

DEFENCE WEST — DOMAIN NAME

**325. Mr R.R. WHITBY to the Minister for Defence Issues:**

I refer to Defence West, which is working to secure more defence jobs for Western Australians. What attempts have been made to obstruct Defence West's efforts to create more jobs and attract more work to Western Australia?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for his question. Being located where he is and representing the seat that he does, he is very sensitive to any issues regarding the defence industry and opportunities for Western Australians. It is true that there have been some efforts, but I am not entirely sure to what end those efforts were dedicated, so I might just respond to that in a moment. I preface my response by referring to the government's position on Defence West. There is no secret about this government's criticism of the previous government's inability to advocate for Western Australia's defence industry. We made it very clear. When I was appointed as the shadow minister following the 2013 state election, it was clear that we were going to create a portfolio; were we to win office, we would have a minister responsible for advocating for Western Australia's defence industry. That was a full four years before the last state election. Almost a year before the last state election, the Western Australian Labor Party—the state opposition at that time—released a plan for jobs with a key element to focus on the defence industry in Western Australia as an attempt to diversify the economy and grow jobs and opportunities for Western Australians. A key element of that action was the intended creation of an office called Defence West. There was no question about the intention of the future government 11 months before the last state election. Immediately upon taking office, I became Minister for Defence Issues. We went to announce the creation of an office of Defence West and subsequently asked the State Solicitor's Office to identify the ability to register the domain name for that office in due course, as would be expected. I was quite shocked and disturbed to hear that only recently the State Solicitor's Office had notified the Defence West office, which notified us, that it was unable to register the domain name of Defence West because three days after we had announced the creation of the office of Defence West and fully 14 months after our notification to the public via the plan for jobs and probably almost five years after we had notified of the intention to place a much greater focus on advocating for the defence industry in Western Australia, the Western Australian Liberal Party rushed out in a fevered effort, reminiscent of perhaps the actions of the University of Western Australia Liberal Club—perhaps that is the source of the concept —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Manager of opposition business, I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is reminiscent of the type of ridiculous questions we receive frequently from the member for Dawesville, and perhaps that is the level of maturity of the questioner. We hear that the Western Australian Liberal Party, under the direction of the Leader of the Opposition apparently, has gone out and registered the domain name. To what end?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members, you might not like the answer, but that is what you are getting. The next person who calls out will get called to order. Finish it up, minister.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There can be only one motivation for the Western Australian Liberal Party —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Dawesville—one of the newbies—I call you to order for the first time.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There can be only one motivation for the Western Australian Liberal Party to have done this and that is that, having trashed the state's finances and having been smashed at the recent state election, it was seeking to extort more money from the Western Australian taxpayer.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Dawesville, you are on the podium twice today. Do not make it a third. Minister, you will bring this question to a conclusion.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is a disgraceful action on behalf of the Western Australian Liberal Party. I can only hope that, as reported in the media, the Leader of the Opposition will immediately surrender the domain name and allow us to get on with advocating for Western Australian industry.