

UNEARTHED PEMBERTON FESTIVAL — REGIONAL TOURISM

278. Mr D.T. REDMAN to the Minister for Tourism:

I have a supplementary question. With a significant amount of tourism to this state leaking under the minister's watch, surely the minister would agree that a one per cent target is massively underwhelming and he needs to do better than that for regional Western Australia?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

As I stated earlier in response to the member for Vasse, no tourism statistics have been released for this year. Therefore, anything the member refers to relates to the period December 2016 to December 2017—four months of which the now opposition was in government; six months of which its old strategy was in place; eight months of which the old budget was in place, which the now opposition laid down and which constrained tourism in Western Australia and prevented it from being flexible enough to respond to opportunities and threats; and, finally, only about three months of which we were responsible for. During that period, we increased the number of bookings to Western Australia by 52 147, most of which happened in December last year, which gave relief to the hotel and tourism operators of Western Australia. I am sure that if the member bothered to talk to anyone in the tourism industry, he would find that they are buoyant at the results of the last three months, and they are optimistic because they know we are on the cusp of good things in the tourism sector, thanks to the efforts of the McGowan government.