

TOURISM — VISITOR NUMBERS

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

I refer to the minister's media statement released today titled "Record number of international holiday visitors to WA" and note that Tourism Research Australia's research released today highlights that the total number of international visitors is down by one per cent and the total international spend is down by two per cent.

- (1) Why is the minister using only a subset of the international visitor numbers—namely, the holiday segment?
- (2) Why is he misleading the people of Western Australia about the dire and consistent collapse in total international tourism spend under his watch?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(2) It is true that international holiday-maker growth in Western Australia leads the nation. It is almost three times the national average—fantastic. Those holiday-makers are the ones who fill the hotels. They are the ones who go to cafes and restaurants, get out in the tourism businesses and create jobs for Western Australians, so that is great news.

Interestingly, in her question the member referred to choosing subsets of tourism numbers and accused me of having done so. Can I give her a more fulsome picture of growth in visitor numbers to Western Australia. Growth in visitor numbers in its entirety includes a lot of factors other than international visitors. You will probably be interested, Mr Speaker, to know that visitor numbers include interstate, international and intrastate visitors, and day trips, all of which contribute to the spend —

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse!

Mr P. PAPALIA: —and all of which contribute to the economy of Western Australia. Interestingly, when we take that data from Tourism Research Australia and compare the 2016 entire holistic view of all categories of visitors to Western Australia and their contribution with that for 2018, we find that there has been an \$830 million increase in spend across the state from last year to this year. It is \$830 million more spent by all the visitors to Western Australia. I do not know about you, Mr Speaker, but I do not care where they come from as long as they are spending in Western Australia.