

TOURISM EVENTS — MARGARET RIVER GOURMET ESCAPE

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

I refer to the fact that when the Premier was the Minister for Tourism, he lost Rally Australia. Will this minister ensure that he does not make the same mistake as the Premier and will he guarantee that the Margaret River Gourmet Escape will be funded into the future and be retained?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for the question. The Margaret River Gourmet Escape, like every other activity being funded from the budget, is being assessed for value to the taxpayer. The measurement we are applying —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I know that is a novel concept! We are applying a measurement to all expenditure. Bearing in mind that the Labor Party went to the election promising to spend \$425 million over five years on destination marketing and events funding to boost tourism in this state —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition!

Mr P. PAPALIA: Every single dollar that we allocate in the tourism portfolio will be assessed for value for money to the taxpayer. The measurement at this critical time—instead of some of the silliness we have witnessed during this question time—should be appropriately focused on trying to fill hotel rooms. Hoteliers and the hospitality businesses in this state are doing it tough. Every time we meet with them, they implore us to focus on one thing and one thing alone—getting more visitors to this state. That is the measurement we will apply. If we do not get more visitors to the state by spending these dollars, they will be spent on something else.