

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY**

*Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**HON KEN TRAVERS (North Metropolitan)** [5.37 pm]: I thank the Leader of the House for ending question time early. I would have been more than happy to have continued the practice we had under the previous government of having question time last until about 5.45 pm. Anyway, such is life.

Before question time I was starting to talk about the new football stadium, for which there was bipartisan support before the election. An expert task force recommended a two-stadium policy, which was to build a new stadium on Kitchener Park in Subiaco alongside the existing stadium, and to develop an upgraded rectangular stadium subject to the development of a further business case. Some issues are now arising on that second point about the business case for the rectangular stadium, and I will watch these with interest over the coming months. The proposal for a new stadium at Kitchener Park has already received a bit of publicity in the media because the new Premier initially declared that he was reconsidering the proposal. It has been made clear that there was bipartisan support before the election, and, if anyone wants to question that, I am happy to quote some of the words of the late Trevor Sprigg, the then shadow Minister for Sport and Recreation, on the Liberal opposition's views about getting on with it.

In a number of media comments, the Premier has now indicated that his preference is for Subiaco Oval to be redeveloped along the lines of a Melbourne Cricket Ground-style rebuild. The problem with that is that it is not easy to do. For a start, the new stadium will have a very different footprint from that of the existing Subiaco Oval. Anyone who wants a simple way of understanding this should have a look at an aerial photograph of the MCG. It can be seen that in the redeveloped MCG the stands are of much greater width than those of the old parts of the stadium. Modern stadiums have a lot more corridor space, and there needs to be greater space for food outlets and toilet facilities, particularly for women and people with disabilities. In the way that modern stadiums are designed, the footprint is a lot wider than was previously the case. To try to rebuild on the existing footprint would be extremely difficult. Added to that would be the difficulty of then trying to put in retractable seating. That will mean that if half the stadium has retractable seating and the other half does not, the building process will be extremely complex.

The second problem with an MCG-style redevelopment is the cost. It is clear that it will cost more to rebuild the stadium in sections than it will to rebuild it—as was proposed by the task force—at Kitchener Park to 40 000 seats, and to then knock down the existing Subiaco Oval and complete the last 20 000 seats. That is actually the cheaper of the two options.

The third problem with an MCG-style redevelopment is the disruption it would cause to people who use the existing Subiaco Oval. That will have an impact on football patronage. Depending on whether the construction was done over a five-year period or an eight-year period, between 10 000 and 12 000 seats would need to be taken out of operation at any one time. The existing approximately 44 000-seat capacity of Subiaco Oval would be reduced in the initial stages of construction to around 30 000 seats. That would mean that many members of the Dockers and Eagles football clubs would have to miss out on watching a game. I expect that it would be very difficult to get those football clubs to agree to such a reduction in their patronage. I think they would argue that they would prefer to stay with the existing Subiaco Oval than accept the MCG-style redevelopment option. I suspect also that if the capacity of Subiaco Oval was reduced to 30 000 seats, that would have a significant impact on the businesses in and around Subiaco Oval. That is not to mention the sheer disruption to Subiaco Oval during the redevelopment process. In fact, if the construction was done over a five-year period, it would be necessary to take out more than one-fifth of the seats, because some protective barriers would need to be provided on either side of the holding area. That would be quite difficult to achieve. I suspect that it would take longer to redevelop Subiaco Oval than it would to build a new stadium. I would be fascinated to know when, under this redevelopment proposal, the stadium would reach a capacity of 40 000 again.

Another problem is that in addition to the existing uses of Subiaco Oval, a number of sporting events are scheduled to take place at that oval in the foreseeable future. It is my understanding that the Cricket World Cup is proposed to be held at Subiaco Oval in 2015. Even if the government does try to bring forward the redevelopment of Subiaco Oval, I suspect that it will not be able to accommodate 40 000 people. That will have a significant impact on the Cricket World Cup in 2015.

Another problem with the redevelopment proposal is that because of the narrow width of the stadium along Roberts Road, the structure of the stadium on the Roberts Road side is very different from the structure of the remainder of the stadium. In order to build a new modern style of stadium, it will be necessary for the stadium to be located on part of Roberts Roads. That will require the realignment of Roberts Road. What causes me

considerable concern is that, as far as I can tell, the government has taken no action to put in place any planning controls or protections over the land that will be affected by this proposed redevelopment. I was looking at the internet this afternoon, and I noticed that four properties are currently for sale in the area bounded by Townshend Road, Coghlan Road, York Street and Roberts Road. Many of the properties in that area will need to be resumed if the government does go down the path of rebuilding the existing Subiaco Oval. I noticed that, unfortunately, the bid process for one of those properties was due to close at five o'clock tonight. It will be very disappointing for the person who has been successful in that bid process and has bought that house to find out in six months' time that the government wants to resume that house.

If the Premier does make the decision to redevelop Subiaco Oval, it will place a blight over that land. Those members in this chamber who have served on the Standing Committee on Public Administration's inquiry into the erosion of private property rights will understand the issue of blight. This government has taken no action to place any planning controls over that land. If this government was a responsible government it would, at the very least, be in the market to purchase those properties as they come onto the market so that people will not be damaged by this decision. I expect that there is already a blight on these properties. The fact that four properties in this area are on the market and the government is not, to the best of my knowledge, in the market and seeking to purchase those properties is a significant problem. If the government did purchase those properties and it then decided to take the sensible option of rebuilding the oval on Kitchener Park, it could always resell those properties. The fact is that a blight has been created because the government is going down the fanciful path of trying to redevelop the existing Subiaco Oval. If the government continues to go down that path, it will have an immeasurable impact on the people who have purchased those properties. Nothing would be more soul destroying for people than to find out, after they have purchased a property, that it is likely to be resumed by the government so that Subiaco Oval can be expanded. I am sure those people would expect to see a new stadium across the road from them. I do not know that those people would expect their property to be resumed. That would certainly come as a great surprise. I therefore urge the government to rule out an MCG-style-redevelopment and to go back to the sensible option—that is, the one proposed by the task force—of building a new Subiaco Oval. If the government is not prepared to do that, it should get into the competitive marketplace and purchase the properties in the area bounded by Townshend Road and York Street, and possibly even as far as Hay Street and Coghlan Road, that are likely to be impacted by the redevelopment proposal.

It is important that the government make a decision about this matter. As members will recall, the former government had picked up a proposal that had been put forward by Louise Durack—one that I certainly actively supported—of investigating the idea of making a bid for the 2018 Commonwealth Games. Again, this was an issue that had bipartisan support. A member of this house actually put out a press release saying that the Commonwealth Games bid could happen on a Liberal watch. I am sure that is a press release that would be well known to members opposite. In order to bid for the 2018 Commonwealth Games, we will need to build a new stadium. Western Australia will be very blessed in a couple of years. We will effectively have built all the major infrastructure that we will need for the Commonwealth Games, without even having bid for the Commonwealth Games. That is why I think we should get on and put in that bid. There is an array of international sporting events that we should be in the marketplace bidding for, because we have the facilities. The new Perth Arena is about to be completed. That will be a fantastic facility that will be available to many sporting codes. Excellent facilities are also being built at A.K. Reserve to replace Perry Lakes Stadium. The Champion Lakes Rowing Course is being built at Armadale. My congratulations go to the former Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, the member for Armadale, for that very innovative project, which took advantage of the opportunity that was provided with the roadworks in that area to also build a rowing course that would be of world-class standard.

The "Heath Ledger Theatre"—I will call it that because I think he deserves the honour—would be an absolutely fantastic facility for major sports events, such as weightlifting. The infrastructure that is under construction or about to be built is amazing. We will have a fantastic array of infrastructure, so I hope that we will go for the Commonwealth Games or some of the other major international events, but preferably both.

I will briefly turn to some of the local issues that arise in my electorate. The first issue I want to touch upon is the sheer growth that is occurring in the outer north metropolitan region. It is simply phenomenal. As I have told the house before, growth in that region has been significantly outstripping growth in the rest of the metropolitan area. The Department for Planning and Infrastructure's projections have been exceeded—something in the order of 30 000 more people will live in the outer corridor by 2011 than the Western Australian Planning Commission predicted. The WAPC predicted in 2001 that the City of Wanneroo would have a population of 129 700 in 2011. Based on work done prior to the election, the population is now expected to hit 157 900 by 2011.

The massive growth we face places significant stress on health services in the northern corridor. From about 2001 to 2005, there were about 1 400 births a year at the Joondalup Health Campus. In 2007-08 there were about 2 100 births. For three or four years the number of births was fairly constant at about 1 400 a year, then all of a sudden there was a massive jump in the number of births of almost 50 per cent. I think that increase in births is

partly a tribute to the way in which the staff at the hospital worked to develop a good reputation for the hospital. Unfortunately, it has not always been the case. I think the rise in the number of births at the hospital is partly because staff have worked hard on the hospital's reputation and partly a product of the growth in population. From 2006-07 to 2007-08, emergency department presentations at Joondalup Health Campus increased from 52 700-odd to just short of 60 000; that is growth of about 13 per cent. Therefore, we have had a sudden rush in growth.

I urge the Minister for Health to sign the contract with the operators of Joondalup Health Campus for the redevelopment. The negotiation process has been long and tortuous, which I think is something that the Auditor General highlighted in his report on the contract for the hospital that was initially entered into by the Richard Court government. The contract created complexities in seeking to renegotiate the expansion of that hospital and it took an enormous amount of time and effort to have those negotiations conducted. It was made even more complex by not only the constantly changing costs of building over that period, but also the sheer complexities of the way in which the original public-private partnership was constructed and the poor quality of that contract. I certainly hope that the new government does not propose to go down the path of public-private partnerships for hospitals, but if it does, I hope that it will do a much better job than that previous contract did in enabling future expansion. I must say it was a headache for not only the government, but also the team from Ramsay Health. My observation is that they are a dedicated group of people who were committed to trying to get the hospital expansion and were probably as frustrated as anybody else by the difficulties presented by the way in which the previous contract was constructed.

It is important that we not only get on with the current development, but also plan for the next stage of the development. It causes me great concern that we will move away from the Reid report's recommendation that we have three tertiary hospitals in Western Australia—one in the southern suburbs, the new Fiona Stanley Hospital; a central metropolitan tertiary hospital; and a northern suburbs tertiary hospital, which would obviously be located at Joondalup. We need to move towards that model. It is sheer lunacy that people are looking to have two tertiary hospitals located in the inner area of Perth. Residents in the suburb where I live will be able to drive for a couple of kilometres in either direction and be able to get to a tertiary hospital, but the thousands of people who live in Perth's outer northern suburbs will not have a tertiary hospital in the foreseeable future, because there is no way the government can keep Royal Perth Hospital open and not rob the development of a tertiary hospital in Joondalup.

It is also important for another reason. I want to spend the final bit of time that I have tonight to talk about that reason because it must be seriously looked at and addressed for the construction of Perth. I made comments earlier about how I hope we are successful through the royalties for regions scheme in making regional Western Australia an attractive place for people to live and hopefully take some of the pressure off Perth. I think that Perth faces the prospect of becoming a quite dysfunctional metropolis with people living in the outer areas but working in the inner core. The simple fact of the matter is that our transport networks will not be able to cope with that situation. We can set up the railway lines. The northern suburbs railway line is a fantastic facility and it will handle some of the growth in patronage of people going into the central business district, but it will not be able to carry all of it. The road network is almost at capacity, and in most places in peak hour it is at capacity already with very little room to increase that capacity in the foreseeable future.

Therefore, we need to plan how we will manage this issue in the long term because at the moment we have a whole range of projects being created in Perth's inner core. These projects will create jobs in the inner core; namely, at the Stirling regional centre, and with facilities around East Perth, Subiaco, Leederville and Victoria Park. I would also include the area around Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, the University of Western Australia and even the Curtin University and Technology Park in the inner core. I would also potentially include some of the massive development going on around Perth Airport, although that is to a lesser degree. Although the Northbridge Link project, which the government says is its priority, and the foreshore redevelopment both include residential components, these projects will create an even larger number of jobs. The Perth foreshore redevelopment would create 25 000 ongoing jobs but residences for only 5 000 people. The Northbridge Link would create 2 400 residences, but between 7 000 and 10 000 jobs in that area. If we continue to build residences in the outer northern metropolitan area, the people who live there will need to be transported into the central business district for work. We have two options. One option is to create more jobs in the outer regions. If we built a tertiary hospital in the northern suburbs, it would create jobs. However, we would also need to create other drivers of jobs in those outer areas or we would need to create more residences in the inner core of the metropolitan area. If we do not, we will place a massive amount of stress on our transport links that are already suffering severely from an overload. We probably need to do a bit of both, but, of course, if we were to create more residences in the metropolitan area, we would also need to think about the transport mechanisms for moving people around within that inner core. People will not be able to simply use their cars; we would need to put in place a suitable public transport system.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm*

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Before the dinner break I was discussing the issues that I think we face as a community in Perth and the significant impacts of potential future changes that we will need to make. I was touching on the economic issues we will be facing and the social issues of having to create residences in the outer suburbs of Perth and jobs in the inner core, which will place the transport system under immense pressure. I was suggesting that we had the option of either trying to create more jobs in the outer northern suburbs, and I think options are available there, or creating more residences in the inner core of Perth, which, in itself, will create challenges for transporting people around the inner core. If the number of residences is significantly increased, the road network of the inner core of Perth will not be able to move those people by car as it has traditionally done. We will need to be looking at forms of mass transit.

I note that the incoming government intends to continue the work of the former government in developing a 20-year blueprint for transport. I look forward to seeing how it progresses, because I think we face great challenges. While we are developing that, we need to be getting on with other projects such as developing the Ellenbrook railway and the Butler railway extension. We cannot wait for the blueprint, as important as it is, to be getting on with those projects.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** In your time in government a lot of work was done on the Butler railway extension, as you have said.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Absolutely; all the master planning is there. It is a matter of saying that we will construct it. The rail carriages are on order. I asked the Minister for Transport the other day about ordering more carriages. We need to get those orders in now for the development of the Ellenbrook railway. The current orders for 15 three-car sets, or 45 carriages, have been in the system for over two years. I expect that the first carriage will be arriving very soon for testing, if it has not arrived already. The last carriage of that order will be delivered in 2011. If we want to build the Ellenbrook railway, we will need to order the rail carriages very soon; in fact, we should probably have already ordered them; and, if we have not already ordered them, we should put those orders in place because there is a long lead time. A number of very important public transport issues such as that need to be dealt with now. Although this is probably an issue to be pursued on another day, I note that the incoming government has promised a form of rapid transit system to the airport. I note that the Premier has ruled out a railway line for it, so I am not sure what form of rapid transit system it will be. If the minister, who is in the house, is happy to do so by way of interjection, perhaps he will indicate now that the government has ruled out the option of a railway in the short to medium term. What other options is the government considering to meet its election commitment to develop a rapid transit system to the airport during this current term of government?

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** The undertaking is to plan for a number of future projects, including the one you mentioned, but that does not necessarily mean that system will be up and running in the first term of government.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The way the minister is describing it today is interesting, but it is probably a debate for another day.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** This is your speech, not mine.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** We can certainly return to the issue. My recollection of the Liberals' policy, which I am looking for, is that they promised to develop a rapid transit system to the airport during this term of government.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** If you will accept the interjection, we have undertaken to develop a blueprint for a future integrated public transport system, including planning for, inter alia, high-capacity passenger rail services to major centres, such as Perth Airport and major hospitals. The undertaking is to plan for it, not to build it.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I thank the minister for the interjection, because it has given me the opportunity to find within the Liberal Party transport policy the section I was thinking of when I made my comments earlier, which is that a Liberal government would work closely with Westralia Airports to develop a new rapid transit service to connect with Perth Airport. The government may have longer term plans as part of its blueprint, but I would have thought, on any reading of that policy, that to develop a new rapid transit service to connect with Perth Airport is not about developing the planning of it but about developing that new rapid transit system. It may be that the minister needs to refresh his memory of his policy.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** No, I do not need to do that at all. What you need to consider is the timetable for the development of Perth Airport. If you think that is happening in the next five minutes, you will be sorely mistaken. I know you are in contact with them, so you will know that.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I am in contact with Perth Airport and a whole range of stakeholders in the transport area. I do not need to be in contact with them to know that they have already publicly announced that they are developing Terminal WA.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** There is that same word—"developing". There is a timeline in place.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** Westralia Airports is physically getting on and building it. If members want it, I am sure that I could organise a tour of the airport and a briefing on what is going on there. Construction is going on as we speak. The apron in front of where Terminal WA will be built is physically under construction. The proposed Terminal WA building will be built there and the passenger numbers will increase. Westralia Airports is talking about a five to seven-year program of development. That is my recollection of what was said the other evening at a meeting of the stakeholders. In its policy the Liberal Party promised a new rapid transit service to connect with Perth Airport, and I thought that this government would be getting on with it. It is interesting that we are hearing tonight that that will not be the case.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** You are not hearing that tonight. You are trying to project that view.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** I do not know whether I can seek an extension of time to allow me to keep taking interjections from the minister. I would be pleased to do so because it is an important issue for the state of Western Australia.

The Liberal Party's policy for its first term in government was clear; that is, that it would develop a new rapid transport service to connect with Perth Airport. It did not say "plan for"; it said "develop". The minister should not try to get out of it by saying it is all about planning. Those were the words in the Liberal Party's policy under the heading "Air Transport" and the subheading "Perth Airport". It also said that the Liberal Party would improve the road connections to the airport estate. I note that that has been included in the government's bid to Infrastructure Australia. It is in black and white in the Liberal Party's policy, and the government must honour its promise.

The new government must also honour the promise it made prior to the election to the pensioners and seniors of Western Australia that within its first 100 days in office it would introduce free public transport for them. Since the election, on 15 October, the Premier reiterated that that would be the case. The government cannot say that when it got into government it found technical problems that it was not aware of prior to the election.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** The minister wrote me a letter saying it would be implemented before Christmas.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It was advertised at the Perth city busport that free travel at specified times for pensioners and seniors would be introduced on 14 December. What is so hard about telling people who show their concession card when they get onto public transport that, as a senior, they are welcome to travel free of charge? It is not that hard.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** That in itself is not hard, but if you would like a briefing, which I do not believe you have asked for, you will find out. You would also find out that the PTA believes that the government made the right decision.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It was not the Public Transport Authority.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** If you don't want to know, don't worry about it.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The point is that the problem is not that the PTA said that the government made the right decision; the problem is that the government made a promise and, at the very least, it should apologise to the pensioners by saying, "When we made that promise, we lied to you" Do not say that because the PTA agreed to it the government is absolved from its promise.

*Point of Order*

**Hon SIMON O'BRIEN:** I have been accused by the member of telling lies. I take exception to that language and ask that it be withdrawn.

**THE DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Ray Halligan):** I am not sure that I heard the member refer to the minister; I thought I heard him refer to the government. If my hearing is correct, there is no point of order.

*Debate Resumed*

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It is clear that in the election campaign the new government lied to the —

**Hon ED DERMER:** Mr Deputy President, I move —

That Hon Ken Travers's time be extended to allow him to continue his comments.

*Ruling by Deputy President*

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Ray Halligan):** Members, there appears to have been a precedent for such a situation in which we find ourselves at the moment. I am just waiting on a copy of that ruling.

Members, standing order 73B states that —

- (ii) any Member when speaking in the address in reply debate or on any motion moved under SO 49(c); or
  - (iii) any Bill that the Council may not amend,
- and for the purposes of paragraph (i), no time limit shall be imposed, and in the case of paragraph (ii) and (iii) each Member may speak for not more than 60 minutes.

A ruling by the then President, Hon Clive Griffiths, dated 6 November 1996 states that with respect to time limits on speeches on a bill that this house cannot amend, of which this happens to be one, nobody, including the minister or the Leader of the Opposition, will be given more than 60 minutes. The ruling states —

In regard to other Bills, a Minister or a member in charge of the business, the Leader of the Opposition, the leader of the National Party, or any member speaking on their behalf gets unlimited time, but not two people. If the Leader of the Opposition speaks, he cannot have somebody else speak on his behalf.

Further on it states —

The only person, if it were not a Bill that this House could not amend, who would get unlimited time would be the Leader of the Opposition, or, if he were not going to speak, somebody who would speak on his behalf.

The ruling states that members speaking on the Address-in-Reply are allowed only 60 minutes. The member's time has expired. We are still dealing with the Address-in-Reply and I call on Hon Ken Baston.

*Motion Resumed*

**HON KEN BASTON (Mining and Pastoral)** [7.48 pm]: I join with other members of the house in thanking His Excellency, Dr Ken Michael, AC, Governor of Western Australia, for his speech on his opening of the first session of the thirty-eighth Parliament, and support the motion moved by Hon Helen Morton. I would also like to welcome the new members—Hon Carolyn Burton from the North Metropolitan Region and Hon Shelley Eaton from the Mining and Pastoral Region. I have seen Shelley in the north quite a bit, particularly at various race meetings in Broome. She always looks as though she enjoys them.

**Hon Simon O'Brien**: Is she a well-known racegoer?

**Hon KEN BASTON**: Absolutely.

**Hon Bruce Donaldson**: Does she go to Cable Beach?

**Hon KEN BASTON**: I never get to Cable Beach so I do not know whether she goes there.

I also farewell two members who were here before the election—Hon Graham Giffard and Hon Vince Catania, who has moved to the other place after being successful in winning the seat of North West.

I think the Governor's speech was very important and I will quote from his opening comments. He said —

It is the responsibility of all members of this Parliament to act as custodians of this democracy and to respect the integrity of the legislative, judicial and executive branches of Government as you represent and work for the wellbeing of the citizens of this state.

When I heard that comment from the Governor, it made me jolt. The previous speaker in this debate wanted to continue his speech, and that reminded me that our role in this place is very much to review legislation and make good law. Every now and again we need to go back to the fundamental principle of scrutinising legislation, which our reports are based on. Those reports give us a good rundown of why we are here and what we should be making our judgements on. It is extremely valuable for all of us from time to time to reflect on that and to understand our role in this place.

I look forward to this government focusing on core business; that is, to deliver in the areas of health, education, and law and order for the whole of Western Australia. To get the best essential government services, the state needs to be well positioned to cope with the global financial challenges. Of course, Western Australia is probably better positioned than are other states in the sense that it produces some 30 per cent of the nation's export income. I also believe that we always need to live within our means and meet the expectations of the community by delivering the best core government services that we can. It is not unreasonable to expect that the government will require efficiencies from its departments and agencies. I will watch with interest and I have great hopes that the Treasurer's initiative of an economic audit group will deliver an efficiency dividend that will result in the improvements that are needed in the provision of essential government services. It will not only save money, but also better deliver funds.

I have spoken previously about LandCorp being centralised. I was very pleased to see a press release by the Minister for Lands, Hon Brendon Grylls, indicating that a LandCorp representative will be located in the Pilbara

from January 2009. It is important to have somebody on the ground who is living and breathing the local issues, and who understands the contractors who are available within those regional areas. I will give a classic example. A lakeside development was completed in Kununurra at the end of the wet season, and then the paving and kerbing was put in. Of course, the ground had not stabilised before the bitumen road was laid and potholes developed in the road when the rains came. It was a disaster. All the locals knew about it; they all said that it was the wrong time. However, the development was done by people in Perth. I believe we will get better value for our investment of taxpayers' funds if people from departments are based in regional areas. Of course, we will also get the added benefit of having their families living in the area, with their children going to school, because that builds up the community in the regional area. That is something that we need to continue to work on.

My electorate is the Mining and Pastoral Region. There is a common thread to all the callers to my office. They now have some expectations that regional areas will get a fair go under the Liberal-National government. Of course, the royalties for regions program will work in their interest. As most members know, the royalties for regions program has been split into three funds—the regional infrastructure and headworks fund, the country local government fund and the regional community services fund. I note that Hon Ken Travers commented in his speech that he hopes the money will be spent wisely. I assure him that there are lots of places in the Mining and Pastoral Region where it can be spent wisely and for the benefit of the community, and I will touch on some of those tonight.

The first project that comes to mind is the commitment to developing the Ord stage 2. That project has been hanging around for some time. The previous government asked for expressions of interest. There were 10 applicants. Those applicants spent a lot of time and money on their applications. I know that one applicant spent nearly \$500 000 on putting together the application only to be told to listen to the news to hear what was happening. The applicants waited desperately to find out who had won the job, only to be told that it was not going ahead and that the government was waiting for federal funding. I believe it was a state issue—it related to land and water. If we want to be responsible as a state, we need to take the lead and develop that project. I am very pleased that the Liberal-National government is taking that on board. The Ord project is a big project. However, I believe that the project needs vision. Not only does the land need to be developed, but also the port and airstrip need to be developed. It also needs an export enhancement program, which, I believe, would allow the produce grown in the area to be flown by Starlifters straight to countries such as Japan. Last year when I visited Tokyo, I found that rockmelons are considered a delicacy there. Growing rockmelons in the Ord is one small example of what could be produced in the area. Our government has already lifted the ban on growing genetically modified crops in the Ord. Early last year I saw the cotton trials that have been taking place in Kununurra for the past nine years. They are very successful. It is worth a visit to see the cotton trials and the work that has been put into them in the past nine years to prove the success of GM cotton.

I now move on to the lifting of the ban on uranium mining in this state. For some time I have wondered why the Northern Territory and South Australia can mine uranium but Western Australia cannot mine its uranium deposits purely because the government has said that it cannot. Why should Western Australia miss out on those exports? Uranium can be mined safely, as has been done in the Northern Territory and South Australia. I do not believe we would be starting something absolutely new. The new federal Labor government is very much in support of exporting uranium, and I believe that, with the help of the federal government, this will happen. It will be some three to five years before it happens. There is a big uranium deposit in the north at Kintore. That is just north of Rudall River National Park and actually borders right onto Rudall River National Park. There are other deposits around Meekatharra, Wiluna and further north. There are others as well but they are just some that come to my mind. From memory, one mine was called Centipede. There is a responsibility to develop the northern part of the Kimberley, which is very much in focus at the moment from movies to tourism and everything else we can think of. The Kimberley is the flavour of the month for people to travel to at the moment. We need to consider where to place the liquefied natural gas hub. We have finally come down to four sites, and I will talk about that a little later in my speech.

I have no doubt that a wilderness park will be developed in the Kimberley, as it would have much to protect. I have not had sufficient time to explore the Kimberley as much as I would like, but I intend to do that in the next few years when I get a bit of free time.

I also commend the government on its commitment to reopen some country police stations. Gascoyne Junction Police Station and Menzies Police Station were closed. I have spoken before in this place about the closure of Gascoyne Junction Police Station. It is about 160 kilometres east of Carnarvon on the Carnarvon-Mullewa Road—better known as the Carnarvon-Meekatharra Road. Gascoyne Junction has a hotel, a school and an Indigenous population. It had always had a police station and therefore the crime rate was very low. However, take the police station away and, as the literature says, the mice will play. The police station was moved out to Burringurrah. The Aboriginal community there has been in the news lately. The local store ran out of food and food had to be flown into the community. That is a federal issue. Another debate that we could have in this house

is how Indigenous communities are run. If I had my way I would get the feds out of it and have the state responsible for all remote communities; then there would not be this double crossover all the time.

I also commend the government for and look forward to the reinstatement of the rural crime squad, in particular the stock squad, which I think had only four members. They were specialists in their field of looking for thieves of stock. I believe the stock squad is to be reinstated and I hope it will be in time before the expertise of its members is lost.

While I am talking about country police stations, I will mention the conditions of some of them. We have talked about funds for police stations and I believe that some police stations need replacing. One that comes to mind is Exmouth, which has a lot of cement cancer and badly needs replacing. Broome has been fortunate to get a new police station, which looks fantastic I might add for the benefit of those members who have not seen it. It is not quite finished. The main part is finished but the administration part is still to be finished. Derby is very much in need of a new police station and courthouse. It is literally a transportable-looking arrangement. There are white ants in the courthouse.

**Hon Robyn McSweeney:** It's had its day.

**Hon KEN BASTON:** It has had its day; Hon Robyn McSweeney is absolutely right. I cannot remember the allocation of funding for it, but it was certainly not sufficient to build a new one. It was intended to put in more transportables for jails etc.

**Hon Shelley Eaton:** The police in Derby were quite happy with the police station there. They said Fitzroy needed it.

**Hon KEN BASTON:** I guess it depends which stations we visit. It is certainly not the message I am getting.

I have spoken in this place before about Cue, which does not even have a lockup. The lockup has been condemned, and so the police station cannot really operate properly. Another measure from the government is for more front-line officers. I believe in Mt Magnet, which has only five police officers, there was difficulty transporting prisoners from there to places such as Geraldton. Basically, two police officers must be present in the police car, which leaves only three officers at the station. When one officer is off-duty, that leaves only two, and two officers must be in the station at all times, which means they cannot leave. That means they do not operate efficiently. The police station at Mt Magnet also has the duty of covering for Sandstone, as there is no police officer there; therefore, the Mt Magnet officers must attend to that town as well. One would hope that the needs of Mt Magnet officers will increase so that they can operate in a more reliable way.

I welcome the promise of an additional 800 nurses to the health system. I know that nursing staff are always welcome wherever they are. I also acknowledge the tremendous work that the Royal Flying Doctor Service has been doing in remote and regional areas of the state. Its members will be looking forward to the security provided by the Liberal-National government; they will know that the government will give them support. I note that the Governor alluded in his speech to the magnificent role that the Royal Flying Doctor Service played when a Qantas Airbus was forced to land at Learmonth. Nobody knows exactly what happened. However, when I was flying there the other day with the Minister for Environment, we asked that the plane not go right over the top of the big towers there in case there was any radio interference. We were assured that the plane was wired and not computer operated, so we were quite pleased. However, there are unsolved issues with that very interesting incident. Luckily, the Learmonth airstrip was close by, which can take virtually any plane in the world. The RFDS played a major role in getting those injured people to hospital.

The government has a lot to deliver on regional roads. One example that comes to mind is Great Northern Highway, which gets funding from Main Roads from time to time, especially for Wubin to New Norcia—or New Norcia to Wubin, whichever way members look at it. It is a very winding road, but it is the artery to the north and is extremely important. Another road that is very heavily used and has had an increase in traffic usage is the Newman to Nullagine road. I have spoken about that road before and I will continue to speak about it, as it is a road worthy of sealing. That would provide a route from Newman to Nullagine and to Marble Bar and farther north. It would cut some two and a half hours off the road to the Kimberley, which would also help in the cost of freight going north and would open up tourism to those towns. It would help trucks going to places such as Telfer and traffic from the Fortescue mines, which also use that road. There is also Bonnie Creek Iron, which is in the North West Iron Ore Alliance, and other mines that could possibly open up at Roy Hill. I have mentioned what needs to be done on the southern end of the Kimberley. There are many roads in this state, but the main arteries must be covered. Some roads are unfinished and, for various reasons, the funding for them was insufficient. That is true of the road from Carnarvon to Gascoyne Junction, which is about 21 kilometres between Gascoyne Junction and Carnarvon. It is an interesting road because it was built by the Shires of Upper Gascoyne and Carnarvon. They worked on the road in unison but from opposite ends. The shires considered that if they were short of funds and a bit of the road in the middle was left unfinished, they would have a better case to get extra funding. When the road is sealed, it will be an all-weather road from Gascoyne Junction to Carnarvon. The

road will also help to open up tourism to Mt Augusta in the future. It has the biggest monolith in the southern hemisphere; it is bigger than Ayers Rock. It is worth a visit for members who have not been there. A nice tourism resort would make it more attractive for visitors. They could climb the rock and come back to a lovely view of the sun setting.

I have talked in this place about regional airline services. We need to revisit the issue of regional airline services. A service is needed to link Exmouth, Karratha, Port Hedland and Broome. Even a Fokker 50 would be adequate for that purpose. The government might have to subsidise that service to, dare I say it, get it off the ground. A number of government departments and tourists would use it and it would soon become a viable business. It would be like having a train and bus service to connect those towns in the north. Many politicians and others are aware that to get to Broome, Karratha or Port Hedland, one must go to Perth, which is the hub, and back up again to the spokes. It is time to link those towns at the top. I am sure that Water Corporation and LandCorp officers—a LandCorp officer is being stationed at Karratha—would fly to Broome and link to the towns further north when necessary, and to the other airline services. The airline service from Perth to Derby is a good example of getting something done with a bit of will. I take my hat off to the shire for pushing for that. Previously, there was no direct jet service from Dampier to Perth. As a result of negotiating with various mining companies, a plane now services the Dampier to Perth route three times a week, which is fantastic. There has been much talk about and planning for an international flight from Singapore to Broome and to Sydney. That would be a fantastic opportunity for the people who live in the north and for tourism.

Another issue I will raise is that of building marinas in the north. I went to Darwin with a couple of my colleagues in July when waiting for the election to be called—we did not know about it. We visited Cullen Bay, Bayview and the port of Darwin, which is called the “Basin”. I was very impressed with the marinas there. The tides in Darwin are dissimilar to those in Broome, as Darwin has an eight-metre tide range. The marinas in Darwin have a lock system and it is time that Western Australia looked at building a lock-system marina in Broome and perhaps Port Hedland. Broome is an interesting town in the sense that it needs a Cullen Bay and Bayview-type operation, which provides for smaller craft and has housing units around it. It is very attractive and highly sought after. A safe boat harbour is needed in Western Australia similar to what is called the “Basin” in the port of Darwin. That port can be used by fishing fleets et cetera. When building a marina of that type, one would have to be mindful. The mooring basin in Darwin has 85 berths and takes boats of between 20 to 30 metres in length. The facilities have showers and the upmarket marinas in Cullen Bay and Bayview—particularly Bayview—have restaurants and are very attractive tourism precincts. The “Basin” is a registered cyclone haven for small boats and medium-sized vessels. That is needed because the coast is very open as far up as Darwin, although there are some islands that boats can get behind. Dampier, Port Hedland and Broome want a small boat harbour.

The expenditure on health services at Karratha, Exmouth and Broome must be looked at. Hon Ken Travers said that the government should spend its royalties for regions money wisely, and we will. I am fairly familiar with the shire of Carnarvon. On a recent visit, the shire gave me its wish list. Its expectations have risen fairly dramatically since the election. Everyone has their hand in the so-called honey jar. Some of the things they want are needed and it is worth raising them in this house. I have spoken of the Ord. About 400 hectares of horticultural land on the north side of the river in Carnarvon can be developed. About 800 hectares of land in Carnarvon is owned by the horticultural scheme. Some 50 per cent of the land is not utilised because of the lack of delivery of water to the horticultural precincts. The enlargement of the pipeline that delivers the water has been on the drawing board for some time. One of the problems is that the pipes are not big enough and must be upgraded. The figure for the project started at about \$10 million and has crept up to \$15 million. The way it is going, it will soon be \$20 million. When funds were provided by the federal government, they were not provided by the state government and when the state government provided funds, the federal government did not provide funds. One hopes that the project will be completed.

I called into Carnarvon the other day and the shire told me that it needs a new air terminal, which it is building. The current terminal is a shocker, I must admit. It has been there since I was a kid and the only thing that has changed is that the urinal has been closed down; it has been boarded up. I am not sure if it was closed because of overuse but the facilities are shrinking, especially on the men’s side; I am not sure about the other side.

**Hon Bruce Donaldson:** It could not get any worse.

**Hon KEN BASTON:** Absolutely. The place is going backwards. The shire is building a temporary facility until the new airport is built. The airport needs to be moved north of Carnarvon to a place called “The Common”, an area set aside years ago for stock to be rested on while they waited to be shipped from Carnarvon. That land is clear of native title and can be utilised to develop a new airport. This will allow a jet service to come into that town. Carnarvon had a jet service 12 or 14 years ago but it was an F28, a smaller plane. Everyone thought that was fantastic. Those planes were downgraded to Fokker 50s. It took me two and three quarter hours to travel up

there the other day. I can get to Broome in two hours and 10 minutes. It is time to look at the new airport, which will cost between \$20 million and \$25 million.

**Hon Bruce Donaldson:** How is the marina getting on?

**Hon KEN BASTON:** I do not know whether I have the marina in my notes but I will certainly raise it. The land where the airstrip is will then be developed for housing.

One of the other problems in Carnarvon is the lack of infill sewerage. The last sewerage works were carried out in Carnarvon in the early 1980s when Wilson Tuckey and I were still on the council, but nothing has been done since. Sewerage works are needed to create high density living and small lots at the southern end of town. Another area in east Carnarvon could be subdivided. It is privately owned land. At present only 2 000 square metre lots will be available, once again due to the lack of sewerage. Virtually every one of these Department of Environment and Conservation sites that we visit has chemical toilets. It is time we looked at some other form of sewerage on these blocks, rather than deep sewerage, to allow them to develop further. That may need a lot more expertise.

Carnarvon has been desperately trying to get federal funding for aged persons residential accommodation. Carnarvon has a climate that is very much conducive to the retirees living there. It is important to the people who live there that residential accommodation funding is sought. I believe that our state government can play a role in keeping the pressure on the commonwealth government to get funding to do that. I recently attended the opening in Broome, as did Hon Shelley Eaton, of the Southern Cross aged care home, which is a fantastic establishment and a credit to all those involved. It will be very much used in Broome. I believe that a facility of that nature is badly needed in the town of Carnarvon. There was a facility run by the Churches of Christ called the Olive Laird Memorial Hostel. It is now closed.

I take my hat off to the Carnarvon Shire for producing a new vision for Carnarvon in July 2008. I urge anybody who has the opportunity to get hold of that vision to look at some of the issues that they want to address in their town in light of the vision that they have for it. It is a very cosmopolitan town in the sense that it has horticulture, tourism, the salt mine and minerals to the east. Talking about the salt mine, I met with some people from Rio Tinto last year who spoke about doubling the capacity of the salt mine; they also spoke about wanting a port. I noticed in the plan from the Carnarvon Shire that it was asking government to re-look at establishing a deepwater port, which was originally pulled out as a proposition many years ago at a place called Bejaling Shoals, about 40 kilometres north of Carnarvon at the bottom end of the Lake Macleod area. It was identified some 30-odd years ago as a port site. I was interested that Rio Tinto was interested in establishing a multi-user port there with the government.

I wish to speak about Broome, where my office is located, and the positioning of the liquefied natural gas hub, which is very topical up there at present. The positioning of the LNG hub has been narrowed down to four sites. A decision still has to be made on which one of those sites it will be. I believe it needs to be on a site that has the best advantage for the region and the town of Broome. It has to be far enough away not to impinge on the town but close enough so that Broome can benefit from it. That would put it some 60 kilometres from the town. Under the state agreement, everyone who worked at the salt mine at Lake Macleod, which was started in the early 1970s under Sir Charles Court, had to live in the town of Carnarvon. Buses drove 80 kilometres to take employees out to the site from town. We need to look at that very seriously. If we position the hub a further 120 kilometres north of Broome on the Dampier Peninsula, we may end up with an airstrip and a fly in, fly out situation. There are lots of communities there. It is very close to Pender Bay, a magnificent area of water. We need to think of where we position it and how we get the best advantage. There is concern that the tourism town of Broome as we know it will be wrecked, with it ending up like Port Hedland or Karratha. I do not believe that that is the case at all. I believe it can be managed with good planning and release of land so that it does not result in a boom attitude that creates high rents and higher prices. If it is managed properly—I am sure that our government is responsible enough to do that—I believe that they can exist side by side very comfortably. In fact, it will complement tourism in the sense that it will keep the airfares down by making sure that flights are always well patronised.

I told my leader that I would not speak for any more than 30 minutes. There are a few more issues that I want to talk about. Water supplies are always an issue in the north. In the time that I have been in this place, the town of Exmouth has gone from seeing one jet a week and one plane every second day to 14 flights a week. The oil rigs operate offshore. The workers fly to Exmouth, hop in the large helicopters and fly straight over the town and out to the rigs. It was brought to my attention that the town would certainly like to have more people living in it to get it to its critical mass so that it can have better health services and babies delivered again in the hospital in town. To do that, we need more affordable land releases, but we also need to make sure that we have a water supply. That can be provided by a desalination plant or a better bore field and piping. That is the type of planning that must happen.

I was in Denham the other day where I was talking to somebody who said that water rates were still huge. When I first came into this place, in my budget reply speech, I raised the water issues in Denham. For those who do not realise it, Denham is the only town in the state in which there are two water meters at every house. They have desalinated water and artesian bore water. Their artesian bore water costs more than the fresh water in Carnarvon. I believe that, because of the work done in the artesian field and the amount of water that was saved, Denham should be given artesian water virtually free of charge because the town could certainly use that water for plants et cetera. Everyone I spoke to there complains about the high cost of water. There is a water charge, of course, that applies to all places equally, but in Denham's case the usage curve moves up very quickly, whereby in other towns it stays fairly static, and that is the difference.

In Cue the other day there was discussion at the "Cue Parliament", as it is called—Murchison's zone council of the six shires out there. A representative from Crosslands, which is part of the Oakajee Port and Rail Group, was there. Crosslands was the successful tenderer in the bid to develop the Jack Hills iron ore rail project. It was felt that it would be better if we looked at developing the railway line on the existing route, through Meekatharra, back through Cue, Mt Magnet, Yalgoo and back to Cue, rather than taking an arc and cutting off those towns. The reason for that, of course, is that the rail reserve already exists; there is no native title. On top of that, there are other mines around there that will be opened up when things turn again that can utilise that railway line. One of those, of course, will be Magellan, the lead mine out at Wiluna, which always planned to bring its lead back by rail, hoping that the rail would be built, and then taking it back in through the Oakajee port.

The other thing that was raised at that meeting was the proposed square kilometre array telescope that has been on the drawing board for a while now. Although the process does seem to be advancing, the deadline for the proposal now seems to be 2010; it keeps moving out. The proposed site for the telescope is Boolardy Station. So if the railway line is built, it will need to be built in an arc to ensure that it is out of the range of the telescope, because it needs to be completely free of radio interference.

**Hon Bruce Donaldson:** Are you going to tell us about Wiluna and Carnarvon, and where —

**Hon KEN BASTON:** No, I will not, Hon Bruce Donaldson. What I will do is let Hon Bruce Donaldson have a look at the document that I obtained from the Shire of Carnarvon which reiterates all that information.

I believe that we are in a very exciting state, and we are positioned to better weather the financial storm than other states and territories given the projects that we have on the boil; namely the development of the Ord River region; the liquefied natural gas hub in the Browse Basin; the Pluto project, which is coming along very well; and the Gorgon project, plus the amount of funding that is still available to develop projects off the coast. I believe that Western Australia, with good governance, will weather well the storm that everyone else is talking about in the rest of the world.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Bruce Donaldson**.