

TOURISM COUNCIL WESTERN AUSTRALIA — 2019 “PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION”

**145. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to Tourism Council Western Australia’s 2019 pre-budget submission, which states —

The decline in international visitor expenditure —

In 2017–18 —

is the most significant ever recorded in the available International Visitor Survey results.

It also refers to the 1 227 tourism jobs lost in 2017–18. Given the absence of a reference to tourism in both the Premier’s Statement and “Our Priorities: Sharing Prosperity”, announced recently, is the government deliberately distancing itself from the Premier’s election commitment to create new jobs for Western Australians by ensuring tourism is prioritised in everything we do?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for gaining the courage to ask a question this year. It is wonderful to have the opportunity to refute some of the falsehoods the member has been peddling about tourism. It is a fact that the last tourism statistics released by Tourism Research Australia confirmed the highest number of visitors to Western Australia—intrastate and international combined—in four years. It is true that we also had record numbers of visitors to the member’s own electorate over the summer.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** In fact, I will take the opportunity to thank the member for Warren–Blackwood. I think he has some very well informed and strong advice on tourism close to home, so he has not engaged in the same type of ridiculous comments that the member for Vasse has made. Margaret River, from all reports, had one of the best summers it has had in years. I know there is always more to be done and there is always more to do in regard to campaigning on behalf of all the regions.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, I want to hear this, and I am sure the member for Vasse does because she asked the question.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The last Tourism Research Australia statistics confirmed that all our regions grew in the last reporting period. Nevertheless, what we have heard from the Liberal Party of Western Australia is a succession of carping, grinding negativity in an effort to undermine the tourism businesses of Western Australia.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Western Australia’s tourism sector deserves more than the self-proclaimed “spokesperson for big fish”. We have a robust —

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** You have asked the question, member for Vasse; all you are doing is shouting out your version of the answer. I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We have a robust, professional, enthusiastic and, I must say, on the whole, optimistic tourism sector. The number that is thrown out there is an extrapolation of some commission’s report claiming some job loss. Is the member aware that in the last 12 months a QT hotel, Westin Perth and DoubleTree by Hilton in Northbridge opened? That is three large hotels collectively employing 600-plus employees. Where does the member get this fantasised figure of a loss of jobs?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members! I am going to start calling everyone to order who interjects. The first one is the member for Darling Range.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will finish by saying that I would advise the member to seek out advice from people in the industry who are actually running hotels.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the third time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Go down to Pan Pacific and talk to the general manager, Rob, who has vast experience across South-East Asia and the Middle East, and seek his advice about what is really going on in the hotel industry and the tourism sector in Western Australia, and educate yourself.