

PERTH–JAPAN DIRECT FLIGHTS

**9. Mr J.N. CAREY to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to the significant work undertaken by the McGowan Labor government in securing direct flights between Perth and Japan.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house why this deal is a massive win for Western Australia's tourism industry?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this will build on the work that the government has already undertaken to grow the number of visitors to Western Australia?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

I thank the member for Perth for his question and for rolling up his sleeves on behalf of the Western Australian tourism industry—putting his shoulder to the wheel as he does.

- (1)–(2) It is, indeed, a massive boost and boon for the tourism industry of Western Australia to regain a direct connection between Tokyo and Perth. We have not had a direct flight—I know the member is aware of this—since 2011, when Qantas stopped flying. In 2011 we lost the direct flight and there was no subsequent effort to regain it. I know that the last time a tourism minister of the former government visited Japan was 2012. It was in office for five more years and did nothing.

**Mr D.C. Nalder** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Bateman!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It made no effort at all to regain that direct connection, which is vital. Japan is a crucial and valuable market. It is currently our ninth biggest market for visitors and 29 000 or so Japanese come here now indirectly. All Nippon Airways is a big win. It is one of the best airlines in the world. It is absolutely trusted by the Japanese market and everyone around the world. It has chosen Perth, Western Australia as its second destination in Australia. When we first went there—I went there in October 2017 and the Premier went there in November—ANA was not even considering Western Australia. We were not on its radar. There had been no effort by the previous government to get us on ANA's radar.

Several members interjected.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There had not! The previous government had not even met with ANA. It had not even met an ANA executive. In that very short time frame—bearing in mind that it took New South Wales four years to get a new airline to fly from India—in the space of less than two years, we have got ANA to fly to Perth seven days a week with a 787 Dreamliner for \$861. I am worried, as the Premier indicated at a meeting in the party room this morning, that it may be so enticing to Western Australians that many of them will be going that way. However, I am sure that it will be just as enticing for Japanese visitors to come to Western Australia. The flights will begin in time for the wildflower season, the Rugby World Cup in Japan, and the peak season in Australia for Japanese visitors. Japanese retirees are cashed up and have time on their hands. They trust their airline and are looking for a safe destination.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** They count Western Australia as a safe destination. It is very attractive now that we have a direct flight. I am very proud of the McGowan government's efforts to regain that direct connection between Tokyo and Perth.