups and so on are that very concerned about what is going to go ahead. We cannot seem to get answers about those projects.

I would like to talk about a couple of projects in my electorate. Esperance is the largest centre in the electorate of Roe and it had been promised some projects that were announced by the former Minister for Regional Development, and the former Minister for Training and Workforce Development in the case of Esperance TAFE. Cabinet committed to and approved those projects, and the financial assistance agreements were in place, but now we are in no-man's-land. The plan for the Esperance indoor stadium has been worked on for up to 25 years by Graham McKenzie and his group of workers from basketball, netball and other sporting groups. It received a commitment of \$4.2 million from royalties for regions, and the Shire of Esperance also supported it, but now we are told, quoting recently from *The Esperance Express*, that the Labor member for the Agricultural Region, Darren West, stated that it might have to be either/or! Who deserves what, and what is more important? As far as I am concerned, those two projects are absolutely essential to the town of Esperance.

The other project I would like to bring up while the Minister for Tourism is in the chamber is the Esperance jetty, which I am sure he is very well aware is an iconic jetty. It is one of the three timber jetties left in Western Australia. It is very important to the community of Esperance, to tourism for the whole region and to the Kalgoorlie community as well. I am sure that the member for Kalgoorlie is well aware of it. How many of his constituents come down to Esperance every Christmas? I impress upon the Minister for Tourism the importance of the Esperance jetty project.

I will go through a few other projects. In Ravensthorpe there is the regional strategic waste management project, which I was involved with as chairman of the Great Southern Development Commission. It covered five local government areas and is very important. There is also the South Coast Highway heavy vehicle route. We had our trucks going up the hill in Ravensthorpe and sliding back down in winter. It is fantastic that that project is back on track. At Lake Grace there was the sporting ground redevelopment. Also, the new \$800 000 St John Ambulance centre was opened. The previous member for Wagin, "Tuck" Waldron, and I attended the opening in February. Amanda Milton and Ross Chappell were an integral part of that and they are a real credit to the Shire of Lake Grace. I would also like to point out the community hub in Nyabing. The pub was going to close. The community identified that and not only sought royalties for regions funding, but also leased 800 hectares of land. I went to the site of that project. The community raised probably two-thirds of the money to have a community hub so that everyone had somewhere to go after the football club closed down. That was a great spend of royalties for regions money, especially when we see how the community commits to the hub. In Pingrup the sporting facilities are the hub of the town and the races are the social highlight of the year. Small grants were given, and the community can really appreciate royalties for regions and the good things that have been done with its funds. There was also the Borden pavilion development. The pavilion caters for netball, football and hockey. There was also the Gnowangerup swimming pool replacement and upgrade. Unfortunately, people had to witness me swimming the first lap in November last year. That is a fantastic royalties for regions project. There is also the aged housing project in Gnowangerup. There was a long-table lunch in Broomehill, with \$6 000 raised for the village heritage precinct. Even though that is only a small amount of money, a nice space was created. Anna Gare was at the long-table lunch. It was something for that community that was very impressive. In Tambellup we have independent living units and the very important relocation of the sporting pavilion and bowling club. I note that the Tambellup Bowling Club has been featured in "Inside Cover" in the last few days. I am very impressed that it has managed to get its name in there. There is also the Cranbrook Community Centre, which is on the site of the old supermarket. There is also the Kojonup tourist train project, with funding for road to rail, plus track. Several members of the community, including Ned Radford and John Lewis, purchased the train from the zoo. The train is taken to the Farrar Dam Reserve, which is a journey of about 10 or 12 kilometres. That is a fantastic result for the community of Kojonup.

The member for Warren–Blackwood mentioned the Katanning project. Katanning is my hometown. We have \$35 million of investment in the hospital and a very important main street investment. The Minister for Tourism is very interested in this project and his representatives have met with Nigel Oakey from the Dome Cafe Group,

which has invested \$7 million on the back of this town-centre revitalisation. To me, that is a fantastic piece of leveraging that the royalties for regions program has achieved. Some other brief examples include a phone tower in Woodanilling, which also cuts out of isolation Darkan and Williams, and the aged-care projects that the member for Warren–Blackwood mentioned. I cannot express how important those projects are. The Regional Development Council’s “Ageing in the Bush Report” lists 15-odd projects, which are probably the most or very close to the most important royalties for regions projects that we and those communities have been left hanging on. I cannot stress enough the importance of those projects to our Minister for Regional Development and our members opposite. We are waiting and we are very keen to hear the outcome on those projects. I am sure the member the Kalgoorlie is keen to hear about the Killarney Retirement Living and the Leonora Ageing in Place projects, and the Laverton primary health and aged care facility. I note that the members for Bunbury and Murray–Wellington also have some aged-care projects in that report. I look forward to a very positive response on those projects from our Minister for Regional Development.

And now a few, I guess, petunia promises, as they have now been called, which are being fed out into Labor electorates. I would like to mention the \$35 000 of funding for Central Parc Skatepark Wickham, which I am sure is a fantastic project; the contribution of \$2 million to the Collie Mineworkers Memorial Pool; the development of the Great Southern Motorplex in Albany; and the \$30 000 to provide shade sales and play equipment in Fitzroy Crossing, in the Kimberley. I note the member for Warren–Blackwood’s comments on the Kimberley community resource centre.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I know everyone is hungry.

Mr M.P. Murray: Just bang on!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I did not get down my list to all the projects in Collie, but there is quite a substantial number.

Is the Kelmscott dog park or a skateboard track in the suburbs or a metro men’s shed more important than an aged-care project or independent-living unit project in the regions? Is the Capel town centre project of \$2.3 million, which was promised during the election campaign, more important than the Kununurra Community Resource Centre, which the member for Warren–Blackwood mentioned is closing in the next couple of days? Strangely, this is happening in the electorate of Kimberley, which is the electorate of a government member. Is the Alexander Park Tennis Club improvement more important than the Tambellup sporting club amalgamation and relocation? I do not choose to say that any of those projects are more important than the others, but many of our community groups are waiting with bated breath. There are business cases and financial assistance agreements, and we need some certainty. We look forward to some great support from the Minister for Regional Development and members opposite.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

House adjourned at 7.00 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — COMMUNICATION METHODS

345. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

- (1) Is the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) provided mobile phone the only method of mobile phone communication for the Minister:
 - (a) If not, how many other mobile phones does the Minister have and is it used to conduct Ministerial business?
- (2) Is the DPC provided iPad the only type of tablet used by the Minister:
 - (a) If not, how many other tablet devices does the Minister have and is it used to conduct Ministerial business?
- (3) Does the Minister use any third-party messaging applications on any of their mobile phones or tablet devices:
 - (a) If yes, what is the name of this application; and
 - (b) If yes, does the Minister maintain the use of this application in a manner consistent with the *State Records Act 2000*?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (1)–(3) The Minister uses many methods of communication in the course of his role. The Minister is aware of his obligations under the State Records Act 2000 and complies with those obligations.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — COMMUNICATION METHODS

347. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

- (1) Is the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) provided mobile phone the only method of mobile phone communication for the Minister:
 - (a) If not, how many other mobile phones does the Minister have and is it used to conduct Ministerial business?
- (2) Is the DPC provided iPad the only type of tablet used by the Minister:
 - (a) If not, how many other tablet devices does the Minister have and is it used to conduct Ministerial business?
- (3) Does the Minister use any third-party messaging applications on any of their mobile phones or tablet devices:
 - (a) If yes, what is the name of this application; and
 - (b) If yes, does the Minister maintain the use of this application in a manner consistent with the *State Records Act 2000*?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

The Minister uses many methods of communication in the course of her role. The Minister is aware of her obligations under the State Records Act 2000 and complies with those obligations

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — COMMUNICATION METHODS

349. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

- (1) Is the Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) provided mobile phone the only method of mobile phone communication for the Minister:
 - (a) If not, how many other mobile phones does the Minister have and is it used to conduct Ministerial business?
- (2) Is the DPC provided iPad the only type of tablet used by the Minister:
 - (a) If not, how many other tablet devices does the Minister have and is it used to conduct Ministerial business?

- (3) Does the Minister use any third-party messaging applications on any of their mobile phones or tablet devices:
- (a) If yes, what is the name of this application; and
- (b) If yes, does the Minister maintain the use of this application in a manner consistent with the *State Records Act 2000*?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

- (1)–(3) The Minister uses many methods of communication in the course of his role. The Minister is aware of his obligations under the *State Records Act 2000* and complies with those obligations.

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — PORTFOLIOS — ELECTION COMMITMENTS

355. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Housing; Veterans Issues; Youth:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) did the Labor Party make any election commitments relevant to your portfolios:
- (i) If yes:
- (A) what was the commitment;
- (B) what was the funding amount attached to the commitment;
- (C) what was the committed date of delivery; and
- (D) what electorate was the commitment for (if State-wide indicate it as such)?

Mr P.C. Tinley replied:

- (a) Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 369.

ATTORNEY GENERAL — PORTFOLIO — ELECTION COMMITMENTS

361. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Attorney General:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) did the Labor Party make any election commitments relevant to your portfolios:
- (i) If yes:
- (A) what was the commitment;
- (B) what was the funding amount attached to the commitment;
- (C) what was the committed date of delivery; and
- (D) what electorate was the commitment for (if State-wide indicate it as such)?

Mr J.R. Quigley replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 369.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — ELECTION COMMITMENTS

362. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) did the Labor Party make any election commitments relevant to your portfolios:
- (i) If yes:
- (A) what was the commitment;
- (B) what was the funding amount attached to the commitment;
- (C) what was the committed date of delivery; and
- (D) what electorate was the commitment for (if State-wide indicate it as such)?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 369.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS — ELECTION COMMITMENTS

364. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) did the Labor Party make any election commitments relevant to your portfolios:
 - (i) If yes:
 - (A) what was the commitment;
 - (B) what was the funding amount attached to the commitment;
 - (C) what was the committed date of delivery; and
 - (D) what electorate was the commitment for (if State-wide indicate it as such)?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 369

MINISTER FOR POLICE — PORTFOLIOS — ELECTION COMMITMENTS

365. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) did the Labor Party make any election commitments relevant to your portfolios:
 - (i) If yes:
 - (A) what was the commitment;
 - (B) what was the funding amount attached to the commitment;
 - (C) what was the committed date of delivery; and
 - (D) what electorate was the commitment for (if State-wide indicate it as such)?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

- (a) Election commitments are a matter of public record. Cabinet and the Expenditure Review Committee are responsible for making decisions in relation to funding and delivery.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — ELECTION COMMITMENTS

366. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) did the Labor Party make any election commitments relevant to your portfolios:
 - (i) If yes:
 - (A) what was the commitment;
 - (B) what was the funding amount attached to the commitment;
 - (C) what was the committed date of delivery; and
 - (D) what electorate was the commitment for (if State-wide indicate it as such)?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 369

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — ADYLKUZZ COMPUTER VIRUS

379. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many computers were infected with the virus/malware called 'Adylkuzz':
 - (i) for each infected computer when was the infection date;
 - (ii) have all computers been cleaned of the virus/malware;
 - (iii) why were the infected machines not patched to prevent this from occurring; and
 - (iv) what actions have been taken since the infection to prevent this from occurring again in the future?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not Applicable.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS — ADYLUKUZZ COMPUTER VIRUS

381. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many computers were infected with the virus/malware called 'Adylkuzz':
 - (i) for each infected computer when was the infection date;
 - (ii) have all computers been cleaned of the virus/malware;
 - (iii) why were the infected machines not patched to prevent this from occurring; and
 - (iv) what actions have been taken since the infection to prevent this from occurring again in the future?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

Department of Agriculture and Food

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

This is a combined response for the Department of Regional Development (DRD) and the nine Regional Development Commissions.

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — ADYLUKUZZ COMPUTER VIRUS

383. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many computers were infected with the virus/malware called 'Adylkuzz':
 - (i) for each infected computer when was the infection date;
 - (ii) have all computers been cleaned of the virus/malware;
 - (iii) why were the infected machines not patched to prevent this from occurring; and
 - (iv) what actions have been taken since the infection to prevent this from occurring again in the future?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

Zoological Parks Authority

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

Department of Parks and Wildlife

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

Office of the Environmental Protection Authority

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

Disability Services Commission

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

Department of Environment Regulation

- (a) Nil.
 - (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

Office of the Appeals Convenor

- (a) Nil.
 (i)–(iv) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — CONTRACT STAFF

396. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities as of 23 May 2017 for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many people are employed on contracts; and
 (b) for the above total figure, please provide a breakdown for those who have been on contract for:
 (i) 0 to 3 months;
 (ii) 3 months to 1 year;
 (iii) 1 year to 2 years;
 (iv) 2 years to 3 years; and
 (v) over 3 years?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

	(a)	(b)(i)	(b)(ii)	(b)(iii)	(b)(iv)	(b)(v)
Department of Local Government and Communities	16	2	5	4	4	1
Metropolitan Cemeteries Board	18*	2	6	4	2	4
State Heritage Office	8	1	2	3	1	1
National Trust	22	5	11	5	0	1
Department of Culture and the Arts**	194	19	56	20	55	42

*This includes the CEO on a 5 year contract, 3 Apprentices, 2 trainees, 2 casual contractors, and 3 employees on a fixed term contract who have recently been successful in being appointed to permanent positions. Seven of these contracts expire on 30 June 2017.

**Please note that the above figures for Public Sector Contracts represent the consolidated figures of the Department of Culture and the Arts and its Portfolio agencies, consisting of the Western Australian Museum, State Library of Western Australia, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth Theatre Trust, Screenwest and State Records Office.

MINISTER FOR POLICE — PORTFOLIOS — CONTRACT STAFF

399. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities as of 23 May 2017 for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many people are employed on contracts; and
 (b) for the above total figure, please provide a breakdown for those who have been on contract for:
 (i) 0 to 3 months;
 (ii) 3 months to 1 year;
 (iii) 1 year to 2 years;
 (iv) 2 years to 3 years; and
 (v) over 3 years?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

The considerable detail required by the member would require the diversion of Police and Road Safety Commission resources. If the member has a more specific concern that he thinks warrants the diversion of these resources, I would ask him to put that specific question on notice.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — CONTRACT STAFF

400. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities as of 23 May 2017 for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many people are employed on contracts; and
- (b) for the above total figure, please provide a breakdown for those who have been on contract for:
 - (i) 0 to 3 months;
 - (ii) 3 months to 1 year;
 - (iii) 1 year to 2 years;
 - (iv) 2 years to 3 years; and
 - (v) over 3 years?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:Department of Parks and Wildlife

- (a) 237
- (b) (i) 19
- (ii) 44
- (iii) 21
- (iv) 54
- (v) 99

Department of Environmental Regulation

- (a) 26
- (b) (i) 2
- (ii) 17
- (iii) 4
- (iv) 3
- (v) Nil.

Appeals Convenor

The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) provides Human Resource support to the Office of the Appeals Convenor, which includes the employment of contract staff. Please refer to DER's response.

Office of Environmental Protection Authority

- (a) 16
- (b) (i) 7
- (ii) 8
- (iii) 1
- (iv) Nil.
- (v) Nil.

Zoological Parks Authority

- (a) 30
- (b) (i) 1
- (ii) 4
- (iii) 5
- (iv) 9
- (v) 11

Disability Services Commission

- (a) 102
- (b) (i) 52
- (ii) 34
- (iii) 14
- (iv) One.
- (v) One.

Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority

- (a) 65
- (b) (i) One.
- (ii) 19
- (iii) 13
- (iv) 10
- (v) 20

HOUSING — DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

405. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Has the Minister or his Ministerial office requested a review to the Disruptive Behaviour Management Strategy, and if yes:
 - (a) what is the nature of the review; and
 - (b) what deadline has been set for the review?
- (2) Has the Minister or his Ministerial office requested any changes to the Disruptive Behaviour Management Strategy, and if yes:
 - (a) what is the nature of the changes?

Mr P.C. Tinley replied:

- (1) No.
 - (a)–(b) Not Applicable.
- (2) No.
 - (a) Not Applicable.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — COMPLAINTS

428. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) For the 2014–15 financial year:
 - (i) how many complaints were received by the department;
 - (ii) how many complaints were successfully resolved and closed;
 - (iii) how many complaints are pending action; and
 - (iv) how many complaints were unable to be resolved; and
- (b) For the 2015–16 financial year:
 - (i) how many complaints were received by the department;
 - (ii) how many complaints were successfully resolved and closed;
 - (iii) how many complaints are pending action; and
 - (iv) how many complaints were unable to be resolved?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

	(a) 2014–15 financial year				(b) 2015–16 financial year			
	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)
Department of Local Government and Communities	1	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	N/A	N/A	N/A
Metropolitan Cemeteries Board	135	135	Nil	Nil	118	118	Nil	Nil
State Heritage Office	Nil	N/A	N/A	N/A	1	1	Nil	Nil
National Trust	Nil	N/A	N/A	N/A	Nil	N/A	N/A	N/A
Department of Culture and the Arts	1	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	N/A	N/A	N/A
Perth Theatre Trust	16	16	Nil	Nil	21	21	Nil	Nil
Art Gallery of Western Australia	18	18	Nil	Nil	41	30	11	Nil
Screenwest	1	1	Nil	Nil	1	1	Nil	Nil
State Library of Western Australia	127	89	Nil	38	136	78	Nil	58
State Records Office	1	1	Nil	Nil	2	2	Nil	Nil
Western Australian Museum	42	33	9	Nil	18	20	7	Nil

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS — COMPLAINTS

430. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) For the 2014–15 financial year:
- (i) how many complaints were received by the department;
 - (ii) how many complaints were successfully resolved and closed;
 - (iii) how many complaints are pending action; and
 - (iv) how many complaints were unable to be resolved; and
- (b) For the 2015–16 financial year:
- (i) how many complaints were received by the department;
 - (ii) how many complaints were successfully resolved and closed;
 - (iii) how many complaints are pending action; and
 - (iv) how many complaints were unable to be resolved?

Mr M. McGowan replied:Department of Agriculture and Food, Western Australia

- (a)
- (i) 15
 - (ii) 12
 - (iii) 2
 - (iv) 1
- (b)
- (i) 12
 - (ii) 14 (including 2 from 2014–15 financial year).
 - (iii) 0
 - (iv) 0

Department of Regional Development and Development Commissions

- (a)–(b) [See tabled paper no 379.]

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — COMPLAINTS

432. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) For the 2014–15 financial year:
 - (i) how many complaints were received by the department;
 - (ii) how many complaints were successfully resolved and closed;
 - (iii) how many complaints are pending action; and
 - (iv) how many complaints were unable to be resolved; and
- (b) For the 2015–16 financial year:
 - (i) how many complaints were received by the department;
 - (ii) how many complaints were successfully resolved and closed;
 - (iii) how many complaints are pending action; and
 - (iv) how many complaints were unable to be resolved?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:Zoological Parks Authority

- (a) For the 2014–2015 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 84
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.
- (b) For the 2015–2016 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 195
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.

Departments of Parks and Wildlife

- (a) For the 2014–2015 financial year:
 - (i) 94
 - (ii) 93
 - (iii) Nil.
 - (iv) One.
- (b) For the 2015–2016 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 94
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.

Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority

- (a) For the 2014–2015 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 84
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.
- (b) For the 2015–2016 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 75
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.

Disability Service Commission

- (a) For the 2014–2015 financial year:
 - (i) 41
 - (ii) 17
 - (iii) Six.
 - (iv) Nil.

- (b) For the 2015–2016 financial year:
 - (i) 42
 - (ii) 22
 - (iii) Four.
 - (iv) Nil.

Office of Environmental Protection Authority

- (a) For the 2014–2015 financial year:
 - (i)–(iv) Nil.
- (b) For the 2015–2016 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 1
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.

Office of the Appeals Convenor

Not applicable to the Office of the Appeals Convenor (OAC). Formal complaints regarding the OAC would be addressed to the Minister for Environment.

Department of Environment Regulation

- (a) For the 2014–2015 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 11
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.
- (b) For the 2015–2016 financial year:
 - (i)–(ii) 14
 - (iii)–(iv) Nil.

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — PORTFOLIOS — UNION NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES

440. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Housing; Veterans Issues; Youth:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities:

- (a) How many union nominated representatives are there in each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation; and
- (b) for each union nominated representative:
 - (i) what is their name; and
 - (ii) what is their position title within the department, agency or public owned corporation?

Mr P.C. Tinley replied:

- (a)–(b) Please refer to the answer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 454.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS —
UNION NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES

447. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities:

- (a) How many union nominated representatives are there in each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation; and
- (b) for each union nominated representative:
 - (i) what is their name; and
 - (ii) what is their position title within the department, agency or public owned corporation?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a)–(b) Please refer to the answer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 454.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS —
UNION NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES

449. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities:

- (a) How many union nominated representatives are there in each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation; and
- (b) for each union nominated representative:
 - (i) what is their name; and
 - (ii) what is their position title within the department, agency or public owned corporation?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

I request that the member clarify what he means by 'union nominated representatives'.

MINISTER FOR POLICE — PORTFOLIOS — UNION NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES

450. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities:

- (a) How many union nominated representatives are there in each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation; and
- (b) for each union nominated representative:
 - (i) what is their name; and
 - (ii) what is their position title within the department, agency or public owned corporation?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

I request that the member be more direct and specify what he means by union nominated representatives, namely what role they are nominated to and who or what they are representing.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — UNION NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES

451. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities:

- (a) How many union nominated representatives are there in each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation; and
- (b) for each union nominated representative:
 - (i) what is their name; and
 - (ii) what is their position title within the department, agency or public owned corporation?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

Please refer to the answer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 454

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

471. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

- (1) Does the Minister operate a Twitter account:
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) who has access to the Twitter account; and
 - (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Twitter account?
- (2) Does the Minister operate a Facebook Account or Page:
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) who has access to the Facebook Account or Page; and
 - (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Facebook Account or Page?

- (3) Does the Minister operate a Instagram account:
- (a) If yes:
- (i) who has access to the Instagram account; and
- (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Instagram account?
- (4) Does the Minister operate a Snapchat account:
- (a) If yes:
- (i) who has access to the Snapchat account; and
- (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Snapchat account?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (a) (i) The Minister's Twitter account is a public account. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
- (ii) The Minister is responsible for the material that they post.
- (2) Yes.
- (a) (i) The Minister's Facebook account is a public account. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
- (ii) The Minister is responsible for the material that they post.
- (3) No.
- (4) No.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

473. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

- (1) Does the Minister operate a Twitter account:
- (a) If yes:
- (i) who has access to the Twitter account; and
- (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Twitter account?
- (2) Does the Minister operate a Facebook Account or Page:
- (a) If yes:
- (i) who has access to the Facebook Account or Page; and
- (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Facebook Account or Page?
- (3) Does the Minister operate a Instagram account:
- (a) If yes:
- (i) who has access to the Instagram account; and
- (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Instagram account?
- (4) Does the Minister operate a Snapchat account:
- (a) If yes:
- (i) who has access to the Snapchat account; and
- (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Snapchat account?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (a) (i) The Minister's Twitter account is a public account. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
- (ii) The Minister is responsible for the materials posted
- (2) Yes.

- (a) (i) Anyone has access to viewing the Minister's public Facebook page. Anyone is able to like or follow the page. The Minister also has a private account. However anyone is able to send a "friend request" to the Minister's account. Anyone who is a friend of the Minister on Facebook is able to access the content posted by the account.
- (a) (ii) The Minister is responsible for the materials posted.
- (3) Yes.
- (a) (i) The Minister's Instagram account is public. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
- (a) (ii) The Minister is responsible for the materials posted.

(4) No.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

475. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

- (1) Does the Minister operate a Twitter account:
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) who has access to the Twitter account; and
 - (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Twitter account?
- (2) Does the Minister operate a Facebook Account or Page:
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) who has access to the Facebook Account or Page; and
 - (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Facebook Account or Page?
- (3) Does the Minister operate a Instagram account:
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) who has access to the Instagram account; and
 - (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Instagram account?
- (4) Does the Minister operate a Snapchat account:
 - (a) If yes:
 - (i) who has access to the Snapchat account; and
 - (ii) who is responsible for the content on the Snapchat account?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

- (1) Yes.
 - (a) (i) The Minister's Twitter account is a public account. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
 - (a) (ii) The Minister is responsible for the content that he posts.
- (2) Yes.
 - (a) (i) The Minister has two Facebook pages. One is a public page and one is a private account. Anyone has access to view the Minister's public Facebook page or like or follow the page. Anyone is able to send the Minister a "friend request" to his private account. Anyone who is a friend of the Minister on his private Facebook is able to access the content posted by the account.
 - (a) (ii) The Minister is responsible for the content that he posts.
- (3) Yes.
 - (a) (i) The Minister's Instagram account is public. Anyone who chooses to follow the Minister's account has access to the content posted by the account.
 - (a) (ii) The Minister is responsible for the content that he posts.
- (4) No.
 - (a) (i)–(ii) Not applicable.

National Trust

(a)		Female		Male		
		20		18		
(b)		Female		Male		
		N/A		N/A		
(c)	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66+
	1	2	11	5	13	1
(d)	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66+
	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Culture and the Arts Portfolio

(a)		Female		Male		
		681		396		
(b)		Female		Male		
		3		6		
(c)	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66+
	89*	244	222	229	226	67
(d)	18 to 25	26 to 35	36 to 45	46 to 55	56 to 65	66+
	0	0	0	2	7	0

* including employees under 18 years of age.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS — STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

490. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- What is the gender breakdown for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation;
- What is the gender breakdown for the Senior Executive Service for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation;
- What is the age breakdown (18 to 25; 26 to 35; 36 to 45; 46 to 55; 56 to 65; 66 and over) for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation; and
- What is the age breakdown (18 to 25; 26 to 35; 36 to 45; 46 to 55; 56 to 65; 66 and over) for the Senior Executive Service for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation?

Mr M. McGowan replied:Department of Agriculture and Food

- Male – 573 Female – 545
- Male – 6 Female – 1
- 18 to 25 – 43
26 to 35 – 133
36 to 45 – 276
46 to 55 – 319
56 to 65 – 312
66 and over – 34
- 46 to 55 – 1
56 to 65 – 6

Department of Regional Development and Regional Development Commissions

- (a)–(d) [See tabled paper no 380.]

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

492. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) What is the gender breakdown for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation;
- (b) What is the gender breakdown for the Senior Executive Service for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation;
- (c) What is the age breakdown (18 to 25; 26 to 35; 36 to 45; 46 to 55; 56 to 65; 66 and over) for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation; and
- (d) What is the age breakdown (18 to 25; 26 to 35; 36 to 45; 46 to 55; 56 to 65; 66 and over) for the Senior Executive Service for each department, agency, and publicly owned corporation?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:Zoological Parks Authority

- (a) Female: 188, Male: 67
- (b) Female: 1, Male: Nil.
- (c) 18–25: 32
26–35: 86
36–45: 59
46–55: 44
56–65: 28
66 and over: 6
- (d) 18–25: Nil.
26–35: Nil.
36–45: Nil.
46–55: Nil.
56–65: 1
66 and over: Nil.

Appeals Convenor

The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) provides Human Resource support to the Office of the Appeals Convenor. Please refer to DER's response.

Department of Parks and Wildlife

- (a) Female: 704, Male: 944
- (b) Female: 1, Male: 12
- (c) 18–25: 70
26–35: 299
36–45: 428
46–55: 468
56–65: 337
66 and over: 46
- (d) 18–25: Nil.
26–35: Nil.
36–45: 1
46–55: 4
56–65: 6
66 and over: 2

Department of Environment Regulation

- (a) Female: 198, Male: 141
- (b) Female: 4, Male: 2
- (c) 18–25: 7
26–35: 93
36–45: 91
46–55: 95
56–65: 44
66 and over: 9
- (d) 18–25: Nil.
26–35: Nil.
36–45: Nil.
46–55: 6
56–65: Nil.
66 and over: Nil.

Office of the Environmental Protection Agency

- (a) Female: 59, Male: 40
- (b) Female: 0, Male: 4
- (c) 18–25: Nil.
26–35: 17
36–45: 39
46–55: 30
56–65: 12
66 and over: 1
- (d) 18–25: Nil.
26–35: Nil.
36–45: 1
46–55: 1
56–65: 2
66 and over: Nil.

Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority

- (a) Female: 93, Male: 70
- (b) Female: 1, Male: 1
- (c) 18–25: 16
26–35: 34
36–45: 46
46–55: 35
56–65: 24
66 and over: 8
- (d) 18–25: Nil.
26–35: Nil.
36–45: Nil.
46–55: 1
56–65: 1
66 and over: Nil.

Disability Services Commission

- (a) Female: 1069, Male: 485
- (b) Female: 6, Male: 6
- (c) 18–25: 23
26–35: 270
36–45: 372
46–55: 431
56–65: 400
66 and over: 58
- (d) 18–25: Nil.
26–35: 1
36–45: 2
46–55: 5
56–65: 4
66 and over: Nil.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE STAFF

505. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities as of 23 May 2017 for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many full time equivalent (FTE) are employed at the Senior Executive Service level;
- (b) how many public servants by 'head count' are employed at the Senior Executive Service level;
- (c) how many Senior Executive Service staff are on annual leave;
- (d) how many Senior Executive Service staff are on personal leave; and
- (e) how many Senior Executive Service staff on leave without pay?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:Local Government Portfolio

- (a) Seven.
- (b) Seven.
- (c)–(e) Nil.

The Department of Local Government and Communities' senior officers (tier 1 and tier 2) are strategically linked to the priorities in the other portfolios.

Heritage Portfolio

- (a) One.
- (b) One.
- (c)–(e) Nil.

Culture and the Arts Portfolio

- (a) 9.
- (b) 9.
- (c)–(e) Nil.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS —
SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE STAFF**507. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:**

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities as of 23 May 2017 for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many full time equivalent (FTE) are employed at the Senior Executive Service level;

- (b) how many public servants by 'head count' are employed at the Senior Executive Service level;
- (c) how many Senior Executive Service staff are on annual leave;
- (d) how many Senior Executive Service staff are on personal leave; and
- (e) how many Senior Executive Service staff on leave without pay?

Mr M. McGowan replied:Department of Agriculture and Food

- (a) 7
- (b) 7
- (c) 1
- (d) 0
- (e) 0

Department of Regional Development and Regional Development Commissions

(a)–(e) [See tabled paper no 381.]

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE STAFF

509. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities as of 23 May 2017 for departments, agencies, and publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how many full time equivalent (FTE) are employed at the Senior Executive Service level;
- (b) how many public servants by 'head count' are employed at the Senior Executive Service level;
- (c) how many Senior Executive Service staff are on annual leave;
- (d) how many Senior Executive Service staff are on personal leave; and
- (e) how many Senior Executive Service staff on leave without pay?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:Zoological Parks Authority

- (a) 1
- (b) 1
- (c) 1
- (d) Nil.
- (e) Nil.

Department of Parks and Wildlife

- (a) 13
- (b) 13
- (c) 1
- (d) 1
- (e) Nil.

Department of Environment Regulation

- (a) 6
- (b) 6
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) Nil.

Office of the Appeals Convenor

The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) provides Human Resource support to the Office of Appeals Convenor. Please refer to DER's response.

Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority

- (a) 2
- (b) 2
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) Nil.

Office of the Environmental Protection Authority

- (a) 4
- (b) 4
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) Nil.

Disability Services Commission

- (a) 12
- (b) 12
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Two.
- (e) Nil.

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — ADVISORS

515. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Housing; Veterans Issues; Youth:

With respect to staff employed in your Ministerial office as at 19 May 2017:

- (a) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on policy matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and policy responsibilities; and
- (b) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on media matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and media responsibilities?

Mr P.C. Tinley replied:

- (a)–(b) Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 529.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — ADVISORS

522. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

With respect to staff employed in your Ministerial office as at 19 May 2017:

- (a) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on policy matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and policy responsibilities; and
- (b) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on media matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and media responsibilities?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a)–(b) Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 529.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — ADVISORS

524. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

With respect to staff employed in your Ministerial office as at 19 May 2017:

- (a) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on policy matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and policy responsibilities; and

- (b) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on media matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and media responsibilities?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 529

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — ADVISORS

526. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

With respect to staff employed in your Ministerial office as at 19 May 2017:

- (a) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on policy matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and policy responsibilities; and
- (b) how many (by headcount) advise the Minister on media matters:
 - (i) what is their name, title and media responsibilities?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 529

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — COMMISSION OF INQUIRY —
PERTH FREIGHT LINK — BRIEFING NOTE**532. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Housing; Veterans Issues; Youth:**

I refer to the Premier's answer to a question during Question Time on 16 May 2017 in which the Premier referred a briefing note regarding the Roe 8 project and said "When new ministers moved into their offices, guess what was sitting on one of the desks? This document was sitting on the desk. It was available for the next Government to reveal" and ask in relation to the *State Records Act 2000*, and ask:

- (a) Has this document been retained by your Ministerial office in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*;
- (b) On what date was it logged into the TRIM document management system; and
- (c) Who is assigned this document in the TRIM system?

Mr P.C. Tinley replied:

- (a)–(c) Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 546.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — COMMISSION OF INQUIRY —
PERTH FREIGHT LINK — BRIEFING NOTE**539. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:**

I refer to the Premier's answer to a question during Question Time on 16 May 2017 in which the Premier referred a briefing note regarding the Roe 8 project and said "When new ministers moved into their offices, guess what was sitting on one of the desks? This document was sitting on the desk. It was available for the next Government to reveal" and ask in relation to the *State Records Act 2000*, and ask:

- (a) Has this document been retained by your Ministerial office in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*;
- (b) On what date was it logged into the TRIM document management system; and
- (c) Who is assigned this document in the TRIM system?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a)–(c) Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 546.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — COMMISSION OF INQUIRY —
PERTH FREIGHT LINK — BRIEFING NOTE**541. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:**

I refer to the Premier's answer to a question during Question Time on 16 May 2017 in which the Premier referred a briefing note regarding the Roe 8 project and said "When new ministers moved into their offices, guess what was sitting on one of the desks? This document was sitting on the desk. It was available for the next Government to reveal" and ask in relation to the *State Records Act 2000*, and ask:

- (a) Has this document been retained by your Ministerial office in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*;

- (b) On what date was it logged into the TRIM document management system; and
- (c) Who is assigned this document in the TRIM system?

Mr M. McGowan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 546

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — COMMISSION OF INQUIRY —
PERTH FREIGHT LINK — BRIEFING NOTE

543. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

I refer to the Premier's answer to a question during Question Time on 16 May 2017 in which the Premier referred a briefing note regarding the Roe 8 project and said "When new ministers moved into their offices, guess what was sitting on one of the desks? This document was sitting on the desk. It was available for the next Government to reveal" and ask in relation to the *State Records Act 2000*, and ask:

- (a) Has this document been retained by your Ministerial office in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*;
- (b) On what date was it logged into the TRIM document management system; and
- (c) Who is assigned this document in the TRIM system?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 546

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — PORTFOLIOS — COMPUTER NETWORK SECURITY

551. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Housing; Veterans Issues; Youth:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how much money was spent on anti-virus, network security, firewall or anti-malware software in the last financial year;
- (b) from 17 March 2017 to 19 May 2017, have there been any reported instances of:
 - (i) Viruses:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system;
 - (ii) Malware:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system;
 - (iii) Cyber-attack:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
 - (B) was this attack reported to the WA or Australian Federal Police? If not, why not;
 - (iv) DNS attack:
 - (A) if so, what systems or websites were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
 - (B) was this attack reported to the WA or Australian Federal Police? If not, why not; and
 - (v) Infected websites:
 - (A) if so, what websites were infected / hacked, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
- (c) From 17 March 2017 to 19 May 2017 have any network files been illegally accessed by external individuals or organisations:
 - (i) if so, what files were illegally accessed and when;
 - (ii) if so, were the WA Police or Australian Federal Police informed of this illegal access; and
 - (iii) if not, why not?

Mr P.C. Tinley replied:Housing Authority

The Housing Authority advises:

- (a) Please refer to clause (a) of Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 549.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (a) Not applicable.
 - (ii) No.
- (a) Not applicable.
 - (iii) No.
 - (A)–(B) Not applicable.
 - (iv) No.
 - (A)–(B) Not applicable.
 - (v) No.
- (a) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i)–(iii) Not applicable.

Department of Local Government and Communities

The Department of Local Government and Communities advises:

- (a) Please refer to clause (a) of Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 549.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (a) Not applicable.
 - (ii) No.
- (a) Not applicable.
 - (iii) No.
 - (A)–(B) Not applicable.
 - (iv) No.
 - (A)–(B) Not applicable.
 - (v) No.
- (a) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i)–(iii) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — COMPUTER NETWORK SECURITY

558. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how much money was spent on anti-virus, network security, firewall or anti-malware software in the last financial year;
- (b) from 17 March 2017 to 19 May 2017, have there been any reported instances of:
 - (i) Viruses:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system;
 - (ii) Malware:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system;

- (iii) Cyber-attack:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
 - (B) was this attack reported to the WA or Australian Federal Police? If not, why not;
- (iv) DNS attack:
 - (A) if so, what systems or websites were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
 - (B) was this attack reported to the WA or Australian Federal Police? If not, why not; and
- (v) Infected websites:
 - (A) if so, what websites were infected / hacked, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
- (c) From 17 March 2017 to 19 May 2017 have any network files been illegally accessed by external individuals or organisations:
 - (i) if so, what files were illegally accessed and when;
 - (ii) if so, were the WA Police or Australian Federal Police informed of this illegal access; and
 - (iii) if not, why not?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (a) Please refer to clause a) of Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 549.
- (b) (i)–(v) Yes. Two incidents of a virus affecting some Perth Theatre Trust network share files and applications; first incident, access progressively restored in nine working days; second incident, access progressively restored in seven working days. One incident of malware detection; no system affected, no downtime. No incidents were reported to WA or Federal Police as the types of incidents did not warrant reporting.
- (c) No.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — COMPUTER NETWORK SECURITY

562. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

In respect of the Minister's portfolio responsibilities for departments, agencies or publicly owned corporations:

- (a) how much money was spent on anti-virus, network security, firewall or anti-malware software in the last financial year;
- (b) from 17 March 2017 to 19 May 2017, have there been any reported instances of:
 - (i) Viruses:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system;
 - (ii) Malware:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system;
 - (iii) Cyber-attack:
 - (A) if so, what systems were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
 - (B) was this attack reported to the WA or Australian Federal Police? If not, why not;
 - (iv) DNS attack:
 - (A) if so, what systems or websites were affected, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and
 - (B) was this attack reported to the WA or Australian Federal Police? If not, why not; and
 - (v) Infected websites:
 - (A) if so, what websites were infected / hacked, for how long and was there any downtime (in hours) for each system; and

- (c) From 17 March 2017 to 19 May 2017 have any network files been illegally accessed by external individuals or organisations:
- (i) if so, what files were illegally accessed and when;
 - (ii) if so, were the WA Police or Australian Federal Police informed of this illegal access; and
 - (iii) if not, why not?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

- (a) Please refer to clause a) of Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 549.

Zoological Parks Authority

- (b) (i)–(v) No.
(A)–(B) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
(i)–(iii) Not applicable.

Office of the Appeals Convenor

The Department of Environment Regulation (DER) provides corporate support to the Office of the Appeals Convenor, which includes IT administration and support. Please refer to DER's response.

Department of Parks and Wildlife and Department of Environment Regulation

- (b) (i) (A) Yes. Two virus instances were reported and successfully cleaned by the Department's security system without any downtime.
(ii) (A) Yes. Two virus instances were reported and successfully cleaned by the Department's security system without any downtime.
(iii) (A)–(B) No.
(iv) (A)–(B) No.
(v) (A) No.
- (c) (i)–(iii) No.

Office of the Environmental Protection Authority

- (b) (i)–(v) No.
(A)–(B) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
(i)–(iii) Not applicable.

Disability Services Commission

- (b) (i)–(v) No.
(A)–(B) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
(i)–(iii) Not applicable.

Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority

- (b) (i) (A) Yes. Two desktop computers were affected in separate instances. There was no effective downtime.
(ii) (A) No.
(iii) (A)–(B) No.
(iv) (A)–(B) No.
(v) (A) No.
- (c) (i)–(iii) No.

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT

575. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

For each of your departments, agencies, boards, public owned corporations and Ministerial offices since 17 March 2017:

- (a) has any video, DSLR or digital cameras been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the camera;
- (b) has any lighting equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (c) has any microphone equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (d) has any broadcasting, video editing, photo editing software been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
 - (ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost; and
- (e) has any software made by Adobe (not covered in question d) been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
 - (ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:Department of Local Government and Communities

(a)–(e) No.

Metropolitan Cemeteries Board

(a)–(d) No.

- (e) (i) Yes. Adobe Acrobat Pro DC, \$441.77 excluding GST per licence consisting of 5 licences with a total value of \$2,208.85 excluding GST (not related to Video or camera equipment or software)
- (ii) No.

State Heritage Office

(a)–(d) No.

- (e) (i) Yes. Adobe Creative Cloud \$938.45 excluding GST per licence consisting of 18 licences with a total value of \$16,896.10 excluding GST.
- (ii) \$16,892.10 excluding GST.

National Trust

(a)–(e) No.

Department of Culture and the Arts

(a)–(e) No.

Art Gallery of Western Australia

- (a) (i) Yes. Go Pro Hero 5 (and accessories), \$651.78; Canon 5D Mark IV (and accessories), \$4,999.05
- (b) No.
- (c) (i) Yes. Audio Technica-Mono Shotgun Condenser Mic, \$139.00; Rode SmartLav+ Professional lapel mic (and accessories), \$94.00; Audio Technica M20Cx headphones, \$75.00
- (d) (i) Yes. Adobe Creative Cloud (one year licence), \$387.87
- (ii) \$387.87
- (e) No.

Perth Theatre Trust

- (a) (i) Yes. EverFocus 1080p True Day/Night Box Camera (Black), \$75.00; Tamron 12VM1040ASIR ½” 10–40mm F/1.4 Manual Infrared C-Mount Lens, \$102.00
- (b)–(d) No.
- (e) (i) Yes. Acrobat \$203.88
(ii) \$203.88

Screenwest

- (a)–(e) No.

State Library of Western Australia

- (a)–(e) No.

State Records Office

- (a)–(e) No.

Western Australian Museum

- (a) (i) Yes. Make: Olympus Stylus Model: tough TGH 4 Dive Cost, \$863.01
- (b)–(d) No.
- (e) (i) Yes. Adobe Photography Plan – System Software, \$109.99
(ii) No.

Ministerial Office

- (a) (i) Yes. Nikon, Coolpix A900 Digital Camera, \$449.00
- (b)–(e) No.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS — AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT

577. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

For each of your departments, agencies, boards, public owned corporations and Ministerial offices since 17 March 2017:

- (a) has any video, DSLR or digital cameras been purchased:
(i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the camera;
- (b) has any lighting equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
(i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (c) has any microphone equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
(i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (d) has any broadcasting, video editing, photo editing software been purchased:
(i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
(ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost; and
- (e) has any software made by Adobe (not covered in question d) been purchased:
(i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
(ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost?

Mr M. McGowan replied:Department of Agriculture and Food:

- (a) Yes.
(i) DJI Mavic Pro costing \$1669.00.
- (b) Yes.
(i) Lishuai 52cm round edgelight LED panel with batteries and case costing \$960.00.
- (c) Yes.
(i) RODE Reporter microphone costing \$153.67.
RODELink Newsshooter Kit TX-XLR Transmitter costing \$590.00.
RODE Mic Me costing \$79.00.

- (d) No.
 - (i) Not Applicable.
 - (ii) Not Applicable.
- (e) Yes.
 - (i) As per (ii), below:
 - (ii) Yes.
 - Adobe Photoshop CC – Subscription Licence – \$239.51.
 - Adobe InDesign CC – Subscription Licence – \$239.51.
 - Adobe Photoshop CC – Subscription License – \$171.08.
 - Adobe InDesign CC – Subscription Licence – \$171.08.

Department of Regional Development:

(a)–(e) [See tabled paper no 382.]

Ministerial office:

- (a)–(c) No.
- (d) Yes.
 - (i) Adobe Creative Cloud for Teams – \$394.95 for five months subscription.
 - (ii) Yes – \$860.00 p/a.
- (e) No.

MINISTER FOR POLICE — PORTFOLIOS — AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT

578. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Police; Road Safety:

For each of your departments, agencies, boards, public owned corporations and Ministerial offices since 17 March 2017:

- (a) has any video, DSLR or digital cameras been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the camera;
- (b) has any lighting equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (c) has any microphone equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (d) has any broadcasting, video editing, photo editing software been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
 - (ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost; and
- (e) has any software made by Adobe (not covered in question d) been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
 - (ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost?

Mrs M.H. Roberts replied:

The considerable detail required by the member would require the diversion of Police and Road Safety resources. If the member has a more specific concern that he thinks warrants the diversion of Police and Road Safety resources, I would ask him to put that specific question on notice.

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — AUDIOVISUAL EQUIPMENT

579. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

For each of your departments, agencies, boards, public owned corporations and Ministerial offices since 17 March 2017:

- (a) has any video, DSLR or digital cameras been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the camera;

- (b) has any lighting equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (c) has any microphone equipment specifically designed for photography or videography been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what was the make, model and cost of the equipment;
- (d) has any broadcasting, video editing, photo editing software been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
 - (ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost; and
- (e) has any software made by Adobe (not covered in question d) been purchased:
 - (i) If yes, what is the software and what was the licence cost; and
 - (ii) Is there a recurrent / subscription component to the software, if so, what is that cost?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:Ministerial Office

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.
- (e) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.

Zoological Parks Authority

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.
- (e) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.

Disability Services Commission

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.

- (d) Yes
 - (i) One x Adobe Creative Cloud for Teams – All Apps at a cost of \$895.10 (ex GST) purchased on 5 April 2017. (The cost is for 5 April 2017 to 18 March 2018.)
 - (ii) Yes. Annual renewal is at an estimated cost of \$918.75. Renewable fees apply on 18 March each year.
- (e) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.

Department of Parks and Wildlife

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.
- (e) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.

Office of the Appeals Convenor

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.
- (e) Yes
 - (i) Acrobat Pro DC six licences \$1,345.61
 - (ii) Renewable yearly

Office of the Environmental Protection Agency

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.

- (e) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.

Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.
- (e) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.

Department of Environment Regulation

- (a) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (b) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (c) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
- (d) No.
 - (i) Not applicable.
 - (ii) Not applicable.
- (e) Yes.
 - (i) Adobe Creative Cloud (all apps) licences for four staff.
 - (ii) Monthly subscription cost is \$63.79 including GST per licence.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT — METROPOLITAN CEMETERIES BOARD —
FUNERAL DIRECTOR OF THE MONTH AWARD**

601. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Does the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board conduct a “Funeral Director of the month” award, and if yes:
 - (a) how many FTE are dedicated to the production of this award;
 - (b) what physical form does the award take;
 - (c) how much does the funeral director of the month award cost to operate; and
 - (d) does the “Funeral Director of the month” receive any prize with the award?
- (2) Provide a list of all funeral directors who have won the award for the past 12 months?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

- (1) Yes, the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board (MCB) introduced a Funeral Director of the Month Award in November 2016. Each month, MCB frontline staff are asked to consider which Funeral Director staff has really made an impression on our team. This may be for attitude, co-operation, good paperwork, and problem-solving – an acknowledgement of how we all work together in delivering a high quality service to the community. Each month, each MCB cemetery team at Karrakatta, Fremantle/Rockingham and Pinnaroo/Midland/Guildford choose a winning Funeral Director staff

member or team. The Award was introduced to encourage greater co-operation between the Funeral Directors licenced by the MCB and the MCB staff. This also has the ability to create healthy competition amongst the funeral directors in delivering a high quality service to the community.

- (a) No FTE are dedicated to the production of the award.
- (b) The Award is a paper certificate created in Microsoft PowerPoint. It is printed onto standard paper and provided to the winning Funeral Director and their company when they next visit the relevant cemetery site. An electronic PDF version is also emailed to the Managing Director or owner of the winning company in case they wish to print themselves.
- (c) It is estimated that the cost of the Funeral Director of the Month Award would be the equivalent of 20 minutes of FTE time per month. 10 minutes for the nominating staff to discuss and decide and 10 minutes for the staff member to insert the winning names in the PowerPoint template; print and email the certificate; send a congratulatory email to the winners; send an email to advise all MCB licenced Funeral Directors; print a certificate for display at cemetery funeral counters; and upload the information to the Funeral Director industry portal on the MCB website. The value of this time is estimated at 4 hours per year, costing approximately \$160 per annum depending on the level of staff contributing. The value of the certificates is estimated at 1.5 cents per sheet and 0.003 cents to print each sheet. At approximately 80 sheets of paper per annum (depending on whether there are multiple winners), this totals \$1.44 per annum.
Therefore, the total annual estimated cost to operate this award is \$161.44.
- (d) No prizes are given other than the paper certificate.

(2) Since the commencement of the Award in November 2016, the winners are listed below.

Month	Site	Person/Team	Company
Nov-16	Karrakatta	Kerrie Owen	Chippers Subiaco
Fremantle	Fremantle Team	Bowra & O'Dea	
Pinnaroo	Karen Lynch	Purslowe Wangara	
Dec-16	Karrakatta	Mal Skipworth	Prosser Scott
Fremantle	Chippers Rockingham	Chippers	
Pinnaroo	Jodie Walsh	Purslowe-Wangara	
Jan-17	Karrakatta	Kim Erceg and Margaret Lawrence	Seasons
Fremantle	Jillian Rix	Bowra & O'Dea	
Pinnaroo	No winner awarded		
Feb-17	Karrakatta	Keith Laird	Bowra & O'Dea
Fremantle	David Graham	Simplicity Kelmscott	
Pinnaroo	Helen McGuinness	Simplicity Joondalup	
Mar-17	Karrakatta	Donna Randazzo	Mareena Purlowe – Subiaco
Fremantle	Hetherington	Hetherington	
Pinnaroo	No winner awarded		
Apr-17	Karrakatta	Martin Brady	Bowra & O'Dea
Fremantle	David Bianci	Bowra & O'Dea	
Pinnaroo	McKee Family Funerals	McKee Family Funerals	

MINISTER FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT — PORTFOLIOS — INTERNET ADVERTISING

625. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts:

For each of your departments, agencies, boards, publicly owned corporations and Ministerial offices since 17 March 2017 how much money has been spent on:

- (a) “Boosted” Facebook posts;
- (b) “Promoted” Twitter posts;

- (c) “Sponsored” Instagram posts;
- (d) Google AdWords; and
- (e) Paid content or advertising on:
 - (i) WWW.THEWEST.COM.AU;
 - (ii) WWW.PERTHNOW.COM.AU;
 - (iii) WWW.WATODAY.COM.AU; and
 - (iv) WWW.YAHOO.COM.AU?

Mr D.A. Templeman replied:

	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e) (i)–(iv)
Department of Local Government and Communities	\$627.32	\$100.00	Nil	Nil	Nil
Metropolitan Cemeteries Board	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
State Heritage Office	Nil	Nil	Nil	\$3,429.34	Nil
National Trust	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Department of Culture and the Arts	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Perth Theatre Trust	\$3,928.26	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Art Gallery of Western Australia	\$771.94	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Screenwest	\$7.37	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
State Library of Western Australia	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
State Records Office	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Western Australian Museum	\$6,444.38	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — PORTFOLIOS — INTERNET ADVERTISING

627. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the minister representing the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

For each of your departments, agencies, boards, publicly owned corporations and Ministerial offices since 17 March 2017 how much money has been spent on:

- (a) “Boosted” Facebook posts;
- (b) “Promoted” Twitter posts;
- (c) “Sponsored” Instagram posts;
- (d) Google AdWords; and
- (e) Paid content or advertising on:
 - (i) WWW.THEWEST.COM.AU;
 - (ii) WWW.PERTHNOW.COM.AU;
 - (iii) WWW.WATODAY.COM.AU; and
 - (iv) WWW.YAHOO.COM.AU?

Mr M. McGowan replied:Department of Agriculture and Food

- (a) \$333.28
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) \$45.28
- (d) \$547.89
- (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.

Department of Regional Development and Regional Development Commissions

- (a)–(e) [See tabled paper no 383.]

MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT — PORTFOLIOS — INTERNET ADVERTISING

629. Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Environment; Disability Services:

For each of your departments, agencies, boards, publicly owned corporations and Ministerial offices since 17 March 2017 how much money has been spent on:

- (a) “Boosted” Facebook posts;
- (b) “Promoted” Twitter posts;
- (c) “Sponsored” Instagram posts;
- (d) Google AdWords; and
- (e) Paid content or advertising on:
 - (i) WWW.THEWEST.COM.AU;
 - (ii) WWW.PERTHNOW.COM.AU;
 - (iii) WWW.WATODAY.COM.AU; and
 - (iv) WWW.YAHOO.COM.AU?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:Ministerial Office

- (a) Nil.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.

Zoological Parks Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) \$2,062.80
- (e) (i) \$3,248.91
 - (ii) Nil.
 - (iii) Nil.
 - (iv) Nil.

Department of Parks and Wildlife

- (a) Nil.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.

Office of the Appeals Convenor

- (a) Nil.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.

Office of the Environmental Protection Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.

Botanic Parks and Gardens Authority

- (a) Nil.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) \$6.05
- (d) Nil.
- (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.

Disability Services Commission

- (a) Nil.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) Nil.
- (d) Nil.
- (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.

Department of Environment Regulations

- (a) Nil.
 - (b) Nil.
 - (c) Nil.
 - (d) Nil.
 - (e) (i)–(iv) Nil.
-

