

TOURISM WA — BUDGET

430. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the minister's claim reported in today's *The West Australian* that she will fund Treasury-imposed cuts to the tourism budget through a reduction in cash assets of \$2.4 million.

- (1) Is it not the case that the minister's approach will have a \$2.4 million impact on net debt and further undermine the Treasurer's fiscal action plan?
- (2) Has the minister received approval from the Treasurer to undertake this measure?
- (3) Given that the government has broken a key election commitment to the tourism industry to increase funding to the Tourism Commission by \$6 million annually, does this not exacerbate her broken promise to the industry?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:

- (1)–(3) It is really interesting that the member for Warnbro alludes to a cut in the Tourism WA budget when this year the Tourism WA budget exceeds \$85 million, which is the biggest budget that Tourism WA has ever had in the state's history.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I will refer to what the member for Warnbro is talking about with the advertising expenditure.

Mr P. Papalia: That would be nice.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am really pleased I have the member's attention. One of the ways that the government was looking at to try to rein in expenditure was to put a freeze on advertising expenditure. Tourism WA was requested to find some savings in its advertising expenditure. However, a lot of the advertising expenditure had been pre-committed and the spend had already been made. We are working through that with Tourism WA and I will work through that with the Treasurer to ensure that we can meet all the commitments that we have made to our advertisers and ensure that we can maintain the rage with our fantastic record with tourism in Western Australia.

We also have a cross-government approach to tourism. We are spending over \$20 million over the next four years, which is geared at parks for people, our caravan parks and camping strategy, to help boost tourism to the 14.2 per cent of visitors to the state who are here on self-drive journeys.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs M.H. Roberts interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Midland!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We have a very ambitious target, which is to increase the value of the tourism spend in this state from \$7.6 billion —

Point of Order

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is an interesting question that the minister is answering; it is not the one I asked. I ask that you draw to her attention the question in point. The relevance of what she is saying is questionable.

The SPEAKER: Minister, come to the point.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The member prefaced his question with reference to a cut in the tourism budget. I think it is really important to put out there that it is impossible to declare a cut to a budget when it is the biggest budget ever delivered in Western Australia at more than \$85 million, so I fail to see how that can be a cut.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Regarding the government's commitment —

Ms M.M. Quirk interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Girrawheen! You heard what I said earlier. Nobody can hear what the minister has to say. Minister, come to the point please and answer the question.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: With regard to the government's commitment over four years to increase the spend on tourism advertising by \$24 million, this is the first budget in a four-year cycle and, clearly, I need to do a bit more heavy lifting to ensure that we meet the remainder of the commitment.

Mr B.S. Wyatt interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Victoria Park!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We have funded \$9 million of the \$24 million in this year's budget papers. We have four years to deliver on that commitment and, as Minister for Tourism, it is my job to do that.