

TOURISM WESTERN AUSTRALIA —
BUSSELTON–MARGARET RIVER REGIONAL AIRPORT EXPANSION

3621. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Tourism; Racing and Gaming; Small Business; Defence Issues; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests:

I refer to the withdrawal of Tourism WA (TWA) officials from leading airline engagement for the Busselton–Margaret River Airport, and ask:

- (a) Why was TWA withdrawn from leading this process;
- (b) Is the State Government assisting local government authorities in any way to secure an airline and ensure this important project is progressed:
 - (i) If so, how; and
 - (ii) If not, why not;
- (c) Why was the project removed from TWA’s two-year action plan despite being included in the draft version of the plan; and
- (d) Who made the decision to remove the project from the plan?

Mr P. Papalia replied:

- (a) The City of Busselton is currently leading the discussions with airlines, as it is the organisation which will contract and provide incentives if needed. Tourism Western Australia continues to work in partnership with the airport owner, the City of Busselton, on airline engagement activities to secure interstate services for the Busselton–Margaret River Airport (BMRA).
- (b) Yes.
 - (i)–(ii) Tourism Western Australia originally developed the Airline Engagement Strategy, which was adopted by the City of Busselton. Tourism Western Australia continues to be an active member of the Airline Engagement Working Group and provides financial support for aviation specialists Three Consulting to develop the business cases used by the City of Busselton to pitch to the airlines. Tourism Western Australia has also met with airlines when supporting the City of Busselton, and continues to provide data and analysis on visitation trends to keep the airlines up to date as discussions progress.
- (c) The *Two-Year Action Plan for Tourism Western Australia – 2018 and 2019* was developed following extensive consultation with key industry stakeholders. It reflects the major projects for Tourism Western Australia over the next two years but is not an exhaustive list of everything the agency is currently working on.
- (d) During the drafting and consultation stages, some projects were included and others were removed, depending on whether Tourism Western Australia was the lead agency and what stage the project was at. The Tourism Western Australia Board approved the content of the *Two-Year Action Plan* at its 9 February 2018 meeting, and provided delegated authority to the Chairman to approve any final changes, prior to publication.