

CORONAVIRUS — INTERSTATE BORDER RESTRICTIONS — SOUTH AUSTRALIA

920. Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI to the Premier:

I refer to the recent community outbreak of COVID-19 in South Australia. Can the Premier update the house on the swift action taken by the Western Australian government in responding to this outbreak, and outline how this will keep our state safe and strong?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Kingsley for the question.

Obviously, the outbreak of community spread of the virus in South Australia remains very concerning. Today, South Australia has reported at least four new cases, and there may be more. Although that is still a small number, we know how insidious this virus can be and how it can spread very easily. We will continue to monitor the situation to determine the true extent of the outbreak, but the truth of the matter is that we are taking this matter very, very seriously. We have acted very swiftly.

Firstly, we have acted to go to a hard border with South Australia, with a very limited list of exemptions for people to come from or through South Australia to Western Australia. This decision was taken based upon health advice from the Chief Health Officer, and I will table that advice. I think we received this advice yesterday, Mr Speaker, which details what we needed to do and why we needed to do it.

[See paper [3987](#).]

Mr M. McGOWAN: South Australia has now been catapulted from being very low risk to the medium-risk category, and that limits the number and range of people who can come into Western Australia via South Australia. These measures, obviously, are harsh and they are difficult for people to manage, particularly for people who wanted to come in for a range of reasons. It will mean significant delays for people who are in South Australia and want to come to Western Australia—if they can come at all. We are doing this based upon health advice to protect the health of Western Australians. I urge any Western Australians who are currently in South Australia to come home now. They will be required to quarantine and be tested. The arrivals from South Australia have slowed down very dramatically as a result of the actions that we have taken. As I have said, we know that the measures that we have put in place actually work.

I want to say a few other things. Firstly, I congratulate the Premier of South Australia, Steven Marshall, with whom I have a very good working relationship, for the measures he has taken to close down certain activity in Adelaide to protect the health of the people of Adelaide. Obviously, that has been a pretty dramatic step, but I think that what he has done is appropriate in the circumstances and I congratulate him for doing that. I also congratulate the state opposition in South Australia for joining and supporting the state government in South Australia for what it has had to do.

Secondly, I want to make this point. I have seen reports in Western Australia of panic buying, once again, of toilet paper. I would urge people not to do stupid and dumb things like that. Please do not engage in panic buying in Western Australia. There is absolutely no need for people to do this. I urge everyone to be sensible and reasonable. No cases have been reported in Western Australia and we have gone to a hard border to protect the people of the state.

Thirdly, I want to make the point that borders work. They are constitutional. The commonwealth High Court has endorsed the legality of these. The federal court examined the issues and said that this was a very effective tool to stop the spread of COVID. If only the United States, another federation of states, had engaged in this sort of practice, maybe it would not have the terrible situation that it currently has. If Britain, which is an island, had engaged in even an international border, it might now be in a far better position than it currently is.

I urge all those people out there moaning and complaining about the measures that the Western Australian government is taking to stop and understand that this government will take whatever measures that it deems fit to protect the health and welfare of the people of the state, and it will not be stopped or criticised by people over east who do not know what they are talking about.