

PREMIER'S STATEMENT

Consideration

Resumed from 14 February on the following question —

That the Premier's Statement be noted.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.54 am]: In my contribution to this debate I would like to make some comments on the Transport portfolio. The government went to the election with its key plank being the Metronet concept. I say "Metronet concept" because nearly a year in, despite the best efforts of the minister to try to claim all sorts of initiatives of the Barnett Liberal government as a Metronet project, the reality is that Metronet is still a concept. The opposition has been in touch with Infrastructure Australia, which advised that it expects, sometime this year, to get a business case for the Thornlie–Cockburn rail line and the Yanchep rail line. However, Metronet has not started. I would like to put on the record how galling it was to see a new minister, appointed in March last year, go to the opening of the Aubin Grove train station without even the good grace to invite the shadow minister, when the project was completed on the former government's watch.

Ms A. Sanderson: Did you invite the member for Midland to your opening?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I am actually glad that the member for Morley asks because when we came to government in 2008 we had a conga line of Labor members at the opening of the Forrest Highway and at all of the projects that were commenced and substantially completed under the Carpenter government.

Ms A. Sanderson interjection.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order! Member for Morley.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Interesting—we are a bit sensitive over there.

I will get back to what I was talking about—the opening of the Aubin Grove train station. At 4.00 pm on a Friday, the former Premier, Hon Colin Barnett, was notified through his electorate office that there would be an opening on the Sunday. The Leader of the Opposition, Dr Mike Nahan, was not invited. I, as the shadow minister, was not invited. I think that is galling. Then the minister had the gall to stand there at the opening of the Aubin Grove train station and say—the media release said—that that was the first Metronet project of the McGowan Labor government. The first Metronet project! Aubin Gove train station was commenced and completed under the member for Bateman and the member for Nedlands as transport ministers. That minister, Hon Rita Saffioti, claimed it as a Metronet project. It gets better, members.

The Forrestfield–Airport Link is apparently the first Metronet project as well—the first Metronet rail line. Hon Dean Nalder signed the contract for the Forrestfield–Airport Link. That started back in April 2016 or somewhere thereabouts. Now there is Metronet branding all over that. The Minister for Transport, who has not actually commenced a rail project yet, claims the Forrestfield–Airport Link as one of hers. The Forrestfield–Airport Link is a great project. The forecasts for the FAL are projected to reach around 20 000 patrons by 2021 and up to about 29 000 by 2031. It is a really good project because it connects existing rail systems. It is a project that does not encourage urban sprawl. It is encouraging densification and intensification within the urban footprint that we have, and that was why we prioritised that as a project.

Members will be interested to know that there is another Metronet project—the Nicholson Road and Moore Street bridge. That is a Metronet project! According to the minister's Facebook page, the Nicholson Road–Moore Street bridge, which was the most dangerous level crossing in Western Australia—I think it was rated the most dangerous level crossing in Australia—was a project substantially commenced under our government. It was a key project. The government has been in power now for nearly a year. The bridge has been completed. Guess what? It is Metronet! It is actually a key plank of the state government's Metronet program. The minister's Facebook page contains a schematic with a drone view over the brand new bridge, which is the minister's bridge, apparently, and it is the start of Metronet's Thornlie–Cockburn rail line. I think it is quite hilarious and somewhat ridiculous really.

What we have yet to see is this minister commence a rail project or submit a proper business case to Infrastructure Australia so it knows what it will be funding.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: We are very sensitive! She loves her voice, doesn't she? She loves listening to her voice over there.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members! Member for Scarborough.

Several members interjected.

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The ACTING SPEAKER: Members on my right! Minister! Thank you.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The other aspect of Metronet that I find really curious is that with great fanfare, Premier McGowan announced he was going to establish Infrastructure WA, which is supposed to be modelled on Infrastructure Australia, which will comprise an independent panel of experts who assess the merits of infrastructure projects. Will Metronet be subject to the scrutiny of the independent, non-political Infrastructure WA? No. We would think that any project worth over \$100 million to be commenced by a government would be subject to that scrutiny. One has to question why. I would wager that this government does not want the proposed Metronet projects to be scrutinised by Infrastructure WA because it is likely that an independent panel of experts would have a look at the rail line to Ellenbrook and say, “Actually we don’t need that until 2031”, as was the Public Transport Authority’s advice to us when we were in government. I am sure it is the PTA’s advice to this government; the government will build it anyway, but it has no plan for how to fund it—no plan as is the case for the rest of the \$5 billion worth of promises. I find it extraordinary that Metronet projects will be excluded from the scrutiny of Infrastructure WA. The government needs to explain why that is so.

Infrastructure Australia, as an independent body, ranked the Perth Freight Link as the most important project in the nation. Of all the projects in the nation assessed by Infrastructure Australia, the Perth Freight Link was ranked highest and would have boosted productivity and the number of jobs for Western Australians. What did this Premier do? In an act of economic vandalism, he completely disregarded the advice of the independent and highly respected board members of Infrastructure Australia and that decision will cost Western Australians millions of dollars. The contract was cancelled.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There is \$1.2 billion —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker!

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, the member has not taken your interjections. You will have an opportunity to contribute.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: There is \$1.2 billion sitting in federal Treasury allocated to that project because federal Treasury knows 5 000 jobs would result from the completion of that project and that that project is needed. I will tell members why it is needed and why it was very reckless of this Premier to cancel the Roe 8–Roe 9 project. It was very interesting the other day when I was listening to the Transport Workers’ Union bemoaning the fact that another set of traffic lights is on the corner of Leach Highway and Norma Road. I know that patch of Leach Highway very well. I owned a business off Norma Road, but I moved my business from where it was located on the corner of Norma Road and Leach Highway because the congestion was very heavy. My customers told me they were not going to that business because they could not get into it due to the congestion. That is the kind of impact congestion has on businesses. I vacated the space and found a location that my customers could get to and park at. When we looked at the reason for the government cancelling this project, yes, it said there was an issue with a small segment of the Beeliar wetlands. The government said also that Roe 8–Roe 9 would not be needed should the outer harbour be constructed. However, the Infrastructure Australia assessment of Roe 8–Roe 9 and the Perth Freight Link project indicated that the freight link project was needed regardless of whether the outer harbour was completed and in fact the benefit–cost ratio of the project improved with the outer harbour, because Roe 8 would then facilitate freight going to the outer harbour and the Roe 8–Roe 9 project was still needed to ease congestion for ordinary motor vehicles—for mums and dads in the southern corridor who have to suffer through the longest commute times of any other commuter in metropolitan Perth. That is why the Liberal–National government was building the Perth Freight Link.

Infrastructure Victoria recently provided advice to the Andrews Labor government, which I quote —

Using national and international benchmarks, it is reasonable to assume that once a decision on a new port location is made, it will take between 10 and 15 years to plan, design, gain approval for, and construct the port.

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I mention this in the context of the Perth Freight Link project because the government's Westport Taskforce is not expected to report to government until more than halfway through the term. It will take 10 to 15 years on top of that to build an outer harbour. Using international benchmarks, we will not have a solution to the congestion problems until sometime between 2029 and 2034. At that stage, Fremantle port capacity will be roughly double the current capacity and this government has no plan for the intervening 10 to 15 years to fix congestion and facilitate freight movements to the port. The government needs to start this project now. We implore the government to reconsider its reckless decision because we need an alternative to the commuter congestion and we need to improve freight efficiency.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Why doesn't the minister listen to some facts about Roe 8–Roe 9? Infrastructure Australia said that the freight industry was prepared to pay for it. It loves this project so much that it was going to cough up \$ 384 million a year of freight charge to use the Perth Freight Link.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Listen to her rabbit on.

The freight industry was prepared to pay for the Perth Freight Link because of the time savings it would create. Trucks would not need to stop and start at every single set of traffic lights along Leach Highway. The fuel savings to freight out of the smooth journey instead of the stop–start journey would be of greater benefit to them than the toll they would pay to use the Perth Freight Link. The carbon footprint would reduce due to reduced emissions and the use of less fuel. The improvement in the carbon footprint from our freight industry, in my view, is the most amazing counter to a very small portion of Beeliar wetlands being disturbed.

Road safety improvement is a big issue for the freight industry. Everyone knows that a lot of normal motor vehicle users are not sympathetic to freight traffic and it is a significant user of Leach Highway. As a lot of big trucks come up to traffic lights, they take a long time to slow down, commuter vehicles duck in front of them and the end-to-end crashes along Leach Highway and the conflict between motor vehicles and trucks will get worse, but this government has no solution to that problem. It cancelled the project.

There are also savings in commuter time. This is where it will really come back and bite this government. There is a congestion time tax on every commuter in the southern corridor. The modelling for PM peak times shows that 80 per cent of commuter trips have travel times 20 per cent longer than the average afternoon peak. Just to make it really clear, to those opposite, as with this act of economic vandalism, they have ensured that every individual travelling home during the PM peak time on those southern road networks will have a 20 per cent longer commute time in their vehicles than any other person in metropolitan Perth.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Minister, member! The member on her feet is not taking your interjections. You will have an opportunity to make a contribution in due time. Thank you.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I reiterate—I know members opposite do not like it—the business case shows us that Roe 8–9 would have economic merit if the outer harbour were developed with higher benefits in 2031 than in 2021 even if the greater share of freight is directed to the outer harbour. The state needs this project with or without an outer harbour. I implore the government to reconsider this decision and find a way to build that freight link, because our commuters and our freight industry need it, and that was why we committed to it. I am flagging that this government will be found wanting. There is no plan for that 10 to 15-year lead-up for the construction of the outer harbour. In the interim, all those commuters will have to spend extra time in their vehicles and will be increasing the pollution and carbon footprint of metropolitan Perth.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The next disaster in the transport portfolio is the taxi reform. The minister has managed to upset every person in the taxi industry with her proposal. Taxi plate owners, taxidriviers and investors in the taxi industry have come to see me. They are absolutely furious about the fact that during the election campaign, and during the period of the last government, at no point did the now Minister for Transport indicate to the taxi industry that she intended to fund the plate buyback scheme with a tax. The plate owners who had meetings with the minister have told me that Minister Saffioti stood in front of them and said, "If we get into government, we will make sure that you get \$160 000 to \$200 000 as part of a buyback scheme." The Labor Party was very sneaky. It did not put out an election policy on this issue. It gave a commitment to the Micro Business Party that it would fund a buyback scheme. The Micro Business Party asked our government whether we would match that, and we said no. The Micro Business Party campaigned against us and for the Labor Party. It had preference deals with the Labor Party. At no point was the Micro Business Party told that its buyback scheme was contingent upon putting

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a tax on every on-demand transport user in this state. That includes regional taxis, which will not get any benefit from a buyback scheme, because they operate under a completely different system. Every person in regional Western Australia will have to pay a 10 per cent tax to help fund the metropolitan plate buyback scheme. Why is this election commitment to taxidrivers not funded in the way in which every other Labor election commitment has been funded? The Labor Party said before the election that if it won government, it would not introduce any new taxes. What is a 10 per cent levy on consumers? It is a tax! The government has introduced a tax. The Labor Party was silent before the election on how it would fund this buyback scheme. The Labor Party was elected in a landslide. That is because it told the taxidrivers—who promoted the Labor Party to get it into government—that it would introduce a buyback scheme for them. The government has absolutely misled the community.

Another issue with the buyback scheme that the plate owners have raised with me is that in other states, taxi plate owners are not required to surrender their plates. I am told that those plates have a residual value of up to \$120 000. In this state, plate owners will be required to surrender their plates. What if plate owners do not want to surrender their plates? What is the plan for plate owners in regional Western Australia, who operate under a different set of rules? Why will regional taxi customers be charged for a metro plate buyback? What about flag-fall customers? People at rank-and-hail do not log their journey with a booking agency. How will they be charged that 10 per cent levy? I have been told by people in the industry that the government will not allow consumers to be charged. That means that taxidrivers will not be allowed to increase their fees by 10 per cent, so the levy will have to come out of the driver's pocket, or from somewhere else. It is absolutely ridiculous. This is another one of the government's unfunded election commitments. The government has broken its key promise to not introduce new taxes to fund this buyback scheme. We will be reminding the community of that. I do not know why taxidrivers and taxi consumers will be required to pay a tax to fund a Labor election commitment. I wonder what other hidden taxes will be brought in to fund the government's other unfunded election commitments. We all know that Labor had no plan to pay for any of its election commitments. It promised and promised and promised, but it had no plan to pay.

That brings me to the next big broken promise. The Labor Party said that it does not believe in privatising monopolies—that is, except Landgate —

Dr M.D. Nahan: And Warradarge.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Yes, except Warradarge. The Labor Party argued against asset sales for eight years. However, when the Labor Party came to government, the now Premier did the mother of all backflips and privatised Synergy's clean energy assets to a foreign company. It was not even an Australian investor; it was a foreign company. Not only that, the Premier tried to hide that decision. He put out another one of his sneaky four o'clock on a Friday afternoon press releases in the hope that no-one would notice. It is ridiculous.

The government is now trying to sell Landgate. Landgate is a monopoly business. The now Premier said before the election that he would never sell a regulated monopoly. If that is the case, why sell an unregulated monopoly? Landgate holds title information. The Torrens title system underpins the economic activity of this state. There is a risk to the protection of personal data and privacy. There is also a risk to the integrity of the Torrens title system. Another important issue is that taxpayer money is invested in the intellectual property that this government is proposing to sell to a private company. If the government wants to do this, it should ensure that every time that intellectual property is used, the taxpayers of Western Australia get a kickback, as is the case for every other trademarked piece of intellectual property. These are just some of the question marks about this proposed sale. Landgate is currently making a profit of only \$20 million a year. The only reason someone would pay over \$2 billion for an asset that returns a profit of only \$20 million a year is if there was a mechanism that would enable them to increase prices, or if there was a mechanism that would enable them to mine the data and sell it. We do not know what protections will be put in place with regard to the prices that Landgate can charge. We do not know what access government agencies will be given to that data, and at what price. Other states in which the land information system has been privatised are starting to understand that they did not get this right. One of the biggest users of the information that is held by Landgate is the government. It would be ironic if this government decided to sell off Landgate for \$2 billion and the sale ended up being funded by asking taxpayers to pay a couple of hundred million dollars a year to get data from a private company that they used to get for free.

Dr M.D. Nahan: That is what is happening in New South Wales.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I know; that is why I mentioned it. The Labor Party made a key election commitment not to privatise assets. That commitment has already been broken twice. Landgate is a big one. Landgate is very different from Western Power. Our government proposed the sale of Western Power. A regulated system is already in place in the electricity and gas markets. The gas pipeline has been privatised for years, and we understand how to regulate to ensure that there is no price gouging on the gas pipeline. It would be very easy to replicate that with Western Power's poles and wires. But how on earth do we regulate people's private data that is currently held by Landgate securely in government hands and ensure that people's privacy is protected? How do we ensure that data about properties that people own will not be mined by the big banks and used for their own purposes? I do not

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believe we can regulate to ensure protection around those aspects of people's privacy. Hopefully, this government will think very carefully before it puts this state's title system at risk. Hopefully, this government will consider very carefully what it will do with the private and sensitive data about Western Australian households that could be made available to overseas companies.

This is another desperate attempt by this government to fund its unfunded election commitments. We said in the lead-up to the election that the Labor Party has made over \$5 billion worth of commitments but has no plan to pay for those commitments. The now Premier was silent on that. The government is now scrabbling to find a way to pay for its election commitments. That is why the government is increasing taxes—another broken promise. That is why the government is increasing fees and charges—another broken promise. That is why the government has sold Warradarge and privatised an electricity asset—another broken promise. That is why the government is proposing to sell Landgate—another broken promise. That is why the government has introduced an Uber tax to pay for the taxi reform—another broken promise.

The other area I want to touch on is the pedestrian bridge to Perth Stadium. We need to know what actually happened there.

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The government is very sensitive —

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker, the minister was at —

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The minister was —

Several members interjected.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Acting Speaker, am I on my feet or is everybody else in the house?

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr T.J. Healy): Ministers and members, this is obviously a very passionate topic for everyone. You will have an opportunity to make a contribution in a very short period. Please listen to the member in silence. I do not believe she is taking interjections.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I was referring to the pedestrian bridge. We know that this government was desperate to try to be a big spoiler on the stadium. The Labor Party was desperate to spoil the stadium project. It argued for years that it was in the wrong spot. It did not stop government members getting over their bottom lips to attend every single corporate event that has been held at the stadium, and enjoying the hospitality of the various users of the stadium. I have seen them there—a conga line of ministers! Apparently it is okay now to go there: "It was in the wrong place; it was a waste of money; it was a terrible project; but we're going to go there and have a couple of beers and watch the cricket; no worries about that." The Minister for Transport was absolutely desperate to cancel that contract in Malaysia. We know that the bridge's arches were substantially completed. We had photographs of them from the factory in Malaysia. What was the sunk cost in that bridge before the minister cancelled that project—ripped up another contract—and moved the project to Perth? How much of its steel has come from China? The whole argument about bringing the bridge back into Western Australia was for Western Australian steel, and the steel has come from China! What is the potential taxpayer liability? Should the contractor —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members!

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: Mr Speaker, they are trying to drown me out because they know that there is a very serious issue here. This government has cancelled a contract and brought the project back to Western Australia. It has put the taxpayers of Western Australia at risk of a lawsuit from the individuals who have had that contract cancelled. It has not said what the risk is to the Western Australian taxpayers after the joint venture partners and those individuals in Malaysia had a substantially completed bridge dumped there. What has the architect had to say about the butchering of its design? Architects get very precious about their designs. It has had its design butchered. It has gone from looking like a beautiful bridge to a meccano set—cheap and nasty. That is what the Minister for Transport has done. When will it actually be ready?

Ms A. Sanderson: What about the taxpayer?

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: This is exactly the point I am making—what about the taxpayer? Are York Rizzani and Toyota Tsusho going to sue the state government over the cancellation of that contract? Are they? The Minister for Transport is silent on that. She is not even in the house; that is the contempt she has for the Parliament.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 February 2018]

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Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Dean Nalder; Mr Chris Tallentire; Mr Peter Katsambanis; Mr John McGrath; Mr Terry Healy

Just to wrap up: we have a sleeping issue with that pedestrian bridge. We need to know what the state government's liability is over the cancellation and tearing up of that contract. We also need to know the tender process for the money allocated to the Roe 8 and Roe 9 projects that just got thrown out to other contractors to try to settle that issue down. There was no tendering for the projects that the Roe 8 and Roe 9 money was allocated to. Those contractors have just named a price and this government has written them a cheque and said, "Off you go. Let's just try and divert away from Roe 8 and Roe 9; the hell with congestion in the southern corridor."

In the two minutes I have left, I will go over this government's broken promises. Electricity prices have gone up; there was the gold tax, the Uber tax, and payroll tax; fees and charges have been increased; and there have been cuts to seniors and cuts to education—170 jobs, including 70 teachers, gone. These are all the things this government promised it would not do in the lead-up to the state election. It got elected and said, "To hell with that, we just said anything to get elected. Now that we're in, we're going to do whatever we like." That is what it is doing.

The government's backflips and stupid decisions include Schools of the Air, the gifted and talented education program and the Follow the Dream program. Thankfully, they have been reversed. The Perth Stadium cap—how stupid! The Minister for Transport thought she could go out and say, "We're going to put a cap on attendance and it's Colin Barnett's fault because the stadium is in the wrong place." She was wrong. Cricket fans said, "No, we want to get to the stadium." She caved in under pressure. And guess what? The Public Transport Authority and the people of Perth made it work! They made it work without the bridge. This minister was made to look like a stupid fool playing a political game with the stadium. That is what she did. Perth commuters have commonsense—they can get to a stadium without a pedestrian bridge. Who would have thought? This minister looked like such a fool that day. I was on the phone to Melbourne and they were laughing at her!

MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren–Blackwood) [10.25 am]: I would like to make my address in reply to the Premier's Statement and raise the litany of issues that are on the table right now, particularly as they apply to regional Western Australia and as they apply to my portfolio responsibilities within the National Party. Yes, we lost the state election last year and yes, it was a pretty brutal loss. Once that happened, regional Western Australia was waiting for the settings. They were waiting for the settings from the new government about where regional Western Australia actually sat in the Labor Party's list of priorities and in its governance after it won the election. The first wave of attack came with the budget in September. The first wave of attack came when it absolutely smashed the integrity of royalties for regions. Out of that budget, it put settings in place that effectively cut nearly half the royalties for regions programs that were in place. That was despite the Labor Party saying in its election commitments that it supported royalties for regions. It absolutely smashed it. That was the first wave of attack on regional Western Australia. We saw the impact of decisions right down to the grassroots levels in many communities. We came back after Christmas to find there were education cuts. That was a wonderful Christmas present for all those people who were in a camp school or a school of the air. Of course that has been backflipped upon now. For students in an agricultural college, all these regional education facilities took a shocking Christmas present away, and they came back to some of those cuts still being in place but of course the government backflipped under pressure from, quite rightly so, not only people living in regional Western Australia, but also people living in metropolitan Perth. The Minister for Tourism is in the house at the moment. He came in here and blatantly said that the government did that because the opposition did not support the gold tax. It was payback. The government's little strategists sat in a huddle and said, "How can we get them back? This is how we're going to do it. They didn't support the gold tax. We're going to cut regional education." It absolutely backfired on them. Quite rightly, the government should be taking some pain, as it did, but it has not yet done the full backflip it should do on the terrible cuts it has made on people in the education system and of course on the students who benefit from that.

I want to talk about a couple of portfolio areas. The first one relates to Aboriginal Affairs and the great amount of work that Helen Morton and I did, and later Andrea Mitchell, on resilient families, stronger communities. We put a key plan in place to try to head towards hopefully bipartisan outcomes over time—I think that is the case; the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs certainly supports this—for kids who are born in those communities. A couple of things came to light. I think that the government generally supports this initiative—not all of it. I am certain that some of the funding that was committed in here is not there. In the housing area in particular, about \$175 million, including assets, sat within the Housing Authority. I have not seen those commitments maintained. I have seen the royalties for regions component but I have not seen those other components come to the table. I will pick up one point out of this report that I think is really important. I refer to a recommendation on page 38 of "Resilient Families, Stronger Communities: A roadmap for regional and remote Aboriginal communities". Under "Employment", it refers to regionally defined targets in government agencies. In many cases, government agencies are probably the biggest employer in those remote communities. They deliver a whole range of services. The position right now is that government agencies have the responsibility to deliver an employment base in their department representing the proportion of Aboriginal people in the working age population across the state. That is the target. If I remember rightly, it is 3.5 per cent. The report asks for a regionally defined target. If we were to

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apply that in the Kimberley, it would be totally unwarranted to apply 3.5 per cent. The Aboriginal population is 45 per cent of the total population; I think it was when I last checked. This is a significant proportion. The working age is in the 30 per cent of population range from memory, but it is probably greater than that. Therefore, we should be setting a regionally based target for that. The government agencies should walk the walk. We did; we put that target in place. It took a bit of pain and the directors general did not like it —

Mr P. Papalia: You didn't.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: We did put it in place.

Ms S.F. McGurk: You might have made it but you didn't meet it.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: It takes time because attrition needs to occur. That is the process. The government needs to define a target. A regionally based, defined target meant that we had pull from agencies because they were able to then walk the walk in those regions with a large Aboriginal population. The same principle applied to government procurement or government contracting in which regionally based targets were set. I have not seen that, and I think that is a tragedy because it is a no-cost option to government to be able to secure employment for some of the most disadvantaged people in the state. That is a really important point that the government needs to pick up. I make that point despite the fact that I pay tribute that the government has not ignored this work in the report and wants to take up that initiative.

Another point has been raised in debate that has occurred. The Treasurer yesterday took a dorothy dixer regarding discussions the government is having with the federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs about the commonwealth's commitment to housing funding in the state. We know that the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing funding will expire at the end of this financial year. Normally, negotiations are held about what the new amount will be, what the funding will go towards, and what its name will be—those deliberations occur—but I was absolutely amazed at the comments from the Minister for Housing, who has lead on this. First, I thought the Minister for Community Services had lead, then I thought the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs had lead, but now it is back to the Minister for Housing. The minute he heard there would be issues with federal funding in this area, the minister went on 720 ABC Radio with what I describe as a “brain fluff”. As a minister, he needs to understand all the issues and all the challenges, own those challenges, and then run commentary accordingly. He did not. He was asked about what would happen if the federal government did not come to the party on housing funding. He talked about closing communities. He was quizzed by the ABC on 21 December 2017 when he was asked whether there was a threat of closing communities. The minister's comment was, “It's not a threat; it's just maths.” This government sees housing in remote communities, in the most disadvantaged part of the state, as just maths.

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The minister should go and take it up; he is in government! I have taken it up. I have taken up the issue but for this housing minister, it is just maths, and that is disappointing. The minister went on to say —

... there is a rational conversation you have to have around the priority spend in these communities.

He is saying that if the government does not get the dough, there are some serious implications on the ground. He went on to say when quizzed again about closing remote communities —

... ultimately, yes; I suppose it's a conversation we will have to have ...

...

And we're going to have to look at the other knock-on effects as people move into other communities ...

His agenda was to say that if the government does not get the money, it will close communities. I am amazed at how quiet it has been since he made those comments. I will make another point. If we go back to the time when Hon Colin Barnett, the former member for Cottesloe, made his comments about the potential closure of communities, it was on the back of taking away recurrent funding—the operational funding. I think the acronym was RAS. Operational funding was taken away. The commonwealth government gave us \$90 million and said, “Go away” with a gun to our head. We were in that position. The former Premier made the comment about closing communities due to operational funding. Although I do not agree with it and I challenged it—I did not agree at the time—I can understand how he might have said that. Capital funding that the government already has is being threatened here. The paper today states that \$80 million per year has been committed to those communities from the state government. The government has its own funding to maintain them. In taking away capital funding, why the hell would the Minister for Housing get to a position of even considering closing a remote community? We can have some understanding of how the former Premier came to that position, but the government does not have grounds for what the Minister for Housing said at the end of last year. That needs to be on the public agenda. Government members, when in opposition —

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Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Ministers!

Mr D.T. REDMAN: — railed against that very hard, and they are absolute hypocrites, hitting the peak of hypocrisy with the arguments that they took up on this issue. Yes, there is a challenge with funding, but it does not merit the comments that came from the housing minister in December last year.

Several members interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I will move on; my time runs out fast here. I want to talk about the energy portfolio and particularly make a couple of comments about the proposal in Albany. Again, one of the Labor Party's commitments going to the election was to have a wave energy facility in Albany. I have FOI-ed the Minister for Energy. I have his documents back. I had about three or four extensions from the Minister for Regional Development. I got her documents today, but I have not had a chance to read them yet. I want to make a couple of points. First, the government committed nearly \$16 million to the Carnegie Clean Energy project. Tenders were submitted by the three proponents that had the capacity to deliver on this project. It is essentially described as common-use infrastructure. The project will effectively run for one year. It will produce one megawatt of energy and the government will get to walk away with everything except for a bit of equipment that sits on the sea floor and a substation connection. A defined list of common-use infrastructure will be left behind, which includes —

- an electrical cable from the substation at the Albany wind farm to a point on the seabed in close proximity to the installation of the wave energy converter;
- sub-sea electrical connection point(s);
- the cable and associated facilities that are installed such that they can withstand 100 year storm events in that location ...
- a dedicated connection to a suitable transformer at the substation at the Albany wind farm.

The company is given—some sort of assistance agreement is in place here—\$16 million on the table, and that is what it has to leave behind. What will the government fund that can be taken away after one year of operation producing one megawatt of energy, assuming Synergy takes off the resource?

I also have letters from the Minister for Energy to Hon Alannah MacTiernan that state that this project has to be determined on commercial grounds. In one letter, the Minister for Energy says that he would like the Minister for Regional Development to take on the project—it is great; she will do that. We know she has a serious interest in the project. I quote the letter from Ben Wyatt to Hon Alannah MacTiernan —

As Synergy seeks to deliver on its renewable energy obligations I have instructed the utility to do so in a manner which has the least impact on consumers. I therefore ask that any proponents of renewable projects which are supported by election commitments have clarity that these commitments do not come with guarantees of support by the State's energy utilities in the South West Interconnected System ...

There are no guarantees of support. He went on to state that the minister would need to talk with Western Power and so on. He is saying that there is no guarantee of support. He is saying that he has the challenge of being able to meet his responsibilities on commercial grounds. A response came back from the Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan; it states —

I fully endorse the principles you set out on commerciality of projects. At the same time, I hope that the utilities adopt a co-operative and flexible stance ...

The Minister for Energy has said he wants full commercial grounds, that he has a massive issue dealing with Synergy and how the government works with the rest of the utilities in the state and Hon Alannah MacTiernan is basically saying, "There's an election commitment sitting here, Ben; you need to make sure that these guys work with a cooperative and flexible stance." It is going to be really interesting to hear what the board of Synergy says when it comes to wave energy, which does not have a high commercial ground to produce renewable energy into the system, and an election commitment regarding these assets that Carnegie is going to put on the ground.

It will be interesting to see, if the board does not recommend that, whether the Minister for Energy directs it to do so against the commerciality of the project. It sits there as a significant issue that the government is facing in delivering on a commitment at \$16 million for one megawatt. It cut regional education and it is chasing one megawatt for one year for \$16 million; that is going to be an interesting outcome. I might add that in the agreement, the government is saying that it has to connect to the Albany wind farm. One of the issues that Synergy has highlighted is that the Albany wind farm substation is at full capacity. The point where the government is asking Synergy to inject energy and make a connection to is running at full capacity. As Synergy was not involved with the project, it therefore came as a hell of a shock to it, when the government said, "Well, you guys are going to

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have to connect in here”, but it cannot. It was a surprise to Synergy; it had not been involved with it, and suddenly the light bulb went on, “What are we going to do?” The letter states —

Our advice to date, and what it will continue to be in the future, is that connection via Albany Grassmere Wind farm substations is not possible due to current capacity ... Curtailing existing wind turbine generation in order to accommodate a wave project is also not an option.

The correspondence went on to state —

We have provided respondents with advice that they need to contact Western Power directly re access to the network and to get their advice as to what substations or other connection options might be available given Synergy’s aren’t.

I do not know where the next nearest substation is, but it is a considerable distance from there. I am pretty certain that that was not catered for in the finances that were put on the table to have that project. Of course, Synergy did this at the behest of the Minister for Regional Development, supporting Albany. There was a project that did deliver long term into the Denmark and Walpole line, but that has been overlooked.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr D.T. REDMAN: There are a lot of questions over that. I still have to go through the next bit and it is a massive issue that the minister is facing. There is clear tension in how that plays out.

On Treasury and finance, we have as a party, as members know, pursued arrangements with the special lease rental, seeking it as a source of revenue and a good position to take. It was a strategy we took to the election to support the royalties for regions program. I have been investigating and the feedback from the Treasurer is that he has also been doing so. What happens if we change the royalty that is paid to some sort of infrastructure fund? Response to questions on notice from Treasury state that the Commonwealth Grants Commission is likely to change the rules and effectively catch the government anyway, which is probably right. That is the feedback I have. I want to highlight an anomaly that sits here. When we were in government, we supported an investment in water infrastructure to supply Karratha. The government went to Rio Tinto, which had secondary processing obligations in its state agreement. We asked the government to say, “You need to get extra water for Cape Lambert. We have the issue of meeting our needs, rather than build a desal plant for Karratha, so let’s put that on the table.” Rio Tinto came to the party with \$330 million. That washed out secondary processing obligations in its state agreement. In answers to questions on notice, the Treasurer confirmed that that did not have an effect on the GST calculation for WA. There was a cash out of a secondary process obligation in state agreements to the state for some infrastructure that supports supplying water into Karratha. That did not affect the GST, yet when we looked at having an infrastructure investment by those companies, another answer to a question on notice suggested that the grants commission would pick up that as a GST payment. The special lease rental is different from a royalty. It is not a payment for the ore. As far as we can ascertain—it is a little cloudy—it was put in place to support paying nurses, doctors and police and all those others who support growth into those areas. If the government cashes out that, it would presumably affect the GST, so there is a massive inconsistency from the federal government in its application of GST calculations in Western Australia. From answers to questions, I know that the Treasurer has been pursuing whether there are alternatives to having a royalty or some other infrastructure payment to get around that. He has not been successful in doing it, but I make the point that the GST issue is not going to be solved soon. Political pressure on that does not go our way, it goes the other way; therefore, do not expect that to be solved. One answer is to look at exemptions on new royalties or new sources of resources from these companies. I am pretty certain that if we were to get some sort of exemption that would not have that flowthrough impact on GST, the government would come to the party and start thinking about looking at what the Nationals would like it to look at; that is, the state agreement obligations written 50 years ago and how they might well apply and support the state funding arrangements as they apply now. That is a massive issue.

To follow on from the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party, the Labor Party also said that it was not going to privatise any assets. In fact, the 195th recommendation of the “200 Fresh Ideas for WA” states, “Stop the privatisation of existing public sector services.” Since then, Landgate is now on the table—the people’s title deeds. We are going to go through their title deeds. I thought that the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party put it quite succinctly when she said that there is a whole range of issues, including sourcing the data that goes to government agencies, which comes from Landgate. It is a massive issue, but the government has put it on the table. Why? It saw the \$1.5 billion price tag for South Australia’s title system and the over \$2 billion price tag for New South Wales’ title system. The government is falling into the trap, once again, of another breach of its election commitments. The government threw the Albany wind farm in the mix as well. It did not say that before the election. Synergy’s clean energy assets are bang in the mix of some sort of deal. The TAB is not off the table either. That was the challenge we had in government. Certainly, the National Party’s view was that we had to support those regional race rounds, which we did, and the more we support that, the more it dials back the value of the TAB. I can see

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that the government will be licking its lips, certainly the Treasurer will, for an asset sale of the TAB to yield the best value back to the state in dollar terms, and who will bear the cost of that if that comes to play? It will be regional Western Australia. Another one that went unnoticed was the replacement of the Boyanup saleyards, which is absolutely fundamental to the south west cattle industry and is now privately owned. The commercial realities do not stump up for the private sector to replace that and build it, so it will have to be the government that does it, or, indeed, it will need to do what the Minister for Regional Development has said to do, which is to throw in Muchea. The government says it needs to meet our energy needs, so it will throw in a wind farm. The government needs to meet its saleyard commitments, which again are written up in the “200 Fresh Ideas for WA”, so it will throw in Muchea—a \$55 million government facility, government run, government owned, looking after the livestock industry in Western Australia. It said, “We’ll throw that into the mix.” Again, it is a massive breach on its public commentary, absolutely going against what Labor said before it went to the election. Of course, it is silent on the north west interconnected system. It is silent on Utah. The government is picking its winners out of the pile and it is trying to pick things that it thinks will go under the radar, but this opposition will ensure that it is absolutely held to account for the commitments that it made.

The Langoulant review has some cause for concern. I can see how that is going to play out. There is a bit of a witch-hunt going on here, although I have some respect for Mr Langoulant. He has come from a Treasury background and we know that regional Western Australia has many fights with Treasury. He is going to be weighing up the respective measures of how royalties for regions projects went into play. Also, I hope, he will have some recommendations to government that might even capture the Local Projects, Local Jobs initiative that this government heard about yesterday, if it did not know about it before, and a magnificent lack of process there. Certainly, as far as royalties for regions applies, we had an RforR program that had integrity. We would maybe give an ounce of support to the government if it maintained the royalties for regions program as it committed to, but it has not; therefore, we know it is thinking that the best way is to get a report to say there is some lack of integrity in the program and it will attack that again. Once again, the regions lose.

The National Party has serious concerns about Infrastructure Western Australia. The minute we put anything into some sort of benefit–cost business case, as it applies to delivering services and infrastructure in regional Western Australia, it is much more challenging. If we are to have regional development and decentralisation—we have not heard those words from this government—government has to drive it. I cannot see an organisation set up to look rationally at business cases being anything other than a hit on regional Western Australia.

I will make a couple of comments about my electorate before I close. I will refer to a few things that are good. In fact, the government has put them up as great initiatives and said that it supports royalties for regions. One is the perimeter road around Margaret River. They dodged a bullet down there from the Minister for Transport because she tried to pull money back from that project, but then she said it was too late and the government would have to do it. So she went out and said that it was a good thing. That is a fantastic initiative. The Busselton–Margaret River Regional Airport project also dodged a bullet from the Minister for Regional Development. She tried to draw money back from that, but that is going ahead. That will be fantastic for not only Vasse, but also the broader south west region.

Another issue concerns the Denmark Country Club. I have written to the Minister for Water. The golf club had a contract in place with the Water Corporation and an offtake agreement to use recycled wastewater from the sewerage plant in Denmark. When the government pulled the \$13.5 million—because it had already spent \$1.5 million—and shut down the project, the golf club was left high and dry. The golf club had made decisions to support having all the necessary irrigation facilities in place to cater for the nature of the treated water that would come off that, and all the way along it had been of the belief in its discussions with the Water Corporation that that initiative would occur. The government pulled that. An agreement was in place. On 2 November last year, I wrote a letter to the Minister for Water. He has not responded. The letter asked about the nature of the agreement that is in place between Water Corp and the Denmark golf club and how strong it is. If the government pulls the money, it is telling me that it has reneged on the agreement. The golf club is absolutely bitter about this because it has made decisions assuming that this stuff would be in place—rightly so, because this was the message coming from Water Corp. We need to get to the bottom of that.

I refer to home and community care services. I am getting a lot of feedback out of Mt Barker that there is a pullback in resources and reduced levels of servicing. I raised the issue with federal Minister Hon Bridget McKenzie when I was in Canberra a couple of weeks ago looking at the federal side of that. I am also raising it with the Minister for Health in correspondence because, as members know, health funding is very, very difficult to track, but I know that on the ground there has been an impact through a reduction in services. Those HACC services are critical. We should support initiatives to keep people in their homes when they are ill.

I refer to the southern forest irrigation scheme. Certainly, one of the agenda items on our trip to Canberra last week was to raise the issue of water infrastructure. The southern forest irrigation scheme is in my electorate. There are

some challenges there. I believe that most of those challenges have been ironed out. A lot of discussion and leadership is occurring at a local level. We are chasing \$40 million from the federal government to support what we decided upon and the current government has supported, which is nearly \$20 million of state government funds plus grower funds to put in irrigation infrastructure and a dam to support another over 10 gegalitres into the Manjimup region. If we played that right through and multiplied it out to gross value added production, it is nearly \$100 million of product. That would be a boost to jobs, which is the mantra of the government, and to the regional economy down there.

I refer to bushfire risk. I pay tribute to all the volunteers who were involved with the Augusta bushfire recently. We have not got to the bottom of it yet, but I presume that, sadly, that fire was accidentally lit. It was just to the north of Augusta and it burnt out quite a big area. Once bushfires get going, it is pretty scary. It shut the highway down for some time. When those things occur, a lot of volunteers rally and in this case they put the fire out. It highlights the importance of bushfire risk management, mitigation work, funding support from the government for the organisations that are at the front line and support for managing those government-owned lands, which we put in place with royalties for regions to manage fire risk in those areas. We cannot highlight enough the importance of that.

On a positive note, Rapids Landing Primary School is up and running. When we were in government, we decided to open a new primary school in Margaret River. I spoke to the principal recently, who is very, very happy with what has happened there. It is the only new regional primary school. Nevertheless, I am very proud of that and so are the local staff. That will certainly take the pressure off Margaret River Primary School.

I was very pleased to see the Premier and the Minister for Regional Development in Manjimup at the Cherry Harmony Festival in December. That community has been massively impacted in recent decades, particularly through the demise of the native timber industry. It was pleasing to see the Premier and the minister there to see what those communities have to offer. I think they were probably pleasantly surprised by the scale of that event and what the community is doing and the initiatives that they are putting in place to build and grow their community. It was pleasing to see the Premier and the minister getting out and about to see that occur.

I could speak about a lot of things relating to the impact of royalties for regions. I think I have gone through the main issues. We are absolutely anxious about the future of the regions as it applies to the policy settings from this state government. One of those policies is royalties for regions. The decision to redirect royalties for regions funding was made last year and the full impact of that is yet to play out.

MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman) [10.55 am]: I also stand in response to the Premier's Statement to highlight some of the disconnect between the rhetoric that this government is providing the people of Western Australia and this chamber and what is actually occurring. In my budget reply speech and in other instances in this house, I said that we can fool some of the people some of the time but we cannot fool all of the people all of the time. People will be starting to wake up to the misleading information that this government is putting out over and over again. As shadow Treasurer, I am going to focus first on the financial management of this state.

The Premier of Western Australia stood in front of the Country Women's Association of Western Australia protest the other day and said that the former government left a financial mess and a debt of \$40 billion. He came into the chamber and changed the language to "within the forward estimates". He said that within the forward estimates is a \$40 billion debt. I want to focus on this a little bit because at that point I challenged him and said that the audited debt at the end of last financial year was \$31.96 billion or \$32 billion. He claimed that I am a detail man and that I am into the detail. He said that it is still thirty-two thousand million dollars and it is still a lot of money and, therefore, I do not understand. The difference between \$32 billion and \$40 billion is \$8 billion, or a 25 per cent difference. I think that that is a substantial difference. In my responsibilities in my corporate life, I found that often it was not the quantum that was the issue; it was the variance. This Premier is showing complete disregard of an extra \$8 billion of debt, eight thousand million dollars, and he is claiming that it is basically irrelevant. He says that whether it is \$32 billion or \$40 billion does not matter. This is the fundamental problem with this government. Labor members stood in this place and promised the people of Western Australia at the election that it would tackle debt and pay it down like a mortgage, yet the Premier is showing total disregard for the fact that the debt will keep going up.

I would also like to highlight that the current government has talked about the previous government inheriting a position of \$3.5 billion debt and taking it to \$40 billion debt. It is really interesting that the \$3.5 billion debt when we came into Parliament did not include the forward estimates. When we look at the forward estimates from the previous government, we see that it was taking it beyond \$10 billion. However, the government does not include that. The period that the government is looking at to determine the debt accumulation of the former government is a 12-and-a-half-year period, yet the former government was in power for only eight and a half years. All of a sudden, the government and the Premier are demonstrating to the people of Western Australia that they do not

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want to take responsibility for the financial position over the next four years. They want the former government to take responsibility for the financial position over the next four years. This is an amazing situation because the government wants to claim the glory, as we heard the shadow Minister for Transport say, for Aubin Grove train station and the Forrestfield–Airport Link. The government wants to claim the glory for the infrastructure that is being built for a population in Western Australia that has grown dramatically, but it does not want to take responsibility for the financial management of it. “Oh, that is the previous administration. We’re not responsible for that. It’s in the forward estimates.” I want to highlight exactly what the Premier said, directed at me —

He ignored the forward estimates. Woe betide future generations of Western Australians if the Liberals and Nationals get back in. We will go back to that shocking budgeting and ignorance of the financial situation and ignorance of the forward estimates if they ever come back to office.

Let us have a look at the forward estimates. When we looked at the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement*, Treasury stated that if we continued in the way we had been going, debt would hit \$41.1 billion. The Liberal Party, which was in government at the time, said that that was too much and that it had to do something about it. We went to the election and committed to the people of Western Australia that we would deal with the issue of debt. Treasury costed the commitments that the Liberal Party took to the election. We said that by the end of the forward estimates, debt would be \$28.8 billion. This Labor government would not submit the costings of its election commitments to Treasury. It stated that it would have debt at \$39 billion at the end of the forward estimates, but after its first budget, the figure was \$43.6 billion.

Let us look at the impact that may have. For a start, let us look at the difference between \$28.8 billion and \$43.6 billion, and round it off to a \$15 billion difference. The forward estimates predict that the bond rate on debt will be around 3.4 per cent; 3.4 per cent of \$15 billion is \$510 million. That is the increase in operating expenses for this state government over the next four years, which it needs to account for and which it is currently ignoring. The government is telling people that it inherited a financial mess, yet it is letting debt grow by another \$15 billion and incurring an additional annual cost of \$510 million a year by the end of the forward estimates. That is in its forward estimates. The government is telling people that we have tight financial times, but it is still splashing money around: “I said to this electorate that they can have this money for this sporting club and this sporting club, because that was one of our commitments.” The government is still spending and that is the thing that it does not get. It is claiming that we are experiencing tight financial times. It is telling people that things are tight, that the economy is tough and that it does not have a lot of room in the budget, yet it is still spending and debt is still going up—and the forward estimates highlight that. The government is not dealing with the issue; rather, it is saying that the opposition does not understand the forward estimates. We are saying that the Premier is responsible for the financial management of this state while his party is in government. The previous administration will not manage the budget over the next four years; the Premier’s government will do that. If the Premier is not prepared to take responsibility, he should get out of the seat if it is too hot. He should stop putting blame on the former administration and take responsibility for it. He should let his rhetoric match what is going on.

It was fascinating when the Minister for Tourism decided to echo the words of the Premier. The Minister for Tourism said that the forward estimates—this is the financial luminary we have as the Minister for Tourism —

Point of Order

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am not sure whether the member is quoting from the uncorrected *Hansard*.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr T.J. Healy): Member, I believe that you are making general comments.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I am.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Is that correct?

Mr D.C. NALDER: Yes, they are general comments.

Debate Resumed

Mr D.C. NALDER: The Minister for Tourism came on and echoed the Premier; he pretty much said the same sorts of things. I will not quote him exactly and accurately, but I will give members a sense of what the Minister for Tourism said. He said that the forward estimates are a plan that a good government employs to achieve its objectives. He said that the forward estimates give everybody an opportunity to see how the government intends to get its ultimate goal and that in the government’s case, the ultimate goal is to get the budget process under control so that it spends less than it receives in revenue.

I have just highlighted that the interest on debt alone will climb by \$500 million a year by the end of the forward estimates. Let me be clear about something. If the government is going to start paying down debt, its operating surplus has to be greater than its capital spend. The government should have a look at the fascinating word “slippage” in volume 3 of the budget papers, which I have referred to before. In the history of Western Australia,

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that word has never appeared in the budget, but the government has a line called “slippage”. It has shifted capital amounts around within the budget to make it look as though it is spending more in the early years and less in the later years and is closing the gap on the deficit between its operating position and its capital spend. That is not true; it is all smoke and mirrors. This will come back to bite the government. It made all these claims going into the election that it would pay down debt like a mortgage, that it would not need to increase taxes and charges, that it would be able to deliver on all its promises of \$5 billion of spending and that it would deliver a debt outcome that is lower than the forward estimates has projected. We know that that is not true, yet the government chooses to ignore it and it chooses to try to mislead the public about the real facts of the financial position of the state.

I want to reinforce some of the comments made by the shadow Minister for Transport about Roe 8 and 9, because from a financial perspective, there is a major disconnect with what the government is thinking and I want to highlight some of those points. The shadow Minister for Transport highlighted the fact that the advice is that if construction of an outer harbour commenced today, it would be between 10 and 15 years before the first container could be shifted. In the interim, the amount of container traffic would continue to climb. What is fascinating about this scenario is the cost of the outer harbour. The cost of what has to happen on land and in the water is estimated to be between \$5 billion and \$6 billion. Current throughput in Fremantle port is around 750 000 TEU, or twenty-foot equivalent units, which is 750 000 containers a year. The Premier is on record as saying that the government will build the outer harbour, cap the number of containers at Fremantle harbour at today’s levels and everything else will go down to the outer harbour. This is where some of the problems start to emerge. If the government caps the number at Fremantle harbour at 750 000 containers—all the thinking on the \$5 billion to \$6 billion for the outer harbour to date has been based on three million containers going through that port each year—the outer harbour will last about 50 years. What will the government do then? The reality is that if the government caps the number at the Fremantle inner harbour at around 750 000 containers and starts planning for an outer harbour, it needs to build a capacity of closer to six million containers a year for the long-term future strategic position of this state. Anything less than that will create a problem for future generations.

It is fascinating that when I was the Minister for Transport, the advice that I had from the Fremantle Port Authority was that the current capacity of Fremantle port is around two million to 2.1 million containers a year. The government is looking to relocate some of that capacity and incur a cost at a time when it claims that it has tight budgetary conditions. The government is going to spend between \$5 billion and \$6 billion on an outer harbour when there is existing capacity in the Fremantle port that it would not have to spend any money on. I do not know how the government can substantiate that economically. I do not know how it can substantiate just writing off the current capacity of Fremantle port.

Dr M.D. Nahan: It holds value of about \$2 billion to \$2.5 billion.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Yes, that is correct. We know that the capacity of Fremantle port is worth between \$2 billion and \$2.5 billion. To remove that capacity would diminish the value of a state asset. It is interesting that the advice I received as the Minister for Transport was that Fremantle port believes that by straightening out berth 1 for a capital cost of around \$300 million, the capacity of the Fremantle inner harbour could be increased to around three million containers a year. Whether we look at the traffic that comes out of that port today or whether we build it into the future, we have to have efficient movement of freight. We know that around 15 per cent of the current freight from the inner harbour is shifted by rail. The objective has always been to try to get that to 30 per cent. If this current government could get it to 30 per cent, it would be world’s best practice. It is fascinating to see places such as Singapore remove rail because it is more efficient to move freight by truck. Even if it got to 30 per cent, 70 per cent of all freight movements would still be by truck. Over the next 15 years, 70 per cent of the traffic increase would be by truck. A lot of consideration needs to be given to this. On the one hand, the government is saying that we have a tight financial position but, on the other, it has made an election commitment to build the outer harbour. The government has not sat down and worked through that from a basic economic perspective. When I was the minister, I went on record in Parliament as saying that the capacity of the inner harbour is not about the actual capacity of the harbour, but about what we as a community are prepared to accept as an appropriate level of activity in the harbour because of the impact it will have on nearby residential areas and so forth. I think that some serious financial analysis needs to be undertaken and that explanations need to be provided to this chamber and to the people of Western Australia to justify a \$5 million to \$6 million spend when additional capacity for zero spend is sitting in Fremantle harbour. I suspect that this is the government’s plan.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr D.C. NALDER: I suspect that is because we are starting to see the union arc up about the outer harbour. It is worried about it being automated and jobs being lost. That will occur only if the state government is seeking expressions of interest from the private sector about whether it might be able to build it. I think that it is time that this government came clean. It will either incur a huge debt for the state, which cannot be justified, or it will

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diminish the value of an existing state asset by outsourcing the outer harbour and capping the existing inner harbour, which is something that it has committed to doing. There are some fundamental problems there.

The other thing that I have talked about, and reiterating what the shadow Minister for Transport said, was about the productivity share on a freight charge. We spent two years working with the transport industry. One of the things that people forget is that the focus of the transport policy of this government is on the movement of people at peak hour. That is what Metronet is all about. It is really interesting that, as the shadow Minister for Transport said, it is chasing urban sprawl. It is looking at Ellenbrook, Yanchep, Bellevue, and Byford. The transport plan put out by the former government stated that those would be good projects at the right time. But Metronet is one-dimensional. Commercial vehicles make up 40 per cent of the vehicles on our roads. The government must have a plan for how those vehicles can move throughout the state efficiently and effectively. One of the things that we shared with the transport industry was that if we could understand the productivity gains it would make by traffic lights being removed, such as improving time, saving fuel, and reducing maintenance, we could capture less than half of that charge to build the infrastructure and put half of it in the industry's pocket. Would that not be a good thing? The industry agreed. It is interesting that if that could be solved, it would become a blueprint for undertaking infrastructure projects throughout Western Australia and have them funded, which is something that this government has decided to ignore. Main Roads has said that a freight charge would generate around \$400 million over the forward estimates. The transport industry was onside, provided that Roe 8 and Roe 9 were constructed, but this government has walked away from that \$400 million.

I wanted to touch on some other things and to reinforce what the shadow Minister for Transport said about Metronet, particularly its financial aspects. Apart from chasing urban sprawl, the projects that the government is looking to undertake will have huge operational cost implications for the state. The government has not shown any consideration for this. Today the state recovers around 25 per cent of the operating costs of the public transport network, meaning that it is subsidising the other 75 per cent. The government's primary objective, in these tight financial times, is to chase urban sprawl and to build solely rail projects to the outer suburbs. If some of those projects, such as the Ellenbrook rail line, do not have the same level of efficiency or effectiveness as the Mandurah or Joondalup lines, the operating subsidy to run those lines will be greater than 75 per cent, which will impact future budgets. At this time that is outside the forward estimates, but the government needs to be very mindful of it. The financial implications of Metronet is an issue. The other aspect of operating costs will be what is required to support that. The former government had to fix up the Mandurah rail line. It had to build additional parking bays and bus connections into the stations that had not been considered as part of the project at the time. This is an issue that the state will have. Considering the capital cost of building these additional lines, the government must ensure that they have connectivity, or there will be additional future costs.

I will move on to the issue of the privatisation of electricity assets. We saw the government run a scare campaign during the election about the potential sale of 51 per cent of Western Power. As the member for Warren-Blackwood said, as one of its 200 fresh ideas, Labor committed to not privatising. However, we have seen a sneaky approach to the privatisation of Synergy assets. There are a few question marks within. The first is about the accounting treatment. There has been a change to international accounting standards. Members will find that, under Australian Accounting Standards Board standards 16 and 17, assets that have been taken off the balance sheet because of the lease commitments of the state for the supply of energy will need to come back onto the balance sheet. The state government has not been clear about this deal. In fact, the opposition forced it to acknowledge that it was undertaking this privatisation with a Dutch equity firm to build the Warradarge wind farm and including other assets to help make up a 20 per cent shareholding in this equity fund. The government's objective is to take it off the balance sheet. If accounting standards change and these assets are forced back onto the balance sheet, we have to question the merit of this deal. It comes down to the cost of capital for the state versus the cost of capital for this private Dutch equity firm, because we can borrow funds at a much cheaper rate than private entities. If it is going to have a higher cost of capital by putting this project out into that Dutch equity firm, that will flow through as a higher cost to consumers. There are some serious concerns about that.

It has been a secret deal. We need the government to be clear about what it is planning to do. It ran a scare campaign about the sale of Western Power, which is a regulated asset, increasing costs to consumers, which was a false accusation. It is being totally secret about this Dutch deal and there are potential ramifications due to a change of accounting standards. There are also concerns from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission about market power. It is really important that this government explains to the people of Western Australia exactly what it is planning to do and how this will impact.

I have touched on a few points here, but there are some serious financial concerns about what this government is doing. The first is that it is not acknowledging that it is growing debt by over 33 per cent over the next four years. The forward estimates, which the Minister for Tourism said are so important to understand because they highlight

where we are going, shows that the government is growing debt by over 34 per cent over the four years and it will see an increase in interest expense by over 50 per cent, or \$500 million a year. In fact, what is really interesting is that all the increases in charges and the new taxes it wanted to put in place do not even meet the interest expense on the new debt that it is accumulating in this term of government. The rhetoric is that it is trying to fix the budgetary position that it was left with by the former administration, yet all its measures do not even cover the interest expense on the new debt it is accumulating. That is my point. It is not fixing the balance sheet; it is not fixing the financial position of this state. It is continuing to get worse because the government is continuing to spend. Mark my word; here is a government that tells pensioners that it is sorry that it is increasing their electricity charges by 30 per cent but it is because of the previous administration. At the same time, it is throwing money around Labor electorates to spend on sporting clubs. It says that mums and dads have to tighten their belts because it has to fix what it inherited from the previous administration, yet the reality is that it is continuing to spend and debt is continuing to grow by over 34 per cent, with an interest expense charge increase of over 50 per cent. All this tightening of the belt has nothing to do with what has occurred in the past under the previous administration; it is purely to fund its own spending. That is what sticks in my gut about this.

Members opposite can dress it up that members of previous governments have had campaigns in their electorates and funding has been given to that, but there are three things that stink with this one. One is the claim that it is about local jobs. I do not know how many jobs are created by giving uniforms to kids at two athletics clubs in the Bicton electorate. The government says that this is a grant, yet there is no criteria for people to apply for grants. The government is telling people from Moora and the residential college, and it tried to tell the people at the Schools of the Air, that unfortunately those were tough decisions it had to make because of its financial situation. Yet it invests \$16 million, as the member for Warren–Blackwood said, into a one-megawatt wave power farm in Albany when the state already has excess electricity. We generate more than we need. There is not the capacity in its lines to handle this, so it has to spend more money to increase the capacity. The cost per unit of energy is greater than the current cost. If there is going to be full cost reflectivity, which the government is saying it is committed to—it is in its forward estimates that it is moving towards cost reflectivity—it will increase the cost by building this wave energy farm when it is not needed. In tight financial times a government holds back those things; it does not do them. That is a responsible government. In tight financial times a government does not splash around in the electorates a slush fund of \$39 million for uniforms here and there; it holds it back because money is tight. This government is not doing it. It is still spending. It is showing disregard to the community. It is being totally sneaky and the rhetoric does not match the reality.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie — Parliamentary Secretary) [11.25 am]: I am very pleased to speak to the Premier's Statement. I note that it highlights how well we are progressing with meeting election commitments, while at the same time dealing with the fiscal legacy that we have, the enormous debt that we are faced with and—I will touch on this in my speech—how we are going about dealing with some other legacy issues.

I want to begin by recognising that, as parliamentarians who only 12 months ago were going through an election process, all 59 of us assembled in this place have succeeded in engaging with the community and in convincing a majority of people to vote for us in our various electorates. That engagement with the public is a task that we have achieved, but in many circumstances it is becoming increasingly difficult to do because the general public is bombarded with images, such as the one we saw on the front page of the local newspaper yesterday, of one parliamentarian who, if you like, is letting the whole side down. That helps to push the message that parliamentarians are not worthy of respect and are not people to be engaged with. All that good work that all 59 of us in this place did in that election campaign to connect with our communities, working with them to instil in them some degree of confidence in the political process, is undone by the behaviour of members such as the person I believe is still the Deputy Prime Minister.

The issue of engaging with the community is a challenging one and all of us have faced that challenge at different times. Ideally, we would be discussing with the general community some issues that are quite complex—budgetary matters and policy matters around any of the portfolio areas in this place. Sometimes to get a public that has in many cases become disenfranchised and disinterested, we have to take to them something that is tangible. This is where I think the Local Projects, Local Jobs funding round or grants round—whatever you want to call it—did a brilliant job. It certainly enabled me to talk to community groups, find out their needs and wants, discuss with them what might be a successful bid and then give them some confidence in the system by delivering on that election commitment. It is very important because the general view often is that politicians make promises and do not deliver. Thanks to our commitment in the election campaign and now our delivery, we have gone about rectifying that serious problem of a lack of confidence that many people have in the political process.

I am very proud of the Local Projects, Local Jobs program that I have been able to support in my electorate. I see many examples in other electorates of excellent campaigns and excellent ideas. When I first heard that this funding round and this campaigning opportunity were open to us, I spoke to our Liddelow Scout Group, which I share with

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the member for Southern River. There are wonderful kids in that group but the leaders, Neill Beer and Michelle Rainsforth, are fantastic people. I met with them and talked about a project they had in mind of funding for some tents so they could go camping. I think they had lost their equipment in a storm, so it was quite urgent for them to get this new equipment so they could go camping. They were after a fairly modest grant of about \$3 000. I was able to run the grant as a story in the local paper, which was good enough to add a little bit about the program in general, bearing in mind it was the 15 December edition of *The Examiner*, mentioned on page 3. The paper was good enough to say that applications, talking generally about the funding round, needed to be into the WA Labor team by close of business on 27 January and a WA Labor email address was given. There was complete transparency about this program. Similar articles were run in other papers, so people were well aware of it.

We contacted also all the community groups in the area that we had contacts for. I note in passing that it is a constant challenge to maintain databases for organisations in which, quite naturally, there is a turnover of secretary, chair—leadership in general. Making sure the database is up to date is quite a task. When we send out an email seeking nomination for a grant, we must make sure the email is not unanswered or is not sent to an email inbox that is unattended. I think it is a two-way street. On the one hand, I recognise that I have a certain responsibility to maintain awareness of an organisation's leaders. On the other hand, it is very useful if organisations always have in mind that they should be letting people such as their local member of Parliament know whenever the names of office-bearers change. It is very important.

Having broadcast the program, it was a matter of checking in with a few groups and asking whether they had put something forward. It was interesting that a few groups declined to seek a grant. One group, the Thornlie Bowling Club—I am working very happily with it on a very large upgrade—did not want to seek a grant. I do not entirely understand why, but its view was that there would not be enough money to meet its needs. Similarly, the Thornlie Tennis Club did not want to nominate. I heard a few stories about that. I think there might have been a degree of sympathy for my political opponent, so perhaps for that reason it did not want to put in a bid. It may also have been that an email inbox was unattended, so it did not put in a bid. For one reason or another, the grant did not fit the frequency with which the Gosnells RSL has meetings and its fairly elaborate approval process for applying for a grant. Some groups decided not to participate, but those that did were fantastic organisations, particularly the Gosnells football club, the Gosnells Bowling Club, organisations that each got \$100 000 from the program. They are doing fantastic work upgrading their clubrooms and facilities, building for the future of their organisations. It continues to be a great pleasure to work with those organisations. Some of the smaller grants have helped me better understand the needs of organisations. I recall a \$2 000 grant to the Gosnells Lions Club to help purchase a portable fridge-freezer so it could do more of the wonderful fundraising the Lions Club does. That was a smallish grant but one that will have quite an amplified benefit. Heritage FM, the local community radio station, received a grant. There was some discussion within the organisation about what the funds should be sought for. Initially, it wanted some heating, but it preferred to use it for some solar panels. It was great to see that kind of internal discussion. A local conservation group, Friends of Mary Carroll Wetland, received \$11 000 so it could put a higher profile around some of its conservation initiatives to give people a better chance to observe the bird activity on the wetlands and help that facility be better shared and understood. One of my largest grants that I provided, in conjunction with the member for Armadale, was for Starick, an organisation that does great work dealing with the terrible issue of domestic violence in our community. I was able to seek around \$120 000 for that organisation. The grants do many good things. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition, a former member of the Thornlie and District Swimming Club, would be very pleased to know that it received \$5 000. Interestingly, it is putting that money towards subsidising the cost of lane hire at the Thornlie Leisure Centre because, unfortunately, getting a lane in a swimming pool is a competitive business, even for a swimming club dominated by young people. It is important we make sure those lanes are as accessible as possible to people. Very important work is going on in the community. The Thornlie Junior Football Club purchased an electronic scoreboard that it has long wanted. Shade sails were bought by the Thornlie and Districts Tee-ball Association. Due to the nature of T-ball, kids are out playing early, but the heat of the day and the brightness and intensity of the sun means kids need to protect themselves and make sure they are taking advantage of whatever shade is available. Many good projects have been funded through this Local Projects, Local Jobs campaign.

I realise that \$39 million is not an insignificant amount of money, but when we take it back to the point I made earlier, it is all about enabling us to engage with our communities. I think it is more than likely this is a practice that will become more assumed in future years and be adopted by all sides in further elections. It gives us a great opportunity to engage with the community and to do the business of being a parliamentarian and discuss other policy issues. But the first thing is to have that point of contact with communities, to be in touch with them and discuss their needs and wants and what we represent in the area or what we stand for personally, as well as the state's objectives. I often find a major point of discussion is: how can so many people be struggling in a state that is very wealthy? That was certainly a topic of conversation we inevitably got around to in the lead-up to the last state election. The conversation would often start around the topic of shade sails for the T-ball club, for example.

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Distribution of wealth remains a pressing topic when some organisations in this state are incredibly wealthy and some people are not seeing any of that wealth. That wealth distribution conversation is well worth all members having with their communities. It is something we can apply ourselves to through the passage of various legislation that we might see.

Deputy Speaker, let me focus on a couple of the achievements that I think are tremendous, such as the commitment to Metronet and the extension of the Thornlie line through to Cockburn, which is already well underway.

I want to mention one of the legacy issues that this government is facing. The consultation process for the Thornlie–Cockburn rail line is an example of an old style of consultation. The public service needs to switch its attitude and mentality when a new government comes into office. The Labor Party has a proud tradition of consulting the public. I think back to the days of the Gallop Labor government and its citizenship and civics unit. That was an excellent initiative in founding and testing the idea of good community engagement. Therefore, I was a little surprised when the Public Transport Authority did not invite me to a consultation round for this rail line. This is a legacy issue. We need to get it into the minds of the bureaucrats in bodies such as the PTA that they should put the local elected members at the forefront of events such as that. It would then have been clear to the people who attended that event that the reason the train line is to be extended is because they voted for a Labor government. That is why it is happening. It would not be happening otherwise. The bureaucrats might have thought that they would be talking about specific issues such as noise walls and vibration studies and it might be difficult for me as the local member to comment on those things. I did attend one of the sessions, and of course I would not pretend to be able to get into the technicalities of those things. However, that was a very important discussion. It is vital that we have these sorts of conversations with our communities. However, there is a job to be done on some of these legacy issues. It is important that as the 12-month mark approaches in the term of this government, we make it clear to the public service that this is a new government and we have a very community-consultative way of doing things.

I now want to talk about some of the other excellent initiatives of the McGowan Labor government. I am thrilled that the Minister for Environment has decided to protect Helena and Aurora Ranges, Bungalbin, and has agreed with the Environmental Protection Authority that the proposal to mine that area should be refused. If members are in any doubt about the value of Helena and Aurora Ranges, Bungalbin, I recommend that they go to Southern Cross and travel 70 kilometres further north, past the mine at Koolyanobbing, to those ranges, and I am sure they will be absolutely struck by the uniqueness of that landform.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: It was an outstanding decision to protect those ranges for future generations. It will also tie in well with this government's tourism plans. A lot of people love to travel around Australia via Kalgoorlie and across the Nullarbor. It will not be difficult for them to divert from Southern Cross and do the 70-kilometre trip to those ranges to observe the outstanding flora and amazing bird life. I have no doubt that this area will be declared a national park into the future. I also want to thank the campaigners for getting this on the agenda and radar of the WA Labor team. I think back to the Australian Labor Party State Conference in 2014 when people from the campaign presented their case for the protection of this area and remark on their good work in doing that.

Another fantastic thing that the government has done is make the roads safer for cyclists by bringing in the safe passing distance regulations. That is an election commitment by the Labor Party that we have delivered on. I must say as a cyclist that I had not anticipated how successful this would be. I had not appreciated that the change to the law to allow motorists to cross a continuous white line or continuous double white lines, so long as it is safe to do so, without breaking the law, would make it so much safer for cyclists. Motorists are now giving cyclists a clearance of a metre and a half, and in some cases up to three metres. I also note and applaud some of the commentary in the cyclists' code of conduct around not riding in large groups and not obstructing vehicles when it is not necessary to do so. Great headway is being made in making sure we share the roads.

I am a little disappointed about some advertisements that have just come out from the Road Safety Commission about speeding. Speeding is a serious subject. One advert says, "If you speed, you'll get enough demerit points to lose your licence and you'll have to ride a bike." This belittling of cycling as a means of transport is totally inconsistent with other government policy. I am not sure how that has crept in. I can think only that the adverts were done by an advertising agency that does not merit its account with the government and the adverts somehow got through the system. That is a poor mistake. Another advert shows a fellow who has lost his licence and has to ride his old rusty bike, and another advert shows a fellow who has lost his licence and is meeting his girlfriend and has mud on his backside because he has ridden through a puddle. It is denigrating this wonderful transport option that we have called cycling.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: It's a reality, though. I don't think it's denigrating. It's a reality. It's another transport alternative, sure.

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Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Cycling is a wonderful transport alternative. It is the most efficient option. If more people rode bikes, we would be able to spend less on railcars. Does the member for Dawesville disagree with that?

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: No.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: I think this advertising campaign is wrongly placed. It is belittling cycling, and that is a mistake. That is something that we have to look into.

Overall, this government is clearly progressing with meeting its election commitments. The Premier's Statement notes many other commitments that this government is well and truly advancing. It is tremendous that Bramfield Park and Thornlie Primary Schools have been given additional education assistants. That will make a great difference to the educational opportunities and outcomes for youngsters in my electorate. They will benefit from that enormously. I am very proud to be part of this government as we come up to our 12-month anniversary and look forward to seeing the delivery of many more fine achievements.

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [11.47 am]: I welcome the opportunity to speak on the Premier's Statement. I will not repeat all the concerns that have been raised by my colleagues in the Liberal Party and the National Party, but I must say that I share many of their concerns. I congratulate the Premier on his first Premier's Statement. He has earned that honour and that right. In the same breath, I also place on record my congratulations to the former Premier and former member for Cottesloe, Colin Barnett, who has retired after a very distinguished career. He has chosen to leave this place, and he leaves an amazing legacy. He rose to the top job. He presided over Western Australia during an extraordinary period of growth and opportunity. I wish him all the very best for the future.

I have been searching for a term to describe the Premier's Statement. The fairest way in which I can describe it is as "a mixed bag". I will focus primarily on the impact on my electorate and on the portfolio areas for which I have responsibility, and I will then cross a couple of other subjects. In the area relating to law and order and community safety, I would say that the Premier set out a solid agenda about what he and his government intend to do in the next 12 months. A lot of the preamble was really about legislation that was passed last year in this place and has not passed in the other place, but it is legislation that the opposition primarily supported. Into the future, the Premier has flagged that he will be reforming our terrorism protection laws to keep our community safe, both with new laws applicable to Western Australians and implementing some Council of Australian Governments initiatives on a national level to ensure we have consistency and the best level of protection.

Protecting the community is one of the most significant tasks that we have as members of Parliament. We are all supportive of increasing protections for our community. Unfortunately, we have to grapple with the realities of modern-day dangers, including acts of terrorism—domestic terrorism, international terrorism and the like—and we need to be prepared for them. We have not seen the legislation from the government but we look forward to seeing it. Assuming it does what the government intends it to do, we look forward to passing it to protect all Western Australians. At the same time, members and the general public would have heard yesterday in this place that the committee I chair, the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, announced an inquiry into Western Australia's preparedness for terrorism acts in crowded places. That inquiry has already started and the committee is looking forward to providing valuable new insights into how we can do even better to firstly—hopefully—stop any of these attacks and, if one does happen, ensure that we are as best prepared as possible to deal with the incident and the aftermath, including limiting any follow-on attacks. In that respect, if the government gets that legislation right, that is a big tick—that is a great thing for us because we will be better protected from those unfortunate, but real, dangers that we face as a society across the whole of the western world, including here in Western Australia. We might be remote and we might be less prominent than other cities or countries, but we know that the threat is set by the national authorities as "probable". That applies to Western Australia as much as to any other place in Australia.

The Premier highlighted that the Corruption and Crime Commission now has powers to go after unexplained wealth. We look forward to seeing how it will be implemented in practice. I am sure the Corruption and Crime Commissioner and all the staff will be getting active. We look forward to seeing some results. As we have discussed in the past, people out there are profiting from illegality. They hire the smartest and the best accountants and lawyers to keep them out of jail, if you like, and also to keep their money out of the reach of authorities. If we can attack the wealth creation of those people, hopefully we will stop their horrible acts, particularly drug dealers.

The government also flagged that it will introduce new laws to deal with dangerous driving. I assume it will reduce the speed threshold for dangerous driving and aggravation in certain prescribed circumstances. It said it will also increase penalties for drunk and drug drivers, including what was stated to be improving the regime for bans on recidivist drink-driving and drug-driving offenders. On the face of it, all of those sound relatively good. They will make our roads safer for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists—essentially for all road users. But let us see what the government actually comes up with. If the past 12 months is any guide, when we see the legislation, the rhetoric

sometimes does not match the reality. In the past 12 months in the area of law and order and community safety, the government has a very patchy and, I would say, poor record. It started off by failing to honour its own election promise to introduce mandatory minimum jail terms for drug dealers. The government had the opportunity. It introduced legislation into this place increasing the maximum penalty, but despite having given a commitment as late as February last year, it reneged on that promise. We know why—because there is ideological opposition from sections of the government to any form of mandatory jail sentencing. It means that under this government our community remains less protected than it ought to be. It highlights again that this government, very early in its term, was prepared to be selective about which election commitments it would implement and which election commitments it would simply jettison because they were useful at the time but it will not implement them in government.

The police budget was slashed by \$250 million over the forward estimates. That was on top of the destruction of the morale of our police force out on the streets—those officers who are out there protecting us from dangerous criminals, keeping our roads safe and keeping our suburbs and towns safe. Their morale was destroyed when the government failed to honour another election commitment that it made to give our police a fair and well-deserved 1.5 per cent pay increase and, instead, offered them a lower pay increase that they eventually had to begrudgingly accept. Also, when our police force called for stab-proof vests for every police officer, the initial reaction of the government was to say no. Eventually, it became obvious that the public did not respond kindly to police being refused stab-proof vests. They were being refused an essential part of modern policing equipment to protect them in an occupational health and safety sense when they go out there and walk into danger when the rest of us are walking away from danger. The public did not wear that. There was quite a lot of concern. Now the government has said it will look into it; it will examine what vests are appropriate to be introduced and in what circumstances. The budget is coming up in May and we are all looking forward to seeing what the government will do about providing this necessary occupational health and safety protection for our police officers.

In the area of law and order, we also know that really early in the term, the Minister for Corrective Services came out and effectively said to the public of Western Australia that this government intends to release more dangerous criminals onto our streets. These are criminals who judges have said ought to be in remand awaiting a decision or sentence. Judges have said that they ought to be in prison, yet the minister thought he knew better and that he would somehow create some sort of triage unit. We have not heard a lot more about it. Hopefully it is dead, buried and cremated because it was a stupid idea then and it remains a stupid idea that would make our community less safe. We have seen some of the legislation that has come in. It has bounced around between the houses. One of the reasons the no body, no parole bill has not gone through is that it bounced around between the houses. The other place decided it needs some changes to make it better. We saw that a completely unrelated matter was moved into the bill giving the Corruption and Crime Commission the power to go after the unexplained wealth of criminals, and that led to unnecessary delay.

In the first 12 months, the government's record on protecting our community is not very good. The sentiments around law and order and community safety in the Premier's Statement are good ones. They have bipartisan support, protecting us from terrorism, helping the Corruption and Crime Commission go after the bad guys, introducing new laws that provide us with better protection from dangerous drivers, increasing penalties for drink and drug-drivers and dealing with recidivist offenders. The sentiments are great. The proof is going to be in the pudding. Let us see what legislation is provided, particularly regarding recidivist offenders. Increasing bans on recidivist offenders who drive whilst unlicensed has proven over a long period to be completely and utterly useless. We know there is a cohort out there in our community who do not care whether they have a licence and drive whether they are licensed or not. A prime example is the fellow who gets a lot of media attention; I think he now goes by the name of Mitchell Walsh. He is a long-term recidivist offender who simply thumbs his nose at authority. These drivers have been proven to be extraordinarily dangerous when they are on the road, and they do not care whether they have a licence. Increasingly out in the community there is a strong belief that if these people who drive unlicensed are not going to learn, if they do not respect the ban that has been placed on them, there is only one place for them and that is jail. We look forward to that legislation and we will see what it does.

The impact of this Premier's Statement and the government's program on the people of the Hillarys electorate is again patchy. The people of the Hillarys electorate do not ask for much from government. They ask the government to keep us safe, run efficient public hospitals, provide good education and get out of the crosshairs of businesses to allow them to grow—especially the many small businesses in the Hillarys electorate, including people in the construction industry, building trades, retail and hospitality. They ask the government to allow them to grow their businesses and provide employment for others. They also ask for a fair go. They ask for a fair opportunity to access all the services that government provides.

That brings me to the Local Projects, Local Jobs program that I am sure many members of the government will get up and spruik about and how they have delivered promises to their communities. Unfortunately, the people of the Hillarys electorate, and the community groups that do valuable work in the Hillarys electorate, were not even

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given an opportunity to apply for these so-called grants. Groups have come to me who are extraordinarily worthy of support. They are in my electorate, they service people from my electorate and they service people from neighbouring electorates, including Joondalup, Kingsley and Burns Beach. These groups have been cut out of the process completely. A group like the Kallaroo Community Threes Kindergarten program has been running for 30 years and does not get regular funding from anyone, but it would appreciate the opportunity to access some funds for additional capital, perhaps to improve its playground or simply make life easier for the parents from all over the northern suburbs who use that service. If it had been given the chance to apply and it was knocked back on merit, or perhaps because there was a perception that it comes from a rich area, which it does not, then it would have worn that. However, the parents at that centre and all the people who are involved in community groups across my electorate are not happy they did not get even an opportunity to apply for the grant funding stream. They feel like they have been treated as second-class citizens based on who they choose to be their representative in this place. If members opposite want to govern for the whole of Western Australia, they cannot say that some electorates or groups will be cut.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I do not want to take up all the time, but I want to make these points. The member for Gosnells got up and talked about the great work his Lions Club does; good on them. Now it has been given some funding so it can do more good work. I applaud that, but why could the Lions Club of Whitfords not make an application to the same funding stream to see whether it could get some equipment funding? I think the club has portable freezers and the like but it could apply funding to lots of other things. It was not even given the opportunity. If, on merit, a panel assessing local grants determined that the Lions Club of Gosnells or the Lions Club of Collie or wherever was more worthy in this particular round than the Lions Club of Whitfords, people would have said, "Fine; that's okay. We'll start again." It was not given even the opportunity to apply. This was a slush fund. What about our local junior footy clubs?

Mr M.P. Murray: Okay, let us have a go. Give me two seconds —

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Wait a second, because I am going to have a go.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: The minister can make a ministerial statement.

Our local sporting clubs are struggling to cope with a massive influx, particularly in women's sport. Any support that they could get would have been welcome. The Sorrento Duncraig Junior Football Club and the Whitford Junior Football Club would have liked the opportunity to access what became a Labor Party slush fund, but they were cut out.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Members, enough.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: There is another reason those clubs should be supported. A lot of clubs in my area and across the northern suburbs have decided to fund from their own funds—from their sausage sizzles, canteen proceeds and raffle sales—a catch-up payment to those families who were duded by this Minister for Sport and Recreation when he slashed funding for an important program like KidSport. It provided funding to families with children who may never have had the opportunity to play competitive sport before. The minister slashed the funding and sporting groups are dipping into the funds that they raised to buy footballs, protective equipment or line-marking equipment. There are dipping into their own pockets because they believe it is important that those families that perhaps do not have the funds to access competitive sport should not be disadvantaged by a penny-pinching government that cut a program. The program was effectively cut because it was a successful program of the previous government. That is what it did. My community does feel duded. They feel like they are second-class citizens and I think it is bad that this government has resorted to a Ros Kelly whiteboard-style scenario to allocate funds only to Labor electorates and not even allow groups in other electorates to get a fair go by making an application for that funding. That is not a good way to run government. That is not a good way to govern for all people and all Western Australians.

Another area I want to touch on very quickly is the election commitment given by this government for no new taxes and no increases in taxes.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Members opposite do increase taxes. The Premier has flagged two new taxes in his statement—an Uber tax and some form of online gaming tax that again highlights that some election commitments are more equal than others. It is as simple as that. Some election commitments are more equal than others. Election commitments made by government members have been honoured, but election commitments made to all

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Western Australians have not. We will be waiting to see the details of those two new taxes this year and then we will be able to have a look at that.

I want to touch on another area that smells of hypocrisy, and that is when the Premier spoke in his statement about liberalising liquor licensing laws. I am looking forward to seeing those laws. No-one in this chamber could ever accuse me of being inconsistent on licensing laws. I am very supportive of reforms that cut red tape and make it easier for businesses to offer a drink to rational consumers, rather than treating Western Australians as children or basically sending the message that we cannot trust people to drink. I have consistently been supportive of those laws for more than 30 years. Let us see whether the proof of the pudding is in the eating. At the same time as facilitating a liberalised regime, a regime that makes us, as the Premier said the other day, hip or attracts hip people here and recognises the reality of modern life, the Premier is flagging banning online lottery platforms like the Lottoland platform that advertises way, way, way too much during the sporting events that I watch. The Premier has said that is what is going to happen because we need to protect our own very successful lottery. Yes, our lottery industry has been very successful, but that is not a recognition of the reality. Our lotteries, that are operated by Lotterywest and provide a significant funding stream for many community groups, and have done so for decades, have been cannibalised by not only online players, but also the fact that lotteries are no longer as attractive a gambling platform as other platforms. Young people are deserting them in droves. I do not know too many people under 30 years or even 40 years who even bother with lotteries and scratchies.

Mr M.P. Murray: What about when it is a jackpot? Come on—they queue up!

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I will put this on record: I am not an anti-gambler, but I am a non-gambler and I have never bought a lottery ticket myself. That is a strong distinction. I suggest that, rather than trying to ban something that we may not be able to ban constitutionally anyway, we cooperate. Some of these operators have already flagged that they would be happy to subscribe to the same —

Mr P. Papalia: Are you talking about synthetic gambling?

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I am talking about Lottoland and the like; all that stuff—the whole lot.

Mr P. Papalia: Have you been lobbied by them?

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Not at all. I have never met a representative from, or spoken to or received any correspondence from, any of those groups.

Mr P. Papalia: Do you understand the implications for Lotterywest from those?

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I do. That is what I am talking about. The minister came in halfway through my speech. Does the minister understand that the same implications that apply to Lotterywest apply to our TAB? We are not banning online bookmakers, but we are talking about banning online lottery platforms. It is inconsistent with the government's announcement to turn Perth into a hipster paradise. Unfortunately, I do not know whether that ban will even work. It sounds as though we are getting into some deep constitutional waters, but this mob is basically saying—I have heard their public pronouncements—"Tax us like you tax the rest of the lotteries; we'd be happy with that." That would be a smarter way to go—create a level playing field and then let people decide. Make no mistake, the people of Western Australia own two very important assets.

Mr M.P. Murray: Do not forget the small businesses that sell lotto tickets.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I am not forgetting them at all. If I had time—I am sure we will get the opportunity some time—I would talk at length about the small businesses that own those kiosks, especially those small businesses that own those kiosks that are not allowed to open when they want to because of restrictive retail trade. But that is a debate for another day.

I do not profess to have the absolute solution to how we deal with the challenges. The TAB faces massive challenges, and Lotterywest faces just as many challenges. I do not believe that it is fairly recognised that not only are they being cannibalised by online players, but also there is a shift in tastes for gambling, especially amongst young people, towards things like sports betting and online gambling at the expense of lotteries. If we do not do something genuine and real about it, we will lose that magic income stream that we have had for decades and has provided for generations of Western Australians. I do not profess to have all the answers, but banning online lotteries does not send a good message. It basically means that we are sending out a dig-our-head-in-the-sand message: Lotterywest can keep doing what it is doing and we will sell the TAB.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I am making a very big distinction here. I am talking about the part of Lotterywest that sells tickets, not the grant applications. That is a process.

Mr P. Papalia: Where does that money come from?

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Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I understand there is a flow of money, but the minister pays attention only selectively.

I am sorry I have taken up so much time of the house today, but I thought they were important matters to put on the public record. I have said it before and I will say it again: I wish this government every success. I am actually barracking for this government to succeed—to reduce debt, reduce taxes, protect our community and provide good public services. I always say that if the government does the right thing, I will support it. I will give it a big tick. But its record is patchy, especially in law and order. Its record in the past 12 months has been poor. The aspirational targets in the Premier's Statement sound like good ideas and the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. However, playing us and them in different communities is wrong and the government will be held accountable for that. I strongly counsel the government to stop playing us and them and treat every Western Australian as an equal citizen.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman): Do I get some direction? Member for South Perth.

MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth) [12.17 pm]: That was a fine decision, Madam Acting Speaker; you went the right way. In my time in this place, I have been fairly level headed about the courses governments and oppositions take. I have no great problem with any party going to an election with election promises, because how else do they get elected if they do not make commitments or promises? I think the strategy of the Labor Party was very clever—to make election commitments in the communities. While in government—the government will find this out—it is required to handle very big projects and make big decisions. We were like the *Queen Mary*, making its way through the ocean; the Labor opposition was like a small speedboat running around, picking off areas in which it thought it could get support. That was very successful for members.

Someone who works for me comes from Capel. Her father, a Liberal voter, said to me, "Mick Murray is offering something for our local bowling club." He probably did not vote for Mick but I am sure that others did because of those promises. That happens in politics, but our problem is with how it is handled. I believe it is not how governments in the past have operated. On 13 February this year, the Premier told Parliament —

In this financial climate, every dollar of government spending has to be scrutinised.

We agree with that. When we were in government, everything had to be scrutinised. I know that money was allocated from the government through the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries for facilities in the electorate of South Perth that I did not even know the council had applied for. It did not come to me and ask whether I could help it get money. It knew that a process is in place and it made an application. I think the government put in something like \$800 000 towards the cost of a new sports pavilion in Manning. The whole project was about \$14 million or \$15 million.

Dr M.D. Nahan: Was that at Trinity Playing Fields?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No, that was at James Miller Oval. The new Manning Community Hub has a library, community centre and a headquarters for the Moorditj Keila, an Aboriginal group, and at the front of it is a sports pavilion. Through the Department of Sport and Recreation the government put towards \$880 000 towards the cost of the sports pavilion. I had no involvement in it.

Mr M.P. Murray: A serious question: do you write support letters for those sorts of grants?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No, I was not asked for it. They did not come to me. People in South Perth are pretty independent and they know the process.

Mr M.P. Murray: Or they do not know the member.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No, they know the process. If they had had problems, they would have come to me, but they know the process and they know that if the City of South Perth wants to do something for a sporting organisation or create a new facility, it goes through a process and makes an application to the Department of Sport and Recreation. That is what the council did and it got the funding and it was very good. As I said, I am not against a political opposition trying to win an election by going out and saying to the communities that if they win government, this is what they will do for them. We all do it. All parties do it. Our only concern is that there is no grant funding stream whereby other groups in that same electorate might have been able to make an application. It was really left to the candidate for Labor to say that this is something that he thinks will resonate with the constituents. The people who ran the campaign for Labor and steered the ship said, "Okay, we will do it that way." A bowling club in an electorate might have got some funding because the local candidate said that it was a good project, but another bowling project down the road, also in that electorate —

Mr M.P. Murray: Mine's a bit different, because Eden, Capel and Collie got money.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: You were handing it out everywhere. You were like Father Christmas; I knew that.

Mr M.P. Murray: All three of them got money. I was very fair.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: But we all knew you were going to be re-elected.

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 15 February 2018]

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Mr M.P. Murray: Many bowlers down there are Liberal people.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Yes, I know they are. Then on 5 February 2018, the Premier said —

“Look, we’re not funding the Peppermint Grove tennis club,” he said.

“The Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club is not getting a grant. But you go to Kwinana, you go to Kununurra, you go to Girrawheen, you go to Burns Beach, you’ll find all sorts of local community clubs and facilities receiving a little bit of attention they hadn’t received before.”

That is saying that I do not have any Labor voters in my electorate. Labor has good voters in South Perth. A lot of old Labor voters have been there a long time and there is a good percentage of Labor supporters. The Labor government is saying to those people that they are unlucky because they live in an electorate that it is not going to help. That is a real issue because, as I said, some families in my electorate of South Perth are not well off and send their kids to local government schools. Como Secondary College is one that I will talk about in a minute. Those people are not wealthy people and they would have voted Labor, because my vote dropped. They would have all voted Labor, but what benefit will they get out of it?

We are going to get the Manning Road on-ramp and that is a good project. I have fought for that project for a long time, but that was forced on Labor. It was not a Labor commitment. The candidate who ran against me in South Perth was asked about it and he said that he cannot make any decisions on behalf of the party and whether it was a commitment. I know a bit about this story because the federal government put about \$20 million into the project. That money was there and all that was needed was for the government to do a top-up. When Labor won, money was transferred from Roe 8 into Metronet. Somewhere along the line, I think the Manning Road ramp even got included in Metronet, but I do not know how that happened. The federal Treasurer said, “There are the projects we will fund, but you’ve got to fund one more—the Manning Road ramp.”

Mr P. Papalia: No, the Minister for Transport stood up for you.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No. Because the seat of West Swan will be very crucial in the next election to the federal government and that is how it happened. I welcome it. As I said before, I want to be there when the Minister for Transport and the Premier, hopefully—I doubt he would; he would not come to Manning Road—open the Manning Road ramp. She might even let me help cut the ribbon. I really doubt it, but I will be there.

Mr P. Papalia: I reckon she would.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Let me talk about Como Secondary College. A lot of kids go to this school and I guarantee that their parents would vote Labor. Como Secondary College is an EMITS school. It has enriched mathematics, information technology and science programs. It is a school of contemporary jazz music. It has a golf academy and a hockey academy. Kids come from all around the metropolitan area, not only from my electorate, to go to the school. Last year it was brought to my attention that the school had a lot of issues. I will put on the record some of these issues that we would find hard to believe exist in this day and age. The school needed to close the school library for three weeks earlier last year due to a water leak above the main electrical switchboard resulting from insufficient gutters after the building was re-roofed. Water is coming in and going onto the electrical switchboard. How dangerous can that be? It had water leaks onto the gymnasium floor. I visited the school. The water was coming from the installation of air conditioners in the roof. The school had a rat infestation. Rats were nesting on the straw insulation in the roof of the school. The school had communication and wireless connection problems. Resurfacing and line marking of the outdoor basketball courts had not been done. It needed an additional change room facility. A big school such as this with 880 students had one change room used by the performing arts students—the dance and drama students would change there—the students using the gym for physical education and the golf and hockey glasses. They all had to go to the one change room.

Dr M.D. Nahan: The boys and girls.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I guess they would have been separated at some stage. It was only one change room, but I gather it would have been for boys and girls. There were ongoing drainage problems around the college. There were large puddles of water in high-traffic areas such as at the entrance to the college when it rained. Just before Christmas last year, I wrote to the Minister for Education and Training about the internet connection problems, which were pointed out to me by a group of students who had gone to the eastern states. I gave them some funding to help them go away and compete and they did very well. They are very bright young people. One of them came from Belmont. He catches three buses to go to school.

Mr M.P. Murray: Does the rest of the state get a chance to apply for some of your funding?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: My personal funding? Well, I am very generous in my electorate. Anyway, the minister wrote back to me on 23 January informing me that an information and communications technology customer

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relationship manager from the Department of Education will contact the college before the start of term one to discuss the concerns that I raised. My office checked with the school after term one had commenced in early February and it said that no-one from the Department of Education had contacted it.

Mr P. Papalia: I will pass it to the minister's office today.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Thank you. Here is a little sketch of Como Secondary College. It has approximately 830 students. These are last year's figures. Some 437 come from the local intake in my electorate, from Karawara, Manning, Salter Point, Waterford, a part of Wilson—that is not in my electorate—and parts of South Perth. Some 393 students come from outside the local intake area, which includes Victoria Park, East Victoria Park, Kensington, St James, Bentley, Cannington, Lathlain and Carlisle. What do members see there? They are all Labor electorates. Students from Labor electorates are going to a school in my electorate, which is getting no funding. Students attending the Como Secondary College specialist programs also travel from Leeming, South Lake, Hammond Park, Meadow Springs, Canning Vale, Kenwick, Seville Grove, Ballajura, Duncraig and Currabine. What do members say about those kids? They come from Labor electorates. The school is not a Liberal school; it has a big mix of students. The statistics that I recently provided to the school paint a very interesting picture with just over half the students coming from my electorate and the rest coming from electorates both near and far, including Labor electorates.

Let us look at what happened in those electorates at the last election. Every polling place in Victoria Park was convincingly won by the member for Victoria Park. It is my neighbouring electorate and I have a very good relationship with the Treasurer. The same thing happened in Cannington; every polling place was won by the member for Cannington. I find that hard to understand, but he did it. Every polling place in Cockburn voted in favour of the member for Cockburn, including absent and early votes. It was the same for Willagee, Kwinana and Mandurah, but not so much for Jandakot, where more than half of the polling places were won by Labor. In Southern River, seven out of the nine polling places were won by Labor. These are where the students come from. In Forrestfield, all polling places and early votes were won by Labor. In Thornlie—I hate repeating this and revisiting this nightmare—all polling places and early votes were won by Labor. In Armadale, all polling places and early votes were won by Labor. In Mirrabooka, all polling places and early votes were won by Labor. In West Swan—where was Frankie?—all polling places and early votes were won by Labor. In Burns Beach and Joondalup, more than half of the polling places were won by Labor. What a resounding win! But out of that win, there are families in those areas who are missing out, and they are missing out because of the government's policy of spending money on election commitments only in Labor electorates, forgetting that there are Labor supporters in other electorates. Western Australian governments should govern for all Western Australians. A government cannot govern on factionalism in politics and the seats that it holds. When we were in government—I have said this before—we funded huge projects in Armadale. We put in a courthouse and a police complex. In December last year, we committed \$86 million for the justice complex. We committed to a potential police officer capacity increase from 80 to 315. The project was expected to create hundreds of jobs. We did that in a seat that we will never win.

An opposition member: Another Fremantle school.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Thanks for that. The other one is my old area of Hammy Hill. We shut down Hamilton Hill High School and rebuilt South Fremantle Senior High School.

Dr M.D. Nahan: In Labor heartland.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: We did that in Labor's heartland. A responsible government —

Mr M.P. Murray: Can you explain to me why Collie did not get its money under a Liberal promise? There's anomalies everywhere!

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I know that. Coalfields Highway was a big issue; we eventually did it.

Mr P. Papalia: He's talking about the high school.

Mr M.P. Murray: The high school was not done—in eight years!

Mr J.E. McGRATH: If I had been education minister, Collie would have got it!

We also built and refurbished schools in numerous suburbs and electorates all around the place, including Butler, Baldivis, West Swan, the Kimberley, Swan Hills, Mandurah, Kwinana and Rockingham—not one Liberal-held seat, but we spent the money as a government.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr T.J. Healy: Member, will you take an interjection?

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Mr J.E. McGRATH: I just have to keep moving.

Mr T.J. Healy: Member, will you take an interjection?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Just from you, because you have a Dockers tie on!

Mr T.J. Healy: Is the list of schools that the previous government built or rebuilt a publicly listed and available document?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Yes.

Mr T.J. Healy: Could I get one?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Sure.

Mr T.J. Healy: That would be fantastic.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: You can have my notes!

In 2015, we invested \$125 million for the Aubin Grove train station. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition and shadow Minister for Transport reminded us today that the new Labor government has claimed it as theirs. Similarly, the new Labor government has claimed Chelsea Football Club coming to Perth as a win. Chelsea is coming to Perth —

Mr P. Papalia: Can I interrupt you there! I did a live cross to Channel Nine on the morning that we announced that game and I acknowledged that it was the previous government who paid for it and arranged it.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I did not see that. I saw a story in *The West*.

We have given this government fertile ground for openings and things like that.

Mr P. Papalia: We still have to make it work.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: It will work; we put it all in place.

We extended the rail line to Butler and the first trains left Butler station in 2014. The member for Butler is not here —

An opposition member interjected.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: He claimed a lot, but he did not do much.

The other day in Mandurah, which is close to the member for Dawesville's seat, I drove over Old Mandurah Bridge for the first time. A long time ago as a kid, we used to fish from it. We did that for the member for Mandurah, Hon David Templeman. He would have been delighted that we spent that money.

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: He opened it!

Mr J.E. McGRATH: He opened it!

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup: I wasn't even invited!

Several members interjected.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: And other openings!

Dr M.D. Nahan: Remember *The Bridge on the River Kwai*?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I saw that movie the other night with Alec Guinness.

A lot has been said about the cutbacks to KidSport funding and the athlete travel subsidy for those aged 13 to 20. I had a briefing with the Minister for Sport and Recreation this week. It was a good briefing. I explained that the opposition was concerned about any cuts to KidSport funding. The cuts that have been made mean that funding will not extend to people in the metropolitan area. There are Labor voters in the metropolitan area; not everyone in the metropolitan area is wealthy. Although in many cases those in the regions have a lot further to travel, there are needy families in the metropolitan area, and I want the minister to look at putting that funding back in. I understand that at times, as the minister pointed out, the funding has been going to the wrong people. People have been claiming it and getting it when they were not entitled to it. Perhaps the system was not working properly. I do not know why the system was put through local councils. It should have been done —

Mr M.P. Murray: As I explained to you in the briefing, a dog got the money.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Yes, and doctors were giving people certificates to get it. The situation got out of control. There needs to be control of the situation, and I do not think that local governments should be involved. I think sports clubs should be able to make that application.

The other issue I discussed with Minister Murray was funding cutbacks for scouts and girl guides. My personal opinion is that scouts and guides should not get Sport and Recreation funding because sporting organisations have a greater need for funding. Scouts and guides have to be supported; they have been supported for 100 years. They are very important movements for our young people. The minister pointed out that they get youth funding and Department of Communities funding. I will be urging the McGowan government to move that a bit because Scouts WA and Girl Guides Western Australia have been asked to prove that they are sporting organisations. I know they compete in some sports recreationally, but it will be a misnomer if they are included as sporting organisations. I think that there is a place for them and that they need to be funded. They are very important programs. In my electorate they do some terrific projects such as cleaning up streets and road verges, doing volunteer work, helping seniors and things like that. It is an admirable thing for young children who do not want to get involved in sport—most of them do not—but want to go into scouting and guiding.

I am the shadow minister for liquor licensing. I had a briefing the other day from the Minister for Racing and Gaming and his staff about amendments to the Liquor Control Act. I think our leader said the other day that the Liberal Party will support, within reason, a freeing up of the liquor act. We believe that we need to reduce red tape. We get a lot of complaints from people who want to open up a small bar or some sort of venue that serves liquor, and restaurants that cannot serve someone who joins a table a glass of wine because they are not having a meal. I think that all those things will be addressed and it is a step in the right direction. We have not seen the legislation yet and it will have to go through our party room, but we will be having a briefing next week. In my time in this place not many things lead to more discussion than liquor, the liquor act and things like road safety and transport. The liquor act always fires members of Parliament up because people have different views about whether we have too many liquor outlets or not enough liquor outlets. I think that the decision to give Tourism WA some say when liquor licence applications are assessed is good. It will not apply to all applications. Obviously, it will apply only to areas where tourism is important. It would not apply in an application for a little liquor store or a licensed premises in a suburb that is not really a tourism area. That is a step in the right direction.

I see one issue that will cause bother—that is, the pop-ups. Hoteliers are very fearful of the impact that pop-ups will have on their premises and on brick and mortar pubs. Hoteliers have built the pubs, have big staffs and pay very high rates and taxes. For a pop-up to come along down the road in a park or something and to exist for only 12 or 16 weeks during the peak period will impact on them. There will be some discussion on that. I know that the minister is looking at something that might make it a little bit easier for hotels to compete, maybe even allowing them to run pop-ups of their own. As one hotelier said to me, “Why would I want to get people to go to a pop-up when I want them to come to my hotel? I have set up the infrastructure. We have a good hotel. We serve good meals and everything. Why would I want to be separating my business a bit and putting a pop-up down the road?” That is an issue and there will be a good discussion.

My other portfolio is racing and gaming. I find it hard to support Lottoland. I think that we have to support Lotterywest. It is a huge program and is something that other states do not have, because they have poker machines. Over here we are a bit different with our funding. I was in Adelaide last month and I spoke to some MPs about our system of the Department of Sport and Recreation funding sporting organisations, in which if they want to build a new clubhouse or something or lay down a new carpet green, they can get one-third from the Department of Sport and Recreation, one-third from the local government and pay one-third. The MPs said that they did not have anything like that, but they have poker machines. In a lot of ways, we are different from other states.

Mr M.P. Murray: You’re not going to take a couple of minutes to brag about your win at the bowls in Adelaide?

Mr J.E. McGRATH: No, I do not talk about private matters.

Mr M.P. Murray: He pinched all the good players!

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I upheld the tradition of Western Australia and we won the parliamentary bowls.

I agree with what the member for Hillarys said; that is, it is a changing marketplace. People probably are not buying as many lottery tickets as they once did. The only way Lottoland could be supported is if it paid its tax and if Lotterywest’s revenue would not be impacted. I do not know that that will ever happen.

Finally, people in this place will know that I was a keen proponent of selling the TAB. I thought that it was the only way for the industry to go forward. I thought that the Western Australia TAB would struggle to survive against the monoliths. Tabcorp has now taken over Tatts, so it is a huge wagering organisation. I have read that corporate bookmakers are struggling. William Hills will not last in Australia because the market is not big enough for it, so it is really struggling. I think we will have a situation in which we will have Tabcorp and one or two corporates that will band together; they will be fairly strong. We might have only one. I do not know where our TAB will sit in that system. I have had some discussions with the Treasurer and with the Minister for Racing and Gaming. We have to get the best outcome for the industry. It has to be decided whether that means keeping

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the TAB or selling the TAB to Tabcorp, provided the industry will be no worse off. If industry does not get revenue from wagering, it will struggle and die.

Mr P. Papalia: Wherever we go, you will be integrally involved with the process.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: Thank you. I appreciate that. Having said that, thank you.

MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River) [12.46 pm]: I want to make my comments on behalf of my community and state that I commend the Premier's Statement. I certainly support the motion that it be noted.

I just want to mention the previous speaker, the member for South Perth—long may he reign. I think that it is wonderful to have him in the chamber. It is wonderful to have him as part of this Parliament. He should ignore the naysayers who might say that he should not be here. I think it is fantastic. Some others may pursue the honey trap of looking at some younger or older members, but I think it is fantastic to have the member for South Perth as part of our Parliament.

I commend the Premier on his statement and on our first year in government. I love being a member of Parliament and of this Labor government. Certainly, I miss my students and I miss teaching, but I get to get up in this place every day and fight for my community to deliver jobs and to change lives in my community. It might sound naive, but I absolutely love it. Today I will not speak about the Barnett government. I will talk about the awesome things that we have done in the first year of the McGowan Labor government. When I listen to some members of the Liberal Party or the Nationals, they sound very negative.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange interjected.

Mr T.J. HEALY: Some amazing things have happened, member for Churchlands, in the last 11 months.

I am going to thread a beautiful story of togetherness. This is actually a state united. I recognise that the National Party has its narrative. It is always trying to say that the city and the country are different. I recognise that that is a political strategy. This McGowan Labor government governs for all—for regions and the urban community. Through my speech today I will be very happy to talk about the incredible investments that we have made. Again, this is a state united. It is a state that is moving forward. This is a government that is getting on with the job. I commend the Premier's Statement. He spoke about projects, legislation and reforms. WA jobs are our number one priority. I seek to discuss jobs and to talk about what has happened in my electorate and what that has done to change lives in Southern River. The Premier said that Western Australia should be fair, prosperous and brimming with opportunity. We have a lot of work to do, but it is fantastic to see and to mark our progress. We are delivering on our commitments and are on the way to repairing the budget. Everyone knows that there is a big chunk of debt but, again, I am will not talk about looking back, I will talk about what we will do. We are fighting for a better share of GST. We are implementing fiscal discipline to move us back to a place where we can ensure that everyone in Western Australia gets an equal share. I am going to talk about a number of different things, including education. I will spend part of my speech especially on regional policies, but I will talk about my electorate first.

There will be new education assistants in schools in all of our electorates, be it regional or urban. I note that at least half the schools in my electorate have picked up additional education assistants. I think it is fantastic that half the 100 new education assistants are in the regions. Fifty of the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education officers are in the regions. Ashburton Drive Primary School in my community has picked up a new science lab. It is glorious to see nine of those new science labs in the agricultural region. That is something other governments have not done. There are nine new science labs where Labor—if we try to do the divide concept—holds no seats. Southern River College received \$8.4 million. The works for a new performing arts theatre, works in the gym and the refurbishments are employing local people in my community. The contracts are moving ahead. The principal met yesterday with more of the builders and engineers—the construction people who are moving ahead. Canning Vale College received \$2 million in needy funds. Huntingdale Primary School received \$40 000. I note that the member for Scarborough said that it would not create one job. I will tell her, Programmed has been awarded the contract for the design. It is not being done entirely by volunteers and the P&C. That \$40 000 for a new nature playground will employ local people—planners and engineers. It is creating further flow-on. I commend the government on investing in them.

Two new primary schools are being built. Southern Grove Primary School opened for kindy and pre-primary just a few weeks ago—brilliant. Both schools were funded in the budget last year, after 10 years. That is why I was interested in the list of schools given by the member for South Perth. In the years of the Barnett government my electorate received no new schools, so I am always interested to see the list. Two new primary schools provide a fantastic opportunity for construction and works and for the teachers and education assistants who are employed there.

I commend the government for two aspects. The TAFE fees freeze means so much to my community in Southern River and so much to the regions. It is significant. The member for Geraldton mentioned last night how

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important that is. Part of our policy, implemented in the past couple of weeks, in terms of what we are sending out to schools, is the direct-to-market policy. That will allow schools and P&Cs with projects under \$20 000 to choose their own local job providers rather than having to go to the government. There are some principals who are time poor and who will stay with the government for that, and that is fine. However, we will see local P&Cs using local providers to get much more value for money. In a tight fiscal environment I find that the direct to market policy, which applies to my school and to all of our schools, will stretch the playdough. It will allow schools to get more bang for their buck if there is a certain amount of work that needs to be done. It is fantastic.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: That is not new.

Mr T.J. HEALY: It is certainly something that we have brought in. That is our Labor policy and the direct-to-market policy is something that this government has made available to schools now.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: That is actually not true.

Mr T.J. HEALY: It is.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: The direct to market allows any school, any government department, to go off the provider list so long as they provide evidence as to how it can be of benefit.

Mr T.J. HEALY: From my experience as a teacher working with P&Cs—I will look a little further, member for Churchlands—that is certainly not the case and not the experience.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Member for Churchlands, desist.

Mr T.J. HEALY: Thank you. I am always happy to take interjections from my friend the member for Churchlands.

I will link it into the jobs bill. The fact that we passed the jobs bill—local jobs and local apprentices keyed to projects and to key infrastructure—means that local apprentices can be employed at a local project and that means so much. After the devastation of the last period, for young people in my community seeking to retrain and reskill and get back into work, it means so much. In manufacturing and procurement it is significant.

We rewrote the skill migration list. Over 40 000 new jobs are being created by this government. Unemployment was down from 6.5 per cent in December 2016 to 5.7 per cent in December 2017. My community benefits from Armadale–Kelmscott Memorial Hospital and Fiona Stanley Hospital. We are in the middle for different emergency rooms and birthing facilities. What is happening with the medihotel at Fiona Stanley Hospital? Medihotels benefit every single regional member of our community. I was onsite with the member for Jandakot at the end of last year to see the construction of the medihotel that is being built there. To see the works happening in that Murdoch precinct is fantastic. The medihotel will provide incredible opportunities for my community and people are being employed on the project.

My wife and I had our little girl at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women because she had a number of complications when she was born in July 2016. The development of a family birthing centre with specialists will be available to people in my community. When parents are worried about the complications that may arise with a pregnancy and birth, knowing that they have got not only King Edward but also the brilliant Fiona Stanley is significant.

This government will finally open the Perth Children's Hospital. We have almost fixed all of that dreadful asbestos and lead. Hopefully, the hospital will open in May this year. The opportunity to allow patients to comment announced by the Minister for Health is a brilliant way to allow the local community to feed back their information on their service providers.

The federal government did not come to the party on the meningococcal vaccine. My daughter is in that one to four age group, as are so many children in my community. I am very proud to have Amanda's Garden in my community. Barry and Lorraine Young as part of the Amanda Young Foundation are at the forefront, across all political parties, of ensuring that meningococcal education and funded vaccine services are available to all of our community. I am proud that the McGowan Labor government has ensured that those vaccines are available for all.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme is a significant reform. So many members of my community were outraged by the delays and frustrations of a previous system. We are ensuring that from July this year a new system is in place.

I want to talk also about roads and rail infrastructure and Metronet. The Thornlie–Cockburn line was promised for so long in my community and it is now well underway. We have done a good year of planning and we are due to start construction next year on the two Canning Vale train stations. I talked to the community on the train on Tuesday. They cannot wait until we bash down the wall at the Thornlie station and build the two new Canning Vale

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train stations and for all the new buses that will come from that. They are happy that we committed to buying and manufacturing new rail cars. These are incredible opportunities. I cannot wait for the railway Metronet bill 2018. I can tell you that I will make a wonderful contribution—I will think it is wonderful—because I cannot wait to talk about the new buses and the new rail cars in the community forums and in discussions that we are already having.

We stopped Roe 8. The community had voted. They were disgusted that a government, in arrogance, had moved ahead signing contracts before taking things to the election. We said no. The community stood with us and we stopped the Roe 8 project. It then was renegotiated as 17 key projects. The member for South Perth spoke about one of the important projects earlier. They are key projects to address congestion, road building and jobs. My community also benefits from road infrastructure from the \$250 000 that we were able to provide to the City of Gosnells to remove speed bumps in Gay Street, Huntingdale in my electorate. The city is putting in chicanes, which are very popular. As the community consultations have taken place, people in Huntingdale are very happy at the chicanes that are being put in place instead of speed bumps.

Ninety-five kilometres of new cycling paths will be constructed across Perth. My colleague the member for Thornlie is very passionate about that.

Infrastructure Western Australia is a key agency that will drive the allocation and planning of infrastructure in this state.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 291.]

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm