

TOURISM — DESTINATION MARKETING AND EVENT TOURISM

341. Ms S.E. WINTON to the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record \$425 million investment in destination marketing and event tourism. Can the minister outline to the house how this funding is providing certainty for the tourism industry and how this unprecedented investment is delivering on the McGowan Labor government's plan to grow tourism and create jobs in the industry?

Mr P. PAPALIA replied:

I thank the member for her question and acknowledge her well-known interest in tourism in this state. What we have done, primarily, as a consequence of this budget and the previous one, is fund tourism in Western Australia to unprecedented levels. It may have been a boring budget in a lot of portfolios, but the Treasurer is not boring when it comes to tourism. A total of \$425 million has been allocated over five years for destination marketing and events in Western Australia. But more importantly, perhaps, than the actual quantum is the certainty and flexibility associated with it.

After eight and a half years of neglect of tourism, for the first time Tourism WA has been unfettered and able to shift money where and when it needs it in a tactical fashion to ensure that we can respond to the challenge of recovering from that eight and a half years of neglect. Apart from providing certainty over the forward estimates and flexibility in the use of the money, we have launched a two-year action plan that, despite some fairly strange observations from the opposition, was developed over a six-month period in direct consultation and collaboration with the industry by Tourism WA's board, working directly hand in glove with the industry to develop that two-year action plan, which is designed to focus on the challenge that we inherited of rebuilding tourism to Western Australia.

For the first time in seven years, we have reinstated or re-established a marketing presence on the east coast. It was shut down by the previous government. It is extraordinary that it would shut down our presence on the east coast. We now have offices in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne selling the Western Australian message. We also have an environment minister who recognises the importance of tourism. He is enabling his agencies to support tourism through focusing on delivering opportunities that were locked out for a period of years, including a simple thing like segways in Kings Park. The Minister for Police and the Minister for Environment got together and in six months delivered what was denied for four years. For four years segway operators were looking for the opportunity to expand their operations into an obvious location such as Kings Park. We got it done in six months.

We have over \$9 million worth of campaigns on the east coast, marketing Western Australia as being affordable and a quality destination. They are selling this state as the place to come and visit now. They are selling seats at the stadium under the AFL marketing campaign, selling stopovers as part of the direct flights to London and selling the north of our state in the cold winter months to people from the south. All those messages will result in a lift in the number of tourists coming to Western Australia from interstate.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Vasse.

Mr P. PAPALIA: These travellers will be filling our hotel rooms. We have allocated \$11 million for port infrastructure. Again, the people of Broome were waiting for seven years for a simple dredging operation. It cost \$7 million to dredge that port, make it a 24/7 port and a marquee destination for Carnival Australia, with \$3 million in Fremantle and \$1 million in Geraldton, doubling the number of cruise ship visits and the number of cruise days to Western Australia this cruising year.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: That is enough. Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the first time—third time, sorry!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I do not know why the member for Vasse does not like her electorate getting a benefit out of this government's actions. It is incredible. We saved the Margaret River Pro. She wants to kill it. We are fighting to retain it, but she wants to kill it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Wall of noise, guys. Let us get back to the answer.

Dr M.D. Nahan: The Margaret River Pro is being finished in Bali.

The SPEAKER: Yes, and you are finished too. No; you are only on your second one.

Mr P. PAPALIA: We came to office after the Barnett government lost the Margaret River Pro. We signed it on for another couple of years but the opposition is still trying to get rid of it. It is trying to kill it again. The member for Vasse is actually attacking the member for Warren-Blackwood's electorate. I do not know why she does not

like him, but it seems that her absolute focus is to try to prevent the Margaret River Pro from staying in Western Australia.

The benefit to the tourism sector as a consequence of the change of government is undeniable —

Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: We are —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: The difference between the last person I threw out and the member for Dawesville is that the previous member had been thrown out a few times. You are on three and a half, with a bullet.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: I know that disappoints a lot of members on this side.

Mr P. PAPALIA: We are poised on the cusp of a tourism boom in Western Australia. We have the industry on board. It is working with the agency. It is working with the government. It requires members opposite to fall into line and support the state and their electorates and do something positive for a change.