

ROTTNEST ISLAND — TOURISM

258. Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI to the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record investment in tourism that is supporting Western Australian tourism businesses in helping to create local jobs. Can the Premier outline to the house how the significant funding for Rottnest Island that was announced today will ensure key tourism attractions will support the record number of tourists visiting the island and continue to help attract more visitors to WA?

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse, just let him open his mouth.

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for Kingsley for the question. I was very pleased this morning to open the Australian Tourism Exchange at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, with thousands of delegates from around Australia and around the world here in Western Australia. We are showing off the state to all of these delegates from around Australia and around the world. I think this will be one of the finest Australian Tourism Exchanges ever held in the 40 years it has been operation.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I must say I want to congratulate everyone from tourism in Western Australia. When I was there, the stalls and the activity put on display by the Western Australian operators were absolutely outstanding. I would like to thank the Tourism Commission and all the tourism operators for all their work. One of things I announced today was our investment in Rottnest Island in the coming budget, with \$16.2 million in state government funding. We have now been able to secure another \$17.2 million from the commonwealth government. One thing about this government is that we have managed to get those commonwealth people just to shower money upon us. The last government would not even talk to the commonwealth government, and it was on the same side!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: There is \$33 million being invested in Rottnest Island. Our investment will be in a new landing facility at the Army jetty for the barges so they do not mingle with the tourists coming ashore.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Please, stop interjecting. It is good news.

We are also redeveloping the fuel jetty. Those two investments will make it safer and upgrade infrastructure that needs upgrading at Rottnest Island. The CEO of the Rottnest Island Authority, Michelle Reynolds, says that this will allow the authority to bring forward some upgrades to accommodation. We have seen record numbers of visitors visiting Rottnest Island—no less than 325 000 over the summer period. Obviously, we continue to upgrade the services. Last year we launched an additional ferry service. We have managed to drive down the fares to the island. We have launched discount fees for children. We have seen nine new businesses established at Rottnest and we have also secured a new eco-camping facility at Rottnest.

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Mr M. McGOWAN: I note that under the last government the golf course was upgraded and I think at least another couple of people went over there as a consequence!

Mr D.C. Nalder interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman!

Mr M. McGOWAN: With our record investment in tourism, marketing and events, our improvements to Rottnest, and our securing of additional flights from Japan coming in September, we have seen record high growth in international visitors to Western Australia —

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse!

Mr M. McGOWAN: — and record high growth in interstate visitors coming to Western Australia. That has all occurred under this Labor government.