



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 9 May 2013

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mr M.W. Sutherland) took the chair at 9.00 am, and read prayers.

SELECT COMMITTEE INTO INCREASES IN STATE DEBT — ESTABLISHMENT

Notice of Motion

Mr B.S. Wyatt gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house appoints a select committee to inquire into and report on the level of increases to the state debt since 2000, particularly borrowings, which are growing state debt to extraordinary levels, and the effects that these and other borrowings may have on the future financial management of Western Australia, and in particular to —

- (a) ascertain the overall level of debt of the state, its agencies and business enterprises, and the amount of its increase since 2000;
- (b) estimate the level of likely borrowings over the next six years that will be needed to cover existing or foreseeable liabilities;
- (c) identify any contingent liabilities which may require borrowings during the next six years;
- (d) identify the contributions of individual government departments, agencies and business enterprises to this level of debt and future or contingent liabilities;
- (e) ascertain whether the debt of individual government departments, agencies or business enterprises is fully, partially or not matched by realistically valued assets;
- (f) assess the impact of the debt on the revenue and expenditure of the state over the next six years;
- (g) recommend strategies for management of the debt over the next six years, which will minimise the adverse effect of the debt on the revenues and expenditures of the state and on the taxpayers of the state; and
- (h) recommend a long-term policy approach to the management and reporting of government debt.

SINO-AUSTRALIA CHALLENGE BASKETBALL SERIES

Statement by Minister for Tourism

DR K.D. HAMES (Dawesville — Minister for Tourism) [9.03 am]: I rise to update the house on developments surrounding the Sino–Australia Challenge basketball series. Western Australia’s basketball fans and the state’s tourism industry will benefit from a new deal, which will see Perth host 12 international basketball games between the Australian and Chinese men’s and women’s basketball teams over the next four years. In 2011 and 2012 Eventscorp sponsored the Youyi Games between the Boomers and Team China and will continue to support basketball through the Sino–Australia Challenge, which will see the men’s teams from both countries compete annually and the women’s teams biennially until the end of 2016. In addition to the games that will be held in Perth, 12 games will be played in China under the deal between Basketball Australia and the Chinese Basketball Association. The series will commence in June when the Boomers will play Team China, twice in Perth and twice in China. It is expected that more than 10 000 Western Australians will attend the games in Perth and that the games will attract national and international visitors to Western Australia. The two WA matches will be held in the Perth Arena and the WA State Basketball Centre.

As members would know, basketball is one of the most popular sports in China in terms of participation and television audience. In WA the sport is enjoying a resurgence thanks to the success of the Perth Wildcats and their fantastic new home at the Perth Arena. All four series games will be broadcast nationally on ESPN and internationally on Boomers TV across personal computers, tablets and mobile devices. A stand-alone broadcast of a Team China game played in China is watched on average by 15 million to 20 million people, with games covered by Chinese broadcasting giant CCTV Sports & Entertainment. Western Australia will enjoy huge exposure to a Chinese audience during the series. The Boomers and Team China have developed a friendly but competitive rivalry in Perth over the past two years and the Sino–Australia Challenge will give WA basketball fans the chance to again see two of the world’s top basketball nations in action.

In 2014 the series is expected to feature four matches between the Australian women’s team, the Opals, and the Chinese national women’s team. The Opals are currently ranked number two in the world behind the United States, and China is at number eight, so these matches promise to be great contests.

INTERNATIONAL FIREFIGHTERS DAY

Statement by Minister for Emergency Services

MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot — Minister for Emergency Services) [9.07 am]: Last Saturday, 4 May, marked the fifteenth annual International Firefighters Day. Tomorrow I will have the honour of attending the official memorial service to mark the day in Western Australia. The date was chosen as it is St Florian's Feast Day, which commemorates the life of St Florian, the patron saint of firefighters, who was the first known commander of one of the firefighting squads in the Roman Empire. He and his colleagues lost their lives in the service of the ideals that firefighters all over the world share today.

Today there are just over 700 career and volunteer fire brigades in this state. Firefighters are a unique group of individuals. Like many of our emergency services workers, they are motivated by the desire to keep their community safe. Their courage and dedication, developed in their own time, is demonstrated whenever these people go to work. Firefighting can be a dangerous and demanding business. No-one will ever forget the events of 11 September 2001 when over 300 firefighters lost their lives attempting to rescue citizens trapped in the World Trade Center towers. More recently, in Waco, Texas, firefighters lost their lives fighting a fire at a fertiliser factory. Chillingly, five Western Australian firefighters lost their lives in Victoria in 1999, the event that this very day was created to commemorate. In Western Australia, Wendy Bearfoot passed away in November last year after suffering burns whilst fighting a bushfire east of Albany. Wendy Bearfoot was doing what over 30 000 volunteer firefighters and 1 100 career firefighters do in every corner of this state nearly every day of the year—protecting their communities from the threat of fire in any conditions and at any time of the day or night. These are graphic examples of the inherent risk that every firefighter faces whenever they turn out for duty.

The modern-day fire services in Western Australia have evolved over time into adaptable, professional and dynamic organisations with a mix of skills, equipment and personnel who are leaders in their field. Our urban search and rescue teams have been deployed as far afield as Queensland and internationally to Christchurch, New Zealand, where they joined international teams from the United States, the UK and Singapore to assist in the search for survivors after the earthquakes in 2011. Our Hazmat team carried out multi-agency training in the lead-up to CHOGM.

This government recognises the extraordinary hard work and dedication of all firefighters within this state and thanks them on behalf of the people of Western Australia for the continued commitment they make to their local communities and the state as a whole. We reflect on the memory of their colleagues who have given their lives in the line of duty. It is not just the firefighters—to the families of these men and women who wait at home for them to return at the end of their shift and to the family members and friends of the ones who did not come home, we thank you for the sacrifice you have made to keep the communities of Western Australia safe. International Firefighters Day was the idea of J.J. Edmondson, a lieutenant in a volunteer brigade in Victoria. She did not know the firefighters who lost their lives back in 1999 but I will finish with a quote from her —

The role of a firefighter in today's society—be it urban, rural, ... volunteer, career ... is one of dedication, commitment and sacrifice—no matter what country we reside and work in. In the fire service we fight together against one common enemy—fire—no matter what country we come from, what uniform we wear or what language we speak.

LIVING IN THE REGIONS 2013 SURVEY

Statement by Minister for Regional Development

MR B.J. GRYLLS (Pilbara — Minister for Regional Development) [9.09 am]: I rise to inform the house about a survey being conducted by the Department of Regional Development and Lands. The Living in the Regions Survey will ask more than 40 000 regional Western Australians for their views on what makes regional WA such a great place to live. The royalties for regions funded survey gives regional communities the opportunity to have a say on what attracts people to regional areas and what makes them want to stay.

As members are aware, Western Australia's population is likely to double by 2050. This growth provides an opportunity to establish a regional network of thriving cities and towns where people want to live and work. The government's SuperTowns program is already planning and working towards this future development.

To help attract and retain people in regional areas we need to know more about the factors they consider when deciding where to live, and about the benefits and challenges of living in our regions. The survey asks respondents to identify what they like about living in a regional area and asks about their quality of life. It asks people how they assess their employment prospects, health and financial situation, as well as how engaged they feel with their community and how happy they are living there. It asks what parts of regional living—sporting, cultural, social activities et cetera—are important to them. It also seeks to find out what would encourage people to stay in the region and what might prompt them to consider moving. This information will be made available

for government and non-government organisations to assist them with decision-making and policy development for regional communities.

The survey was mailed to approximately 40 000 residents across regional Western Australia in April 2013. A further 5 000 surveys have been distributed through the Community Resource Network; the Rural, Remote and Regional Women's Network; the regional chambers of commerce; local governments; and regional development commissions. Regional residents can also access the survey on the Department of Regional Development's website.

An alternative survey for metropolitan residents to share perceptions of regional WA can also be found on the website. Importantly, the metropolitan survey asks people living in Perth what barriers prevent them from moving to the regions. The survey will be complemented by a series of regional workshops throughout May and June to collect more data about living in regional WA. This is the first time in more than a decade that a comprehensive regional survey of this nature has been undertaken. A similar survey was done in 1997 and was used by the Regional Development Council in 1999 to inform a Living in the Regions report, which played a valuable role in informing regional policy. The 2013 Living in the Regions Survey will make a valuable contribution in informing regional policy development for years to come. The survey was to close this Friday, 10 May, but to enable as many people as possible a chance to fill out the questionnaire, the closing date has now been extended to 31 May.

I encourage all regional communities to participate and have their voice heard.

BEDFORD YOUTH HOSTEL

Grievance

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [9:12 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Disability Services, through the member for Kingsley in her capacity as parliamentary secretary, who is representing the minister in the house. The member has had some warning of the matter, but in my electorate some four years ago, a hostel for disadvantaged youth was burnt down and completely destroyed. It is a completely derelict site and very dangerous. I have been there and walked around the site. There are trees causing damage to other people's property. One of my constituents has written to me saying that it is more than four years since the hostel building was destroyed by fire and that the lack of maintenance is concerning. He says that he has had to re-gutter all of his house because of the overhanging trees that have caused damage to his guttering, despite the fact that he cleans them out regularly. I have photographs. That is just one of the complaints; I have had a number of them from residents wanting to know what is going on with the derelict site. Given the housing crisis we have at the moment, I think the member will agree that four years is an awfully long time to leave a site vacant that is available for building upon and for housing disadvantaged youth. I believe it is a Disability Services Commission building, so it will be moving on it. Back in 2012, when we wrote to Minister Helen Morton, she told us that the government had intentions for redeveloping the site. That was nearly two years ago, and if the member were to look at the dates of the letters, she will see that still nothing has gone on.

I will just reiterate. The Bedford youth hostel, as it was called, burnt down in 2009. It provided accommodation for disadvantaged youth for nearly 40 years. Here we are four years after the fire and the building is still derelict, an eyesore, a maintenance nuisance to residents, and most importantly, the property is left unused at a time when Perth's housing crisis is at a peak and government-provided housing priority lists have a two-year waiting period.

What I would really like to hear from the member for Kingsley is the following: what are the intentions now that we are four years down the track; are tenders going to be let; when are plans going to council; when will construction commence; when will the building be finished on that site; and what type of building will it be? I am also concerned that there has been no communication with any of the street neighbours to let them know what is going on. I would think as a matter of good practice being a neighbour in the residence that DSC should have made some attempt to just inform the local neighbours up and down the street, even within three or four houses distance, about what was going on with that site.

It is certainly a mess and causing everyone problems. Why did the government delay doing anything on this site? It is an appalling oversight on the government's behalf and it really needs to get on top of the matter in a hurry.

MS A.R. MITCHELL (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary) [9:15 am]: I thank the member for Maylands for bringing the grievance forward. I am pleased to respond to her on behalf of the Minister for Disability Services. The member is right. Yes, the property was originally owned by the Department for Child Protection for a hostel that provided eight beds at the site. It did burn down. One of the hardest things to understand is that when a property changes hands from one department to another, it does seem to take an inordinate amount of time for the processes to be passed through; I have experienced that myself in my own electorate with one or two departments changing hands. That is very hard for local residents to understand. But the member is correct in saying that in 2010 the transfer of ownership went to the Disability Services Commission in conjunction with the Department of Housing to work through the housing project that will occur on this site.

I think the member's residents will also be very pleased to know—I will say this nicely—that it has actually changed from the Department for Child Protection and Family Support because there were some antisocial issues surrounding the house as it was prior to the unfortunate incident that resulted in the burning down of the hostel. The service it provided was valuable, but now it will become a six-bed emergency accommodation facility for people with a disability. Yes, the process has taken a little while, but I can assure the member that we now have interagency agreements that were required and are now in place. Conceptual designs are being developed, but before they can go out to the community, they need to go through council and that process is underway. The planning approval must be obtained first. The process begins with the City of Bayswater. After receipt of the application, the City of Bayswater starts an assessment process for compliance with the accepted development standards, and then a community consultation process occurs. Of course, even though it is a government department, it must comply with due process and follow all those things as they go through.

Once the approval has been granted, the next steps, including the finalisation of the detail design specifications, can begin. That is probably why local residents have not heard a lot at this stage. I know that can be very frustrating for them if they do not know what is going on. Often it becomes like Chinese whispers—that is, people hearing the worst possible things going on rather than the good things that can be going on.

I certainly note the member for Maylands' press release of 2011 expressing her concerns. The matter is progressing and I now believe will be moving at a much quicker rate. Once the process, the design specs and community consultation are completed, it is expected that construction will commence in the fourth quarter of this year, once again, with practical completion expected in May 2014. Obviously that is still subject to the planning approval going through the City of Bayswater. I would say that this timeline is still only two months longer than the Disability Services Commission actually intended it to be in the first place. Overall, it is only probably delayed by about two months.

Ms L.L. Baker: Any ideas on what it might look like? What size and scope?

Ms A.R. MITCHELL: Absolutely. I will get to that in just a sec. Obviously, we are only talking generalities at the moment.

Ms L.L. Baker: Sure.

Ms A.R. MITCHELL: The member mentioned people who have been concerned about overhanging trees and things like that. My understanding from DSC is that it has not received a complaint or a call about anything in the past 12 months. The site is well signposted as to which is the responsible department for it, so once it receives that information, it will act upon it.

Ms L.L. Baker: I have a letter in front of me that my resident claims he sent on 18 April to the Disability Services Commission, raising his concerns and telling them that pruning trees once a year is not really going to cut it when they are doing that much damage.

Ms A.R. MITCHELL: I am sure the member for Maylands will find that they are going out regularly and that they will discuss those matters with the member's constituents, because we do not want disgruntled neighbours. There is no question about that. The member will find that as a government department DSC is well aware of those things, because they are going to be neighbours very soon. One of the things the member will find with DSC is that it is very conscious of being a good neighbour and it will continually consult with local residents because it wants this facility to fit in with the neighbourhood. I do not think the member should have any concerns about that.

DSC's policy now is to develop smaller dwellings; we are talking about a six-bed facility. We are talking not about a dormitory-style facility but about a house that will be designed and constructed for people with disabilities. It will be their house and not a care facility, although carers will visit from time to time. It is designed as a house, so it is something that will fit in. DSC already has a number of these houses, and it provides a wonderful way for people with disabilities to be independent and part of a community. That is why DSC places so much importance on its relationship with the neighbours and people in the street. I think the member will see a considerable relationship develop between the neighbours and the people who live in the facility.

I emphasise that it is important to build this facility as a home and not as a dormitory or a care facility so that it will fit in with the local neighbourhood, but it will require specific design elements that may take longer to be approved by the local council. DSC is well versed in how to do that sort of work.

Ms L.L. Baker: Before you finish, it might be worthwhile if DSC has the opportunity to inform the neighbours about where the process is up to, and I'm happy to take that information and send it to neighbours on your behalf, if you would like me to.

Ms A.R. MITCHELL: I am sure we can work something out.

One of the most pleasing aspects of the ongoing reform of disability services is that people with disabilities are now no longer required to live in large dormitory-style accommodation and centres but now live in more home-based accommodation.

ASSOCIATIONS INCORPORATION ACT*Grievance*

MR P. ABETZ (Southern River) [9.22 am]: My grievance is directed to the Minister for Commerce, represented in this house by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Commerce, the member for Wanneroo, and it relates to the Associations Incorporation Bill 2006, which was tabled as a green bill in November 2006 and which has since gone nowhere.

By way of introduction, since 1895 Western Australian law has made provision for associations to become incorporated. Incorporation gives associations the benefit of becoming legal entities. The Consumer Protection Division of the Department of Commerce administers the act and has provided helpful advice to associations over the years. It checks the constitutions of newly formed associations to ensure that they comply with the current Associations Incorporation Act 1987. It also checks that the names of associations to be registered are not so similar to existing names that it will cause confusion.

It has long been recognised that the Associations Incorporations Act 1987 is in need of revision. There are 17 000 incorporated associations in Western Australia, and it goes without saying that it has been a challenge to provide a legal structure that will suit every type of association. The shortcomings of the 1987 act are well known. In 2005, in recognition of the differing needs of the various associations, the then Department of Consumer and Employment Protection engaged in a major community consultation with many of the varied incorporated associations in Western Australia. In my former role as a pastor I was involved in those extensive consultations. I have the file I had during those consultations and I still have the green bill and some of the submissions I made at that time. All those consultations led to the tabling of the Associations Incorporation Bill 2006 on 30 November, but since then nothing much seems to have happened.

In giving a few examples of the need to change the act, I will not mention the names of the associations or the people involved, because although currently what they are doing is technically legal, it leaves a lot to be desired. Association A is an animal breeders' society. For breeders to sell their animals as pedigrees, certification must be issued by that association. Under the current law the governing council of the organisation can suspend a person's membership. That often results in severe financial pressure on that individual because the progeny of their animals is no longer registered and cannot be sold as pedigree animals.

I am concerned that under the current law there is no obligation for the governing committee of any incorporated association to keep minutes. Similarly, the current act does not require a conflict resolution process, nor does it provide for a dispute appeals process to an outside body. Currently, if someone is adversely affected by the outrageous conduct of a governing council, the only avenue open to them is to take civil proceedings in a court of law, which members know is exceedingly costly and often beyond the financial means of people. There is also often cronyism within these associations and in the event that a committee is voted out by its members, the outgoing committee can refuse to hand over its records. This can make it very difficult for an association to then continue to function and to get on with its tasks.

Another example I have is from a constituent who came to see me because she was fed up with the autocratic behaviour of the president of her incorporated association. She decided, because she was passionate about the objectives of the association, to nominate for a position on the governing council and try to bring about change. When she expressed criticism of the current leadership, her membership was suspended. Under the constitution or regulations of that association, a member who is suspended loses all rights of membership. As a result, she was denied the right to use the dispute resolution system of the association and her membership was terminated. The only course of action left to her was to go to court, but she did not have the financial means to do that. The green bill tabled in November 2006 addresses very well some of the shortcomings in the act. One of the very positive changes proposed in that 2006 bill would allow aggrieved members the ability to take their case to the State Administrative Tribunal.

Given that I have only a minute left, I will highlight just a couple of the positive things proposed in that 2006 bill. For example, the appointment of a public officer as the point of contact for all official communications would be useful. Of course, an additional issue to consider is the formation of the federal government's Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission; we do not want duplication.

I ask the minister, through the parliamentary secretary, to do all in his power to bring a new associations incorporation bill to this chamber. Most of the work has already been done, and I believe it is time to pull things together and make it happen as soon as possible.

MR P.T. MILES (Wanneroo — Parliamentary Secretary) [9.29 am]: I acknowledge and thank the member for Southern River for some notice of this grievance. A lot of information and submissions have been received since the review process started way back in 2005 and since the member and others entered this place. This government wants to progress this legislation in the spring session this year. The member will therefore see the bill coming forward later this year and, hopefully, pass through both houses of Parliament before the summer

break. The bill will incorporate quite a few changes to the current act, and I will refer to some of the financial record reporting and accountability measures in the new act. I will refer to them because it is important that people realise that their local football club, Lions club, Rotary club, church or parents and citizens associations have the same accountability and reporting responsibilities as has the local RAC down the road. That is not quite right because of the size and capacity of each entity. The amendments to the legislation will therefore address that issue.

We put out a green bill last year or the year before that indicated there would be a three-tier system for financial accountability, except that the three tiers will be based on an association's revenue as opposed to revenue and assets, as the intent is obviously to reduce the reporting burden on associations. Some associations that have owned a bit of land for the past 50 years are asset rich, especially tennis clubs and what have you, but they do not have a lot of revenue in the turnover that keeps them going. Their turnover just trickles over each year and some of the reporting is a bit onerous. We are therefore looking at that matter very seriously as part of the government's red tape reduction measures wherever possible given the size of an association. The size of the thresholds in the three tiers is as a result of the financial reporting and auditing obligations. Obviously we will still have to make sure that financial memberships are maintained and guaranteed under the incorporation act. We do not want to be flippant about this matter and must be very careful about where we are going.

The department has also aimed, where appropriate, to harmonise the Western Australian requirements with those of the commonwealth and other jurisdictions, given that the subset of incorporated associations in Western Australia will fall under the jurisdiction of the federal Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission—ACNC. The intention is to be consistent with the ACNC act as well, wherever reasonably possible, to minimise the regulatory impact, as I previously said.

There will therefore be three tiers. Tier 1 will cover clubs with turnover revenue of \$250 000 a year, which accounts for about 90 per cent of those 17 000 associations, and most organisations will be at that level; tier 2 will cover clubs with revenue turnover of \$250 000 to \$1 million a year; and the tier 3 bracket will cover clubs with revenue turnover of \$1 million-plus, such as the RAC. There will be associations that experience a one-off revenue in a financial year that will cause them to fall into a higher bracket. To protect the association from having to change its reporting system, which again could be quite onerous, the amendments to the legislation will give the commissioner the power to declare, upon application by the association, whether the association is tier 1, 2 or 3.

For those people who are not aware of the tiers, I will explain some of the small points. Tier 1 associations will be required to submit basic financial statements to its members at general meetings. This is consistent with the current requirements under the act; however, unlike the act, the bill will explicitly allow choice of either a cash or accrual method of accounting to minimise the burden on small associations. When an association starts to get near the revenue turnover in tier 2 or 3, obviously the level of reporting and accountability will increase and the association will have to align itself with the Australian standards for accounting practices.

Self-reporting is another part of the bill. The provisions will encourage self-reporting by associations which will continue to report to their members rather than lodge annual financial statements with the commissioner. That is again an attempt to cut down on the red tape with the department or as required by other jurisdictions such as the federal government. The commission can intervene on an exceptional basis. The commissioner may request documents relating to financial affairs of an association to be produced and that may require a special audit to be carried out. The commission will still have an overriding view—no matter what. We will not dismiss the powers of the commissioner who will be able to investigate when needed. The duties of officers and incorporations are being looked at right now. We have a couple of tweaks to make on those provisions that Minister Michael Mischin's office is working through, and he is very happy with some of the changes. We also propose to introduce a duty to exercise care and diligence and duties prohibiting the improper use of the position and the information.

As the member for Southern River is probably aware, this is a very complex bill that needs to be linked in with the federal acts and the acts in other jurisdictions and we do not want it to upset the charities acts that are administered by the taxation commissioner. We will therefore be bringing the bill on for debate in the September session of Parliament this year when the member will be able to see it in full.

TAXIS — SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS — REGIONAL AREAS

Grievance

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [9.36 am]: My grievance this morning is to the Minister for Transport and relates to the issue of regional taxis. As the minister is aware, monitored cameras—important safety devices for taxidriviers and taxi patrons—are mandatory in all taxis operating within the metropolitan area. The same, however, does not exist for taxis operating in regional centres outside the metropolitan area, such as in the regional cities of Mandurah, Albany, Bunbury or Kalgoorlie. This issue I am raising today is an important one for all regional members.

On 1 March 2011, I wrote to the minister requesting that Mandurah, my city, be considered as another trial region for the installation of surveillance cameras in our taxis. At that time two serious assaults on local taxidrivers had occurred, and Mandurah taxi owners, local police and local taxidrivers called for and supported the introduction of cameras in our taxis in Mandurah. The minister responded to my request in a letter to me dated 13 April 2011 in which he stated that a successful trial of surveillance cameras was carried out in Geraldton in 2008. The letter states —

While this trial may be considered successful, it highlighted several practical issues that need to be resolved before TCSUs —

That is, taxi camera surveillance cameras —

can be rolled out across the regions. These include the availability of personnel to install, service, inspect and test TCSUs and the availability of premises and personnel with the proper authority and capacity to perform regular downloads in regional towns. Until these issues are resolved, there are no plans for further regional TCSU trials ...

Just over two weeks ago, Mr Lindsay Ferguson, a local taxidriver of some 20 years' experience in Mandurah, died in his taxi after a frightening, violent passenger traumatised him and other passengers who were in his taxi at the time. Lindsay died and it will be alleged—as charges have been laid—that his death was as a result of this violent passenger. I acknowledge in the public gallery Lindsay's daughter Karen; and also Julie Murray, the proprietor of Mandurah Taxis. This death obviously devastated the family, Lindsay's workmates at Mandurah Taxis and the proprietors. Although cameras may not have saved his life, there is no doubt that having surveillance cameras in taxis is an important additional safety appliance for both taxidrivers and taxi patrons; also, in already proven cases, it can provide important information to police on incidents that have occurred outside a taxi but that have been captured by a taxi's external camera.

I want to refer to another tragedy; the death of Mr Tauri Litchfield, a man who was killed in Pinjarra Road, Mandurah in March this year. Mandurah police were seeking camera surveillance and contacted Mandurah Taxis asking for any surveillance it may have had, and the police were astounded that our local taxis were not fitted with taxi camera surveillance units.

Regional centres—particularly large centres like Mandurah, Bunbury, Albany, Kalgoorlie, and even the minister's own, Busselton—need monitored surveillance cameras now. Surely since March 2011 the issues that prevented the rollout of these cameras to regional centres, as outlined in the minister's letter, have or should have been resolved; after all, it is two years since that matter was raised, and five years since the original TCSU trial took place in Geraldton.

Julie Murray is here as a proprietor, along with her husband, Greg, of Mandurah Taxis. She is representing her employees—the taxidrivers of Mandurah—and she is also the secretary-treasurer of the WA Country Taxi Operators Association, and a regional representative and member of the Taxi Council of Western Australia. Julie, her company and I really want to work with the minister and the department to ensure that the funding needed to roll out TCSUs in regional areas is secured as soon as possible, so that taxidrivers and taxi patrons in regional WA are treated the same as their counterparts in the metropolitan area.

As the minister highlighted in his letter—maybe he will elaborate today—there have been some impediments, and I mentioned some in that quote, but I can assure the minister that Mandurah Taxis already has the expertise to address a number those, so really it is now a case of having the will to ensure that this is funded; I think Mandurah is the perfect regional centre to start.

The minister would have had correspondence from Julie and her company, Mandurah Taxis, and over a period she has also corresponded with her local member, the Deputy Premier, and also the minister responsible for royalties for regions, the member for Pilbara, on a number of occasions on this and other matters relating to regional taxis. It is time for action, and I respectfully ask that the minister find funding, from royalties for regions if necessary, for the rolling out of TCSUs into major regional centres; I suggested Mandurah, Albany, Bunbury and Kalgoorlie as examples. I think the minister has had enough time to address the issues highlighted in the 2008 trial and iron out those impediments that have stopped the rollout into regional centres, and I think we owe it to Lindsay, Karen, her mum, and his family, and other regional taxidrivers and their patrons, to ensure that the taxis in regional communities are as safe as possible for not only taxidrivers, but also of course patrons; they would provide the extra eyes on the street, if you like—surveillance information, if and when needed, to relevant police. It will need strong support from police, the minister's department and obviously the taxi operators, but I think the minister will get that, and I really look forward to his response.

As I earlier said to the minister in the chamber, I would really appreciate him having a quick chat to Julie and Karen after this grievance if he is able to.

MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Minister for Transport) [9.43 am]: Can I just start by extending my condolences to the family and work colleagues of Mr Ferguson. Nobody expects to say goodbye to their husband, father or colleague as he goes off to work and have him not come home, especially in such tragic circumstances. As the member pointed out, there is no guarantee that a camera would have stopped this from happening; indeed, unfortunately, even in the metropolitan area where there are cameras there are still violent attacks against taxidriviers and occasionally issues involving taxidriviers and passengers. However, there is no doubt in my mind that the cameras are a good deterrent, and there is no doubt in my mind that the cameras help the police—particularly the new cameras, which are much better quality—in gathering evidence when crimes are committed.

In relation to our potential rollout of taxi camera surveillance units—I will call them cameras—into regional WA, at the moment, technically, there is nothing except cost to stop people in regional WA purchasing cameras and having them fitted to taxis; it is my recollection that it costs around \$4 000 a unit—it might be more in regional areas. Indeed, the advice I have had from the department is that a taxi in Geraldton was recently fitted with the new generation of taxi camera surveillance unit. They are not monitored as such, but they do keep the data in the black box in the cab for up to six days, which is a lot better than previously. Within that six-day period I would imagine that wherever somebody is in WA, if there is a serious need to get the data out, the people who need to access that can get to the destination.

In relation to the metropolitan area regarding the rollout of the new cameras, if somebody buys a new cab and puts it on the road, they basically have to foot the bill for the camera; that is just part of the mandatory requirement. However, for existing cabs, the government has provided a subsidy to assist the transition across to the new cameras. The funding for that subsidy has come out of the taxi industry development account, which is where lease payments received from metropolitan taxi plate holders go. They go into the TIDA and the money is then allocated out. Just to put it into perspective, a peak-period plate in the metropolitan area pays about \$6 500 a year; a conventional plate pays about \$13 000. So they pay that money, it goes into the account, and then it gets spent in the industry.

In regional WA the arrangements in and around leases are a lot lower than that, simply because there is a lot less regulation, control and, I suppose, oversight by government. However, I do not think that is a reason not to look at proceeding in the country. As I said, there is currently no reason for people not being able to do it, it is just not mandated as a requirement. I will shortly have a chat to Mrs Murray; we will just need to have a bit of a conversation about how we can assist in the funding of that. In the metropolitan area I think we covered half the cost—maybe up to 75 per cent of the cost, depending on the type of camera unit that was being replaced. I am happy to sit with Mrs Murray and, by extension, perhaps other operators in regional areas; the member is right, my hometown Busselton, and certainly Broome, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie, are areas where issues have been raised in the past. If there is a mechanism we can use to move forward, I am happy to have a look at that. There will be, though, a cost for that installation, but I expect that when that is considered in light of what happened to Mr Ferguson, cost really is not the issue; the issue is trying to make the cab safe. If that can stop one other person going through what Mr Ferguson would have been through and what his family is now going through, then that is probably a very, very good investment of public funds.

Historically, as the member read from the letter, the reasons that have been given for it not proceeding in regional areas are the three he highlighted: firstly, the difficulty with installation; secondly, issues around cost and who pays; and, thirdly, issues around monitoring. But, as I said, I think a lot of those issues can be easily resolved; for example, in Mandurah I cannot imagine the cost of arranging for those installations to be done would be too high, given the proximity to the metropolitan area.

In relation to monitoring, in practice what happens in the city is, if there is an issue either the taxi dispatch service or the police will contact the Department of Transport, and one of our operators—we now have operators in vehicles in the field, especially on the weekends—will attend wherever required, and they have the capacity to download the equipment. One of the reasons it has to be very secure is that, unfortunately, sometimes there are allegations against taxidriviers, and we have to make sure that nobody can access the data that is carried. Given that it can now basically be stored for six days before it is rolled over, that allows a fair bit of time to get in and access it.

So, I am happy to have a look at what we can do. We will need to have a conversation around costs associated with that, as I am sure the member appreciates, but in light of the sorts of outcomes that have happened in Mandurah, I think it is important we look for some changes. The member is right, I did write to him in 2011; since that time we have been heavily focused on trying to roll the cameras out in the city. As I am sure the member appreciates, we have had some significant issues in terms of safety in cabs, particularly safety for drivers but also safety for passengers. That program is now well underway. Around half the cabs now have it fully installed. We had some teething difficulties that we had to bed down, but from a personnel and resourcing point of view there is now capacity for us to look at what we can do in regional areas. We will go outside in a

second and have a chat, but I thank the member for raising the issue. I close by extending my condolences to the family of Mr Ferguson, and his workmates in particular.

GERALDTON HEALTH CAMPUS — MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

Grievance

MR I.C. BLAYNEY (Geraldton) [9.51 am]: My grievance today is to the Minister for Mental Health. I thank the member for Kingsley for taking the question on behalf of the Minister for Mental Health. My grievance is on the need for a mental health unit at Geraldton Health Campus. It is generally known in the region that Geraldton hospital, which opened in 2005, is only slightly bigger than half the size of the hospital it replaced. One of the reasons for this, I am told, is that the mental health facility that was intended to be part of the hospital was removed from the plans at the last minute. It is this facility that I wish to speak about today. Constructing it would improve mental health outcomes in the region by making more treatment available locally and follow-up treatment more effective. It would also free up space in the hospital, which is now too small. Geraldton Health Campus is the central receiving site for 17 sites across the midwest. The midwest covers some 605 000 square kilometres or almost a fifth of the Western Australian land mass. It services a population of approximately 60 000 people, about 90 per cent of whom live in Geraldton or in other smaller communities along the coast to the north and south; the rest live inland. The most recent figures point to the region's population growing at about the state average and I confidently expect this to continue. Some 11 per cent of the population are Aboriginal, which means the midwest has the second-highest Aboriginal population in the state. The largest industries in the midwest are mining, agriculture and fishing. These industries tend to have the demographics of a larger itinerant workforce than average, which tends to have higher social isolation, higher usage of alcohol and drugs and more risk-taking behaviour than average. Of course, the workplaces are generally in isolated locations.

Mental health disorders requiring treatment in Geraldton can range from short-term conditions, such as anxiety and depression, to longer term conditions, such as chronic depression and schizophrenia. The 2007 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that 45 per cent of Australians aged from 16 to 85 years had had a mental disorder at some time in their life; 20 per cent had shown symptoms in the year before the survey interviewed them and 25 per cent had not; and 12 per cent of Australians had accessed services in the previous year.

Meeting the needs of people with a mental illness in the midwest is difficult. Treatment is delivered on an ad hoc basis. The lack of an authorised facility means that a larger number of patients have to be transferred to Perth. This has resulted in something in the order of 90 evacuations a year by the Royal Flying Doctor Service, at a cost of just in excess of \$6 000 an evacuation. The average time taken to reach the destination airport is 23 hours. There are also added costs through things such as the patient assisted travel scheme. This creates ongoing social, safety and economic issues. Patients are removed from familiar surroundings and family. There is also a shift in location when treatment is finished in Perth and patients are moved back to Geraldton, which can result in a break in the flow of treatment. An expanded mental health facility would include inpatient beds, expanded community services, drug and alcohol mental health promotion and a better mental health emergency service. The establishment of a dedicated mental health facility would also free up space in the regional hospital, which is running at capacity. Keeping patients in the midwest would also relieve pressure on metropolitan services. It would also avoid the delay in treatment that results from having to ship a patient out of Geraldton before commencing treatment.

There has been a clear increase in the number of hospital admissions for mental health reasons in Geraldton. Between 2006 and 2010, there were 1 701. The highest number of admissions were for serious psychiatric admissions, which was 880 admissions; for anxiety disorders there were 349 admissions; and for alcohol and drug disorders there were 380 admissions. Aboriginal people were admitted at a much higher rate than non-Aboriginal people—3.4 times in the case of men and 2.4 times in the case of women. I note that the Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service is generally regarded as one of the best Aboriginal medical services in Australia. Emergency department admissions for mental health reasons rose from 550 in 2010 to 606 in 2012, which is a 10.1 per cent increase. Likewise, mental health inpatient admissions rose from 205 in 2010 to 263 in 2012, which is a 28 per cent increase. The increase in admissions adds to activity pressure at the hospital and adds to concerns regarding patient safety. These figures all point to the need for a dedicated mental health facility in Geraldton to service the city and midwest. I would welcome the minister visiting Geraldton to see the situation firsthand.

MS A.R. MITCHELL (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary) [9.57 am]: I thank the member for Geraldton for this grievance, because obviously it is a concern to people in the midwest region. He is absolutely correct; the midwest region is a very large area of land. It also does not have great population centres. It has Geraldton, but there is some distance between centres and travelling is not always easy. We understand the dilemma that the major hospital at Geraldton is facing. However, I would like to outline that people within that region have really

quite a fantastic service. That is no disrespect to what the member is asking for, but I acknowledge that through the Central West Mental Health Service there is a comprehensive range of community mental health services for assessment, support and treatment within the region. They are locally based in the region. As the member mentioned, it is very, very important to try to keep many of these services locally based. It is also very important that we use as many intervention programs as we can so that we use fewer acute beds, rather than having more acute beds and fewer intervention programs.

Within the Central West Mental Health Service, clinical staff are located in four centres already. They are in Geraldton, Meekatharra, Carnarvon and Exmouth. I have figures that show that in 2010–11 more than 1 600 people with mental illness who live in the region accessed this service. That is a credit to that service, because I can imagine it is not an easy service to deliver. Travelling around that region and getting people to commit to their appointments and meet with people would not be easy, so I acknowledge the wonderful work that those people working in that area do. Their aim, of course, is to have the majority of people with mental illness living in the community and using a locally accessible mental health service and the other supports in their lives without needing to be admitted to specialist mental health inpatient units.

As the member said, mental health patients can be admitted to general hospitals and that occurs in the midwest region. General hospitals can provide health care and access in-reach mental health consultation services to provide additional expertise and advice if it is required. It is my understanding that in 2009–10, 239 people were treated for mental illness in general hospitals in the midwest region. This resulted in the use of 722 bed days or the equivalent, in Department of Health speak, of two inpatient bed days. Alternatively, if an individual requires specialist mental health inpatient services, they need to travel to metropolitan services. Sometimes that will be in general hospitals or mental health inpatient services. In 2009–10, 102 people from the midwest region transferred to specialist mental health inpatient units in the metropolitan area and a further 46 were transferred to general hospitals in the metropolitan area.

As the member has indicated and as he is aware, specialist mental health inpatient units have recently been established in regional Western Australia. They are in Bunbury, Albany, Kalgoorlie and most recently in Broome, where there are 14 beds. As the population grows and the need for services expands, the government is responding and developing services close to home, including establishing services in regional areas. There is no doubt that there is a need to build a specialist mental health inpatient unit in Geraldton and that should be accessed by residents of the midwest region; we certainly know that. It is such a shame that it was decided not to proceed with that mental health unit originally, but I know that the services are around and people are now working hard to get that in-house mental health inpatient unit in Geraldton provided. As I have said before, the minister is very keen, as we all are, to continue to support the local dedicated mental health service providers because we believe that if we can address the problem early on, we will reduce the need to have acute illness addressed in hospital services. I understand that work that has been done already showed that a specialist mental health inpatient unit of up to 40 beds is required for the region by 2020–21, and that is obviously the work that has been used to frame what it could look like in the future. We also know that the Department of Health has made two submissions to the commonwealth health and hospital fund region priority funding program for capital funding for this. Unfortunately, the department has been unsuccessful, but I know it is continuing to look at other ways of getting the capital funding and of course then working out how it will have its recurrent operational funding through activity-based funding.

As I have said, there is recognition that the midwest is in need of a specialist mental health inpatient unit; it is supported and the concept planning for the unit has commenced already. Those things are in place. We need to get a few other things in line, but that unit would complement what is already there, not take away what is already there, and make sure that our focus is always on intervention and prevention, rather than focusing on always getting to the acute stage. Geraldton has a high level of very skilled non-government agencies providing community support, residential unit care and other support to keep people with a mental illness living successfully in the community. For the member's information the minister and I will meet with the Mayor of Geraldton, Ian Carpenter, on 27 May to discuss a range of issues that relate to mental health and also disability services and child protection for the region. Obviously the subject of a mental facility in Geraldton will be discussed and addressed in this meeting. I thank the member for his grievance to the house.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Appointment of Members — Motion

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Leader of the House) [10.03 am]: I move —

That for the present Parliament —

- (1) the Procedure and Privileges Committee consist of the Speaker and the members for Kalgoorlie, Butler, Midland and Swan Hills;

- (2) the Public Accounts Committee consist of the members for Alfred Cove, Bateman, Belmont, Victoria Park and Cannington;
- (3) the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee consist of the members for Armadale, Balcatta, Collie–Preston, Girrawheen and Morley;
- (4) the Economics and Industry Standing Committee consist of the members for Cockburn, Geraldton, Joondalup, North West Central and Willagee; and
- (5) the Education and Health Standing Committee consist of the members for Eyre, Forrestfield, Hillarys, Mirrabooka and West Swan.

This motion has the effect of establishing the standing committees of the Legislative Assembly. There are five committees to be established: the Procedure and Privileges Committee, the Public Accounts Committee, the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, the Economics and Industry Standing Committee, and the Education and Health Standing Committee. Putting aside the Procedure and Privileges Committee, which is normally chaired by the Speaker, the four other committees deal with policy areas of government. The particular portfolios covered by each committee have been tabled in this house by decision of the Speaker and the portfolios allocated to each committee's coverage are fairly logical. It is proposed by the government that it have a majority on three of these committees and therefore a government member would chair those three committees. It is proposed by the government that the opposition would have a majority on and therefore chair one of the other four committees, that being the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee. Although it is not the subject of this motion, the government has also proposed to the opposition that it chair the proposed Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People and also that it chair one of the Legislative Council standing committees, as it does at the moment, that being the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review. Therefore, the government has proposed that the opposition chair three committees of this Parliament including one of those that we are establishing in the Assembly at the moment.

I acknowledge that is a variation from the situation that existed in the previous Parliament, which was established after the 2008 election, when two of the committees were chaired by government-supporting members, one being a Liberal member and the other an Independent, the member for Alfred Cove. In the last Parliament there were two committees on which the opposition had a majority and therefore chaired. I suspect that the argument may well be put today that that arrangement should continue. It is the government's view that because of a substantial change in the composition of the house, whereby the number of government-supporting members has increased substantially and therefore, by definition, the number of opposition members has decreased substantially, with 38 government-supporting members and 21 opposition members, it is appropriate for some variation to the arrangement that was put in place after the last election. It is important to note that we are proposing as a government a substantial change from the situation that existed up until 2008 election, when it was normally the case that the government would have a majority on all committees of this house. That practice was followed when the Labor Party was in government, as I said, up until the 2008 election, and also when the then coalition was in office until the 2001 election. We acknowledge as a government that it is appropriate for there to be some division of responsibilities and for it not to be the case that the government dominates all of the committees of this Parliament, and that is reflected in our proposal that the opposition chair and have a majority on the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee. It is a significant step forward from the situation that normally applied up until 2008. As I have said, the government also proposes that the opposition chair two other committees, one being the joint standing committee I referred to earlier and the other being one of the standing committees of the Legislative Council. I do not need to go through all of the specific nominations for membership of the committees; they are all outlined in the motion. However, the principle of the composition of the committees is as I have just outlined and I commend this motion to the house.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [10.08 am]: Although the opposition will not be voting against this motion, I want to make the point that the Leader of the House no doubt alluded to in his address; that is, this breaks the word of the government, solemnly given in this house in November 2008, about the way that these committees would operate and their composition, which was acknowledged by the Premier as a permanent change. The Leader of the House can say it is a variation, which is a euphemism if ever I have heard one—"a variation to the arrangement". It is a bit like the Minister for Police saying yesterday that she was "redefining" the promise in relation to a 24/7 police station in Ballajura. This government is expert at euphemisms and a variation is actually a broken promise. That is what a variation is and that is what the government has done. It has broken the commitment it made to the opposition in late 2008 in relation to the composition and chairmanship of the committees of the Parliament. For the information of new members the five standing committees of the lower house are very important bodies and as they go on in this place they will start to realise how important they are. They are one of the main research capacities and an opportunity to examine the various activities of government across the spectrum. Bear in mind that they are wide and varied across this state. The committees are established to undertake research into what is actually going on and what could be

going wrong within government. It is an opportunity for members of Parliament, many of whom have come from very narrow backgrounds, not only to provide an oversight role of the activities of government, but also to broaden their interests in and examinations of the activities of government. It gives that opportunity to the many people who arrive in this place and who have not worked in government before.

The five standing committees of the Parliament created in 1997 were established as a mechanism to provide examination of all sorts of activities of government. Until the end of 2008, the overriding criticism of the standing committees was justified; that is, when there is a government majority on all the standing committees, unless there is a particularly disaffected government member on those committees, they could very well just be rubber stamps for whatever the government does, without proper examination of what goes on within government. That has been the criticism for the past 108 years, since Federation, of any committee of the Parliament that has a government majority. Certainly it was the criticism of the standing committees from 1997, when they were created, until late 2008.

What happened, of course, was that, as members will recall, at the end of 2008 there was some debate about who would form government. A number of members of the house thought that one of the good things that could come from a very close run election with a balance of power held by some Independents and the National Party, would be some bipartisanship, if you like, or some greater scrutiny opportunities for the committees of the house. People such as the then Leader of the Opposition, Eric Ripper; me, as manager of opposition business; the Leader of the National Party; the then member for Bassendean; the member for Kalgoorlie; and a few other members, came together and said that one of the good things that could come from this was that we could follow the example of other Parliaments around the world so that the most important committee of the Parliament, the Public Accounts Committee, would be chaired by a member of the opposition and have an opposition majority. We came together and said that that would be a good outcome of this very close run election in which, for a period, the numbers of the house were uncertain. That outcome was negotiated between all those members and the then Leader of the House, the member for Hillarys. It was debated for a month or so internally inside the parties.

The arrangement agreed upon was that two committees would have an opposition majority, one of which would be the Public Accounts Committee. We nominated the former member for Balcatta, a well-respected member of this place, John Kobelke, to be the chair of the Public Accounts Committee. I think that committee acted in a fairly sensible fashion over those four years, chaired by a very sensible and well-respected member of this place, and it provided an opportunity for scrutiny of government. Whilst this place is always political, I think it did so in a not particularly political manner. That was the outcome agreed between both parties that was signed off by the government and the opposition in November 2008.

What do we see today? We see a breaking of that commitment by the government because the government can do so. We see a breaking of the commitment made by the Premier himself. I will read what the Premier had to say on 13 November 2008 when we agreed upon the arrangement whereby two parliamentary committees would be chaired by the opposition and have a majority of opposition members on them. On 13 November 2008 he said, as recorded in *Hansard* —

It is therefore a good step forward and, like the Leader of the Opposition, as far as I and members on this side of the house are concerned it represents a permanent change to the way in which this house will operate. No matter what the numbers will be in future Parliaments or which party will form government, there will be a sharing of committee positions and chairmanship on an equitable basis across the chamber. That is a desirable result. Although there were some pretty torrid negotiations, I thank members opposite, all members on this side of the house and Independent members for their suggestions and ultimately cooperation in bringing about this result.

The Leader of the National Party then stood and said —

I also endorse the composition of the new committee structure. Without a doubt the Western Australian public reminded us in this chamber during the term of the previous government about the challenges that were presented to them for supporting us in good government. I hope that this almost bipartisan approach to the formation of committees is a step in the right direction at providing better governments.

There are numerous other examples of the Premier saying what a good arrangement it was. The arrangement agreed upon was that two committees would be chaired by the opposition with an opposition majority. Now the Premier is reducing it by 50 per cent. He is halving it and taking out of this arrangement the Public Accounts Committee, the most important accountability committee in the Parliament, perhaps one of the most important accountability bodies in the state. The Premier is breaking his word of four years ago when he said this arrangement of giving the opposition chairmanship and majority on two committees of the Parliament would be a permanent change. I have no doubt he will obfuscate and say, "Oh, this election had a different result; I never actually said exactly two committees, and I am giving you one." He will no doubt say, "That's a fair

arrangement.” I was part of those discussions with members of the government and Independent members of this place, and the agreement was for two committees, one of which was the Public Accounts Committee.

When I spoke to the Leader of the House about these issues some weeks ago, I said, “Look—two committees was the agreement; if you want to make it two committees of the lower house, whichever two of the lower house you wish to make it, I think that would be in the spirit of the agreement.” But that has not come to pass, even though I think that was a fair offer on the opposition’s part. The government can do what it wants; it is the government and has the numbers in the house. The Liberal Party won the election and Labor lost five or so seats. That is all true, but when the Premier stood in the house four years ago and said, “The arrangement that was agreed was a permanent change”, none of that is relevant.

We have a Premier who breaks his word with impunity and gets away with it. We will continue to hold the Premier to account for these things. This is a change for the worse with these committees and the less scope they have to examine the arrangements and the performance of government, it is a lessening of accountability in this state. Whilst the Premier might not like it, oppositions are important. A good opposition is important to the state; it is good and proper that the opposition have an important role in Parliament and an important role on the committees. Allowing one out of four committees to have opposition control and removing opposition control from the most important committee is a backward step. We have seen where other Parliaments around the world have an arrangement of the likes of what I am talking about, and it is good for the Parliament, good for the state, good for accountability, good for the government and good for the individual members of Parliament who are involved. Once again, the Premier is breaking his word to the house. He misled the house in late 2008 when he made that promise to the people of Western Australia. He is breaking his word with impunity once again on an important matter of accountability.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland) [10.19 am]: The Leader of the Opposition has summed up the situation. A variation to an agreement when that variation is not agreed to by the other party to the agreement is clearly a broken promise. Back in 2008, the Premier said that the committee positions and chairmanships would be a permanent change. I consider that this step for the Public Accounts Committee takes us backwards to a worse situation than any we have been in during the whole time I have been a member of Parliament. I think that this is the first time a clear majority of three Liberal members has been appointed to that committee, although I stand to be corrected if there is an exception. During my earlier years in Parliament, the Public Accounts Committee always comprised a National Party member and two Liberal and two Labor Party members. That was the general agreement. Some members may remember that Max Trenorden chaired that committee. I shared an office with Larry Graham, who was also on the Public Accounts Committee. Over the years, Larry and other people have talked about the importance of the Parliament as a check on the executive government. It is the Parliament’s job to scrutinise the actions of the executive government. For the committee system to work properly, there must be proper scrutiny. If a Liberal majority is put on an important accountability mechanism such as the Public Accounts Committee, we are doing the Western Australian community a disservice. The Premier said himself four years ago that there is a strong case to be made for the opposition to chair the Public Accounts Committee. That is what occurs in some other Parliaments in other jurisdictions. It is my understanding that the standing orders of the Legislative Council provide for a non-government majority on its Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations. That requirement is not in our standing orders but I think that would be worth bringing on for debate. That way we could have a permanent arrangement. Maybe we were a little slow off the mark the last time, but I think that should have occurred in 2008. Rather than taking the Premier at his word then, we should have taken the next step and insisted that the standing orders be amended to provide a non-government majority on the Public Accounts Committee so that we could build into our democratic parliamentary system in this place a permanent accountability mechanism that could not be changed at the whim of the Premier of the day. I signal that I believe that is worth bringing on for debate at some stage.

I note also that the Premier and the Leader of the National Party talked about taking a bipartisan approach to the committees and sharing the main committee positions. Setting aside the Procedure and Privileges Committee, which comprises the Speaker, Deputy Speaker and generally two members of the opposition and one other member of the government, the Leader of the House noted that effectively there are four substantial committees of this house—the Public Accounts Committee and the three policy or portfolio-based committees. I note the general formula for the Procedure and Privileges Committee, which has one National Party member, two Liberal Party members and two Labor Party members. I think that committee is appropriately formed. The government of the day has the Speaker and the other positions fall the way I mentioned. As the Leader of the Opposition said, if the government and opposition were to share the responsibilities for the other committees, the government would have a majority on two of them, the opposition would have a majority on two of them and the government and opposition would chair two each. Throwing into the mix the fact that the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations in the upper house will be chaired by someone from the Labor Party is not really a progression at all because traditionally that committee has been chaired by someone from the opposition party, so that takes us nowhere.

As I said, I think this is a step backwards for the Public Accounts Committee because that committee used to comprise a member of the National Party and two members from the Liberal and Labor Parties. When the Public Accounts Committee was chaired by a member such as Hon Max Trenorden, we knew that it did a robust job on behalf of the Parliament. In the previous Parliament, as the Leader of the Opposition said, Hon John Kobelke chaired the Public Accounts Committee and I think that committee did a good, robust job. I do not think there can be any claim that the Labor Party abused its position or misused that committee. There is no good reason for the government to turn around and say that it has changed its mind since 2008 because of the way the committee operated or that it ended up with an adverse outcome because of the way the Labor Party chaired it, because it did not. It operated responsibly.

This is a sad day for the Premier and the Western Australian Parliament. Firstly, because the Premier has broken his word and, secondly, because now that he has such a significant majority he is not prepared to support what he was prepared to support back in 2008. Suddenly he says it is a matter of winner takes all and that the government will give us whatever positions the government sees fit. We are told it is a major step forward for us to chair one of the four substantial committees of this house. Yes, it is true that the government has the numbers and could deny us even that. That is an option. However, it would make a complete mockery of what the Premier said in 2008 if he went down that path and held one view when he won government by the skin of his teeth but held another view when he achieved a substantial majority. Anyone looking at this objectively and at what is the best outcome for democracy and the proper scrutiny of the executive government would see the advantage in having the opposition chair and hold a majority on the Public Accounts Committee. For many years, the Liberal and National Parties were not in a coalition in this house and the National Party has, at various stages, operated more independently of the Liberal Party than it currently does. That meant there was robust scrutiny over many years when the National Party had the opportunity to chair the Public Accounts Committee in the past.

This is a big step backwards today and I do not think it is in the interests of the people of Western Australia. Good government is also about good opposition and the proper operation of the Parliament of Western Australia, and in particular the Assembly chamber. I am very disappointed in the Premier's attitude. He has been a member of this house for a long time and has professed to support this institution as the place for the robust scrutiny of the executive government. I think he has diminished that scrutiny by providing for a Liberal Party majority on the Public Accounts Committee.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Leader of the House) [10.28 am] — in reply: I thank the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Midland for their contributions. The points they made are understandable and I am not surprised that they put those arguments.

The government has made a decision, after quite a lot of discussion and consideration, about what it considers to be the most appropriate arrangement, which is the arrangement I have put forward as Leader of the House. We expect that the members of the Public Accounts Committee, and indeed all committees, whether they be government or opposition members, will do their job professionally and act as proper committees of this Parliament. They are not representatives of the executive at all. If there are issues that fairly and reasonably should be inquired into and exposed, whether they be actions of the government or matters in the wider community, we expect the committees will do their job. Members of the government and members of the executive may not be comfortable with that at all times, but from my point of view, which should be the attitude of all other ministers as well, we have a responsibility to do our jobs as ministers and members of the executive professionally, ethically and properly; and if we are not going to act in such a manner, we should expect our actions and decisions to be inquired into, whether by a parliamentary committee or some other body. We expect the committees to do their job professionally. My experience, having been a member of a number of parliamentary committees in the past, is that members work together cooperatively and in a collaborative manner most of the time, and I certainly expect that approach to continue. It is not just a matter of having members of the government and members of the opposition divide in a certain manner; generally speaking, as members of a committee they operate in a collaborative and cooperative manner and do their job as the Parliament expects them to do it.

The member for Midland made a reasonable point about the composition of the Public Accounts Committee, and perhaps we can consider that for the future.

Mr M. McGowan: What do you mean by that?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: In future, when considering the composition of committees that can be considered. The members proposed from the government side on the Public Accounts Committee are the members for Alfred Cove, Bateman and Belmont, all of whom have substantial experience in different areas of their working life and other aspects of their life. Incidentally, the government intends that the member for Alfred Cove will be the chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and of course the opposition will nominate the deputy chair. The member for Alfred Cove has had executive experience at a senior level in business.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: None of the three you have nominated have any experience in the Parliament.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: From my experience in the Parliament, most of us learn pretty quickly and I think all of those members have been here over the last two and a half weeks of the sitting and have probably learnt a lot in that time.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: It is unusual for the Public Accounts Committee, which is a senior committee, not to have one experienced person from your party on it.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I am sure that the members for Victoria Park and Cannington will play an important role in bringing them along, if that is necessary; but I am sure they are all very quick learners.

In relation to the other committees, it is the government's intention that the member for Geraldton chair the Economics and Industry Standing Committee and the member for Eyre chair the Education and Health Standing Committee; and, as I mentioned earlier, it is up to the opposition to nominate the chair of the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, who I presume is intended to be the member for Girrawheen. Would that be right?

Mr F.M. Logan: Yes.

Mr J.H.D. DAY: The government will support the member for Girrawheen being chair of that committee.

As I said, I thank the Leader of the Opposition and member for Midland for their contributions. It was a reasonable debate. This is a big step forward from the situation that applied prior to the 2008 election, when it was routine practice that the government dominated all committees of this house. That will not be the case from this point on, and from comments made by the Leader of the Opposition, both today and in the debate after the 2008 election, I expect that it will not be the situation ever again in the future for the government side to dominate all of the committees of the Assembly. Once again, I thank members for their contributions and consideration of those issues.

Question put and passed.

PARLIAMENTARY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Appointment of Members — Motion

On motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

- (1) That for the present session, the Parliamentary Services Committee consists of the Speaker and the members for Cockburn, Girrawheen, Perth, South Perth and Willagee.
- (2) That the Legislative Council be acquainted accordingly.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION

Appointment — Motion

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Leader of the House) [10.33 am]: It is necessary to move this motion because, as it says on the notice paper, we need to request the Legislative Council to agree to a similar resolution. Once both houses have made that decision, we can then proceed to nominate members of the committee. We cannot do that until both houses have agreed to establish the committee. I move —

- (1) That for the present Parliament, in accordance with Legislative Assembly standing orders 288 to 292, a Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission be appointed by the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.
- (2) That the Legislative Assembly requests the Legislative Council to agree to a similar resolution.

Question put and passed.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Appointment — Motion

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Leader of the House) [10.35 am]: I move —

- (1) That for the present Parliament —
 - (a) pursuant to section 51 of the Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006, a Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People be appointed by the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council;
 - (b) the joint standing committee shall comprise two members appointed by the Legislative Assembly and two members appointed by the Legislative Council;
 - (c) it is the function of the joint standing committee to —

- (i) monitor, review and report to Parliament on the exercise of the functions of the Commissioner for Children and Young People;
- (ii) examine annual and other reports of the commissioner; and
- (iii) consult regularly with the commissioner;
- (d) a report of the joint standing committee will be presented to the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council by members of the joint standing committee nominated by it for that purpose; and
- (e) the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly relating to standing and select committees will be followed as far as they can be applied.

(2) That the Legislative Assembly requests the Legislative Council to agree to a similar resolution.

This motion relates to establishing the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People. This motion is similar in effect to the previous motion on the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, except that because the establishment of this committee is not provided for in the standing orders, it is necessary to express a lot more detail in the motion to establish the committee, which is required under section 51 of the Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006. Similar to the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, once the Legislative Council has agreed to a resolution, it will be possible for us to make a decision about appointing specific members to the committee.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland) [10.36 am]: I have a couple of points to make here. Firstly, I note that the Leader of the House has said that this committee is not provided for in the standing orders. I understand this committee is required by legislation, so I wonder whether or not it would be appropriate to incorporate this committee in some way into standing orders in the future. Secondly, I note that in his earlier comments the Leader of the House indicated that this is a committee that the government had said it would welcome the opposition chairing, and I signal we will be nominating the member for Maylands and, as per that agreement with government, we anticipate she would be the chair of it.

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Leader of the House) [10.38 am] — in reply: I thank the member for Midland for providing that information. In relation to the government's nominee from the Assembly, we will be nominating the member for Perth for this committee. I support what the member said about the government's intention that the opposition has the responsibility for chairing this committee. That is certainly the government's intention and we will support that. In relation to the previous motion on the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission, it is the intention of the government to nominate the member for Churchlands as the government's nominee from the Assembly for that committee.

Question put and passed.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II MEDICAL CENTRE AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Dr K.D. Hames (Minister for Health)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Minister for Health.

Second Reading

DR K.D. HAMES (Dawesville — Minister for Health) [10.39 am]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

A government member interjected.

Dr K.D. HAMES: I was asked to do this, but I would much rather have had someone else do it, and I am surprised that the minister did not do the same! I was waiting to be told that I had been demoted and that he had been put in my place because of his friendship with the Premier!

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.

This bill seeks to amend the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre Act 1966, following a review of the act in accordance with section 21. The amendments are to enhance the governance to support the increasingly complex role of the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre Trust to operate in a more flexible and responsive manner, given the current ongoing and proposed development on the site. It is important that trust members can meet through the most efficient and effective means, in order to ensure that development on the site is not delayed and,

additionally, that health services continue to improve and to meet the public's expectations in this rapidly evolving area.

New state-of-the-art hospitals and facilities are planned and are being constructed on the site to meet the future healthcare needs of the public of Western Australia. This government is committed to the following major developments on the site. Construction works completed or underway include: the new children's hospital, to be completed in 2015, incorporating an integrated health research centre; the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research, with a completion date expected in 2013; the PathWest facility, which was completed in April 2013; the Comprehensive Cancer Centre, which is now completed; a multideck car park with 5 100 car parking bays, which is being completed in stages, with stages 1a and 1b already opened, providing an additional 1 500 car parking bays; a Ronald McDonald House, which is to be completed at the same time as the new children's hospital; the Neurosciences Research Institute, which is in the design stage; and the expansion and improvement of facilities at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, which will include a new mental health unit.

The bill also comprises the following amendments. Firstly, the trust is established under the act and is composed of five members. A quorum of the trust is currently prescribed as four members; it is intended that three members will comprise a quorum. Members are sometimes unable to attend meetings due to illness or other commitments such as travel. This change will enable the trust to continue to make decisions when only three members are present at a meeting.

Secondly, to assist the trust to operate more efficiently it is intended that members will not be required to hold all meetings face to face. Meetings could be held remotely by electronic means or by telephone, and resolutions could be made without holding a meeting. Written resolutions of the trust could be agreed by signing or other written methods, as if they had been passed at a meeting of the trust.

Thirdly, it is intended that eligible members of the trust will be remunerated in accordance with a recommendation from the Public Sector Commissioner, determined by the minister. This is standard practice for all government boards and committees, where a statutory provision provides for sitting fees and allowances.

Lastly, it is intended to increase the maximum penalty rate and modified penalty rate to \$200. The penalty rate would be up to \$200 and be prescribed in the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre (Delegated Site) By-laws 1986. The penalty rate is currently set at \$50, which is not considered to be a deterrent for offences such as vandalism. All amendments to the by-laws would be scrutinised by the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation.

The main aim of the amendments is to ensure that patients and the public can continue to access world-class facilities on the site by enabling trust members more flexibility in performing the functions required of them under the act. The increase in the general and modified penalty rates is to deter persons who would cause, amongst other things, damage or injury to persons on the site. The bill was previously introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Parliament on 13 September 2012 and second read; the bill lapsed due to the proroguing of Parliament because of the state election on 9 March 2013. I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms S.F. McGurk**.

HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2013

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Dr K.D. Hames (Minister for Health)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

Second Reading

DR K.D. HAMES (Dawesville — Minister for Health) [10.45 am]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

These amendments to the Hospitals and Health Services Act 1927 are the first tranche of legislative changes that WA Health is undertaking to enable Western Australia to take full advantage of the National Health Reform Agreement. The National Health Reform Agreement aims to improve patient access to services and public hospital efficiency through activity-based funding and the establishment of a number of agencies, such as the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority and the National Health Performance Authority, and the establishment of local health networks. The decision of the state government was not to establish local health networks but to streamline the structures presently in existence within the public health system to take advantage of federal government funding and improve local accountability and responsiveness.

In August 2011, cabinet endorsed the creation of new health service boards to replace the existing legal and employing structures of the Metropolitan Health Service and the WA Country Health Service. Four new health service boards will replace the existing administrative area health services and will be known as North Metropolitan Health Service, South Metropolitan Health Service, Child and Adolescent Health Service and WA Country Health Service.

The creation of these four legal entities will occur in June 2014; however, in researching the creation of these four independent health services, it became clear that the increase in the number of entities from two to four would disadvantage staff and increase the administrative workload. Currently, hospital and health service staff are employed by the MHS in the metropolitan area and by WACHS in regional areas. Hospital and health service staff regularly move between hospital facilities. The volume of relocations is estimated to be in excess of 2 000 hospital and health service employees each year. Where staff move between country and metropolitan locations, they will be terminated from one employer—for example, the MHS—and re-employed by another—for example, WACHS—resulting in additional human resources processing, the reissue of employment contracts and taxation forms, and production of multiple payment summaries.

The amendments in this bill allow for the creation of a single employing agency that will ensure convenience and flexibility for staff working across and with the four public health service entities, as well as reducing administrative workloads of the present HR shared service. These amendments will enable WA Health staff to be employed by the State Health Service Agency Board and work in any of the state's public hospital facilities without a break in service in the move to the new health service structure, and into the future. The legislation aims to provide legal surety by clarifying the minister's powers to create an agency for such a purpose, defining a number of terms associated with setting up the State Health Service Agency, the roles the hospital boards may perform and the delegation necessary, as well as the impact of the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 on staff working within a health service while employed by a separate agency.

As stated earlier, the bill is about providing legal surety and ensuring that staff are not disadvantaged by the formal restructure Western Australia is undertaking to comply with the National Health Reform Agreement. The majority of hospitals and health service staff will be unaware of their change of status from either the MHS or WACHS to that of the State Health Service Agency; their entitlements will remain the same.

Pursuant to Legislative Council 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 this bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms S.F. McGurk**.

STATE AGREEMENTS LEGISLATION REPEAL BILL 2013

Second Reading

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier) [10.50 am]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

The purpose of this bill is to ratify an act to repeal various state agreement acts, and for consequential and related purposes. Once passed by Parliament, the bill will repeal the following obsolete acts relating to state agreements that have been terminated: the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited Agreements (Variation) Act 1980; the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's Integrated Steel Works Agreement Act 1960; the Broken Hill Proprietary Steel Industry Agreement Act 1952; the Iron and Steel (Mid West) Agreement Act 1997; and the Nickel Refinery (Western Mining Corporation Limited) Agreement Act 1968.

To put this bill in context, I will provide some background details on the acts that will be repealed. The Broken Hill Proprietary Steel Industry Agreement Act 1952, the Broken Hill Proprietary Company's Integrated Steel Works Agreement Act 1960 and the Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited Agreements (Variation) Act 1980 relate to two state agreements that established a steel-rolling mill, blast furnace and pig iron mill at Kwinana, as well as iron ore mining operations at Koolyanobbing and Cockatoo Island. The BHP state agreements were terminated through the ratification of the BHP Billiton (Termination of Agreements) Agreement Act 2005 because the Kwinana operations had ceased, and the Koolyanobbing and Cockatoo Island iron ore mines were operating under general laws of the land.

The Iron and Steel (Mid West) Agreement Act 1997 relates to a state agreement that was negotiated to facilitate the establishment of iron ore mines and an iron and steel plant in the midwest region of Western Australia. The iron and steel agreement was determined by agreement between the parties in 2002.

The nickel refinery state agreement was terminated through the ratification of the Nickel Refinery (BHP Billiton Nickel West Pty Ltd) (Termination of Agreements) Agreement Act 2008 because it had achieved its development aims, the company had met its obligations for further processing and it was no longer mining nickel in the Kambalda region. BHP Billiton Nickel West continues to operate the concentrator, smelter and refinery under general laws of the land, and the mineral leases were sold to junior miners, which resulted in the re-opening of a number of mines around Kambalda. As a consequence of repealing the nickel refinery act, an amendment is required to be made to the definition of "principal agreement" in the 2008 termination agreement

so that it does not refer to the nickel refinery act. The consequential amendment deletes the definition of “principal agreement” in section 5(1) of the 2008 termination agreement and inserts —

principal agreement has the meaning given to the term *the Principal Agreement* in Recital A to the scheduled agreement;

This bill is consistent with the government’s commitment to remove obsolete acts in Western Australia. I commend the bill to the house.

Declaration as Urgent

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier) [10.52 am]: In accordance with standing order 168(2), I move —

That the bill be considered an urgent bill.

By way of explanation, this bill was introduced into Parliament last year. It did not complete its passage through this house but we have started the process again rather than simply reinstate the bill. The bill simply repeals obsolete state agreements. No doubt there will be some debate but there is no real policy component to this. I would hope that members opposite support this motion. I understand that the opposition would not want to debate this bill immediately but it would allow us to debate the bill next week and that would allow time for a renewed briefing for members opposite if they so wish.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Can I confirm that whilst a bill in identical form was introduced, it was never debated in the chamber?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It got to the second reading stage.

Mr W.J. Johnston: The Premier second read it but there was no debate on the floor of the chamber.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: That is correct. It will no doubt engender some debate about resources projects and the like. If members of the opposition do agree to this motion, we will wait until such time as they have had a briefing and are happy to proceed to the debate, but I do not believe it is necessary to wait for three weeks to debate the repeal bill.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland) [10.54 am]: I note that there was no indication on the daily program that we received today that the government intended to declare the State Agreements Legislation Repeal Bill 2013 urgent. This is an indication of the shambles that the government is in. Given that this bill was introduced into Parliament last year, why on earth could we not have been advised on the opening day of Parliament that this was something the government wanted to bring on? Why in that first week that we sat did the government not introduce this bill into the house and lay it on the table? If the government had done that, we would have been put on notice some three weeks ago and there would be no need to declare this bill urgent.

This motion smacks of total incompetency. This is a government without a legislative agenda. It failed to introduce other legislation and failed to get legislation ready that it should have had ready, such as the legislation to give workers’ compensation to firefighters, an issue on which the opposition introduced a bill into this house last year. The government said it supported it. Now 12 months later it is saying that it is expediting that legislation. No doubt it is expediting it now but it has taken a whole year. It has not got organised and brought it into this house. When Parliament resumed sitting three weeks ago, the government had an opportunity to outline the legislative agenda and introduce bills. We asked whether it would be reinstating any of the bills. We were told it was a new government and everything would be considered afresh. I assumed that bills would then be introduced either in the same or a different format and would lay on the table for three weeks. There is an argument for the bill to lay on the table for three weeks because, as the Premier has pointed out on previous occasions, there are new members of this house and members who are no longer with us who were in the house last year when this bill was introduced. There are new members on the Premier’s side of the house and on our side of the house who were not here when this bill was introduced last year.

I am not sure how many bills were on the notice paper when Parliament was prorogued but I am guessing that it was more than 20 bills. Given that the Premier said that we are starting afresh, I do not think any of the new members would have a clue which bills the Premier would bring on. If this state agreement repeal legislation is so important, why was it not concluded last year? If it is genuinely so urgent that it needs to be declared urgent now, why did the Premier not know that three weeks ago and why did he not give notice of this bill in the first week that Parliament sat this year?

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is not urgent in that sense but it is a pretty trivial piece of legislation that I think the Parliament could deal with.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: This is about filling the parliamentary sitting days over the next couple of weeks because the government does not have other legislation ready to go. The Premier has pretty much clarified that. It is not that this is urgent in and of itself; it is just that this house has little government business before it. This is

a bit of business that it can bring on and deal with. It is not urgent; it is just a matter of incompetence and mismanagement by a government that has no proper legislative agenda.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington) [10.58 am]: I will not speak for long. I make the observation that the State Agreements Legislation Repeal Bill was introduced in identical form on 8 November last year. There was only one week of sittings after 8 November. I did not seek a briefing from the Department of State Development because I was advised by the Premier that the bill was not coming on for a vote. I have not received a briefing from the government on this matter. If this bill had been debated last year, there would not be a problem declaring it urgent on this occasion, given the nature of the bill. But I do not think it is appropriate to declare it urgent when the opposition has not been briefed on the bill. We have not gone through our usual procedures because, in accordance with our party rules, we cannot vote in favour of legislation without the support of our caucus. It will not be possible for this bill to be considered by the caucus of the Labor Party and dealt with in accordance with our rules in the fashion that is being suggested at the moment. The bill was introduced so late in the legislative program last year that even the government never sought to have the matter debated or voted on. I do not think that is an appropriate course of action. Had the bill been debated, we might be having a different discussion, but given it was never debated I do not think it is appropriate to handle it in the way that is being requested.

Question put and passed.

Second Reading Resumed

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms S.F. McGurk**.

SUPPLY BILL 2013

Second Reading

Resumed from 8 May.

Declaration as Urgent

MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Treasurer) [11.00 am]: In accordance with standing order 168(2), I move —
That the Supply Bill 2013 be considered an urgent bill.

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [11.00 am]: Interestingly, this is the second occasion in recent seconds that we have been asked to deal with a motion to declare a bill an urgent bill, but we had a little notice that this bill would be declared urgent. The reason we have some difficulty with these things is that the ordinary reason for a bill to be declared urgent is so that it can pass because the exigencies of government require it. On the bill that was just debated, which debate I did not participate in but other members did, it was clear that there was no urgency around that legislation. It was being declared urgent merely because the Premier admitted that the government does not have a legislative agenda.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It was the privileges bill.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We dealt with the State Agreements Legislation Repeal Bill 2013.

As the government does not have a legislative agenda, it comes into this place and declares bills urgent outside the ordinary understanding of an urgent bill. The government should have come out of the election and done things properly. It should have come out of the election and had a legislative agenda ready to go. But when we ask questions about the bills that the Premier said were the most important bills that this house could possibly deal with, such as a bill to deal with the issue of prostitution, which the Premier campaigned on relentlessly for four years, he said that that is not necessarily something that the government is going to do anymore. That issue is no longer important. The 59 of us in this chamber in Parliament have been reduced to sitting in this house without any government business to deal with. Why are we here?

Mr C.J. Barnett: Because this government brought the Parliament back quickly, unlike other governments.

Mr M. McGOWAN: It is because the Premier recalled Parliament without an agenda. That is why we are here. This is a government of inertia without an agenda. This is a Premier of inertia without an agenda. Now he has been reduced to bringing forward pieces of legislation that even he says are unimportant but he is declaring them urgent so that members have something to stand and talk about. What sort of governing is that? What sort of management of the Parliament is that? When the government comes out of the election, it comes up with its agenda and it introduces legislation into Parliament so that it can be debated. Parliament is recalled in accordance with the requirements of that legislation. Ordinarily, I would have thought that that is the way that Parliament is run, but not according to year zero here with this Premier. “Year zero” means everything starts again, including the ordinary operation of Parliament.

Now the Supply Bill has been declared urgent. The reason we have the Supply Bill is that the government delayed the budget. It is the government’s call to delay the budget until August, in the midst of a federal election

campaign. We all see through the subterfuge. The government has placed the budget in the midst of a federal election campaign so that it can hide the decisions of the budget. Ordinarily, the budget would be brought down in May, and the government has the numbers to do it, but it has not done that. It is a very strange way to govern the state. We should very shortly be going into the budget debate. That is what this house should be doing; it should be dealing with the budget, not with obscure and strange pieces of legislation the government has introduced because it does not have an agenda. If the government had come out of the election campaign with an agenda, we would be dealing with the budget now. That is what we should be doing, instead of the 59 of us sitting here wondering what we are doing. That is what should be happening.

The Premier seems to have lost the plot in some ways. Today we found that he breaks his word with impunity on committee positions, and he does not answer questions about the dismissal of public servants. The government has introduced strange pieces of legislation that even the Premier admits are unimportant and are not urgent, yet they have been declared urgent. It is a very strange way of governing. So we are all sitting here now, just filling in time because the government does not have an agenda.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [11.05 am]: The Premier made the point a minute ago that he brought Parliament back quickly after the election; he is very proud of the fact that he rushed Parliament back. Unfortunately, he did not think about what members of Parliament were going to do upon our return to the Parliament of Western Australia. The Premier said just a minute ago that the State Agreements Legislation Repeal Bill that he has introduced needs to be declared urgent so that we have something to do for the next few weeks, because at the moment we are starting to run out of things to talk about.

It is not as though the Supply Bill was an enormously complicated bill to draft. It has four clauses and is one page long. I went back and had a look at that bill when the Premier first said that the budget would be delivered in August, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, in the blast zone of the federal election so that any spikes in it may get some very brief coverage. On 3 April the Premier said that the budget would be brought down in August. Parliament came back on 16 April for a week. Nothing happened. Parliamentary draftsmen no doubt spent weeks on end drafting what is an incredibly complicated piece of legislation! We are now back for three weeks, then we will rise for two weeks, and then we will be back on 11 June until 27 June. There is nothing that should mean that this bill should be declared urgent. The bill could lay on the table for three weeks, as standing order 168(1) stipulates, so that members of Parliament can seek input from their constituents and stakeholders. Ultimately, we have another three sitting weeks in June, and no doubt the government is rushing around trying to find something to do in those three weeks. We could deal with the Supply Bill then in the ordinary course as per standing orders. I was not here when the standing orders were drafted, but I can only assume that they were drafted for a reason—for the conduct of the proper passage of legislation and accountability in Western Australia. If there is to be a declaration of urgency pursuant to standing order 168(2), there must be a reason better than “I’m sorry; we’ve got nothing else to talk about.” That is not a reason to declare legislation urgent, particularly when that legislation will authorise some \$7 billion in public spending.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Therefore, it’s an important issue and we should get on with it.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I thank the minister for his interjection. I think that if we are to authorise some \$7.2 billion in public spending, we should go through the proper processes of government. The bill should be laid on the table for three weeks as per the standing orders that have been developed over no doubt centuries to get to where we are now. Why should we breach those standing orders? Why should we allow legislation to be rushed through pursuant to standing order 168? The Premier said that it is because we have nothing else to do. That is not a particularly good reason to deal with what are, I would have thought, fairly important pieces of legislation.

The fact that the government came back to Parliament quickly—the Premier likes to gloat about that—is one thing, but having Parliament actually do something is another. I remember the Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill 2008. Royal Perth Hospital was to be protected under the Liberal government, yet here we are now in 2013 and the legislation has not been passed. It does not look as though it will be reintroduced because it is a new government that has popped onto the scene in the past couple of months. If the government wants bills to be declared urgent, it will have to do much better than simply saying that it is because we have nothing to talk about in Parliament.

Question put and passed.

Second Reading Resumed — Adjournment of Debate

MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle) [11.10 am]: I move —

That the debate be adjourned.

Point of Order

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Madam Acting Speaker, I seek some clarification, if I may, in relation to the application of standing orders to this motion by the member for Fremantle to adjourn the debate. Could you please

illuminate us—or me, because, of course, my knowledge of standing orders is somewhat rusty compared with that of the Leader of the House, who is on top of it all—and let us know when, if indeed we pass this motion and adjourn the debate, we can next visit this important topic?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): If the debate is adjourned, we cannot get back onto debating this bill at all today. The question now is that the debate be adjourned.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman) casting her vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (19)

Ms L.L. Baker
Mr R.H. Cook
Ms J. Farrer
Ms J.M. Freeman
Mr W.J. Johnston

Mr D.J. Kelly
Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Ms S.F. McGurk
Mr M.P. Murray

Mr P. Papalia
Ms M.M. Quirk
Mrs M.H. Roberts
Ms R. Saffioti
Mr C.J. Tallentire

Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr P.B. Watson
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Noes (35)

Mr P. Abetz
Mr F.A. Alban
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr I.M. Britza
Mr T.R. Buswell
Mr G.M. Castrilli
Mr M.J. Cowper
Ms M.J. Davies

Mr J.H.D. Day
Ms W.M. Duncan
Ms E. Evangel
Mr J.M. Francis
Mrs G.J. Godfrey
Mr B.J. Grylls
Dr K.D. Hames
Mrs L.M. Harvey
Mr C.D. Hatton

Mr A.P. Jacob
Mr R.F. Johnson
Mr S.K. L'Estrange
Mr R.S. Love
Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr J.E. McGrath
Mr P.T. Miles
Ms A.R. Mitchell
Mr N.W. Morton

Dr M.D. Nahan
Mr D.C. Nalder
Mr J. Norberger
Mr D.T. Redman
Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr A. Krsticevic (*Teller*)

Pairs

Dr A.D. Buti
Mr J.R. Quigley

Mr V.A. Catania
Dr G.G. Jacobs

Question thus negatived.

Second Reading

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [11.17 am]: I think we are debating the Supply Bill now, Madam Acting Speaker. It is worth reflecting on what has just happened—a tortuous process to get to where I think we were all initially heading. When we came in here this morning, we noted on the green daily program that the Supply Bill was to be declared an urgent bill and therefore would be debated today. That is because, as has already been pointed out, there is nothing else from the government to debate in the Parliament, so the government has rushed the Supply Bill into the Parliament. But then, curiously, the Premier said to the member for Fremantle, “Well, come on, adjourn the debate, or we’ll deal with it right now!” So the member for Fremantle did what she was told by the Premier and jumped to her feet and moved to adjourn the debate, and then confusion reigned. The member for Kalamunda —

Mr M. McGowan: A steel trap!

Mr B.S. WYATT: Yes! The member for Kalamunda then rapidly worked out that something is not right. He is not sitting down the front. I think he should be sitting down the front, from where he can perhaps direct proceedings a bit better than he can from where he is sitting, next to the Minister for Environment. But the member for Kalamunda rapidly worked out that the government does not want to adjourn the debate. The government does not want to adjourn the debate on this bill because that will mean that we will all be home in time for lunch, and that might be a bit awkward for the government because it will not be until next week that we get to deal with the Supply Bill.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Hang on, Premier! I have to reflect on this! Give me the chance to reflect on this! So those heads came together on the government benches and they thought, “If we adjourn the debate, what will happen?” We then had the Treasurer—who is, quite rightly, I think, starting to worry about the progress of the Supply Bill—jump to his feet to seek a point of order from you, Madam Acting Speaker. The Treasurer was wondering about what will happen if we adjourn this debate, as demanded by the Premier, because, as has been pointed out, that will mean that we do not get to debate this bill today and it will go off to next week. When we look at the green, we see that if we do not get to debate the Supply Bill today, we are running out of things to do. So, the Supply Bill—very much so—developed a sense of urgency, and the division ensued. I am assuming that lots of Liberal members of Parliament will be hauled into the Premier’s office for voting against exactly what the Premier demanded in the chamber.

Mr M. McGowan: He voted against it himself.

Mr B.S. WYATT: That is true. The Premier, in a state of confusion, voted against what he demanded take place just a few minutes before.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: How long has he been here?

Mr R.H. Cook: Too long.

Mr B.S. WYATT: A long time; a long time.

Eventually we got to where I think we were supposed to be, and that was the declaration of the Supply Bill as urgent. Despite the objections of the Premier, we are finally here to debate the Supply Bill. When we had that initial short debate over whether it should be declared urgent, I pointed out that the Premier raised the issue of an August budget back on 3 April. Therefore, we have had a long time to get to where we are—that is, the drafting of a very simple, but important, piece of legislation. We came back for a week's sitting on 16 April and saw neither hide nor hair of the legislation. Now it has been introduced this week and declared urgent. Let us not forget that we are back again on 11 June for another three weeks, so the ordinary course of the passage of legislation as set out in the standing orders whereby it lays on the table for three weeks should indeed take place. It will not jeopardise the paying of bills; it will not jeopardise the state's finances. It can go through the normal parliamentary process, and we can still debate and have passage of the legislation, the Supply Bill, through the Parliament. However, as the government does not have anything to do in the Parliament, despite the Premier's keen desire to rush the Parliament back, as he said, because he wants us to look busy, we have to work out a few things about what we are going to debate. So here we are now with the Supply Bill.

It is an interesting bill. This is the first time we have had one of these bills since 2001—since the last time a budget was delayed. The Leader of the Opposition has already pointed out that clearly the reason why the budget has been delayed to August is to get it nice and close to the federal election, so any spikes that may appear in this budget perhaps will not get the attention they deserve because, of course, the attention of Australians will be on the federal election campaign that will be taking place at that time. Further, the 2001 delay of the budget was because there was a change of government. The then coalition government lost the election, and the incoming new Labor government delayed that budget. That has not taken place now; the government continues. Therefore, the argument about why the budget should be delayed is clearly all around political purposes alone. I note that the Treasurer in his second reading speech made the following point —

An August budget will allow time for ministers to critically look at the spending of each of our departments. By considering all existing policies, each minister can then prioritise with the aim of delivering programs more effectively and implementing new election commitments.

That certainly did not require the delay of the budget through to August.

We have now a Supply Bill. As I said, it is a simple bill that provides the supply of some \$7.942 billion, made up of \$6.75 billion by way of recurrent spending and \$1.2 billion capital spending for the three months, I think, through to the end of September, when we expect the actual budget to pass through the Parliament. As I said, it is not a complicated bill. It is simply calculated on the basis of 40 per cent of the previous appropriation, and that calculation is made in terms of both recurrent and capital spending for approval by and passage through the Parliament.

What is interesting for me and for the opposition to note is the fact that the stand-alone bill gives a general monetary limit. It does not stipulate how much will be going to the Department of Education, how much will be going to the Department of Health et cetera; it simply has 40 per cent of the entire previous budget, recurrent and capital, allocated in a general pool, for the Treasurer to allocate as he sees fit. I assume what will then take place are discussions between the Department of Treasury and the various departments. That will then allow the Treasurer to simply allocate moneys to those departments pursuant to those agreements. This is something that will no doubt come up during consideration in detail regarding the details of when the Parliament will be informed, how much each department is allocated, how that process takes place, and then, ultimately, at the end of —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Member, for your information, that will be at the time of the budget.

Mr B.S. WYATT: That will be at the time of the budget. So, at the time of the budget, we will get a separate listing of how much each department —

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, because the money that this authorises being spent will effectively be moneys that are covered by the budget and the appropriation bills.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I understand that, but when the budget comes down in August, we will have, as we always have, the appropriation for, say, the Department of Education. There must be a separate line item that will say, "This is how much has already been allocated to that department pursuant to the Supply Bill."

Mr T.R. Buswell: I wouldn't imagine so.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Why not?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Because, effectively, the budget papers will detail the appropriations for each of the agencies, and this money would be a subset of that total appropriation.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Yes; okay. Let us say it is \$4 billion for the Department of Health; right?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Yes.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Ultimately, out of this \$6 billion for recurrent purposes, a reasonable-sized amount will go to the Department of Health. There must be a separate accounting so that the opposition, at the very least, can see how much of the current Supply Bill is going to the various departments.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I would have to get some more advice, but I do not think that is the case.

Mr B.S. WYATT: It would not be hard to provide that information. Am I correct? Is that what is happening now; that is, there is an agreement between the Department of Treasury and the various departments on this Supply Bill? At the moment we have a general pot of money being authorised for the Treasurer to allocate; right?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Appropriation; yes.

Mr B.S. WYATT: How will the Treasurer make those decisions on how much each department is provided? I assume there will be an agreement process between the Department of Treasury and each department.

Mr T.R. Buswell: For the interim period, however long that transpires to be—let's say the budget gets through in August–September—I imagine that, outside any other decisions by government, it would be a roll forward of what's in the TIMS system for this year; a business-as-usual-type funding arrangement.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Okay.

Mr T.R. Buswell: But one way you can obtain that information—I don't think Treasury publishes the monthly financials any more —

Mr B.S. WYATT: No, it does not. The Treasurer got rid of it. Does he not remember?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Let's assume the appropriation happens in September; okay?

Mr B.S. WYATT: Yes.

Mr T.R. Buswell: The quarterly results would at least give you an insight into that because they would have July and August. Let me have a chat about it. I am happy to have a look at providing monthlies up to that point, if you want.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I think it would be useful, because presumably what is also taking place—hence the reason for the delay in the budget—is that, because the election has happened, within these figures, which are 40 per cent of last year's appropriation, election commitments will be rolling into there as well. Even though it is 40 per cent of last year's appropriation, there are other spending pressures on each department now.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Yes. There may be other decisions of government that impact on that, but I would have to get some advice—it is a fair question—on the extent to which that is reported, because under the Treasurer's advance, as you know, we have to do the subsequent appropriation bill.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Yes.

Mr T.R. Buswell: My understanding is that if the expenditure is not money that was covered by last year's appropriation, at some point it would have to be reported as part of the Treasurer's advance, because the requirement under the Financial Management Act is that you report through the Treasurer's advance if you are spending money that was not appropriated.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Yes, that is right.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I will get some advice on that. My understanding under the Financial Management Act is that there is no requirement for us to provide an additional report that provides the information sought by the member, if it is covered by the appropriations from last year. I will get more advice on that

Mr B.S. WYATT: While the Treasurer is in a chatty mood, I calculate, using 40 per cent of the previous year's appropriation, that there is already a couple of months under the FMA, so the Treasurer is getting another, say, two months —

Mr T.R. Buswell: The 40 per cent is for the total.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Yes, of the previous year.

Mr T.R. Buswell: Yes.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Why 40 per cent? Is that something that has historically developed?

Mr T.R. Buswell: The assumption is that the budget will get through in September. Let us say that is a quarter—25 per cent. I suppose it is just a bit of additional coverage in case there are any unforeseen delays, so that we do not have to come back and do another one. I asked the same question. One would rationally say perhaps it is 25 per cent, but the advice I was given is we have to have a bit for “unforeseens”. The member is right, there would have to be a mechanism to report back.

Mr B.S. WYATT: That is what I am interested in —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Especially on money that is not covered in last year’s appropriation.

Ms R. Saffioti: I do not think there is an automatic mechanism to report back on the expenditure.

Mr T.R. Buswell: No.

Mr B.S. WYATT: If there is not, that is something that certainly should be done by government. The last time this happened was 2001. The Parliament is giving the Treasurer \$7.9 billion to spend at this moment as he sees fit on things that were spent in the previous appropriation—services et cetera.

Mr T.R. Buswell: But there will still be some scrutiny around that as the appropriation bill is passed for next year as well. I will get more advice on it and get back to the member. I am not after a blank cheque! I would like one.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Can I just clarify: the Treasurer is saying that when the appropriation bill comes in, we will get to clarify what the money has been spent on. Normally, we get that process through estimates before the expenditure happens and now we are not getting it before the expenditure.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I understand that.

Ms R. Saffioti: It is a lot of money.

Mr W.J. Johnston: That is a big difference.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I am assuming there is a reason. I am assuming, whomever the wise heads were who wrote the FMA, that if there is not a requirement for us to report back on this Supply Bill appropriation, which I do not believe there is, there must have been a reason for that. I will find out.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Presumably the only equivalent that will have will be consideration in detail, but we do not have any information.

Mr T.R. Buswell: You won’t get that now. It is a fair question; I will find out. I do not mind; I am happy to provide that information, but I just need to find out through what mechanism we will do that, if indeed there is not already a mechanism.

Ms R. Saffioti: The amount of \$7.9 billion is a bit of cash!

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, it is not; it is actually the money needed. It is just a fact. It is an approximation of the money we will need to pay the bills until the budget goes through.

Mr B.S. WYATT: That is right, but as the member for Cannington pointed out, because it is unusual—this happens very rarely, the last time was 2001 —

Mr T.R. Buswell: I think there is an issue. I think this will actually happen after a lot of elections—the member highlighted the point—especially if there is a change in government. We normally start our budget process in December. That is what we do, so I am assuming. Having a March election does of course—not that we went into campaign mode until the caretaker period started—have an impact on the capacity to do what needs to be done to get a budget ready for May.

Mr B.S. WYATT: In light of the fact we now have fixed terms, the doubt about election dates has been removed; surely this process will need to be made a bit more thorough.

Mr T.R. Buswell: We have to look at it. Even when there is not a change in government —

Mr B.S. WYATT: The Treasurer is saying that is not relevant now because there was not a change in government and yet we still have the delay.

Mr T.R. Buswell: The point I am trying to make is that budget cut-off is a month before the budget. It is not without its challenges.

Mr W.J. Johnston: When I spoke to the then Premier, Geoff Gallop, about when the budget was delayed in 2001, he made the point that he could have had a budget in May, but he described that it would have been a Liberal budget because it would have just been the departments continuing with current procedures.

Ms R. Saffioti: The rollover of existing programs.

Mr W.J. Johnston: It is not that the budget cannot come down in May; it is that a new government wants to have its say. That is why we are confused because it is not a new government.

Mr T.R. Buswell: There are always issues to work through when we have to bed in a range of new commitments and there is a set of existing commitments. That is the point I alluded to in the second reading speech. I do not just want to bolt on a new wave of spending out of the election. We have to fulfil election commitments but we have to look at our current spending program. I suspect it will be an issue at every election.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I suspect the Treasurer is probably right, which makes me think there needs to be, whether it is an amendment through the FMA or some form of circular, a better and more rigorous process about what happens after an election before a late budget, whenever that budget is.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I am happy to look at that. When we are where you are one day, it will be the same issue. It is a fair point. The FMA is up for review, as I understand it.

Ms R. Saffioti: The member for Cannington just reminded me that in 2005 we brought in a May budget even though we had just won the election.

Mr W.J. Johnston: The election was the last week in February.

Ms R. Saffioti: The budget process was basically that all election commitments would be delivered because we wanted to run a tight budget. Anyway, it is quite interesting that you did not take that —

Mr T.R. Buswell: It often happens. It is just one of those things. I do not see it as being the end of the world but it is an issue.

Mr B.S. WYATT: No; all this conversation has been very useful, but now that we have fixed terms we know— unless something unusual happens—with a high degree of certainty when the elections will be. We also know that it is highly likely that whoever wins that election will delay the budget to August or whatever time. This process is now starting to become woefully inadequate because we do not have —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Let us get some more advice about the reporting back, but I am —

Mr B.S. WYATT: At the moment, as far as I am aware, unless the Treasurer gets to his feet and tells me after this advice that there is a better reporting back mechanism that Treasury can give to the Parliament, this is rapidly becoming an inadequate process.

Mr T.R. Buswell: I am not disagreeing with you. I am happy to look at it. The FMA will be reviewed.

Mr B.S. WYATT: When is that being reviewed?

Mr T.R. Buswell: Soon. That is my recollection. One of the best articles written during the whole election campaign was on the back page of the *Western Australia Business News* by Mr Kennedy relating to fixed terms. I thought it was a very interesting article.

Mr B.S. WYATT: I will go back and re-read it. No doubt I read it at the time but can no longer remember! Hopefully Peter Kennedy was talking about —

Mr T.R. Buswell: It was on the table when we had that wonderful debate.

Mr B.S. WYATT: Was it that one? I do not know if I read it. Either way, no doubt I will be able to get a copy of it. Since that debate I note that I have been getting regular copies of the *Business News* in my mail telling me that I had attended a *Business News* event and therefore was entitled to a month of free copy! It was very nice of them.

Mr T.R. Buswell: You didn't have your breakfast; I had it for you!

Mr B.S. WYATT: I didn't have my breakfast, no. The beauty of where I am in life, Treasurer, is that I get up very, very early because of a small child who still has not learnt to sleep. I had had my breakfast before our breakfast!

Mr T.R. Buswell: A path we have all trodden, or most of us!

Mr B.S. WYATT: You have been there, that is right.

I will come back later with some financial questions I want to raise. I will deal with some issues not necessarily related to the state's finances, but the beauty of a general debate is that this is what we can do. In light of the declaration of urgency, the government is relying on the opposition to talk about issues well beyond necessarily the economic brief to keep the discussion on this bill going for quite some time.

Yesterday I had the good fortune to deliver my Address-in-Reply to the Governor's speech. I want to fill out a bit more detail as I ran out of time yesterday. I want to talk about the Carrolup art that Curtin University and Colgate University, in the state of New York, have agreed to return to Western Australia. Those who are familiar with the story around Carrolup, the artists and young children will know that this is a significant agreement

between the Colgate and Curtin Universities. I will read out a very brief part of the Curtin University media release. It will not take long, but I want to put on record the exact history of why that was a significant agreement. I quote from the Curtin University media statement —

Carrolup Native School and Settlement, now known as Marribank, is situated 30 kilometres out of Katanning Western Australia. In 1915 the Settlement was established by the Australian Government to provide education and training for Aboriginal children in accordance with the aims of the assimilation policies under the Aborigines Act of 1905. The Settlement closed in 1922 and its residents were transferred to the Moore River Settlement. In 1940, the Settlement was reopened as a farm training school.

Over its history, Carrolup became home to many Aboriginal children who had been removed from their families, belonging to what is now referred to as Australia's 'stolen generation'.

In 1945 schoolteacher Mr Noel White joined the school as Principal, and it was during 1945 and 1951 the artistic talents of the children flourished.

I do make the point that it was actually only a very small period of time—a six-year window—in which the Carrolup art was produced. It continues —

Children between five years and fourteen years, without any formal instruction, created intricate and unusual designs and stunning landscapes that astounded the art community. The students would wander through the local bush and make sketches of what they saw later recreating them in the classroom. For many of these children, painting was a way of maintaining their Noongar culture and deep connection with the land, after being removed under the Government's assimilation policies.

Through Mrs Florence Rutter, a British patron and major benefactor to the school, the paintings were exhibited in major cities throughout Australia and New Zealand, as well as London, Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow. At the end of the collection's European tour, Mrs Rutter sold the artworks to a major American art collector and dealer, Mr Herbert Mayers.

Speaking to some of the elders who were at Carrolup, the point was made that the art was gifted to Ms Rutter and their view was that it was never intended for her to then onsell that art. There certainly was, very early on, a sense of ownership over that art. It was not meant to be onsold or redistributed. I return to the media statement —

In 1952, Mrs Rutter and Australian writer Mary Durack Miller published a book, 'Child Artists of the Australian Bush', including photographs of the works and artist interviews.

Under the guidance of Mrs Rutter, this remarkable collection received international success; and two of the artist, Parnell Dempster and Revel Cooper became relatively well known artists, though due to the Aborigines Act they were deemed as 'wards of the state' and received no monetary rewards or claims to their work.

In 1951 the Carrolup Native School and Settlement closed down and officially handed over its assets to the Baptist Union, to become the Marribank Farm School.

In 1966 Mr Mayers, a Colgate University alumnus, donated his collection to the university. Mr Mayers passed away in 1991.

For the next four decades, these artworks would become 'lost' to Australia and the world, to be re-discovered in 2004 in storage at Colgate University and fortuitously identified by a Mr Howard Morphy.

At the time Mr Morphy was the Director of the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research at the Australian National University and considered a central figure in the study of Aboriginal art. During a visiting lecture at Colgate, Mr Morphy was invited to their Picker Art Gallery to examine artwork with an Australian connection.

It is utterly incredible that Mr Morphy was in the right place at the right time to identify this art. This is a quote from Mr Morphy in the media release —

"I took the lid off this box and I saw the top drawing, a beautiful pastel drawing, and I immediately thought: Carrolup. It was a Carrolup drawing," said Morphy. "I just leapt for joy. And then I saw that this box was actually full of works on paper, piled on top of each other. So I started to take them out and each one was a Carrolup."

In 2006, the University of Western Australia who had an existing selection of Corralup pieces, partnered with Colgate University in an exhibition called ... (*Children Long Ago*). The Picker and Berndt collections were exhibited ... in Katanning and ... at the University of Western Australia as part of the 2006 Perth International Arts Festival.

I think it was then that Carrolup art became more broadly identified around the Perth and Western Australian community. The release continues —

Since their discovery, the artwork and the Katanning region have been visited and studied by students from Colgate University.

A number of representatives from Colgate University came out to Western Australia and had gone down to Katanning before attending the ceremony at Curtin University yesterday to sign the memorandum of agreement. The main person from Colgate, Douglas Hicks, the dean of the faculty, gave a wonderful presentation. It is clear that over the past 10 years a very good relationship has developed between Colgate University and Curtin University, and now the Noongar elders, in respect of the art. Students have been coming out to Katanning to study the art and also the country. The elder who was there yesterday, Angus Wallam, gave a wonderful speech, as did Ezzard Flowers, about the relationship that had developed. As a result of that memorandum of agreement, 119 pieces of Carrolup art will now come out to Western Australia over the next 12 months. Details are still being negotiated as far as I can tell, but from what was said yesterday, Curtin University will store and show the art, and the art will then be taken around the south west of Western Australia and probably more broadly around Western Australia.

Mr Hicks from Colgate University also brought out, as he called it, a down payment: one beautiful piece of Carrolup art that has already been presented to Curtin University. That is a tremendous outcome for the return of that Carrolup art. It is not just an issue of significance to Noongar people, but also a significant art collection and history of art for Western Australians more broadly.

I want to return to some brief comments I made yesterday about the Browse project. What is next for the Kimberley? I made the point yesterday about the problem of linking Aboriginal economic development with a particular industrial outcome when that industrial outcome, for whatever reason, does not happen. The question in the Kimberley now is very much what is next and what will happen now? An article written by Peter Yu that appeared in *The West Australian* on 16 April outlined that question incredibly well. He made the following point —

The legacy of this fiasco is an Aboriginal community deeply divided and uncertain about their relationship with government and industry.

That is where we are at now. For a long time, the better part of the past decade, the future of the Kimberley and the future of Aboriginal economic development always included the assumption of a significant onshore gas plan, ultimately at James Price Point, but for a long time at a site to be decided upon. As Peter Yu asks, what happens now when there has been a divided, fractious and emotional response from the community to the decision—to be frank—to compulsorily acquire that land at James Price Point? There now needs to be a strong effort by government to bring these various groups back together in some form of dialogue so that discussion can take place around what happens now for the Kimberley. Ultimately the state government's contribution to the benefits package is, I dare say, the sort of thing that governments should and would be spending in the Kimberley in any event over the initially agreed 20 to 30-year time frame. No doubt that will take place in any event, unless the government is planning to withdraw from the Kimberley, and I do not think that is the case at all. However, there now needs to be a focused dialogue with the Aboriginal people in the Kimberley about what is next, because emotion is still running quite high and there is now great uncertainty.

The other point I made, quoting from Marcia Langton's *Boyer Lectures 2012: The Quiet Revolution: Indigenous People and the Resources Boom*, was my light but fair critique of the response by Australian Greens federal leader, Senator Milne, to the decision by the joint venture partners not to develop an onshore gas facility at James Price Point. To quote Marcia Langton, what is next? I do not think the comments by Senator Milne are particularly helpful. Peter Yu, although not specifically focusing on Senator Milne's comments, made this point —

We should dispel the myth that western style economic development is mutually exclusive from Aboriginal traditional life and values. The old economy based on extractive resource development, horticulture and cattle grazing can coexist and support the emerging Aboriginal cultural economy.

I quoted from Marcia Langton's *Boyer Lectures* yesterday in which she makes that point: that we cannot adopt the idea of having one but not the other. In *Boyer Lectures*—which I commend to anybody who cares to read the lectures—Marcia Langton refers to the fact that since the Mabo decision and the commencement of the federal Native Title Act, Aboriginal participation in Australia's and Western Australia's economy has been quite significant. We spend a lot of time discussing Aboriginal people who are not yet participating, but there has been a quite demographic change in Aboriginal people and the emergence very much of an Aboriginal middle class, which Marcia Langton talks about. I note the member for Kwinana is nodding his head in my general direction. This change highlights the importance of resolving native title claims in a speedy and timely manner. This is not just a matter of resolving land ownership and native title, which are obviously very important to traditional owners, but after that what can happen is that those Aboriginal people can be given a right—admittedly a right to

negotiate, not to veto—to negotiate economic outcomes for development that may be occurring on their land. Two weeks ago, I went out to well 6 on the Canning Stock Route as part of the Birriliburu Indigenous protected area declaration. It was a tremendous day. A big mob came out from Wiluna, and it is not an easy trip to get there from Wiluna; there was a convoy of about 30 or 40 four-wheel drive vehicles and a bus to get everybody out there—a huge turnout. An area of 6.6 million hectares of country has been declared an Indigenous protected area, which is very much a gift, if members like, from those Aboriginal people—as native title has already been recognised—to the nation’s conservation estate. Passing through country out there at the moment is utterly glorious because Aboriginal rangers have been working, and several designated native title services and the Department of Agriculture and Food have been very much focused on removing camels, horses and other animals that cause so much damage to country, so the country is looking fantastic. I think that the development of IPAs by the federal government has gone largely unnoticed, but it certainly is becoming a very significant gift by Aboriginal people of traditional country to the nation’s conservation estate. But it also shows that if any Western Australian or Australian had any concerns or felt any threat about the acknowledgement of native title—certainly when the Native Title Act was making its way through federal Parliament it was the subject of fierce debate and high emotions—that concern should now be gone. Ultimately, the recognition of native title is to everybody’s benefit, not just that of traditional owners. People may recall that Eric Ripper, before he retired from Parliament, on 14 November last year—it might have been his final speech to the Parliament; if not, it was very close to—made the point that we should set a target or aspire to, if members like, resolve all native title claims by the thirtieth anniversary of the Mabo decision in 2022. I think not only is that a worthy aspiration, but also it should be taken up in this Parliament. It is an aspiration that will clearly, if we want to achieve it, require a lot more resources and effort from government. But, ultimately, the point I make is that resolving native title is not just to the benefit of traditional owners; it is in everybody’s interests to have native title resolved.

The story of native title in Western Australia, despite such an appalling beginning when the Native Title Act was going through the federal Parliament, has now been, I think, one of our state’s great success stories. I make that point reflecting on the effort Eric Ripper went to when he was minister with responsibility for native title. When reflecting on his parliamentary career, no doubt Eric will particularly recall his eight years as Treasurer, but I think he speaks with more pride about his time as minister with responsibility for native title than the pride he feels for his strong stewardship of the state economy during his time as Treasurer. I think we have the opportunity to make that decision and focus on 2022—that way we take it beyond a four-year electoral cycle—and, hopefully, then move to resolving all outstanding native title issues in Western Australia. I certainly think that if any state can do that and any state has the right to do that, it is Western Australia.

I would like to make one other point in respect of Aboriginal affairs in my capacity as shadow minister. I do not know the detail of where the negotiations currently are in respect of the Single Noongar Claim and the offer made by the state government, but when the offer was first made, I wrote a piece for *The West Australian* about it and why it is significant, and why I think we can and should, hopefully, resolve the Noongar claims with the state government. I make that point as a person who has no say or role in making that decision, and ultimately that offer from the state government may be rejected. There seems to be a focus, not necessarily from Aboriginal people but from the broader community, on the size of that offer, where the land is that is being swapped and the money being paid. When I speak with some of the older Noongar men and women in the south west of Western Australia, Noongar country, I find that there is a sense of a lack of ownership or a lack of involvement in the government structure of the south west of Western Australia. I say this without having completely finalised my thoughts on the matter, but the government is looking at local government reform and I think there is an opportunity there, if the government really wants to resolve the Noongar claim. If it is going to seriously consider local government reform—I assume it is; we have not heard whether it is on the agenda post-election, but I assume that is still taking place—and if we are to have new boundaries for local government in the Perth metropolitan area, maybe the government wants to think about how it will go about ensuring that there is Aboriginal Noongar representation on those councils. There is a real opportunity now, assuming the government is still committed to its local government reform package, to do that. By that I mean that we do not have a set spot for which only Aboriginal people can vote, but consideration may be given to a council position on local government that is for a Noongar person and it still goes through a voting process with every member of the community who wants to vote. I think we will find that it is those sorts of initiatives that bring Aboriginal people into the government structure and the decision-making structure. That will carry much more weight and remove the debate from simply being around the size of the benefits package being offered. I emphasise the fact that that is also important, but it is always these other enabling processes that people are much more interested in for the long-term future of the Noongar nation.

I move on to the issue of housing. I am sorry the Minister for Housing is not in the chamber at the moment. The week before last there was a murder in my electorate just behind my office. It took place at a small Department of Housing apartment block with eight tenancies. Before Madam Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman) tries to sit me down, I will not reflect on anything that may involve people who may or may not have been involved in that tragic murder. Certainly that block of tenancies has caused the local community no end of consternation. I make

this point: I am very proud of having public housing in my electorate. Public housing is underwritten by the support of the community to continue public housing and I am always worried when we see people of influence, members of Parliament in particular, railing against the density of public housing. Maintaining that community support for public housing in our state is more about ensuring that people who live around public housing have their concerns dealt with quickly and efficiently.

My view is that the department needs to get much more strategic in how it allocates tenancies to people, particularly when we have a lot of tenancies in one building with people living close together. A great example is Brownlie Towers in my electorate. Anyone who has been to Brownlie Towers knows the size of Brownlie Towers. The Treasurer is nodding his head at me. It is a large complex. We do not do that anymore. We do not create those sort of 1960s-style, high-rise apartments in which we put thousands of people. When I first became the member for Victoria Park, antisocial behaviour and crime was occupying most of my time and my local police's time. The department made the decision that maybe we should not put kids on the seventh floor in an apartment with one room. It is curious now, but maybe we should not do that—my kids would be just as awful—or kids will participate in antisocial behaviour. Let us put in Brownlie Towers older couples and people with no children. We saw significant investment led by former Minister for Housing Tom Stephens and the then Premier and member for Victoria Park, Geoff Gallop, as millions of dollars go into —

Mr T.R. Buswell: That was a long time ago—Tom Stephens.

Mr B.S. WYATT: It was some time ago. As the member knows, Treasurer, sometimes these decisions take their time to work their way through.

I think about \$12 million was spent on Brownlie Towers to provide increased security and that, as well as, importantly, that housing policy by Homeswest, had a dramatic impact on the quality of life of those tenants. I am not advocating that we get rid of public tenants. There are ways we can ensure that we maintain our public tenancies while ensuring people have a quality of life, including those people who own their houses privately living in and around public tenancies. The murder took place at the apartment block, which backs on to a large empty car park. It is a huge car park that is the car park for a tavern, a licensed premises in my electorate. I noted that the owner of that tavern complained in the local paper about the behaviour of Department of Housing tenants over a long time. But to be frank, the owner of that tavern also needs to take on some responsibility for the provision of alcohol, because in that empty car park there are regularly fights due to people abusing alcohol and causing no end of trouble. A lot of those people are transient people coming in and out and catching up with people in the block of tenancies where the murder took place. Those licensed premises need to take on an element of responsibility themselves. I note, looking at the Liquor Control Act, that there is very much a strong focus on the public interest.

My office is on the restaurant strip on Albany Highway, Victoria Park, where there are a lot of liquor licensees, from restaurant licensees to tavern licensees to bottle shops. Not that long ago, early this year, a liquor store in my electorate was providing alcohol on credit to some homeless people there. There is a homeless service provider in my electorate. This happened earlier this year; it is not something that happened a long time ago. I wrote to the minister, who forwarded my letter to Barry Sargeant, the director general of Racing, Gaming and Liquor, very quickly. I always find Barry Sargeant very quick to respond. His department did an investigation and I read from the letter I received from Barry Sargeant —

... the licensee confirmed that although he does have regular customers who patronise his business several times during the day, they usually only purchase one or two cans of liquor. The licensee stressed that he would not serve them if they exhibited any signs of drunkenness and he also explained that it was difficult to establish whether persons have addiction issues.

Regarding the third allegation, the licensee confirmed that he has provided credit to 5 of his regular patrons.

This was in January this year. With the greatest respect to the licensee, if someone comes through several times a day putting on credit one or two cans of grog, chances are there is a problem behind that and perhaps that person should not be getting credit on small quantities of liquor that over the course of the day may add up to half a carton of beer. Barry Sargeant was very quick to point out that, pursuant to that licence, the licensee should not be doing that and I think that person was subsequently cautioned not to do so.

I go back to where I began in respect of housing. The problem I have is that that murder took place in an environment where there had been bad behaviour fuelled by, I think, holders of liquor licences who have not been honouring the terms and conditions of their licences. If we look at regional and remote parts of Western Australia where we do impose restrictions, I think there are some holders of liquor licences in the metropolitan area who also have to look at how they conduct themselves and how they serve liquor. The biggest problem is not actually in bars and restaurants; it is those with bottle shop licences who are willing to participate in the sort of behaviour I just went through.

I make a final point on housing. As I said, I am sorry the minister is not in this place, because I wrote to him two weeks ago about a particular house that is causing significant problems and I cannot get a response from him about this issue. Constituents living on the street where the house is located—I will not identify the address—have had no end of trouble with this tenancy. The tenants no longer live in the house. They have since split and moved so that their children are living there—if not living there, certainly using the tenancy. One of my constituents came to my office and he had clearly spent thousands of dollars on a security camera. When he said he had video footage, I was expecting the sort of grainy footage that is sometimes seen on TV, but the footage was crystal clear. It showed the police canine squad raiding his property. He showed me one of the sons, the day before, smashing a Holden V8 car with a crowbar. He showed me a small child in a nappy pushing a pram around by itself, as children do, wandering around on the road unsupervised.

It was extraordinary. At night we could see cab after cab pulling up at the premises. Obviously, drug dealing is going on at this property. I must say that the cars that tend to be parked there are either new V8s—Holdens or Fords; I do not know; I am not a car man—and WRXs. They are cars that carry significant prices. I am sorry the minister is not here. I certainly expect a response from him very soon because those constituents of mine who know what is going on will eventually take that footage to a TV station that will no doubt use it to great effect. I do not want that to take place given the point I made at the beginning about housing. Public housing is always dependent on the support of the broader community and the fact that we are willing to allocate billions of dollars to public housing. I think we need to do that, but we also need to ensure that adequate responses are in place to maintain that support of public housing. I certainly very strongly support public housing in my electorate. The point I made before is that the holders of liquor licences cannot absent themselves from responsibility for some of the behaviour we see in our electorates.

With that I will conclude by coming back to some points I made at the beginning. This Supply Bill is a spending bill. We are giving the Treasurer \$7.9 billion to spend. We do not know how he will spend it or how much money will be going to which department. All we know is that we are giving the Treasurer \$7.9 billion. As we know now from the useful discussion that took place across the chamber between the members for West Swan and Cannington and me, with a fixed-term election, this is likely to be a regular occurrence, regardless of who wins the election. The election will be in March; therefore, the budget will be delayed until later in the year. As I hope happens through the review of the Financial Management Act, which the Treasurer referred to a while ago, we need a much more rigorous process for how we deal with the state's finances between election day and the budget, which, in future parliamentary terms, may even come down as late as September or October. Who knows? We need a better accountability mechanism than simply allocating a global figure of \$7.9 billion—40 per cent of last year's appropriation—to the Treasurer to spend as he sees fit. As discussions across the chamber between the Treasurer and I showed, the Treasurer is not even sure whether, at some point later, there will be an appropriate accounting of how much of that \$7.9 billion is allocated to each government department and agency. To be frank, that is simply not good enough.

When, not long after he became Premier, the Premier created a Minister for Finance, he acknowledged that the state finances were getting more complicated and more sophisticated and required greater transparency and more effort to be put into their accountability. We now need to—I was not aware the FMA was being reviewed—review this process so that the Parliament has a much more effective mechanism to review how this money is spent. I say to my friends on the other side of the chamber, knowing that they may ignore what I say, that going forward to future terms of government, this will be an important mechanism to hold to account governments, be they Labor or Liberal. As I said, this is a spending bill. The government is spending \$7.9 billion but there is nothing in this legislation that tells us where the money is coming from—not one sentence in the bill.

I conclude by reflecting on yesterday's speech by my friend the member for Hillarys, in which he talked about debt. I have been talking about debt for four and a half years but I did not quite get the same media coverage that the member for Hillarys got yesterday in his foray into the world of state debt! The reality is that state debt is \$18 billion and heading towards \$25 billion, even before factoring in the government's election commitments and the reality that delivering on some of those commitments for public transport and the Perth to Darwin highway is dependent upon the federal government gifting the state government \$3 billion. As the member for Hillarys astutely pointed out, debt is becoming an issue. This bill does not deal with the revenue in any way whatsoever. Another reason that we need to have a much more rigorous process to take us from election day through to whenever the budget is brought down later in that year is that ultimately we are authorising the government to spend \$7.9 billion without any estimates process or a review of the state's revenue and where that may be coming from. There is no review of the amount we are authorising today to be borrowed to fund the capital works in particular, which from memory is \$1.2 billion. The debate on this legislation has exposed, I think, something that needs correcting. I do not make this point as a criticism, because it is the first fixed-term election we have had, but obviously a weakness has been exposed in the accountability mechanisms that are in place. The review of the Financial Management Act means we can ensure that a much more rigorous process takes place so that Western Australians can have confidence that we are not just giving the government

\$7.9 billion to spend as it sees fit, that there is an appropriate level of accountability for how that money is spent and that there is a thorough review of how the revenue is to be raised.

MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan) [12.12 pm]: I rise to talk about the Supply Bill 2013 and follow on from the comments made by the member for Victoria Park. This is the first time since 2001 that a supply bill has been required. During the debate with the Treasurer earlier, the member for Cannington referred to the re-election of the Gallop Labor government in 2005 when, despite the election being held on 26 February, the budget was presented on 26 May 2005. One of the key reasons that the budget was able to be put together so quickly was that the budget was pretty much based on election commitments. Unlike this government's election commitments, ours were fully funded and costed, and so it was quite easy to put together a budget using the previous estimates and adding the election commitments. Another key reason was that the budget was in good shape. After the first four years under the stewardship of the former member for Belmont, the budget was in a very good shape in 2005, with strong operating surpluses and debt under control. Expenditure growth, although difficult to maintain, was also under control. After the 2005 election, the government exercised strong budget discipline with a focus on delivering our fully costed and fully funded election commitments and the budget was in great shape. Frankly, the budget was not difficult to deliver at that time.

I contrast that to the current situation. The Supply Bill is necessary not simply because we had a fixed-term election in March and the government cannot introduce a budget bill. We must look at two key points. Firstly, the government's election commitments were not fully funded or costed. As we know, the government faces an approximately \$3 billion funding hole for its key capital works commitments. Secondly, the budget is not in good shape and we are not sure whether the efficiency dividends are being met. Frankly, we do not have that information before us even though last year during the midyear review the government promised to deliver it to Parliament in May. We do not have information on the efficiency dividends and therefore we have no idea whether they have been met. The government's election commitments are not fully costed or funded, expenditure growth is out of control and debt is at record highs. It is no wonder that the government had to delay the budget until August, as was said during the fog of the election campaign, because I expect this will have to be a very tough budget. The government will either not deliver on its promises or have to make significant cuts to maintain the budget in any sort of shape. As the opposition outlined previously, the Supply Bill 2013 will provide for the equivalent of 40 per cent of the 2012–13 budgeted appropriation. I understand that this will allow the government to run into October–November, if needed. However, as the member for Victoria Park outlined, we have had no breakdown of the forecast expenditure for that time, so the Parliament has been asked to approve \$7.9 billion of expenditure, with no idea where that expenditure will be. I know supply bills do not come into this Parliament every year, but in this situation the Premier has called back Parliament and we are sitting here debating the Supply Bill and we have no idea where the \$7.9 billion will be spent. I think it would be realistic, achievable and a necessary outcome by 30 June that the government gives us a breakdown of that \$7.9 billion, by agency. I think that would be appropriate. I understand from a briefing from Treasury that that information will be sorted by 30 June, because, of course, from 1 July agencies need to know how much money they have to spend up until October–November. So, agencies will have to be informed by 30 June of how much they have to go on with until the budget is brought down. I think it is realistic, appropriate and the only accountable thing to do for the government to inform the Parliament by 30 June the exact breakdown of the expenditure of \$7.9 billion. That issue is something that we can possibly pursue through the consideration in detail stage, as \$7.9 billion is a large amount of money and we need to find out exactly where the expenditure will occur.

I will go through a couple of issues in the shadow portfolios of finance and planning, which I hold. I am disappointed that the Minister for Finance is not in this place, because it would be hard for him to reconcile that he is now the highest taxing Minister for Finance in this state's history, given his attitude to tax and his previous role in the Institute of Public Affairs. I look in particular at payroll tax. When I was given the shadow finance portfolio, I went through the information available to look at the growth in tax revenue in particular cases over the past four or five years, in particular payroll tax. It is worth noting that in 2007–08 the payroll tax collection was \$1.936 billion and in 2012–13 it was estimated to be \$3.583 billion, which was an increase of \$1.65 billion over those four years.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It is because of employment and wages growth. That is the reason

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There have been no changes to the threshold or the rates but there have been massive increases in payroll tax collections.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Two years of rebates! You have to praise that and the achievement in employment growth.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There have been massive increases in payroll tax collections.

Mr C.J. Barnett: From a strong economy and strong employment growth!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I am just reading from the "2012–13 Budget Overview", the overview of state taxes document prepared by the Department of Treasury. I am just reading out the facts! There has been a massive increase in collections of \$1.6 billion. Interestingly, in 2007–08 payroll tax represented 33 per cent of the total

tax take, and in 2012–13 it is expected to be 43 per cent of the total tax take. This has come from the Liberal Party that once pledged to abolish payroll tax!

Mr P. Papalia: What was that percentage again?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It has gone from 33 per cent of total tax take in 2007–08 to 43 per cent of the total tax take. Is this the Liberal Party that promised to abolish payroll tax at some stage? It is an interesting approach to payroll tax in this state. I will also talk about the general tax increase to show that this government has enjoyed significant increases in taxation revenue over this time. Again, in 2007–08 the total tax take was \$6.34 billion; in 2012–13, it was more than \$8 billion. That is a significant increase in tax takes.

I want to quickly talk about the payroll tax cuts that were committed to by the government during the election campaign. As I understand it, it works out that the total of the full effect of the tax reduction will be about \$60 million per annum, compared with the additional \$1.6 billion the government has taken in payroll tax. As I said, despite the Liberal government's current Minister for Finance having railed against payroll tax when the Labor Party was in government, this government seems to have increased its take at an enormous rate, and as a greater percentage of the total tax take. It is very hard to reconcile these facts with what has been said by both the Liberal Party and the Minister for Finance over recent years.

I will now touch on the issue of planning in relation to land approvals. Again, in taking on this shadow portfolio, I have tried to compare some of the Liberal Party's rhetoric in respect of land approvals under the former Labor government with the reality of the situation. I found a very interesting report that was recently released by the Department of Planning: "Perth and Peel Development Outlook 2011/12". There has been a reduction in land approvals under this government, and there are some land supply issues out there. This report, which was released either today or yesterday, and to which I will refer in a second, warns of an imminent and significant land shortage resulting from insufficient land approvals in the community.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Not sufficient land applications for approval.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Land approvals.

Mr C.J. Barnett: There's a difference.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have read the report and gone through all the stats. Both conditional approvals and final land approvals have actually fallen under this government. It is as simple as that.

I turn now to some of the spin that was put out by the Liberal opposition during the term of the previous Labor government; I remember the whole issue about land shortages and land supply. I checked the government's own Department of Planning report that I referred to earlier, and I want to read from a section that I found particularly interesting. The report states, at pages 52 and 53 —

Based on expert advice from the property industry, Perth was in dwelling equilibrium around 2000. On this basis the cumulative effect of the overbuilding up to June 2006 meant that a dwelling surplus built up over time peaking at over 12,000 dwellings during 2005/06 ... then a dwelling shortage of about 4,000 dwellings by June 2011.

This analysis challenges a view that rising housing prices in the mid-2000s was caused by a shortage of housing as a result of a perceived demand–supply imbalance. Instead, Figure 23 shows that there was a substantial oversupply of housing through most of the decade until the end of 2008 when a massive post-GFC population boom helped to absorb the surplus housing stock.

The conclusion from the analysis shown in Figure 23 is that as at June 2011, the Perth metropolitan region had a housing shortage of around 4,000 dwellings and that this shortage was getting worse by around 550 dwellings per quarter ...

It is an absolute crisis. We are failing the people of Western Australia by not having enough homes for our population. Over the past four and a half years a number of promises and commitments were made—that is, through the Office of Land and Housing Supply, which was introduced in the May 2010 budget. To a subsequent question from the then shadow planning minister, Hon Sally Talbot, about how many people were actually allocated to the new Office of Land and Housing Supply, the answer was that there were no permanent staff.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: None!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: None. In May 2010, the government's cornerstone of addressing land and housing shortage was this new Office of Land and Housing Supply. Then subsequent to —

Several members interjected.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It reminds me of *Yes Minister*—no patients in the hospital! Some six months later, a question was asked: how many staff had been allocated to the office? The answer was no permanent staff. While the office does provide good information, I will point out that it is not doing what it was set out to do—that is, to

ensure that housing approvals are done in a timely manner to ensure there is an availability of land ready when required.

I will again refer to a report I received today, which is very relevant. It states —

Without a further significant lift in the number of lots brought onto the market in Perth, current sales volumes will not be maintained. Analysis of the number of lots on the market, the number of lots committed to be brought onto the market and current sales rates reveals that there is a notional shortfall of 700 lots in Perth and Peel over the next six months.

It is a significant issue that the government has not been taking seriously. As has been previously said, and we have all experienced it in our offices, there are reports from non-government organisations—whether it is from Anglicare or from seniors lobby groups—that show a lack of dwelling stock in the market. I strongly believe there is not enough dwelling stock to meet the significant demand, both by population growth and just by the nature of the WA economy. We need more stock to ensure that prices are not overinflated, and also to give people the opportunity to have a roof over their heads.

Presently I am dealing with a particular situation—I am also sorry that the Minister for Housing is not here. At the moment his job is very tough, but he needs to be proactive to get through what is a crisis situation for many families in Western Australia. We all have these cases before us. For example, I have a mother with six children who tonight may be homeless because of a decision made by the government. I have asked that the matter be deferred—again, I hope the Minister for Housing is watching—and that this mother and her children can stay in her home until she is found reasonable housing. It is a tough situation, but we need to make sure we can do whatever we can to ensure that children are not forced to live on the streets and in cars as we have all seen and experienced.

I have more to say about some of the statistics that I have seen in recent weeks, but from what I have seen, despite the significant criticisms that were made by the then Liberal Party of the previous Labor government, it is clear that this government has not done what it set out to do. There are significant delays at the Western Australian Planning Commission and the Department of Planning. Again, many of us have been informed by councils or private developers that both the WAPC and the Department of Planning are just not staffed enough to be able to progress approvals and statutory plans in a timely way.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: For example, in the City of Swan there has been a draft development contribution plan that has been with the WAPC for a number of years. It creates enormous uncertainty not only for the developers, but for potential developers, landowners and also homebuyers.

Although in some instances the government has some good policies, it actually needs to work on this issue. I believe it is the biggest area of government that the government needs to attend to straightaway to ensure more housing for families and the people of Western Australia. It is just ridiculous that members can stand up and talk about a few hundred homes being committed to or funded by the commonwealth government, but it is actually much more than that. It is about trying to get that stock level up over the next six to 12 months and make a range of housing available so there is affordable housing across the suburbs and across WA.

I want to keep talking about planning issues, more particularly planning issues that relate to my electorate. I refer to the review of the Swan Valley Planning Act 1995. I cannot remember, but I think it commenced about a year and a half ago, with no sense of direction or knowledge of where we were going to end up. Most people have been frustrated by what has gone on and the fact that there is so much uncertainty. When we start a review such as the Swan Valley Planning Act review or the review of the use of the Swan Valley, we really need an idea of where we want to be. A sense of frustration and a bit of hopelessness is creeping into parts of the community about where these things will end up. I hope that the review will come to a conclusion soon and that the proper people are consulted. I do not think it was done in the right manner; I think the consultation process was a little weak. Elected members are not really consulted because the review is done behind closed doors. That is difficult when a lot of people come to me about these issues. We build up a wealth of information over time.

As I said, planning is a hard portfolio as priorities need to be balanced all the time. We need to resolve the uncertainty created over the Swan Valley Planning Act review soon.

Mr J.H.D. Day: You are very welcome to express your views over what should happen in the Swan Valley in here or by other means.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I know.

Mr J.H.D. Day: In terms of consultation, I'm very interested to hear what you think should happen.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I have said it 100 times in this place. If the minister would like proper feedback on the review, I would love to contribute in a proper format. I have said a number of things in this place a number of

times about grape growers, road infrastructure and promoting tourism. I am prepared to sit down and make that contribution.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Did you make a submission?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: No, because we were going to release our policy on it, which we did during the election campaign. I was not going to reveal my whole policy before the election campaign.

I refer to another issue, which I know the minister is aware of. I think he is organising a meeting about a chicken farm in Cheltenham Street in the Swan Valley.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Someone is.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, someone is. He is not organising it with me but with some of the other stakeholders. As I have said before, after picking up the planning portfolio, one of the key issues that is put to me relates to the sterilisation of land through the issue of buffers. I will not touch the issues surrounding pure environmental buffers because that is the responsibility of the shadow Minister for Environment. The debate surrounding issues relating to buffers for agricultural use is very interesting. Something occurred relating to a mushroom buffer in one of the development areas adjacent to the Swan Valley. The interesting play—I do not know what word I could use—by that mushroom farm owner —

Ms J.M. Freeman: Manipulation.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It could be manipulation. I am referring to the conducting of activities that would increase the value of the land—that is, creating more odour on a property to increase the value of the land. I respect property rights but this issue affects multiple residents of the area. Not only does it affect those residents but it also affects the ability for land to be put onto the market. This is particularly the case when these buffer and agricultural use issues occur within a development zone where land is zoned urban deferred and this particular use is smack in the middle. It creates an issue to do with land supply and it then impacts on the purchase price for first home buyers. In debating the value of a piece of land that will become urban deferred and housing for first home buyers, of course the land should be available at an appropriate price, but no-one should be held to ransom over its value because that will affect the purchase price of that land.

Having said that, I come from an orchard background. My family had an orchard in the metropolitan area, so I understand and support having land close to the metropolitan area that is made available for the production of eggs and for use as orchards. However, I also believe that in this era of land shortage, of increasing house costs and the reduced ability of first home buyers to get into the market, we must rethink our planning policies. As I have said before, although there is a statement of planning policy for chicken farms, the Department of Planning should be more proactive in identifying land, either within, close to or outside the metropolitan area, which would have applicable or equivalent environmental issues, and encouraging farmers, and chicken farmers in particular, to move to those areas. This issue is faced across my electorate, because of the type of electorate I have; but other members in this house also face the same issue. We cannot continue to have this stand-off that lasts for years and does nothing to address the land supply issue. It creates aggravation among neighbours and provides enormous uncertainty for chicken and poultry farm owners. It is a matter I want to put on the table.

I also think it is an issue of regulatory failure. I refer in particular to a chicken farm in my electorate that has received a lot of media attention and has gone through the State Administrative Tribunal process. This farm was licensed for only 24 000 chickens but was allowed to operate for a number of years with about 150 000 chickens. My experience of this process is that there has been a regulatory failure and regulatory gaps between agencies and councils. I believe the council allowed this farm to operate well beyond its licence for a number of years, and this raises issues about what role the Department of Agriculture and Food plays in relation to this farm and, in particular, the welfare of the chickens. Although in the previous term the opposition raised the matter of labelling eggs free range, it raises the matter again, because it affects consumers. Ordinary families are paying a premium for free-range eggs in the belief their kids are eating healthier eggs, and so the eggs that they buy should be free range. There should be some certainty in that. I do not believe the farm in question is producing the free-range eggs it is purporting to produce. What is the Department of Agriculture and Food doing? What is the Department of Environmental Protection doing about odour control and pollution? What is it doing about buffers? Is it okay that odour can be at any level in a buffer zone? I do not think so. It is difficult to sort through this maze of regulation, regulatory gaps and oversights. There are also health issues.

These gaps in the regulations have an impact on three fronts. They have an impact on neighbours; they have an impact on consumers who purchase what are supposed to be free-range products; and they have the impact of sterilising land for years. There is no incentive to do things properly; there is only the incentive to increase odour because it increases the value of land. People are willing to buy land at a higher price if there is more activity on the land. It is a complex matter, and the Department of Planning must sort through these issues so that pockets of land are not sterilised against future use for home buyers and have a sustainable use for farmers in the future. I

think we need to support our agricultural industry and the poultry industry, but in such a way that tension is not created, and is not maintained, in outer suburbs, which will blow up in future years.

I want to finish on the housing crisis. I hope the Minister for Housing has heard that a number of people are struggling to find homes in Western Australia. I have put a particular issue before him, and I urge him and his office to reconsider it, because we do not want people with nowhere to go living on the streets. It should not be like that in WA, especially when people have a number of children. I know the Minister for Planning came into the chamber late in the debate. Although much has been said about the issue of land approvals, there is still a lot to be done. I do not believe the Department of Planning is appropriately equipped or has the staff to facilitate land approvals in a systematic way to help meet the massive housing crisis in WA.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [12.40 pm]: I rise to also contribute to the debate on the Supply Bill 2013. As has been mentioned by other speakers, of course this bill deals with the spending of revenue. I would like to focus on a number of pressing issues in my electorate, but I also agree with the comments of the member for West Swan about the housing crisis. I acknowledge it is a very challenging issue for governments, but it has become a more pressing issue as time has gone on with the price of rent in Perth and also the price of land and housing generally. I have a constituent who lives under the bridge near the Canning River in Kelmscott. Thankfully, she has not been living there for the last couple of weeks. As members know, there was a murder along that stretch a few weeks ago. This woman is falling between the cracks. I acknowledge it is a very difficult issue, but I am sure the minister will give much attention to the issue to try to alleviate the crisis. We will never solve the housing crisis, but the crisis we have at the moment can be alleviated, as it is a very severe and significant crisis.

One of the first issues I want to raise is mental health and appropriate mental health services in my area. If people drive along the railway line between Gosnells and Armadale, they will see, unfortunately, a number of monuments to people who have committed suicide. Nine out of 10 times it was a young person. The Minister for Transport is aware of this. There is one public access way between Sherwood station and Armadale station, a distance of no more than two kilometres, where people can walk across the railway line. A constituent who lives near that passageway rang me and complained about the number of youths who had attempted to kill themselves at that intersection. It is an incredibly stressful situation for, of course, the train drivers and the families who are left behind, and it does not seem to be improving; if anything, it is getting worse. Each week as I travel along that stretch of road, another person seems to have taken their life. So it was of great concern that another constituent who works as a nurse in the suicide prevention area came to see me. She is a suicide intervention officer employed by the Armadale Health Service. She has been employed by the Armadale Health Service for six years, and for the last three years she has been a suicide intervention officer. She works at the Eudoria Street Centre in Gosnells. As of May this year, the two half-positions at the Eudoria Street Centre and the Mead Centre, which is the mental health facility in Armadale, were abolished. So we now have the situation that mental health and youth suicide in my area is at an incredibly stressful level. So what does the government do? It removes the suicide intervention officers! Granted, these services are now allegedly being provided by a non-government organisation. However, that NGO is required to cover an even larger area, from Bentley through to Armadale.

Mr P. Papalia: Just like modern policing!

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes, just like modern policing. But the problem is that the suicide intervention officers who were employed by the Department of Health were able to counsel young people who are in immediate danger of suicide. It would appear that the NGO does not have the capacity to deal with the serious issues. How the health department and the government can allow a decrease in the provision of suicide intervention services, when in my area there has been an increase the number of youth suicides, is very hard to grapple with.

Before I move onto some issues with the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, I want to talk a bit about the police station issue, which we of course debated in this place on Tuesday. As members would be aware, a rally on this issue was held in Armadale on Saturday morning. It is interesting that the *Examiner*, which is one of the two local newspapers in my electorate of Armadale, has published a report of the rally. The report quotes the Minister for Police as follows —

Police Minister Liza Harvey did not agree with Mr Buti saying a 24/7 police station would not guarantee more police on the beat in Armadale.

“What will make a difference is the allocation of more resources to the area and indeed the south east metropolitan district has recently had an increase of 10 officers, five of which have been allocated to Armadale,” she said.

It is interesting that the police minister now agrees there should be an increase in the allocation of resources. For the past couple of years, the police minister has been saying that the level of policing in Armadale is sufficient.

Mr P. Papalia: All is sweet in Armadale!

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is right; there is no problem; we do not need any extra police. It is interesting that the police minister says that police stations are not important, when five of the additional 10 officers have been allocated to Armadale. If it is not important, why do they need to go to Armadale?

Alongside that article there is an opinion piece or comment from the Commissioner of Police. Part of that opinion piece states —

Recent calls by some members of the community to have the front counter of the police station open 24/7 will not have any impact on crime.

I am extremely disappointed in the police commissioner, in that he is falling for the same language—I think misleading, if not dishonest, language—that the police minister has been using. The residents of Armadale, Kelmscott, Roleystone, Forrestdale, Byford and Mundijong are not asking for just a 24/7 counter service. The member for Darling Range and the federal member for Canning are not asking for just a 24/7 counter service. What we are asking for—what we are demanding—is a 24/7 district police station. What we are demanding is a proper police station that is fitting of a major regional centre that is growing. I say to the police commissioner and the minister that they should stop being misleading and should stop misrepresenting what the residents of Armadale and the greater Armadale area want. We do not want just a 24/7 counter service; we want a fully formed police station, as there is at Cannington and Fremantle and will soon be in the western suburbs, even though there are police stations 10 kilometres both north and south of the one proposed.

Mr P. Papalia: It's a hotbed of crime in the western suburbs!

Dr A.D. BUTI: Crime in the western suburbs is of such significance that a 24/7 police station is needed, even though the police minister said it is not important. If it is not important to have a 24/7 police station, why build one in the western suburbs?

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 398.]

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING — MILLDALE WAY, MIRRABOOKA

Statement by Member for Mirrabooka

MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka) [12.50 pm]: I would like to respond to the statement made by the Minister for Housing yesterday and in particular I will raise the issue of developing the empty land at lots 60 and 61 Milldale Way in Mirrabooka. The Department of Housing has sat on this land for 50 years while people in the Mirrabooka area struggle with a lack of housing in the region. Despite me raising this issue since September 2008 with both the past and present minister, it remains a large, vacant block of some 16 hectares in a time of great and growing need. The recent release of the Anglicare report on rental affordability illustrates the housing crisis that this government has failed to address. Private rental vacancy rates sit at below 1.2 per cent. In his statement yesterday, the minister indicated that there were 7 600 new affordable housing opportunities. What does this mean? What the people of WA need to know is how many houses have been built that deliver real prospects of housing for the more than 20 000 people sitting on the eight-year-long waiting list or the more than 3 000 desperate families waiting 132 weeks on the priority list. This is happening when there is unprecedented demand in the private rental market. Perth recorded a 22 per cent increase in private rental prices over the past year. The Perth median rent of \$470 does not illustrate the real cost of high private rent and the need for permanent housing solutions for families in the Mirrabooka area. The Department of Housing has used the land at Milldale Way to make its balance sheet look better, but, as a consequence, the Mirrabooka region has suffered. The Department of Housing needs to get on and tell the people of Mirrabooka what it intends for this site. The stories of the housing crisis that the Premier acknowledged at a meeting in Mirrabooka during the election and then denied on SBS television are heartbreaking, and the state government has to act.

FORRESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Statement by Member for Forrestfield

MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield) [12.51 pm]: On Wednesday, 3 April 2013, I held the official declaration for my electorate at Forrestfield Primary School. The school is situated in the heart of the Forrestfield electorate. The declaration fit well with the school's current focus on Parliament and government. Indeed, many of the year 7 students will be visiting Canberra later this year. It was of great interest that I spoke to the students about the importance of our democracy and, furthermore, the importance of making their vote count. The young people of today are the custodians of our robust democracy. They need to engage with the political process so that they are aware of how important their action is in this process.

I am most grateful to the principal, Diane Greenaway, and the many staff who welcomed me to the school so graciously with a whole school assembly followed by a tour of the school and morning tea. Certainly, as a former deputy principal, I appreciate the values, programs and curriculum that are being delivered within this local school. It was encouraging to see the fantastic initiatives that are occurring within the school. One of these

programs and initiatives is the community kitchen garden, which was officially opened by the Minister for Education, Hon Peter Collier, in October last year. This program has gone from strength to strength and is run and maintained through the energy and enthusiasm of the staff and, undeniably, the efforts of the entire local community. Further to this, the school runs a talented and gifted program for visual arts. After personally viewing the artwork, I know that there is great talent abounding within this program, which is most ably run by the art teacher, Mr Rob Gear. I was most fortunate to receive some samples of this artwork, which is proudly displayed within my electorate office. I will conclude by saying that I am most impressed with the energetic, innovative and dedicated staff and community who are working to improve educational outcomes for the students at Forrestfield Primary School.

GOSNELLS — LOCAL HEROES

Statement by Member for Gosnells

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells) [12.53 pm]: I want to pay tribute to a number of people in my electorate—the people who see problems in our community and then set about fixing the situation. These people are rightly described as local heroes. I want to acknowledge Max Davis, who very sadly passed away on Monday. Max was a life member of the Maritime Union of Australia and he never shied away from an opportunity to improve the life of fellow members or members of the broader community. Happily retired, one of Max's most recent campaigns was to fix our footpaths to make them safer for gopher drivers. In great detail, Max helped me to supply the City of Gosnells with maps showing the location of problem crossings so that they could be altered. This will be yet another lasting legacy of Max's contribution to our community.

John Maarssen is another community member who goes out of his way to spot problems and get solutions. Whenever he sees graffiti and rubbish periodically blighting our neighbourhood, he acts to get it removed. He is indefatigable in his efforts.

Improving the amenity of our community for people and wildlife is a priority for my constituent Amanda Gray. She is helping make a water body in Claridge Circle in the Forest Lakes area of Thornlie a delight for local residents and pelicans and is bringing people and wildlife together.

Keeping water features attractive and functional has also been an issue for Wally Ashworth of Gosnells. I thank him for coming to one of my street corner meetings and making me aware of the situation in Prince Regent Boulevard. Keeping an eye out for the amenity of people and wildlife is a most worthy objective. I thank my local heroes for their excellent contributions.

ANZAC COMMEMORATION SERVICE — MELVILLE CITY CLOCK TOWER MEMORIAL

Statement by Member for Bateman

MR M.H. TAYLOR (Bateman) [12.54 pm]: In 1988, the Melville city clock tower was dedicated as a war memorial at an Anzac commemoration service. Since then, commemoration services have been held there each year on the Sunday before Anzac Day. It was my privilege to attend this year's Anzac commemoration service on Sunday, 21 April 2013. I would like to publicly thank the Returned and Services League of Australia WA branch, and in particular the Applecross sub-branch, for organising the event, which was attended by about 150 people on a wet Sunday morning.

The service was attended by special guests whom I wish to acknowledge: state president, Returned and Services League, Mr Graham Edwards, AM; patron, Applecross RSL sub-branch, Mr Wally Holtham; president, Bicton–Palmyra RSL sub-branch, Mr Alan Meyer, AM; secretary, Fremantle city RSL sub-branch, Mr Les Butt; president, Royal Australian Air Force Association, Mr Graeme Bland; deputy commissioner, Department of Veterans' Affairs, Mr Peter King; assistant manager, Army Museum of Western Australia, Captain Wayne Gardiner, who delivered the tribute speech and took the salute; federal member for Tangney, Dr Dennis Jensen, MP; the deputy mayor, City of Melville, Mr Duncan Macphail; Melville city councillor, Mr Clive Robartson, OAM; 703 Squadron, Australian Air Force Cadets, and Flight Officer Nick Dodd; representatives from ex-service organisations and the Red Cross; staff and students from Applecross Senior High School, Melville Senior High School, Kennedy Baptist College and Attadale Primary School; Waylen Bay Sea Scouts; Bull Creek Leeming Friendship Guides; Willetton Sunshine Guides; Town of Victoria Park Brass Band; and One Achord Community Choir.

The Anzac tradition is a defining feature of our Australian story, and I am grateful that we, as a community, genuinely commemorate the courageous sacrifice of all the brave men and women who have paved our way.

BAYSWATER LACROSSE CLUB ERIC SINGLETON — CONDOLENCE

Statement by Member for Maylands

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [12.56 pm]: Bayswater Lacrosse Club was established in 1993. The current president, Glenn Morley, an accomplished Australian player in his own right, worked tirelessly to see the

renovations to the club completed in 2012. Thanks go to the City of Bayswater for supporting this club with its renovations. Congratulations must also go to Carole Bowland, the club manager, not only for all her work last year, but also for her many years of service to the club. In 2012, in addition to completing their renovations at Bayswater Lacrosse Club, the men's team were the 2012 state league premiers, and the men's division 2 team were minor premiers at the grand final. Individual performances at the national championships last year saw Ben Game named as an under-18 all star and also the tournament's most valuable player. Jesse Bowland-Curtis was named the senior men's national all star and most valued player, and Maddy Koelmeyer was the under-16 women's fairest and best player.

Also last year, Bayswater lost its iconic resident, Eric Singleton. He and his son, Peter, established the Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary in Bayswater, which is now a reserve. They are incredibly valuable and unique wetlands. He did extraordinary work to ensure that these wetlands were protected. Eric will be sorely missed by all Bayswater and, indeed, all Western Australian residents.

ANZAC DAY SERVICES — BELMONT

Statement by Member for Belmont

MRS G.J. GODFREY (Belmont) [12.57 pm]: I rise today to take note of the wonderful efforts taken within the Belmont electorate to commemorate this year's Anzac Day. On Friday, 19 April, the Mayor of the City of Belmont, Councillor Phil Marks, and the representative of the RSL, Mrs Olga Greig, OAM, and I attended the Carlisle Primary School Anzac Day memorial service. All the students paid the utmost respect by their good behaviour, and their singing and poetry presentations were excellent. Each class made its own wreath. It was a moving service presented by young people in honour of those who gave their lives in the defence of our country.

On Sunday, 21 April, it was my great honour to give the Anzac Day address at the Belmont War Memorial. In attendance were the president of the City of Belmont RSL, Mr Alan Richardson, and Mrs Richardson; the Mayor of the City of Belmont, Councillor Phil Marks; Mr Steve Irons, MP, member for Swan, and Mrs Irons; and members of the RSL, scouts, guides and the community. The music was provided by the Southern Coastal Pipe Band and the City of Belmont Brass Band, and both did a superb job. Flowers and wreaths were laid at the war memorial.

On 25 April, Anzac Day, we stop as a nation to remember and reflect on the sacrifice of men and women who serve and served our nation in times of war and peace. The City of Belmont RSL is a magnificent organisation that hosted a dawn gunfire breakfast, the success of which is reflected by the growth in attendance each year. I acknowledge the great work being done at the City of Belmont RSL by Mrs Dot Balcombe, the committee and volunteers. Their efforts are ensuring that many more people, young and old, are attending dawn services and honouring the Anzac tradition.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

ELECTRICITY PRICES

87. Mr M. McGOWAN to the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the minister's statement in this house on 18 April this year in which he stated that electricity prices would increase by 2.75 per cent this year.

- (1) Why has the minister increased electricity prices by four per cent when he said it would be 2.75 per cent?
- (2) Given it is now only three weeks since the minister made that promise, how can he explain breaking that guarantee that he made in this house?

Dr M.D. NAHAN replied:

Thanks for the question.

- (1)–(2) The Leader of the Opposition asked me a question three weeks ago which I answered succinctly "Yes". The second question he asked me was, "What is the expected rate of inflation?" The Leader of the Opposition suggested it was 2.75 per cent, and I said "Yes" to that. That is the estimate in the budget. He also asked if the Premier had announced that the rate of increase in electricity prices would be at or about the rate of inflation, and I said "Yes" to that.

The Treasurer announced today that electricity prices would go up by four per cent. That is higher than the estimated rate of inflation, which is 2.75 per cent, but my argument would be that is at or about the rate of inflation.

ELECTRICITY PRICES

88. Mr M. McGOWAN to the Minister for Energy:

I have a supplementary question. Given that the minister said that the price of electricity would go up by 2.75 per cent and it is now going up by four per cent, does the minister concede that he has misled this house and will he now apologise?

Dr M.D. NAHAN replied:

I did not say that.

Several members interjected.

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

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I repeat: the Leader of the Opposition —

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

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

Dr M.D. NAHAN: I repeat: the question that the Leader of the Opposition asked me was, “Did the Premier say during the election —

Mr M. McGowan: No, I didn’t.

Several members interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: The Leader of the Opposition asked me, “Did the Premier say that the electricity price would be at or above the rate of inflation and would the expected rate of inflation be 2.75 per cent?” which I summarily answered “Yes”.

Mr M. McGowan: That is not true.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: Yes, it is true that I said “Yes”. Today the Treasurer announced that the price would go up by four per cent for the 2013–14 year. In my view that is at or about the rate of inflation.

PERTH CITY LINK — GRAHAM FARMER FREEWAY TUNNEL

89. Ms E. EVANGEL to the Minister for Transport:

Before I proceed, I acknowledge the students from Servite College in the public gallery today. They are from the Balcatta electorate, and the member for Balcatta, Chris Hatton, is here with us.

Can the minister please update the house on two of my electorate’s key city projects, being the Perth City Link and the third lane in the Graham Farmer Freeway tunnel?

The SPEAKER: Please sit down. I cannot hear what is going on, member for Albany, so can you please settle down? Has the member for Perth finished her question?

Ms E. EVANGEL: Mr Speaker, yes.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL replied:

I thank the member for Perth for that question, and I join her in acknowledging a group of students in the chamber today from my electorate from MacKillop Catholic College. Welcome, and I hope you enjoy this display of excellent behaviour!

Two incredibly important projects —

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Member for Albany, I congratulate you on your election. We ran a hard campaign against you and you did very well. I was interested to read your comments after the election when you said, “If the Labor Party is to improve, we have to stop preselection of burnt-out union hacks.”

Mr P.B. Watson: Not “burnt-out”.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I am sorry—“union hacks”. Who was the member for Albany referring to?

Mr P.B. Watson: Joe Bullock.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Ha, ha! It was not the member for Bassendean because he told the paper the member for Albany rang him and apologised!

The SPEAKER: Minister!

Point of Order

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: My point of order is that of relevance. This answer bears no relevance to the question asked.

The SPEAKER: Minister, come back to the point, please.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I am sorry, Mr Speaker.

The railway lines, Mr Speaker: I was down there last Sunday —

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The member for Kwinana has got very noisy since his puppetmaster has gotten right behind him, has he not? He does not have to reach as far!

The SPEAKER: Minister, please just address your question.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker.

I was down there at the tunnel last Sunday with Gary Gray, a federal Australian Labor Party member and minister. We were inspecting progress on the railway lines and they are going really well. It is a fantastic project. When members go down there, they will understand the extent to which this project will help to transform the city. An amount of \$360 million is being spent to sink the railway lines, effectively between Perth Arena and the railway station. In addition to that, a project will start soon to demolish and then sink the bus station. In total, the spend on those two projects will be \$610 million; that is, \$335 million from the state, \$236 million from the commonwealth and \$38 million from the City of Perth. The good thing about the project is that it will be finished on time, probably a little early, and it will be delivered on budget. That is a fantastic outcome. It is a fantastic achievement from this government, which is focused on delivering positive outcomes to the people of Perth and more broadly to the people of Western Australia.

I want to reflect very quickly on how that compares with the approach of the former government, the Labor Party, to this same project. I note that in June 2002, almost 11 years ago, Alannah MacTiernan and Geoff Gallop announced that this project would go ahead. They said that it had the potential to achieve two of the great planning outcomes that have eluded modern governments—linking the city to the river, and linking Northbridge to the city. Guess what, Mr Speaker? It has not eluded this government. That was in 2002. In 2005, the same Premier announced the same project and said it would be finished in 2010, which of course it was not. It is now well on the way to being completed by the middle of next year. I thank the member for Perth for the question about the third lane in the tunnel.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: It could have been done by now.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: The member for Midland was too busy trying to work out how much Perth Arena was going to cost. She had no idea what it was going to cost.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: I tell you what: people like it, don't they? It was built to a standard, wasn't it?

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland!

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Built to a standard all right!

The construction of a third lane in the tunnel is a \$57 million project. When that happened —

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: They are not just planning lanes, member for Cannington.

Mr W.J. Johnston: You haven't been through the tunnel.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I have been through the tunnel several times.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Right now, minister, please answer the question and do not get into side conversations with the other side; thank you.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: I am sorry, Mr Speaker, and thank you for that advice.

There are now three lanes in the tunnel. There is now an additional lane as vehicles head north along Mitchell Freeway. That will soon extend through to Hutton Street. It is a fantastic outcome. Of course there were doomsayers. There were people who said it would never work. Who did they include, Mr Speaker? The opposition transport spokesman, Ken "Knuckles" Travers, urged the government on 17 February —

Several members interjected.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I believe the minister knows that that is not the way to reflect on a member of the other house. I call upon him to apologise and withdraw.

The SPEAKER: Minister.

Several members interjected.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. On 17 February —

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, I call you for the first time.

I have taken your point of order, member for Midland. Minister, will you please withdraw those comments refer to the member appropriately.

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Certainly; I do withdraw that.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr T.R. BUSWELL: Ken Travers was who I was referring to, and he urged the government to put the project on hold. A couple of days later he was on the news saying, “It’s a bad decision; the government has to rethink”; you know, “We’re all doomed! We’re all doomed, Captain Mainwaring.” He was like Frazer on *Dad’s Army*—“We’re doomed”! A couple of days later the Leader of the Opposition was saying he could not believe that we were going ahead with this project. Guess what? We have gone ahead with it, it is finished, and every bit of feedback I get is that it has had an incredibly positive outcome.

As I sit down I will just read—I think this is that thing that the opposition uses a lot—Twitter. It reads —

@Perth_Traffic no delays for me at 7:45 westbound tunnel. Usually backed up to the casino, well done!

The people who use that tunnel are damn glad that we have had the foresight to invest in it, and what you see, Mr Speaker, in those two projects is a government that is delivering benefits for Western Australians today and a long-term legacy for the future.

COURT PROCEEDINGS — LIVE STREAMING

90. Mr M. McGOWAN to the Premier:

Premier, I refer to Chief Justice Wayne Martin’s concerns expressed today about the live streaming of court proceedings.

- (1) Does the Premier support his Attorney General in denying the opportunity for the public to see justice in action, including the Rayney appeal?
- (2) Is the Chief Justice correct that the position taken by the Attorney General is “a threat to the independence of the judiciary in this state” and “usurping the role of the judiciary”?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

- (1)–(2) I am aware of the difference of opinion between the Chief Justice and the Attorney General. I think it is a serious issue that should be carefully and properly considered. I guess we have all seen an episode of *Judge Judy* on TV.

Ms M.M. Quirk: The Chief Justice would be pleased to be compared with that!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: No, no —

Mr M. McGowan: Yes, that’s what it’s like!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: And there are examples of screening —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I respect the point of view of the Chief Justice to allow —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: To liken him to Judge Judy? You’re kidding!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: No; to allow people to view proceedings in the court. However, has the opposition given a thought to the position of witnesses, particularly witnesses at threat or who feel threatened or intimidated? Has it given a thought to that?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am happy to answer a question, but I am not going to yell over this mob.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park, I call you to order for the first time. This has now got to the point where we cannot hear the Premier speak, so if you let the Premier answer the question —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, I call you to order for the first time. If you let the Premier speak, the chances are that there will be a supplementary question and we will get through the number of questions that we should in one session.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: So the Chief Justice has put a case for the broadcasting or screening of court cases, as the Chief Justice is entitled to.

Mr J.R. Quigley: As occurs in Victoria!

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

Mr C.J. BARNETT: In response, the Attorney General, to my understanding, has raised two issues, the first being the privacy of witnesses. Yes, it could be argued that the Chief Justice or a justice in a court can make that decision. But there are many people who are victims of crime who will be drawn as witnesses—sometimes family members—who may very well feel intimidated or may very well feel that their privacy is compromised by a broadcast of proceedings. The Attorney General is quite correct in raising that issue.

Mr J.R. Quigley: The Rayney appeal wasn't going to have witnesses; it is being argued on the law.

The SPEAKER: Member for Butler, I call you to order for the third time. I do not want to have to ask you to leave, but if you continue this shouting across the chamber I will ask you to leave.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: With respect to the part of the question that related to the independence of the judiciary, it is not simply a matter of that. The Chief Justice can certainly promote and suggest what he believes would be an advance in court proceedings—that is entirely appropriate—but it is the Attorney General who determines the budget for the justice system. That is the difference.

COURT PROCEEDINGS — LIVE STREAMING

91. **Mr M. McGOWAN to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. Does the Premier accept the advice of the Chief Justice when he says he has put in place appropriate protocols to ensure those concerns the Premier raised are met; and, secondly, will the Premier provide a small amount of money to ensure that this initiative in the interest of openness and accountability can be put in place?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

I have the greatest respect for the Chief Justice. I think he is a very fine person. However, as Premier I will take my advice on this issue from the Attorney General.

MINING REHABILITATION FUND

92. **Ms W.M. DUNCAN to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:**

Can the minister please update the house on how Western Australia is leading the way in reducing the cost liability of abandoned mines to the community?

Mr W.R. MARMION replied:

Another very good question from the member for Kalgoorlie who I know in her electorate has many abandoned mines.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Minds or mines?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Mines—mine shafts. The way the system currently works is that mine rehabilitation is managed by the department through an environmental bond system. Basically, the protection against a company not meeting its rehabilitation responsibilities is tied up in a bank-guaranteed bond. This system has its shortcomings. Firstly, the total amount of bonds represents only 25 per cent of the rehabilitation costs of the mines in operation in WA. Also, they apply only to specific mines, so if there is an abandoned mine, we cannot rehabilitate that. Of course, the obvious shortcoming is that it ties up a lot of capital funds that could be better utilised, as the member for Kalgoorlie would know, in developing mines.

This is a win for reducing red tape, it is a win for mining companies and it is a win for the environment. To improve the system we are introducing a mining rehabilitation fund. The new mining rehabilitation fund will provide a pooled fund, which will be raised through a mining levy, that will be drawn on in the event that operators do not meet their closure and rehabilitation obligations. The new levy does not diminish the

responsibilities of mining companies to meet their environmental obligations. This has been developed in consultation with both industry and environmental groups and has broad support. Through the Mining Rehabilitation Fund Act, which was passed in late 2012, operators from July this year will be able to voluntarily contribute to the scheme 12 months before it becomes compulsory. They will be able to relinquish their bonds and free up that capital for investment in the mining industry.

There has been quite a lot of interest and a lot of mining companies are ready to roll on 1 July this year. But the important thing is that the interest earned on the fund will be available to the state to manage and rehabilitate historic and abandoned mines. This will lead to better community safety and environmental outcomes for the whole state. For the first time in Western Australia a perpetual fund has been established to fund the rehabilitation of historic abandoned mine sites that pose a safety risks to both people and the environment.

COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES — RESIGNATION

93. Mr M. McGOWAN to the Premier:

I refer to the sudden resignation of the Commissioner of Corrective Services, Mr Ian Johnson, who admits to having unfinished business.

- (1) Did the Premier instruct or request any of his staff to inform Public Sector Commissioner Mal Wauchope to initiate discussions to encourage Mr Johnson to resign from his position?
- (2) Is the Premier aware of his personal staff or Mr Conran conducting discussions with Mr Wauchope to hasten Mr Johnson's resignation?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

(1)–(2) I think the Leader of the Opposition asked the same question yesterday. I neither directed nor instructed anyone to initiate discussions between the Public Sector Commissioner and Mr Johnson.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Do members opposite understand? No direction, no instruction.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Answer the question that was asked.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I just answered it in a perfectly straightforward way. No direction, no instruction. Because of the question yesterday, I inquired about the process and let me tell members what happened to the best of my knowledge because I was not involved. To the best of my knowledge it was the Public Sector Commissioner who contacted the minister and suggested that as a new minister he should meet with the Public Sector Commissioner to look at some of the issues within corrective services. I think that is correct, minister?

Mr J.M. Francis: Yes.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: So the Public Sector Commissioner initiated —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr J.M. Francis interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Listen, please. Again —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Mr Speaker, I will address the comments to you, because it is a serious matter and you are a man of the law. It was the Public —

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Listen.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It was the Public Sector Commissioner who initiated a discussion with the newly appointed Minister for Corrective Services. The Public Sector Commissioner initiated that because of some of his concerns about issues within the department.

Mr P.B. Watson: So he makes policy now?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: No, he initiated a discussion. Okay? You got it?

Mr P.B. Watson: Yes, Mr Barnett.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Okay; you got that far.

The SPEAKER: Premier!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: So the Public Sector Commissioner initiated discussions. There was no instruction or direction from me whatsoever and there was no initiation by the minister.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Point two—members need to concentrate—the newly appointed Minister for Corrective Services had a meeting —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: You are just ridiculous.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

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

Mr C.J. BARNETT: A meeting took place between the Public Sector Commissioner and the newly appointed Minister for Corrective Services. At that stage I was unaware of that meeting taking place—totally unaware.

Mr P. Papalia: You said you didn't meet with him.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I did not; the minister did. The Public Sector Commissioner and the minister had a discussion and I understand that the newly appointed minister may also have raised some concerns that he had with that portfolio and the agency. I do not know what concerns he raised, but that is my understanding. Have members opposite got that much? There was then a subsequent meeting between Mr Johnson and the Public Sector Commissioner held on 22 April 2013 and at that meeting, in a discussion between the Public Sector Commissioner and Mr Johnson, with the minister not present and no-one from my office present—I was aware then that discussions were going on—it was agreed between the Public Sector Commissioner and Mr Johnson that Mr Johnson would leave the public sector. That is it. Got it?

COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES — RESIGNATION

94. **Mr M. McGOWAN to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. Premier, there were all these discussions going on between the Public Sector Commissioner and the minister, so whose decision was it to encourage Mr Johnson to resign?

Mr C.J. BARNETT replied:

The discussions with Mr Johnson took place between him and the Public Sector Commissioner. As the minister has said in debate in this chamber, there are some concerns—concerns that I was not fully aware of myself—about the operation of that agency.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Mr Speaker —

The SPEAKER: Premier, just address the Chair.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: A public servant has left. He has left on mutually agreed terms.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: He has left on mutually agreed terms, so he has gone. He served this state well. I thank him for that, but he has left, he has been paid out according to his contract and he has gone. I hate to go back to the past, but I remind members opposite that during Labor's term in government—just remember this—59 senior public servants were given management-initiated redundancies. That is 59 at a cost of \$8 million. I could go through the list, but I will not bother. There were 59 at \$8 million. So why is the opposition crying wolf? The Labor Party's record was abysmal.

SOUTHERN INLAND HEALTH INITIATIVE

95. **Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Regional Development:**

Mr Speaker, my question is to the Minister for Regional Development. Minister —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

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

Mr R.S. LOVE: I understand the government's \$565 million Southern Inland Health Initiative is heavily investing in both the health infrastructure and attracting and retaining health professionals across the southern half of the state. Can the minister please update the house on its progress?

Mr B.J. GRYLLS replied:

I thank the member for Moore for the question, his first question in Parliament. Congratulations on winning the seat in the Legislative Assembly.

Yes, the Southern Inland Health Initiative has been a very important program for the Liberal–National government. At the end of April, 24 GPs had been signed up across the region as part of this initiative. The latest recruits to have signed are doctors located in Toodyay, in the member for Moore’s electorate, and in Narrogin, in the member for Wagin’s electorate. The southern inland catchment area stretches from Kalbarri and Meekatharra in the north to Laverton in the east, down to Esperance in the south. So far, doctors have been signed up in Corrigin, Northam, Moora, Wagin, Lake Grace, Kalbarri, Merredin, Collie, Esperance, Mt Magnet, Narrogin, Dongara, Boddington, Kondinin, Kununoppin and Katanning. There are 19 candidates progressing through their initial assessment and, in the coming weeks, three new recruits are due to start practising in Northam, Yilgarn and Wyalkatchem. That will take the number of new GPs we have attracted to this region to 27.

This has to be contrasted to the time when the Labor Party held the treasury bench, when people could not get a doctor’s appointment in regional Western Australia. Not only could they not get a doctor’s appointment, the plan put forward by then Minister Bob Kucera and, subsequently, Minister Jim McGinty, was that if people could not get a doctor’s appointment the solution was to shut the hospital. If towns could not attract doctors, the plan was to hollow out the whole health system in the southern half of regional WA. I am happy to say, as part of the Liberal–National government, that we have done the exact opposite. We have put in place a plan to attract doctors. As well as that, we have put in place a plan to rebuild —

Mr P.B. Watson: How about putting a few in Albany.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: I am happy to talk about Albany health. I think a \$170 million brand-new hospital has been opened in the member for Albany’s electorate, so I would have thought our record was pretty good. The member for Albany should have asked me the question!

Mr P.B. Watson interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany!

Mr P.B. Watson: He’s talking to me.

The SPEAKER: You started it; stop it.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: These doctors have been targeted through a very substantial recruitment program. We are getting a lot of interest from doctors in the United Kingdom who are interested in coming to WA to live and work in our regional communities under the Southern Inland Health Initiative. Importantly, more than that, we are investing in the infrastructure of health in these regional communities. Major upgrades are planned for the hospitals in Collie, Katanning, Narrogin, Manjimup, Merredin and Northam. They are all set for major upgrades. Enabling works for 36 sites are underway to ensure that the program can progress. That is part of a \$325 million investment into the southern inland health infrastructure system. Given what is happening in Albany and Busselton and across the metropolitan health network in attracting and retaining doctors, Western Australia is going through a revolution in health delivery.

The final thing I will talk about is telehealth. The telehealth program is making an amazing difference to the ability of country communities to link our best emergency doctors to country hospitals so that when a patient turns up at hospital they can get some of the best expert care. There are now 24 sites connected to emergency telehealth, and Kununoppin, in the seat of the member for Central Wheatbelt, has been the latest site to come online and link the doctors and nurses in those regional hospitals to our best medical experts here in Perth. Already through the telehealth program there have been more than 1 900 consults since August last year. Nineteen hundred separate patients have got the best expert advice from the doctors in the metropolitan area out to regional hospitals. We have brought doctors to the regional communities; we are investing in building hospitals and using the latest technology to bring up-to-date, world-class health to regional communities. It is the Southern Inland Health Initiative, and it is what the Liberal–National government means to country Western Australia.

RACING INDUSTRY — HORSE DEATHS

96. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I refer to the death of thoroughbred horse Texan at Ascot Racecourse on 1 January 2013 and the death of thoroughbred horse Ms Funovits at Ascot Racecourse on 20 April 2013.

- (1) How are these incidents being investigated, especially given the claims by the trainers of Ms Funovits that Racing and Wagering WA and Perth Racing were ignoring them following the death of the horse?
- (2) Will the full results of the deceased horses’ autopsies be made publicly available?

Mr T.K. WALDRON replied:

(1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. As a minister in this government and on behalf of Racing and Wagering WA, I can say that all allegations are taken extremely seriously. Maintaining integrity is of the utmost importance to the racing industry generally and, of course, to the hundreds and thousands of people who are employed in the industry and to the people who go to the races, and I want to make sure that continues. Racing and Wagering WA is the industry body that is responsible for ensuring the integrity of racing in Western Australia. It invests considerable resources on the investigative units of the stewards. RWWA spent more than \$6.4 million on stewards and their investigative functions and has recently added another investigative position at a cost of \$200 000. RWWA takes it very, very seriously.

The member for Collie–Preston would have seen the allegations made today—I will comment on that before answering the member’s other question—in an unsigned and unidentified letter. We are taking that extremely seriously. The stewards have done extra investigations on those races but at this stage have found —

Point of Order

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I distinctly heard that the member for Collie–Preston’s question was about the death of two individual horses. He did not ask about the letter that is the subject of the front-page news story today. It appears to me that the minister is reading a prepared answer to the front-page story rather than answering the questions put to him by the member for Collie–Preston, and I suggest that he actually deal with the questions he was asked.

The SPEAKER: Can the minister come back to the point please—succinctly.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr T.K. WALDRON: As I thought I said at the start, all allegations regarding the integrity of racing, which the member for Collie–Preston asked about concerning the death of these horses, are looked into and investigated by RWWA.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Do you know anything about these two horses and what is happening?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: I do. That is what has taken place in this case. I have not seen the full results. It will be up to RWWA to decide what it does or does not make public. RWWA is the body within the racing industry that has the expertise. As the member knows, it is independent. I meet regularly with RWWA and it updates me on these issues. I insist that it follow all those measures very closely because the confidence of the industry relies on that, as the member understands. I will find out what RWWA will disclose on that matter. I understand there are issues that it might not want to disclose.

RACING INDUSTRY — HORSE DEATHS

97. Mr M.P. MURRAY to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I have a supplementary question. Given that these two horses dropped dead on the course within just a few months of each other prior to major races in Perth and given today’s assertion in *The West Australian* that not all is well in WA racing, is the minister willing to instigate an independent investigation into the reasons behind the deaths of those horses?

Mr T.K. WALDRON replied:

No, because I have the utmost confidence that RWWA’s integrity assurance unit, together with the stewards, is a proven system.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr T.K. WALDRON: Member, it is a fair question.

The SPEAKER: Minister, can you address the Chair?

Mr T.K. WALDRON: RWWA regularly refers allegations as a matter of course to the Corruption and Crime Commission if it has strong allegations. I am not sure whether RWWA has done that in this case but I will check and advise the member. One of the worries that I have, wearing my other hat as Minister for Sport and Recreation, is that we are probably behind the game in that area, whereas racing is right out in front of the game. As I said, RWWA refers matters to the CCC when allegations regarding inappropriate behaviour such as that are made. I will check to see whether RWWA has done that and advise the member.

CHILDCARE SERVICES

98. Ms A.R. MITCHELL to the Minister for Community Services:

Can the minister please update the house on the growth in childcare services in Western Australia over the past 12 months and outline examples of excellence in childcare centres in our state?

Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:

I thank the member for the question. Firstly, I wish to place on record that we are fortunate in Western Australia to have a very high standard of childcare services. The sector continues to grow. In the last nine months it has grown by over 10 per cent. It has been keeping up with the growing economy and has kept my department very busy! Through the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education and Care, we are striving for a consistently high level of childcare services throughout Western Australia. Most of the success comes from the work done by the great childcare staff and the committed work they do. Recently I attended the first annual childcare awards held by the Child Care Association of Western Australia. It was a great night to recognise the excellent work these people do for our community. Everyone understands that babies and children need attention, especially in the formative years, to help them grow into role models when they go to school. Childcare centres in Fremantle, Toodyay and Subiaco did very well at the awards. It takes me back to my days as president of my child's playgroup and also the community kindergarten, when I could get involved in those early years. I have empathy for those people who work well in our community with our children. I would like to acknowledge the great work that they do. I would like to acknowledge the Child Care Association of Western Australia and the Department for Communities, which are helping to make our community a stronger and safer environment for the most vulnerable children in our community.

COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES — RESIGNATION

99. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the minister's comments in the house yesterday that he was unable to meet with the former Commissioner of Corrective Services Mr Ian Johnson due to him being on leave, and to diary conflicts, and to the minister's commitment to check the relevant weeks in question.

- (1) As indicated yesterday, will the minister table his diary for the period 15 April to 22 April?
- (2) What efforts did the minister or his office make during that period to schedule a meeting with Mr Johnson for that period?
- (3) Can the minister confirm, as he told Parliament several times yesterday, that he had raised his concerns with the Premier prior to Mr Johnson's sacking?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS replied:

- (1)–(3) Let me start with the dates for which Mr Johnson was on leave. I said that after cabinet was sworn in, Mr Johnson was on leave for about four weeks—28 days. I am sorry; I got it wrong: it was 26 days. I am informed that Mr Johnson was on leave from 8 March until 15 April, and cabinet was sworn in on 21 March. From 21 March to 15 April equals 26 days, which is two days short of four weeks.

Mr P. Papalia: He was back for a week.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I had, in fact, expected to meet Mr Johnson at Karnet Prison Farm.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: No, this is around 15 April. I expected to meet Mr Johnson for the first time at Karnet Prison Farm, and that was in everyone's diary. When I got to Karnet Prison Farm—there is a plaque there with his and my name on it—I asked where the commissioner was, and I was told that he would not be coming.

Mr P. Papalia: What date was that?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: It was Friday, 12 April.

Mr P. Papalia: Were you intending to tell him he was sacked on that day?

The SPEAKER: The member asked a question that contained three parts. Can the minister answer the three parts of the question; and please do not have private conversations across the room.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Thank you, Mr Speaker; I am trying very hard to answer this question.

After cabinet was sworn in and up to 15 April, 26 days elapsed and not 28 days; and if somehow I misled someone over those two days, I am sorry. It is close enough to four weeks for me! What was the other part of your question?

Mr P. Papalia: The first part was —

Will the minister table his diary for the period of 15 April to 22 April?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: No, I will not table my diary.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Has the minister finished answering?

Mr J.M. Francis: I have.

COMMISSIONER OF CORRECTIVE SERVICES — RESIGNATION

100. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Corrective Services:

I have a supplementary question. I will repeat parts of the question —

- (1) What efforts did the minister or his office make during that period to schedule a meeting with Mr Johnson for that period?
- (2) Can the minister confirm—as he said many times yesterday and as is recorded in *Hansard*—that he talked to the Premier and he raised his issues with the Premier? Can the minister confirm that?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS replied:

(1)–(2) It is very simple. I had a conversation—in fact, I can go back to *Hansard* of Tuesday, 7 May, in answer to a question from the Leader of the Opposition. Maybe the member for Warnbro was not listening, so I will read it for him. I stated —

We have a number of different priorities that we want to take the Department of Corrective Services towards. I raised those issues with the Premier and with the Public Sector Commissioner.

WATER — EFFICIENCY MEASURES

101. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Water:

I am aware that the opposition spokesperson for water made some ill-informed comments last week about the successful showerhead swap program coming to an end. Can the minister please explain why this program has ended, and update the house on the success of the government's other water efficiency measures?

Mr D.T. REDMAN replied:

I thank the member for Forrestfield. I know that he is a very strong advocate for water use efficiency in his electorate, as he should be.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: We have had a lot of levity about showerheads; can we get back to the question?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I have little doubt that he, as a very effective backbencher, will keep pressure on this government to ensure that we maintain that level of water use efficiency.

The government has embarked on a showerhead replacement program to replace the old inefficient showerheads with far more efficient ones. In fact, 120 000 of them were rolled out. That program was always destined to be a two-year program, finishing up in April this year. We put up 74 000 showerhead replacements, and at one point it actually ran out early and we added a further 50 000. So, because of the effectiveness of the program, this government made a decision during that period to add a further 50 000 showerhead replacements. Collectively, that adds savings of some 870 million litres per year. The member for Bassendean came straight out and said two things: firstly, he said this is cost cutting by the government and asked why we were stopping; and he also said that we had just had the hottest April in Western Australia's history and asked why we were doing this. I think that shows the ignorance of the opposition on building efficiencies into the community in respect of water use. If we have a program and targets, once we deliver on that program and those targets, we move on and look for other efficiencies that we can put in the program. We have done exactly that. In fact, there have been a number of those, and as I highlighted in some of the media prompted by the member for Bassendean, through the H₂O Assist program, as advertised in *The West Australian*, people can go and get —

Mr P.B. Watson: You stuffed up the prisons department, and now you —

The SPEAKER: Member for Albany, I call you for the first time—and please watch your language in this chamber.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The Water Corporation has been able to secure some very cost-effective deals through which consumers can go and get a number of replacement items for their houses to build the next layer of water use efficiency and save on their household costs. Over the last four years, the government has seen the level of water use reduced by eight per cent. That is a significant saving to the householder and very significant to the challenge of supplying water to consumers in a very dry state.

I want to have a very quick look at the water use efficiency programs we have put in place. We have had the integrated regional water efficiency program, which saves four billion litres of water a year; the Target 60 program, which saves 60 litres per person, per day; the water efficiency management plan, which saved 10 billion litres over three years; the Waterwise council program, supported by 45 councils, saving 11 billion litres —

The SPEAKER: The members for West Swan and Bassendean are having a private conversation. Minister, can you wind up this answer, please.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: There are numerous examples I could go through, but in the interests of expediency I will not go into them. I will say that the Water Corporation achieved an international award in 2012 for the measures that it has put in place. I thank the member for Forrestfield for his advocacy for these sorts of programs, and I am sure that this government will continue driving water use efficiencies within our community.

FLORENCE HUMMERSTON KIOSK

102. Ms M.M. QUIRK to the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the dismantling, storage and proposed re-erection at Elizabeth Quay of the heritage building, Florence Hummerston Kiosk.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that the existing lessee, the Grand Palace restaurant, had more than 20 years remaining on its lease?
- (2) Can the minister confirm that the lessee was paid out of that lease?
- (3) If yes to (2), what amount was the payout?

Mr J.H.D. DAY replied:

- (1)–(3) From my recollection, not all that long ago quite a long lease was granted by the City of Perth to the lessees of the restaurant in the Florence Hummerston building. With the government's decision to go ahead with the Elizabeth Quay project, there was clearly a need to bring that lease to an end. Negotiations were underway. I am not sure whether they had been concluded; they may well have been, but I will seek an update on that. I am not sure what the final settlement amount is but I will also seek information about that. Given that a lease was in place in the Florence Hummerston building —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Will you give that information to the house; that is, the amount?

Mr J.H.D. DAY: I do not see why not. It is information that should be made publicly available. The Florence Hummerston building will be relocated and reconstructed on the island in the Elizabeth Quay inlet. It is an important aspect of the major redevelopment and transformation of that part of the city of Perth.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES — GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT

Matter of Public Interest

THE SPEAKER (Mr M.W. Sutherland) informed the Assembly that he was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the Opposition seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition) [2.46 pm]: I move —

That this house condemns the Barnett government for its mismanagement of the corrective services portfolio.

We have been raising these issues concerning the corrective services portfolio all week and, indeed, prior to this week because major questions have been left unanswered about this very important portfolio in Western Australia. The Premier is now leaving the house even though this matter of public interest is directed at him and we are requesting answers from him. Once again, he does not stay in the chamber and show accountability for the actions of his government. These questions go directly to his integrity. He should come back to the chamber and answer these questions. The fact that he leaves the chamber any time he is under pressure is a poor reflection on him and his courage.

We have spent a whole week raising these issues. We are still none the wiser about the truth of the matter. We do know that the corrective services commissioner, lauded by the Premier as one of the state's best public servants a matter of weeks ago and acknowledged in *The West Australian* as one of the 100 most influential people in Western Australia, dealt with a major portfolio with thousands of employees in a dangerous environment, perhaps as dangerous an environment as we can imagine in any workplace in this state. This person was arbitrarily dismissed by the government. We know that that is what happened. He left the job and then we asked questions about why that took place. Considering his record, his resume and all the plaudits he received, we asked basic questions. We asked why that happened. We also asked all sorts of questions about the performance of the portfolio and the ministers in that portfolio, particularly considering the information that has come to light today in relation to what happened at Banksia Hill Detention Centre and Rangeview Remand Centre and the fact that the government was warned a year ago that that would be the outcome of its own actions. We have seen failures of administration and then failures to account for what has happened to one of the most senior public servants in the state. Then we get all sorts of stories from the minister and the Premier. Today the Premier

deigned to answer a question in question time about this issue. What answer did we get from the Premier? Basically, the answer we got from the Premier is that he had nothing to do with Mr Ian Johnson's departure. His answer today was that it was all news to him and that it occurred between the new Minister for Corrective Services and the Public Sector Commissioner. It was all news to the Premier when it took place; it all happened outside of him. However, when I look at the record of what the minister said in this place on numerous occasions on Tuesday and Wednesday this week, I find that the minister said that he had been discussing the matter with the Premier—he had been raising the issues with the Premier. Yet the Premier denies any knowledge of these matters. He said that these are matters between the minister and the Public Sector Commissioner. If the Public Sector Commissioner decides everything, why do we not have Premier Wauchope in here? Where is Premier Wauchope, because he decides all these things? This Premier slopes his shoulders when it comes to making any of these decisions and apparently does not know anything about the execution of a senior public servant. We saw the minister stand in this place on a few occasions this week and say that he had discussions with the Premier about it. One of them is not telling the truth. The minister said that he discussed it with the Premier, but he said yesterday and the day before that he had a discussion with the Premier and the Public Sector Commissioner and that we needed to ask the minister for public sector management about that.

Mr T.R. Buswell: That's not what he said; you made that up.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, he did; that is what he said.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Minister for Transport!

Mr M. McGOWAN: He said on Tuesday that we needed to ask the minister for public sector management about that. When I asked the minister for public sector management—for new members, that minister is the Premier—what happened, he said that he knew nothing about it; it was the minister and the Public Sector Commissioner. What is the truth of the matter about how and why senior public servants are dismissed in this state? Why has this happened? We are still none the wiser, because two different stories are being put out by the minister and the Premier. I then asked the minister what happened when the Commissioner of Corrective Services was dismissed and he said, "I was not in the room; I have no idea what took place. You need to ask the Premier and the Public Sector Commissioner." The Premier is saying that it was the minister, and the minister is saying that it was the Premier. The truth is somewhere in between. I am sure that Premier Wauchope is the one we need to go to now to get the answer to this important question. We do not know the answer because there are mutterings amongst both of them. The Premier and the minister agree on one thing: there are issues in the department that need to be resolved. But they do not tell us what the issues are. What are the issues? Why have they not come into the house and explained the issues to us? We know one of the significant issues, and that is what happened at Banksia Hill, but the Premier said that that had nothing to do with the dismissal of the Commissioner of Corrective Services. We know one of the issues for which he was not dismissed, but we do not know why he was dismissed. The Premier can define with absolute certainty why he was not dismissed, but he cannot define why he was. That is decisiveness from this Premier! He knows why things do not happen; he just does not know why they do happen.

Why was the commissioner dismissed in the way that he was? That is the simple question that we are asking in this matter. What are the issues inside the department that need to be resolved that caused all this muttering between the minister and the Premier? Come clean on what they are. We know one big issue for which he was not dismissed, and that was the riot at Banksia Hill. But we also know, courtesy of today's *The West Australian* and the good work of the shadow minister, the member for Wambro, that the government and previous ministers were warned that in closing the Rangeview Remand Centre to juveniles, a situation would be created at Banksia Hill that could promote a riot. The government increased the likelihood—because of a report that had been given to the minister—of a riot at Banksia Hill. Yet the person who was sacked was the Commissioner of Corrective Services, not the minister.

So, millions of dollars' worth of damage was caused, there was disruption to the system, and court cases were going on, all because of this riot and the moving of children—broken promises. The minister said that the government would build a new young persons' correctional facility, not move kids out of Rangeview—more broken promises—yet the person who was sacked was someone who had nothing to do with any of those things. The Commissioner of Corrective Services is not the person who broke the government's election promises; the government is the one that did that. The government made the promise in the lead-up to 2008 that it would build a new young persons' correctional facility. By "young persons", I mean persons aged between 18 and 25. The government made the promise that it would do that. However, instead of building that facility, what did the government do? It closed Rangeview to children and put them into Banksia Hill. It then put the 18 to 25-year-olds into Rangeview. What happened then? Rangeview—the newly termed Wandoo—is then only half full, because there are not enough prisoners to be put into that facility. The government no longer has the flexibility that it should have to move prisoners around and perhaps to reconvert Rangeview into a children's facility,

because it has outsourced that facility. All of the incompetence around these things is on the shoulders of the government. It is not on the shoulders of the Commissioner of Corrective Services. The Premier recognised that, because the commissioner was not sacked for that reason; he was sacked for something else, but we do not know what it is. The failures in the corrective services portfolio are the government's failures. The failures at Banksia Hill are the government's failures. The failures at Rangeview are the government's failures. They are not Ian Johnson's failures. Yet, for some reason, he has been made the scapegoat, and there are numerous stories around about why he has been made the scapegoat, but the government will not come clean on what they are.

Further, today we see other issues related to the corrective services portfolio. I think that opening up the court system to more public scrutiny is a good thing. Obviously the Chief Justice of Western Australia, Wayne Martin, thinks that as well. It is not *Judge Judy*. Wayne Martin is not Judge Judy. Trust me. Yet the Premier seems to compare the Chief Justice of Western Australia, Wayne Martin—one of the most eminent judges in the country, and I would have thought a person destined for the High Court, should he choose to do so—to Judge Judy! For goodness sake! What sort of Premier goes out there and does that, even flippantly—perhaps even worse, flippantly? That is what we see in the administration of justice in this state. All the Chief Justice wanted to do, after working for some years on this issue, is make public information more openly available. He has even said that of course there would be strict protocols around the publication of any such trials or proceedings before the court. That is also a correctional services matter. The public has great interest in the courts.

Mr T.R. Buswell: How is it a correctional services matter?

Mr M. McGOWAN: There is great interest in the courts. We see it on Channel 7 every night. Maybe the Treasurer does not watch Channel 7, but a lot of people do, and corrective services —

Mr T.R. Buswell: How is it a correctional services matter?

The SPEAKER: Treasurer, I call you to order for the first time!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I have lost my train of thought here.

Mr T.R. Buswell: That's because you don't have one.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Where was I, Mr Speaker?

Mr T.R. Buswell: You were prattling on about something!

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse!

Mr M. McGOWAN: Corrective services. That is where I was. Yes, it does relate to corrective services, because of course there is great interest in our court system. All the Chief Justice wanted to do was allow people to watch court proceedings more closely; and, if they do that, perhaps there will be a greater understanding of the sentencing principles and the sentencing arrangements put into place in relation to criminals or people convicted of offences in this state.

Maybe that is a good thing because it actually requires a little bit of flexible thinking. But what do we see from this Premier? He accuses it of being a Judge Judy-style arrangement. What a shocking statement from him, but it is typical of a Premier who will not even come into this Parliament and answer the questions that are put to him as part of a matter of public importance. Anyone who was around in those years would know that Geoff Gallop or Alan Carpenter would be in this Parliament answering these questions.

The SPEAKER: The member for Kwinana—Warnbro! That is the fourth time lucky.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro) [3.00 pm]: I rise to support this motion that condemns the Barnett government for its mismanagement of the corrective services portfolio. At the outset, following on from the Leader of the Opposition, I must make the point in response to the Treasurer, who interjected and suggested that no-one in Western Australia was interested in the transparency of the judiciary —

Mr T.R. Buswell: I didn't say that! You made it up!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Well, what was the Treasurer's concern? He said no-one was interested in looking into the court —

Mr T.R. Buswell: No, I said nobody is interested in what the Leader of the Opposition is talking about!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Ah right! The point I wanted to make —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr P. PAPALIA: The point I wanted to make is that I was here during the course of the last Parliament when the previous Attorney General who, on many occasions, with the wholehearted full-throated support of the Premier and other senior ministers, chose to undermine the judiciary of this state. He suggested to the people of

Western Australia that the judiciary did not reflect nor care about public opinion, that it was soft on crime, and that it had to be directed by the Parliament through legislative changes that implemented mandatory sentencing as the means to ensure the judiciary responded to public concerns.

They said that there was no transparency. On many occasions I heard the former Attorney General in the public domain using the media to suggest that judges were out of touch and that they needed to be responsive and transparent. What we saw today was extraordinary—that is, the Chief Justice of Western Australia responding to the concerns of the public of Western Australian by allowing transparency and permitting people to get an education about what actually happens in court. For the sake of some \$50 000, was it? Some \$50 000 —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Many drops fill a bucket!

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is one-eighth of the payout to Mr Johnson, who was sacked and had to be paid out for the remainder of his contract. Mr Johnson was sacked without justification. As we have heard on many occasions from members on this side of the house, it is because of that pre-emptive sacking that he had to be paid out a considerable amount of money, which would have more than adequately funded the Chief Justice's requirement —

Several members interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: For that small amount, the Barnett government has chosen to close down transparency and prevent the people of Western Australian from having the opportunity to witness what goes on in some of our courts. That is just disgraceful.

I will now turn to the motion that refers to the government's mismanagement in the corrective services portfolio. There has been rank mismanagement. I will go into that in a little while, but I will take the opportunity now that I am on my feet to address the new minister and ask whether he has noticed that there has been one scapegoat in the corrective services field recently. Does he think there might be another one getting set to be hung out to dry by the Premier? Has the minister noticed that the Premier completely contradicted the minister's own statement in Parliament on many occasions yesterday and earlier in the week? It happened when the minister informed the house that he had raised the concerns within the corrective services portfolio that led subsequently to the Public Sector Commissioner coming to the decision to sack the director general. The minister raised those issues with the Premier and told the Parliament that he did. The Premier sat over there today and said that the minister had never talked to him about it!

Mr T.R. Buswell: He didn't say that!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Do you sense —

Mr T.R. Buswell: He didn't say that at all!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Is there a chill running up the minister's spine? Are the hairs standing up on the back of the neck? The next thing we know is the Premier will be congratulating the minister on such a good job, and we know what that means!

Several members interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The minister knows what that means! If the Premier stands up and says that he is doing a wonderful job, watch out!

Several members interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: He should have colluded before he stood up in Parliament. It is too late now. They are both on the record as making contradictory statements.

Now I am going to talk a little about the failures of the Barnett government—the mismanagement in the corrective services portfolio. When we are specifically focusing on Banksia Hill Detention Centre and juvenile detention in this state, it is worth going back to 2008; it is worth returning to election commitments—promises that were made by the then opposition, under the leadership of the member for Cottesloe, in the lead-up to the election in 2008. The then opposition promised that, were it elected, it would build a young men's prison. If anyone has a bit of a vague memory—perhaps the minister might want to seek some sage advice—they can seek advice from an individual in the Parliament, because the former police minister, the member for Hillarys, was the one who, in the lead-up to that election, was carrying that entire policy issue. He drafted it. He knows the detail. He knows what the then opposition promised before the election. I would go to him and find out just how big the promise was that members opposite, as a government, broke following the 2008 election when, after they came into office, they determined that they were not going to do what they promised—like a lot of the promises they made at the last election and this one. They decided that, instead of keeping their promise, they would take the cheap option. Instead of building a new young men's prison, in addition to all the other facilities we had, they decided that they would shift remand juvenile detainees from Rangeview Remand Centre over to Banksia Hill—cram them in with the —

Mr T.R. Buswell: Cram them in!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I will explain that terminology in a moment.

They decided they would cram them into Banksia Hill with the sentenced juveniles and undermine all the stability, all the long-term education, all the long-term interventions and all the long-term mentoring programs that went on in that place when it had only sentenced juveniles, which enabled those individuals to have their problems tackled with a view to making them better people when they eventually emerged from that place. They were undermined. The government chose to make that decision. That was not a decision of the commissioner. As the Leader of the Opposition has said, it was a government decision, and it would have gone all the way to the top, because the government chose to outsource the new young men's prison. That would have gone to the cabinet table and the Premier would have decided on that. The Premier would have been sitting there and he would have absolutely been a contributor to that decision. To suggest that it was anyone else's responsibility in the way that the government has—in this underhand way—by sacking the commissioner and not providing an explanation, in the hope that people will attribute blame to him, is just shameless; it is shameful and it is also shameless.

In February 2012, the government was warned by the Inspector of Custodial Services not to do it—he did not say not to do it; he said, “If you close Rangeview, there will be significant, really serious challenges, with shortages of staff and overcrowding at the resultant Banksia Hill complex.” That was from the Inspector of Custodial Services. The union representing the youth custodial officers—those people whose reputation the government has maligned in public this week—warned the government not to do it. It said, “Don't do it. Our members say, ‘Don't do it.’ It won't work and it'll be dangerous for our members.” The government did it anyway. At the time, the opposition was very vocal about not doing it. It advised the government that it was the wrong decision and said not to do it. The government went ahead and did it anyway. As we have seen today, the government was in possession, from its own department, of risk analysis. I assumed there was risk analysis. I asked Heather Harker when I went to Hakea Prison a couple of weeks ago and she was holding my hand walking around Hakea —

Mr J.M. Francis: She was holding your hand!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I was not allowed to go anywhere without a posse of six people from the minister's office and central office.

Mr J.M. Francis interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Not literally; figuratively.

I asked her, “Was there a risk analysis prior to you shutting down Rangeview and shifting all juvenile detainees to the one resultant detention centre?” and she said, “Yes, of course there was.” I said, “Oh, good.” So, I have FOI-ed that. That is not the document that is in the public domain today. The document that was reported on in *The West Australian* today was an internal document looking at the risk associated with potentially shutting down Rangeview before the capital works had been finished at Banksia Hill. I know that the minister will waffle on about how it is not relevant. It is absolutely relevant, because the risks were associated with overcrowding at Banksia Hill, and I can tell the minister that in February this year Banksia Hill was overcrowded. In fact one need go no further than Chief Justice Martin's judgement —

Mr J.M. Francis: In February?

Mr P. PAPALIA: In January this year. When the riot occurred, Banksia Hill was massively overcrowded.

The Chief Justice, in his judgement delivered on 3 May 2013, told the people of Western Australia —

The decision to put Rangeview Remand Centre to another use, and the growth in the number of detainees generally, combined to significantly increase the demand for accommodation at Banksia Hill. During 2009, the average muster was around 90. In 2012, following the closure of Rangeview, the muster at Banksia Hill was, at times, more than double that number.

It did not matter what capital works were done out there, the number of detainees doubled. The number of staff was not doubled. The risk analysis that identified the potential for staff shortages was not taken into account. Five risk areas were identified, but staff levels being inadequate was the one that leapt off the page at me, not just because it was coloured red—most of them were coloured red—but because the likelihood of staff shortages was identified as being almost certain. The consequence was identified as being major. They are both at the top end of the assessments. The risk rating was determined to be extreme. The risks associated with inadequate staffing were extreme should Rangeview be closed and all detainees crammed into Banksia Hill—which happened—and the numbers way in excess of what they were capable of dealing with. The current Minister for Corrective Services was not in the job, I fully accept that, but this government did it anyway.

Forget about the riot, I do not care about that—this risk analysis is not the only risk analysis; I am sure there were others. There must have been a risk analysis that identified the risks associated with shutting one of only

two facilities and shifting all our eggs into one basket, all our juveniles into one facility, and taking the risk at that facility to a critical point of failure, which it subsequently went to. There must have been a risk analysis. If there was not a risk analysis, then that is inept. If there was a risk analysis and the minister still went ahead and did it, despite all those extreme risks being identified, I want to know why and how that came to be. The minister needs to explain. Those juveniles will go from Hakea back to Banksia Hill but nothing will have changed except a few bars on windows. The people of Western Australia want to know that the minister has more of a plan than just shifting the juveniles back and letting it all happen again.

MR J.M. FRANCIS (Jandakot — Minister for Corrective Services) [3.12 pm]: I will start on the points the member for Warnbro raised and come back to the Leader of the Opposition's issues.

Today's report in *The West Australian*, which I first became aware of last night, was prepared. I accept that there were some serious threat analyses in that report. I have not seen a colour version—the member for Warnbro is luckier than I am! The report prepared with that threat assessment pre-dated the transition by eight months. I am advised that of course there was another threat analysis or risk assessment—I will stop the Navy lingo shortly!—done before the juveniles were actually moved. A couple of points need to be put on the record. I am not doing this just to correct some of the mistakes that the member for Warnbro has made in his public commentary of this. I understand the member for Warnbro said that all of these juveniles were moved without any additional staff. My understanding is that the majority of youth custodial officers at Rangeview moved with them. There was in fact an increase —

Mr P. Papalia: How many of them were on sick or stress leave?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I will get to that as well when I get to the issues that I have become aware of relating to the concerns within the department that I raised with the Public Sector Commissioner.

Members should be aware that the number of youth custodial officers increased at Banksia Hill when that transition was made. I am advised that another risk assessment was made. I have asked for that; I have yet to see it, member for Warnbro. I would be concerned if a particular instruction said there would be serious concerns with safety, security and welfare of the juveniles if they were moved straightaway. I would therefore expect another assessment to have been done, and I understand it was. The issues raised in that report, which was done eight months before the transfer, were mitigated. I have asked for a copy of that report. I have not seen it yet but I am looking forward to it.

Let us just go back to some of the issues to make it perfectly clear what happened in my conversations with the Public Sector Commissioner about the management of the Department of Corrective Services. The Public Sector Commissioner made an appointment to see me—I will check the date—about two weeks after the government was sworn in. He came to me and asked me about my impressions of the department and how I thought it was run. I was starting to raise my eyebrows at a number of issues that came up in what the member for Warnbro ridiculed me for saying was a cold-eyes review. Part of those issues have come out now and are quite obvious in the public eye. Yesterday, as the member for Warnbro knows, the Auditor General tabled this report on the management of injured workers in the public sector, and the Department of Corrective Services does not come out of the report too well. The member would have seen in *The West Australian* today an article on a number of issues that were raised about the management of workers' compensation claims in the department. For example, between 2010 and 2012 the premium paid for workers' compensation cover went up from roughly \$11 million to about \$31 million. It went up roughly \$20 million over two years. To me that rings alarm bells and is a concern. Obviously, there has been an increase in the number of staff in the department to cover that but nowhere near the extent at which —

Mr P. Papalia: There's been another factor, minister. Two years before that you increased the prison muster by 27 per cent in 18 months. Don't you think that would have had an impact?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: And we have increased the number of prison officers as well, so the whole department —
Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr P. Papalia: Would that not have had an impact on the stress levels and sick leave of those people who had to deal with that tough environment?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: It would have had some impact on them, as would the growth in the entire payroll of this department.

Mr P. Papalia: Because you did double-bunk them.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I will get to double-bunking.

Mr P.B. Watson: Go and talk to your prison officers.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: When I state that figure, I am not just talking about youth custodial officers; I am talking about the number across the entire department.

Mr P. Papalia: So am I.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: There was a significant increase in the workers' compensation premium. To be honest, there have been a number of significant failings—they are highlighted in the Auditor General's report—in workers' compensation injury management, especially in dealing with individual cases. That is why the department is obviously now starting to wind down the premium and becoming very proactive in addressing that issue. However, the massive increase in premium is obviously ringing alarm bells.

I am fortunate to be responsible for two almost similar departments—the Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the Department of Corrective Services. I say “similar” but I am obviously not comparing apples with apples. In referring to a high-risk job for people who are under the pump and exposed to a number of pressures physically and emotionally in carrying out their job, I consider the comparison with emergency services' firefighters, who put themselves in harm's way, run into burning buildings and are exposed to unfortunate situations including dealing with deceased people. I compare that with the job prison officers do; it is a very difficult job. I do not back away from my comment that a person needs a certain thickness of skin to be a prison officer. If anything, that is a compliment to prison officers, as I am respecting that they need to be a little bit tougher than the average person to do the job they are doing. It is a tough job being a prison officer. Prison officers deal with the most dangerous people known to society. That is why they are behind bars—because they are dangerous.

Mr P. Papalia: But with respect to this year, you are discussing your government's policies resulting in double-bunking throughout the prison system that has actually added to the stress level. Consider this: every time they go to a door there are two blokes behind it, not just one—or more in some cases.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: The member for Warnbro has to understand that we are running prisons, not hotels. What does the member for Warnbro want to do; put them all up in the Hyatt? The member for Warnbro talks about double-bunking—I spent years of my life hot bunking on a submarine.

Mr P. Papalia: I am saying take responsibility and acknowledge that you contributed!

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro!

Mr P. Papalia: He's talking to me.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I will get on to the issue of double-bunking shortly, but let me just continue to go with the figures that raised alarm bells to me early on.

Looking at the amount of the payroll that is paid in overtime and sick leave entitlements, the total wages budget just for adult custodial prison officers alone in the financial year that finished nearly a year ago was \$182.5 million for just over 2 000 prison officers. That is \$182 million for about 2 000 prison officers.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Is that out of control?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Let me see if this rings alarm bells with the opposition.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Is it out of control in your view?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: The percentage of that \$182.5 million, the amount that was spent on overtime—of course people are going to get overtime and of course people are going to get sick—was \$35 million.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: It didn't bother the former Treasurer of this state; he didn't do anything about it.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: So, 19 per cent was spent on overtime and entitlements to do with paying people above what their basic role is. I compare that with the amount in the Department of Fire and Emergency Services budget, which is only nine per cent.

Mr P. Papalia: They're not doing the same thing; they didn't have a 27 per cent increase in their job.

Mr F.M. Logan: They didn't have the huge turnover of labour and people missing. That's the reason they are doing overtime.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: And if some of what the opposition says is right—I will accept there were pressures on it that would have made that figure go up—the difference between nine and 19 per cent is unacceptable and it rings alarm bells.

Mr P. Papalia: Your government drove the massive overcrowding in the prison system. The mess that has been created is your challenge to deal with; don't blame it on the workers.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro, you have had a chance, okay; let the minister have a chance.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I will go back to the points the Leader of the Opposition raised.

Obviously, I had concerns with a number of factors, one of which was outlined yesterday by the Auditor General, and some of which members have read in the papers, about the financial integrity in a number of areas within this department and about the systems that were in place, and, as I said yesterday, about the recruitment process for new prison officers. I used the *Top Gun* analogy, and I think that is a pretty good analogy to use. I think that when we look at what we are asking prison officers to do—to be particularly thick of skin, to handle and deal with, on a daily basis, very dangerous people—I think there is some merit, as does John Welch from the Prison Officers' Union, in reviewing the whole criteria that we select new prison officers by; on the selection criteria, on the merit by which we choose them, on the system by which we train them and on the curriculum they go through. That is so that prison officers who are already in the system know that when someone else comes out of the prison officers' academy they are safe and that the person standing next to them will have their back if something goes wrong. I will come back to that in a second. This is just one of the issues that I think need to be addressed when we are talking about changing the direction of corrective services in Western Australia; the other one, I will not dwell on. The other two key ones, obviously, are trying to stop juveniles who are at risk—who are almost at crossing that line that will land them in jail from stopping —

Mr P. Papalia: You shut down the only program that directly targeted those people.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: The member for Warnbro says that, but what I am advised, after the member said that to me yesterday—I did go and follow that up—is that an independent report examined that program and it was not —

Mr P. Papalia: Be aware that I have that report; I know exactly what it says. Be careful about what they tell you.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I am saying that I am advised—I have not read it, and I will get around to reading that report so I am not going to dwell on that issue —

Mr P. Papalia: Don't believe what they told the previous minister.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I will have a look at that, but I am advised that that particular program, at about \$2.5 million, was not delivering value for money for taxpayers as other programs did.

Mr P. Papalia: Do you know what it cost? It cost \$110 000 a year an individual. It cost a lot of money.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: Look, the member for Warnbro makes a good point. It costs about \$630-odd a day —

Mr P. Papalia: It costs \$220 000—twice as much—to lock them up!

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: It cost about —

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro. Can you please now, minister, address the Chair and stop talking across the chamber? Thank you.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: It costs about \$636 a day to keep a juvenile in detention in Western Australia. When we talk to the people in the Department of Corrective Services who run the at-risk intervention programs that are targeted at the young, mainly male, mainly Aboriginal—they have a high incarceration rate in Western Australia which we, as a government, would obviously like to address—and when we look at the amount it costs to keep these juveniles in custody, we have to ask ourselves, as I have asked the department: if we put \$1 million more into it, would we be able to stop more juveniles from crossing that line that will land them in jail in the first place? The answer is yes, but of course it is not an unlimited amount. We cannot just keep spending more and more money. It is about finding the point of equilibrium. It costs about a quarter of a million dollars a year to keep a juvenile in custody in Western Australia. If we put another \$1 million into programs to try to stop them crossing that line that means they will have to be incarcerated, can we save four of them at \$250 000 each? That is the purely economic argument. The answer I am getting is yes, we can. We can probably save more. But if the answer alone was just yes, we can save four of them, clearly that is still worth doing. If it gets to the point at which it is just throwing good money after bad, we have to say that we have passed that point of equilibrium and we have to cut back on our spending on these programs.

Mr P. Papalia: Can you talk about the risk analysis and the staffing at Banksia Hill prior to shutting down Rangeview?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I have addressed that.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro! You have had a long time to speak. I have now asked you three times to let the minister make his speech.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: The point I am trying to make is that we are committed to changing direction in a number of different areas. Firstly, we are trying to put a bit more effort into early diversion programs and put a greater focus on stopping those at-risk young people from crossing that line that lands them in custody in the first place.

As the member knows, anyone in jail is simply a waste of human capital and we need to do everything we can to try to protect not only the community, but also those people who are at risk and who may cross that line and basically write off a large section, if not all, of their life.

The other thing that we need to try to put more effort into is reforming those in the corrections system. One of the reasons Rangeview—now Wandoo—was changed in its purpose was that we could pick out the 18 to 24-year-olds, who were there for a shorter time and who were going to have the best chance of rehabilitation, ostracise them from the mainstream prison population, put them in a specially redesigned unit in Wandoo and target programs specifically at them. At the moment, that unit is obviously not fully utilised. It has about 80 beds and I am advised that as of today there are 38 people in that facility and tomorrow or the next day there will be another four.

Mr P. Papalia: How much are they being paid for that?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: It is paid for in tiers, by the way, member for Warnbro. Serco does not get paid full freight for having empty beds; there are layers in the contract. One of the reasons that it has taken some time to fill that or start to fill capacity is because it has essentially been a building site. When I was out there just last week, the tail end of building works was going on. They have done a lot of work out there. They have redesigned and rebuilt the visitors centre so that when families come to visit these young males, they are not confronted with the image of effectively being inside a prison. It is a bit more like a high school campus, for want of better words. Obviously it has the secured perimeter, but it is not quite as confronting as a prison because, at the end of the day, if we want to give people the best possible chance of succeeding in life and landing on their feet when they get out of prison, we need to ensure as much as possible that their last day in prison is as close to their first day of freedom, and the only thing in the perfect sense would be the pillow on which they lay their head on their last night in prison. That is the reason that Rangeview had its purpose changed; so that we can direct and target resources to try to save as many of these people as we can and stop them from reoffending. One of the other things the department was doing out there was building a kitchen so that people could do cooking courses. There was some work going on out there, and now we are at the tail end of it we will start to see the population of that facility increase to its capacity of approximately 80 people. Not only that, but also I understand there are around 120 to 160 young men in the corrections system who would fit the category to move into Rangeview Remand Centre. I was given that advice today.

Mr P. Papalia: So you compromised all the juveniles so those young men can get the best opportunity?

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I stand behind the decision that changing the use of Rangeview into Wandoo was the right thing to do. It was in my electorate. I visited it when it was formerly in my electorate, when it was Rangeview. It was a pretty hardcore kind of prison up there at Murdoch. It is now in the member for Bateman's electorate. I went there last week and I had a look at it and it is a totally different facility. I think it will be a brilliant step forward in trying to give that hand up so when people get out of prison, they stay out of prison, and it can actually make a meaningful contribution to society.

That is the second point that I believe the Department of Corrective Services needs to change its direction on. There are a lot of programs out there already that help address a number of different issues amongst the population of the prison system, to help them train and to help them get a qualification in a whole range of different areas. Acacia Prison is at the tail end of finishing a massive update to its kitchen so prisoners can basically be put through almost the essential equivalent of a TAFE course, and when they get out of Acacia they will be qualified cooks. Members who go to Acacia will see that prisoners are being trained to build dual-axle trailers. They are skills for which there is a particular demand when prisoners get out of the correction system. The old days of making numberplates in prisons are gone, but I am still a bit concerned that some of the things that prisoners are trained to do are obsolete in today's day and age. There is a prison that has a program to make shoes and some prisoners actually make shoes in Western Australia.

Mr P. Papalia: Yes, they wear them.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: But the point is that we have to be realistic about this, and I challenge anyone to show me here and now an Australian-made shoe, unless someone has a pair of R.M. Williams shoes on. There is not really a demand —

The SPEAKER: Excuse me, member for Wanneroo.

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: There is not a demand for shoemakers in the public sector for when people get out of prison. So let us train them —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Warnbro!

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: The point I make is let us train prisoners and give them skills so that when they get out of prison they will have skills that help them get a job. We should not train prisoners to do things for which there

will be very little or no demand when they get out. That is why it is so pleasing to see programs such as those at Karnet Prison Farm and those at Acacia and at some of the other prisons. However, many prisoners are still being trained to do what we could only call mundane tasks for which there is no demand in the private sector. I think that is one of the areas in which we can also look at changing the direction of corrective services so people actually have a worthwhile skill when they leave prison. There are a lot of programs out there. I was very impressed with another program at Acacia called the Sycamore Tree Project. It is a great program that allows —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

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

Mr J.M. FRANCIS: I will have to sit down in a minute because I am losing my voice. The Sycamore Tree Project is a great program that allows prisoners and victims to confront each other and work through different issues. It allows prisoners to confront their attitude on a number of different fronts and can actually change people for the better. There are a lot of programs in the prison system, as we would expect because of the high Indigenous incarceration rate in Western Australia, that are directed towards young Aboriginal males, to try to involve them in cultural projects so they can rediscover some of their cultural background, and I think these are also great programs. I know royalties for regions kicks in money and a whole host of different areas of government also kick in money for early intervention, especially for young males, but the actual amount of the \$706 million-odd Department of Corrective Services budget that we spend on these programs is only about \$2 million. One of the directions to take to change the Department of Corrective Services in Western Australia is to find savings in other places and direct them toward early intervention, because if a juvenile can be stopped from crashing that ship and crossing that line in the first place, it would be a good outcome not only for the taxpayers of Western Australia, but also for those juveniles who will not become a waste of human capital and who will not end up involved in other crimes and locked up behind bars. It would also be a good outcome for their victims and potential victims. Everyone will be a winner.

As I said, obviously, there will be limitations. The government is currently doing a stocktake and reviewing the programs that work and do not work, and we will direct our resources to the programs that work.

MS A.R. MITCHELL (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.35 pm]: I rise to support the direction the Minister for Corrective Services is taking corrective services for the future. Every attempt should be made to divert as many young people as possible from the path of crime and incarceration. There is no doubt that we as a government have a responsibility to protect the community, and we will maintain our focus on that responsibility. Not one member in this house would agree that it is not in our best interest to have as few people as possible going into the system and that every effort possible should be made to keep them out so they can continue on their path forward and upwards to becoming effective members of the community. I have always believed the vehicle of sport and recreation is one way of diverting those people who are teetering on the edge of the offending field. Culture, the arts and music are other vehicles that can also be used. We should be aware of and support those people and agencies that are doing that kind of work.

In my role as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Child Protection, I know a number of juveniles in corrective facilities at the moment are under the care of the director general of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. In recent times we have discussed whether there are ways to better manage the juveniles under his care, and even those who are close to being under his care. I believe it is generally agreed that this approach is the way to look to the future. It shows initiative and brings together people involved in the system and does not separate them into special areas.

The minister has also referred to the many groups that are keen to be involved in this matter. I recall working with a group of Noongar men who realised, as we all realise, that there was a high level of Indigenous youth involved in the prison system. That fact is one we are not proud of, and it is certainly a fact they are not proud of. Those men recognised this and were doing a lot of work that said, “We have a responsibility; we need to do something about it.” They developed a comprehensive program not only for the young men, because they realised that is where they needed to start, but also for the women and families of those young men. The program they set up was a holistic approach and involved the older men taking those young boys into the dreamtime trails in the wheatbelt area so they could work through their issues, while the women worked with the families of those young people to improve the situation. A holistic approach was needed, not just a program here or a course there. It is essential to provide the right environment in which this can work. The Noongar people of the great southern were keen to incorporate the work they were doing in those areas, and that can be found throughout the state, especially in the Kimberley.

I support the minister’s direction, and I am sure every member believes that diversion and attempting to take people away from heading down a path towards the corrective services system is something worth fighting for.

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn) [3.39 pm]: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to speak. I want to come to the point of this matter of public interest, which is the termination of Mr Ian Johnson, the former Commissioner of Corrective Services. The Minister for Corrective Services has been on the record four times.

When *Hansard* is printed the minister can read it and see for himself. I can assure the house that the minister is on the record four times saying that he has raised the issues—obviously the issues that led to the termination of Mr Johnson—with the Premier. He has said that four times. The Premier has indicated by way of a nod in the house now that it is true that the minister has raised those issues.

Mr C.J. Barnett: In a very general way, yes.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: The Premier also said today that the Public Sector Commissioner requested a meeting with the correctional services minister to discuss his portfolio and some of the concerns about that department. The minister himself has never said in any of the debates in this house that the Public Sector Commissioner initiated the meeting with him to talk about his department.

Mr C.J. Barnett: Yes.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: The Premier said that, but the minister himself has never referred to that. He has simply tried to say, “I raised issues with the Premier and I had nothing to do with the termination.” It is a new part to the story that the Public Sector Commissioner had a discussion with the minister. The minister said himself today in the house that, as a result of his cold-eyed review, whatever that is, he too raised issues with the Public Sector Commissioner. I asked the minister yesterday and he refused to answer, Premier, so I put it to the Premier, because the minister raised these issues with the Premier about the Commissioner of Corrective Services: What were the issues? What were the issues, Premier?

The minister has refused to say what issues he raised with the Premier and the Premier is refusing to say what issues the minister raised with him. We know for one thing, because both of them have indicated this to the house, that obviously those were the issues that led to the termination of the Commissioner of Corrective Services by the Public Sector Commissioner. But neither the Premier nor the minister will tell this house what the issues were. This is a disgrace. The Premier indicated to the media immediately after the election that this was a completely new government, but we did not know it was a new government in which the Public Sector Commissioner would determine who runs government and who employs and sacks heads of departments; that the Premier and the ministers have no role to play and cabinet has no role to play in determining who will be the heads of departments. Only the Public Sector Commissioner will hire and fire and make decisions on when and how he fires. That is very new to Western Australia. However, we know that is not really going to happen. We know that is not really how government works. We know that cabinet and the Premier particularly pull the trigger when heads of departments have to go. We know that is the way things are done and that those issues are raised with the Public Sector Commissioner. What were the issues?

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Premier) [3.45 pm]: In response to those last few comments, I remind all members that one of the first acts of the Liberal–National government in 2008 upon election was to create an independent Public Sector Commission, with the Public Sector Commissioner being the employer of all public servants. A proper process was established and it is up to the Public Sector Commissioner to look at the performance of a CEO and the way the CEO’s department is functioning and to discuss that with the minister. In this case, the Minister for Corrective Services had a discussion with Mr Johnson and it was mutually agreed that he would depart and he was paid out according to his contract. That is the proper way to do it. We just had an admission from a former minister about how it was done under Labor—pull the trigger in cabinet. We now know what Labor did. That probably explains why during the Labor years, as I said in question time, 59 senior public servants were given management-initiated redundancies at a cost of \$8 million. Would members opposite like to hear their names?

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: They are Alan Bansemer, Mike Harris, Peter Browne, Roger Payne, Terry Simpson, Jack Busch, Brenda Robbins, June Williams —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, members! Member for Warnbro, I will read to you standing order 48 —

A member whose conduct has made it necessary for the Speaker to formally call that member to order more than three times in the course of one sitting for a significant breach of the rules may, by order and at the discretion of the Speaker, be suspended from the service of the Assembly until the adjournment of that sitting.

I have asked you on a number of occasions to let other people speak and you continue to interrupt. You have been called to order for three times. If I call you to order again, I am going to ask you to leave the chamber. Let the Premier finish his speech.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I will just finish this: Haydn Lowe, Terry McVeigh, David Eiszele, Dr Stephen van der Mye, Paul Albert and Ron Mance. They were the senior ones, now that we know Labor’s system, whose names

went to cabinet and bang! Fire the gun. One of the most fundamental and decent reforms of the Liberal–National government was to set up the Public Sector Commission.

If I can just go back to some of the other points, I want to again place on the public record the comparative record in corrective services between Labor and the Liberal–National government. We have taken a tough line on law and order and the prison population has risen. One reason that the crime rate has gone down is that a lot of the baddies are in jail. This government has either spent or committed \$655 million, adding 2 661 beds to our prison system. Compared with the term of the last Labor government over eight years, we have exceeded additional beds and expenditure by nine times that of Labor’s record. In 2007–08, the last year of the Labor government, 844 education, training and rehabilitation programs were delivered to people in our prisons. In 2010–11 under this government, 1 850 programs were delivered and in 2011–12, 2 100 programs were delivered. That is a threefold increase in the effort in prisons, and there is more to do. I congratulate the new Minister for Corrective Services. He is rolling up his sleeves and getting down to the issues. There are issues of human resources management, the executive, expenditure and accountability of some of the budget, and he is getting to grips with that. Good on him, because it will save the taxpayers money and allow the money that is spent on our corrective services system to be better spent and hopefully young people will be rehabilitated and will not return to crime. Part of that expenditure includes \$36 million on the refurbishment of the Rangeview Remand Centre facility into Wandoo. We kept our commitment to build a specialist facility for 18 to 24-year-olds so that they do not mix with hardened criminals. Why did the Labor government not undertake that reform in eight years? It did not even cross their tiny minds to actually have genuine reform in our prison system. Labor did nothing in its eight years in government—nothing at all!

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: We spent \$36 million on juvenile detention and the bulk of that—\$30 million —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen, you are now drowning out the Premier.

Ms M.M. Quirk: Excellent.

The SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Girrawheen. I call you for the third time. Premier, can you finish?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The government acknowledges that more can be done in our prison system, in rehabilitation and preventive courses and in releasing people into employment. This government has a good record and a minister who is pursuing that. The construction works that we committed to are either completed or underway. When members go to the Kimberley, they should look at the new facility in Derby, which has been designed specifically for Aboriginal prisoners. It is innovative, outstanding and is a world-leading concept.

Members opposite did not do any of that; they just did not do it! The facts speak for themselves. Members opposite come in here and they scream, squawk and carry on, but they are serial under-performers in this area as they are in every other area.

Division

Question put and a division taken with the following result —

Ayes (18)

Ms L.L. Baker
Dr A.D. Buti
Ms J. Farrer
Mr W.J. Johnston
Mr D.J. Kelly

Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Mr M.P. Murray
Mr P. Papalia
Mr J.R. Quigley

Ms M.M. Quirk
Mrs M.H. Roberts
Ms R. Saffioti
Mr C.J. Tallentire
Mr D.A. Templeman

Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms S.F. McGurk (*Teller*)

Noes (34)

Mr P. Abetz
Mr F.A. Alban
Mr C.J. Barnett
Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr T.R. Buswell
Mr G.M. Castrilli
Mr M.J. Cowper
Ms M.J. Davies
Mr J.H.D. Day

Ms W.M. Duncan
Ms E. Evangel
Mr J.M. Francis
Mrs G.J. Godfrey
Mr B.J. Grylls
Dr K.D. Hames
Mrs L.M. Harvey
Mr C.D. Hatton
Mr A.P. Jacob

Mr R.F. Johnson
Mr S.K. L’Estrange
Mr R.S. Love
Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr J.E. McGrath
Mr P.T. Miles
Ms A.R. Mitchell
Mr N.W. Morton
Dr M.D. Nahan

Mr D.C. Nalder
Mr J. Norberger
Mr D.T. Redman
Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr A. Krsticevic (*Teller*)

Pairs

Mr R.H. Cook
Ms J.M. Freeman
Mr P.B. Watson

Mr V.A. Catania
Dr G.G. Jacobs
Mr I.M. Britza

Question thus negated.

SUPPLY BILL 2013*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale) [3.55 pm]: When we adjourned for lunch, I was making some concluding comments in respect of the police station issue in Armadale. I reiterate that the police commissioner is wrong, as is the Minister for Police, to say that the people of Armadale and the surrounding areas want a 24/7 counter service; we want a lot more than just a 24/7 counter service. As the minister and the police commissioner know, the 24/7 police stations we have are the ones from which the majority of services originate and around which the majority of services are focused. I should not say this in front of my colleague the member for Cannington, but it is not such a big issue; the Cannington Police Station can come down to Armadale! But what would be even better public policy —

The SPEAKER: There are a number of private meetings going on here. Can people settle down so we can listen to the member for Armadale with interest?

Dr A.D. BUTI: As the member for Cannington is a very good local member, he will defend his police station because he knows the benefits of having a 24/7 district hub based in Cannington. He knows the benefits —

Mr W.J. Johnston: A shorter response time.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Exactly, and that is what the police commissioner and the police minister refuse to admit. They know that to be the case, and that is why the people of Armadale, which is a regional centre, demand a 24/7 police station. I shake my head at the response we have received from the police minister in respect of this issue. The Armadale region has one of the highest crime rates in Perth; one would think that that would justify Armadale being a centre for policing in the south east corridor.

During the debate on Tuesday the police minister mentioned that she had toured Armadale with the federal member for Canning, Don Randall, who is of course supportive of the 24/7 police station concept. She said that she had visited some drug houses. What did she do at the drug houses? One wonders what she did when she visited the drug houses! Had they been closed down? I received an email today to say that she had visited a drug house near the residence of the person who sent me the email, and he said that it was still operating! If the police minister visited a drug house, the police therefore know that it is a drug house, yet it is still operating! One has to wonder why that is the case.

I have already talked about the mental health problems in my area, and I mentioned the number of suicides on the train line. I received another message today before lunch from someone who must have been listening to the debate, to tell me—I have not been able to verify this—that there has been another death on the Armadale line today. This is a tragic situation, so I really hope that this government will reconsider its downgrading of mental health services in the Armadale region.

An issue of particular concern to me is child protection and child welfare. I want to relay a particular story that relates to one family in my region. The problem that we have in not only Armadale, but also the Perth metropolitan area generally is that there are a certain number of identifiable families who are causing a significant amount of criminal activity, especially juvenile criminal activity. One family in particular has come to the attention of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support over the past few years. The police and the schools have become involved but nothing appears to be happening. Up to 10 to 12 kids are being looked after by their grandmother in this street. A resident who lives in the street in which this family resides was admitted to hospital after she attempted to commit suicide because of the problems that this family is causing in the neighbourhood. People who live in the street are constantly being abused and bricks, glass bottles and kitchen knives et cetera are being thrown. Although this is a very complex issue, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support does not appear to have any answers. It has stated, “We can protect but we can’t control the kids.” I debate whether it can protect the kids, but someone has to control the kids. Many of them are under the age at which they can be held criminally liable. The Department for Child Protection and Family Support has to do something to ensure that these children are safe and not causing havoc to the residents in that one street. The department also says that they have caused many problems in the CBD of Armadale. Armadale Youth Resources, which does a fantastic job in the Armadale area, has had a number of encounters with this particular family and a number of fights have occurred in the Jull Street mall, which at other times is a fantastic place. It can become very frightening for the local residents when these altercations take place.

I sought an interagency meeting with officials from the Department for Child Protection and Family Support and WA Police, which has not been forthcoming, although the police have been very willing to engage me in this situation and they are doing their best. The onus is on the Department for Child Protection and Family Support; it has to put more resources into assisting this family and these children. There is no doubt that if these children do not receive greater assistance and if greater interventional programs are not set up, they will probably end up

on the wrong side of the law. They are already on the wrong side of the law in many cases, but they will end up in jail. I have been told by certain people that they often talk about what it would be like to go to jail, and that is very depressing. I urge the Minister for Child Protection in the other house, who has been made aware of the situation as I have written to her in the past couple of weeks, to engage with her department. I admit that it is a very complex and difficult issue but something really needs to be done. We cannot just shake our heads and throw our arms up in the air.

I turn to a very different issue in my electorate—that is, the Champion Lakes Regatta Centre.

[Member's time extended.]

Dr A.D. BUTI: This centre was the brainchild of the former member for Armadale, the former Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. Anyone who happens to drive past Champion Lakes cannot help but be impressed by the superb facilities at Champion Lakes, which is well regarded as a world-class rowing course. I have already expressed my views on the upkeep of the Champion Lakes Regatta Centre. Originally, it was under the control of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority. When the various redevelopment authorities were amalgamated into the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority, the responsibility for Champion Lakes was handed over to VenuesWest. I have received a number of criticisms and grumblings about the way VenuesWest manages the centre. I received an email today from a local journalist telling me that the Champion Lakes waterways were closed again today. They have been closed a number of times. This also occurred when it was under the jurisdiction of the Armadale Redevelopment Authority, so it is not new. But VenuesWest does not appear to be investing enough time, energy and resources into trying to alleviate the problem. It is a major problem.

The other issue is the Champion Lakes whitewater canoeing facility. The member for Darling Range mentioned in *Hansard* in 2007 and 2008 the issue of a whitewater park. I believe that the Barnett government put aside \$10.5 million for a compensation scheme after the closure of Harvey Dam to whitewater canoeing. Harvey Dam was a major venue for whitewater canoeing. I would like to know where we are at with progressing a whitewater park that can be used for Olympic-style canoeing competitions and whether Champion Lakes is still on the radar. I hope so, because it makes sense to have an Olympic-style whitewater park at the Champion Lakes Regatta Centre, which has world-class facilities for rowing and still-water canoeing.

I would now like to make some comments about disability, the National Disability Insurance Scheme debate and so forth. As we all know, Western Australia and the Northern Territory are the only jurisdictions that have not signed on to the NDIS. The Premier stated yesterday that eventually Western Australia will sign on, but he cannot see any sense in doing so before the federal election. The question that should be put to the Premier is: what assurance has he received from Mr Abbott, the Leader of the Opposition, who is the alternative Prime Minister if the Liberal and National Parties form the next federal government after 14 September? What assurance has Mr Abbott given the Premier of Western Australia that he will change the current NDIS plan that is causing trouble for the Premier? If he has received no assurance from Mr Abbott, why is he waiting? Why is he waiting until after the next federal election before he signs on to the NDIS if he has received no assurance from Tony Abbott that Tony Abbott will make changes to the system that will address some of the concerns that the Premier has expressed? The Premier has stated that we have the best disability services system in Australia. We may have, but the point is that most jurisdictions in Australia have a poor system. So it does not necessarily make ours a Rolls Royce system; it just may be a better system. I have had community and professional involvement in disability services for a number of years. Yes, some non-government organisations that provide services to the disability sector say that we generally have a better system than those in other places. But the problem with our system is that not enough people can be covered by the system. The reason that a lot of people are not able to access the system is a lack of resources and funding. That is why the NDIS is such a brilliant scheme. It is a brilliant prospect for people who have a disability, and for their carers and family. This is the first time that a government at any level has been prepared to inject a significant quantity of resources into the disability services sector.

What we all should remember—I think the Australian public has remembered it—is that we are only one car accident or one heart attack away from needing access to the NDIS. The NDIS does not discriminate on the basis of whether a person is born with a disability or acquires a disability, and I think that is one of its main virtues.

We need to remember that the NDIS came out of a recommendation of the Productivity Commission. It is not a bleeding heart proposal. It is a proposal that makes very good economic sense. That is why it was diabolical—it actually would be funny if it were not so serious—when we heard the chief executive officer of Myer complain that the levy would cause economic damage to his store. People with a disability actually go shopping. The carers of people with a disability go shopping. The idea behind the Productivity Commission NDIS proposal is to assist people with a disability to enter the workplace. It also may free up the carers of people with a disability to engage in meaningful employment.

That raises another issue. This is a federal issue, but I feel compelled to talk about it, and this is my personal view. We have moved on from the debate of last week at the federal level about the NDIS—although we still need to debate it at the state level—and we are now onto the debate about Tony Abbott's proposed parental leave scheme. It will be interesting to know how many Liberals in this house agree with Tony Abbott's paid parental leave scheme. There would probably be people on the left of politics who do agree with this proposal from Mr Abbott. The interesting thing about this scheme is that it will apply only to women. If men want to take parental leave, they will not be entitled to this generous scheme. It is only for females. Again, generally more women than men go on parental leave when a baby is born in the family. But where will the parents of a child with a disability fit into this scheme? Many parents of a child with a disability—many mothers in particular—do not have a choice. They cannot go out and work. They have to stay at home to look after their disabled child, and that means that they have to resign from the workforce. If those mothers then have another child, they will not receive any benefits under this very generous scheme.

A debate has been happening over the last two or three days to say that this is just a normal workplace entitlement. We can argue with merit that it is a workplace entitlement. But the employer is the one who should pay for it. This is a tax. Tony Abbott may want to call it a levy, but this is a tax. A tax is a tax is a tax. This is as much a tax as the carbon tax is a tax. For the past three or four years we have been hearing from the conservatives about what a terrible drain on the economy the carbon tax is going to be. This is also a tax. This will be collected from companies. So it is a tax. It will have an economic consequence. I think personally that it is absurd. We can argue the merit of this tax on economic grounds as a means of trying to get females back into the workforce. But it will also be an incredibly regressive tax, because for women who are earning \$50 000 or \$60 000 a year, the worth that they will get out this, vis-a-vis women who are earning \$150 000 a year, is of course much less. No government should be involved in such a regressive taxation system. Certainly no Liberal government should be engaged in trying to increase taxes for what will be a regressive taxation system. I repeat: it will be incredibly inequitable, not just for women who are at the lower end of the pay scale, but for those mothers who cannot go to work because they are looking after a child with a disability. Tony Abbott has not addressed that. He needs to address that. He made a song and dance last week that he supported the National Disability Insurance Scheme because carers and people with disability need to be supported. If he believes they should be supported, he should apply this generous, but very stupid, paid parental leave scheme to mothers with children with disability. It is an absurd policy, and I urge the Premier to discuss this with Mr Abbott. I also would like the Premier to come into this house and tell us what assurance he has received from Tony Abbott that he will address the Premier's concerns with the NDIS, because if he will not address his concerns with the NDIS, the Premier should sign on now. But I agree with the Premier that we want to ensure that we do not have one monolithic bureaucratic system in Canberra that tells us what services are best for people with disability. If we can decentralise that as much as possible, it is much more effective. But the Premier needs to tell us how Tony Abbott is going to improve it or address his problems.

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands) [4.15 pm]: I hope to entertain members until the closing hours, or the closing minutes maybe, of Parliament this afternoon. I shall do my best. I want to talk about a subject in my electorate which I have touched on several times but which I have not gone into any detail about. I want to talk about small business in my electorate, which is vibrant, to say the least. It is growing and voracious in its appetite for resources, knowledge and customers. It is a fantastic, growing area of the economy in the Maylands electorate. If people think about it, they will realise that Centro Galleria is in my electorate, which is clearly the biggest focus of retail and other kinds of shopping activities. It draws huge numbers of people—obviously, they are not all from the Maylands electorate; they are from all over the metropolitan area. It is a big, major shopping complex run by a major shopping company, Centro. It is a major hub in my area.

We have smaller versions. We have little village precincts such as the Bayswater village precinct. We have the Maylands village precinct also. I am sure that members who have been reading the newspapers and who like to go out for a good lunch or a coffee on the weekend or in their time off would have been to my electorate and taken advantage of the fantastic new food outlets and coffee shops in the Maylands precinct. We have an Inglewood business precinct as well. These are mainly shops along the road focused on retail—shops along the retail strip. Again, there are quite a few restaurants, post offices, banks and health clubs—those kinds of businesses. Bedford has a very small shopping centre, with some shops along Grand Promenade. Another tiny cluster of shops are in between Slade Street, Guildford Road and King William Street.

I want to try to make sure I mention all of them, because each has its own specific set of local clientele and also clients from outside the area. I want to make sure that they are all included. They are all different sizes and they all have different problems, and I will talk about problems in small business in a minute. The retail and service businesses in my electorate cover everything from the cradle to the grave. We have shopping outlets that look after mums and bubs, and clothing, food and the like. We have a funeral director as well. So, I thought that if people want to move to a good electorate, they will get it all in Maylands—from the cradle to the grave. We have settlement agents, information technology, accountants, fashion, food, accommodation, media, public relations and lots of online services to help people kick off their website or design a new image for their business. We

have fantastic printing companies, training companies, security companies, mortgage brokers and recruitment and human resources services.

From not only the work that I have done in my electorate, but also a lifetime of working alongside and supporting small business in various positions I held, there are at least three major problems that small businesses in my electorate talk to me about all the time. I start off by mentioning that this government, in 2009, did what I thought promised to be a very positive review, known as the red tape inquiry. It was completed by the end of 2009. The committee was chaired by the now Minister for Small Business, who is not in the chamber this afternoon. It made 200 recommendations. That is an astonishing number of recommendations. If I had drafted the report, I probably would have brought them down somehow or other and clustered them so that they were not so frightening—maybe to 10, with 20 sub-recommendations in each area. Whatever the case, we have 200 recommendations. My businesses would share my concern about what has happened to the other 199. We now have a Small Business Commissioner, which is absolutely fantastic. I would very much like to see his report from his first 12 months. He started in the role in January 2012. His job is to look at unfair market practices that have been occurring, to receive complaints from small businesses and investigate those complaints, to achieve some outcomes and, if necessary, to refer complainants to the State Administrative Tribunal. I have not heard how that is going. I will put some questions on notice. As the minister is not here, she cannot enlighten me. There is a very real problem with what this government has failed to do with the other 199 recommendations. That is something my constituents raise with me. They are aware of the red tape report. They are particularly concerned about some aspects of it—I will talk about payroll tax in a minute. I would very much like to know what happened to the rest of the recommendations. I will be pursuing that with the minister.

I turn now to the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act. Retail leases are regulated by that act. We have debated it extensively over the last four and a half years. Members would be very familiar with the positions that have been put. Tenants with microbusinesses—businesses set up in the middle of shopping centres—in shopping centres such as Centro Galleria have expressed their exasperation. I am not picking on Centro Galleria; I think they all have these kinds of practices. The big anchor tenants such as Myer, Coles or Woolies get really good deals to go into big shopping complexes, as we all know—they pay hardly anything. They have a much easier in and out. When microbusiness tenants negotiate a lease agreement, they have no idea how their agreement compares with anybody else's tenancy. For all they know, they could be charged three or four times what the guy down the road with the newsagency in the middle of the building is paying. There is simply no way of registering that. We need to register these kinds of details to try to create a much more level playing field for small business operators, who are not as empowered as the big corporates like Myer, David Jones, Coles and Woolies. That has certainly been raised by shop owners in the big shopping complexes in my electorate. I would like us to tackle that.

Small business owners have also raised the issue of payroll tax. I was very glad that I happened to be in the house today—in the Acting Speaker's chair in fact—and listened to the member for West Swan's presentation. She drew the house's attention to some of the figures around what has happened under the Liberal government in terms of the total tax take in Western Australia. She pointed out that the total payroll tax take in WA in 2007–08, which is when Labor was in power, was 33.6 per cent. She then pointed out that under the Liberal government it has now crept up, not by one per cent, not by the consumer price index, but by a massive leap to 43 per cent. Unless I have missed my guess, that is an increase of just under 10 per cent. That is a huge impost. It is no wonder that small businesses in my electorate are complaining to me. It is no wonder when I talk to small and medium enterprises in my electorate that they say, "Payroll tax is killing me. Can't you in the Labor Party stop payroll tax?" They also say that to the Liberal Party. From memory, during the election the Liberal Party said that it would fix the payroll tax issue. It certainly said at the last election that it would tackle the issue of payroll tax. What have we seen happen? Let me repeat it. Back in 2007–08, when Labor was in power, 33.6 per cent of the total tax take was payroll tax. Now, after nearly five years of a Liberal–National government, a small business owner is looking at paying 43 per cent of the total tax take as payroll tax. I do not think anyone needs to be a Rhodes scholar to work out that that is not a good outcome. It is pretty surprising that a Liberal government would allow that to happen.

Another issue has been raised, which is a federal issue. I bring it up in this place because it was raised by a fantastic small business networking organisation in my electorate called the Central Eastern Business Association, which I might talk about a bit later. Last year Mark Whitehouse, the then president of CEBA, as it is known, raised the issue with me the issue about the tax deductible threshold for depreciation. I believe it was raised to \$6 500 and was an attempt by the federal government to stimulate business vitality and investment. The problem, as Mark pointed out to me, is that the way in which this deductible appreciation amount is allowed to be claimed back is not actually helping businesses at all. I will read a statement from him —

Cash flow is all important to small businesses with the reduced profit margins that most are working on at the moment and gaining the tax rebate in 12 months time isn't enough to encourage small businesses to invest in their own future.

To be able to claim deductions at the end of each BAS period would be a much better way to stimulate the small business sector and also might tend to encourage investment at the beginning of each financial year rather than the end.

At a time when reinvestment in new technology for small businesses is really important to help improve efficiency and competitiveness, the current system isn't seen as a helpful solution.

I absolutely agree with him. I wrote to our federal colleagues stating the case and got the normal letter one gets back from one's federal colleagues of all persuasions saying, "Yes, good point, we'll look into it." I put that on the record because Mark has a very good point to raise when he talks about small businesses struggling to keep the cash flow going. If they get the opportunity to claw back some of that at the end of each business activity statement, it is much better than having to cashflow through for 12 months and then apply for that money back.

I will now move to a higher level and talk about small business in Australia and in Western Australia, and then move to one of my favourite subjects, which is the subject of women entrepreneurs in WA. I want to put on the record a few statistics. For those members who are not aware of it, 95 per cent of business in Western Australia is small business. The category of small business that the Small Business Development Corporation uses includes small, micro and non-employing businesses. Micro enterprises, those people with one to four staff members, and non-employing people, such as I was for a while as the sole proprietor of a consultancy selling my services as a consultant, make up that 95 per cent. Ten per cent of that 95 per cent category is small, 21.3 per cent is micro, and 63 per cent do not employ anyone and work on their own. Thirty-five per cent are women-owned small businesses and 15 per cent of businesses in the export market are run by women. Small business is, of course, a major employer in Western Australia. There is no doubt about that. Anybody who has researched it would be well aware of small business's capacity to give many kids a start; when they are at school they may get a part-time or casual job to help them through, and it is often with a local retailer. Back in 2009–2010, the statistics around the use of online services—so, how many small businesses had a website—show that only 50 per cent of small businesses had a website, and only 30 per cent of small businesses claimed they were able to trade through online orders. I find that amazing, and I would like to see the current statistics because that must have changed; certainly it has changed for me as a consumer. Maybe it is because we do not have a lot of free time, but I find I am purchasing much more online than I was five years ago.

In addition to that, 81 per cent of Western Australian small neighbourhood businesses say that their customer base is local, which is, again, an interesting figure. It means that people really are staying local and shopping local. So when people go down to the local corner shop, they are part of that 81 per cent that is helping those small businesses stay afloat.

The industries involved in small business are diverse. I will just run through a very short list of the industries in which 95 per cent are run by small business owners so that members get some picture about the nature of small business and its diversity. They include the construction industry, of which 97.4 per cent is classified as a small business; professional scientific and technical services, of which 96.9 per cent are small businesses; rental, hiring and real estate, 98 per cent; agriculture, forestry and fishing, 97 per cent; finance and insurance, 98 per cent; transport, postal and warehousing, 97 per cent; and, health care and social assistance, 95 per cent. They are just some of the figures I thought were relevant.

I will now talk about women in business. I have a lot of them in my electorate and I am sure other members have a lot of women business owners in their electorates. There is plenty of research to substantiate the statement that female entrepreneurs are a bit different in the way they start and run their businesses; I will not go into the many pieces of research.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: Women's entrepreneurship has been recognised during the last 10 or 20 years as a very important source of economic growth in our communities, and female wealth creation globally is rapidly increasing. I am sorry to talk about statistics this afternoon, but I think it is important to get on the record where this discussion starts for me over the next four years. Back in 2009, Credit Suisse published a document that stated that in the United States women control 27 per cent of the wealth—roughly \$US22.2 trillion. In 2010, more than 104 million women in 59 countries started and managed new businesses. In Australia in 2012, women accounted for 38 per cent of the overall self-employed population. Just on that point, since 2007 the number of women in business has doubled. I will not talk today about the reasons for that; these are just the statistics. Today in Australia, one million women are trading; however, many are economically disadvantaged, with more than half not paying themselves a wage. Twenty per cent of Australian women business owners are in fact single parents.

In WA, 35 per cent of small businesses are owned by women. In 2011, nearly 3 000 women responded to the Australian Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry's "National Research Program on Women Business Owners and Female Entrepreneurs" into women who had tendered for government contracts. Of those 3 000 women who responded, only 20 per cent had even bothered to tender for a government contract and of that

20 per cent, only 60 per cent were successful. I will talk about government contracting before I finish this afternoon, but I think that is a very interesting point to note. The amount of business that comes from the government into the community is very, very high.

I want to talk now about characteristics of women entrepreneurs. The increasing number of female entrepreneurs leads to significant growth. Women are more likely to invest in improving health, education and infrastructure. The World Bank confirms that an increase in women's financial independence and social standing has a direct impact on the welfare of future generations. Female entrepreneurs create new jobs for themselves and others and provide different solutions to management, organisational and business problems, as well as expanding the choice in entrepreneurial opportunities. The differences in working experiences are in part due to women's lifestyles, different job routines, different social relationships and, indeed, just the way they live their lives day to day. Lack of access to capital and barriers to the procurement of contracts, particularly government contracts, in the early stages of their company development often prevent women-owned firms from generating and growing income and from hiring employees. Again, in the United States if women-owned business gained only five per cent of government contracts, women would gain more than \$US5 billion in annual revenue, which would then get injected directly back into their families and provide massive benefits to the overall social fabric.

In Australia, no data is available to indicate the percentage of government contracts that have been secured by women-owned firms, yet we know that this information is crucial to planning for economic growth and stability. It would also assist with measuring the growth and the veracity of small enterprises. Some of the information that I have been giving members comes from an issues paper put out in August 2012 titled "Collection of sex desegregated data and the procurement of contracts for women business owners in Australia". Again, that is by the Australian Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry. For those members who are not familiar with some of the ways that other governments have addressed this issue, I want to give a couple of examples. I start by saying that at one stage in my career I was in charge of policy and planning in government contracting in this state. I remember that in one of the first conversations I had with the director general of the day, he said to me, "Lisa, did you know that the United States has targets for women-owned businesses in its contracting?" I looked at him shocked because it never occurred to me that a country would take that action. That was a very long time ago, but we are no closer to achieving that outcome. However, we have some good initiatives federally with Indigenous businesses. The federal government has brought in a target for contracting with Indigenous businesses, which is excellent.

I want to read through a couple of examples so members understand what I am talking about. In 1994 President Clinton signed into law the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act, which reformed federal government's contracting and acquisition system. It dramatically changed the way the government performed its contracting functions. The government adopted policies designed to assist various types of small and disadvantaged businesses—that is, at least 51 per cent owned by one or more individuals who are both socially and economically disadvantaged—and also to ensure that Congress's social economic objectives were met. To implement those policies under certain circumstances, the government was able to provide contracting preferences to small businesses, small disadvantaged businesses, women-owned businesses and contractors performing in labour-surplus areas. This effort was expanded to the procurement of government contracts and the statute provided that civilian agencies as well as defence departments set aside certain contracts to ensure that five per cent of government contracts were awarded to small or disadvantaged businesses. The statute also created a five per cent women-owned business contracting goal. There are many other examples around the world of where this kind of action has been taken by a government. I raise this issue because I think it is well-timed, if this government is serious about tackling some of the problems in small business in this state. Members would all be aware of how many non-mining-related businesses that are not in the downstream or upstream line around mining are doing it tough at the moment. My friends in small business have used their savings or have used the money they were putting aside to send their children to university and they are really in a bad position.

The recommendation the government should look at is that we first collect data in this state about the number of contracts given to women-owned businesses. At least we will know what the starting point is and then we will know whether we have an issue, whether there is some way we can tackle it and whether there is some way we can strengthen the work we are doing. There is currently no sex-desegregated data collected by the government. The collection of that data in respect to procurement will assist in forming policies and programs and will identify gender imbalances in the process. Although the data will not explain why women do not engage in the process, it will provide some guidance to help women participate in it. By analysing the specific number of contracts awarded to small business owners, governments can better understand the barriers to growth for women's business and instigate policies and programs accordingly. The other thing that needs to happen is for our female entrepreneurs to be educated on how to engage in the process, because, like many small business owners, they are probably terrified by the thought of getting online and looking at the government's online procurement services. It is a bit daunting. I did it myself, when I was a consultant for various services, with the first iteration of the website, which was called GEM—which I think stood for Government Employment

Marketplace; I cannot remember whether that was the abbreviation—and I got the princely sum of one contact from the government. It was not my most lucrative experience in small business, let me tell members! We need to educate women on how to get government contracts and how to get into the market in the first place. I know I recommend this against all ideological rationale of the Liberal Party, but it would be oh so sweet if we could see a five per cent target in contracting to women-owned businesses, so when contracts are set, small businesses that are women-owned would be able to achieve just a small five per cent of the business that was being tendered, which is in line with other countries. This target is not rocket science; it is being used in many countries in the world.

I talk now briefly about why I am interested in small business and a bit about my background in this area, because it is something I have not really talked about or put on the record and I think it is appropriate that I do that. Those of us who were working in Western Australia in the late-1980s—I was only a child in those days of course!—may have noticed some women’s business seminars were held in the city. I will not get much of this conversation in, will I? I will tell members the background and history. There were three women’s business series seminars held. They were started by the Business and Professional Women’s Association coming to me when I was employed in government at the time, working in the Department of Employment and Training. The BPWA had the idea that it wanted to do something for professional women and women’s business in Western Australia and so we modestly thought that maybe if we were very adventurous, we could hold a seminar and invite women business owners or other interested women to come to it. We nervously advertised it, thinking we might be able to fill a small hall after a couple of weeks’ advertising. In the first three days 700 women indicated that they were interested in knowing more about starting a small business. Another 700 registered for a follow-up. We ran three seminars, two weeks apart. In total, more than 2 100 women came so we had to use the Government House ballroom to run them. We were simply offering these women a chance to hear five other experienced small business women talk about their lives and how they started their enterprises. Women were given information on what the Small Business Development Corporation offered in small business support for starting up, and what TAFE offered in small business training. At the time, another program was being established called the new enterprise scheme to help disadvantaged and unemployed people explore avenues for unemployment.

That is all we offered; it was not something we saw as extravagant or anything very appealing. But 2 100 women turned up to them. That started a chain of commitments from the state government of the day—I think it was Peter Dowding’s government—to fund research into women in business in Western Australia. We completed the first research into that topic that had ever been done in Australia. It was called the Hub project, on the premise that women are at the hub of families; therefore, their income-generating activities and their economic independence were vital. Some other time when I have more than about 40 seconds left, I will talk about some of the research outcomes we established and how it guided the development of women’s enterprise courses and supported the funding we finally received from the government and the community to start the Women’s Economic Development Organisation in Western Australia, which ran successfully for 10 years. It worked on the premise that economically independent women can support their families and can be major contributors to the community, if only they are given the information, advice and support they need to get their businesses going successfully.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**.

NATURAL GAS (CANNING BASIN JOINT VENTURE) AGREEMENT BILL 2013

Order of Business — Motion

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Leader of the House) [4.47 pm]: I move —

That debate on order of the day 3 be resumed.

By way of explanation, this is to allow a motion to declare the Natural Gas (Canning Basin Joint Venture) Agreement Bill 2013 an urgent bill to be debated and, hopefully, agreed to.

Question put and passed.

Second Reading

Resumed from 8 May.

Declaration as Urgent

MR J.H.D. DAY (Kalamunda — Leader of the House) [4.47 pm]: I move —

That in accordance with standing order 168(2), the Natural Gas (Canning Basin Joint Venture) Agreement Bill 2013 be considered an urgent bill.

The Premier was intending to move this motion himself, but I understand he is involved in an interview at the moment, so he has asked me to move the motion. The purpose of the motion is to allow the bill to be debated

next week. Obviously, it will be important that the opposition be fully briefed before that occurs, and I have sought to ensure that that is put in place tomorrow. Clearly, the opposition should be fully briefed and have time to consider the contents of the bill. I do not think the bill is particularly contentious, but it is one that the Premier is keen to debate next week.

MR W.J. JOHNSTON (Cannington) [4.50 pm]: The Leader of the House says that the Natural Gas (Canning Basin Joint Venture) Agreement Bill 2013 is not particularly complex. In fact, it is massively complex.

Mr J.H.D. Day: I said “contentious”.

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: It is in fact both complex and contentious. The situation surrounding this bill is extraordinary. It was read into Parliament on the last sitting day of the thirty-eighth Parliament. There was no chance of the bill having any consideration by the former Parliament. The fact that it was read in on the last day was itself an extraordinary decision. Why would the government introduce a contentious and major piece of legislation to Parliament on the last sitting day? There was no intention, capacity or desire to have the bill debated. It is extraordinary. Now the new government—it keeps telling us it is a new government—has obviously rushed the matter through cabinet. The government did not outline to us that this was priority legislation in the Governor’s address to Parliament just a few short weeks ago, yet we now have the bill being declared urgent. A briefing between the opposition and the Department of State Development has been arranged for Tuesday next week. When the bill was read in and I approached the Premier, who is the relevant minister, and arranged that briefing, the Premier never told me that this bill would be declared urgent. We casually arranged the briefing for after our caucus meeting next week and now we are told that suddenly—since Tuesday—it has become an urgent bill. This is appalling management by the government. The history of this bill is a shambles and a disgrace. It is major legislation and should be properly debated and considered by the Parliament. This is a billion-dollar bill; it is a very important piece of legislation. Through this legislation, we will set aside the ordinary laws of this state to allow the companies involved to retain leases in the Kimberley that they would normally have to abandon back to the state. This is not some minor piece of legislation. It deals with the need to build pipelines through the Kimberley and potentially build a liquefied natural gas export facility somewhere in the Kimberley. This is an unprecedented piece of legislation. It is a very major issue that will need to be dealt with by the Western Australian Parliament. To declare such a bill as urgent when it was introduced last year on the last day of Parliament and to somehow truncate the processes of Parliament is simply extraordinary. There is no excuse for what is occurring here. We know what the numbers are and what the government will do, but it is simply inexcusable behaviour by the government to introduce a bill on Tuesday or Wednesday, line up in the ordinary course of procedure a briefing for the opposition and even before that process has gone anywhere to return to Parliament and at the last minute declare it an urgent bill. It is a disgrace and should not be allowed to occur.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Gosnells) [4.53 pm]: I rise to voice my opposition to declaring the Natural Gas (Canning Basin Joint Venture) Agreement Bill 2013 an urgent bill because this relates to the very contentious issue of fracking and shale gas exploitation. There is in the minds of many in the community a serious concern about this. I acknowledge that concern gets confused between coal seam fracking and shale gas fracking but nevertheless there is a major concern in the community. In the electorate of Moore there is much concern about this. This bill relates to the Canning Basin, which we are told is a 229 trillion cubic feet gas resource. It is an absolutely enormous resource. I think it is double the size of the offshore reserves. We are being told that we should accept this bill being brought on as an urgent bill without having an opportunity to consult with our stakeholders. That is simply not acceptable.

There is much concern about this matter. As my friend the member for Cannington said, this legislation was introduced into the last Parliament at the very latest stage. The word I have received on that is that was done because there was concern about protecting the market capitalisation of Buru Energy Ltd because the competitors of that company were saying the project would never happen. For some reason a favour was granted to the company in that regard. Now we are being asked to deal with this bill at an express rate through this Parliament, and that is just not acceptable. There is much concern in the community about this issue. If we are seen to be rubberstamping and expediting something of this magnitude, we are going to aggravate that level of concern that exists amongst many people. We should consult with the many stakeholders who hold legitimate concerns. Perhaps this is the opportunity to inform, consult, and to bring them along and to help allay their concerns. Why would we as a Parliament not take the opportunity to let things run their natural course and let this bill lay on the table for the requisite time to enable people to give us their views and for us to have that exchange with stakeholders, rather than bring this matter on as an urgent bill in this way? It is totally unacceptable and, as has been said, the briefing will not be held until Tuesday, which is after our caucus meeting. This goes against all good community consultation guidelines and is certainly against the appropriate practices this Parliament should be adopting. It is totally unreasonable. I know that many people in the community would have great concerns about this bill and would voice those concerns through the normal course of events, but if this bill is allowed to go through as an urgent bill, their concerns will be heightened to the extent

that they will imagine there is something really wrong and something badly afoot that is almost underhand and devious. We are not going to help the community understand what is at stake here if the opposition accepts this is an urgent bill. I oppose this bill being considered an urgent bill.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe — Minister for State Development) [4.56 pm]: The Natural Gas (Canning Basin Joint Venture) Agreement Bill 2012 was introduced in the Parliament last year, so the Natural Gas (Canning Basin Joint Venture) Agreement Bill 2013 is not news to the opposition; it is a ratification bill. The agreement between the state and Buru Energy Ltd, Mitsubishi Corporation and the other partners has been signed; it is agreed. That will go ahead. This is simply a ratification bill. The agreement is done and dusted.

Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member has spoken, and now I am speaking! The agreement has been reached and signed. That is finished.

Mr W.J. Johnston: That is with the government, not the Parliament.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: This bill gives government endorsement —

Mr B.S. Wyatt: Parliamentary.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: — or parliamentary endorsement to that agreement. The Parliament cannot change the agreement.

Mr W.J. Johnston: No, but it can reject it.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Be quiet!

Mr W.J. Johnston: Yes, it can!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Cannington!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Parliament cannot change the agreement.

Mr W.J. Johnston: We can do whatever we like; we are sovereign.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Parliament cannot change the agreement.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Yes, it can; we are sovereign.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am sorry, it cannot! The member will find out next week that he cannot because it is signed and delivered. All the Parliament can do is reject parliamentary ratification. If this place rejects parliamentary ratification, I can assure the member that the agreement is going ahead in any case. It has been signed. It is in place and it is required. The agreement sets a principled arrangement for the long-term development of the Canning onshore gas basin. This bill is not new. As I said, it has been in the Parliament, effectively, for months. But if the issue is about when the opposition is to have a briefing, I will offer opposition members a briefing tomorrow—Friday. I will offer the opposition one on Monday. I will give them one on Sunday, if they want! The opposition can have the briefing before its caucus meeting.

Mr W.J. Johnston: I would like it at 10.00 am —

Mr C.J. BARNETT: You can have it!

Mr W.J. Johnston: Ten o'clock on Sunday, at my office.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: No, no; it will be in the ministerial offices.

Mr W.J. Johnston: I cannot get in there, so my office!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: You're a fool! You can have the briefing nine o'clock tomorrow morning; is that okay?

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Then 10 o'clock, 11 o'clock, midday!

Mr W.J. Johnston: No, 10 o'clock on Sunday!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I made it very clear that the government is very willing to provide a briefing on Friday or on Monday, but members opposite are too lazy to do that! They are too lazy to front up and to understand the bill.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The briefing can be held before the Labor caucus meeting. It is not a particularly complex piece of legislation. Members opposite are just too lazy to do the work.

Point of Order

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The Premier is using quite unparliamentary terms in relation to the member for Cannington.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Lazy and so forth.

I ask you, Mr Acting Speaker, to bring the Premier back to the subject and for him to stop personally abusing members and to speak through the Chair in this chamber.

Debate Resumed

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The government is prepared to offer a briefing —

Mr W.J. Johnston: At 10.00 am on Sunday. We've already accepted your briefing. You offered to do it on Sunday; I want to have it on Sunday. What's wrong with you? Are you too lazy to do any work on the weekend?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The government will offer a briefing on Monday—it will offer it tomorrow—so the opposition can have a briefing in detail well before its caucus meeting. It will not have me or any of my staff there; it will simply have public servants giving it a detailed briefing on the agreement. Once the opposition has had its caucus meeting we would want to debate this bill sometime next week. The opposition cannot pretend it has not seen this bill; it has basically been in the public arena for months. It was introduced into this Parliament —

Mr W.J. Johnston: But that was the last government!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, and you were the shadow minister at the time.

That is the government's decision; the agreement has been signed. Hopefully, in a few moments we are going to declare it an urgent bill and we will arrange for a briefing for the member and for any other opposition members who want to come along. It can be tomorrow, it can be Monday, it can be whenever you want it, and then we intend to bring this on for debate, because there is urgency here. This is an agreement that was signed months ago and it is important in terms of investment in and development of the exploration program. The member may be against development in Western Australia, but this is potentially the most important natural resource for the future of this state. The member may well oppose it, as he opposes most good projects in Western Australia, but the development of the Canning Basin for domestic gas, for consumers, for business and for town gas, is important. This is a state-owned gas resource and it has huge financial benefits for the state, huge gas supply benefits, huge export opportunities, and huge employment opportunities. If any part of this state needs employment, it is the Kimberley. Why does the opposition argue and stand against it? The member can have his briefing when he wants it, but I can assure him, this will be debated next week.

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park) [5.01 pm]: What an arrogant, nasty performance from the Premier. On one hand, he comes in here and says, "Well, the Parliament doesn't need to do it; it doesn't need to ratify it; we don't need it at all", but on the other he says it is very, very urgent: the Parliament must deal with it, and must deal with it now. Well, either the Parliament has no relevance in the ratification of this particular agreement, or it does. The Premier has been embarrassed today by declarations of urgency for three separate bills that apparently were not that urgent, but they need to be made urgent because the Premier brought Parliament back and he has nothing for Parliament to do. He comes in here in response to legitimate questions being raised by the member for Cannington, the relevant shadow minister, on what is, as the member for Cannington pointed out, a big, comprehensive bill. The opposition may well support every single one of those bills that have been declared urgent today—the State Agreements Legislation Repeal Bill 2013, the Supply Bill 2013 and now the Natural Gas (Canning Basin Joint Venture) Agreement Bill 2013—but the Premier should not for a moment think that just because the government has made a decision and signed an agreement that the Parliament should simply roll over and accept whatever is being signed. The Premier can say, "Well, there's nothing you can do about it". You want a bet? If the Premier wants the Parliament to ratify an agreement with the endorsement of the Parliament, we can. We can do what we want because we are a sovereign Parliament. I do not care what the cabinet has decided; I do not care what the executive has decided, and none of the mob up the back should care, either, because their job is not simply to come in here and ratify what the member for Cottesloe says you should ratify, because guess what? We can do what we want—we are the Parliament of Western Australia.

Just because the Premier has been embarrassed by it having been shown again and again today that he has no legislative agenda and that he has brought Parliament back with nothing for Parliament to do, he then gets cranky when the member for Cannington raises legitimate issues about the passage of a particular bill that deals with what is, as the Premier said—I wrote it down—the most important natural resource that may be developed in Western Australia. Apparently the Parliament has no role in that, because the executive has made a decision. Yes, the member for Cottesloe got a strong majority at the last election, but that does not mean that he can simply come in here and demand that the Parliament roll over and have its tummy tickled, because that is what he wants. All the mob up there should listen very, very closely to this, because the arrogance that the member for Hillarys talked about, the arrogance that we saw during the first term of this government, and the arrogance that is becoming far more apparent now in the first two weeks of this new parliamentary session, will bring the government unstuck. The Premier may hide behind his hubris and arrogance now and be confident in his

numbers now, but if this is how the Premier, the government, the Liberal Party and the National Party are going to be guided, not just when governing but in their treatment of the Parliament of Western Australia, so be it because I know for sure that the Premier will come unstuck if he takes this approach.

The member for Cannington has questions that need answering. It is not simply a matter of when the briefing will be. The reason the standing orders say that bills cannot be debated until three weeks after their introduction is to allow for consultation and research and allow for the relevant shadow ministers and members of Parliament to speak to the relevant stakeholders. The government is clearly not serious about this bill anyway. As the member for Cannington said, it introduced it on the last day of Parliament before an election. It was not as if the election was a surprise. The government knew the bill was not going to go through Parliament, yet it introduced it on the last day on the last term of Parliament. For heaven's sake! Now, because the Parliament has nothing to do, the government comes in here and, with that arrogant attack on the member for Cannington, assumes that the Parliament is simply here to rubberstamp what the member for Cottesloe wants. It is utterly outrageous. The reason the standing orders state that bills must lie on the table for three weeks is so that governments with large majorities and dictatorial methods cannot simply ram things through in the dead of night without adequate scrutiny and accountability from the opposition of the day.

Ultimately, the Liberal and National Parties will be on this side of the house again at some point. The conservatives are setting the precedent of what is emerging as awfully arrogant poor government.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Mr I.C. Blayney) casting his vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (30)

Mr P. Abetz	Ms E. Evangel	Mr R.S. Love	Mr J. Norberger
Mr F.A. Alban	Mr J.M. Francis	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr D.T. Redman
Mr C.J. Barnett	Mrs G.J. Godfrey	Mr J.E. McGrath	Mr A.J. Simpson
Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr B.J. Grylls	Mr P.T. Miles	Mr M.H. Taylor
Mr G.M. Castrilli	Mrs L.M. Harvey	Ms A.R. Mitchell	Mr T.K. Waldron
Mr M.J. Cowper	Mr C.D. Hatton	Mr N.W. Morton	Mr A. Krsticevic (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms M.J. Davies	Mr A.P. Jacob	Dr M.D. Nahan	
Mr J.H.D. Day	Mr S.K. L'Estrange	Mr D.C. Nalder	

Noes (13)

Ms J. Farrer	Mr F.M. Logan	Ms R. Saffioti	Ms S.F. McGurk (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mr P. Papalia	Mr C.J. Tallentire	
Mr W.J. Johnston	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr P.C. Tinley	
Mr D.J. Kelly	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Mr B.S. Wyatt	

Pairs

Mr V.A. Catania	Mr R.H. Cook
Dr G.G. Jacobs	Mr D.A. Templeman
Dr K.D. Hames	Mr M.P. Murray
Mr I.M. Britza	Mr J.R. Quigley
Ms W.M. Duncan	Mr M. McGowan

Question thus passed.

Second Reading Resumed

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr J.H.D. Day (Leader of the House)**.

House adjourned at 5.13 pm

