

BULK-BATTERY STORAGE TRIAL — MANDURAH

903. Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE to the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the government's bulk-battery storage trial, which for the first time will integrate this technology into the existing grid. Can the minister update the house on how the community has responded to this trial and the McGowan Labor government's commitment to making renewable energy technology more accessible for Western Australians?

Mr B.S. WYATT replied:

I thank the member for Thornlie for that question. It seems only minutes ago that the member for Swan Hills asked me a question around PowerBank and the fact that with its collaboration with Synergy, Western Power and the good people of the City of Mandurah, we have put a community battery in Meadow Springs. At the time, we thought it might take us until early next year to get the required interest from the people of Mandurah to be part of this community battery trial. It does require those participating to pay about \$1 a day to effectively avoid the cost of inserting their own battery on their own house. They get the benefit, therefore, of effectively storing the energy that their solar panels are producing during the day when they are at work and then using that energy during peak times when they come home. I am delighted to say that we are now full, Mr Speaker. Three months early, we are now full. The people of Mandurah were clearly excited by this opportunity and have taken up this trial with great gusto. That means we will be starting the trial now as opposed to early next year. That means that over the next two years, those Western Australians in the City of Mandurah will be able to really work out how they can better use their own renewable energy with a community storage facility to lower their own power bills. I think that over time, even with paying about \$1 a day, they will find they reduce their power bills. As people have talked about in this place and certainly around Australia for a long time, solving the conundrum of marrying up the supply of renewables with demand is the great challenge that we face. This will go a long way to doing that and, importantly, if this works, as I suspect it will, community-style batteries—those larger-scale batteries that can be retrofitted onto grids—will provide the government and Western Australians with an opportunity going forward to ensure that we do not need to have very large, expensive upgrades of our grids that we would otherwise require as more and more renewables come into the system.

I want to thank all those people in the City of Mandurah who have taken up the trial and, of course, Synergy and Western Power, which have developed this together as a way to ensure that Western Australians do not have to make a significant capital investment to take better advantage of the renewable energy source they take off their roof.