

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

146. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Tourism:

I have a supplementary question. When does the minister expect to deliver on his election commitment and see tourism jobs created and a reversal in the shocking decline in international visitor spend?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

It would be worth the member’s time—this is genuine advice—to seek out advice from Tourism Australia about the entire country and international visitor spend. I was at a tourism ministers’ meeting in Tasmania—I understand the member was not there—only about a month ago, in advance of the Tourism Australia Awards. Tourism Australia gave a presentation just before the lunchbreak to all the ministers from across the country to explain the drop in international visitor spend that has been experienced right across the country. The reason for that is that there has been a transfer, a shift, in the proportion of international visitors from Asia versus Europe and the United States. In the past, 60 per cent or so of international visitors came from those traditional markets of Europe and the United States and 40 per cent from Asia. Now it is reversed and 60 per cent, or thereabouts, right across the country, come from Asia and 40 per cent from Europe and United States. The Asian visitors have shorter holidays, they get less time to stay in a country and they spend less. That has had an impact.

International visitor spend has been reduced, despite the fact that numbers are growing. The growing numbers should have been heralded as a success and a wonderful outcome after eight and a half years of neglect of the tourism sector, when we only had business travel. Now we are building the leisure market for the first time in decades. Members opposite should have been commending us for that outcome; instead, they denigrate the industry. The visitor numbers are growing but they are spending less. Western Australia is affordable and a quality destination.