

Division 14: Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation — Services 5 to 7, Tourism —

Mr P. Lilburne, Chair.

Ms R. Saffioti, Minister for Tourism.

Ms R. Brown, Chief Executive Officer.

Ms S. Underwood, Acting Managing Director.

Ms R. Lowe, Executive Director, Destination Development.

Ms A. Last, Executive Director, Events.

Mr R. Sansalone, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr R. Williamson, Senior Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and the daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with those details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall be examined only in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by noon on Friday, 31 May 2024. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

I give the call to the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to page 196 of budget paper No 2, volume 1, and the points under “Tourism”. Paragraph 8.1 states —

increasing the Major Events Fund by an additional \$44.4 million over the forward estimates period to secure blockbuster events and drive visitation to the State;

Does the government try to forecast a return on investment for those projects at the time the funds are being allocated? We do not know the level of funding given to each project. What is the threshold return on investment that the government seeks in planning for an event?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: A number of factors are taken into consideration in relation to bringing major events to WA. One of them, of course, is how many visitors the event is expected to bring. That includes, for example, an estimation of interstate and overseas tourism, the average length of stay and average expenditure. That is all fit into a return on investment calculator. For events like the Margaret River Pro, we also look at how they can activate and bring tourists to a particular regional town and support regional WA. A number of factors go into that consideration, but a return on investment is determined. We are also looking at how we can incorporate a wider assessment of return on investment—for example, how we can support and acknowledge some of the social media following and the broadcast impact. We saw that with WWE wrestling, which had a major impact across the world.

The other point I will make is with regard to the social media impact. More and more of the people we bring here have an incredible social media following, so their support and promotion of Western Australia is also a part of our consideration. A number of considerations are discussed and put forward, Tourism WA makes a recommendation, and the government makes a final decision on its allocation of funding.

Mr R.S. LOVE: What follow-up is done to try to assess both the success of the event and the accuracy of the government’s forecasting techniques?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: A review is undertaken after the event, where we have actuals in relation to the actual number of visitors. As I said, we are going to delve into and do more work on the value of the promotion of the state. For the IBF boxing event two weekends ago, again, we promoted Western Australia into target markets either through social media or sections of the broadcast media. For example, the Supercars Championship was here over the weekend and two drivers filmed in Exmouth, which was edited into the broadcast and posted on social media. In many instances, the events, including both Supercars and WWE, have their own broadcasts. A number of them have their own broadcasts which means that we can, as part of the event, incorporate advertising and marketing of the state into that. That would cost a lot extra if we were trying to buy airtime or billboards in another part of the country. Those are some of the benefits of securing these international, global events—particularly in the case of

something like WWE, and, as I said, the level of sophistication of what it brought to WA with regard to engagement with the local community.

More generally, as we go down the events path, it is also about making sure that Western Australians get to participate in these events. A real focus for us going forward is to not only hold the events, but also have local activation. We started that with the United Cup in January; we had some local activation. We want to ensure that Western Australians who maybe just want the atmosphere but do not necessarily want to go to the event can have a way of participating; WWE did that. For the FIFA Women's World Cup, we hosted the Perth FIFA Fan Festival in the middle of Forrest Place. Thousands of people went down there, watched the matches on the big screen and got to be part of the Matildas atmosphere, even though the Matildas were not playing in Perth.

I want to stretch that into regional WA; we have some ideas that we will continue to pursue. If we have a major event or concert, we want to have some local activation in regional towns so that people can feel part of it. I think Melbourne has been very successful with that. If you go to an event in Melbourne on a particular weekend, whether it is Formula 1 or the AFL grand final, you may not actually attend the event but you are part of that atmosphere. That is something that we are very keen to work on. The local community already gets the benefit of being able to go to things instead of having to travel. The feedback I have had on both WWE and IBF boxing was that people said, "Oh, this is great. I would have to travel to see events of this quality." It basically means they do not have to travel. But as I said, more generally, I want to create more activation around these blockbuster events.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I was actually trying to find out whether there is a threshold the government seeks in terms of what could be considered the minimum expected return on investment before it decides to fund an event?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There is a strict return on investment, but, as I said, it is like the benefit–cost ratio for an infrastructure project. For example, the Albany ring-road was never going to get above 1, but we backed it because of the wider community benefits. I think the initial BCR for Albany ring-road was 0.7. In regional WA there may be further benefits. The Margaret River Pro is an example, given our status as a surfing destination and the global reach. All other aspects are taken into consideration. When we are bringing something that helps activate a regional town and also helps, for example, international women's football, it has wider benefits because we are encouraging young women to play sport. We saw with the Matildas, in particular, an incredible wider impact. We are going to get more and more sophisticated with how we model this because I believe that we need to do further work on the broadcast impact in particular and the social media impact.

[9.10 am]

Mr R.S. LOVE: A number of events take place at Optus Stadium. Has there been any consideration of the name of that stadium reverting to Perth Stadium or some other locally identifiable name as part of the promotional advantage from having these events?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Naming rights are given to major stadia around the world and nation; that is what happens. We broadcast the name Perth or Western Australia through our in-ground advertising. Of course, this is part of the promotion relating to broadcast. What we are doing very well—I congratulate the team at Tourism WA team for this—when negotiating the contracts and landing these blockbuster events is placing a big focus on how we can as part of the broadcast and lead-up create momentum in broadcasting Western Australia around the world. For example, promoting our beautiful whale sharks will be worth a lot more than the name of a stadium.

Ms M. BEARD: I am on page 196 looking at paragraph 8.1. There is an additional \$44.4 million of investment over the forward estimates period with \$26.8 million in 2024–25. Does the minister have any idea how many events that will result in?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Not yet. We will continue to successfully allocate funds. For example, we aim in the future to secure major blockbuster events. That fund has been used to support major events like Coldplay, WWE, past English Premier League matches, the upcoming match of Serie A teams and the Ultimate Fighting Championship. You name it; that is what it is there to fund. Promoters engage with Tourism WA and identify opportunities. Tourism WA does some assessments and goes to the tourism board, and then recommendations are given to government. We try—I think we have been successful—to get a diversity of events and we continue to pursue that. I will give the member some examples of what we have funded for the upcoming year. As we know, there will be the Wallabies v South Africa match, the UFC 305, the Hockey Australia Masters Championships, the United Cup and Pair'd in the Margaret River region. Those are the types of events that we fund.

Ms M. BEARD: I am keen to understand. Do people in the department make approaches or is there a bucket available and people just say, "Yes. I'm happy to come"?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is best to describe it in two ways. There are the homegrown events, which I will talk a little bit about. In a sense, there are two streams of events—blockbuster events, which are hard to predict because we are not sure exactly what we will secure, and homegrown events. As part of our strategy going forward, we are very much into supporting blockbuster events and homegrown events. For example, we are very much focused on how

we can support homegrown events over the calendar year so a key event is held in Perth every month that we can sell internationally and interstate. There is a calendar of events.

We are working across government and looking at events currently funded by Tourism WA, like Pair'd, the replacement for Margaret River Escape, and EverNow in October. These homegrown events are sometimes sponsored by Tourism, but the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries might have some such as the Fringe World Festival and the Perth Festival. Then there might be some Perth Racing events and some key regional events like the Shore Leave Festival and key events in Broome. We will create a calendar of homegrown events. We can then support those homegrown events by giving them longer funding certainty so that they can continue to grow and become key destinations themselves. That is very much a priority of ours. We are working through that. We are incorporating the whole of government. We are looking at what is happening in the racing calendar, the culture and the arts calendar and the regional events calendar. There are so many regional events happening. We are looking at how we can support them to grow bigger and maybe longer.

Then there are the blockbuster events. With blockbuster events, Tourism WA engages with promoters. There are some three or four key promoters who are always developing concepts or events. They put them to us, and we initially look at whether it is something worth us pursuing. If it is, there is further work to describe the event or to get the economic impact and cost of that event. WA's success, particularly with Coldplay and WWE, has really put us on the events map. I think everyone from tourism would agree that we are seeing a lot of promoters coming to WA first now because they know that we have very strong audiences. In particular, I think WWE here had the biggest ever audience for an WWE Elimination Chamber and it sold a record amount of merchandise for a non-WrestleMania event. We saw with our EPL teams last year and particularly with the UFC that our interstate visitation was very big.

We are seeing that promoters are keen to come to us. We understand the time of the year. To be honest, the other issue we have is negotiating access to grounds. For example, the AFL has certain contracts with Optus Stadium. We are always trying to negotiate through that as well. Since VenuesWest took operating control of Optus Stadium, it deals directly with Cricket Australia and the AFL. When we look at events, we have to make sure that we can get access to Optus Stadium.

Ms M. BEARD: Regional events are really important. There is sometimes difficulty for regional events to get exposure. Is there a thought around some of those regional events coming to Perth, like the Gascoyne Long Table Lunch, the Southern Forests Food Council or whatever it might be? Something could be run at the same time to promote that neck of the woods and give them exposure to a wider audience.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: That is a great idea. I was up for Shore Leave at the Abrolhos and I was blown away by the event. It was a one-day event. I came back with the idea to grow that event, because it is an incredible event and it was sold out that day. I also thought, "How many people are coming from interstate and overseas?" We want to give many of these regional events maybe three or more years of funding certainty and ask how we can work with the marketing team to ensure that we can promote those regional events interstate. We can then work with the airlines to help tourist airfares. It is far more sophisticated and complicated, but we will be picking some iconic events from around regional WA. There might be some arguments: "You haven't picked us" or "You haven't picked this", but we need to start from somewhere. Whether they happen around Margaret River, as I said, or around Geraldton or Broome—there are some incredible events through the Gascoyne as well—we will pick those and then elevate them to our major calendar of events. We will still support all the other events through our normal regional events program, but by targeting some major events, we hope to develop to the next tier.

It is something I am very excited and passionate about because, to be honest, I think it is normally the same people who go on our experiences each year, so let us expose what we have in regional WA. The Ord Valley Muster was on the weekend just past; let us expose events such as that to interstate and overseas tourists. On the Abrolhos trip, I thought: far out; some tourists from China or Singapore would absolutely be blown away by this experience and, in particular, the combination of fresh seafood and local cooking. Overseas tourists would love to be served freshly caught seafood that has been cooked before their eyes. There is a huge ability for us to do more.

[9.20 am]

Ms M. BEARD: Regional events rely heavily on grant funding. Some of the feedback I have had from event organisers is that sometimes the timing of finding out that they will get the funding prevents them from being able to book what they need to book earlier in the timeline to make the event happen. Is there any scope for flexibility in the timing of that funding?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Absolutely. For example, I want to move iconic regional events to longer funding certainty so that they know what they have this year and next year and they can negotiate a couple of years in advance. My view is that funding certainty is important. We do not want event organisers to spend the first four months of the year trying to identify funding, because it does not allow them to grow the event. Events also help support local businesses.

Some of the feedback I have had in the past is that we have not activated local businesses enough, and I think that is because we have not given people enough time to activate those local businesses. Funding certainty over two or three years is very much where we are heading.

I think racing is a great day out. I was at the Quokka Horse Race recently and there was some visitation from South-East Asia. We have other big races in regional WA, such as the Kalgoorlie Cup and the Broome Cup. I want to look at how we can further support them. I think Kalgoorlie is still very strong, but feedback on some of others is that they are not as popular as they were. It is partly because of funding support or, more generally, who is managing the event, and that is where we can engage our development commissions and local tourism representatives.

Mr R.S. LOVE: On page 197, the service summary table shows that for both “Event Tourism” and “Destination Marketing” there are significant changes across the forward estimates. This year there is a larger allocation than in any of the other years. Can the minister explain why there is a decrease in the out years from the amount for this budget year? For example, “Event Tourism” goes from \$101 million down to \$53 million in the following year.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: As I have said, we have injected significant funding. A lot of this has been post-COVID. The former Minister for Tourism and now Premier, emerging from COVID, put in specific funding for major events and also recovery of our direct flights. There was a significant boost to the budget of both post-COVID. In relation to the recovery of direct flights, we now have 19 reconnected flights or new connections. We have also re-cashflowed some of that money from 2023–24 to 2024–25, and the same with events. We have re-cashflowed some money, but over the forward estimates we will see how we continue to support events. Hopefully, many of our homegrown events now will have taken charge and we have a fully-fledged homegrown events calendar. They are still blockbuster events. Post-COVID, we have attempted to make Western Australia an events capital of South-East Asia. We are working on that and that is why we injected particular extra funds. We will continue to monitor how we go over the forward estimates and if further funds are required, we will support that, but, in the meantime, we will support a homegrown events calendar.

Mr R.S. LOVE: I refer to budget paper No 2 and the line item “Tourism Investment Committee of Cabinet” under the spending changes on page 193. Can the minister explain what that money will achieve and also how the committee of cabinet will influence further decisions around tourism expenditure?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sure. The key feedback we got from industry, and something that I have always believed, is tourism is much bigger than what happens within Tourism WA. In particular, when we look at national parks, maritime facilities, transport and so many other portfolios, we see that they impact the state’s ability to attract tourists and create a positive experience for tourists once they are here. One of my aspirations was to ensure that tourism is a cross-government priority and, more generally, that we take into account the tourism benefits and the need for improved tourism infrastructure around Western Australia.

As we know, a lot of what happens in the environmental space, such as with national parks or trails, very much impacts on tourism. We have seen an incredible increase in trails visitation, whether it be for hiking, gravel riding or mountain bike riding. I think there was an event recently in Nannup. I received feedback about how popular it was. Also, international tourists are now targeting Western Australia’s trails because they want the experience of going through native forest and enjoying not only an incredible cycling event, but also a nature-based event.

Then we have culture and the arts. Fringe is a great event that supports the Western Australian community, but I truly believe it should be an international event whereby we bring over artists from around the world, create partnerships and support visitation from other parts of the world and interstate. We can then back that in with marketing and other flights. We can then also combine a regional event with it.

We have regional development, of course. Tourism is a very, very big part of regional economies.

This subcommittee has been created to ensure a cross-government approach to tourism. For nature-based tourism, we have the Minister for Environment on the committee so that when we support expenditure on our national parks, we ensure at the very early stages that it will support the tourism experience. Culture and the arts is also represented on the committee. Again, that will make sure that when we invest in infrastructure or events, tourism is a key part of it—and it is just not. It is all fine to be targeting our local audience, but I think Fringe can bring from interstate and overseas not only the performers and their teams, but also the tourists. That is why the subcommittee exists.

Mr R.S. LOVE: The membership of this subcommittee is based upon the relevance of the ministerial responsibilities to tourism as a portfolio. For instance, the minister mentioned the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. I assume sport would be another portfolio. What departments or ministers will be represented?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The ministers are Minister Templeman, Minister for Culture and the Arts and Minister for Sport and Recreation; Minister Whitby, Minister for Environment; Minister Punch, Minister for Regional Development; and Minister Carey, Minister for Lands and Minister for Planning, because those departments are also big contributors to increasing and improving visitor experiences. I am also on the committee; it includes transport.

Ms M. BEARD: My question relates to the service summary on page 197. I refer to service 5, “Destination Marketing”, in conjunction with service 7, “Tourism Destination Development”, which is decreasing. Can the minister advise why funding for destination development is reducing over time?

[9.30 am]

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Those numbers bounce around a little bit because it includes the aviation recovery fund, which was part of Reconnect WA. We supported \$75 million to recover air links across the world. We have been successful in some and we still have funds to be allocated next year to try to recover more connections. That is why it is a bit lumpy and then disappears. It was a set fund to entice airlines back to Western Australia. It is not continued funding for them, but it is some initial funding to help market the routes and to bring connections back. That is why there was a dedicated fund that then disappears.

Ms M. BEARD: Is the minister saying that it will likely disappear or will it still be there but with a lesser amount?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The \$75 million was about reconnecting. As I said, it is not a long-term fund. It is embedded in those numbers, which is why there is volatility in that. The profile will depend on our expenditure. As I said, we have secured a number of direct connections, but we still have a number of offers on the table for some key markets out there like China and India.

Ms M. BEARD: In the same table, is “Destination Marketing” related to the five registered training organisations? It is the fifth point in the table.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: A lot of the funding under “Tourism Destination Development” is also supporting the workforce. We have specific training for young people entering the workforce. We have a partnership with AHA, which is all about encouraging younger people to enter the tourism industry. We also run programs for mature age workers to help people who are re-entering the workforce after being absent. We have specific initiatives to support workforce development. Destination marketing includes the aviation recovery fund and the regional tourism organisations.

Ms M. BEARD: Can the minister tell me the allocation for each of those RTOs?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes; by way of supplementary information, we can provide the annual allocation for each of the RTOs.

The CHAIR: Does the minister agree to provide the supplementary information, and, if so, state exactly what information will be provided?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will provide the allocation of funding to RTOs for the 2024–25 financial year.

[*Supplementary Information No A11.*]

Ms M. BEARD: Is it still the case that marketing the regions is the core function of RTOs?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Affiliated bodies of Tourism WA each receive a portion of their funding from the agency. They may also be supported by local communities, local businesses and their members. The RTOs’ primary role is to deliver region-focused intrastate campaigns, working in cooperation with Tourism WA and the local tourism industry. They work on five-year agreements. The five RTOs are Australia’s coral coast, Australia’s golden outback, Australia’s north west, Australia’s south west and Destination Perth.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I refer to “Outdoor Adventure Tourism Package—Tourism Attraction Feasibility” under “New Initiatives” in the table on page 193. There is an amount of \$500 000. Can the minister outline what that package will deliver?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: It is a \$165 million package all up. We across government looked at some outstanding issues that we wanted to address. We also looked at the popularity of trails and how we support more hiking, mountain biking and gravel bikes—I am getting across all the different types of biking; it is really hard. We looked at maritime infrastructure and camping facilities. We worked across government to identify where we can support investment in projects. To confirm, does the member want the outdoor adventure package?

Ms M.J. DAVIES: That is right. I am on page 193 and there is only \$500 000 allocated to that, but it sounds like this is spread across the whole division.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There is further feasibility. The \$500 000 relates to tourism attraction feasibility studies, by which we fund tourism to do further work on proposals for new tourism infrastructure. We are working with them on that. More generally, \$165 million is to fund a number of outdoor adventure tourism items, including \$82.4 million in boating and maritime facilities, which includes \$17.5 million to extend the northern breakwater at Jurien Bay boat harbour; \$9.1 million additional funding for the Woodman Point jetty; \$6.5 million on the Onslow marina community boating facility, subject to some private sector funding; more funding for the Albany waterfront marina, in particular the boat ramp in Albany; and \$4 million for a new fishing platform in Bunbury. We have \$45.8 million

in trails and other recreational facilities, which includes \$8 million for the Pemberton trail master plan; \$8 million for the Peel regional trails; \$3.5 million for the Kwinana Loop; \$3 million for stages 1 to 3 of the Kalamunda circuit trail; \$2.5 million towards the Red Gorge hike and cycle trail at Karijini and \$17.1 million for campgrounds across the state, to deliver a range of upgrades. There is \$8.1 million for specific initiatives, such as a visitor centre and jetty at the Abrolhos Islands; \$8.1 million for the Kalbarri foreshore and beaches revitalisation; and \$3 million for the upgrade of the Gloucester and bicentennial trees in the Pemberton area.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: In the Central Wheatbelt, we have Northam, ballooning and the Avon Descent, which, from my experience of being a previous Minister for Sport and Recreation, falls between the gaps. It is most definitely a sporting event, but there is also tourism attached. I spoke to the Minister for Sport and Recreation and I think there has been some funding attached to the Avon Descent, but in terms of ballooning or those types of events, how do they find their way into feasibility or onto the radar?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Again, councils can present. There are two parts. There is the event itself. I agree: the Avon Descent is an iconic WA event that celebrates a great part of the world. When we look at iconic tourism events, Avon Descent is one I am looking at to see how we can promote that more and give it more funding certainty and help build on an iconic Western Australian event. We have the regional events scheme and last year we supported the Women's Hot Air Ballooning Championships in Northam as an event. There are two parts: we continue to support iconic regional events, and we hope over time to develop even greater exposure of the Northam hot air balloons. I think it is one of the most beautiful visions out there. I was in Northam for a wedding and there were a lot of hot air balloons that morning when we drove out and it was incredible. We worked with the Wheatbelt Development Commission, too. Looking at the calendar, the Avon Descent in particular is a good staple that we can build on over time. It would expose us to the rest of the world, bringing more and more people from around the world to come and participate.

[9.40 am]

Ms M. BEARD: The minister referred to Kalbarri and the foreshore. Can she provide more information on what that will provide for Kalbarri?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Sorry; I do not think we have the information. As I understand, it has been an aspiration and a project after cyclone Seroja. It has been a priority of both the council and the development commission to revitalise the foreshore and help re-beautify the foreshore to further attract visitors. There is some infrastructure and new landscaping supporting the foreshore.

Ms M. BEARD: I just want to clarify that that is new money and that there is no planning. Have any projects been started for that project?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: An amount of \$8.1 million will fund phase 1 of the Kalbarri foreshore and beaches revitalisation initiative. Yes; this is new money.

Ms M. BEARD: In relation to the tourism events and the solar eclipse referred to on page 205, what was the return on investment for the 2023 solar eclipse event?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: I will say a couple of things. Sorry; I do not have that information. The total solar eclipse allowed us to fund some upgrades to infrastructure. As Minister for Transport, for example, I injected funds into the Minilya–Exmouth Road to support safety and provide more parking bays and more rest areas. A lot of permanent infrastructure was funded. Then there was the event itself. I was there for that event, and it was one of the most well attended and well controlled events I have ever seen. But I do not have the numbers for the return on investment.

Ms M. BEARD: Is the minister saying that she is unsure of the economic return to the state? How many visitors actually attended in person?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There might be figures, but I do not have them in front of me. I can provide supplementary information on the visitation numbers for the total solar eclipse in Exmouth in 2023.

[*Supplementary Information No A12.*]

Ms M. BEARD: Is it possible to include in that supplementary information the economic return to the state from that event, if it is available?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, if we have it. The visitation numbers and economic return to the state will be part of that supplementary information.

Ms M. BEARD: My question is about paragraph 8.2 on page 196, which states —

building Western Australia's density and diversity of attractions and accommodation by investing \$500,000 to explore the feasibility of new tourism attractions and investing \$1 million to grow the State's cruise tourism program;

Who is undertaking the work for that, and what attractions are being considered?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: There are a number of different proposals around the state. The committee will work through it and then allocate funds to develop feasibility studies for some proposals. We will work through that. They will be outcomes of deliberations of the tourism subcommittee. Work on tourism cruise ship destinations is done by Tourism WA. Again, we are working with the cruise line companies, which facilitate a lot of engagement with cruise liners. For example, during the WA Cruise Exchange event last year, we engaged directly with the cruise line companies and helped to promote WA experiences with them. That money helps to do that. There is funding to support shore excursion development and building the capacity of destinations for cruise ships. Cruise ship tourism is much wanted, but it is ad hoc. It takes a lot of development to ensure that all the local tourism businesses in regional towns are geared up for hundreds, if not thousands, of people coming in on one day and getting around. All that work with local businesses in regional WA supports welcoming cruise ships when they arrive.

Ms M. BEARD: On page 193, there is the line item “Kimberley Tourism Support Program”. I notice that there is no funding after 2025–26. Considering the government’s decision to close Horizontal Falls, what is driving that significant reduction in funding?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We very much continue to work with industry in Broome, in particular the tourism industry. A package was announced post the Kimberley floods, and that included an allocation of funds. We have helped support discounts on tours and subsidised airfares or discounted flights. Earlier this year, I announced \$2.8 million for further support, and that includes, for example, discounted tourism experiences and support for flights. It includes \$1.7 million for discounted flights to and across the Kimberley, some of which are currently on sale; a further \$500 000 in discounted tours and experiences with a new Kimberley Season Pass program; and a \$200 000 partnership with the Caravan Industry Association. We will continue to work on further funding. There may be other areas across the whole state that will need extra support for particular reasons. We continue to monitor what is happening in tourism. For example, there was an injection and a continuation of support, particularly post the Kimberley floods. We will continue to monitor it to see whether further funds are required in the out years.

Ms M. BEARD: Does the Treasurer know how many people have used the Kimberley tourism support program since its inception?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Post January 2023, when the then Minister for Tourism and now Premier announced the recovery package, there were 19 000 discounted airfares from Perth to Broome and from Perth to Kununurra. We now have our \$2.8 million extension of that support, which includes a \$1.7 million aviation package. I do not have those numbers because that sale is currently happening. Also, there is \$500 000 in discounted tours and experiences, with 50 per cent off the cost of tours and experiences across the Kimberley region. I do not have the full numbers because that support package is still out there. I have further information. We recently reported that 1 500 vouchers at \$100 have been used through the visitor centre.

[9.50 am]

Ms M. BEARD: Do we have information on the annual usage rate of the program in terms of the number of travellers and the amount of discounted travel, accommodation and airfares that was provided?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Yes, we do for post season, but we do not have all the information for this current season because it is still alive. I did read out those numbers for 2023.

The appropriation was recommended.