

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Zak Kirkup; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr Peter Katsambanis; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyrán O'Donnell; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Bill Marmion;
Mr Tony Krsticevic; Dr David Honey; Ms Sabine Winton

PREMIER'S STATEMENT

Presentation

MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Premier) [3.22 pm]: I rise today to inform the house of this WA Labor government's agenda for 2020. When this house rose in December last year, we achieved something incredible. We passed laws that will change the experience for so many Western Australians at the end of their lives. We showed that our Parliament, the Western Australian Parliament, can achieve ambitious, sweeping reform, and that we take the roles we do here seriously and solemnly in service of the people of Western Australia. In 2020, the final year of the fortieth Parliament, our work continues. Our task is not reduced.

At the outset, I would like to acknowledge the incredible resilience and generosity of Western Australians after the bushfires and cyclone Damien this summer, not the least of which our emergency service workers and volunteers, who have done incredible things. Can I thank our volunteers and workforce who have served our community and gone east to help our friends during this difficult summer. I acknowledge the concern and worry many Western Australians feel following the natural disasters across the summer, and now the coronavirus outbreak around the world. Can I also pass on our thoughts and regards to the people of China during this difficult period. In this time of global uncertainty, strong leadership and stable government are required more than ever.

Mr Speaker, we all know Western Australia is the trading powerhouse of the Australian economy. We drive the country forward, through tough times, keeping Australia out of recession. Our trade-facing industries, whether in resources, energy, tourism, international education, manufacturing or agriculture, are the source of our expertise and international renown. But with any trading economy, Western Australia is exposed to international risks to a far greater degree than is the case with any other state in the Federation. The headwinds we face are complex and many. They include commodity prices, trade disputes, the fallout of Brexit, geopolitical tensions, and coronavirus. All of these things are outside the government's control and have the potential to disrupt our economic performance. But I can tell this house and the people of Western Australia that this WA Labor government has the agenda the state needs to meet these challenges head-on. From the surpluses we deliver that give our finances stability and security to our drive to diversify the state's economy and trading partners, we know that a diversified economy is a resilient economy and ultimately a stronger Western Australia.

When my government came to office at the beginning of 2017, the outlook was bleak for many Western Australians. The economy was in reverse, as WA experienced its only recession on record. Major decisions had been deferred for too long and the state was directionless. People were rightly concerned about their prospects and that of their children. The old ideas and proposals were not turning things around. Since the very first day of this government, we have been hard at work delivering the fresh approach we promised: putting Western Australia on a new path—a path where WA jobs are everyone's number one priority; a path where local content and local employment are key because "WA made" means quality; a path where education and training is valued because it unlocks so many opportunities; and a path where our health system is sustainable and patients are put first. After nearly three years along this path, we are seeing concrete results. Western Australia is stronger and Western Australians are better off. The economy is accelerating, projected to grow at three per cent this year, compared to one per cent last year and a 2.7 per cent contraction in the last year of the previous government. More than 50 000 jobs have been generated and the unemployment rate is a full per cent lower than when we came to government, despite a higher participation rate, with 11 000 fewer Western Australians unemployed.

Mr Speaker, when it comes to the budget, I am pleased to advise the house that the finances, as per the midyear review, continue to improve under this Labor government. WA remains the only state in the nation with debt forecast to decline. When the previous Liberal–National government left office, net debt was forecast to grow to \$43.7 billion by this financial year, with no peak in sight. Under this Labor government, net debt is expected to decline to just \$36.2 billion in 2019–20, on to \$34.5 billion in 2022–23 as we run surpluses into the future. That \$9 billion difference is roughly what would have been raised by the sale of Western Power. That \$9 billion decline in debt is a massive achievement, unmatched by any other state in Australia.

Strong financial management means running surpluses, not selling essential assets. The lower debt means lower interest bills, saving taxpayers more than \$800 million over the first three years of the McGowan Labor government. That is \$800 million not wasted on eye-watering interest payments. This has only been achieved due to our fiscal restraint and strong controls on expenditure growth. Expenditure growth is tracking at just over a third of the rate of the previous government and is forecast to average just 1.6 per cent over the forward estimates. It is essential to keep expenditure growth under control because of Western Australia's volatile revenue sources. WA needs a buffer of surpluses. It is irresponsible to spend every last dollar. I would caution all political parties in the run-up to the next state election against overspending. Western Australia has already suffered the consequences of

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that mistake once; we cannot afford it again. In these uncertain times, this government's approach of careful budgeting and running surpluses is the only credible, viable, responsible approach to financial management in this state.

The years 2017, 2018 and 2019 have all been big for this government. After years of stagnation, Western Australians have a government that is delivering for them, even in an environment of fiscal restraint. The list includes the state's first high-density secondary school; freezing and slashing TAFE fees; 13 jobs and skills centres right across the state; hundreds of new education assistants in classrooms; new general practitioner urgent care clinics; extra hours at police stations; the best resourcing for police ever; record investment in tourism and international education; and the most aggressive approach to attracting defence industries this state has seen. We have delivered life sentences for meth traffickers; no body, no parole laws; dangerous sexual offender laws; revenge porn laws; and new laws to fight terrorism and organised crime. We have introduced laws that enshrine genuine local content rules for government projects. We have had the lowest rise in fees and charges in a decade, lower stamp duty and lower payroll tax for small businesses. But in 2020, we will go up another gear. In 2020, so many of this government's signature projects will become tangible, creating and supporting thousands upon thousands of WA jobs.

This will be a landmark year for Metronet, when Western Australians will be able to see these projects take shape. Last year, work commenced on the Yanchep extension and the Thornlie–Cockburn Link. This represented one of the fastest commencements to rail projects in Western Australian history. We came to government with no work left to us on these projects, and we broke ground on both at the end of last year. That was just 30 months to get 32 kilometres of rail and five new stations planned, funded and approved. That is an incredibly swift effort, and a credit to the whole of government and the capacity of Western Australians, especially when the same work is underway and ongoing on three other Metronet projects: the Bayswater station upgrade and the start of the Morley–Ellenbrook line; the Denny Avenue level crossing removal; and the new Mandurah multistorey car park project. Very soon we will commence construction of the new rail manufacturing facility in Midland that will build the next generation of commuter trains, with over 50 per cent local Western Australian content, for the first time in nearly 30 years. The contract was signed in December with Alstom, for 246 new Metronet railcars, an additional six railcars to replace the existing *Australind* service, as well as the new manufacturing and assembly facility. Already, local workers and companies are benefiting from this project, with millions of dollars' worth of contracts for cranes and other equipment awarded to local firms. We should not forget that under the previous government our railcars were made in Queensland, containing only two per cent Western Australian content, costing taxpayers 33 per cent more. Our commitment to local content in such an important project shows that this government believes in the capability of Western Australian manufacturing. It believes in the capacity of Western Australians. All the while, we continue to build the Forrestfield–Airport line, with the tunnel boring nearly complete. The planning and preparation continues on a whole host of other Metronet projects, including the Byford extension, the Midland station relocation, Karnup and Lakelands stations, and more level crossing removals—all essential infrastructure that will transform Perth.

Mr Speaker, 2020 will also see major developments on our expansive suite of road projects in regional and metro WA. All across our city and state, this government is delivering the road infrastructure that WA needs. Countless projects are underway on our Kwinana and Mitchell Freeways to lengthen, widen and smarten this essential transport link. Five of them will open in 2020 alone, including three widenings, the smart freeway project on Kwinana northbound, and the new Manning Road on-ramp, together worth \$186 million. The final stage of NorthLink is nearing completion and will open imminently. Construction has started on the High Street upgrades, as work concludes on the Murdoch Drive connection. These are both essential projects to alleviate congestion in our southern suburbs. In our northern suburbs, work continues on major projects and election commitments, with construction expected to be completed on the dualling of Marmion Avenue to Yanchep, and the interchanges of Wanneroo Road with Joondalup Drive and Ocean Reef Road. In the east, we are starting the Tonkin gap project, the Hale Road–Woolworths Drive intersection, the Toodyay Road project, as well as planning on Tonkin Highway grade separations. Across the regions, we are looking to complete construction of stage 3 of the Karratha–Tom Price road, start construction on upgrades to Coolgardie–Esperance Highway, as well as stages 2 and 3 of the Albany ring-road, and award the contracts for the Bunbury Outer Ring Road. These projects will not only help the state economy, as they support and create thousands of Western Australian jobs, but also make life better and easier for Western Australians. We ask for the public's patience as this remarkable volume of transport infrastructure work is undertaken around the state.

This year will also see the opening of the new Western Australian Museum in November. Practical completion has been achieved, and the work is now underway to fill and get the Museum ready for the public. Not only will the Museum tell Western Australian stories, but it is also a testament to the capability of Western Australian workers. Nearly 2 900 jobs were created on the project, 80 per cent of the materials were locally supplied, over \$130 million worth of contracts were awarded to WA companies, and another 420 jobs in creative industries will be created by the end of this project. When the Museum opens in November, admission will be free for the first 18 months thanks to the decision taken by this government. I encourage all members to spread the word.

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This year our focus on a quality education for all Western Australians continues. A good education is the birthright of all Australians, and my WA Labor government is dedicated to giving students, trainees and apprentices of all ages the opportunity to succeed. It has been so encouraging to see that under this government more students than ever are meeting basic standards. Under this government, we are ensuring that students and teachers have the resources they need to succeed, from new science facilities, to putting 300 FTE education assistants back into classrooms. We have built Bob Hawke College, Alkimos College and Hammond Park Secondary College. We are delivering 15 new primary schools, not to mention countless upgrades and expansions to campuses, and hundreds of millions in extra maintenance funding. We have banned mobile phone usage at school by students. We have established 13 new jobs and skills centres, ensuring that TAFE campuses are linking students and employers. We put an end to the former government's TAFE fee hikes by freezing TAFE fees, and cut them in half for 34 high-priority qualifications. The results have been remarkable. Early data for the Lower Fees, Local Skills qualifications shows a 20 per cent rise in the number of students who are gaining the skills that employers need right now. A certificate III in engineering: fabrication trade (heavy welding), and a certificate IV in cybersecurity have both seen a rise in student numbers of 85 per cent. Student numbers for a certificate III in early childhood education and care is up almost 40 per cent, and student numbers for a certificate IV in preparation for health and nursing studies are up by more than 30 per cent. This government knows how essential it is to make training affordable and accessible. So many Western Australians were denied the opportunity when the former government hiked fees by over 500 per cent, whether they were retraining or entering the workforce for the very first time.

Under this government, we are creating opportunity again. This government has also increased funding to training by expanding the Building and Construction Industry Training Fund levy to projects in the resources industry, recognising the important benefits skilled Western Australians provide to the sector. This year legislation will be introduced to ensure the regime works effectively for the resources industry, implementing recommendations arising from the review conducted by the late Hon John Kobelke and Mr Jim Walker.

Mr Speaker, in 2020, this government continues to put patients first. Since day one, we have been transforming our health sector to ensure that Western Australia has a health system that is effective and affordable, and that makes the most of the talented professionals who work in it. Initiatives like our GP urgent care clinics are designed to be a sensible way of providing better care to patients while reducing pressure on our emergency rooms. This system is already up and running in Perth, Peel and Bunbury. In 2020, it will be rolled out regionally in Kalgoorlie, Geraldton and Albany.

This year, Western Australia will see continued investment and improvement in our health system. In 2020, construction begins on the redevelopment of Royal Perth Hospital in the city, as well as WA's first medihotel as part of the Murdoch Health and Knowledge Precinct. This will help to ensure that regional patients receive the best care in their recovery when they are treated in Perth. Across the regions, we will see construction start on stages 1 and 2 of the upgrades to Peel Health Campus—the first significant upgrades the hospital has seen in over a decade—upgrades to Geraldton Health Campus and to Collie Hospital. Tendering is underway for the brand-new hospital in Newman and work continues as we prepare to get started on the redevelopment of Bunbury Hospital at the South West Health Campus. We will see the completion of the Northam Health Service redevelopment and 11 remote Indigenous health clinics. Planning will also continue on a new women and babies' hospital for Western Australia to replace King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women.

In mental health, we will see the opening of the Bunbury Step Up, Step Down facility and the Butler Community Mental Health Service Centre.

This year will also see the passage of the Western Australian Future Fund Amendment (Future Health Research and Innovation Fund) Bill—currently before the Legislative Council—an essential reform to ensure our medical research here in Western Australia remains cutting edge, creating and supporting hundreds of jobs in our sciences.

Mr Speaker, since coming to government in 2017, my government has had a comprehensive agenda for tackling crime. Since day one, we have reformed how we approach the entire justice portfolio. We have tackled crime in this state from all angles, with more police on the street, the new meth border force, Target 120, unexplained wealth legislation, meth rehabilitation prisons, better equipment for police, new domestic violence laws, tougher dangerous sexual offender laws, multiple murderer laws, no body, no parole laws, and Operation Heat Shield. This comprehensive approach has delivered results.

Although any crime is too much crime, I am proud that there is less crime in Western Australia compared with what we inherited—less crime in the city, less crime across the regions, less crime across WA. Operation Heat Shield has also received wide praise from retailers for the impact it has had. But the work is never over. One of the first priorities will be the High Risk Offenders Bill 2019, currently before the upper house. That bill allows the courts to make continuing detention and supervision orders to serious violent offenders, helping to keep the

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community safe. Also before the other place is the Road Traffic Amendment (Impaired Driving and Penalties) Bill 2019. This is essential legislation that will modernise how police deal with drug-impaired drivers, meaning that police will have the power to issue 24-hour roadside bans for those who test positive, as well as new offences for those who drive while under the influence of a combination of alcohol and drugs.

Also this year, this house will debate new powers in the ongoing fight against organised crime. The Criminal Law (Unlawful Consorting) Bill 2020 will do what the former government's anti-bikie legislation did not do; it will provide an effective tool to disrupt and prevent organised crime in our state. This year we will also introduce the Prisons Amendment Bill 2020. This legislation fulfils another election commitment to introduce mandatory testing for infectious diseases for prisoners who assault prison officers, while also modernising penalties. The fight against crime is never over, but this government will always give our police, our prisons and our courts the resources they need to do their jobs and keep the community safe.

This year will be an important year for environmental policy in Western Australia. On 1 June 2020, Western Australia's own container deposit scheme will come into effect. This will be a wonderful scheme that will not only lead to an improvement in our recycling rates, but will also allow for the recouped deposits to be used for fundraising for schools, sporting clubs and charities. The container deposit scheme builds upon the success of our plastic bag ban, which has already seen a reported 30 per cent drop in plastic bags as litter. No-one wants to see waste needlessly go to landfill; the container deposit scheme is going to make it easy for Western Australians to do the right thing.

Work also continues on our commitment to increase the conservation estate in Western Australia by five million hectares, as outlined in our Plan for Our Parks. This is an ambitious endeavour, and across the next year there will be extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders. Also this year, Western Australia will release its climate change policy. Across the country, Australians want to see action on climate change. They know the impact it has on climate patterns. They know the impact it has on sea levels and erosion. They understand better than ever the role it plays in the intensity, severity and frequency of bushfires. Although my government maintains that the federal government needs to provide leadership with a national system for emissions reduction that does not disadvantage Western Australia, there are still things we can do on a state level, and we have a duty to act accordingly.

Western Australia, in 2020, will continue to work with the commonwealth to establish an environmental approvals bilateral agreement to fast-track major project approvals. Such a regime would have the potential to cut approvals times by six months on major projects by removing duplication. With regards to legislation, this year we will introduce the Environmental Protection Amendment Bill 2020. The act is over 30 years old and needs the capacity to respond to future challenges. Opportunity exists to streamline processes, reduce regulatory burden and duplication, while also maintaining the level of protection the community expects.

The fortieth Parliament of Western Australia has not been shy to tackle major reforms. Our record should make Western Australians proud that they have legislators who are bold enough to address the issues that face this state: taxi and on-demand transport reform, strata reform, liquor reform, Infrastructure WA, payroll tax and stamp duty cuts, removing the statute of limitations on child sexual abuse, racing and gambling reform, gender reassignment legislation, heritage reform, historical homosexual convictions legislation, local government reform, tobacco reform, recycling reform, port reform and voluntary assisted dying legislation—not to mention countless initiatives to tackle crime in Western Australia and ensure that victims of crime have access to justice.

However, Mr Speaker, we have a lot of work to do before this fortieth Parliament comes to an end. The first priorities will be the passage of legislation that went through this house while the other place dealt with the voluntary assisted dying legislation. That includes the aforementioned Western Australia Future Fund Amendment (Future Health Research and Innovation Fund) and High Risk Offenders Bills; the Railway (METRONET) Amendment Bill 2019, allowing for the construction of the Morley–Ellenbrook rail line; the North West Gas Development (Woodside) Agreement Amendment Bill 2019, essential to bringing Browse gas onshore at Karratha; the Wittenoom Closure Bill 2019; and the Small Business Development Corporation Amendment Bill 2019, which will ensure a fairer regime and genuine advocate for subcontractors.

While the other place deals with those essential reforms for Western Australia, this house will deal with other matters. Our first priority will be the Work Health and Safety Bill 2019, a vital piece of legislation that will modernise this state's workplace health and safety regime and introduce the offence of industrial manslaughter. This is essential legislation that will go a long way to ensuring that Western Australians come home safe and sound from a day's work. Secondly, we will address the Pay-roll Tax Assessment (Thresholds) Bill 2019. At the end of last year, we announced that this Western Australian Labor government will be reducing the payroll tax take in Western Australia twice. From 1 January 2020, we raised the threshold from \$850 000 to \$950 000. On 1 January 2021, we will raise it again to \$1 million. These changes will result in 1 000 businesses in WA no longer having any liability for payroll tax and a further 11 000 businesses having lower payroll tax bills. This legislation will give effect to that change. Also of great priority will be three new pieces of legislation to bring justice to

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Western Australians. Firstly, there is the Family Violence Legislation Reform Bill 2019, an essential initiative from this government in the fight against the scourge of family and domestic violence. This bill creates new offences for strangulation and persistent violence, requires the police to record every reported incident of family violence, broadens the government's ability to monitor offenders electronically, and makes it easier to obtain restraining orders. The house will also consider the Family Court Amendment Bill 2019, which will provide better protections for victims of family violence during cross-examinations in Family Court proceedings. The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare tells us that one in six women across Australia have experienced physical or sexual violence by a current or previous partner since the age of 15. Family and domestic violence is an insidious problem, hidden from view from far too long. With Australia's new attention on this issue, thanks to a generation of campaigners, we have an incredible opportunity to ensure that spouses and children do not have to become victims any more, and perhaps we may just be able to break this devastating cycle.

The Legislative Assembly will also consider the Children and Community Services Amendment Bill 2019. This legislation implements not only 41 recommendations from the statutory review of the Children and Community Services Act, but also recommendations arising from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Included in this legislation is the extension of mandatory reporting requirements to ministers of religion, an essential component to ensuring that future generations of children are kept safe from abuse.

We will also introduce new provisions to outlaw the practice of puppy farming in Western Australia. After extensive consultation across the state, we will have a new regime where dogs can be traced throughout their lives through a central registration system, allowing authorities to identify unscrupulous or illegal breeders and shut down their operations. The Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Bill 2020 will fulfil a key election commitment and help to protect the welfare, safety and health of dogs in Western Australia.

One of the key policy decisions taken by this government was to join the nationally delivered National Disability Insurance Scheme. That transition has seen substantial success, supported by a \$20.3 million assistance package to assist service providers. Since the transition began, over 25 000 Western Australians have connected to the NDIS and developed an approved NDIS plan, including over 7 600 people who have developed a plan for the first time. Over the past three years, there has been a threefold increase in the number of service providers registered with the Department of Communities, meaning greater choice and control for people with disability, their family and carers. To support this, encourage confidence in the system and fulfil our intergovernmental agreement commitments, this Parliament will consider the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Screening) Bill 2020 to minimise the risk of people with disability experiencing harm from those who have been engaged to support them.

Around the nation, other states have or are in the process of legislating for laws allowing for safe access zones around premises that provide abortion services. In 2020, this government will introduce laws to provide the same. Now that the High Court has confirmed the constitutional validity of these kinds of laws, I believe it is the right and decent thing to do. Women accessing these services have a right to do so free of harassment and intimidation. We hope to achieve that with the Public Health Amendment (Safe Access Zones) Bill 2020.

Finally, in 2020, we will also be introducing essential legislation to reform donations and increase transparency in our electoral system. Obviously, we are approaching an election, and it is essential that Western Australia has a system that all citizens can have faith in, taking into account developments and trends around the country for additional transparency. This legislation will fulfil our election commitments, including but not limited to more timely disclosure of donations and a lower threshold for the disclosure of relevant donations. These are commonsense reforms that send important messages that transparency in our democracy and elections is essential.

This is a comprehensive agenda that meets the challenges of today head on, not least of which are the ramifications of coronavirus on the global economy, but despite the headwinds we face, 2020 has all the potential to be a great year. Western Australia is back on track and there are clear improvements for the people of Western Australia. But the work of government is never over. Three years along this path, after three years of delivery, financial repair and good government for Western Australians, I feel like we are just getting started. There are those who will argue that the best days of Western Australia are behind us; who pretend that the old ways were better; who want to go back and reheat old ideas. Members, the failed policies of former regimes will not solve the problems of the present day any better than the problems of the past. When it comes to this state, fresh ideas are what are needed to realise the promise of the good days that lay ahead. Mr Speaker, this government is just getting started. Thank you.

[Applause.]

Consideration

The SPEAKER: The question is —

That the Premier's Statement be noted.

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MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville) [3.56 pm]: I rise to also speak to the Premier's Statement. Before I commence my contribution, Mr Speaker, I would also like to recognise your services to this chamber over a number of years, since 2001, together with the Minister for Sport and Recreation. Someone told me you were Thelma and Louise, which is a reference slightly beyond my age, but I look forward to your continued service here for the remainder of the time, and thank you again, echoing the sentiments from the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER: Thank you very much.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: In the Premier's speech here today, he called 2020 a landmark year. What I find remarkable is that there was very little vision and very little leadership shown from the Premier for the year ahead. He said that after three years of office, this government was just —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! The Premier was heard in silence. I think the member should be heard in silence, too.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Thank you, Mr Speaker. The member for Wanneroo should not worry. I hope she sticks around; we have something special lined up for her. I look forward to seeing what this Premier intends to deliver, because today we heard nothing new from him whatsoever. There was no new content, no vision and no leadership whatsoever that he outlined to this place, which is traditionally the role of the Premier's Statement. What I also find remarkable is that the members of the backbench felt similar; we could hear the bells for the Legislative Council ringing over the Premier's Statement because there was so little enthusiasm expressed from his own government members in supporting his speech. No-one could hear the cheers encouraging the Premier to continue with his speech, member for Bunbury. I thought that most of the members were asleep; at least, that is what it looked like! In truth, it was a contribution by the Premier that lacked any direction and achievement from the WA Labor Party because, of course, there is very little to speak of in general.

As part of my contribution here today, I would like to talk about a couple of things. One, of course, is the stark contrast that exists between the Labor Party in office now and the Liberal Party when we were in office, and the achievements associated with our terms in office. I would also like to speak briefly about the coroner's inquest into the Kimberley suicides. I find it remarkable that the response to that inquest still stands.

Point of Order

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: We listened to the Premier's speech in silence and I would hope that we would show the same respect to this side.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Quite right. Thank you. Members, you have heard this being corrected before. Can you please not interject.

Debate Resumed

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

As I said, I will discuss the State Coroner's inquest into Aboriginal youth suicide. I find it remarkable and disappointing that the Premier did not mention the coroner's inquest once and that this government is failing to provide a response to this house to the inquest. Not only has the government missed its own deadline, it is now more than a year that the coroner's report has stood without response.

I will end my contribution by reflecting on my district and how it is feeling after three years of the McGowan Labor government. As this chamber marches ever closer to the election in 396 days, we can start to hear the heartbeats of members in marginal seats beating that much faster and getting that much quicker. I suspect some of them are also starting to perspire because they know—not because they go around doorknocking, because they do very little work—that they are getting closer to the day when many of them are likely to lose their seats because they will be held responsible for the decisions of this Premier and this government.

Members of the WA Labor Party will find themselves being held accountable not just for the substantial cost-of-living increases that have been ruthlessly inflicted upon everyday Western Australians. They will also be judged on what they have delivered for their communities and the state more broadly. That is, members of the WA Labor Party will be judged on their distinct lack of achievement, delivery and decisions for the state of Western Australia. The people of Western Australia face difficulties and struggles on a daily basis. Members of the backbench and the government sit frozen like statues unable to voice their opinions, deliver on their election commitments or show any leadership whatsoever, because they have a Premier who is so risk adverse that his best decision is to make no decision at all.

Every single one of the more than one thousand days since this government took office has largely been squandered without much achievement. If we look back at the delivery and achievements of the former Liberal-led government, it can be seen that the Labor Party has fundamentally wasted their last opportunity in government before the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA are returned to the Treasury benches. I thought it may be prudent to remind members

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of the transformational work that was undertaken by the former Liberal–National government when it was in office. Members will see that it stands in stark contrast to the contributions thus far made by the Labor Party and this Premier.

The Premier spoke about building 15 new schools. I remind members that it was the Liberal–National government that built 56 new schools, implemented the independent public school system, and invested in six new child and parent centres across Western Australia. That should be compared with the Labor Party, which has gutted funding to the education budget quite substantially.

It was the Liberal–National government that boosted police numbers. It invested \$67 million in police station upgrades, opened a new air wing facility, and protected police with mandatory sentencing for assaulting public officers. That should be compared with the record of the WA Labor Party, which has failed to protect police and has reduced the overall number of police officers on our streets.

It was the Liberal–National government that funded road projects both big and small right across our state. We did everything in regional and metropolitan Western Australia that needed to be done and more to make sure that our roads were extended, widened and made safer. That should be compared with the record of the WA Labor Party in office. We have seen nothing but delays on road projects under this government.

I stick to the mantra that the Liberal Party is the best friend of public transport users. It was this side of the house that introduced free public transport for carers and those on aged and disability support pensions. It was this side of the house that built Aubin Grove train station, invested in the peak-period bus-only lane for Beaufort Street, upgraded Kenwick train station, commenced the construction of the Forrestfield–Airport Link, and added more train sets to the Joondalup and Mandurah lines. We extended the rail line up to Yanchep, delivered free bus services to regional schools, and added more than 4 500 car bays to our metropolitan train stations. That should be contrasted once again to where this government is at with its public transport policies and the projects it is supposedly delivering. It can be seen that they are behind time and significantly delayed.

The Liberal–National government made a significant investment in our state's health and mental health system with an 80 per cent increase in the health budget and an 84 per cent increase in the mental health budget during our time in office. We transformed virtually every hospital around our state, including regional hospitals and metropolitan hospitals. The Liberal Party and the Nationals have a proud record of delivering and investing in regional and metropolitan health services in Western Australia. That is contrasted quite significantly with where the health system is now under the Labor government. We have record ambulance ramping times, record blowouts in the four-hour rule, and record blowouts in elective surgery waitlists. Time and again we have seen commitments to build and invest in new hospital infrastructure made by the Labor Party that remain unfulfilled. The reality is that the Labor Party has gutted the state's health budget since coming to office. That is having a real impact on delays and patient safety. We have spoken about that a number of times both inside and outside this place.

Much like roads, schools, hospitals and the public transport network, the Liberal–National government revitalised nearly every corner of the state with projects both big and small. Of course, I am not talking only about Optus Stadium, Yagan Square, Elizabeth Quay and other hallmark projects we like to talk about. I am talking about smaller projects such as Lightning Park in Noranda, which was upgraded; the Kostera oval upgrades in Kalamunda; the Northern Redbacks Women's Soccer Club upgrades in Balga; or the Lissiman Street precinct upgrades in Gosnells. The vision and decisions of the Liberal Party and the National Party got the job done.

In contrast, we have a Machiavellian Premier who invests only in electorates where it is electorally beneficial to do so. He fails to meet his own commitment to govern for all Western Australians. He instead invests in only those seats he believes are necessary to see him re-elected in 396 days. That is why there is a stark contrast between seats such as Pilbara, which has more than \$1 billion earmarked, and seats such as Kingsley, where projects the Labor government has committed to, let alone delivered on the ground, can barely be found.

A true theme of the Liberal–National government is that we did not stop at our city and our suburbs. We provided \$6.9 billion of investment into more than 3 700 projects and programs across regional Western Australia. That should be contrasted with the Labor Party, which has continued to ignore regional Western Australia and the bush at the expense of all Western Australians. Without a healthy and vibrant regional Western Australia, the whole state suffers.

I realise that members could argue that it is easy to invest in infrastructure. I realise that it is suggested that that is a relatively easy thing to do, albeit that, from the record of the Labor Party in office, I doubt it would be able to put together a Lego set for children aged four to nine years. When the Labor Party touches projects, even those that we gave to them, there are further delays and blowouts.

We did not invest in just infrastructure. We also addressed complex social issues that this government seems either unwilling or unable to achieve. I remind members that it was the Liberal–National government that negotiated one of the most wide-ranging proposed native title settlements with the south west native title scheme. A sum of \$600 million

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was going to be invested in helping support the south west Aboriginal community. We invested in Aboriginal community patrols and the Clontarf Foundation. We committed to build short-stay facilities, which are important for regional Western Australia. Those short-stay facilities have since been closed by this government. After 13 years of negotiation, it was the Liberal–National government that saw the return of Yagan's head to the Swan Valley. It was an important initiative that recognised the suffering of the south west Noongar community. This government has shied away from those difficult and complex social problems.

Homelessness is an example. The member for Carine has done a great job at advocating for the homeless. Work in that area is missing and there are delays by this government. The reality is that it was the Liberal–National government that invested in upgrading Foyer Oxford and Lime Street. It invested more than \$600 million in the not-for-profit sector. The Liberal–National government in office confronted serious, difficult and complex issues. We needed to address the struggles that all Western Australians face and provide leadership. The drive and vision we have on this side of the house is seemingly missing when we look at the Premier and his government.

I could go on, but I think members get a sense, I hope, of the achievements we delivered in our time in office. It was interesting to hear what the Premier lauded in the Premier's Statement as his achievements and vision. There was nothing new whatsoever. There was re-announcement after re-announcement. This government is getting very good at one thing—that is, spin. In anything other than that I have to say that this government is failing the people of Western Australia. Contrast our achievements with those of members opposite—our legacy, our investment, our decisions and our leadership that we have demonstrated. Compare that with the hollow, non-achieving, uninspiring legacy of this Premier, and the contrast is stark. The Premier has done such a poor job of leading the state that it makes Alan Carpenter's legacy look significant, and he was in office for a much shorter time. When we look across our state, we get a sense of the legacy of the members opposite. We have out-of-control crime, out-of-control antisocial behaviour and homelessness at record rates. Domestic violence is increasing. Unemployment, business confidence and consumer confidence are all weaker. International investment, house prices, commercial tenancy vacancies, water prices, electricity prices, car registration, residential mortgage bankruptcies, store closures, tourism numbers, ambulance ramping, elective surgery waitlist and resource exploration have all gotten worse since the Labor Party and the member for Rockingham were elected into office. The reality is that the Labor Party is nothing but a lot of political spin and very little substance on the ground.

It has inflicted very significant price rises on the people of Western Australia. It had raided our bank accounts and we have very little to show for it. The people of Western Australia are still seething from those price rises—increases to water, electricity and car registrations. We have seen the results of that at the Darling Range by-election. Members on this side of the house are out there constantly advocating for our communities and we hear time and again just how much these cost-of-living increases have hurt all Western Australian communities. While we see the members on this side continue to stand up and advocate, the Labor Party and the backbench of the government sit there like drones, silently marching along to the orders of the Premier, and they will be charged for their complicity at the ballot box. I think they know what is coming for them. I think, as they travel behind this Premier in lockstep, they know that deep down they can sense the sentiment building in the community as Western Australians quietly wait, like they did in the federal election, counting down the days until they can exercise their vote. If we follow the vote of the federal election, what we know to be true is that if the people of Western Australia follow through at the state election, this Labor Party will be voted out of office in a significant landslide. What we know is that this sentiment is building now, each and every day, as people try to make ends meet, as people struggle to get food on the table. They struggled over Christmas. We saw stores close. We see stores that have existed in Western Australia for decades now closing because they cannot survive the McGowan Labor government. I promise members in this place that there are plenty of people out there who are not surviving under the McGowan Labor government, and they will make sure their voices are heard in 396 days' time.

In this context, I also find it interesting that any surprise that the Labor Party finds itself in is such a hot mess. It cannot even sort out its own head office properly at this point. With 396 days until the next state election, I find it remarkable that the Labor Party is still without a state secretary. I do not understand how that has been allowed to occur. I respect political operators. I understand that type of job, but I find it remarkable that the Labor Party decided to basically publicly execute Mr Dixon and replace him with a vacant chair. I do not understand how it could orchestrate such a move so close to the election. Why is it that its own state secretary was leaked against and undermined by members of the Labor Party in this house, and then they replace him with nobody else whatsoever? I suspect those marginal seat members who exist out there know the impact that is having because not only are they going to be held accountable for the decisions of the McGowan Labor government, but at this moment they have no campaign director. They should start putting together their own campaigns. Much like a Premier who is bereft of any ideas and policies, the Premier has had to rush to Victoria to try to find a replacement, just like he does for his policies, for a state secretary.

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Mr P.A. Katsambanis: Has he signed the contract?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Member for Hillarys, we do not know whether he has signed the contract yet, but we do know that his replacement, the proposed state secretary, is commanding more than \$280 000 as part of his package to come across to Western Australia. This government was so uninspiring that it could not attract anyone within WA, breaching, I suspect, its own flawed Western Australian Jobs Act in any case. It could not find anyone to attract to the position of state secretary, so it has gone over to Victoria and now seeks to pay somebody \$130 000 more than a member of this Parliament, and that person will also get paid more than a minister in this chamber.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: Will he be allowed to use Twitter as well?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: We will see what other conditions might be on there because we know that the proposed replacement for state secretary has a bit of a sordid history when it comes to his Twitter account, member for Hillarys. More power to Mr Picton, I have to say, because he has realised that the Labor Party is in such turmoil that it cannot find anybody, and so of course he is demanding a higher rate. But I find it remarkable that for a party that has such little money left, it is going to have to spend quite a lot of it topping up the salary of the state secretary.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I can only imagine how vulnerable those marginal seat members might be feeling now, their hearts pounding evermore. They are sweating that much more, knowing that the money that they have fundraised is gone and lost to fund a highly successful Shorten McGowan federal campaign! It is remarkable that the money that the members have contributed as part of their fundraisers will no longer be used for their own state campaigns. I find that very interesting. It is interesting because we now see as part of the work of local members that they are coming out with what I think the member for Wanneroo calls the inaugural Wanneroo branch fundraiser, which will start this year on 14 March. The member for Wanneroo has been in office for more than 1 061 days. She has contributed money to the central account and she can no longer access that, so her local branch will have to start fundraising on 14 March this year. The member for Wanneroo is starting only now to get her fundraising together for what she calls the Wanneroo war chest. I can promise the member for Wanneroo that we have been building our war chest, very diligently, making sure that on this side of the house we are getting out there in the community, fundraising —

Mr V.A. Catania: Bushfire bill.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I can promise members that because we have good financial stewardship on this side of the house, we ensure that when it comes to the state election campaign, the Liberal Party will be absolutely competitive. Of course we cannot compete with the unions' scare tactics, but we will try our best. It is interesting to me, though, that the members of the Labor Party who have gone through their fundraising will no longer be able to use the money that they have already given to the central campaign because that was lost on the Shorten McGowan campaign.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Perhaps.

Mr V.A. Catania: They spent the money on the wrong bill.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: That is right! All of this organisational lethargy is because they have mismanaged the dismissal of Mr Dixon and then they have been so uninspiring as a party and as a Premier that they could not attract anyone to the top job of state secretary without paying them significantly more than every member of the Labor caucus except the member for Rockingham, who started this mess in the first place. Unfortunately, the Premier's incompetence and indecision is not confined to the internal machinations of his own party. His incompetence does not stop at the lack of projects being delivered but, unfortunately, extends to complex and difficult issues as well. I am, of course, talking about the government's response, or lack thereof, to the coroner's inquest into the deaths of 13 children and young people in the Kimberley community. Members might be aware that this time last year, in response to the Premier's Statement, I also spoke about the coroner's inquest. Sadly, I have to say, it is silence that I have heard from the government at this point. It has been more than a year since the coronial inquest was released by State Coroner Fogliani, and this government still does not have a response. When I stand together with leading Aboriginal figures in Western Australia, like Professor Westerman, and raise the issue, the government suggests that somehow, together with the Aboriginal community, we are politicising this matter. The reality is that the government is saying that it does not want to be criticised for its own indecision and inaction on what is a very complex and difficult issue. There were 42 recommendations that came out of the coroner's inquest and those 42 recommendations are yet to be responded to. Therefore, getting towards the anniversary of State Coroner Fogliani's report, I wanted to make sure that my contribution went beyond the 300-and-something-odd pages of the coroner's inquest and I wanted to visit the communities and towns that were affected.

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Last week I spent four days up in the Kimberley—two days in Kununurra, a full day in Broome and a full day in Derby. In addition to those towns, I visited a number of Aboriginal communities, including Mud Springs, Munthamar and Mowanjum. A number of those were referenced in the coroner's inquest. I have to acknowledge that although my visit was for only four days, a number of people obviously witness and live this every single day of their lives. I acknowledge those who have spoken to me during the time that I was up there. It was a very difficult conversation.

My visit up there, albeit short, has left an indelible impression on me. Sadly, what I witnessed is not that dissimilar to what I witnessed in the communities and reserves that I visited in the goldfields, midwest and Pilbara, and even parts of the south west. Aboriginal Western Australians in the Kimberley in particular have struggled with centuries of segregation, oppression and systemic dispossession that were brought about by successive governments very early on, particularly in the settlement of Western Australia. However, the perilous situation in the Kimberley is exacerbated and the circumstances that our First Nation people face are that much worse because of their remoteness and how far away they are from our capital. I am thankful to the many people I met. I would like to acknowledge the work of healthcare workers, police and everyone in those communities who are trying their very best to combat a very difficult circumstance.

To give an example of what I witnessed, when I was in the Kimberley, I spoke to a gentleman who has lost 12 nieces and nephews to suicide. I met with paramedics who were there when the hanging bodies of teenagers were cut out of trees. I met with doctors and nurses of Aboriginal corporations and Aboriginal medical services who serve with passion in the light of very difficult circumstances and who want some direction from this government on the coroner's inquest. I spoke to people working in Aboriginal communities who had to cut down from a tree the body of a young girl who had been hanging there so long that the town dogs had eaten her feet. I heard a story of a 13-month-old who had been abused and was admitted to hospital but, unfortunately, passed away weeks later. After learning that I was up there, individuals reached out to me—they continue to do so—wishing to share their stories of a difficult circumstance that the member for Kimberley and many other members in this place know well. Suicide is a difficult issue to talk about, particularly in Aboriginal communities because of the perception of shame that exists around those deaths. People in that region reached out to talk to me about the circumstances they faced when they lost loved ones in similar circumstances. Sadly, what I found is by no means new. This is not something that any of us in this chamber are not already aware of. It has been canvassed significantly by Coroner Fogliani, by former Coroner Hope, by parliamentary investigations and in multiple agency reports.

As I walked around those towns, all I could think was: why are we still waiting for a direction on the coroner's inquest? Service-based organisations in particular said to me that they were promised a response from the government by the end of last year, but it has still been found wanting. It has now been more than a year and they do not know what is going on. There has been no further direction. It is disappointing to me that the Premier did not seek to raise this in his Premier's Statement. It is disappointing to me that when we stand with other community leaders, particularly Aboriginal community leaders, and seek to raise this issue, the opposition is howled down as somehow politicising it. If we look back at the record of this Premier's response, we find that it is only when the opposition pushes this and asks questions in estimates hearings and question time that we hear anything from him about the coroner's Kimberley inquest. That is absolutely not good enough and only further demonstrates to me that there is no capacity. I do not understand what the hold-up is. I realise that these are complex issues. The Premier cannot promise communities that his government will respond by the end of 2019 and then let them down further. It is absolutely disappointing. It is distressing. I do not understand how that neglect in our state has been allowed to continue. People are crying out for leadership from this Premier. They are crying out for him to use the coroner's inquest as a watershed moment. I would have expected some vision and some reference at the very least to the plight that Aboriginal communities are facing in light of the coroner's inquest, yet we saw nothing. It is frankly distressing. It is very disappointing.

Of course, this is a very vulnerable community that deserves a lot more attention. I hope that at some point we will get a response from the government to all 42 recommendations in the committee report, "Learnings from the message stick: The report of the Inquiry into Aboriginal youth suicide in remote areas". The concern is that it is likely going to be another year before any funding will be released. We do not know whether legislation will need to be brought to this place. If we look at the Premier's priorities, we see that there was no reference to any priority legislation that might come about from either that committee's recommendations or the coroner's inquest.

Mr D.A. Templeman: When did you go up there?

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Last week.

It is disappointing to me that this vulnerable community has not been responded to, but of course, right across Western Australia at this time, the concerns of a number of communities are not being met. I could reflect on my own district of Dawesville, as part of the City of Mandurah. In that community, the issues are by no means as perilous as those that I have seen in the north and that many members would have seen whenever they have gone up there. Mandurah has record unemployment at this point and has had a significant increase in antisocial behaviour

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and issues of crime. The Leader of the Opposition, the member for Hillarys, as the shadow Minister for Police, and I called attention to this issue during a crime rally that was held in May last year. We called on the government to put more resources into Mandurah. Once again, it is an example of a community that is not being listened to. Unfortunately, the government surged for a moment in time, member for Hillarys, and it put a few more police in the town, but then it pulled them back out again and we saw crime skyrocket. People are saying to me that they are considering leaving our beautiful town because they are worried about their future and their safety. That is absolutely not good enough for a community like Mandurah. Again, it calls to the uninspiring, weak and incompetent leadership of the Premier, who fails to respond to complex issues. I would have expected more of a commitment to the people of Mandurah on the issues of crime, because all of us acknowledge that crime is an issue across our state. I promise members that it is greater still in Mandurah. I look forward to joining the member for Mandurah when we visit the police station at the end of this week or the end of next week. It will be an important trip. I look forward to talking to the police there to see what they want on the ground. When they are out of uniform and they come to my district office, they tell me that they want more police because they have lost them. That is what they are telling me. Again, I will be criticised for politicising this issue, but that is what they are telling me and I am trying to reference their concerns in this place.

Amendment to Question

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: With that in mind, I move —

That the following words be added after “noted” —

and this house condemns the McGowan Labor government for failing to put more police on the street, failing to address the meth crisis as promised and allowing crime to spiral out of control

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [4.27 pm]: I rise to speak on the amendment, and only on the amendment, and I stress that.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Understood.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I support the amendment moved by my friend the member for Dawesville, which reads —

and this house condemns the McGowan Labor government for failing to put more police on the street, failing to address the meth crisis as promised and allowing crime to spiral out of control

It does not give me any pleasure at all to rise to speak on this amendment. I say this a lot in this chamber and I mean it. I would have hoped that effectively three years into the term of this government, it would have woken up to the patterns of crime that are being experienced by Western Australians right across our state, it would have woken up to the fact that we need more police on the street rather than fewer, and it would have woken up to the fact that the public is sick and tired of the now tried and tested response of this government every time there is a policing or crime issue. It is a temporary solution—a shuffling of the deckchairs, as the member for Dawesville alluded to in his speech, and I will get to that in a moment.

Unfortunately, Western Australians know too well the impact that crime is having in our streets, in our suburbs, in our towns and in our regional and remote communities right across the state, and no community has been immune to the rise in crime. We have seen the latest crime statistics. The crimes that really matter to the public of Western Australia—the crimes committed in their own homes, on the streets and when they go shopping—are going up and up. In the three months from October to December last year, dwelling burglaries were up by 5.5 per cent on the previous comparable period; stealing, particularly shop stealing, was up by 2.6 per cent; and robberies were up by 20 per cent.

In just the month of December, the number of dwelling burglaries was up by 11.8 per cent compared with the number in the previous December. The rate of stealing was up by 5.4 per cent compared with the rate in the previous December. They are figures that bear out the reality of what Western Australian families, senior citizens, young people and shopkeepers are living with on a day-to-day basis. What is this government's response? This government's response has been notable since its first day of government. Every response to rising crime has been met by declaring a short-term emergency or short-term focus, not where the crime is but where the media focus on crime is. When crime was getting out of control in the Dawesville district and the Mandurah electoral district around the Mandurah policing district, the rate of crime was not going down in other places; it was not going down in Joondalup, Kalamunda, Bicton or any other place across Western Australia. The appropriate response would have been to introduce more police across the board to deal with the issue. Instead, the government moved police from other areas to Mandurah on a short-term basis. The member for Dawesville and the member for Mandurah got the feedback and I got the feedback as shadow police minister. The feedback was that more police on the ground in Mandurah actually led to a reduction in crime, particularly annoying crime such as shop stealing and home burglary—the sort of crime that is deterred by a visible police presence. When media attention went away,

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the police went back to their original districts. What happened? The crime rate started coming up again. The same pattern has been repeated right around the state.

With media focus on crime in Fremantle, and a temporary surge in police numbers in Fremantle, there is a reduction in crime. When the media focus goes away, police go back to their normal districts and the rate of crime goes up again. The same thing occurred in Cockburn last year where we saw some of those horrific scenes of young people effectively smashing and grabbing in retail shops, destroying people's livelihoods and their investment and threatening the jobs of the people working in those shops, not to mention threatening their safety and security. There was a short-term media focus and short-term placing of police into that area to reduce the crime through a visible police presence. However, off they went again after the media focus went away and they moved somewhere else. With fewer police in that area, the rate of crime shot back up again. We saw it over summer.

The Premier and the Minister for Police laud this as some wonderful achievement. We saw the heavy focus on crime in the CBD and Northbridge—that general daily crime of shop stealing in particular when people were brazenly walking into stores and stealing people's goods that they had on display for sale. They denied them the opportunity to sell their products, to earn a living and to perhaps employ a few more Western Australians. Rather than introduce more police across the state, this government introduced—I think it called it Operation Heat Shield. The police put names to these things as though they are some sort of wonderful achievement. The government introduced a program to temporarily provide more overtime for police officers. Our already overworked hardworking police officers were asked to go out and work extra hours, not for an extended period but for a short term over summer. They did that because that is what our police officers do. They went out there and worked as hard as they always do. They concentrated because they were told to concentrate on this hotspot and the police started arresting people for these crimes. The minister goes out and gives a press conference, dragging out the shopkeepers, who say, "That's great; they've put a bit of focus on this area for once." That is great; we applaud that and say well done. But then the minister says, "We'll repeat the exercise next year, hopefully." What will happen between the end of February and the end of March or whenever the overtime budget runs out —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: May.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: May. What will happen between May and next summer? A message will go out to the criminals, "Go somewhere else for a while. There's a concentration in the CBD of police resources." In May when those resources are pulled again because this government has not given the police any real additional long-term resources, the criminals will go back to the CBD. The pattern will start again. There will be a focus again and probably next year the minister will say, "Oh, we've got this great idea. We've got another wonderful operation. We'll deal with this." The government is not dealing with it; all it is doing is providing a bandaid solution to the area that is gaining the most media attention at the time. If the government was seriously interested in dealing with crime across our community, it would properly resource our police to do their job on a day-to-day basis. The government would not ask overworked police officers to work longer shifts and have some more overtime, blatantly disregarding the serious issues that our police have to confront every day, the physical stress and the mental health stress that impacts on them from their day-to-day work. Just do some more work; that will be the solution! The real solution is to put more boots on the ground because the government's temporary operations prove it. Temporary operations involving a surge of police numbers in Mandurah, Fremantle and Cockburn and extra overtime in the CBD proves that extra police on the ground—more boots on the ground—and a higher visible police presence deters criminals and reduces the rate of crime. It frees up the streets and make people feel safer in those areas. It gives retailers doing it tough already a bit of confidence that if they rang in a stealing incident, the police might be able to respond quickly enough to apprehend those people before they get away with their crime. That is what happens during a temporary surge. The government proved it, so it should do it permanently. It should introduce proper police numbers. Instead what have we seen? The figures do not lie. The minister and the Premier keep saying they introduced 125 new police officers —

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Much more than that.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: — as specialist squads that the government promised during its election campaign. The fact is that WA Police has been hiring and training new police officers but it has been losing police officers at an even greater rate than it has been hiring them.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: Not true. You are misleading now.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: The minister says, "Not true." I can only go on the public statistics. Let us talk about statistics. When the minister came to power, monthly crime statistics disappeared and became quarterly crime statistics. Remember this open and transparent government.

Mr V.A. Catania: All smoke and mirrors.

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Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Yes; that is one way of putting it. The minister has reduced the level of statistical reporting, but what comes out is the police annual report, which tells us that in June 2017, there were 40 more police officers than in June 2019. In that two-year period, numbers went down, not up, despite the Premier and the minister claiming in and out of this place that they had introduced more police officers. Police officer numbers are down. They were down by 40.

Mrs M.H. Roberts: No, they're not.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: If the minister has any newer figures, let us have a look at them. We see the numbers coming out of the academy. They are all hardworking people. Our police are doing a wonderful job.

They are doing an awesome job but they have their hands tied behind their backs because they were given an unfair pay increase. The pay increase that they were promised before the election was taken off the table. Regional police officers have been asked to pay more for their housing than they received in their pay increase, and when they cry out for more police to help them, they are not given them. If they are given them, they are taken from one area and put into the other temporarily. It is just not good enough.

Let us look at what happened over summer. I will give a potted history because if I went through all the really serious crime incidents that occurred during that time, we would be here all day. In December, a man in his 60s was taken to hospital after being stabbed in a Mandurah street. A couple of days later, in Falcon, a man needed emergency surgery after an incident in which three children—15, 16 and 17-year-olds—used knives in a vicious attack outside the man's house. The man was in his 60s and he suffered deep lacerations to his stomach. In Bunbury, in the middle of December, a serious assault left an 18-year-old man with a broken jaw. Police allege that that man was assaulted by another man in his own home. He was rushed to hospital and then taken to Fiona Stanley Hospital for emergency surgery. In Ballajura, three home invaders threatened residents on 22 December. Those home invaders were carrying a silver handgun and crowbars. On New Year's Day at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, two nurses were assaulted by a person visiting a relative who was a patient in the hospital. Once again, we have spoken about that. Our first responders—nurses, doctors, ambulance people and police officers—are all getting assaulted. In Rockingham on New Year's Day, a mother was bashed by a gang of intoxicated and out of control men. There were fears that she could lose her eye. This occurred in the Premier's electorate. She was just bashed on the street. In Geraldton, around the same time, early in the new year, a police officer was injured. I quote from an article in *The West Australian* of 2 January headed "Syringe attack in line of duty" —

A police officer was stabbed in the face with two syringes with so much force that the needles bent.

The long-serving senior-constable was injured after going to a house in Geraldton on Sunday night to investigate concerns for a man's safety.

Here is a police officer doing his job—going to investigate a report about a man's safety. He rolls up to the house and is stabbed in the face with two syringes. That is not a reduction in crime; that is just unbelievable.

We have also seen random shootings recently, which is new to Western Australia. It is something that until recently I think every right-minded Western Australian thought happened only in the movies or perhaps in places such as Chicago, Detroit or, sadly, my old home town of Melbourne, where shootings are becoming a regular occurrence. I think in December alone there were six random shootings in our suburbs. A man in Nollamara was shot dead in one of those shootings. They continued into January. On 11 January at Watermans Bay, there was a drive-by shooting at the home of an elderly couple. The outside of their house and motor vehicle were damaged. On 21 January, an armed gang fired into a house in Thornlie, narrowly missing a mother and her daughter. I think the mother was checking on her daughter because she heard a commotion. As she was checking on her daughter, a bullet shot right past her. This occurred in their own home. On 22 January, nine shots were fired into a home in a suburban street.

I highlight these incidents because these shootings are not accidents as such; they are planned shootings. This is part of some sort of territorial war—some sort of gang warfare that is going on in our streets and suburbs—but they are indiscriminate. They end up causing harm, and sometimes death, to innocent bystanders. The police indicated that one of those incidents—I think it was in Cloverdale—was targeted. The offenders were targeting someone who had been released from prison only a few days before. If they got the wrong house—these criminals are not very smart—or if a bullet ricocheted or if they were a bit indiscriminate in their shooting and their target ran off down the street and they started shooting at him, they might not get only the person they were targeting; they could indiscriminately shoot everyone.

If our police had more resources, they could spend time investigating these crimes properly and get those people off the street. This goes to show members the level of criminality that we are seeing in Western Australia at the moment. Not only are burglaries, stealing and robberies going up; we are also seeing new types of crime that we have not seen before—these random drive-by shootings. The public is crying out for more police to deal with this.

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I have not even touched on the meth crisis, which is continuing unabated. The police are doing a great job. We hear reports of them finding meth all the time, but they are making very little impact because far more is coming in. We need more resources. We need more police on the ground, not temporarily. We do not need them taken out of Joondalup, Warwick or Mirrabooka and sent to Mandurah and Cockburn. We do not need a temporary increase in the overtime budget. We need a permanent increase in police numbers. What did we hear today? Nothing. That is the reason I join the member for Dawesville in supporting this amendment that condemns this government for failing the Western Australian public on one of the most basic principles of government—that is, providing a safer community for all of us. The Premier failed and he deserves to be condemned.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Leader of the Opposition) [4.46 pm]: I, too, rise to support the amendment to the Premier's Statement that reads —

and this house condemns the McGowan Labor government for failing to put more police on the street, failing to address the meth crisis as promised and allowing crime to spiral out of control

The opposition has been raising issues relating to crime for a couple of years in this place. We have had no effective response from the government. We know what the problems are. We had seven quarters of recession in our domestic economy. Admittedly, we moved out of that for two quarters but we were coming from a low base. During those seven quarters of recession, we saw an increase in household fees and charges—\$850 a year for the average household. A lot of households do not meet the average, and those costs are significantly higher. We have seen increased costs in utility charges. People cannot afford these increases. What do people do when they cannot afford to buy the things they want? They steal them. That is what we are seeing.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Minister for Police, I think the Leader of the Opposition is saying she does not want to take an interjection.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I will bring members back to an article dated 7 August 2019 in *WAtoday*, which reviewed the crime statistics for the financial year. The government was alerted to the problem. It states —

The latest crime figures show a 37 per cent increase in stealing across Perth with police being called out on average 45 times a day ...

In the last financial year, the Joondalup area has seen a 50 per cent spike in crime, —

It is no wonder the member for Joondalup is not in here —

with shoplifting increasing by more than 30 per cent in Fremantle and Mandurah.

Between 2018 and July 2019, police also recorded more than 2600 shoplifting cases in Armadale.

A small business owner was quoted in that article as saying —

“All the small businesses are struggling at the moment at the best of times without this kind of thing happening ...

We had no words from our Premier. The article states —

“I feel sorry for traders who go through this. I saw the images in the paper, I've seen it myself in the shops. It's appalling stuff.”

It is appalling stuff. It is all right to make comments like that in a newspaper article, but it needs to be backed up with action, and the action that needed to be taken was to recruit more police officers and get more police officers out to deal with these issues. It did not happen, members. We know it did not happen. The police are telling us it did not happen, the community are telling us it did not happen and now here we are again. Look at the summer of crime that has occurred in Western Australia. The Australian Retailers Association estimates that the cost to small businesses and retailers from shop theft in the lead-up to Christmas alone was over \$1 billion. That is over \$1 billion being borne by small businesses and retailers in this state, and country, because of the problem of the lack of police resourcing in this state.

When we started to raise the issues of the rising crime rates in Western Australia, what was the government's response? It changed the reporting regime. Having been a Minister for Police for a time, I know that the police review their stats every week. Instead of reporting monthly on crime statistics, with the push of a button they could be getting week-by-week updates on crime stats in every suburb. They were reporting monthly because it was transparent and so that the opposition, in holding the government to account, could compare last October with this October, or whatever it might be. But the government, in a gross act of obfuscation, has now changed the reporting time frame for police stats to quarterly. It makes it difficult for the opposition to hold the government to account on a month-by-month basis, but gee, it was not a terribly good decision to go to quarterly reporting, because the quarterly stats looked really sick. The quarterly stats look absolutely appalling. Under this government,

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violent crime in Northbridge has escalated 31 per cent, including assaults up a massive 39 per cent. What do police officers say to us? They say, "There's not enough of us to do the job." We get it again, again and again. They are contacting us about all these issues. We had a government that in opposition talked really tough about things such as keeping dangerous sex offenders behind bars. What was it the Attorney General said? "We are introducing the toughest laws in the country to keep these offenders behind bars." What do we see? We see a dangerous sex offender, Christopher John Bentley, released from prison in order to redeem his spot on the public housing waitlist. He has breached his order and his supervision orders, he is a repeat sexual offender, but he was going to miss his spot on the public housing waitlist, so he has been released into the community. I cannot quite believe it. There are no words, members. I have a large list of people in my constituency who are waiting to get a house on the public housing waitlist. They do not expect that spot to be taken from them and given to a dangerous sex offender who has been released from jail early so that he can avail himself of a public housing spot. It is just extraordinary. Let us look at other recidivist offenders who have been released under the watch of this government. I draw members to an article from 31 January in *The West Australian*, which states —

Rape trauma 'killed' 76yo

The family of an elderly Perth woman who was bashed and raped in her own home believe the appalling attack caused her so much trauma, it ended up killing her.

Mugahed Adam Eldouma, 40, who has been to jail multiple times since 2006, was sentenced yesterday ... to 17½ years jail for attacking and sexually assaulting the 76-year-old woman in her Armadale home in 2018.

...

Eldouma ... was previously jailed in 2006, 2008, 2009 and twice in 2017.

...

Judge ... said Eldouma's crimes were "all the more appalling" because the woman was barely able to look after herself.

This is an individual, who, under the Attorney General's toughest laws in Australia, was released into the community with an absolutely catastrophic result for a 76-year-old grandmother, not to mention the ongoing trauma being suffered by her family as a result of the heinous acts that were perpetrated on her by a person who should not have been out of prison. It is as simple as that.

When the Attorney General was in opposition as shadow Attorney General, he made an election commitment and promised the Western Australian community that he would bring in the toughest laws in Australia to ensure that these sorts of people would not be released. He has apparently brought in the toughest laws in Australia, and these people are being released. These dangerous sex offenders are being released, and the Attorney General now, suddenly, when he is in the hot seat and on the six figure salary, sidesteps the questions. That is what it says in the *WAtoday* article from June 2019. It also states —

"Would I like to know whether he's living next door to me? Of course I would. I've got two daughters here," Mr Quigley said.

That is how every family in Western Australia feels about the release of these dangerous sex offenders. We fear for our children and grandchildren. We fear for our nieces and nephews who are all potential victims of these people.

When we look further into some of the newspaper articles, we see that it was a very, very sorry summer for the government regarding crime. The gun violence in Perth is most unusual for Perth. On 14 November 2019, there were two drive-by shootings in Landsdale. On 23 November, Mathew James McPherson was shot dead in Nollamara. On 26 November, a bikie was hit in Ellenbrook. On 1 December, a father was shot in the face in Girrawheen. On 11 January, a home in Waterman's Bay was sprayed with bullets, members. This is Perth! A house in Waterman's Bay was sprayed with bullets under the watch of this Labor government because it is not effectively funding police; it is not resourcing police. It goes on. On 18 January, a man was gunned down in the member for South Perth's electorate. On 21 January, shots were fired into a home in Thornlie, just missing a young mother by centimetres. On 21 January, nine shots were fired into a family home in Cloverdale. Those are eight incidents involving firearms being used in the suburbs of Perth. That is an unprecedented wave of firearm and gun violence in Western Australia under the watch of this Labor government. The problem is that the government will not resource police effectively. That is the problem.

I feel sorry for police officers. They work really hard and they are doing the best with what they have been given. They are in enterprise bargaining agreement negotiations with this government at the moment, and the pay rise they were promised in the pre-election period, the pay rise that the Premier said they would get if they voted Labor,

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is off the agenda. They have been held to the government's wages policy—too bad, so sad. It was an election commitment, but apparently not a cast iron one. Now police are being offered some extra days off. They are being bought with some extra days off. However, police officers are telling me that there is no point in giving them extra days off, because they are so under-resourced. They have sick leave, they have exhausted coppers taking time off and they cannot take days in lieu. They cannot take days off because they cannot let their team down because they are so under-resourced. If they let the team down, they put other officers at risk. This is the awful scenario that they are faced with because of the under-resourcing issue that this government has caused for them.

When we look at the drivers of crime, there is no worse article headline for the government than that on 23 January. It states —

The state's top cop says ... the current strategies in the war on drugs were not working and it was easier to buy meth on Perth streets now than 10 years ago.

It is a failed meth strategy. This government got elected saying that it was going to put everything in place to help deal with the scourge of meth in our community. What do we see as a result of it? I tell members that the crime stats are revealing. The crime stats show that there has been a drop in drug offences. Do members know what that means? Police officers do not have the time to sit down to do the paperwork to charge people with the offences for drug possession and trafficking. That has always been a measure of police activity, and when that offence category drops, that is when things start to unravel in the community. I will concede, Minister for Police, that there have been some significantly large drug busts. One was an accidental drug bust, when a yacht ran aground and it was investigated. I am trying to remember the name of the yacht. A yacht ran aground and as a result of that we saw a big drug bust. Some very good investigative work has also been done by police, with our federal authorities, and there have been some big drug busts, but what is not happening is the stuff that affects people in the suburbs. There has been no end to supply because methamphetamine is cheaper and more available on the streets of Western Australia than it has been in 10 years. Notwithstanding that there have been some significant drug busts, they are not having an impact on the flow of meth into our communities, and it is meth-affected people who are predominantly involved in crime. We have seen that they are violent people; they are unpredictable and behave erratically. If a person has someone who might be under the influence of that dreadful substance shoplifting from their shop, they would have to be a very brave person to challenge them, because they do not know what is going to happen next. That is a problem that we are dealing with. When we see that drop in the number of drug offences in the police statistical data, we know that the mid-tier drug dealers are not being chased down by police, charged or brought before the courts, and that is an under-resourcing problem. That is a problem because police officers do not have the time to do that work to bring those charges forward and bring those people before the courts, and that is because of under-resourcing by this government.

Looking further on in the article of 2 January 2020 about the police officer stabbed in the face with two syringes, with so much force that the needles bent, which was raised by my friend the member for Hillarys, we see it states —

The number of assaults is increasing, with figures showing there were 977 assault offences on police officers across WA in the past financial year, up from 941 offences in 2017–18.

The article refers to another police officer, Detective Sergeant Chris Turner, who was attacked while off duty in November, allegedly by a man urinating in public in Alfred Cove. That officer identified himself as an off-duty police officer, and was allegedly punched and kicked, leaving him with smashed teeth, a fractured eye socket and a broken nose. That is the violence that officers are dealing with every day. When an officer is down like that, there is no available officer time to replace that individual on his shift. The work that he would be doing in the community, responding to crime and doing the paperwork necessary to bring people to justice, is not being done. That is an issue this government has created because of its shocking underfunding of the WA Police Force. When the state's top cop says that the strategy has failed, one would expect a response from the government. A response saying, "We're going to work with Commissioner Dawson on a new strategy to provide some solutions to the crime wave that Perth now finds itself in."

We do not use those words lightly. We use those words because my team has been very busy over the holiday period. Unlike those who occupy the treasury bench who have not had time, apparently, to even attend to parliamentary questions on notice and lodge them on the first day of Parliament, my team has been busy, out in the community, listening to the concerns of individuals. The hot topics that they are talking about everywhere across the state are the cost of living, falling housing prices and crime. I did a community survey just recently and the number one issue was crime. There are hoon tracks all through Scarborough again because there are no police on the road to deter that activity. We have hoon tracks on a very small local street, near where I live, right beside a massive family and dog exercise area, and a massive sporting facility that is utilised by hundreds of people in the community every day. Right beside that facility there are hoon tracks from when a vehicle has sped out of control from the road up

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onto the footpath. It is very, very dangerous indeed. That is happening because there are not enough police to do that road policing to deter that kind of activity.

There have been assaults on nurses at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. On 30 December 2019, a man was charged with assaulting two nurses at Charlies. An article published in *The West Australian* states that our nurses and other healthcare professionals are getting bashed in our hospitals. What is happening? The Stop the Violence campaign being run in hospitals clearly is not working, because our nurses are no safer now; in fact, they are less safe now than they ever have been because of this government's under-resourcing of police. If we look at law and order, we see that this government has dropped the ball.

At the end of last year, the Auditor General found that the Department of Communities could not even tell us whether its own employees who require a working with children check actually had valid working with children checks. When an agency is unable to say who in the agency should have a working with children check, we know there is a problem. The opposition did a great job highlighting that 105 individuals with questionable backgrounds had worked with vulnerable children for over 14 000 days. Of those individuals, at least 15 had been charged or found guilty of child sex offences. The Minister for Child Protection's response was pitiful when we raised the issue in this chamber. She said, "Stop politicising the issue." Well I am sorry, but the Minister for Child Protection is in a game called politics. The minister is responsible for serious maladministration in her portfolio, and that means responding to it, not criticising or shooting the messenger. It means responding in a meaningful way to prevent that problem from occurring again.

The opposition is not going to take the pressure off this government when it comes to crime and law and order. We know how bad it is, because the community is telling us how bad it is. We know it has been one of the worst summers for crime that this state has seen, with unprecedented gun violence in the streets and suburbs of Perth. It is not good enough.

MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central) [5.07 pm]: The Nationals WA support the motion moved by the member for Dawesville. This is not my contribution to consideration of the Premier's Statement; on behalf of the National Party, I am supporting the amendment motion that has been moved.

It is interesting. Here we have a Premier who said today that we have the best police resourcing the state has ever had. He also came up to Carnarvon one day and said that there is a meth dealer on every corner in Carnarvon. Yet, when we look at the answers to questions asked by Hon Martin Aldridge in the other place, we see some interesting stats on resourcing policing in regional areas. I will go through each district's full-time equivalent staff in 2019 and the levels under the previous government. In the Kimberley, there were 211 police officers back in our time, when we were in government. Today, there are 204. That has gone down by seven. In the Pilbara, there were 218. The actual FTE was 210. It is down by eight. In the goldfields-Esperance region, there were 232 FTEs. The actual FTE was 211.5. That is down 20.5. In the midwest-Gascoyne, there were 248 FTEs. The actual FTE was 231.5. That is down 16.5. In the great southern, there were 195 FTEs. The actual FTE was 188.3. That is down 5.7. In the south west, there were 269 FTEs. The actual FTE was 249.83. That is down 19.17. In the wheatbelt, there were 165. The actual FTE was 146.75. That is a difference of 18.25. That is 95.12 police officers missing in regional WA.

The Premier said that this is the best police resourcing that this state has ever had. When we look at those figures, we can see, clearly, that the resourcing is not there when it comes to regional WA. There are 95 unfilled positions in rural police districts. It is unacceptable, especially when the Premier stands up and says what he said about the resourcing in this state. It is completely false and misleading to tell the people of regional WA that all is good. Nothing to see here! We can see that is a common theme of the Premier: "Nothing to see here; don't worry about it!" But when we look closely at the statistics, clearly there is a problem; clearly the police have not been properly resourced. Media clippings state —

Police boss says he wants more frontline officers

...

Police Commissioner Chris Dawson wants the McGowan Government to help put more cops on the frontline ...

WA Police Union president Harry Arnott said the State was "crying out for more cops" and officers were frustrated at being ordered "to do more with less".

That is the theme—to do more with less. There is not even an acknowledgement by this Labor government that the police officers are doing more with less, because there is no reflection in their pay of doing more with less. That seems to be the theme of this Labor government—doing more with less. If we look at the *Avon Advocate* of 16 October, a headline reads —

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Wheatbelt police vacancies to be addressed by mid-2020

WA Police Union president, Harry Arnott, is quoted as saying that the current job vacancies were “less than ideal”. He said —

“There were 150 police officers who left the WA Police Force in June last year —

That is 2018 —

as part of the last round of voluntary severances, so that is one of the main reasons why there are gaps throughout the agency.

“The WA Police Force has advised the union that it anticipates that the gaps will remain in place until those 150 retired police officers are replaced by new recruits which should happen by mid-2020.”

We will look forward to 2020 to see what the police, through the Minister for Police, say is actually going to come to fruition, because there is a gap in regional Western Australia.

I go back to what the Premier said—that it was the best police resourcing the state has ever had. We all know what happened to the water police up in Dampier, Karratha and the Pilbara. They have gone; disappeared; been cut. Now we do not have any water police in the north west of Australia, where there is the highest number of boats per head of population in the country. We have the assets of the oil and gas industry off the north west coast, which is the engine room of our economy; however, to save money, it has closed down the water police. Would that be acceptable in Mandurah or in Perth?

Dr M.D. Nahan: Rockingham?

Mr V.A. CATANIA: Would that be acceptable in Rockingham? Of course not, but when it comes to regional WA, it is. “Don’t worry; we’ve got the Darling Scarp there. They can’t see or hear us.” That is what they say. If members look at the way this government is treating crime in regional Western Australia, they will see that it is unacceptable. It is putting pressure on our police resources. We can look at crime statistics, because I think the Premier also said that regional crime has gone down. When I had a look at the Kimberley stats between 2018–19 and 2017–18 for offences against other persons, offences against property, total detected offences and total miscellaneous offences, there was a total of 11 273 in 2017–18 and 11 969 in 2018–19. That is an increase of 696 offences. How has regional crime gone down, Premier? How has it gone down, Labor government? When we look at the Pilbara and compare the statistics, we can see that there were 8 898 offences in 2017–18, and 9 144 offences in 2018–19. That is a difference of 246 offences. How has regional crime gone down? Crime has gone up, resourcing has gone down, and we have a lack of confidence in the regional communities, which, unfortunately, often reflects on police, when we know the police are overworked and underpaid. They are stretched to the limit. We can look across the regions and talk about police resourcing and there being a gap of 95 full-time positions of police resourcing in regional Western Australia. That is not catering for the influx of the amount of crime, which is increasing, and it is not catering for any growth. Therefore, what is the true number of police that are actually needed? It is probably double that. In my electorate—I will use Carnarvon as a good example—I have written to the Minister for Corrective Services, the Minister for Child Protection, the Minister for Housing and the Minister for Police highlighting the issues facing the people of Carnarvon as a result of crime, because often police officers are doing all they have to do in their job and are managing their numbers in the best way they can. They do not need extra days off; they need more resources. Often, it is not just having more police officers. Often, there are enough police officers, but auxiliary officers are needed to take the pressure off police officers. When the police go and do their job, which they are doing to the best of their ability in regional WA, and they lock someone up, that often takes police officers off the road. It is easy to see the stats in the north west right across my electorate, whether in Carnarvon, Mt Magnet or Meekatharra, regarding how auxiliary officers take pressure off the police so they do not have to babysit people who are locked up. We want our police to be on the road catching more criminals and people who offend, not having to babysit people who are locked up in a cell, taking police off the street.

We look at the programs that need to be rolled out. Where is the government at with the rollout of CCTV cameras? I know that the previous government had a rollout of CCTV cameras to provide another tool for police officers. Where is that rollout? I go back to the letters that I wrote, because it is not just police resourcing that is needed, whether it be more police or auxiliary officers to do the babysitting so that we do not have police officers stuck at the police station. We need child protection officers as well dealing with some children who roam the streets—those walking in groups, throwing stones and smashing bottles who do not have a care in the world because their parents do not care. There is no-one managing these children in Carnarvon. The resources are stretched when it comes to child protection. No-one is working with families to educate parents. They also need to be responsible as they look after their children. We should ensure that we provide the support these families need to be able to act in an appropriate way and in a way that society believes that they should. At the moment, the number of crime-related issues in Carnarvon is increasing. It is increasing because police officers are doing their jobs, but locking people

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up is taking them off the street. As I said, I have written to the Minister for Child Protection and I got just a fob-off letter. I have written to the Minister for Housing to say that there also needs to be investment in social housing in regional areas so we do not have the overcrowding that is occurring. This Labor government has made no investment in social housing in my electorate. Houses are falling apart, so why would people want to live in them? Overcrowding is occurring because no-one can get a house unless they move to a regional city such as Geraldton.

I will read a letter I received from the Minister for Housing, then I will read an email that I received from a constituent about the three-strikes rule. I sent a letter to the Minister for Housing on 20 June 2019 regarding disruptive behaviour issues with public housing tenants in Carnarvon. The reply states that the Department of Communities and the WA police were working collaboratively to address the destructive behaviour in social housing properties in Carnarvon. It states that the previous month staff from the destructive behaviour unit and WA police conducted joint visits to social housing properties in Brockman to discuss tenancy requirements and recent complaints of destructive behaviour and strategies to reduce such incidents. The letter also states that, in addition, the Department of Communities was working with the Shire of Carnarvon to deconcentrate public housing assets in the Brockman area through urban renewal and progressive redevelopment when opportunities arise. That was over a year ago. I do not think those opportunities have arisen at all.

More importantly, the Minister for Housing goes on to say that appropriate action in line with destructive behaviour policies will be taken against social housing tenancies with corroborated complaints. That is interesting. Let us look at a response that was given by the Department of Housing. People complaining about crime is a common theme. It states that someone attended court on a day and the magistrate did not approve the order for the termination of a tenancy in Carnarvon. The magistrate advised that the department's submissions and evidence did not justify terminating the agreement because of the time frame since the third strike was issued when court action was lodged and the most recent court mention on the date, so unfortunately, they have to start again from the beginning with any new destructive behaviour complaints. It says they are happy to make a time to meet.

The aggrieved person wrote an email and copied me in. They asked whether the department was going to appeal. They said it should not be about the time frame, that it should be about the amount of complaints that have been lodged against the tenants. They say that the police records need to be checked only to see the number of times they have had to attend that unit. The email goes on and gets to the point at which the individual swears. That person is at his wits end from making complaints.

I know that the police receive those complaints and then send them on to the appropriate governmental departments. Yet those government departments are not doing their jobs because they are under-resourced as well. This motion is not about just police resourcing. Police resourcing has really gone downhill in regional WA. As I said, 95 full-time employees are missing from regional Western Australia. That is how many are missing—not how many are needed. Police officers are tied up at police stations babysitting prisoners. There should be auxiliary officers throughout regional Western Australia to make sure that we get more people on the beat. The police are being asked to do more for less, which is causing a morale problem in the Western Australia Police Force. They are tearing their hair out. That is coupled with the resourcing for Child Protection, which is also at an all-time low. The kids and families who have problems are not being dealt with. A whole-of-government approach is needed to deal with the crime issues occurring, particularly in my electorate of North West Central. It is right across regional Western Australia. I read out the stats for the Kimberley and the Pilbara. Crime has not gone down; it has gone up under this Labor government! Enough is enough! The smoke and mirrors coming out of the Premier's mouth are clearly not backed up by the stats. The stats show that the Premier is misleading Parliament and the people of Western Australia. The people of regional Western Australia know first-hand that crime is getting out of control. It is not because of a lack of effort by police trying to catch criminals; it is the lack of resources. They are being asked to do more for less. The Premier should give the police a pay increase, provide the right resources for regional police officers, and look at ways to increase those resources. He should bring back the water police in the north west and make sure that other government departments are properly resourced so the police can do their job. He should help the police and help communities in regional Western Australia. He is failing at that. Maybe he needs to come and have a look and speak to the local police officers and members of the local community. They will tell him that what he is saying is not correct.

Mr K.M. O'Donnell: Mr Acting Speaker!

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for South Perth.

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth) [5.27 pm]: I jumped the gun there, but I thought the member for Kalgoorlie said to me, "You're next, John." I am sure he will not mind.

I rise to support this amendment moved by the member for Dawesville. I have been around for a fair while. I must admit that I do not think I have ever seen Perth in a more lawless state. I heard a member—it may have been the

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member for Hillarys—talk about some cities in the US with poor crime records. Even Melbourne, where I lived for five years, was the shooting capital of Australia. I do not think I have ever seen as many shootings in Perth as we see now. Every day we wake up in the morning and hear that there has been a violent attack overnight such as a serious assault, a drive-by shooting or just a straight shooting. I have been very fortunate in my electorate. The Leader of the Opposition reminded me of a shooting in South Perth in January. I walked down the street the next day and saw police putting the tape out. I had no idea what had happened there. We found out later that there had been a shooting down by the river. They were, obviously, trying to get as much evidence as they could. In many respects, South Perth is a fairly safe community. A lot of the most serious crimes happen in lower socioeconomic areas, where people are on low incomes and are deprived. I think that sometimes breeds this sort of behaviour. There is an election in I do not know how many days—member for Dawesville?

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: It is 396.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: It is 396 days. I will say it is 13 months. The one constant in the time I have been in this place is that police numbers are a key issue in every election because the safety of the community is of paramount importance. When they go to an election, both sides have a target they will push for. Our side will have a target. At the last election, the Labor opposition obviously had a target of police numbers and I do not think it has quite reached those numbers yet. It tells us that it will reach those numbers, but I think if we ask people in the community whether more support should be given to our police, the answer would be yes. The answer would be yes to not only wages, because we all agree that police should be well paid for the dangerous job they do, but also numbers. We all know that if we see a police car driving down the street or an officer on patrol or a police officer in the CBD, it makes us aware that we have police out there to look after us as citizens of our state.

I would like to talk about some of the conversations that I have had. I work very closely with the Kensington police, as I am sure most members of this place do, and I think the Kensington police do a fantastic job. They are very quick to react. They go out when there is a call to a serious incident. They cannot attend every incident, but they will go to serious incidents. I get the feeling that they could be better resourced. Last year there were concerns in the Manning and Karawara areas. The police addressed those issues, and we found that the crime rate reduced. Now, other areas are having some spikes—not serious spikes—in the number of break-ins. We are now noticing that car break-ins have become quite regular. In South Perth alone, police have picked up some CCTV footage from private homes in the street, and a lot of people who are doing these break-ins and are breaking into cars are on bicycles. They have probably stolen the bicycles. I have seen some of the footage of these shadowy figures riding bikes down the streets of Manning at 3.00 am or 4.00 am. If a young person is out at four o'clock in the morning, they are obviously up to no good. The police are aware of this and they have picked up a lot of these young offenders.

Earlier this month I attended a neighbourhood street meeting with residents of Melville Parade in Como. Melville Parade is the street that runs alongside the Kwinana Freeway. One of the South Perth councillors, Carl Celedin, who is the ward councillor for that area, came along and we spoke to those people. They were very concerned because they had had a spate of break-ins and a couple of their cars had had their windows smashed. I said to them, “The police tell us that you don’t leave anything in the car. If you want to invite someone to smash your window, you leave a laptop or an iPad on the back seat of your car and they are going to do it.” But they said that there was nothing in these cars. But what happens is that a lot of these offenders are young and they will break in just hoping to get a bit of loose change out of the console. That is where we are at now. Some of the residents suspected that these people might be coming into the area, getting off at the Canning Bridge train station, doing a couple of burglaries and then leaving. At that discussion, one of the residents said, “We don’t have great CCTV coverage. There was only one home in that strip that had CCTV coverage and he was the person who provided the police with the footage.” We said, “What if we get a mobile CCTV camera?” Councillor Celedin said that he would take that up with the City of South Perth, because it has one. Normally, the mobile cameras are not put in a street that does not have much traffic, as that does not make much sense. A couple of cameras that were put down at the foreshore for Australia Day have been left there, and the City of South Perth told us that they have been quite productive, because there have been a few things happening and the CCTV cameras have picked up that footage. But Councillor Celedin is going to raise with the council whether, to satisfy these residents and put their minds at rest, a mobile camera could be put outside their houses in that problem strip for a while.

The other problem with policing is that police cannot be everywhere. The criminals are not going to stop work if they see a policeman in a certain place; they will go somewhere else. Policing is also not just about arrest and charge. The police in my electorate work closely with other government agencies, such as mental health and the department of housing, to see whether some of these offenders can be rehoused with a more responsible adult, because a lot of these offenders are juveniles. Police identify the kids who are on the verge of becoming offenders and the youth policing arm works with these children before they become potential offenders. It does not always

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work, but many of these young people have been steered away from a life of crime. I think that is a fantastic initiative, but if the police are going to do initiatives like this, it obviously requires a greater workforce. A grandmother called Jeanette Day once said that there is no such thing as a naughty child, just a child with nothing to do. Therefore, if young people do not have anything to do, they can get into trouble. If the police are taking part in programs with other agencies that can lead these young offenders up the right path, I think they are good programs. It will also mean that the police will need more funding and resources, because if they are doing those sorts of programs, they will not be out on the beat catching the crooks. It is a matter of being able to afford more police. We are aware that the government has invested in Operation Heat Shield. Police in my electorate tell me this is pretty good. They have been working with it and they have been working the overtime. I think that operation put an extra \$5 million into what is a \$1.55 billion police budget over six months from 1 December to 31 May. It was put there to combat the traditional summer crime spike. People are asking what happens when 31 May comes, and that is the question that the Minister for Police might be able to answer today. Obviously, the police called it a summer program, but if the crooks go on vacation in winter, maybe the police will not need it. But we are not sure that that is going to happen. Maybe the minister can talk to us about the future of Operation Heat Shield, because it is something that is of interest to everyone. We understand that police are under pressure and stress. My police have not complained about not being able to do the overtime, but I think there is a general feeling that any help that they can get will be much appreciated.

In supporting the member for Dawesville's amendment, I would just like to say to the minister that it is an important area. I am sure that the minister is aware of the need for the best possible policing that we can have and I would be interested to hear the response from the government to the points that have been raised by the opposition today.

MR K.M. O'DONNELL (Kalgoorlie) [5.38 pm]: Greetings. I, too, would like to stand and support the member for Dawesville's amendment to the motion. I would like to just start with the WA Police Force report from 2019. On page 185, under the heading "Profile of Police Officers by Gender" it lists the senior police, police officers, police auxiliary officers and Aboriginal police liaison officers. From 2017 to 2019, the number of Aboriginal police liaison officers fell by 10 per cent, from 344 to 307. Auxiliary officers are trained, but not fully, so that they can utilise weapons and have full police powers. However, they do police officers' jobs in dealing with drugs, property, lockups, handling prisoners and things like that. In 2017, there were eight Aboriginal liaison officers. The number has fallen by 50 per cent to four in both 2018 and 2019. I believe that the number should be increased in this area. When I was a police officer, many of the police liaison officers crossed over to mainstream policing. They made it and helped wherever they could, picking up education to improve and upskilling so that they could join the mainstream. Some liaison officers chose not to do that; they enjoyed the role they had and they stayed there. We have four liaison officers in the state. There is one outstanding Aboriginal liaison officer in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, Ian Tulloch. "Tully" was an Aboriginal police liaison officer when I was a bar manager at the Pier Hotel in Port Hedland in the 1970s, before I even became a policeman. I did 34 years and he did years before that and he is still going. He was recruited by Superintendent Darryl Gaunt to come to Kalgoorlie-Boulder because of how good he is. I would love to see more Aboriginal liaison officers. There are a lot of Aboriginal people out there who would love to help. Some of them do not have the education or qualifications to become mainstream police, but surely we could skill those people to become Aboriginal liaison officers. The two police liaison officers who were in Kalgoorlie-Boulder when I first got there, Preston Thomas and Les Walker, taught me about Aboriginal culture and heritage and about the Aboriginal people in the City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder. They taught me how to behave and how to speak to them, and I took it on board and I have never forgotten it and I thank them for that. If big stations do not have police liaison officers, it makes the job harder. Those officers can show the way for young police officers who are coming through the ranks. According to the report, the total number of police in 2017 was 6 793. In 2019, the number was 6 768—a drop of 25. We have gone backwards. Hopefully, that will be rectified in 2020.

I would like to talk about police on the street and foot patrols. Every man and his dog knows that a visual police presence will deter crime. It will also make people feel safer and happier. I have spoken to people on the street, and in front of me they have changed and become silly and stupid to the extent that they will not listen and will not heed the warnings and then they have been arrested. We will have those types of people no matter whether police are there. When we got the mounted section to patrol the streets in Kalgoorlie-Boulder, people not only photographed them, but also talked about them and said how safe they felt and how good it was.

We had issues with antisocial behaviour in Kalgoorlie-Boulder a few years ago, especially during the election campaign. When I started doorknocking six months out from the election, people at every house I went to told me that their issue was not with jobs, education or health; it was with antisocial behaviour and how people behaved on the streets. I worked with the police and the city and, to its credit, the city put on three rangers to walk the streets to help police. They were there not to move people on, but to engage and talk. Police increased the number of foot patrols and the antisocial behaviour slowed right down, which was a credit. The antisocial behaviour picked

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up again when the foot patrols were non-evident. We need them. If we do not have the numbers in the stations, we should look at police officers who are office bound. We need to get them out on the street and re-engaging.

I would like to talk about the meth issue and crime getting out of control. Police say that they are getting tough on crime, and everybody loves it. Articles in the paper state that they will not put up with this, and that is fantastic. The minister will say that and we thoroughly agree with her, but we keep forgetting to tell the courts. I know that they are an independent system and I have the utmost respect for magistrates and judges, but there are occasions when commonsense does not prevail and they do not imagine what it would be like. As an example, I would like to bring to members' attention an article in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of 20 December 2019 headed "Cop station attacker spared jail". It states that a man who bashed his partner while she sought refuge at Kalgoorlie Police Station was spared jail. She went to the police station to seek help. He was sentenced to a 12-month suspended imprisonment order in Geraldton. The court was told that he repeatedly threatened his partner with a metal pole outside the station before assaulting her. When she tried to seek help, he punched her in the back of the head and pulled her by the hair. I can just imagine grabbing the hair of someone like the member for Vasse and pulling her. That is not good—not good at all. He was arrested at the scene—naturally, the police station is not a good place to commit a crime—and he pleaded guilty. He was given a 12-month suspended imprisonment order. Some people would regard that as tough.

Mr P.J. Rundle: So they let him off.

Mr K.M. O'DONNELL: Yes, but wait. He was also that week sentenced on 14 other charges. Not only did he get a slap on the knuckles for bashing his woman, but also he had 14 other charges, including possession of methamphetamine with intent to sell or supply, unlawfully obtaining property and eight breaches of bail. He failed to attend court. That is just ordinary. The magistrate threw in a \$1 000 fine. I think the courts miss it. I do not know how anybody in possession of methamphetamine with intent to sell or supply cannot have the kitchen sink thrown at them. I am not talking about 10 years' jail. He bashed and threatened a woman and the court gave him a 12-month suspended order and a \$1 000 fine. He is not going to pay the \$1 000 fine. If we are going to get tough on crime—the government wants to, as do the police—we need to send a memo to the courts saying, "Hop on board."

Here is another one. A repeat offender who punched a junior police officer in the face before pulling out a tomahawk when fleeing the scene of a burglary got 15 months in jail. That is great! He will be eligible for parole, so he will do only three or four months. Fifteen months might sound like a lot, but this person hit the officer numerous times. Not only was he armed to cause fear, but he did a burglary, too. People in possession of a tomahawk cannot go around bashing police. Holy cow; he is lucky he was not shot and killed. Again, we are just not doing it. In another case, a drug debt led to trafficking and jail. A Kalgoorlie–Boulder drug trafficker who was trying to pay off a \$10 000 drug debt by couriering drugs was jailed for five years. He was not jailed for trying to pay the drug debt; he was jailed for bringing 108 grams of methamphetamine into Kalgoorlie–Boulder. That is what we want to see—five years. Way to go! Get him off the street and rehabilitate him while he is in jail and work on him. None of this 15 months. I will not keep going on. I just wanted to have my say. I will say just one more thing. We could put police on every corner of our cities and our suburbs and there will still be burglaries. They will still get through. I have driven down the street and the next minute I have had a phone call, "Someone needs to go down to Hampton Street, South Kal." We get on the radio and say, "We just drove down there" and are told, "Well, get back there."

Mr J.E. McGrath interjected.

Mr K.M. O'DONNELL: Yes. I am finished. Thank you very much.

MR S.K. L'ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [5.50 pm]: Happy 2020 to you, Acting Speaker. I hope you enjoy the year. I rise to speak on this amendment because I think it is a very good amendment. It cuts to the chase of the real issue that your government has not been able to grip over the last three years. However, I hope you enjoy this final year of yours because we are coming for your seat. Given the performance your mob has put on over the last three years, you are in shaky territory, Acting Speaker.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr T.J. Healy): If only I could properly reply.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Many of your colleagues are on shaky territory. Some are even prepared to jump ship early. The member for Collie–Preston, an old war horse of the Labor Party, has put up the white flag. He has had enough.

Mr M.P. Murray: You started with a bald head.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Do not worry about my bald head, member for Collie–Preston. You are on your bike. Even the police minister has decided that she wants to be the Speaker. Even she is trying to shore up a new job down the track. That is what we are reading, minister.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member! You will be drawn to the amendment.

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Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I know. I am excited; it is the beginning of a new year.

The ACTING SPEAKER: You still have your speech on the Premier's Statement.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is a great quarter; it is the quarter when we come through with the goods.

Mr D.A. Templeman: How are you feeling over there in Siberia?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is fine over here; we are enjoying the sunshine of opposition. The sunshine of opposition is preparing us for government, minister.

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: We have been watching the minister in a storm of discontent.

The ACTING SPEAKER: I do not want to take away from your response to the Premier's Statement, but you can please stick to the amendment. You can make a great contribution.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: That is quite a valid point you make. I should get back to the point and reserve all my enthusiasm for my reply to the Premier's Statement because there is much material. I will tell members what they could do to solve the problem of 5.6 per cent unemployment. The government has been able to achieve a 0.2 per cent change since it has been in power, by the way. That is all it is; unemployment has decreased by 0.2 per cent. I will tell members opposite what they can do to contribute towards their failure on employment: give us more research officers. My one research officer is snowed under with the amount of material she has to hand to me on government bumbles, backflips and failures. When I ask her to get me some information so I can make a contribution to the Premier's Statement, I feel I should get five other people in to help because there is no shortage of material.

I am speaking on this amendment to talk about corrective services. Believe it or not—this is something that you guys over there need to understand—when the police fail to do enough because they are under-resourced for what they need to achieve, when they get the bad guys and girls and lock them up, we want the two organisations to talk. We want the department of corrective services to try to help stop those people from re-offending, particularly children. The member for Dawesville has been campaigning really hard on the issues to do with Aboriginal communities up north. I will touch on that a little later during my comments on this amendment. We want to make sure they do not re-offend so we need really effective corrective service programs and a system to make sure that when the police do their hard work to put away people whom the community needs to be kept safe from, they will stay kept away and receive programs and treatments that might reduce the potential for them to re-offend when they are eventually released. That is what the community wants. Do members agree with that?

Several members interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: That sounds pretty fair. I can say that on all of that, this government has failed dismally and continues to fail. In its three years in government, it has not managed to improve the situation. One thing it has got right is being consistent, but it is consistent in the wrong area. It has failed to improve the corrective services system for Western Australia. I will go through some of the examples. Just recently there was the Broome Prison escape when a woman was able to escape from Broome Prison and do over \$5 million worth of damage to Broome Primary School. That was devastating for the Broome Primary School community. They love that school because it has a lot of history attached to it in their community. Just recently, in December last year, there was a Hakea Prison riot, where two inmates climbed on the roof in protest and three cells were set on fire. Fortunately, that did not lead to an escape, as it did when somebody set fire to a mattress in Greenough and ladders and angle grinders had been left out that the prisoners could use to get through the fence and escape and run amok through Geraldton. Some of those who escaped were quite seriously dangerous offenders. Fortunately, the Hakea riot and mattress fire did not lead to that, but the Greenough one did. Where was the government during all that? It was nowhere. It did not know what to do. It did not have any answers at all.

There was a major drug bust in November last year in Bunbury Regional Prison. I must say that the minister allowed me to visit Bunbury Regional Prison, and I thank him for that. I have to say that the superintendent down there was doing an absolutely fantastic job. She was first rate in her approach to her staff and to how she was trying to prevent drug use in that prison. She told me that every prisoner who is transferred from another prison or first goes into prison is drug tested. She said that the rate of prisoners testing positive for drug use prior to going in was as high as, I think, 90 per cent. Drugs are a big issue in the community and there is a very obvious correlation between drug use in the community and those who end up in jail. We have to ask ourselves: in three years of this McGowan government, what has it done to try to address the drugs issue other than put out nice colourful media releases with the police minister standing behind a big haul of methamphetamine or whatever? That is all well and good; she was supporting the police and standing with them on their drug haul. That is all well and good, but what is the government doing to prevent drug use by the community and to actually attack demand-side drug use? That

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is critically important. I can tell the government where it is failing. This is where the backbench, including you, Acting Speaker, needs to be talking to the ministers and cabinet in their caucus meetings. They should be holding caucus accountable for what it is doing to reduce the demand for drugs by their constituents. I will hazard a guess that the number one thing that parents of teenagers most fear is that their teenage daughter or son will get caught up with methamphetamine and other serious drugs. I think that is the number one concern parents will have because parents understand how devastating it can be if it gets out of control. We also are fully aware that drug use has no socioeconomic boundary. It covers everybody, yet what have we seen from this government in the last three years to address that issue? I am not speaking here now as a politician but as a father. I have seen nothing. I have seen no media messaging on it. I have seen no media campaign on it. I have seen no programs to educate parents and their children on how to broach this problem. Government has literally vacated the space on the number one issue that causes most of the crime in our community. The government has just left it. Members opposite think that getting a drug haul or building another prison is the answer. It is not. They have to attack the demand side of what causes people to get into trouble with the law. They have to approach from that angle and they are not doing that. That is where the government is fundamentally failing. Once people are arrested and locked up, there are all these failures. There were 40 prisoner cells at Bunbury Regional Prison closed due to water leaks, so they did not even build the thing right. That is one thing they did. Another issue in September 2019 that we in Parliament were all very concerned about was when Laurie John Dodd escaped after beating up a police dog and police officers, got himself out of the hospital and was on the run for some time. There were no real answers. In fact, even at the time, the Premier said that he conceded there were real question marks around what went on there. We did not have to be a rocket scientist to work out that Laurie John Dodd was a very dangerous character. I am pretty sure the police would have said, "That is who he is." They would have punched it into their computers in their squad cars. They are now moving to hold all the information on mobile phones, and that will make it even quicker for them to work out how dangerous characters like him are. I am pretty confident the police would have said, "Hey fellows, this guy is dangerous, so you might want to keep a close watch on him while he is at the hospital." The Premier said, "Oh, there are question marks around that." What did the minister say? "We don't know; it's terrible." They blame someone else and, again, we get these failures. McGowan and his ministers attach themselves to the blame game approach to life. That is what they do. No wonder the member for Collie-Preston is going. I can see why he is leaving. Then there was the eastern goldfields security breach.

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: I will continue my remarks about this very —

[Quorum formed.]

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It is great to see a few of the marginal seat backbenchers join us for this debate on the amendment to the Premier's Statement. I was saying earlier that they should enjoy their fourth year and get those CVs well and truly polished up for 2021 because we are coming for their seats, and we are coming with a vengeance! The reason we have our backs up and are keen and motivated is related to the Premier's speech today. It is good to see the Premier in the chamber. In his speech, the Premier used the words "stepping up a gear". I would like to see the Premier step into gear for the people of Western Australia!

Dr A.D. Buti: How long have you been working on that one?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Boom, boom!

We are noticing that no amount of rhetoric from the Premier today can wash away the gloom from the people of Western Australia who are facing an economy that has stagnated under this government's watch, even with the royalty revenue windfalls and even with the GST floor that has been put in place, with all that money going back into the government coffers. It has no plan to create jobs and it has no economic stimulus package, and on this law and order amendment, it has no plan to deal with the methylamphetamine problem from a demand side in the community of Western Australia. The community is hurting because of it. Members on this side of the chamber will be able to explain those things and many more at length in their speeches over the next few days. In our very significant and well thought through and important amendments, such as the one put forward by the member for Dawesville earlier today that we are currently on, the government will learn some valuable lessons. Some government backbenchers can take those lessons with them into their new jobs in 2021, but the others can take those lessons with them into their shadow portfolios when they resume on the benches in 2021. We are here to help. I hope members opposite pay some attention to the advice that we will provide over the next week in this session of Parliament.

There was a security breach last year at Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison. The member for Warren-Blackwood highlighted very eloquently the security issues when going through the main gates of that prison. We have also seen mistakes made. In November 2018, a prisoner was mistakenly released by prison staff at Hakea. During the Greenough prison riot back in July 2018, prisoners were able to set fire to some mattresses. They got hold of

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a couple of ladders lying around and some tools and equipment to be able to cut through the fence and just go on their merry way. Some of them were quite dangerous prisoners, which put that community at risk.

One thing that I found most concerning more locally in this part of Western Australia was that an M4 assault rifle was left in the boot of a car over the weekend outside Hakea Prison.

Mr W.R. Marmion: Really?

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Yes. I found that quite amazing. For those members who are not fully au fait with what assault rifles are, the M4 is a carbine rifle. It is used by special forces all around the world. It is a very high velocity, high-powered rifle that soldiers use in wars. Obviously, the specialist police have them and the specialist guards at the prison have them, but it is concerning that one was left in the boot of a car over a weekend. One would think that the quartermaster, for example, would simply run a bit of an audit and say, "Rifles out for the day, 15. At the end of the day, 15 back. Oh no, one is missing. Where is that one? Who was it assigned to?" A serial number is assigned to the person. Ring that person and ask, "Where is your rifle?" "Oh, left it in my car." "Get it back inside now, mate", not, "Let's just leave it in the car over the weekend." "Oh, we found it and I'll bring it back to work on Monday." How does that work with an assault rifle? That was kind of just brushed over by the government as a one-off. I am sorry; when the Inspector of Custodial Services and others say that they are concerned about corruption in the prison sector, we do not like hearing that assault rifles are being left in the boots of cars over the weekend. When we hear news reports saying, for example, that Hakea Prison is being run by bkie gangs, we do not want to hear that an M4 assault rifle has been left in the boot of a car over a weekend. That means there are breaches of procedures within corrective services that flow back into concerns about community safety, which police have to deal with. That is why I get back to what I said at the start of this amendment speech of mine: the two must work together. Flaws in both systems need to be fixed. If they cannot be fixed, it means the minister or the cabinet are not working hard enough to fix them. It is that simple.

Being a reactive government to problems that happen is not what the people of Western Australia expect. They want a government that is proactive in improving systems and processes so that mistakes are not made, and if people in those organisations are not doing the right thing, they are weeded out. We cannot have a service as important as corrective services, which is trying to prevent recidivism in the prison community and trying to make prisoners safer when they are released back into the community, making mistakes. We cannot afford mistakes. Otherwise, it becomes a revolving door of crime and the prison population continues to rise and the people of Western Australia are continually put at risk. We cannot have that. The assault rifle was one example.

We then had the sex offenders' supervision orders. A fellow called Christopher John Bentley was convicted of drugging and sexually assaulting a teenage babysitter in 2001. He was given social housing ahead of others on the list. That really upset people in the community. Members will remember the Edward Latimer case. He was a serial sex offender who was jailed indefinitely. He was released from prison on 31 July 2019 under a 10-year supervision order, with 52 strict conditions. He breached the order on 7 September. On 9 September, police were notified of the breach by corrective services. It took corrective services two days to inform police. That is another example of these two very important services not talking to each other on a very important issue—a serious serial sex offender. It took until 16 September for Latimer to be arrested—some seven days later. He was back in court on 17 September and was granted bail before being back in court because of another breach on 27 September, and on 1 October he was freed from prison again. We have to ask: what is going wrong? He is a serious serial sex offender who is a danger to the community and was on 52 strict condition orders. The community knows it and the government knows it, but the government is not making sure that the systems are working properly to keep the community safe. While I am on the topic of breaches of supervision orders, in 2018, nine of the state's worst sex monsters who were living in the community under strict conditions were convicted or accused of breaching their court-imposed release orders. That made a headline in a newspaper. In 2017–18, 22 dangerous sex offenders were alleged to have violated the terms of their GPS tracking conditions.

Another issue that became quite a serious situation was that prisoners were assaulting prison guards. The number of assaults on prison staff increased. Western Australia had 344 prisoners per 100 000 of the population, which is the highest rate among the states. Picking up on the member for Dawesville's point about the need to support the Aboriginal community, Western Australia's rate of incarceration of Indigenous children is apparently more than 50 times higher than that of their non-Indigenous peers. On an average day in 2018–19, 93 of the 119 youngsters aged between 10 and 17 detained at Banksia Hill Detention Centre were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. What are we doing to better support that community to keep children out of jail? Can members imagine the drop in the child prison population if we were able to better support the Aboriginal community and gear those kids up to want to learn to get a trade or a skill or go to university?

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MRS A.K. HAYDEN (Darling Range) [7.11 pm]: I join my colleagues in supporting the amendment moved by the member for Dawesville. I remind the house that the amendment is —

and this house condemns the McGowan Labor government for failing to put more police on the street, failing to address the meth crisis as promised and allowing crime to spiral out of control

I apologise in advance to Hansard for my voice.

Mr D.R. Michael interjected.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: Not enough Sherbies!

This is a crucial amendment that the government should not ignore. As members of Parliament, we all survey our communities and ask what their number one, two, three and four issues that matter to them are. The top two issues in our community that keep coming back over and over are the cost of living and crime and community safety. Crime and community safety is always at the top of people's minds, whether it is for themselves, their children, their grandparents or their business. Crime and safety is one of the biggest issues that every Western Australian cares about. That is why this amendment has been moved. This amendment is aimed at getting the government to focus on an area it has been neglecting. I will paraphrase what the Premier said at the end of the Premier's Statement today. It is not a quote because we do not have the *Hansard*, but the Premier said something along the lines that this government is "just getting started". The member for Dawesville said the government has been in office for 1 061 days and has only 396 days of its term left. If the government is only just getting started after 1 061 days, I do not see it getting warmed up within the 396 days that are left, let alone actually achieving anything. It is very scary to think that the Premier thought his closing line in his statement should be that this government is just getting started as it is heading into the last year of its term. The people of Western Australia expected the government to get started the day it was elected, not 1 061 days later. The community deserves an apology. The Premier needs to come in here and apologise to the community because he has been asleep at the wheel and, by his own admission, he is only just getting started in the last year of his term. I think it is absolutely appalling.

The government has not supported our police officers, it has not supported our small business community, it has not supported the staff who work in our businesses, it has not supported our community by ensuring community safety and reducing crime, and it has not supported those in real need—the homeless in our CBD who are suffering and need help with their drug addiction, with getting a home and with getting their life back in order. This government, which is just getting started, has failed. It has failed our police officers by failing to stand behind them and giving them the support it promised to give them at the last election. The government has not given the police the pay rise it promised or the backing it promised by providing more police officers on the beat. The member for Hillarys said that the number of police officers this year is down by 40 officers compared with last year, and the member for North West Central said that the number of police officers in regional WA is down by 95 officers. The government says it is about delivering more police officers and promoting and supporting police officers but where is the proof of the pudding? There is no proof of the pudding because the government is only just starting to do its job.

We know that this government is not delivering when the number one issue for our small business communities, regional communities and families and seniors is crime and safety, yet we see a reduction in the number of, and the support for, police officers. We know the government has failed the people of Western Australia. It is all well and good to have photo opportunities with police officers and to take the glory when drugs are confiscated after a drug haul. That is great, but do members know who did the work? It is the police officers who did the work. They worked hard to track down and get the drugs and lock away the criminals, thereby stopping the drugs from getting onto our streets. We see the Minister for Police taking photo opportunities as though to say, "Aren't we doing a great job!" In the meantime, the government is not resourcing officers or putting more cops on the beat or helping them do their jobs properly. The member for North West Central also said that the government is asking the police to do more with less. We are asking our officers to do overtime but they are being given less money. Give them the time, the money and more officers to get out on the street and protect our communities.

Retail crime, which has spiked by 37 per cent, is one of the biggest issues facing our small business community. Retail crime also adds another cost on our small business community. Our small businesses are already doing it tough and have their backs to the wall. With the increase in the cost of living they have fewer customers coming through their doors in addition to the retail crime spike of 37 per cent. People are coming in and stealing goods, and small businesses are subject to antisocial behaviour, which is keeping customers away from their doors. Staff are being threatened and turning up to unsafe workplaces. What is the government doing? It has fewer officers on the beat to tackle the spike in retail crime. We saw a bandaid fix when the government put more officers into the CBD over the Christmas festive season for the Christmas lights walk. The government did not employ new officers; it dragged them from other areas and put them in the CBD. What did that do? It left other areas of the state vulnerable

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because those police officers were pulled out of their usual area of duty and sent to the CBD as a bandaid fix so that people could walk around and feel safe when looking at the Christmas lights. Once that was over, the police officers returned to their jobs and the city returned to the way it was when fewer officers were on the beat. Before Christmas, I spent time walking around the CBD talking to small business operators and larger chains to find out what the feeling was out there. I saw “For Lease” signs up on windows shop after shop in Hay Street Mall and knew that the offices in our high-rise buildings were empty. People have also turned away from the CBD because of the antisocial behaviour and the homeless people asleep in the Hay Street and Murray Street Malls and within the foyers of our businesses.

It was in the middle of the day and people were lying there, fast asleep in front of shop entries. I spoke to a few staff, and their biggest issue was that they do not feel safe at work. One gentleman, from OMG Coffee and Toastie, rocks up to work early so that he can get there before his one other staff member. He does this because he knows it is unsafe for her to walk into the business and unlock it, as homeless people use his shopfront as a shelter at night time. When he took on that business, he was overwhelmed with how many people were sleeping out the front of his business. He felt unsafe. He would then park on the side of the road out the front of his shop at 5.30 in the morning to get in there—so that he felt safe and had a vehicle as his back-up—and try to move these homeless people on. Some would get aggressive. So what did he do? He knew he could not get any help. He then thought that the best thing to do is help these people. He started giving them coffee and food in return for them moving on and leaving the street so he could then open his business and get customers. For a coffee shop owner to spend \$300 to \$400 a week is a big chunk out of his profit, if there is any left for him at the end of the week. That is a big chunk. He works from 5.30 in the morning to late in the afternoon, dealing with homeless people sleeping out the front who he then has to feed and give coffee to to coax them away from his door. His customers would not come to his door until they were moved. He was stuck between a rock and a hard place. He is a very nice guy and his name is Al. He is a very nice bloke. He said, “They’re human beings and we’ve got to do what we can do, but I can’t afford to keep doing this.” Was there any assistance for him? No. Were the police moving these people on? No. Did the police have somewhere to move them on to? No. Were there enough police on the street to act on this? No. This government is not supporting a small business owner who is getting up, leaving home, employing staff at a coffee shop, having to then take it on himself to pay homeless people to move on. Small business people are very innovative and think outside the square. He came up with the idea for a pay it forward campaign. He got his customers to start donating coffees or toasties into the fund to help him pay to move these homeless people from his shopfront. Western Australians are very generous. That seems to be working quite well for him, but it should not be up to him to tackle it as a business owner. That should not be his problem, and the onus should not be sitting on him. The government of the day should work out the problem and fix it, resourcing our police officers so that they can pick these people up and move them on to the place that they need to go to for help, for services and to get a roof over their head. I am not saying that they should be picked up and thrown in jail, I am saying that the police should pick them up and take them to where they can get help. Do not leave the issue for small businesses to have to find a solution so they can keep their doors open every day.

If members are looking for a good coffee, he makes a mean coffee at OMG Coffee on Pier Street. Go there, check him out and help sponsor his campaign. That will be a great way for members to help small businesses.

When I was out there, I spoke to people at other stores, including Mecca Cosmetics. In Parliament last year I asked the Minister for Small Business whether he was aware that the Mecca chain store in Hay Street was closing. His answer to me was, “Don’t be silly, they’ve opened up around the corner. You don’t know what you’re talking about. It’s actually not my problem. Why are you asking me? That’s a problem for the Minister for Police.” He deflected any responsibility to support or deal with business. I know he is the minister for more than just small business, but he does not seem to look after the business portfolio at all. He should put his tourism hat on and support businesses to support our tourism people who are walking through our city seeing the standard of safety that it is at the moment, and the antisocial behaviour. When I spoke to some Mecca staff, they said they had fears for staff. I quote from a 19 October article in *The West Australian* —

Fears for staff safety have prompted one of Australia’s largest beauty retailers to shut their shop in Hay Street mall.

Staff at Mecca Cosmetics said the store, near the corner of Barrack and Hay streets, would not be renewing its lease next quarter because of antisocial behaviour near the business.

The staff I spoke to there said that people would come in, cause havoc in the shop, threaten and abuse the staff, steal goods and leave. These staff said that they are retail and they do not go to work to put up with that. They do not go to work to feel unsafe. They go to work to earn their award rate as a retail shoppie. They need to get their money, they are happy to do their job, but they do not go to work to be abused and put up with antisocial behaviour. Their customers would come in, get abused and leave. The minister, who actually said the business

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is opening around the corner, needs to know his cosmetics. It is a completely different store and product, and that store has shut down and moved out of Hay Street. Large chain stores are moving out of the CBD and going to our shopping precincts for a number of reasons, but one of them is antisocial behaviour and the safety of their staff. The role of government is to provide community safety. The role of government is to provide an environment for businesses to thrive so that they can employ staff, not to create an environment in which staff feel unsafe to go to work, customers feel unsafe to go to the shop and the businesses start losing money. That is the wrong environment. That is the environment that this government is delivering for our small businesses and our retailers.

One of the other places is Valleygirl, a fashion chain opposite Mecca Cosmetica on Hay Street Mall, and in the same article, the staff there said —

“We’re targeted a lot as well. They come in and call us names. The store is pretty long so often we don’t see the thefts until it’s too late, but when we do, they do get quite aggressive,” she said.

“I don’t want to get punched, it’s not my job.”

This is what people are doing. They are going into the city in retail, feeling fear that they are going to get punched at work. Of course they are not going to stop anybody from stealing. Another place is Temt. The article states —

... a staff member revealed it was not just “businesses near the corner (of Barrack and Hay streets)” that were hit.

“Even we’re targeted.

They said that people would sometimes come in and abuse them or their customers, be obnoxious, or just sit outside the shop and discourage customers going in. These stories are happening over and over. I point out that it is not just within our CBD. The City of Armadale is having exactly the same problem. Jull Street is the hub of the shopping retail sector in Armadale. Business owners there are getting the same problem. These are family businesses—mum-and-dad businesses. They have the same problem with antisocial behaviour. Kids and young adults on drugs are coming into the shop, threatening their customers, abusing staff and robbing from the shop.

Retail crime is a real issue for businesses, and until this government realises that we cannot keep taking advantage of our business community, we will never see our economy change. Our economy starts with our small businesses. They employ nearly 50 per cent of private sector employees in WA. They need to thrive so that they can continue to employ people. If they do not thrive, they do not employ people and we will have a downward spiral. Business confidence in WA is at an all-time low right now. Retail confidence is at a low. WA is the worst retail trader in the country. We need to do something about it, and it starts with cleaning up our streets, getting people off the street, reducing crime and making people feel safe.

At the end of July last year, we went to Kalgoorlie to visit the member for Kalgoorlie. I also took the time to walk the Kalgoorlie retail strip and talk to people there. Only every third shop was open; the other two were closed, with for lease signs on them. The biggest issue facing customers was antisocial behaviour and retail crime. A team of council rangers walk around in their purple shirts trying to keep the streets safe, because the police do not have the resources to do so. The local council now has its rangers walking the street because the police do not have the manpower to do their job. People are walking into shops and blatantly stealing from them. They know that they can steal up to \$500 worth of goods without getting in too much trouble; they get a slap on the wrist and are sent out again. They are not charged for stealing items under \$500, so they walk in and are blatant about stealing—they call out \$100, \$200, \$400, \$500 and out they go.

Dr D.J. Honey: It’s teaching them arithmetic.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: It is teaching them arithmetic, but it is killing our small businesses.

The Premier said today that the government is just getting started. That is obvious, because retail crime, theft and antisocial behaviour has got worse under this government. That is disgraceful, and all government members should be hanging their heads in shame. The government is just getting started 1 061 days after coming to office and with only 396 days left before the election! I do not hold out much hope for the community of Western Australia on the government getting anything done before the election. The government may go out and try to buy a few votes, but it is a little too late. People will remember that this government did nothing for 1 061 days. As the Premier said himself, it is just getting started. People will remember.

MRS M.H. ROBERTS (Midland — Minister for Police) [7.31 pm]: It would appear that the member for Darling Range does not understand a simple expression. What the Premier did today was outline that our government has done more things—about three times as many things—in just three years than the other lot did in

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eight and a half years. We have done three times as much in three years as they did in eight and a half years. The Premier went on to say that we have so much more to do.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Dawesville, I will call people if they interrupt. Everyone else was heard in silence and I would appreciate it if the minister is heard in silence.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: That is right, member for Dawesville; your leader set the tone when she said that she would not accept interjections, so if members opposite do not accept my interjections, I do not intend to accept theirs. I have 20 minutes and I intend to use it.

What have members opposite learnt over the break? They had plenty of time to do a bit of research. They have staff and resources, but they are lazy. What we learnt today is that they either do not understand the crime statistics or are being deliberately misleading, that they either do not understand that we have engaged over 150 more police officers or are being deliberately misleading, and that they either do not understand that we have increased the police budget or are being deliberately misleading. I will take members back in time a little. It seems a long time ago, but it is really not that long ago that the Leader of the Opposition was the Minister for Police and Deputy Premier of this state. I will go back in time and quote from an ABC online news article by Andrew O'Connor headed "Curbing Perth's summer crime wave: Police launch Operation Celsius to 'flood' suburbs". Members opposite stood up today and said that Operation Heat Shield is a bandaid solution and that they do not support the use of extra resources over the summer period. However, let us look at just how small their bandaid was. In principle, the Leader of the Opposition does support this operation because she did the same thing when she was minister; it was called Operation Celsius. The only problem was that Operation Celsius did not go for six months, as Operation Heat Shield does, but for about six weeks. Operation Celsius was given a budget not of \$5 million but of about \$1 million, and it did not deliver 55 000 extra policing hours like we are delivering; it was about a fifth of that. Let us look at the state of play back then. This article was posted on 7 December 2016, just a few short months before the state election in 2017. It says here —

WA Police have launched a pre-emptive strike against the traditional summer surge in crime, with a series of integrated operations targeting hotspots for offences across Perth.

Officers have been battling to contain double-digit increases in crime after elevated summer levels spilled over into the rest of the year.

Basically, it reiterates that under the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Scarborough, we had month after month of double-digit increases in crime. The article goes on to say —

Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan said he believed the combined approach using traffic officers, general police and specialist squads should prove effective.

"This is a high impact strategy.

Members opposite have been saying that we are just transferring people from one suburb to another. Of course, that is what occurred under them. The article quotes Karl O'Callaghan as saying —

"Tomorrow we'll move into another suburb and we'll flood that suburb with resources and we'll do the same sort of work."

Called Operation Celsius, the campaign has been launched two weeks earlier than the normal Christmas road traffic campaign in an effort to head off the summer crime rise.

This kind of operation was not invented by the coalition in government.

Point of Order

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: I notice that the minister is reading from her phone. I am curious about the previous ruling on reading from a phone and using that as an official document. I am not sure where we are at with that.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): I will seek clarification.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Further to that point of order, I point out that this is an ABC online news article; it is the same as holding up an article that I had printed out.

The ACTING SPEAKER: There is no point of order, member for Dawesville, because the minister did actually point out that she was looking at an online news article when she started.

Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP: Further to the point of order, would it not be prudent to perhaps inspect the minister's phone to ensure that that is what she is reading from?

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The ACTING SPEAKER: No. On this occasion I can see a picture on the screen from here, so I will accept the minister's explanation.

Debate Resumed

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

I think the member for Dawesville is perhaps embarrassed about having moved this amendment to the question in the first place, because he and the opposition have ended up with egg all over their faces. Although they have been complaining, disappointed, angry and whatever about Operation Heat Shield, in which officers have been doing a fantastic job, the fact is that they had their own mini pathetic version of it when they were in government. Summer crime strategies are not new. I think I launched the first of them during the time of the Gallop government, because we acknowledged back then that there is often a spike in crime over summer. This is not a uniquely Perth or Australian thing—people generally spend time outdoors during summer. When there is good weather, people spend more time socialising, drinking and so forth outdoors. This happens right round the world. In winter periods, people are indoors and are not celebrating as much—windows are closed and so forth. People tend to get into a bit more conflict in the summer period, and there are often a lot of great events organised then.

Let me just recap, since I was interrupted. It was acknowledged back in December 2016 that there had been continuous double-digit increases in crime under the opposition leader. The previous government launched a six-week campaign, not a six-month campaign. In fact, members opposite have done so little research on what Operation Heat Shield actually involves that some asked what will happen when the money runs out at the end of February. The money is not running out at the end of February; the money will continue until the end of May. That is nonsense.

Let us look at where we were at the end of 2016 under the former Minister for Police. What else did we learn today when the member for Scarborough got to her feet? We learned that she thinks that a downturn in the economy, and an increase in the number of poor and unemployed people, somehow leads to an increase in crime. I think that was the start of her argument. We will get to the crime figures in a moment, but perhaps the member for Scarborough will be able to explain why, during an upturn in the economy, there was a double-digit increase in crime. She went on to say something that is bleedingly obvious—that there is an association between drug and meth use, and crime. The only problem is that the member for Scarborough has never had a solution to the meth crisis, and she did not provide one today. She has never had a solution for driving crime down. When the member for Scarborough was Minister for Police and had the opportunity to do something about it, she had no plan and no commitment to increasing police numbers, and no plan to driving down crime.

I will tell members what happened with meth. In 2009, 15 per cent of Perth watch house detainees tested positive to a methamphetamine urine analysis. In 2016, when the member for Scarborough was Minister for Police, 60 per cent of Perth watch house detainees tested positive to meth. Between 2009 and 2016, there was a 50 per cent increase in assault, a 70 per cent increase in threatening behaviour, a 31 per cent increase in burglary, a 39 per cent increases in motor vehicle theft, and a 42 per cent increase in stealing. According to results from the National Wastewater Drug Monitoring Program, meth use in Western Australia peaked in December 2016. That was the opposition's record in government. The opposition still does not have a plan. Opposition members have used some figures that they think suit their purpose, but, by and large, those figures are totally and completely inaccurate.

Let us think back to all the things members opposite did when they were in government. The member for Scarborough cut the number of metropolitan policing districts to just four. Take Kalamunda, for example. The member for Scarborough's number one move was to close Kalamunda Police Station. Few people in Perth were more poorly served during the coalition's time in government than the people of Kalamunda. No doubt that is why they got rid of their former Liberal member. On top of that, Kalamunda was put into a mega district. That meant that police officers had to come from as far away as Wembley and the city to respond to incidents in the hills—be it Kalamunda, Lesmurdie or whatever. Those people were incredibly poorly serviced during that time, because too many officers were spending too much time travelling from one end of the metropolitan area to the other to service those communities. People might have forgotten that as some kind of bad nightmare.

The former government also split the police force into two teams—a local policing team and a response team. Not only was the number of officers in the response team halved, but also they had to travel from one end of the metro area to the other. Therefore, it is hardly a surprise that there was a double-digit increase in crime during that period. People in Ellenbrook and Armadale were crying out for a 24-hour police station, with petitions and protests. That fell on deaf ears. The former government had the opportunity to do something about that, but it did not. We committed to doing that at the election. In the first few months after we were elected, we established three new 24-hour police stations, in Canning Vale, Armadale and Ellenbrook, so that the people in those areas could be provided with the same level of service as people in the city, Fremantle, Mirrabooka and Armadale.

Mr T.J. Healy: Thank you!

Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Zak Kirkup; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Mr Peter Katsambanis; Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Vincent Catania; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mrs Michelle Roberts; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Dr David Honey; Ms Sabine Winton

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: We also put in place some extended-hour police stations. Major police stations in heavily populated areas had been closing at four o'clock in the afternoon. The member for Scarborough's response to that was to say, "That's not for government to interfere in." She did not support the extra 24-hour police stations or the extended-hour police stations that we put in place in areas like Forrestfield, when people were crying out for that, and when the nearby Kalamunda Police Station had been closed. We still have not heard from the Liberal Party whether, if and when it gets back into office, it will close those 24-hour police stations and close all police stations at four o'clock in the afternoon. That may be the opposition's model, but so far we have not heard a plan.

I want to make a few things clear when it comes to police resourcing. We have already committed to and delivered 148 extra police. We have made a \$126 million injection to deal with the methamphetamine issue. That has enabled 100 additional officers to target meth use, and 20 other police staff. We have put in place 25 additional officers for the regional enforcement unit, policing our major country roads. The road toll in regional Western Australia is plainly unacceptable. We have put in place an additional 13 full-time equivalent police officers to assist with the staffing of those 24-hour and extended-hour police stations. We have put in place an additional 10 officers for the family and domestic violence monitoring unit. That is a total of 148 officers.

Unfortunately, when the opposition looks at police numbers, it plucks a number from here and a number from there and compares one moment in time with another. It is true that 150 officers left the police force under our redundancy program. However, when members opposite were in government, they had a much larger redundancy program. That program was funded by the police force. The redundancy payments for those officers came out of the police budget. That is how members opposite did things when they were in government. That is very different from how we did it. We got an allocation from Treasury to pay for those redundancies. All those officers are being replaced. Members opposite might say that we have lost some senior officers and we now have only junior constables. I have spoken to the Commissioner of Police. The majority of officers who were made redundant were not on frontline duties. Many of them were older or carrying issues that meant that they were not able to serve on the frontline. The commissioner is very happy about being able to recruit new people at the Western Australia Police Academy who are fit and able to serve on the frontline. It has worked out for everyone. Officers who were looking for redundancy or looking to retire and did not want to continue to work and be on the frontline were able to take a redundancy, not out of the police budget, but allocated from Treasury, and we have managed to recruit new officers in their stead. The fact of the matter is that on 28 February 2017, the police headcount was 6 042. On 7 November, following that graduation from the police academy, the police head count was 6 885. That is an increase of 153 officers—not the 148 that we promised, but 153. That is because we need to take into account natural attrition and ensure that is covered off. It is a nonsense for people to suggest that somehow we have not increased police numbers; we have done that.

Operation Heat Shield has been getting amazing results. It has not been a matter of taking officers from one end of town to the other. That shows how little people opposite understand. It has been about providing additional overtime hours in every region.

About \$1 million of that \$5 million has been allocated to regional Western Australia. That means that if there is an issue in Bunbury and the Commissioner of Police or the superintendent wants to allocate extra resources to it, they can offer overtime hours to local officers in Bunbury. The same applies in Geraldton. The superintendent there can allocate overtime to officers in Geraldton, or if not in Geraldton, to officers in Meekatharra or somewhere else in the midwest. The same applies in the Kimberley and Pilbara, and in the metropolitan area. Each metropolitan district is able to decide how to best allocate those resources for their purposes.

I will just finish with the crime statistics. The amendment was moved by the member for Mandurah, so let me look at the Mandurah region.

Mr D.A. Templeman: No—Dawesville.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I am sorry about that major insult, member for Mandurah.

Several members interjected.

Mrs M.H. ROBERTS: I have only a couple of minutes left in which to compare the crime statistics between 1 July 2019 and 31 January 2020 under our government with the last seven months of the former government, between July 2015 and January 2016. In 2015–16, there were 1 445 family assault offences. That figure is now down by 16.5 per cent, to 1 384, which means that there have been 239 fewer family assaults. The figure for non-family assaults in 2015–16 was 724, and that is down now to 655, a 9.5 per cent decrease. The figure for threatening behaviour family is down from 200 to 196, a two per cent decrease; and, threatening behaviour non-family was 203, down now by 29 to 174, a 14.3 per cent decrease. Here is a big one. Under the former government there were 2 527 burglaries, but that is down by a massive 692 to just 1 835, a 27.4 per cent decrease. If we break that down into dwelling and non-dwelling burglaries, the figure for dwelling burglaries in 2015–16 was 1 984, which is now

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down to 1 406, a 29.1 per cent decrease; and for non-dwelling burglaries the figure in 2015–16 was 543, and now down to 424, a 21 per cent decrease. Stealing a motor vehicle—during the former government's time the figure was 592; in our time, 475. That is down by 117 or 23 per cent. For stealing, the figure was 5 595, and it is now down to 5 415—a 3.2 per cent decrease. The figure for property damage under the former government in 2015–16 was 2 301. That is now down by 691 offences to 1 610, a 27.2 per cent decrease. There have been massive decreases in crime statistics since the former government was in office.

What those opposite do is compare a couple of months here with a couple of months there—small samples. The figures I have just read out are for the whole of the Mandurah district. Any crime is unacceptable, but these figures show that crime is massively down since the Liberal Party's time in office.

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Armadale, I will call you if you keep talking.

Division

Amendment put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Mr I.C. Blayney) casting his vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (16)

Mr I.C. Blayney
Mr V.A. Catania
Ms M.J. Davies
Mrs L.M. Harvey

Dr D.J. Honey
Mr P.A. Katsambanis
Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup
Mr A. Krsticevic

Mr S.K. L'Estrange
Mr W.R. Marmion
Mr J.E. McGrath
Mr D.C. Nalder

Mr K.M. O'Donnell
Mr D.T. Redman
Mr P.J. Rundle
Mrs A.K. Hayden (*Teller*)

Noes (33)

Ms L.L. Baker
Dr A.D. Buti
Mr J.N. Carey
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke
Mr R.H. Cook
Ms J. Farrer
Ms J.M. Freeman
Mr T.J. Healy
Mr M. Hughes

Mr W.J. Johnston
Mr D.J. Kelly
Ms S.F. McGurk
Mr S.A. Millman
Mr Y. Mubarakai
Mr M.P. Murray
Mrs L.M. O'Malley
Mr P. Papalia
Mr S.J. Price

Mr D.T. Punch
Mr J.R. Quigley
Mrs M.H. Roberts
Ms C.M. Rowe
Ms R. Saffioti
Ms A. Sanderson
Ms J.J. Shaw
Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Mr C.J. Tallentire

Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr R.R. Whitby
Ms S.E. Winton
Mr B.S. Wyatt
Mr D.R. Michael (*Teller*)

Pairs

Mr R.S. Love
Ms L. Mettam
Dr M.D. Nahan

Mr F.M. Logan
Mr M. McGowan
Ms M.M. Quirk

Amendment thus negatived.

Consideration Resumed

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [7.58 pm]: It is a great pleasure to be the second opposition speaker at such a late time on the first day back for 2020. I am going to talk about some of the issues in my shadow portfolios and some of the issues in my electorate. Before I do, I reflect that this is the final quarter of a four-year term. We are nearly there. This is a fairly important year in which the government must demonstrate that it has done something over the last four years in office. When the government came into office in 2017, it looked very successful. It won lots of seats. I think at the time it won 41 seats. It lost one along the way.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: Darling Range.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Darling Range—the government now has 40 seats, a massive number of members in the Legislative Assembly. Largely, the election campaign was run on the promise of no new taxes. That was pretty appealing to the electorate and it was not a bad election promise to run on. The other thing that gained a lot of momentum was four new railway tracks, with one to Yanchep and one all the way down to Byford. I know that area quite well. As the member for Armadale knows, there is quite difficult topography to get through down there, but the government is extending the rail line to Byford. There is also the Thornlie–Cockburn line and of course the line to Ellenbrook.

We sit here after nearly three years and look at the first promise, which was for no new taxes. The first thing the Labor government did when it got into power was to increase the fixed charge cost of power to customers by

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10.9 per cent. Straight away there was a 10.9 per cent increase in the cost of power. The government also increased water charges and, indeed, introduced a sliding scale. The member for Cottesloe raises this quite often. The sliding scale is such that a large water consumer pays way above the marginal cost of the production of the water. People who have a large house and may have an extended family with lots of visitors and cousins living in their house have more people in the house and so use more water. It is okay if they are paying the same rate, but they are not. They are paying an inflated rate well above the marginal cost. That is not very good. The government also tried to increase the gold royalty from 2.5 per cent to 3.75 per cent in its very first year. The government also cleverly raised the cost of mining licences to cover \$10 million that it was normally putting in for the exploration incentive scheme. There was another cost to the mining industry. In the last few years, the government has also increased the mine safety levy. The government has gone pretty poorly with the first promise of no new taxes—not too good.

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I will take the member for Cottesloe's interjection.

Dr D.J. Honey: A bit of a miss!

Mr W.R. MARMION: The unfortunate thing is that it has been well publicised that the cost to consumers has been about \$850 a year over the last three years. The government will have to try to explain why it has done that to the people of Western Australia when it promised no new taxes. The government did not say to read the fine print.

I turn to the four rail projects. I inquired with our shadow Minister for Transport and she assures me that not one centimetre of rail track has been laid yet. I think the government has really got to get a rattle on in the next 12 months to try to get some railway line out, because one thing we have been hammered with by the other side is that the Labor Party builds railway lines and we do not. Actually, the last lot of rail track that was built was the line to Butler, and that was built in our term. To deliver that amount of railway line, the government really has to move. The government wants to claim the Forrestfield line, but it knows full well that it was a Liberal project.

What will be the Labor Party's communication strategy for 2021—"Trust us this time; no new taxes"; "We will build some rail if you give us another chance"; or "Thanks for paying \$850 per household to help Labor keep the budget deficit at exactly the same level it was when we got into power"? In fact, it is not. Actual net debt since we left government has gone up. I have the data right here. That is another clever strategy—because it is a strategy. It is all about communication and selling ideas or putting a spin on what has been going on. The government talked about the debt rate in the forward estimates of being up near \$40 billion. It was actually \$39.7 billion, but the actual net debt was \$31.964 billion. That is basically what the net debt was in 2016–17. That was some months into the Labor government's term. That is a bit lower than what we predicted in our budget estimates. What was net debt in June 2019? It was \$37.54 billion. Just looking at the figures, to me \$37.54 billion looks higher than \$31.964 billion; that is an increase. In the time Labor Party has been in government net debt has gone up. That message is not well publicised by the media, but the government has to explain that, because it is saying it has done a great job on net debt, but in actual fact net debt has gone up.

I turn to the state of play in Western Australia and the electoral pendulum. There are eight seats with a margin below three per cent. The Labor Party has eight seats held by less than three per cent. They are Joondalup, Kingsley, Jandakot, Murray–Wellington, Pilbara, Burns Beach, Kalamunda and Bicton. They are the eight seats. We just need a 2.9 per cent swing and they are in jeopardy. If the swing was greater than that, up to 5.8 per cent, we could win another three seats and then the Labor Party would be in great trouble, because that would give us 11 seats and give us an opportunity to take over government. I just thought I would start off with the state of play.

I now want to touch on some my portfolio issues, and I will start with mines and petroleum, because that is the major one.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Local government is pretty important.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I have got that; it is coming up, but I will start with mines and petroleum. Because there are a few local government issues in my electorate, I might concentrate on local government in my electorate. To turn to mining issues, there are probably two main concerns to the mining industry. First of all, the gold industry is very concerned that the Labor Party may go back to the possibility of increasing royalties from the current rate of 2.5 per cent to 3.75 per cent. I heard the Treasurer say "early days" when he lost out on that, but it is still on his radar. I think the commentary of late has been not during this term, but I have not heard the commentary that in the next term of government, if the Labor Party happens to win another term, that it will not look at hitting the goldminers again. I would be interested to see how the Labor Party goes on that. The gold industry has done very well. It is a great thing for Western Australia that we have a commodity like gold, which keeps going when things are tough, so it is important that we support the gold industry. The other concern the mining industry has is the delays in approval processes. I know the government is working with Streamline WA. The responsible minister is not here, but I have been involved in lots of iterations of things such as Streamline WA in various decades, and

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I must say it is very, very hard to get departments to come on board to improve the approvals process. Indeed, I ask questions on notice to get data and because the clocks been stopped, we do not get decent data to show the amount of time that mining companies take to get approvals. The main concern with approvals relates to environmental approvals and Aboriginal heritage. There is some good news about the environment. Environmental approvals by the commonwealth are worse than those of the state, so I give the government that. There has been some improvement in the timing; however, as the name says, there needs to be streamlining to cut the red tape in approvals.

I now touch on the Construction Training Fund, which used to be the Building and Construction Industry Training Fund. I think it has now been changed to just the Construction Training Fund. There is a lot of uncertainty about that. The issue with bringing in the mining industry—one person knows this area more than anyone else, that is why I am looking over to the member for Forrestfield—is how we define what part of the construction work of a liquefied natural gas project comes under new Construction Training Fund, because LNG is tricky. I have been to briefings on this and there have been a number of papers breaking down an LNG project to work out what elements the government will charge a levy on. There is that issue, and it has gone on for over three years. The people trying to work it out are not as knowledgeable as the industry, so it will be tricky to fix. The other thing is that if the government ends up getting more money from the mining industry than it does from the building and construction industry, it would be reasonable to think that the board membership, the composition of members who make up ideas about where the training money should go, should be pro rata on what the contribution is. There is a shortage of mining engineers in the mining industry, and one of the big areas that probably cuts across mining more, but also still the construction industry, is the shortage of heavy machinery fitters, turners and mechanics. There is a definite shortage in that area at the moment; indeed, they can almost write their own price for a job. That is my comment on the fund.

I touched on the exploration incentive scheme earlier. It is now 100 per cent contributed to by industry. It used to work as an incentive whereby the state government co-funded a drilling program. Of the \$10 million that the state government had for exploration incentives, between \$5 million and \$6 million would go to a co-funded drilling program but now the whole \$10 million is recouped by an increase in the cost of mining licences and mining tenements. The clever little trick with that is that it does not all go to the co-funded drilling program. It is a terrific program even though the mining industry is paying for it. The mining industry also pays for the contribution that used to go to geological surveys and the payment of Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety staff, who would normally be paid from the consolidated account. One would hope that the money—let us say, \$4 million—that goes to mines and petroleum actually goes towards geological surveys because geological survey data is fundamental and important for future exploration. One would hope that the money goes towards those surveys and is not siphoned off into other areas of the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety.

There is another problem when mining tenement fees are increased because council rates are based on mining tenement licences. The poor old small mining companies—the big ones can probably handle it—and small exploration companies have the added cost of increased local government rates. As the member for Forrestfield would know, some operations are miles and miles away from the council and rubbish trucks do not pick up their rubbish and they have to maintain their own roads so they are not getting very good value; indeed, they are now paying more rates. That has slipped under the radar but I assure members that the mining industry knows what has been going on.

I will give the Labor government one pat on the back. It has continued funding the Norman Moore—instigated Mineral Research Institute of WA, which is a very good program that started with \$5 million per annum. It conducts applied research; that is, research that levers off industry and is not way out there, “Hopefully, you’ll find something.” Rather, the research considers how to better find minerals. A lot of council people who approve it do not take a fee. The board does it mostly pro bono and comprises experienced miners who select the projects. It is great that that is continuing.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr W.R. MARMION: The Mining Rehabilitation Fund is a terrific program that was brought in by the Liberal government. It was actually my project but I have to give Norman Moore credit because he got the ball rolling on it. It came into operation when I was the minister during a difficult time in the industry. At the time, \$1.2 billion worth of bonds was tied up just in case something went wrong with the environment. It was a conditional bond that was cashed out with the banks. I know that some people from the banking industry might say that some mining companies may not have had the cash but I understand that it was mostly cash in the banks. The banks probably suffered from this. Nearly \$1.2 billion was freed up and given back to the mining companies and for a lot of mining companies, that kept them going. I remember getting a lot of criticism from the then shadow Minister for Mines and Petroleum, particularly when it first came in. It generates about \$30 million per annum. Of course, when the fund started, it did not have anything in it but after a year it had \$30 million. The Ellendale Diamond Mine went

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into receivership, which created an environmental concern over its project. The then shadow minister said that it would cost \$30 million to rehabilitate so all the money in the mining rehabilitation fund would be lost in one go. That has not happened; in fact, it now has \$182 million. Treasury has a nice little trust fund of \$182 million and I think \$5.2 million has been spent on rehabilitation. I guess Treasury does not have a big incentive for rehabilitation because that fund is nicely placed to offset any debt. That is quite a good program. We have to keep an eye on what rehabilitation is going on. I will quickly touch on a couple of my other shadow portfolios before I turn to local government issues.

Science is a really important portfolio. When Labor got into power in 2001, Geoff Gallop made the science portfolio the responsibility of the Premier—that is how important he viewed it. It is becoming more important, not that it sits under the Premier anymore. When I was on the Education and Health Standing Committee, we visited a number of schools and it became clear that we must address the teaching of science and IT in schools. We rely on the schools to do this. We need to embed science education in our schools because if we do not, we will not have future Western Australian scientists and engineers. One of the barriers to having good science education in Western Australia is that the teachers are not skilled enough to present it and to present in a way that is exciting, not boring. We need exciting teachers to explain the fundamentals of science and how exciting science can be.

Mr D.A. Templeman: Someone like you!

Mr W.R. MARMION: Yes, that is right! Actually, I am not as good a scientist as the member for Cottesloe, but that sort of ilk. We need teachers who emanate enthusiasm when they talk about science.

The other barriers are the need for apparatus and gear to conduct experiments and broadband capacity. We found that some students in regional schools in particular were making slow progress because the broadband capacity was so slow that they could not use their computers. Someone who uses their computer a lot, such as the member for Dawesville, would find that most frustrating. Every subject these days, even English literature, at which I was not very good, requires using the internet.

I turn to defence. Defence WA was a smart, clever and tricky initiative of the Labor government and involved expenditure on television advertisements to promote the interests of WA in getting the full-cycle docking contract. What was the purpose of that?

Dr D.J. Honey: They all secretly live in Western Australia!

Mr W.R. MARMION: The government tried to sell to the Western Australian audience the need for WA to have 100 per cent of the full-cycle docking contract, the six Collins-class submarine recent contracts and the six more that are coming on. There are HR issues with this. The people who do the maintenance might not want to move to Western Australia because their kids are happy at their school. The government tried to sell the idea of 100 per cent to the community of Western Australia—"If we don't get 100 per cent of the whole full-cycle docking, we are hard done by." The public of Western Australia can see through that.

Dr D.J. Honey: I think it sounds like spin.

Mr W.R. MARMION: It does sound like spin. I turn to local government issues; it is a difficult area. I get the Minister for Local Government's well-constructed letters, explaining how he does and does not —

Mr D.A. Templeman: I write them myself!

Mr W.R. MARMION: I can tell, because there is not a lot in them!

Mr D.A. Templeman: They're carefully crafted!

Mr W.R. MARMION: They are carefully crafted!

The comments I am getting, not from local governments but from the broader industries of local government, are that the department is fairly busy with reviews and reviews of reviews, and that with its limited staff, the reviews are taking too long. The City of Perth one is just an example —

Mr D.A. Templeman: That's a panel inquiry. That's nothing to do with the department.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Okay, so they are separate —

Mr D.A. Templeman: That's a legal judicial inquiry that we have no control over, as we shouldn't, because it is a legal process.

Mr W.R. MARMION: What about control over the time line?

Mr D.A. Templeman: It is a legal process undertaken by the panel inquiry. Are you asking me to influence the outcome of that?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Certainly not. Nevertheless, there are other reviews going on —

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Mr D.A. Templeman: The review of the Local Government Act.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Yes, and the policy people are sort of the same people, the skilled people. They have a fairly large workload, and maybe that is just the bubble we get at this time. I just pass that on.

In the remaining seven minutes, I will touch on a couple of electoral issues. The main electoral issues in the City of Nedlands and the City of Subiaco are to do with their planning schemes. Both cities are concerned that the Minister for Planning has imposed upon them schemes that they are unhappy with and that they did not have much of a role in choosing. I turn to Subiaco first. Subiaco actually went through a massive process. It consulted with the community, held many forums, got lots of submissions and developed a scheme that was a modification of the scheme that the Western Australian Planning Commission imposed upon it, and was passed unanimously by the council. It went through that process and sent it up to the minister. The minister then got her red pen out—I do not understand why she did this; some 140 individual properties were affected—and upscaled some areas from R40 to R100, to give one example. Once she did that—we are talking about Subiaco—the plan went back to the council for endorsement. That was it; no correspondence was entered into. She basically hung the council and, indeed, the mayor, out to dry. The mayor of Subiaco went through this process. She ran against me as the Labor candidate in the last election and went through a hard process and took a lot of criticism from the City of Subiaco, and ended up with a modified plan. The city took it up to the minister, and the minister just had to say, “Well done, City of Subiaco”, and tick it off, but she did not. I have no idea why. The minister is not here, but I am hoping that one day she will explain in this Parliament why she got her red pen out.

To give another example, there is a house in Waylen Road, just one street back from the railway line, that was zoned R15. All those houses along the railway line were originally zoned R15 and they were upscaled to R40. The residents were quite happy with that, and the red pen went from R40 to R100. The topography makes it worse; it means there is the possibility of a four or five-storey building overlooking a small R15 house. That caused a lot of angst in Subiaco and it is just one example.

I turn now to Nedlands, and it was exactly the same process. It is fair to say that Nedlands probably did not engage as much as Subiaco did, but nevertheless it had already prepared a plan, local planning scheme 3, that provided the right number of potential houses that the minister was chasing. There were 4 400 potential new dwellings in the scheme that the City of Nedlands had approved. The WAPC put forward its own scheme with 9 000 dwellings, so it went from 4 400 to 9 000. The minister stepped in, but the City of Nedlands had no role in the plan she approved after she had put it on the table. I think the figure is 8 985 new dwellings, when the target was 4 400, so the scheme that is now in place in Nedlands far exceeds the numbers the minister originally sought. We would have to wonder why the minister is basically picking on Subiaco and Nedlands in this regard. It smacks of taking away the democratic role of local governments. That is all I will say today on that particular topic. I am sure the member for South Perth will bring up the fact that the minister has overwritten a joint development assessment panel decision, which is quite bizarre.

In the remaining two minutes, I will talk about a couple of things in my electorate. One issue that relates to planning is Stirling Highway. In the original City of Nedlands LPS 3, Stirling Highway was zoned to be upscaled because it is a transport corridor; there are issues in terms of how that will work. Nevertheless, it is an area that is likely to be developed more. One of the issues with Stirling Highway is that it has a lot of cars and a lot of kids go to school there. They catch buses there, and whether it is in the morning or the afternoon, they have to cross the highway, which is a dangerous road to cross. It is probably dangerous in the member for Cottesloe's area; it is certainly dangerous in my area. I think we need to consider an underpass or some other method of making the roads safer for pedestrians in one or two places in my electorate.

In the remaining minute, I will pass on some quick lines. Bob Hawke College in my electorate—yes, a tick, but it addresses only year 7s. Indeed, the number of students at Shenton College is only five fewer than last year. We have a brand-new high school in Subiaco, but the number of students at Shenton College has decreased by only five. The member for Churchlands is not here, but —

Mrs L.M. Harvey: It has not helped Churchlands at all.

Mr W.R. MARMION: No. What are we going to do? We already need another high school, and we need more primary schools as well.

MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine) [8.27 pm]: I just want to say a few words about the Premier's Statement. I start by saying that it was probably the most shallow speech I have heard in this Parliament in the 10 years I have been here. It lacked empathy and gave people no hope. It was completely disconnected from the suffering that is happening out there in the community at the moment. There was no link to the reality of the lives people are experiencing at the moment. It actually destroys the fabric of the society that we live in and destroys people's hopes and aspirations. We all remember when the Labor government was elected back in March 2017. Within the first month, the

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headline on the front page of *The West Australian* was “WA’s Great Depression”. There was an image of the Premier, looking like a homeless person, heating himself over a drum. Of course, it was not the situation that he inherited; this was his vision for his government in his first term—to convert Western Australia, a successful state, into a state of depression where homeless people appeared on the front page of *The West Australian*. That was back in April 2017, and it has been a consistent theme ever since he was elected as Premier of Western Australia.

The most important dream and aspiration that every Australian has is to own a home. This government has destroyed that aspiration. Only late last year the Reserve Bank of Australia showed that 18 per cent of home —

Dr A.D. Buti interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Do that again, member for Armadale, and I will call you. It is the first day back—shush.

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: Thank you very much, Madam Acting Speaker.

We know that owning a home is the most important thing. At the moment, one in five Western Australians have negative equity. Their mortgages are worth more than the value of their homes. When people find themselves in that situation in a country like Australia, that is probably as low as it gets. The government has been able to destroy home ownership as an aspiration when housing values are at one of the lowest points in the last 10 years. The government has done a great job destroying the value of homes. Talking about how much the government values people, I was reading a *Business News Western Australia* article from 19 December in which Minister McGurk said that the community services sector is a “valued partner in the delivery of services for vulnerable Western Australians, as well as a significant contributor to economic growth, employment and community wellbeing.” It is interesting that she said that in December 2019 at the same time that the community services sector launched a campaign against this government because it has been doing everything in its power to destroy the work the community services sector has been doing. The government has been forcing them to struggle to deliver their services while people are suffering like never before. The disconnect the minister has from the sector she is supposed to be working with is amazing. Interestingly, in the same article, the Treasurer said the government had listened to the sector and was committed to supporting organisations by addressing the impact of the equal remuneration order. I heard the Treasurer speaking on 6PR about the not-for-profit sector and the years 2011 to 2017 when the Barnett government gave a record \$600 million to the sector—that had never been done before—to support them and give them a hand to do their job. The Treasurer said this government would not do that because it thinks it is a waste of money to give it to the community services sector. The Treasurer said that it needs to prove to the government that the sector is giving the government a return on its investment. Can members believe the words of the Treasurer! Nearly 100 000 people work in that space, 80 per cent of whom are women. They are some of the lowest paid people in Western Australia who are looking to get a fair wage for the work they do yet the Treasurer said they need to prove to the government that they deserve to be paid, even though the work that they do is valuable and they are contributing. It is an absolute disgrace for members of this government to say they have any empathy for the people working in this space after listening to the words of the minister and the Treasurer.

In 2019, the government released the document “Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity”. That document does not mention the community service sector, homelessness, housing or supporting the most vulnerable people of Western Australia, of whom there are now approximately 500 000 supported by the community services sector thanks to the work of this government over the past three years. When the government talks about repairing the state’s finances in that document, it does not say anything about the federal Liberal government fixing the GST or royalties being higher than the government thought they would be or anything about the federal election funds that came the government’s way. That is why state government debt has been improved. It is not because of the government’s management. The government does not care about the most vulnerable people of Western Australia. It has proved that time and again.

I read from the WACOSS state budget submission 2020–21 —

Meanwhile, the focus on complex machinery of government changes and a lack of communication have led to a loss of clarity in roles and responsibilities and contract points, particularly in the Department of Communities.

It does not get more scathing than that. The report continues —

The sector is struggling with ‘reform fatigue’, with organisations and consumers participating in multiple consultations and strategies without seeing it translate into new services, investments or ways of doing things.

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WACOSS is saying clearly in its 2021 budget submission, just before next state election, “Labor, you have failed. You continue to fail and we are running a campaign to show the community what we think about you and how much you have failed in this space.” Further, it states –

There is clear frustration that the promises of more collaborative and joined-up service design and delivery have not materialised ...

WACOSS, which one would assume is a big supporter of the Labor Party, has said that the Labor Party has failed the sector completely and utterly. It does not matter what members of the Labor Party say. This is not the Liberal Party or me saying this—this is Louise Gialitto and Debra Zanella from the sector saying that the government has failed WACOSS and the other 500 community organisations. It is amazing that the Labor Party does not care. It does not care and it does not realise that the sector cannot sustain itself. The sector is suffering.

As if that it is not enough, we know that Foster Care Association of WA has also said that the government needs to get real about child protection. The government has dropped the ball on child protection like never before. Fay Alford, the president of the association, said in 2019 in an article published in *WAtoday* —

... claims made by a foster mother who revealed her personal story of battling against the Department of Communities to *WAtoday* earlier this week, agreeing that the system was in crisis ...

The Foster Care Association is saying that the foster care system and child protection system is in crisis. WACOSS is saying that the government has failed on every single measure. We know from reports from the national debt helpline that calls from Western Australia are skyrocketing at an alarming rate and there is no support.

During a visit to Foodbank, Foodbank told me and the Leader of the Opposition that business is booming for Foodbank. It had a 20 per cent increase in business in the last 12 months. That means people cannot afford to feed themselves. It is year-on-year growth. It is absolutely unbelievable. An article on 13 October 2019 states —

The latest Hunger Report, to be released by Foodbank Australia today, shows its WA operation would need 30 per cent more resources to be able to meet total demand, despite 414 Foodbank agencies and 501,000 meals already being delivered each month.

It is getting worse. A quarter of the customers are women who have food insecurity. The article refers to women and children who cannot afford to feed themselves and are feeling high levels of anxiety. Foodbank is struggling. When I raised in the house the issue of more funding with the Premier, which Foodbank has spoken about, the Premier told me that Foodbank had not asked for more funding. It told me it did ask. The Premier said it had not asked but members would think Foodbank would not have to ask if the Minister for Community Services bothered to go there and find out what it was doing, how much it was costing and the number of people who are going there, but this minister does not care; she is lost in action.

We have the first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. Roughly around 41 per cent of homelessness stems from family and domestic violence. We all know that homelessness is out of control. If 41 per cent of homelessness is caused by family and domestic violence, what is the minister doing about it? We have a specific minister to look after that but she is not doing anything. Financial difficulties make up 39 per cent and the breakdown of families and relationships make up 24 per cent of homelessness. Do not tell me that homeless people are all under the influence of drugs or have alcohol or mental health issues. There is a degree of that, but if people have to live through family and domestic violence and financial difficulties and a relationship breakdown, at some point they will be under stress and depression, and that will lead to mental health issues. The National Mental Health Commission wrote a report stating that one in four 15 to 19-year-olds meet the criteria of suffering from some form of psychological distress, and 30 per cent are young women. Mental health is a serious problem. In *The West Australian* of 19 October is an article headed “Patients suffer in sick system” that states —

Mental health patients are being turned away from hospitals, discharged while still at risk of self-harm and kept for months in bug-ridden, mouldy wards ...

It is unbelievable that that is happening in Western Australia. The article continues —

In its latest annual report, the Mental Health Advocacy Service has revealed the extent of the State’s strained mental health system, with suicidal patients made to share single bedrooms for months ... left without locks on shared toilets with broken flushes and having to sleep on blood-stained mattresses.

I cannot believe people just gloss over that. They do not care. Nobody in government seems to care. I am amazed that there is not a revolt on that side. The article continues —

In one instance, a suicidal teenager who was discharged due to lack of beds, despite her family’s concerns, went on to commit self-harm ...

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She therefore required intervention. The number of psychiatric hospital beds has fallen under this government from 832 in 2016–17 to 723 last financial year. It is an absolute disgrace. Late last year the Productivity Commission released a report that said that mental health is costing the Australian economy \$500 million a day—that is if we believe the Productivity Commission, which I assume most people do. That is what it is costing us, yet we cannot afford to have a few more beds or to look after people. The state government is taking shortcuts at every level. It does not care about people. It does not care about the vulnerable and people who are struggling, and there are lot of them at the moment.

Homelessness support services have been ringing the alarm bells for years. Labor has ignored what they have been saying ever since it was elected. An article from back in 2019 states —

Services providing support to homeless people in Perth have banded together to sound the alarm, warning the sector is at breaking point because funding levels have stagnated for years.

The minister always says that the government is putting in more money, but it obviously is not because the sector is not getting it. I am not sure whom it is going to, but it is not going to the sector. The article continues —

WA Council of Social Services chief executive ... said the most vulnerable people in the community would pay the price ...

We see that every day with what is going on, and it is getting much worse with people sleeping rough and everything else.

The sector is running the Your Help WA campaign, as it should, to try to expose the lack of commitment from the government in this space. This lack of support from the government will have a major impact on our community into the future. Again, the government does not seem to care, and I really do not understand why. The 16 December media release for the Your Help WA campaign is interesting. It states —

Representatives from the Community Services Sector have held meetings with senior bureaucrats in the Departments of Treasury and Finance, and with Premier Mark McGowan and he gave no clear acknowledgement of the scale of the issues faced.

He does not even understand what the problems are. He is not interested. He does not care. The media release continues —

The Western Australian Council of Social Service, Chief Executive Officer ... says that the Community Service Sector and the State Government have reached an impasse which is underpinned by a lack of understanding the investment required for people who are in need in our state and for the community providers working on the frontline.

It goes on to say —

“We need the State Government to put people first and adequately fund the organisations that have skills ...

We know that is not happening. We know that the government has failed. In question on notice 5503, I wanted to know the Labor Party’s funding commitment for homelessness support services. In 2017–18, the state government put in \$52 million; in 2018–19 it put in \$45 million, which was a reduction of \$7 million; and in 2019–20 it put in \$46 million. Since 2017–18, the state government has ripped \$14 million from homelessness support services. Government members keep quoting the figure of \$90 million. The figure has been pretty much \$90 million for those three years, but that is only because the federal government has been increasing its contribution. Every time the federal government puts in more money the state government rips out the same amount from its contribution. It is an absolute disgrace! Homelessness is acknowledged to be a problem, yet the state government continually reduces funding to it at every opportunity.

In question on notice 5508 I asked about the number of crisis accommodation beds that are available. Interestingly, the answer was that 253 crisis beds were available for families and singles in 2016–17, while in 2019–20—three years later—there were only 246 crisis beds available. The number of crisis beds reduced by seven over three years, at a time when problems were increasing exponentially. That is absolutely unbelievable. We obviously now have a Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, so one would think it would be a high priority. Back in 2016–17, 300 beds were available for single females and women with children. In 2019–20—three years later—there were only 298 beds, so the number of those beds had reduced by two. While problems have been escalating, the government has cut back on its investment in this space at every level. It is interesting to look at where the cuts have been happening. For example, six beds have been cut from the Cannington district; in Fremantle there has been a seven-bed reduction in the domestic violence space; in Midland, four beds have been cut in the domestic violence space; and in Perth, the number of crisis beds has reduced by 13.

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[Member's time extended.]

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: It is unbelievable, but the most desperate areas have experienced cuts. LGBTQI+ people have absolutely no hope under this government—there are only four beds available for them if they are struggling or suffering in some way, shape or form. That is an absolute disgrace.

When I asked the department whether it collected information on whether mental health patients discharged from facilities would be homeless, the answer was —

The Department of Health state-wide data collection does not collect information on whether patients were 'discharged' into homelessness.

This government does not care whether a mental health patient is released into homelessness. It is just saying, "See you later; you're out of this facility. We don't care where you're going. We don't keep statistics on it because we don't want to follow that up." I could not believe it—this is with mental health patients! It is no wonder that people with mental health issues are in distress in our CBD. It is the same with the health system—the department does not keep any statistics or data. It is not interested. For example, people are discharged from hospitals into backpacker accommodation. Of course, we know that there have been issues with backpacker accommodation. The answer to question on notice 5515 states —

I am advised that WA Health's Webpas system does not have a discharge-type selection for backpackers accommodation. I am therefore unable to provide this information.

Recently, a woman unfortunately lost her life after being put in backpacker accommodation by the Department of Health. It is absolutely unbelievable, but the department does not keep any information or statistics on the people it puts into backpacker accommodation. Likewise, the department does not know or care about any mental health patients who are discharged into backpacker accommodation. It is not interested.

My God; I could not believe this answer about child protection! I asked in question on notice 5517 —

... can you please advise how many individuals have left out-of-home care and become homeless ...

Ms M.M. Quirk: Member, do you realise that this would be in *Hansard* already?

Mr A. KRSTICEVIC: That is okay, but people may not read the questions I have asked. I am restating this more for people who want to read the speech.

The answer to that question was —

... unless the young person seeks support as a care leaver ... and, even if a care leaver does remain in contact with Communities, the agency does not collect data on their living circumstances.

These children leave child protection at the age of 18. They might not have a place to live and could be homeless, but the department does not care—it is not interested and does not want to know the statistics. It is burying its head in the sand, because the less it knows, the less responsibility it has to take. It is an absolute disgrace.

I then asked the Minister for Housing about housing evictions and how many families or women with children were evicted from social housing into homelessness. The answer was that the department does not currently report on evictions involving families or children. Again, the department is evicting women and children onto the street and does not care. It is not interested in the statistics. It does not want to know where they are going or what they are doing. They have to find their own way, as the department does not care.

I also asked a question about how many clients who accessed specialist homelessness services were in need of accommodation. In 2017–18, 13 848 people presented to specialist services looking for accommodation, but only 10 303 were provided with accommodation—3 545 were turned away. The department was not interested. It could not help so it did not want to know. Who accesses these services? We know that 37 per cent of these people are male and 63 per cent are female, 42 per cent are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, 28 per cent are under the age of 18, 17 per cent are under the age of 10 and 45 per cent reported experiencing family and domestic violence. This is another cohort that we are letting down.

When we talk about social housing being an issue, it is amazing to look at how many social houses this government has sold off. In 2017–18, the government sold 434 homes. In 2018–19, it sold 513 homes. In 2019–20, up to 4 December, it had sold 110 homes. Over 1 000 social houses have been sold by this government. At a time when there is a housing crisis and over 1 000 people are sleeping rough in the streets because there is nowhere to put those people, the government is selling social houses. The government does not care. So long as it is pocketing the money, it does not want to know what is going on.

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When the government was elected in 2017, the first thing it did was cut funding for the hardship utility grant scheme. It cut the support for the most vulnerable people in our community. It increased their cost-of-living expenses and offered no support. The number of electricity, gas and water disconnections went through the roof. To give an example, in 2017–18, 40 209 people were given a HUGS payment to help them pay their Synergy bill; in 2018–19, after the government had cut HUGS funding, only 9 768 people were supported through that program to pay their bill. It is an absolute disgrace that the most vulnerable people in Western Australia were cut off, just because the government wanted to save about \$7 million. The government is willing to let people go without gas and electricity for cooking and heating, and without water. It does not care, so long as it can save \$7 million and invest it somewhere else. In 2017–18, 9 008 people received HUGS funding to enable them to pay their Alinta Energy bill; in 2018–19, only 1 617 people received HUGS funding. The government has plenty of money to buy election votes, but no money to help people in our community who are struggling, young families and people in unfortunate economic circumstances. No-one in this government is interested in helping them. No-one cares. It is amazing.

We have talked about the unfortunate death at Exclusive Backpackers. The government's strategy is to put homeless people into backpacker accommodation because no other form of accommodation is available. The government has sold off social housing. It is not helping the sector to build additional housing. The idea is to put all these homeless people, who are vulnerable, have mental health issues, are struggling and have no support services, into backpacker lodges. It is interesting that when that sad incident occurred at Exclusive Backpackers, the Minister for Tourism ran a country mile from making a comment on that. He did not want a bar of it. I thought I would go online and look at some of the reviews of backpacker lodges. This is what tourists are spreading around the world about Western Australia. I am reading from my notes. One review said —

Cheap, but expect trouble from other residents. Police attend a couple of times a week usually.

A review on Booking.com said —

Never again.

Another said —

I felt like I was in a crack den.

Another said —

Obviously an establishment catering mainly for the unemployed and homeless. Got a very depressing vibe.

Another said —

Too many mental health patients.

Another said —

Disappointing. A lot of “strange” people.

Another said —

It was like a halfway house for alcoholics and drug addicts, after 10pm I was not game enough to leave my room. Worst night EVER.

A review on TripAdvisor said —

Stayed for one night due to locality of the car rental and appeared to be okay on first impressions. How wrong we were it turns out this place is a halfway house with residents being the sort of people you don't want to meet when backpacking. Other residents were children bizarrely ...

Avoid if you haven't been just released from prison or recovering from an addiction.

Another review said —

... the place is full of old and creepy men living there. I felt as though I was staying in a mental asylum. At roughly 9pm we were sitting on the balcony and heard yelling we looked down and one guest was hitting another with a broom very brutally!!

It did not have a backpackers vibe at all! We have stayed in backpackers all around the world and have never felt so unsafe. I would definitely not recommend to stay here especially if you are a young girl.

Those are some of the reviews on backpacker lodges. The government is putting the most vulnerable people in Western Australia into these lodges. It is no wonder there was a tragic death at one of these lodges. That death could have been avoided. I know from speaking to people in the sector that no support services are being offered.

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Members will remember that last year we moved a motion calling on the McGowan government to provide immediate emergency funding to address the homelessness crisis in Perth and broader Western Australia. What happened? The government voted down that motion. The Minister for Police said it was a disgrace that we had brought that motion to Parliament. She asked whether that was the best that we could do—that is, bring a motion on homelessness and funding for the not-for-profit sector after our parliamentary break. She said it was a disgrace that we were not able to bring a more substantial motion to Parliament. Can members believe that is what the Minister for Police said in response to our motion? Can members believe that the government voted down that motion? The sector was in crisis. It was running a campaign. People were struggling, and people were dying, and that is all the government could do. The member for Fremantle said in this Parliament that she lives in the middle of it, and it is not that bad; it is all okay. From the words that she used in Parliament, it was almost as though homelessness in Fremantle was an attraction.

The government has talked about how it is putting \$35 million into providing two common ground facilities to try to address the homelessness issue. Seriously? The book on common ground, which is obviously supported by the sector and the government, states that one facility will cost \$36 million. It will house 100 people, with a 50 per cent social housing and 50 per cent homelessness break-up. The government's solution to solving the homelessness situation in Perth is to build the equivalent of one common ground facility that will house 50 homeless people. How far will that go? There are 600 homeless people in the City of Perth alone. This will not even scratch the surface. Everybody knows it is a joke. Everybody knows it is ridiculous.

The minister attacked me, as the member for Armadale said, for bringing to the attention of the Parliament back in 2009 that 12 people were living in a three-by-one Homeswest home. The mother in this situation was reported as having stabbed one of the children. Drugs, drunkenness, rock throwing and all sorts of things were taking place in that house. I have emails attesting to all those things. I had hoped to read those to the Parliament, but I do not have time. There were two adults and 10 children, four of whom were foster children. The level of abuse in that household was unbelievable. The minister attacked me for bringing that to the attention of the department and asking for something to be done. I cannot believe the minister thinks it is okay for two adults and 10 children to live in a three-by-one home in the middle of suburbia, with drugs and alcohol, and with violence taking place, and that it is inappropriate for the local member of Parliament to intervene. If that is the standard the government is setting, God help the rest of us. God help us all. What this government is doing is an absolute disgrace. It is destroying this community. The government is closing its eyes. It thinks that people will vote for it at the next election. People are struggling. People are suffering. People can see every single day that they are being ignored and not listened to. The community services sector is very smart. It can see what is going on. It knows that when the Liberals were in government, we did so much to help them. We bent over backwards to help them. We were not perfect, but we were very good. Compared with this government, we were the goose that laid the golden egg. Members opposite are a disgrace. They call themselves the champions of the most vulnerable people in Western Australia. They are a rod for those people's backs. They are the reason they are suffering. The government does not care. It is an absolute disgrace, and I want the backbenchers to do something about it.

DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe) [8.57 pm]: I rise to respond to the Premier's Statement. As was alluded to by the member for Nedlands, in sporting terms, we are in the final quarter of the electoral cycle. This is when the winning team has used the third quarter to build a suitable margin and is defending itself against a late push from the other side. How disappointed the Labor Party coach must be in their dismal performance to date. It is not quite the winning margin they had hoped for. Of course it is not quite clear who the coach is on the Labor team. The Premier should be the coach. He certainly seems to handle the post-match interviews well. We have to admit that he has all the spin going and so on. We have to say that in those post-match speeches, there are a lot of references to the problems with the other team in past matches, some seasons ago. However, the Premier seems to be missing in action during the play, with players doing what they want.

The Minister for Fisheries tried to nationalise the crayfish industry. Coach McGowan had to carry out some damage control during the post-match interview and reverse that decision. The problem is that the damage had been done. The other side had already scored—that is us. I can tell members that the fishers in this state love us. The coach even seemed to be having trouble with some of his experienced players. One of the strongest midfield players, the Treasurer, seemed to be struggling at the end of last year with a massive misplay over his attempts to revive the building industry with a stamp duty rebate. It seemed as though Coach McGowan was actually in on that particular play, so the blame for this epic miscalculation is probably a collective failure. In any case, there were plenty of angry phone calls and meetings with now ex-supporters after that particular play.

Maybe we are all misunderstanding who the coach is. Some commentators believe the coach is the Minister for Water, quietly playing and directing play from behind the scenes. He has certainly been working hard to increase the number of players on his side, using taxpayers' money to increase union membership. Whatever the case may

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be, the game is not going well. Panic is setting in. The spin doctors are burning the midnight oil and putting on a brave face and the coach is hoping he can buy his way out of the difficulties. Can I suggest, members, maybe it is time to find a new coach.

The state Labor government has largely wasted its opportunity to implement effective policy to improve the outcomes for our state. That was even clearly evident to Labor Party members at their conference on Rottnest Island just a few days ago. This has happened in the context of a government that has seen enormous windfalls and that should have seen a big improvement in this state's economy. My colleague the member for Bateman will go through that in some detail later this week, but it is still worthwhile to dwell a little bit on the financial performance of the Labor government to date. What we have seen is a lot of chest thumping from the Premier and a lot of statements coming out. We saw a beautiful glossy document—the “Western Australia State Budget 2019–20”. Gosh, it looks wonderful, does it not? According to the budget papers everything is going swimmingly, but that view is not shared by others. Remember the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia and the halcyon days when the Treasurer stood there, arm in arm with head of the CCI, who told the Treasurer he was the best Treasurer the state had ever seen. Do members remember those glory days? It is not such a rosy picture now. I do not wish to characterise it negatively, but I thought that the government would have its own man in the CCI now, after a former member of the Treasurer's office had taken the top job. What do we see coming out from the CCI now? A media statement with the headline “Consumer strike continuing to hit business confidence”. The CCI has finally woken up to the fact that its new friend is not quite the friend it thought it was, because it has destroyed the state economy.

The simple reality is that the predicted budget surplus and the improved balance sheet at the end of the year are almost entirely due to windfall revenues that were completely outside the control of this state government. I will go through that in a little bit of detail. The GST reform was driven by our federal parliamentarians—that is, coalition federal parliamentarians from this state. I particularly want to recognise Senator Dean Smith who did an outstanding job and the federal finance minister, Hon Mathias Cormann. The GST fix delivered \$8.326 billion in an additional unforecast revenue above the budget in 2017–18. It had nothing to do with you lot whatsoever. That \$8.326 billion in additional revenue is due to the GST fix. I love it and I love Senator Dean Smith. He is a fantastic Western Australian who has been working for this state, doing what the state government could not do.

There has also been a rapid increase in iron ore prices in the last year, which, in fact, has been about \$20 above the budget forecast for this financial year. The budget forecast was \$73.50 and it has been about \$20 above that. It sat there quite consistently, and has been going up and down. Every dollar above the forecast means results of around \$80 million in additional state government royalty revenue. In the case of this year, that means \$1.6 billion simply from iron ore royalties, and of course other mineral royalties have increased as well. In fact, if we look at the forward estimates for royalties and at the *Government Mid-year Financial Projections Statement and Budget Statements*, we see that the royalty income is about \$4 billion above the budget forecast in 2017–18. This government played around with the numbers when it came into office and forecast dreadful drops to artificially inflate the supposed trading deficit to suit its purposes and it has quoted that completely wrong number ever since. But the simple reality is that those two amounts will add to up a figure that is about \$13 billion above the original forecast in the 2017–18 budget. That is how the government can account for the surplus. It has nothing to do with the government at all. It is frankly a disgrace that the Treasurer sits there and tries to claim that he has done some magnificent job.

We have seen a government that claims good fiscal management and boasts about its tight wages policies. It has gone to industry forums and said, “What a fantastic job we're doing. We're holding the public service to account. We're holding them down”, but it has spent tens of millions of dollars on redundancies—a phenomenal amount of money; an amount of money the member for Fremantle could have spent on dealing with the issue of homelessness. The aim was to lose 3 000 positions in the public service; in fact, what happened is the public service went up by 3 600. That is 6 600 off the mark. There has not been a decrease, but an increase, in the number of public service employees. Every other major employer in this state has decreased their workforce while they have increased the productivity of their businesses through efficiencies. This government has completely failed on that score.

There has been another real impact from that. We have heard the government tout its \$1 000 a year wages policy. Yes, it has held everyone to its \$1 000 a year wages policy but on top of that there have been the government's secret, backroom deals. We have seen the Minister for Police do a backroom deal with the Western Australian Police Union of Workers that has given them effectively five days additional leave every year. I will go on to talk about that a little bit, but I am sure that the member for Hillarys will explore it in more detail when he gets to his feet to address the Premier's Statement. How does the government plan to cover that? It will be about \$1 400 per police person. That will be about a \$6 million hit to the budget. How will the Minister for Police cover that?

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Will we see more overtime? That money is coming out of the budget. Are we going to see more police? That is extremely unlikely. As the member for Hillarys has pointed out on a number of occasions, the simple truth is that the Minister for Police has failed to hit police staffing targets because more police are leaving than are being recruited. Or is the government simply going to have fewer police on the beat and fewer police dealing with crime so that crime will spiral out of control, as pointed out in the debate on the excellent amendment that was suggested earlier today? It may be that the police deserve and need that extra time off. If that is the case, go out to the public and say that. Be open. Remember when the Premier in 2017 talked about his gold standard in transparency. This is not gold standard in transparency; this is a backdoor way of giving a pay rise to one group of people and then claiming that it is being fiscally responsible. It is not being fiscally responsible, and we see that, ultimately, in the way that the state is run.

The separation scheme and those 3 000 supposed redundancies was going to save an estimated \$1.1 billion in wages. In fact, the government has increased that number by 3 600. The budget papers and the end of year financial statement shows a year on year, two per cent cumulative increase in the government wages' bill, which is money the member for Fremantle cannot spend to deal with crucial social issues. I am sure the government's Labor and union mates thought that the redundancy scheme was okay. A whole lot of people, who were going to retire anyway, got a sweetener for their retirement. The tens of millions of dollars that have been spent on a faux redundancy scheme to reduce public service numbers has not gone to help people in this state deal with hardship. It is more than that. In fact, this government has cruelly increased in fees and charges massively, and we have pointed this out over the last three years. This Treasurer and this Premier have cruelly increased in power and water prices massively, and it has been done in a way that families cannot avoid, because the increases have been to connection fees and base fees. Families cannot avoid them, and members who care about people who live in their areas know that that has caused enormous hardship.

We saw the stamp duty debacle from this government. The government has already smashed the local industry with its ill-timed seven per cent foreign buyers duty. We saw the government take the state out of the regional migration scheme. We saw the state massively slash the skilled migration categories down to about 10 per cent, which smashed the industry. Ministers here should look at what they have done. Last year the Labor Party was into its third year of government and it had its hand on the tiller—it had its hand on the Treasury guiding the state.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: The member can have a glib smile on her face and she can smile about this: last year the construction industry in Western Australia declined by 41 per cent. I will tell members what that was: that was a \$17 billion reduction.

Mr D.T. Punch interjected.

Dr D.J. HONEY: It was a \$17 billion reduction, member for Bunbury—I assume he is proud of this—in the construction industry. Industry and civil construction work for the year to June 2019 was down 51.5 per cent. That is down \$15.9 billion; it more than halved. We saw a reduction of 15.1 per cent in the value of engineering and construction work started. Looking at residential construction, the total volume of residential building work for the year to 2019 was down 6.8 per cent on the previous 12 months, or 10.5 per cent in the 12 months prior to the June quarter. We also saw a 14.3 per cent drop in total new dwelling starts. Total building approvals were down 12.9 per cent as at September last year. The total number of new dwellings under construction was down 10.8 per cent as at June 2019 compared with the previous 12 months. There was a 6.2 per cent drop in the number of new dwellings awaiting commencement compared with the previous 12 months. The volume of commercial building work done for the year to June was down \$890 million—down almost 20 per cent. The total value of commercial building work under construction was \$2.25 billion, and that was a \$298 million reduction on the 12 months earlier. This is when the Labor Party is well into government. This is this government's work. It is a product of this government's ill timed and ill thought out decisions smashing the construction industry in this state. It is not just the construction industry. We can quote numbers and figures, but the government knows that that is hundreds and hundreds of small businesses. I think the government has overseen the demise of 30 000 small businesses during its time. These are little builders and little subcontractors. The government came in with legislation for subcontractors to be paid and to be paid on time, but people are not going to be paid anything if they are unemployed, if they do not have a business and if they have had to sell their equipment, and that is what has happened under this government. In fact, it adds up to hurting thousands of little contracting businesses and small businesses in this state through the decisions this government has made. This is not idle chance. We have pointed this out to the government all the way along. This government's decisions have cost thousands and thousands of jobs in this state, putting families into hardship. It is a horrible thought, but these people do not just lose their businesses; they lose their homes and their cars. They have to move away from the area they may have lived in for

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most of their lives and have to move their kids out of school. We are talking about enormous disruption. It is not just numbers; it is people, and this government's decisions have caused that harm to those people.

I turn to the rebate on stamp duty. What an absolutely terrible misjudgement by the Treasurer, who is someone in this place who, as I said before, members on this side typically rate. What a sign of panic that this terrible misjudgement took place. It has added to the hardship for struggling families in this state. The reason that the poor implementation of this supposed stimulant was a failure is quite simple: the construction of many multi-resident projects commences before all units are sold. They may have pre-sales of 75 per cent or 80 per cent, so proponents will start building and wait to sell the remaining 20 per cent or whatever of those units once they are under construction. The day the government announced this policy, approved projects that were about to start lost future customers. They lost them, because those customers said, "Hang on, if I go with you, I am going to have to pay full stamp duty."

[Member's time extended.]

Dr D.J. HONEY: They say, "If I go with you, I am going to have to pay stamp duty, so, guess what, I do not think I will sign up to buy those remaining units. I am going to sign up for one of these off-the-plan units." What happened was that the project stopped. This was a stimulant! We were told that this would stimulate the building industry in the state. This was the Treasurer, who otherwise is a pretty sharp sort of guy. This has actually stopped projects. It did not start projects; it stopped projects. I spoke to a major builder in the state who had three major apartment projects, had employed people and was literally about to start those projects. They had done all the detailed design and had all the approvals through. They cancelled those projects and sacked people—sacked them. People lost jobs because of this government's ill thought out decision on the stamp duty rebate. The disappointing thing is that it was an entirely predictable outcome. When we were told about this, we said, "You what?" The member for Bateman pointed this out in detail to the Treasurer at the time. It was a foolhardy decision and a sign of a government in panic doing something it thought was going to improve the economy. In fact, the government harmed the economy even further on top of the other harm it has caused.

We have a domestic economy in a terrible position, and unfortunately time just does not allow me to go through all of those details. It is no wonder the economy is in such a difficult position when we look at some of the decisions of this government. We look at Roe 8 and 9. The government killed consumer demand with its ill-timed fee and charge increases, it smashed the construction sector and it then set out an active plan to constrain the economy even further by stopping the Roe 8 and 9 project. It did this with a conscious bill coming before Parliament—the Metropolitan Region Scheme (Beeliar Wetlands) Bill 2018. It was introduced in 2018 with the specific purpose of not only preventing any progress on Roe 8 and 9 through the port during this term of government, but also absolutely sabotaging the ability of any future government to complete that critical infrastructure project. I suspect the Labor government hopes that this ill-considered bill is just going to disappear off into the ether or fade into the background, because it knows by now that the overwhelming majority of people in this state can see what the Minister for Planning, the Premier and the Treasurer cannot see, and that is that this project is critical for the future of the state. The money is there; it is available. We know that that project is absolutely crucial. We are going to see a 50 per cent increase in general traffic in the southern suburbs over the next 10 years—that is what is forecast. How are we going to cope with that? I tell members what: a roundabout on High Street is pretty well as stupid as it can get for a plan to deal with a 50 per cent increase in traffic. There will be absolute chaos on the roads. We know that there will be a steady increase in continued trade through to the port of Fremantle. A conservative estimate, an absolutely conservative estimate, is three per cent year-on-year compound growth. In fact, the port of Fremantle believes it is higher than that, but we will go with three per cent. That is a 36 per cent increase in container freight through the port of Fremantle over the next 10 years.

Turning to the government's strategy, what is the government going to do? It is going to put more containers on trains. We know the world best practice for containers on trains is 30 per cent of freight. We know that not much better than that can be done anywhere in the world. I also know that the major operators at the port right now are concerned that the 22 per cent that the government has achieved—that was an increase; we have to give the government kudos for that—at a cost of \$50 a container that we are paying for is costing operators money because they are finding that the handling time of going from port to train, offloading from the train and then onto a truck is costing them time and therefore money. Even if they get the extra eight per cent, 28 per cent of the increase in freight will not be able to go on trains. We will see a 28 per cent increase in container freight through the port of Fremantle—how will we cope with that on the existing road system? We will not. We all know that no outer harbour project will occur in the next 10 years because it will take longer than that to get such a project going. The government's decision to stop Roe 8 and 9 to the port has put a foot on the economic throat of this state. We will see enormous congestion and enormous suffering. Again, there is a human dimension to this—it is not just about numbers. As I have mentioned before, it is a nightmare for truck drivers on Leach Highway and South Street because

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they are constantly putting on the brakes and they are constantly worried about cars moving in front of them. It is terrifying for them and it is equally as terrifying for commuters who drive alongside four or five container trucks. All those vehicles would have come off Leach Highway and South Street and travelled on Roe 8 and 9 through to the port making it safer and easier for truck drivers and commuters. But this government—cabinet had to agree with this and I assume that backbench members, or some of them, were on board—has not only stopped that project, it has tried to stop any government from doing the project by putting an A-class reserve in place of the road reserve on the Roe 8 part of it. The government's process is holding commuters, truck drivers and the economy of the state hostage to what is a flawed ideological opposition to Roe 8 and 9.

The member for Nedlands did a good job outlining some of the issues with approvals. I want to cover some other topics, but we have seen a massive increase in the time it takes for this government to do approvals. In 2016–17, it took 75 days for medium-risk water licence approvals. Now it takes 133 days, which is a 58 per cent increase. The high-risk approvals, which are approvals for most of the large resource projects with typically a higher volume of water, took 57 days under the previous government but it is 213 days under this government. Some of those are critical approvals. Miners have told me that if they identified a developable mineral deposit today, it would be eight to 10 years before the mine would be producing. What is the government doing to substantially reduce the time it takes for approvals because all we have seen are massive blowouts and a massive spend on computers systems and other processes that are supposed to support the approvals process? The government has been in government for three years. I can understand it saying in year one, “We haven't quite got that one right” and saying in year two, “Maybe they should be getting things moving by now.” However, by year three the government owns the problem. It has had three years for its machinery-of-government changes to bed in. It has either got it completely wrong or it has failed to execute the changes. It is one of the two—the wrong model or the government has failed to execute the model. It cannot be both.

I turn to electorate issues. I will cover a little of the ground covered by the member for Nedlands but perhaps with a different spin. About half of the City of Nedlands is in my electorate of Cottesloe—Swanbourne, Mount Claremont and other parts of the area. I have previously expressed my concern about the way this government has approached urban infill and all I can say is that those concerns have simply been amplified by Minister Saffioti's horrendous decisions that were rolled out for local planning scheme 3, which was forced onto the City of Nedlands. In fact, her decision is so bad that it can only be characterised as class warfare against the City of Nedlands. There is no other way of looking at it. I will explain why I say that. The Perth and Peel@3.5 million target requires another 4 400 dwellings in the City of Nedlands, which is a 53 per cent increase in the number of dwellings in the City of Nedlands. I think most fair-minded members would say, yes, that is a pretty good target. The City of Nedlands accepted it and said that it could achieve that target. The member for Nedlands has gone through a little of the history on this. Minister Saffioti came back with a crayon after some toing and froing and said that the new target was 7 517 new residences and forced zoning in particular areas, as the member for Nedlands pointed out, with no regard whatsoever for the capacity of those areas to cope. That is a 90 per cent increase in the density of residences in the City of Nedlands. I know that the Minister for Water, the member for Bassendean, would not accept that in his electorate. In fact, I know that there is enormous consternation about landfill in the eastern suburbs and that the government has made moves to stop it in certain areas. But it has not done so in the City of Nedlands. Why? Because this government hates the western suburbs and the minister thinks it is perfectly fine to destroy a suburban area. Again, we are not just talking about numbers, houses and buildings. We are talking about people and families who will live alongside seven-storey apartments and who will have dozens of neighbours where they previously had one neighbour in a single or double-storey dwelling. In fact, it is much worse than that. The member for Fremantle can smile because this goes way above any density in Fremantle. The figure of 7 517 new residences was based on the Western Australian Planning Commission estimation of a 30 per cent take-up. Land and properties in the western suburbs are worth substantially more than any other part of Perth. We can expect a higher take up than 30 per cent because developers are making big offers to people to develop those areas. A 100 per cent take-up will mean 25 000 new residences in an area with 8 000 residences. I ask one member on the government side to tell me that that is fair. It is an absolute disgrace. It is urban vandalism and, as I said, it has all the manifestations of class warfare by the Minister for Planning because she hates the western suburbs. It is not urban planning, it is urban vandalism, and I challenge any government member to tell me that that is a reasonable outcome. I have not spoken with a single individual or group in the City of Nedlands that opposes a reasonable amount of infill, but this is utterly egregious. At this very moment developers are approaching people and offering elevated prices. The price of residences adjacent to those properties have dropped 25 per cent or more. Will the government help those people and compensate them? No, it will not. It is a disgrace. We have seen this across Perth and in South Perth.

I do not have time to go through everything. The Minister for Water's various decisions have resulted in massive price increases. He has belted farmers with standpipe price increases and an attempt to increase licences. This

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government wanted to put its stamp on the economy. It has put its stamp on the economy and it reads "Failed". This government has failed to deliver for the people of Western Australia and it has failed to deliver major projects that will put this state ahead. In fact, its policies have harmed the economy and harmed the people of Western Australia. Thousands of families are worse off because of the failures of this government.

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo) [9.28 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the Premier's Statement that was made earlier today. It was an inspirational speech on behalf of the government that sets the scene for more landmark legislation this year. Of course, it comes after last year's historic voluntary assisted dying legislation, which demonstrated clearly that the McGowan Labor government is prepared to put before Parliament legislation that might be prickly or uncomfortable for some people. It was courageous legislation that the community and residents expected us to bring into this place to debate.

I take this opportunity to update the house and the residents of Wanneroo on how the McGowan Labor government is continuing to deliver on its election platform and commitments, which were overwhelmingly endorsed by the Western Australian public in 2017. We had plans, policies and a fresh approach and we overwhelmingly gained a mandate. I have to say it has been torturous having to listen to some of the opposition speeches tonight. Although I have never been in opposition, I have spoken to many members of government who have done their time in opposition and I understand that it is the role of the opposition to challenge existing government policies, decisions or laws, but at some point the opposition actually has to come up with plans and provide some alternatives. I have sat here through hours and hours of contributions by opposition members and there has not been one single suggestion of any policy, or any solutions to any of the issues that have been raised today.

Several members interjected.

Ms S.E. WINTON: It is clearly going to be a problem for the member for Dawesville and his opposition because he likes to keep reminding the house of how many days there are until the next election; I think it is 400 days. At some point he is going to have to roll up his sleeves, stop whingeing and whining and actually come up with some alternatives to solve these problems.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Members!

Ms S.E. WINTON: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I will ask you to protect me tonight; it is very, very late and I am a bit bloody grumpy!

We have repaid the faith placed in us by the people of Western Australia and we continue to do hard work every single day. We work hard, and we are delivering on the election commitments we made. We are going to continue bringing good financial management to the state and we will continue to create jobs and diversify our economy. We are focusing on the things that really matter to the local families in all our electorates, including Wanneroo, in the key areas of jobs, health and education. Before we were elected we said what we would do, and we are doing what we said.

It has been interesting listening to the opposition tonight. I guess it is frustrating for people out in the community sometimes when they tune in to Parliament and listen to the back and forth: "When we were in government we did this", and, "No, when you were in government you did such a bad job." We can go back and forth a lot, but what really defines the debate is what happened in the 2017 election. If the opposition's performance as the previous Liberal government was so good, how does it explain the 2017 election result? How does it explain that? Does it not give any credit to the people of Western Australia who, in 2017, went to the election and judged the Liberal government on its previous performance? I put much more faith in the people of my electorate and their judgement than perhaps members of the government when they have a crack at the opposition about its time in government. The reality is that at the 2017 election, the people of Western Australia judged the Liberal government's performance over the eight previous years as being dismal.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Ms S.E. WINTON: To say anything else would suggest that the member for Dawesville does not respect the wishes and the opinions of the electorate out there. If he does not, he is going to be on dangerous, dangerous ground.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister!

Ms S.E. WINTON: I would like to talk briefly about the financial management of the state since we came to government. It is an important point. Back in 2017, what I overwhelmingly heard from residents was that they were very disappointed in the way the Barnett Liberal government had handled the state's finances. We said that we would be responsible financial managers, and we are.

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Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

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

Ms S.E. WINTON: Make no mistake, member for Dawesville: we are getting Western Australia's finances back on track. We have brought the budget back into surplus—the first one in five years. Our surplus is a real surplus, unlike the Scott Morrison federal government surplus—remember that? “Back in black”, in 2019–20. Remember the federal campaign when he said, “We’ve got the budget back in surplus in 2019–20”? How is that working out for him?

Over the last three years in this place—the opposition raised this again—I have heard a lot of debate about, “Oh, the good financial standing of the state is due to the fact that we have received all this GST”, and all these other reasons: “The federal government has been our saviour.” One key point that the opposition missed and does not credit our government with—although the business sector does—is the fact that we have managed to curtail average expenditure growth to about 1.3 per cent, as opposed to the average 6.4 per cent under the previous government. The point is that the previous government spent way too much. We have demonstrated financial discipline and made difficult, sometimes unpopular, but disciplined decisions. Because we have reduced WA's debt—which will be \$7 billion lower than what was projected under the previous Liberal government—we have got WA's credit rating back on track. That also means that we are able to pay off the credit card that the previous government maxed out. We are paying \$800 million less on the previous government's maxed-out credit card, which we had to deal with. The previous government left us with in excess of \$40 billion debt on the credit card and we are starting to pay down debt because we are not spending as much as the previous government. As a result of that, we are saving \$800 million in interest on the credit card that the previous government racked up.

I turn to employment. We said we would make jobs our priority and we are doing it. That continues to be front and centre in every decision made by every minister of this McGowan government. We have created 50 000 jobs since coming to office, and creating jobs is front and centre of every single decision we make. We are about diversifying the economy and supporting business. We have increased the payroll tax threshold. We have introduced laws that maximise the number of local workers and apprentices on government projects, and we have created WA Industry Link to support local businesses getting work on government contracts.

With regard to infrastructure, there is no doubt that Western Australia is going through a massive transformation as a result of the unprecedented infrastructure projects that are occurring throughout our state. We are building trains right here in WA, we are building a modern, connected city, and we are creating the jobs that are essential to our record infrastructure spend.

I want to take a few moments to talk about my election commitments. I told the people of Wanneroo what I would do, and I am doing what I said. We have \$146 million of road infrastructure projects in Wanneroo, worth nearly 1 000 jobs. There was \$31 000 allocated for the dualling of Wanneroo Road between Joondalup Drive and Flynn Drive, and that has been delivered; I drive on that safe piece of road every day. The \$65 million Wanneroo Road–Ocean Reef Road overpass is being constructed; the \$50 million Wanneroo Road–Joondalup Drive overpass is being constructed right now. I acknowledge that there will be short-term pain for people while we are constructing those key bits of infrastructure. There is no way around that, but when those projects are finished—and they will be, soon—those two key intersections will be fixed properly for generations to come for a very long time. We are going to do it once, and we are going to do it properly. I am convinced that the majority of people in Wanneroo appreciate the forward-looking vision of the McGowan government and are coping really well with the short-term pain of the roadworks that are occurring right now.

We are committed to the entire northern suburbs. Metronet is going to Yanchep, with an additional 14.5 kilometres of rail. The Mitchell Freeway will be extended to Romeo Road—a \$107 million project that will create 1 200 new jobs. Growing up in Yanchep and going to Murdoch University, I still lived at home in Yanchep with my mum and dad. The northernmost point of the Mitchell Freeway back in those days was Main Road, Osborne Park. It is going to be quite mind-blowing when that first train arrives in Yanchep, and it is the Mark McGowan government that is delivering it.

Mr R.H. Cook: That's right.

Ms S.E. WINTON: It is. The Romeo Road–Mitchell Freeway extension is really important to my electorate to the east of Wanneroo Road. The freeway extension will see a new east–west connection by connecting Wanneroo Road to Romeo Road. It is really important for the rural areas in my electorate such as Nowergup, Carabooda and Neerabup to be connected to the northern corridor, the freeway, the train line and the schools and shops in Alkimos and Butler. The Romeo Road extension will also finally see one of the worst black spots in the northern suburbs fixed at the intersection of Karaborup Road. I noticed that the shadow Minister for Transport has visited Wanneroo

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on occasion and chatted to some of the locals. She has been banging on a fair bit by saying there should also be a Lukin Drive interchange straight through the guts and beautiful heart of Neerabup National Park, connecting Carabooda and Nowergup. It is clear to me that she knows nothing about the area. I noticed in a media release that she was standing with the proprietor of Benara Nurseries as a point of emphasising the need for Lukin Drive. She does not know where Benara Nurseries is. Benara Nurseries needs Romeo Road because that is close to where it is. Lukin Drive is of no consequence to that business. Members would think she would at least try to find residents and businesses to drive the argument. None of those business would go to go Lukin Drive because the businesses she refers to are north of Romeo Road. She does not know the area. She was doing exactly what I have heard the opposition do today, which is to grasp at bits of sensationalism, get a couple of aggrieved people and run with a story to try to create a headline but without doing the research. Another example is Roe 8. The opposition said, "Let's build Roe 8. We will have tolls." The opposition then backflipped and now does not support Roe 8 having tolls. The opposition said that the Ellenbrook rail line could not be built. The shadow Minister for Transport is a blocker and a knocker with no clear alternatives of what she would do if she were to become Minister for Transport.

Everyone knows that education is one of my favourite topics and that I like advocating for it as the member Wanneroo. WA Labor gets education. It always has and always will. That is demonstrated no more than in my electorate. A brand new primary school opened this week in Grandis Park, Banksia Grove. The kindergarten opened last year but this year has seen the full complement of all year levels enjoying their first week at the state-of-the-art facilities. Wanneroo Secondary College, my old high school, is in the middle of building its new gymnasium. I am looking forward to enjoying great fun with students in that gymnasium when it is finished later this year. Tapping Primary School received an upgrade to its undercover area. It has already held one fantastic musical there and is planning another one this year. I am looking forward to joining that community and attending musicals with the entire community on site.

We have science labs in Tapping Primary School, Wanneroo Primary School, East Wanneroo Primary School and Carramar Primary School so that our teachers now have the best facilities to deliver STEM subjects in those schools. STEM being science, technology, engineering and maths. The McGowan government has serious STEM targets and participation rates. We all know that it starts in primary school and that we have to get the young students enjoying science and mathematics in primary school. The science labs in our primary schools do that; they make sure that when the students hit high school they are enthused and excited about the STEM subjects. We have employed more education assistants than ever before. They are so important to our classrooms. We have reinstated the important level 3 classroom status for our teachers and we are valuing the profession and the important role they play in the education of our students.

In the area of health, we are committed to the much-needed upgrades to Joondalup Health Campus. Some of those upgrades have been delivered. We have provided more mental health beds, delivered a stroke unit, invested a record \$224 million for palliative care services and \$9 million towards additional in-patient palliative care beds in the northern suburbs. We are working hard, and the Minister for Health knows that. The members for Joondalup, Burns Beach and I are constantly on the heels of our minister to make sure that we continue to receive fantastic work.

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms S.E. WINTON: Apologies, member for Girrawheen, I thought the member was alerting me to my time limit.

Sometimes we do not appreciate the extent to which the northern suburbs are fully represented by Labor members of the McGowan government. It is not lost on me when I go to functions like the Tet Festival, which was organised by the member for Girrawheen and I see no members of Parliament at the Liberal Party stand. It is tricky when we set up our stand because we are all bumping each other out of the way trying to get ourselves through the place because there are so many members of the McGowan government in the northern suburbs. We are well represented, and that representation has been reflected in the massive investment in infrastructure, health and education in the northern suburbs.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Ms S.E. WINTON: The member might laugh or giggle but it is true.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Member for Dawesville, the member has already indicated that she is not taking interjections, so I will caution you.

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Ms S.E. WINTON: Thank you. I will talk about a couple of commitments of mine, one of which is about the agricultural area in Wanneroo. I have mentioned previously that Wanneroo is a key contributor to agricultural produce in our state and that it produces more than 38 per cent of the total production in the metropolitan area. I have spoken many times about the significance of the industry of Wanneroo to Perth and the 100 growers in the area who employ more than 1 000 people. I have delivered by establishing a task force whose recommendations are being enacted by the government. The government made the tough decision—we, as a task force had not recommended it to the government—that we need to cut water use by 10 per cent from 2028, as opposed to the 25 per cent cut proposed by the previous Liberal government. It is a tough decision but it has given certainty to the sector because the 10 per cent cut will not take effect until 2028. In conjunction with the cuts, the Department of Agriculture and Food has invested heavily in making sure growers have efficiencies in place to cope with that 10 per cent cut. The feedback I have had from the growers who are part of the program is that they are making great gains in efficiency dividends to make sure they can cope with the 10 per cent cut. Of course, that is just the short-term picture. An important and key element of the north Wanneroo agricultural story is that we need a new water source. We are developing a business case to determine whether it is possible to have a leasehold agricultural precinct in north Wanneroo that uses recycled water. That work is taking time but it is a significant piece of work and it has to be properly costed to determine whether it is viable for the agricultural growers. This government will make a decision on that one way or another, which is what the agricultural industry has been wanting for many, many years.

It would be nice if the federal government actually showed a little more interest in the north Wanneroo growers. They have been in constant communication with Christian Porter, the member for Pearce, who represents that area. He has shown his outrage at the 10 per cent cuts, but he has not come up with any support or solution from the federal government to actually help waterproof Wanneroo in the long term. There has been nothing at all from the federal government in terms of assisting us to provide a solution to the long-term water issues in Wanneroo. Now that the federal government has lost its agriculture minister, that position is not going to get any better any time soon. Perhaps Barnaby Joyce might be a better agriculture minister than we have had so far, but we will see. I do not think he will stay on the sidelines for too long.

I want to highlight a few of my other local election commitments. I said I would deliver them and I have done what I said. One promise was to upgrade the Wanneroo Showgrounds. Important events are held at that location, such as the Tet Festival that I mentioned earlier, the Wanneroo Show and the biggest Australia Day citizenship ceremony in Australia. I am pleased that funding of \$220 000 was delivered to upgrade the Wanneroo Showgrounds—it was well used over the summer months. The Wanneroo District Netball Association, which has more than 5 000 girls playing netball every week, received \$500 000 for toilet upgrades. The Edgar Griffiths dog park received \$200 000—the local community is enjoying that facility in Sinagra. I made a commitment to my community that upgrades would be made to improve access to Lake Nowergup. I am happy to say that work on that is nearly completed. I will be trying very hard to convince my government to go to the next stage. Now that the freeway will go through to Romeo Road, it is timely to consider getting a pathway to connect the Yaberoo trail with Lake Nowergup, which was the original path that local Indigenous people would have walked from Joondalup to Yanchep. Another key election commitment, which was promised by the previous Liberal member for Wanneroo for many years but nothing happened, was to facilitate the movement of Ingham's chicken facility out of Wanneroo. That work is progressing well and is a great outcome for the residents of Sinagra.

There is no question that the government's management of the state's finances is paying dividends. The repayments on the credit card that the previous government left us have decreased by some \$800 million, which is \$800 million that we can spend on other stuff. That is pretty good. The government has the finances under control. This responsible financial management will allow us to make decisions that will deliver ongoing benefits to all Western Australians. A good example of that is the key announcements made late last year around the \$81.5 million health infrastructure maintenance spend, to make sure that our ageing health campuses are upgraded. Of course, my favourite announcement late last year was the major maintenance blitz, which saw a record \$200 million go towards fixing maintenance issues in our schools. I can tell members that the schools in my electorate and across the northern suburbs are pretty happy about that much-needed injection of funds to make sure that maintenance issues are addressed. We want the best schools and the best learning environments for our students and teachers.

Of course, it is really only a Labor government that values and properly supports the training system. We said we would freeze TAFE fees, which we did. The government has gone even further. Because the government has been able to manage the finances well, it announced that TAFE fees would be cut by 50 per cent for 34 important courses. It was really wonderful to hear the Premier today highlight that that decision is already paying dividends, with a more than 20 per cent increase in TAFE enrolments. That is a good thing in my electorate, where we need

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to support youth to get the training they need so that they can get the jobs that they want. We have done all those things by keeping the budget in surplus.

I want to briefly talk about the Legislative Assembly. The reason we come to this place is to pass laws, and the amount of legislation that was passed in our third year was phenomenal. There is no question that ours is a reforming government. We successfully introduced and passed the Voluntary Assisted Dying Bill. We passed no body, no parole laws, revenge porn laws, and laws giving redress to victims of child sex abuse. We have schemes such as the container deposit scheme and the ban on plastic bags. I look forward to being part of the McGowan government as we go even further this year. We will tackle even more difficult and prickly subjects, but these are subjects that our community expects us to tackle. We will make it safe for women who choose to have an abortion. We will ban puppy farming. We are going to have mandatory reporting of child sex abuse. We are going to introduce a climate change policy. This is being done by a sensible and stable government. I think the member for Cottesloe fell a bit flat with his little attempt at humour or whatever it was with his little footy team thing, but this is a stable government. Mark McGowan was opposition leader for a very long time and he has been Premier for a very long time. This is a stable government, which is something you guys can only dream of! The Liberal Party had only 14 members and one has run away. It has had so many reshuffles of its shadow ministry, yet it talks about us not being a sensible and stable government. We are going to continue to prioritise health, education, TAFE, construction and small business. We said in 2017 that we are going to do a bunch of stuff and we are getting on with doing it.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**.

House adjourned at 9.57 pm
