

Division 68: Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, \$14 943 000 —

Mr M.W. Sutherland, Chairman.

Mr W.R. Marmion, Minister for Environment.

Ms M. Broderick, Acting Chief Executive Officer.

Mr I. Biddle, Business and Finance Manager.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Eyre has a question.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: I refer to page 815 and the line item for total appropriations provided to deliver services. I note that there is an increase. Can the minister outline what the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority will deliver with this increase in appropriation?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The functions that underpin the management of both Kings Park and Bold Park include the provision of recreational and tourism services and facilities, conservation of natural landscapes and cultural heritage, plant management and display, biodiversity management and research and educational programs. As everyone knows, Kings Park and Botanic Garden is an important cultural and scientific institution. It is Western Australia's single most visited tourist destination. It contains the Western Australian botanic garden. Both Kings Park and Bold Park contain large areas of remnant bushland. The key deliverables for 2012, 2013 and beyond include improvement of and promotion of knowledge and enjoyment of Kings Park, the botanic garden and Bold Park; maintenance and improvement of urban bushland, parklands and botanic gardens with a focus on Western Australian heritage; providing a range of visitor opportunities and experiences; providing a safe and accessible environment; providing a high-quality public service and facilities; and to conserve, promote and develop Aboriginal, colonial and contemporary cultural heritage. An example of this is the Boodja Gnarning walk, which was launched in the 2012–11 period, which highlights and celebrates the links between the local Nyoongah people and Kings Park. I think that probably is enough to answer the member's main questions.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: The minister talked about visitation. How many visitors come to Kings Park in a year? Is that possible to calculate or not?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: He has already mentioned it.

Dr G.G. JACOBS: Yes, but how many?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Member, it is getting close to six million. It might go just over that expectation this year.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I just have one really quick question. At the second dot point on page 816 under the service summary, it looks like \$10 million is going towards biodiversity conservation and scientific research. Could the minister please detail what areas of biodiversity conservation and scientific research that money is being allocated towards?

Mr W.R. MARMION: The high-profile deliverables include conserving, developing and managing scientific collections of Western Australian and other flora; displaying Western Australian and other flora; promoting the use of flora for the purpose of horticultural conservation and education; undertaking and promoting scientific research and investigation into WA and other flora and biodiversity and conservation; and seeking to establish regional botanical gardens in Western Australia that provide environmental, social, cultural and economic benefits for all local and regional communities.

In addition, responsiveness to meet government priorities can be demonstrated by the Western Australian botanic garden as a living research centre for the conservation of Western Australia's flora. The garden beds in the botanical garden display about 2 300 species of mainly Western Australian plants. The WA Seed Technology Centre and the Kings Park Nursery are responsible for the collection, propagation and record-keeping of all plants in the botanic gardens and parkland areas. The Kings Park education service has developed an extensive series of programs and special events for schools in line with the national curriculum. Programs focus on the environment in general, biodiversity and ecosystems and cultural heritage.

The Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority science team continue to support Western Australia's industry in research projects for the restoration and conservation of native Western Australian plant species and rehabilitation of disturbed environments outside of the designated lands and contribute extensively to international publications, as everyone knows.

The appropriation was recommended.