

**Division 71: Zoological Parks Authority, \$11 674 000 —**

Mr M.W. Sutherland, Chairman.

Mr W.R. Marmion, Minister for Environment.

Ms S. Hunt, Chief Executive Officer.

Ms C. Shannon, Director, Corporate and Commercial Development.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIRMAN:** The member for Mandurah has a question.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I ask that the minister does not read the response to this question. I would really like a quick answer. Page 842 of the *Budget Statements* has a footnote regarding attendance at the Zoo over the past two years. It appears that the results show a levelling of numbers of people attending. I am interested for the chief executive officer of the Zoo to give us an indication of whether budget pressures on families has been mentioned as a reason for low attendance or issues regarding attendance when the Zoo has asked for feedback from patrons.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Is the member referring to item (a), “Efficiency indicators”, and the average cost per visitor?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** No, I am looking at “Community engagement and awareness in conservation”. Visitor numbers are mentioned for 2010–11 and 2011–12, both estimated and actual.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Correct. That is what I just said—point (a) under “Efficiency indicators”. The numbers for 2010–11, actual 611 793, are they the figures the member is referring to?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** That is clear. I am happy for the chief executive officer to answer.

**Ms S. Hunt:** Thank you for the question. Since the early 2000s there has been an upward trend in attendance at the Zoo. We did see a slight drop in the past 12 months. A lot of our attendance certainly has been based on weather. If it is a very hot day, our attendance drops. In terms of the specifics of the question about price sensitivity, in our market research over the last two years, we are seeing an increasing price sensitivity amongst people, which is in line with broader indications amongst our consumers in Western Australia.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** The cost for entry has not increased in the past two years, has it?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I am happy for the director to answer the question.

[8.00 pm]

**Ms S. Hunt:** I point out firstly that we are the most reasonably priced zoo in Australia. We are the cheapest zoo of all the mainland city zoos in Australia. The entry price increased in the last financial year by \$1 for adults and 50c for children. In this financial year, the increase to the cost of entry is not projected to be any higher than CPI. There is no additional increase.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Has there been an increase or decrease in the number of people signing on as Zoo Friends?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I am happy for Ms Hunt to answer that.

**Ms S. Hunt:** We have had an increase in membership, but our director of corporate and commercial development has further details.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Member for Eyre —

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I think the CEO indicated that there may be some extra information. Because of time restrictions, I am very happy to receive that as supplementary information.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Does the member want to take one or two questions? I will leave it to the next Chair.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I do not know about that. I am very interested in this. I congratulate the Zoo. I went with my family in March this year and I am a strong supporter of the Zoo. I thought I saw the member opposite in the marmoset enclosure! I know that Zoo Friends is an opportunity for the generation of funds through membership.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I refer to the director of corporate and commercial development

**Ms C. Shannon:** There has been growth in the membership program in the past five years. We saw some levelling off last year in the membership program, but we are anticipating that it will increase again this year.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The member for Eyre wanted to ask a question on the zoological gardens. Now I see that the members for Murray–Wellington and Scarborough also want to ask questions. Are we going to run over time? We agreed to run from quarter to eight to eight o'clock.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** I have a very quick question. Page 841 contains a comment about the new water feature that was funded from last year in a six-year staged program. How is that developing?

[Mr A.P. O’Gorman took the chair.]

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Over the past 12 months, work has been done on developing the detailed project definition plan. As the member knows, water is a big resource at a zoo and we try to get the benefits of recycling it. This program is about recycling water to get greater use out of one bit of water. The project will deliver great benefits and savings once it is tuned. In the past 12 months we have worked on developing a detailed project definition plan. I imagine that the project will progress to tender shortly and we will deliver it in the next year. Perhaps the director of the Zoo can clarify the time line of when the project will be completed.

**Ms S. Hunt:** This is a very detailed project. It is spanned over five years as we want to get the planning for water re-use right throughout the Zoo system so that in the longer term we will be able to minimise our water use even further. We have been able to achieve quite a lot. Being in the water portfolio as well as environment, it is important that we do that. Yes, it will be phased in over the next five years.

**Mrs L.M. HARVEY:** I refer to the third dot point on page 843 of the *Budget Statements* that states —

Improved visitor amenities including an upgrade of the playground, front entry and ablution facilities ...

Could the minister please advise whether those are the works currently underway at the entrance to the Zoo? When are we likely to see the completion of those works?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The work being undertaken at the front of the Zoo is stage 2 of the Perth’s solar project. When completed, 240 kilovolts of photovoltaic system will be installed at the Perth Zoo. That is quite a substantial capacity. My understanding is it will be capable of producing a minimum of 20 per cent of the Zoo’s current electricity needs. The savings are estimated at about \$2.6 million over the initial estimated life of the project, which is 25 years. If people go to the Zoo in the next 12 months, they will see that being installed.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** We have now had two questions from the government on this appropriation.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I have an indication that the member for Eyre wants to ask a question.

**Dr G.G. JACOBS:** Very quickly, all indications, minister, are that the breeding program is resulting in a lot more animals than expected, but I can see that there are fewer “Number of offspring produced by threatened animals for re-introduction”. All those figures have decreased. The numbers for the Western Swamp Tortoise, the numbat and the dibbler are all down; why would that be?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Perth Zoo has a very good breeding program for a number of different animals. In 2011–12, the estimated actual result of 47 for the Western Swamp Tortoise is in line with the 2010–11 actual result. The target of 30 for 2012–13 is based on the target set by the Western Swamp Tortoise species recovery team. The better-than-expected breeding success in 2011–12 was due to some young females producing offspring earlier than expected. The estimated actual result of 19 for numbats is an increase over the original target of 12 and the 2010–11 actual of 14. The target of 12 for 2012–13 is based on the target set by the recovery team for this species. Basically, the threatened species program is very successful at Perth Zoo and something that this government supports.

**Dr G.G. JACOBS:** The figures are all down though, are they not?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The targets are down, but the program is very successful. Indeed, for our endangered and threatened species, it is crucial to Western Australia that the breeding program continue.

**The appropriation was recommended.**