

TOURISM WA — SEOUL OFFICE CLOSURE

**479. Mr P. PAPALIA to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to the minister's broken promise for an additional \$24 million over four years specifically for the tourism marketing budget, along with the decision to close the Seoul tourism office.

- (1) Does the minister concede that it was a poor choice to close the Seoul office in light of the dramatic 24 per cent increase in Korean tourists visiting WA in the 12 months to June this year?

**Dr K.D. Hames** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Minister for Health, are you finished?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** My next question is —

- (2) Does the minister also concede that it was an especially poor choice, given that, relative to the number of visitors, Korean tourists, when they do come to Australia, spend an above-average number of nights here?

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY replied:**

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. It is true that Tourism WA closed down the Seoul office. That decision was made based on the patronage and activity being generated out of that office. We have engaged the services of a contractor to the tune of \$12 000 to encourage the interest still there in that market and to keep our feelers out to see whether that market might rebound. Those decisions are made based on the market we perceive to be present at the time. We were certainly not getting a value-for-money return on that investment and the decision was made by Tourism Western Australia that that money would be better spent in other markets where we are getting a far greater return on our investment.