

Division 14: Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation — Services 1 to 3, Defence Industry; Veterans Issues, \$414 065 000 —

Mr S.J. Price, Chair.

Mr P. Papalia, Minister for Defence Industry; Veterans Issues.

Mrs R. Brown, Director General.

Ms L. Dawson, Deputy Director General.

Mr A. Boddy, Acting Executive Director, Defence West.

Mr R. Sansalone, Chief Executive Officer.

Mr P. Zappelli, Principal Policy Adviser.

Mr J. Gangell, Senior Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and the daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with those details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by noon on Friday, 2 June 2023. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

Do we have any questions? I give the call to the member for North West Central.

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to paragraph 7.2.3 on page 192 of budget paper No 2, which states —

monitoring and assessing implications for Western Australia following the release of the Commonwealth Government's Defence Strategic Review ...

Can the minister explain the initial implications for Western Australia of the *National defence: Defence strategic review 2023*?

Mr P. PAPALIA: At this stage, some pretty significant matters have been identified in the strategic review that represent opportunities for Western Australia, but some clarification around shipbuilding in particular will have to be provided by the federal government before we are able to answer the member's question more thoroughly and identify where a lot of the opportunities lie. The member probably would have seen the federal government's comments about the need to consolidate shipbuilding in Western Australia. It has identified and confirmed, as noted for some time now, that Western Australia is one of only two naval shipbuilding sites in the country. The Minister for Defence Industry, Pat Conroy, made some comments about shipbuilding in Western Australia needing to be consolidated. We have two shipbuilders here and he said that one has a lot of work and not enough workers, while the other one has workers but not enough work. We are waiting on the next move by the federal government.

I have met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister Conroy and they have indicated that work is being done right now on a very rapid review of the surface fleet post the announcement of nuclear submarines, because that changes everything. Our surface fleet structure was being developed based on Collins-class and Attack-class submarines, then that was all dropped. We have now gone to nuclear submarines, which perhaps changes the need for anti-submarine frigates, for instance. The review will look at what the surface fleet will look like. It may even have implications for the ships that are built in Western Australia at the moment, which are the Evolved Cape-class by Austal and the offshore patrol vessel by Luerssen Australia. What happens next may all change after this quick review, which I think the federal government anticipates being finished by September.

Ms M. BEARD: Knowing that that is coming, has the government taken any steps since the release of that information to review whether any high-level opportunities exist to expand defence assets in the north of the state? I know that there has long been a push for a defence presence in Exmouth.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Again, the strategic review is pretty light on for specifics, but it identified the need to harden our northern bases, which in Western Australia includes the bases at Curtin and Learmonth. The review also referred to Cocos (Keeling) Islands, but gave no real detail beyond the need to harden and strengthen. The strategic review makes reference to the expectation that the Army will defend those bases, but in Western Australia we have very little presence in terms of the regular Army, and the whole Pilbara presence really is the Pilbara regiment, which

is an understrength reserve unit. The Kimberley has part of the North West Mobile Force. We have a very small presence from Norforce in Broome for the whole Kimberley. Neither of those units would be capable of doing what was suggested that the Army will do, so there is potentially the opportunity for more presence, a structural change and some sort of forced posture change that involves the Army. There is also an opportunity for forced posture in shifting. The obvious place that I would suggest and the member would think of would be Learmonth, near Exmouth. The Air Force currently operates out of Learmonth, but it is mostly maritime surveillance based in Adelaide that flies to Learmonth, is temporarily based there and then pushes on to the west before coming back to Learmonth and going home to Adelaide. There is a lot of opportunity for more activity.

Our submission to the strategic review argued that there needs to be more presence and activity. The strategic review acknowledged the need for more activity. Exercise Talisman Sabre, which is the big exercise coming up, includes the Kimberley but not the Pilbara. That is a big multinational exercise across the northern parts of Australia, but the Kimberley is essentially where the Australian Defence Force assets will be operating from for that exercise.

Ms M. BEARD: Does the government support having a deepwater port at Exmouth and would it potentially be part of the strategic planning in response to the defence review?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Is the member referring to the Gascoyne Gateway proposal?

Ms M. BEARD: Yes.

Mr P. PAPALIA: At the moment, that is a private enterprise proposal with lead agency status. This department is the lead agency for the proposal, providing something like a concierge service through the approvals process, so we support the proposal in that regard. With respect to defence matters—we are kind of stretched as far as a state defence industry minister goes—it really would be a federal government matter as to whether it perceives a deepwater port as being needed for its defence purposes. That is not my role.

[7.10 pm]

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 192 of budget paper No 2 and paragraph 7.2.3, which is about Defence West. Paragraph 7.2.1 states —

implementing initiatives and exploring opportunities to advance strategic partnerships between industry and defence and expand Western Australia's role within defence supply chains;

Can the minister explain what work has been done by the state government to improve that supply chain for defence?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Is the question about the supply chain or the engagement and partnerships with industry?

Dr D.J. HONEY: It is about expanding the defence supply chain with industry.

Mr P. PAPALIA: There are a couple of things in that line. There are strategic partnerships between industry and defence. We have been absolutely engaged in identifying those opportunities and building the relationships. We have a Defence Advocate. The new one is Rear Admiral Philip Spedding. He chairs a defence industry advisory forum. The intent is to enable those industry players to talk directly to the state government about identifying potential further engagement with defence industry opportunities. We also provide two-thirds of the funding for the Western Australian Defence Science Centre. It provides grants for research and development projects, with the aim of identifying problems that confront defence players, particularly in Western Australia. We have just changed the structure of the panel that determines where those grants go. It is now chaired by Rear Admiral Spedding. We also have Commodore Ivan Ingham, who is the senior defence officer in Western Australia; Brigadier Brett Chaloner, who is the 13th Brigade commander; and somebody from the Air Force, but I am not sure who. The intent is for them to identify the problems that defence has, and then we view opportunities for funding research by either universities or universities and the industry in conjunction to solve the problem with a view to potentially creating an opportunity for export. Just fixing our problems is a relatively minor market, but in defence, the opportunity lies with export. That is what those are focused on.

With regard to supply chains, our defence strategic review submission identified the vulnerability of defence supply chains into Western Australia, as confirmed not only by the pandemic, but also by the recent floods in South Australia that destroyed a rail line, which disrupted everything, not just toilet paper supplies. We made the point that we are at the end of national supply chains. There are very few producers of defence supplies; in fact, there are none. Some key defence items such as ammunition and weapons are not manufactured in WA; they are manufactured on the east coast and we are at the other end of the supply chain. We have identified those vulnerabilities in our submission. A lot of the solutions to those are going to come from the federal government. I acknowledge those problems and challenges, and the federal government has made some announcements in response to some of the review's findings, so it is doing some things. It is planning to establish a sovereign sea mine construction capability, but it will be in Sydney, unfortunately. It will be on the other side of the country. It has talked about bringing home capabilities and establishing missile manufacture and the like. But at this stage it has not got into things that might happen in Western Australia. I have advocated for this, and I will continue to make the case that it

needs to build redundancy into its supply chains, not just ensure that they are robust. We need some degree of redundancy for anything we do as a sovereign nation. At the moment, there are small arms manufacturers at one site. It is a critical vulnerability and it is on the other side of the country. That could be said of firearms manufacture and a lot of artillery manufacture. They are all done at an increasingly small number of sites and they are on the east coast. We will keep making the case. The real change will come from the federal government making calls and changing things.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I just note as an aside that when my father was a mature man, we used to build tanks in Western Australia.

Mr P. PAPALIA: During World War II, there were dozens of small arms manufacturers right across the country. I think there were more than 60.

Dr D.J. HONEY: The minister mentioned R&D projects and grants. Where does that appear in the budget? Where can I find out about those?

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is on page 202—“Defence Science Centre”. I will put on the record again that we put into that program twice as much money as the federal government does. It is a very small program, but it is quite powerful—potentially even more powerful. I regularly advocate, and I did when I last met with the Deputy Prime Minister and the federal Minister for Defence Industry, that they should at least match our funding. There is likelihood of that happening, I hope, because they have just significantly increased funding for the Defence Science and Technology Group as part of bringing sovereign capability back to the country.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Can the minister give some examples? It is estimated that \$400 000 will be spent this year. Can he give us some examples of what grants have been given?

Mr P. PAPALIA: We have just changed the system. We started it in about 2018, I think; I cannot remember. We announced it with Melissa Price when she was minister. Up until now, it has essentially been a series of research grants that have mostly gone towards funding PhDs on defence subject matter without as much focus as I would have liked, but we have collectively addressed that now. We have significantly increased the number of PhDs in defence in Western Australia over that time. If we have not solved a lot of practical defence problems, at the very least we have done research and enabled PhD students to pursue their studies in the defence sector. That is a good outcome.

There are a couple of case studies. For example, using a collaborative research grant from the Defence Science Centre, researchers from Edith Cowan University are utilising recent developments in virtual reality technology to develop, test and incorporate high-fidelity, high-graphical parachute simulation into military parachutist training. That is one of the studies we will be doing, and there is another one that was originally funded as a WA case study under the DSC grants. In 2021, ECU researchers leveraged the CRG project to secure an additional \$198 000 in funding from the Department of Defence to expand the project to develop a working VR system, providing an immersive interactive simulated parachute descent under canopy and a virtual version of a real environment. That would be more comfortable than jumping out of a plane. That is one of the things that have been done. A lot of other research projects have been funded.

What we are doing now is very much tying it back to the operator in WA and identifying a problem. We do that through Commodore Ingham, Captain Gary Lawton from the submarine force, Brett Chaloner from the Army or a senior officer from the Air Force. Through their contacts, they will seek to identify actual problems that WA defence people confront that we might be able to solve through a research grant. That is what they are going to be doing. We have not really done a round of that yet with those guys on the panel, but that is about to start.

[7.20 pm]

Ms M. BEARD: I had a question about the special purpose accounts, referring to page 207 of budget paper No 2. Can the minister give me a summary of the status of the Defence Science Centre? Who are the members of the science technology group and who do they report to?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Essentially, we fund a director of the Defence Science Centre. The Defence Science and Technology Group is the federal agency that does defence research and science activity. It funds a deputy director. As I said earlier, we contribute money. We contribute about two-thirds of the money for grants and operations of the Defence Science Centre. It does activities other than the grant scheme, but we contribute two-thirds of the money and it contributes one-third. The Defence Science Centre is physically located inside Defence West, which is part of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, just so the member knows where it is.

We put in \$500 000 annually and the DSTG, the federal agency, puts in \$270 000. The public universities all contribute \$50 000 each. All that money is put together as funding for the Defence Science Centre. A lot of it is disbursed. It is all used, mostly for research grants, but it has other smaller activities. It does little events and problem and opportunity things, for which it gives smaller grants or shorter term research opportunities to people.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Under industry development, it refers to working with government agencies and the private sector.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Which page is it?

Dr D.J. HONEY: Sorry. I apologise, minister. It is page 197, budget paper No 2, under “Industry Development”. That section is about promoting the defence industries.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Sorry, what page number was it?

Dr D.J. HONEY: It is page 197, “Industry Development”. It is in relation to supply chains.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Which line?

Dr D.J. HONEY: In the preamble to paragraph 3, it refers to working with government agencies, and then there is the total cost of service.

Has there been an analysis of the availability of suitable land at the marine complex? There has been an enormous focus on the naval component and, obviously, we have the Collins-class submarine servicing. Hopefully, we will pick up something in relation to the nuclear submarines, and then we have other naval vessels, as the minister knows very well. That site is extremely constrained. As I understand it, the marine complex is pretty well fully occupied. If we were going to see a significant expansion of that site, I would imagine that we would need to see a physical expansion of that location. I wonder whether there has been a review of appropriate available land so that we can have co-located industries at the marine complex.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Prior to the federal election and, in fact, prior to the AUKUS announcement before the federal election, a process was underway for the better part of a year and a half, going on two years. It was led by a task force that was led by the director general on our side and by Tony Dalton, the deputy secretary of national naval shipbuilding, on the federal government side. It looked at the challenge of land at the Australian Marine Complex in light of the announced need for a large vessel dry berth. A number of studies were funded to prepare and inform that process.

The AUKUS announcement kind of threw the whole thing into the air, because that changes everything. We are the submarine base. In fact, at that point, there was not enough detail about the AUKUS statement, and then we had the federal election, so for a period of time we went into a degree of knowledge vacuum.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Hibernation.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Yes. Subsequently, the member would have seen a lot of action and activity. They established a nuclear submarine task force with Vice Admiral Jonathan Mead leading it. It did a really rapid bit of work and then announced that we will initially get Virginia-class submarines and then an AUKUS submarine at the end of that period. In the meantime, the member would have seen that it has announced the nuclear Submarine Rotational Force–West. I am pretty certain that is what they call it. Essentially, that is composed of the Virginia-class American submarines coming down here and forward operating from HMAS *Stirling* for a period of time. Ultimately by 2027, that will get to as many as four American nuclear submarines and one British Astute-class submarine, well before we have our own.

All that has implications for us. It means that Western Australia will have to rapidly develop a capacity to sustain nuclear submarines and do some degree of maintenance. We put a proposal to the federal government in August last year for a pathway to achieve nuclear submarine sustainment capability. I briefed the member’s colleague Hon Tjorn Sibma about it, but essentially what the federal government is going with kind of looks like what we proposed. It is not identical, but it is still early days as far as clarity. We proposed a phased development of that capability, and the first bit has to start almost immediately because nuclear submarines will be forward operating from our base very soon, so we have to start getting ready, but all that is driven by the federal government and the Navy.

There will be implications for the Australian Marine Complex in due course, but right now, the federal government has publicly announced that all the submarine activity will be at HMAS *Stirling*. I am interested in seeing how that goes. That aside, the nuclear submarines are big. The Virginia class is a big submarine, so even if it does the operating and maintenance at HMAS *Stirling*, there will be implications for the surface fleet and whether it can continue to berth the fleet there all the time and do the maintenance. There may be implications for the Australian Marine Complex in having to accommodate more surface fleet activity there. They are not at that point yet, and it is part of the surface fleet review, which was due in September and I referred to earlier. The Deputy Prime Minister indicated that it will be really rapid; it will not go on. There will be some serious decisions.

Regarding what the member said earlier about land down there, in recent times a lot of sheds have been knocked over and a bit of land is available on the foreshore at the Australian Marine Complex. Once we get a picture from the feds of what they want, we will have to work rapidly to deliver our state support. It will probably have a defence precinct. That might have implications for non-defence activity, which is what the member was referring to before. I cannot give him an indication of what that will look like yet because we are not at that point.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Is all the land to the north of the existing site—the Austal sheds and so on, where the North West Shelf platforms were constructed—under the control of government?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Is the member talking about the common-user facility? That is the big flat bit where they do the lifting and shifting with a floating dock. BAE Systems, with the frigates, is just north of that. There is often offshore oil and gas activity there, next to the big shed; that is a big lay-down area. Then more land is further north of Austal, right at the other end of the CUF, which has not been developed but is used at the moment by Austal as a sort of lay-down area.

Whatever the federal government comes up with for site use, with this consolidation and request of us, if the federal government determines that it needs a defence area with nothing else going on, we will not be able to do it. What we call the common-user facility is available for commercial activity as well as defence, and there are multiple users. That may not be practical, so we will have to look at some other solution. I cannot tell the member now what its demands will be, and how we will go about solving them and providing our contribution to meeting the demands. As soon as we know, we will move on it, but at the moment this next decision around the surface fleet has serious implications for Western Australia. It is all on the upside. It is good for Western Australia. There will be a lot more activity and a lot of specialist skills being built around nuclear submarine sustainment. A lot of investment will be happening. I cannot give the member the details, not because I am not telling the member; it is just that I do not know.

[7.30 pm]

Ms M. BEARD: Given that will happen quickly and there will be all sorts of skill gaps—the skilled worker shortage is obviously taboo—has the government done any modelling around the shortages and how the department might foster skills development in preparation for that?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Regarding the task force that I referred to earlier for Henderson, which the director general is the lead on for our side, we are looking at transitioning that to one focused on the future of defence needs around Henderson as opposed to preparing for a flood vessel dry berth solely being the focus, which is what it was before. That is one activity going on. If we transition that task force, part of its remit will be looking at training requirements. At the same time, we have already established a working group with the federal government on nuclear submarine sustainment. The deputy director general, Linda Dawson, is the lead for us on that, supported by our advocate, Admiral Spedding. From the other side, Rear Admiral Matt Buckley is the second-in-command of the submarine task force. It will bring in whoever it needs. I have anticipated that it will probably need someone from the Department of Training and Workforce Development to do the modelling of training requirements, and probably Terry from South Metropolitan TAFE will be training people. Again, we are at that point at which we are still waiting for the next bit of guidance from the federal government.

These guys have established a relationship. They are creating a working group. Before all the nuclear stuff and this latest round of strategic review, the Department of Training and Workforce Development had developed an industry workforce plan for defence in Western Australia, and it was delivering it. We put tens of millions of dollars into providing training pathways for people to meet the demand, and now it has all changed because we have a whole new sector. No-one has nuclear sustainment in Australia, let alone Western Australia. Sorry, \$30 million was already budgeted for that and was in the budget. We were training people. We had other programs. This portfolio has the defence industry veterans employment scheme, DIVES, that attracts defence people in uniform as they are retiring. If they find a job in the defence industry sector, we fund a scholarship for them to get “gap filled in” training. We already have things underway, but that was pre-nuclear. We will have to reassess and then shape our new pathway for delivery in the nuclear world.

It will not be just nuclear subs; it will also be meeting the demands of the shipbuilding sector. The Department of Training and Workforce Development does that by looking at the whole state. It does not look at just the defence industry. The skills that the member is talking about, even if they are in nuclear and submarines, are mostly the same technicians, electricians, plumbers, welders and people who the resource sector wants, except they obviously have a pathway towards a nuclear environment. There will be demand for those people beyond defence. The department looks at everybody, and then it looks at attrition, movement and the like, and competition from other jurisdictions or other parts of the world and says, “How are we going to ensure that we meet our demand?” It is pretty good at it. The department did a great job of it during the last boom and it is meeting the demand now. It is punching out apprentices all over the place, but this will very much be more tailored to accommodating this new thing as well.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I had a chance to visit a nuclear submarine, which I think was a Virginia-class submarine down at HMAS *Stirling*.

Mr P. PAPALIA: Can the member remember which one?

Dr D.J. HONEY: It was the USS *Springfield*.

Mr P. PAPALIA: That is the Los Angeles-class.

Dr D.J. HONEY: Los Angeles—I apologise. The minister would know! Thank you.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am a diver, not a submariner, but I was there with the member.

Dr D.J. HONEY: It was interesting seeing that, and I observed the resources required for just one vessel. I agree with the minister that I cannot intuitively see how we could have three of those class submarines or larger, the Virginia class, there at that time. Is there some discussion or thought for the work going on around the Westport development? That will be a substantial port structure, with possibly 100 hectares of development. Is there some thought that perhaps future military needs could be incorporated into that? Is there at least some channel of communication with Westport?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Everything I have talked about with regard to the Australian Marine Complex and by de facto HMAS *Stirling* is provided to the Westport task force so that it ensures that it is understood and planned for. I would not anticipate that the actual port would have any naval requirement other than it has to deconflict shipping and ensure we have channel capacity and all those sorts of things that we require, but it needs to know what is going on in Henderson. The DG has just reminded me that there are Westport officers on the joint Henderson task force at the moment. There is no reason why the task force would not continue to be at least aware and cognisant of what is happening. We are being sensitive of the need to ensure that whatever planning is going on, we share the demands of the different sectors, particularly on this matter. One of the things we asked about when talking to the federal government post the election, and when it was meeting with its nuclear submarine task forces, was about whether it would require a dualling of channels and such things.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 192 and paragraph 7.2.2 on the nuclear-powered submarine sustainment pathway. Who is leading the state's participation in that particular program? Who is leading our involvement for the state government?

Mr P. PAPALIA: Deputy director general Dawson sits on the working group that we have established with the federal government, and so does our Defence Advocate, Phil Spedding. Phil is located in Canberra to facilitate presence, because we are all the way over here and the member knows how hard it is to keep awareness, but he is also very engaged and knowledgeable of the defence players in the field. He is working with Linda to ensure that we identify and create a nuclear-powered submarine optimal pathway road map.

As I said earlier, last August we gave a proposal to the federal government. Before we knew what submarine it was getting or anything of that nature, a proposal for acquiring a nuclear-powered submarine sustainment capability was provided. That was a pretty good road map I think. We have delivered that as a proposal. Whether it looks exactly like ours or it comes up with another one, the working group will have to identify a pathway that will have its own road map. We were ahead of the game when we gave the federal government that document. It has welcomed our proposal that we form a working group. Admiral Buckley met with Linda and Admiral Spedding already and they are working on it.

Ms M. BEARD: I refer to page 192 and attracting investment in new industries, and paragraph 7.2.1, which refers to the defence supply chains. Can the minister tell me what percentage of the Australian defence supply chains are held by the WA sector?

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, I would not be able to do that. We launched a defence industrial strategic plan in 2018, which identified that at that stage, defence contributed \$3 billion annually to the state's economy, and our strategy was to double that in a decade. I have no doubt that that will be easily achieved, but that is not what the member asked me. It is probably not really easy for us to identify because we are talking about the federal agencies and we would have to ask them what percentage we in WA contribute.

[7.40 pm]

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to page 192 and paragraph 7.2.4 about managing the veterans issues portfolio and supporting the veteran community. Can the minister outline what the state government's involvement is with that, please?

Mr P. PAPALIA: What is the involvement with the veteran support dogs program?

Dr D.J. HONEY: Yes, and on that portfolio generally.

Mr P. PAPALIA: It is not our core business. We made a significant increase in funding for the support of veterans. There used to be \$300 000 a year from the consolidated account that went into the Anzac Day Trust and it was then disbursed in support of the veterans issues portfolio. At that point, because it was a relatively small amount of money, a lot of it went towards commemorative purposes. At the last election, my predecessor Peter Tinley sought a commitment to increase that funding fourfold, and we did that. Now, \$1.3 million a year goes into the Anzac Day Trust. The trustees who are all volunteers manage it and they have no vested interests or anything of that nature other than they are veterans or have a longstanding commitment in support of veterans. Essentially, the trustees disburse all the funds annually. What we ask them to consider is that, because we have increased the

money, two-thirds if not three-quarters of the money—it is not rigid—goes towards supporting living veterans and the remainder goes towards commemorative purposes so that we do not have it skewed towards building memorials at great cost when people out there might require support right now.

Since we increased that funding, we have initiated a range of programs. We also asked the board members to consider doing things like consolidating the funds to have fewer but bigger grants and extending, when possible, funding for services over a number of years to the people delivering the services to veterans so that it gives them a degree of certainty that has never been there. They are doing that now. The trustees have given three years' worth of funding to Legacy WA to deliver a range of programs for families and widows across the state. They are also funding caretaker and maintenance-type operations of the Legacy camp in Busselton every year for three years, and they are looking to do it in perpetuity so that it relieves Legacy of the need to fundraise for that practice.

Recently, the trustees have also funded a great program that is a partnership between RSLWA and Working Spirit, which is run by a woman named Karyn Hinder. She was initially running it off the smell of an oily rag. It is like a placement service whereby she finds work for veterans. It is very effective. It seeks out and identifies employers who want to employ veterans and then puts them in proximity to veterans and, essentially, matchmakes them. Working Spirit is doing that with RSLWA. It has created a portal that enhances its ability to do that more rapidly and effectively. The trustees have funded Working Spirit for two years in a row. Last year, Working Spirit placed 115 veterans into employment when it had not been running for the whole year and it was early days when it did not have the online portal. To put that into context, about 350 veterans leave the service in WA each year and Working Spirit put 115 of them in jobs. The jobs are not just in the public sector; the jobs are everywhere. That is a really effective thing. In accordance with our strategic plan, we want veterans and their families to see WA as the attractive place to transition—not retire; we want them to retire eventually—and to come here and work because it is an attractive jurisdiction. Those are the things the trust is doing.

Other money is also being dedicated. The paragraph that the member referred to has a reference to support dogs. We are funding the creation of an assistance dog training program in WA. The Department of Veterans' Affairs funds the training of assistance dogs for veterans, but there is no certified trainer in Western Australia, so the department has funded dog training for our veterans. The veteran does not meet the dog until it is fully trained and brought over here from some other state. We are looking to establish our own training in Western Australia that meets DVA requirements so that it can be certified. I anticipate that the Anzac Day Trust will fund a certain number of dogs a year once we get some sense of what it costs and how much demand there is. DVA studies show that the dogs are valuable and worthwhile, so we will do that, but it will be with a Western Australian provider. This funding is with the Anzac Day Trust. Just recently, we moved the money over there. It costs about \$430 000 to establish that capability and then deliver. If the Anzac Day Trust views it as valuable, it can continue to fund it.

We have done other things. Hopefully, the member might come along—he will get an invitation; all members will probably get one—on 27 July for the unveiling of the Korean War memorial in Kings Park. The state's contribution for this was funded by the Anzac Day Trust. There is a lot of other money coming from the South Korean government and industry, and I think the feds ended up contributing—I hope they did! There are things like that, but that was a smaller amount and our contribution to the memorial was \$150 000. Out of the \$1.3 million, the Anzac Day Trust might distribute \$300 000 or a bit more a year to commemorative things.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I do not know whether the minister has been approached—I know his predecessor was—by the *HMAS Perth I* Memorial Foundation. It was looking to build a memorial near the Leeuwin Barracks in East Fremantle. Is that something that the minister has actively considered?

Mr P. PAPALIA: That memorial has had two rounds of funding. It is a magnificent memorial, so, yes, it has received funding. That is the Naval Historical Society, and the building is now a visual memorial around which World War II photos tell the story on the outside of the building. The bow-shaped memorial at the front of the building was funded by a series of grants. Those guys are very effective at advocating for funding! But it is an appropriate and nationally significant memorial, and that is what we suggested to the trust with the commemorative stuff. Rather than funding an annual reunion of a unit or something of that nature, we said that it would be good if the trust focuses mostly on nationally significant commemorative events or memorials of national significance, like the *HMAS Sydney II* memorial in Geraldton, the *HMAS Perth I* memorial and the Korean War memorial. A group is fundraising to build a Battle of Crete memorial in Kings Park as well, and it has a grant from the Anzac Day Trust because that is a particularly Western Australian story around the 2nd/11th Battalion.

[7.50 pm]

Mr R.S. LOVE: In terms of the groups that are supported, does the state support the National Anzac Centre in Albany; and, if so, what is the level of support?

Mr P. PAPALIA: We do not support it from that trust. The board of the trust determines where the funds go. Funds have not gone from that trust to the Anzac Centre. The member would recall that the federal government funded it at the outset with a significant amount of money, but it does not contribute to the recurrent costs. It would be up

to the board to determine whether it would fund something like that. I would argue that it should be a part of the Australian War Memorial's estate. In the past, we advocated for it to be adopted as a federal government responsibility. It is spending half a billion dollars on the War Memorial in Canberra, but that one has not been addressed.

Mr R.S. LOVE: A new mob is there now so perhaps the state government can have another try.

Mr P. PAPALIA: My view personally is that it is a nationally significant site. Albany is an extraordinary location; it is the place where the Anzacs from the east coast and New Zealand first met. The fleets that carried the first New Zealanders and east coast Australians on deployment anchored in King George Sound. The men went ashore in Albany and would have met for the very first time. That is extraordinary. It was the last point of friendly coast sighted by a lot of Australians and New Zealanders. It has a beautiful outlook and museum, which the federal government built. It is very hard for a lot of Western Australians to make their way to the national War Memorial, but it is not so hard for them to get down to Albany. The federal government created the Anzac Centre, so I would have thought it reasonable that it contributes something to support the council that runs it.

The appropriation was recommended.

Meeting suspended from 7.53 to 8.00 pm