

**COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS — FORTIETH PARLIAMENT**

*Statement by Leader of the House*

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [5.04 pm]: Today marks the last sitting day of the fortieth Parliament. I want to take the opportunity to make some comments. I thank all members and staff in this place for their contributions over the life of the fortieth Parliament. Although members of the public do not necessarily always believe it, it is the case that most of the time we actually agree and get the job done. Each of us hold the same motivations, and we heard all of that reinforced in the valedictory speeches of those who have given them. We are all here because we want to improve our community and we are committed to our community. From time to time, we will disagree on how we achieve a better outcome for our communities, but fundamentally everybody is here for the same reason.

Some are leaving us because they have chosen to move on to the next stage of their careers and to end their parliamentary careers, but for others it is not by choice. Any one of us could find ourselves in that position at any time, either by virtue of the decision of our party or indeed the electorate. My observation over the last two weeks of the sitting period is that some members have found these last two weeks very difficult, while others, I have to say, have looked and sounded quite liberated. I asked members of the government benches to stay in the house for each valedictory speech. I said they ought to treat those who are making their valedictory speeches, no matter how uncomfortable some of them might make us feel, the way we would want to be treated when we do our valedictory speeches; that is, we would want people to listen. I thank members of the government team who have done that. As somebody made the point—I think it was Hon Martin Aldridge—the valedictory speeches have been really quite illuminating for all of us. We have heard some things for the first time about some of the people whom we have worked with for at least four years and some of whom we have worked with for much longer than that.

On behalf of the government, I thank all members who are leaving us and who will not be coming back in the forty-first Parliament for the contribution that they have made. I thank you for your public service. I thank you for the service you have provided the people of Western Australia. To the outgoing members of the Liberal Party, to Hon Simon O'Brien, the father of the house, your experience is a great loss to this Parliament. I am not going to make a comment about each member who is leaving, but I will share this. Hon Simon O'Brien and I served on a select committee of two. We looked into particular circumstances around Fremantle Cemetery. I have said this before in this place, but Hon Simon O'Brien does not mind the odd quip and the odd word game. I want members to think of every possible poor taste joke that they can about a cemetery and a crematorium—I heard all of them in the course of that select committee inquiry.

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** I remember you stormed off when I pointed out the incongruity of the sign in the crematorium that said “No smoking in this area”!

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** And that was one of the better jokes! To you, my friend, all the best for the future.

Hon Michael Mischin is not in the chamber; he is out on urgent parliamentary business. I have had the opportunity to spar with him on a number of occasions when I have been sitting at the table.

To Hon Ken Baston, who served as Whip, that is not an easy job to do.

To Hon Jim Chown, whom I had the opportunity to travel with to China on the infamous Huawei trip, what happens on tour stays on tour is all that I am —

Several members interjected.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Settle down! Dear me, Madam President!

**The PRESIDENT:** I was with you, I can back you up, Leader of the House.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Indeed, you were.

Several members interjected.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Everyone, calm down. To the outgoing members of the National Party, Hon Colin Holt and Hon Jacqui Boydell, it really has been a pleasure working with you and getting to know you as well. Thank you for your service, too.

To the outgoing members of the crossbench, Hon Rick Mazza, Hon Colin Tincknell, Hon Aaron Stonehouse, Hon Robin Scott and, somewhere, Hon Charles Smith, I wish you all the best for the future as well. Rumour has it that we will see at least one of you, apparently, around the house a bit.

To the Greens, Hon Alison Xamon, Hon Robin Chapple, Hon Tim Clifford and Hon Diane Evers, thank you for your service to Western Australia. Thank you for the issues that you have continued to raise and pursue on behalf of the people of WA as well.

Finally, to the retiring members in the Labor Party, Hon Adele Farina, who I entered Parliament with 20-odd years ago, and Hon Laurie Graham, thank you for serving the party with distinction both inside this chamber and out. I want to place on the record my thanks for your contribution to the party, to your electorates, and to the people of Western Australia. I sincerely wish all the outgoing members the very best for whatever may happen next in their careers and in their lives. Your contribution to this place and to Western Australia has been significant. It is a formidable group of people who are moving on after serving the people of Western Australia in the fortieth Parliament, and many who have served in previous Parliaments before that as well. I wish you well in whatever happens in the next chapter of your life.

Thank you, Madam President.

Members: Hear, hear!

*Statement by Leader of the Opposition*

**HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition)** [5.10 pm]: Along with the Leader of the House, I would like to offer my own congratulations and the congratulations of the National–Liberal alliance to all those members who will no longer be with us after today. In particular, in my own party I have obviously had many years of reliance on Hon Michael Mischin’s sage advice on legal matters, and I shall miss that sage advice, but I have no doubt that I will call on it on occasions from here on in.

To Hon Simon O’Brien, I am sure that your humour is shared amongst all of us, not just those on committees. Having been an acting president and having been on committees with you, it has been an absolute pleasure, and I am sure that you will continue to make a humorous contribution to public life outside of this Parliament.

It is interesting that my fellow regional members Hon Jim Chown and Hon Ken Baston will also depart their chairs. It is very difficult to be a regional member, as I am sure other regional members will know, and I am sure that as my good friend Hon Robin Chapple will know, it is hard to be the only member from one’s political party in a region, so it is a great task to represent the collective.

To my good friend Hon Jacqui Boydell, your speech was magnificent and your contribution in the years that I have known you has been great. I intend to keep in contact with Hon Jacqui Boydell, who is not infrequently down in Bunbury and will continue, no doubt, to visit us, and I am sure we will find a range of coffee shops in that area that we can go to and talk.

Hon Colin Holt needs no introduction to Bunbury. It was one of those things where we often saw Hon Colin Holt around the south west, and I am sure that his contribution will also be missed.

To the crossbench and all those members who are departing us, Hon Rick Mazza and Hon Aaron Stonehouse, and my friends from One Nation, Hon Colin Tincknell, whom I got to know just before the last state election when we started talking about what might happen, and Hon Robin Scott, it has been a magnificent four years. Your contribution has been significant in this state. It should always be remembered that in those times when this side of the house managed to get votes over the top of the existing government, it would never have happened if it were not for your support and your contribution. To Hon Aaron Stonehouse, I always felt that there was a place for you over here, and perhaps if you had jumped into the spare seat, we might have been able to save you, but I will be pleased to continue those conversations. Hon Rick Mazza will, I think, retire back down to the south west now and be a constituent, so I will be looking forward to those letters, particularly around firearms licensing going forward. Hon Colin Tincknell and I will no doubt stay in touch. Hon Robin Scott, I will miss your passionate Scottish voice in this chamber. You have been one of the most passionate contributors I have heard, and it has been great to see.

I will definitely miss Hon Alison Xamon. Your contribution has been—I was going to use the word “voluminous”, but it has also been consistent and strong. I will absolutely miss Hon Robin Chapple. For someone who was sometimes on the other extreme of some of these debates, we found an enormous amount of common ground. I shall look forward to seeing you back up north at some point.

**Hon Robin Chapple:** So long as it is not by the television!

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** You will be seeing the next round of advertising campaign very soon, so I am sure you will be looking forward to that. Hon Diane Evers, thank you for your contribution. You have been a passionate supporter around the south west and I have seen you at numerous events.

Hon Laurie Graham, thank you. It has been fun. I remember going on to the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review relating to the ports. We even found some common ground at that point, which is unusual for members from two sides of politics.

I must spend a couple of minutes to speak about my good friend Hon Adele Farina, who, as I said during my contribution to the Address-in-Reply, has made an enormous effort around the south west. For someone on the other side of politics, Hon Adele Farina is the person I have seen in the most places over many years. She has constantly been around the community. She would go to events; I would see her everywhere I went. We did a number of

Australia Day ceremonies together, where one of us would give out some part of the award, particularly because in Margaret River they give a coin and flowers. One year I would hand out one part and Hon Adele Farina would hand out the other. We worked as a team many times. I think people underestimate the level of interaction Hon Adele Farina has had throughout the south west. It is very easy to forget members who are not necessarily a loud voice in this chamber but who are a constant voice in their community. It is not always the loudest that counts. I think she should be congratulated for the years that she has contributed, and this will be a poorer place for her not being here.

Finally, Madam President, to you. I did note that in almost every valedictory speech that I listened to—I listened to all of them—you were congratulated for your work in the last four years. It might seem a little bit redundant to say it again, but as someone who has acted in your place on occasion and someone who relied on your advice, I think it behoves this chamber on its final day of the fortieth Parliament to acknowledge your contribution and your work and the magnificent bipartisan way you have approached your job and have helped all members of Parliament, and the steadfast application of the rules for which you have now become as famous as your predecessors. You should be congratulated, Madam President. I am sure that the entirety of the house will join me in saying a profound thankyou for your work over the last four years. We wish your replacement well and hope that they do as much as you have done for the benefit of the state of Western Australia and the Legislative Council.

**Hon Nick Goiran:** I am sure that you agree with me that Hon Tim Clifford is worthy of a mention.

**Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS:** I am sorry. I missed mentioning Hon Tim Clifford—and we were on a committee together. I saved the best for last!

Hon Tim Clifford, of course. I thought that the statement “What goes on in committee stays in committee” was sage advice. But I think that it might be interesting to mention that when the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs—which really did not do a lot of environmental work over the past four years; it generally dealt with petitions—examined compensation for genetically modified organisms, I had the expectation that Hon Tim Clifford might prove to be an ideologue, shall I say. But he was absolutely open to all sides of the argument. The committee report was delivered unanimously. Hon Tim Clifford does not have to worry about preselection at the moment; he has four years, so everybody can forget that. He obviously took the position that doing the right thing was more important than philosophy. That will stand him in good stead for the next few years. I have every expectation that we will see you, Hon Tim Clifford, in Parliament, or around Parliament, for many years to come in some way, shape or form.

Members: Hear, hear!

*Statement by President*

**THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust)** [5.18 pm]: Members, I rise to make some comments, focusing particularly on the last four years of my term as President. I was certainly honoured at the commencement of the last Parliament to be selected by yourselves, the members of the Legislative Council, to serve as the chamber’s Presiding Officer. I know that history was made when you elected me as the first female President of the Legislative Council, and I hope I have served you well. It also has been an honour and a privilege to work with the most professional and skilled employees of the Department of the Legislative Council. Our house team is exceptionally good, and I thank them for their diligence, support and commitment to the members of this place. I acknowledge the Clerk, Mr Nigel Pratt; the Deputy Clerk, Mr Paul Grant; the Usher of the Black Rod, Mr John Seal-Pollard; Clerk Assistant (House), Mr Sam Hastings; Advisory Officer (Procedure), Mr Grant Hitchcock; Parliamentary Officer (Procedure), Mr Chris Hunt; Parliamentary Officer (Procedure), Ms Renae Jewell; the Deputy Usher of the Black Rod, Mr Peter Gale; Parliamentary Officers, Mr Brian Conn, Ms Hayley Brown and Ms Lauren Levia; and the Executive Officer, Office of the Clerk, Ms Rebecca Burton.

I would also like to acknowledge Ms Christine Kain, Clerk Assistant (Committees), and the team at the Legislative Council committee office. During the fortieth Parliament they have worked extremely hard. Not only did they have the eight standing committees to deal with, but also six select committees, which placed considerable pressure on the financial and human resources of the department. Committees met for almost 2 000 hours in the last Parliament, and this does not reflect the many, many hours that the staff worked in preparation for meeting and developing the 123 reports tabled, so I think we can all acknowledge that they are indeed a class act.

The role of the President is much more than just presiding over the chamber. The President also gets to represent the Legislative Council in official dealings with other Parliaments and organisations, plays an important ceremonial role and assumes responsibilities for the administration of the Parliament and of Parliament House. The President is also a member of a whole range of committees that impact on the running and maintenance of the Parliament and ultimately is responsible for the appointment of Legislative Council staff. I must tell members that it is a much more involved role than Barry House ever pitched to me when he sat me down for a chat—much, much more.

As per Westminster traditions, in all these duties the President must serve impartially, treating all members equally, irrespective of rank or political affiliation. The President represents the tradition, prestige and integrity of the Parliament and advocates independence from executive government, the separation of powers, and is also an ambassador for the Parliament. The President's first allegiance must always be to the Parliament, not to the government; to do otherwise would damage the Parliament's independence. I hope that history will judge me as someone who has played with a political straight bat and acted with integrity and the best intentions of the Legislative Council.

There have been a number of challenges when presiding over this last Parliament. The composition of the house has given rise to some very interesting and challenging circumstances. When we started out, we had a record six non-government parties, and this expanded to seven during the term. The increased number of parties represented in the Council prompted the need for clarification regarding unlimited speaking times and a proper interpretation of a lead member of the opposition. Question time was also something that required a little getting used to for some, with, on more than one occasion—not looking at you, Hon Dr Steve Thomas—a behind-the-chair query on why I gave a member the call only once or twice. My response was that each party that wishes to ask a question should be given the opportunity to do so.

I would also like to thank Mr Deputy President, Hon Simon O'Brien, and my Deputy Chairs during the fortieth Parliament, Hon Adele Farina, Hon Dr Steve Thomas, Hon Robin Chapple, Hon Laurie Graham, Hon Matthew Swinbourn, Hon Martin Aldridge and, more recently, Hon Dr Sally Talbot. I particularly want to thank Hon Simon O'Brien, who has such a long corporate history and knowledge of this place and will be sorely missed. I thank him very much for his solid support and guidance and sage advice during this last term. I know that both Joy, his wife, and his daughter, Nadika, have a very full and busy agenda lined up for him in his retirement and I wish them all well and good health and happiness into the future.

During this last term, we had to deal with something that I hope we never have to deal with again during our lifetimes—the COVID-19 pandemic. We were an unusual Parliament in that we kept operating during this period and had COVID-19 sitting arrangements that also provided a range of complications for all members in this house. We had modified seating arrangements and new speaking procedures whereby members in unallocated seating had to use a lectern positioned adjacent to the table of the house. We had hygiene practices and social distancing and the minimisation of movement around the chamber. We had changes in the division procedures whereby members did not need to cross the chamber, with those voting with the ayes standing and those voting with the noes sitting. These are to name just a few of the types of situations that we had to deal with. The circumstances that we had before us at the time compelled us to immediately shift to the online world, and many of us developed new vocabularies around Zooming, Webex, WFH—work from home—social distancing, herd immunity, “let's get together on Teams” and, for the first time that I am aware of, face masks in the Legislative Council for members. I know I have done this before, but I would again like to thank all members and staff for their efforts in enabling us to keep sitting and ensuring that the essential work of the Legislative Council continued, both in the chamber and in the committees.

Representing the Legislative Council and the Parliament of WA has been an absolute pleasure. I have been involved in a number of activities in representing the Parliament. One of those is Rotary, and I have particularly enjoyed my involvement with the Rotary Club of Matilda Bay, something that was handed down to me by former President Barry House. Each year, COVID permitting, an event is held here at Parliament House for international students participating in the Rotary youth exchange. It is such a pleasure to welcome to the Parliament students from all over the world, their host families from across the state and their consular representatives. I have been told that for the students it is one of the key highlights of their time in Western Australia, and it is a great opportunity to introduce them to the Westminster system and to our Parliament.

Over the last two years, we have participated in a Curtin University project. This has been another very enjoyable opportunity to promote the Parliament via collaboration with Curtin University's School of Design and the Built Environment. This is the second year the Parliament has been involved in a project whereby the planning, graphics and design students have been required to design a concept for a new public space made available by capping the freeway between the Hay and Malcolm Street Bridges. Hon Barry House would be very pleased with this project. I thank their lecturer, Jake Schapper, for inviting us to participate. I hope this project will continue in the future. The former Speaker, Hon Peter Watson, and I were very keen on things such as that to try to encourage more people to come and visit the people's place through a range of different activities.

I have been really fortunate to represent the Legislative Council in a range of overseas activities. In April 2018, I attended the Commonwealth Women's Forum in London, which was held in the lead-up to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. The forum and side meetings provided an opportunity for me to meet a number of people and learn about some issues of interest, such as the United Kingdom Parliament's approach to sexual harassment and bullying, cybersecurity, social media and parliamentary privilege, to name a few. The trip also provided me with an opportunity to engage directly with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and I met with Mr Akbar Khan, the then general secretary of the CPA, and members of the UK branch, CPA UK. Those meetings resulted in a number of things happening here. In December 2019, the Legislative Council hosted the CPA UK regional workshop on

the role of parliamentary committees in combating human trafficking and forced labour. I know a number of members from this chamber attended and participated in that forum. In October last year, I was also able to be a panellist, and delivered a paper in conjunction with our Clerk Assistant, Mr Sam Hastings, at the CPA webinar for Speakers and presiding officers of the Commonwealth on the theme of COVID-19 and independent Parliaments. That paper went on to be published in the *European Journal of Law Reform*. I was also involved in filming an introductory video presentation in December last year on the topic of ethics and standards for the new Parliamentary Academy at CPA headquarters.

Another opportunity to represent the Legislative Council overseas arose in mid-June 2019. In March of that year, the Australasian Study of Parliament Group encouraged members to consider presenting a paper at the Westminster Foundation for Democracy's upcoming Conference on Post-Legislative Scrutiny in Asia, which I again did with the assistance of the Clerk Assistant, Mr Sam Hastings. I was pleased that we were chosen to present our paper, which provided an overview of post-legislative scrutiny in Western Australia, in Yangon, Myanmar, and also to be chosen to chair a workshop session. That paper also went on to be published in the *Journal of Southeast Asian Human Rights*. Post-legislative scrutiny is becoming a very important area to be considered by not just this Legislative Council, but also a range of Parliaments around the world, and it is becoming more prominent. I hope that it is something we consider putting more emphasis on as legislators. It is certainly an important area to inquire into to complete the loop on our work as legislators. I look forward to expanding on that issue in my next term.

The trip to Myanmar was very interesting, and it was a great privilege to meet so many very experienced and knowledgeable members of Parliament from that country and others. It is with trepidation that we watch the state of democracy in Myanmar today. I have very deep concerns about the deteriorating situation there and reiterate the United Nations Security Council's comments strongly condemning the use of violence against peaceful protesters and the deaths of hundreds of civilians, including women and children.

In July 2019, I attended a workshop of parliamentary scholars and parliamentarians in Wroxton, Oxfordshire, just outside of London. While in London I took the opportunity to reconnect with the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association UK to learn more about eParliaments and digital engagement with citizens. Who would have known, with COVID advancing, that that would become quite useful!

I also met with the British representative of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to learn more about IPU Centre for Innovation in Parliament and related matters. As a follow-up to the Myanmar conference, I again met with the Westminster Foundation for Democracy's chief executive, Anthony Smith, to discuss matters in this space. The workshop in Wroxton was interesting and a valuable learning experience. The plenary session addressed sexual harassment and violence against women parliamentarians, and the papers presented covered a number of topics, including delegated legislation, the impact of ministerial codes of conduct and post-legislative scrutiny. A flow-on from my meeting with Westminster Foundation for Democracy chief executive Anthony Smith was my participation in a digital conference the foundation had organised with the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies at the University of London. The theme of the conference was: "Are emergency measures in response to COVID-19 a threat to democracy? Fact and fiction." I, along with Sam Hastings, presented a paper titled "Legislative Scrutiny in Times of Emergency: A Case Study of Australian Parliaments". I would like to acknowledge and thank Sam for his work on this paper and the two papers he worked on, with the other headed "An Overview of Post-Legislative Scrutiny in Western Australia".

I have had the pleasure of representing the Western Australian Parliament at two Presiding Officers and Clerks Conferences. These conferences provide an invaluable opportunity to meet with presiding officers from all Australian jurisdictions and from New Zealand and the Pacific. At the forty-ninth POC in Wellington, New Zealand, in July 2018 I presented a paper titled "Frontiers of the Wild West: Progress and Possibilities", and I would like to thank John Seal-Pollard for his assistance in developing this paper. At the fiftieth POC in Brisbane, Queensland, in July 2019, I presented a paper titled "The challenges of managing the Parliamentary precinct without legislation", and I thank Tina O'Connor for her assistance in developing this paper.

There is also a significant ceremonial aspect to the role of being President, and I have had the pleasure of providing official receptions for a range of visiting dignitaries, delegations, parliamentary officers from other jurisdictions, ambassadors and members of the consular corps, so I have met a number of very remarkable people. A number of schoolchildren from around the state have also visited us here in Parliament. It is an absolute joy. I remember children from the One Arm Point Remote Community School coming into the President's suite, and that was a really lovely day with those kids.

One of the highlights I want to mention—there are a number—was a visit from the President of Ireland, Mr Michael D Higgins, and Mrs Sabina Higgins in October 2017. You will remember that President Higgins addressed the Legislative Assembly from the floor of the house. It was a significant event, especially for those members of Parliament of Irish heritage. I was indeed fortunate to again meet with the President and Mrs Higgins

early last year when on holiday in Dublin, not long before the pandemic hit. On that same visit to Ireland, I was also able to meet the presiding officers of the two houses of the Irish Parliament.

In relation to notable visitors to the Parliament during the last term, one was the visit of the head of the Syrian Orthodox Church in Damascus, His Holiness Patriarch Ignatius Aphrem II, and his delegation. I must thank Hon Martin Pritchard for that visit. We were fortunate enough to visit with His Holiness on at least three separate occasions over the last couple of years. There was also the visit of the Chairwoman of the National Assembly of Vietnam, Madam Nguyen, who was the first female to be elected to that position, and her delegation in December 2017. Other notable visits were by members and staff from the Western Cape Provincial Parliament based in Cape Town, South Africa, and the visit of Mr Kenya Akiba, member of the House of Representatives in the Diet, the national legislature of Japan and special adviser to the then Prime Minister of Japan, Mr Shinzo Abe, not to mention visits by very interesting ambassadors, high commissioners and members of the consular corps. Valuable information is exchanged during these visits. A fun fact: who knew that Australia's second major import from Morocco, behind fertiliser, is women's clothing, and specifically underwear? You learn all sorts of interesting things when you are meeting people on behalf of the Parliament!

Over the last two years I have participated in the consular corps' International Women's Day event, and this year I delivered the keynote address on women in leadership and joined the panel discussion. In 2020, the discussion was on women in diplomacy. These events were moderated by the state director of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. We have been fortunate to have DFAT facilitate two very interesting briefings for members of Parliament. The first was delivered by Her Excellency Ms Harinder Sidhu, the then High Commissioner to India, who spoke about the future of the Australia–India economic relationship and the report *An India economic strategy to 2035: Navigating from potential to delivery* and how Western Australia could benefit. The second briefing was delivered by the then ambassador to Japan, His Excellency Mr Richard Court, AC, who spoke about the Australia–Japan relationship and opportunities for Western Australia to engage more closely with Japan in the future. For those members who attended—I know there were significant numbers on both occasions—I am sure you reaped great benefit from those meetings.

A very interesting part of this role is the administration of Parliament. I have had a very interesting four years working with the former Speaker, Mr Peter Watson, the Clerks and the executive manager of Parliamentary Services, Mr Rob Hunter, in maintaining an oversight of the administration of Parliament and facilities and services affecting members. Sometimes people ask, “What do you do as President? What's it like?” Sometimes it is like running a hotel. Not every member likes the food they are served or the accommodation they are provided. Sometimes it feels a little bit like *Fawlty Towers*, and sometimes I think this place is just held together by duct tape and good luck!

Something that I had hoped we might have achieved during this last term is parliamentary precinct legislation. I had hoped to see a bill for the control and management of the parliamentary precinct to be enacted while I was President. As a Presiding Officer, a major issue is the management of the grounds of Parliament for order, security and safety. In 2018, discussions commenced with the government to draft a bill for the control and management of the parliamentary precinct. This is still a work in process. Hopefully, the bill will be agreed to at some point by cabinet and introduced in the forty-first Parliament. The grounds are currently managed by the Parliamentary Reserve Board without any enabling legislation to determine the parliamentary precinct. This hinders not only the day-to-day operations of Parliament, but also the management of security threats. Most Australian jurisdictions have implemented legislation to address this issue. Legislation to define the parliamentary precinct, authorised officers and the powers of authorised officers to give directions to leave or not to enter the parliamentary precinct and to search people in vehicles in certain circumstances would be of great benefit and is required. As I mentioned earlier, I delivered a paper at the fiftieth annual Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference in July 2019 on the challenges of managing the parliamentary precinct without legislation.

In relation to Parliamentary Services, I would again like to recognise Mr Rob Hunter, the executive manager of Parliamentary Services, and his team, including: Ms Patricia Traegde, deputy executive manager, Parliamentary Services, and director member and operational support; and Ms Belinda Corey, director parliamentary information and education. Rob Hunter is, indeed, a great asset to this Parliament. He always goes out of his way to try to accommodate members in this Parliament and make our lives easier and more comfortable. He always finds a way to get things done. If things ever get tough, he continues to have the best attitude. I think Rob is probably one of the most optimistic people I have ever had to deal with. I thank him for his very great work on our behalf and his friendship during my term as President.

I would also like to thank the Building Services team, headed up by Mr Hugh McCaffrey, who always do an amazing job keeping this building up and running and the gardens beautiful and which I think has one of the best office spaces in the converted fountains.

I would like to thank Catering Services, headed by Mr Enno Schijf. Some people in this place say that the real enemy is not the crossbench; it is actually the chefs and the catering team, who are not happy unless you retire from this place at least three clothing sizes greater than when you started!

To the finance team, headed by Ms Elma Ozich, who is currently away on leave, I thank you all for paying the bills and ensuring everyone gets paid and that our books balance. You indeed play a pivotal role in this organisation and are our quiet achievers. I thank you all.

I also thank our Human Resources team, headed up by Ms Tina Hunter. Anyone who has ever worked in HR knows that it is a tough gig. I certainly thank the team for their diligence and for supporting our employees in many ways. I especially note their good work with the health and wellbeing program that has been operating over the last few years, which I know members in this place certainly appreciate and participate in.

I thank the Information Technology team, which is headed up by Mr John Buchanan. It has had an exceptionally wild ride over the last 12 months, getting us up and running in a virtual environment because of COVID, at extremely short notice, I might say, dealing with cybersecurity issues, which cannot be understated as one of the world's greatest risks, and the everyday fast-paced changing world of IT.

I would also like to thank our library and information services headed up by Ms Judy Ballantyne. They certainly know how much I love that library. I love their work. If they had a loyalty program, I would be on the gold tier.

I cannot say enough good words about the Parliamentary Education Office. It does outstanding work in the area of school liaison, outreach, developing fact sheets, conducting public tours and assisting with events and exhibitions. I am continually impressed by its work.

I would like to thank Reporting Services, which includes both the Hansard and broadcasting teams and are headed up by Mr Laurie Mansell. I thank the broadcast team for their ninja-like skills in zooming from one speaker to the next in the chamber and for their assistance in recording various presentations outside the chamber. Their assistance is very much appreciated in filming my contribution to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association presentation on ethics and standards, as mentioned earlier, and my contribution to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's Ruby Hutchison Memorial Lecture. For Hansard, I thank you very much for your work in reporting proceedings in both the chamber and committee hearings.

Finally, yet more importantly, my thanks to the security team, which is managed by Mr Tony Paterson. Their work is to provide a secure environment for members, staff and visitors within the parliamentary precinct, and it is much appreciated. I know the challenges that you face, and thank you for your assistance in dealing with the many security incidents over the last four years, including two serious threats to life.

Another significant issue of Parliament is the budget. Prioritising projects is a big challenge, particularly because the Parliament's capital funds are very limited; for example, an air conditioning replacement program might consume more than half the annual budget. Parliament's fundamental role is to hold the executive to account, free from any interference. However, the executive can diminish the separation of powers by controlling the finance of Parliament or by controlling its officers. As the saying goes, the power of the purse is great. Last year, one of the parliamentary research program participants, Ms Madison Colangelo—a very bright young woman, doing a five-year law and arts global politics and policy degree—produced an excellent report on the separation of powers and the independence of the Parliament of Western Australia. It is available in the Parliamentary Library and I recommend it to members for good reading.

With regard to the financial independence of the Parliament, the current model of funding in Western Australia does not provide the Parliament with the resources it requires. In January 2019, the Parliament submitted very strong business cases to the government for funding six major projects. Only one was approved—\$366 000 for remediation works to the eastern roof. Funding to fix the air conditioning, upgrade security, and the courtyard restoration were rejected, as was the request for recurrent funding for security infrastructure maintenance and maintenance of the new fountain accommodation. The Parliament is the pre-eminent public building in Western Australia, or it should be. I quote in part from the Register of Heritage Places —

the place is a symbol of democracy in Western Australia and provides a strong sense of historical continuity in its function. It contributes to the community's sense of identity, providing an important physical and symbolic presence, as the centre of democracy and decision making;

the place is an important and well recognised landmark ...

the well maintained grounds are regarded as a prestigious and symbolic venue for the conduct of important civic ceremonies, as the primary point of contact between the media and parliamentarians, as well as a gathering point for public rallies;

Not receiving adequate funding to preserve and maintain the building or upgrade it to provide all the services needed by a modern, accessible and accountable Parliament can be quite frustrating. Concerns over the condition

of the building have been raised for decades regardless of who was in government. Part of the difficulty, regardless of who was in government, is that no political party has made, or will ever be able to make, commitments to fund the Parliament to the level it requires. We do not want to be in the same position as the Palace of Westminster in a few years' time whereby the building is falling apart faster than it can be repaired. The fear that public perception and media scrutiny will say MPs are feathering their own nest is something that I believe can be countered. The patch-and-mend approach is failing, and it is not fair for parliamentary employees who spend far greater time in the building than we members and have to put up with sub-par facilities. I sincerely hope that the current budget submissions are successful in due course. ICT services requires funds to meet the operational requirements for a virtual Parliament, to provide cybersecurity for the operational needs of Parliament and to meet the WA government's digital services policy framework accessibility and inclusivity standard. Additional resources are required to implement the reporting arrangements resulting from the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal determination that came into effect on 14 March. Heritage conservation requires funding to address the challenge of maintaining a safe and appropriate environment in a building that is over 115 years old. The replacement of air conditioners is required to address issues associated with significantly aged infrastructure in order to meet health requirements under OSH legislation for code compliance and to resolve fire and security risks. I hope that those budget applications are successful in due course.

I have been involved with a range of committees in the administration of Parliament and have participated in the policy development, strategic direction and public image of Parliament. The Management Executive Committee makes major decisions in parliamentary administration such as building works, policies, community engagement activities, parliamentary events and education programs and so on. At some point, everything that happens in this place goes before that committee. The committee has to deal with some significant issues that have not always received positive public or media comment. One of those very clear ones that comes to mind is the temporary traffic-calming devices that were positioned in the forecourts. Known as the sewerage pipes, until funds were found for a more permanent solution, the concrete bollards were placed either side of the front steps to thwart vehicles that might be used in a terrorist attack. I must say that I was very pleased to see that those large overgrown flowerpots are now based in the car park up the other end of the property and we now have more appropriate security measures in place in the forecourt.

The Parliamentary Education and Community Relations Committee has done some outstanding work during the last four years, and I want to reference some of that. Its work has included the launch of the new Parliament website; the ramping up of the social media presence at Parliament; the launching of the series *The Key to Your House*, which was broadcast on channel 44 and is available online; the Parliament partnered with North Metropolitan TAFE students to create "The difference between Parliament and Government" and "*You, Me and Democracy*". We increased our community engagement with such things as participation in Perth Heritage Week, the Centenary of Anzac, the promotion of the 100<sup>th</sup> year of the election of Edith Cowan, and the new taste and tour initiative in the Parliament.

The Parliamentary History Advisory Committee has concentrated on capturing former members' recollections and the major and minor historical events of their time. I want to thank the members who participated on that committee who are no longer involved: Hon Derrick Tomlinson, a former member for East Metropolitan Region; Hon Eric Ripper, a former member for Belmont; Dr Harry Phillips, AM; and Emeritus Professor Dr David Black, AM.

The Parliament House Advisory Committee has undertaken a number of events and projects. We have had three very successful artist-in-residence programs and a number of exhibitions, including *The Year of Living Dangerously*, *Borderless Gandhi presents Mahatma in Colour* and *Time For Heroes*. We have also had a number of art loans; notably, we saw the removal of some longstanding local government art replaced by *PEEK: A Partial View of the Murdoch University Art Collection* at Parliament House throughout the lower level of the Parliament. I am sure all members enjoyed seeing something different and thought-provoking on the walls. I sincerely hope that the opportunity to have continuing loans from Murdoch University happens into the future.

I have referenced already the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, but I want to mention the twinning arrangements between our Parliament and the Parliament of the Cook Islands whereby we provide support and assistance to that Parliament. It is very important that we continue to support our small CPA branches. Their resources are extremely limited and, in many cases, they are geographically isolated, as is the case with our twin Parliament in the Cook Islands. I would like to recognise the close relationship that the CPA WA branch had with Niki Rattle, who was the Speaker of the Parliament of the Cook Islands, and who recently retired. Earlier this year during the bushfires, she conveyed to the people of Western Australia her thoughts and best wishes, and those of members and staff of the Parliament of the Cook Islands, and I hope you will join with me in wishing her well in her retirement.

There are a few matters affecting members that I want to touch on. The work that the former Speaker and I did in relation to management of electorate offices was interesting and sometimes change can take a while, but I must say it has taken four years of repeated requests and, hopefully, we have finally put in place criminal history record checks—the "fit2work" checks—that electorate staff are now working through. Hopefully, in the next week a new



code of conduct for electorate office staff will be signed off and agreed. Also in relation to a code of conduct and ethics training for MPs, further to my statement in the chamber and the email you all would have received in November 2020, I hope the new President will continue to champion the development of a code of conduct for members of the Legislative Council along with ethics training for all members.

I know that much has been said about retiring members and whether it is of your own choice or not. I just want to say thank you to each of those members who will not be continuing on with us into the next Parliament. During this last term, challenging as it was with COVID and other factors, I think every member has risen to the role to which they were elected. In representing their electorates, they have not hesitated to rise to their feet and raise issues of concern to their constituents. Members have worked extremely hard on a variety of committees, sometimes two or more. There have been very rigorous question times, motions and debates, and I think each of you should be proud of your commitment and contribution, not just to this chamber but to your electorates. I wish each of you well in whatever pathway you follow in your future. I thank you very much for the opportunity to have worked with each and every one of you and look forward to seeing you at some point in the future.

I am sure you are looking forward to me finishing this. At the end of this sitting, I certainly invite all members to join us in the Members' Lounge for a cup of tea or something. I know it is a dreadful thing to get between members and a cup of tea.

In closing, I have a couple more people I want to thank. I want to thank my steward, Deb Kapoor, who has looked after me exceptionally well and I know looks after every person in this chamber with great care. She looks after some members from the other chamber, too, actually, so we always have to watch that they do not seek to steal her away from us. I want to thank my executive officer, Tina O'Connor, who has been a great friend and a great support and has worked diligently to provide a great service to all members in this chamber in her role as my executive officer.

Members, I hope that during my time as President I have demonstrated integrity, impartiality, commitment and diplomacy and have upheld the traditions of this place. On 23 May 2017, when taking the chair, I said —

I am very keen to make sure that we look at ways to make Parliament much more family friendly. I am also very keen, given my passion for all things tech, to investigate ways in which we can incorporate technology into this place in a range of areas, to not only make us more productive, but also open up opportunities for better engagement with our community.

I must say, members, that a silver lining to COVID is that it pushed you all up to the plate and you were compelled to embrace tech like you never had before. I hope sincerely that you continue to do so, to the benefit of your work here and to your communities.

I am very pleased to say that we now have a family room, which was opened up earlier this year for the use of members and parliamentary employees. It may not be the ideal room; it may not be perfect, but it is a start. It is only a small space to begin with, but it means that parents can be with their children in the workplace while managing the demands of their work. I hope in due course a larger room will become available and the facilities will be enhanced. When I started here 20 years ago, my three children were three, six and nine years old. We did not have any of those facilities and it was always a tough gig to try to manage that work–life balance. I hope that by making these changes, as small and incremental as they are at this point, those opportunities will expand and the appropriate supports will be provided for all people who work in this place who have children.

I referenced the silver lining for technology. I also want to say that I am really pleased that at the start of each sitting day we now have an acknowledgement of country, and at our recent opening of the forty-first Parliament we had a welcome to country for the first time on the floor of this house delivered by Dr Richard Walley. I was very, very pleased that we were able to have that on the day, even with COVID restrictions. I think it was a significant change and I hope it is a practice that is continued for each successive opening of the Parliament into the future.

As many have alluded to in their valedictory speeches, the last four years have not been without their challenges, even putting COVID aside. One of those challenges as referenced has been in relation to the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, which I have chaired, which for the last two years has had a very difficult time dealing with the complex matter of privilege, and I tabled a report in relation to that matter today. I will again quote from the former President Hon Clive Griffiths, who said —

... any infringement of the privileges and immunities of this House will be criticised by me, whatever the source of that infringement.

I would again like to thank the members of the committee for their tireless dedication to this matter whilst under immense pressure, the staff of the committee for their excellent work, and those members of the Legislative Council who have supported the committee and, most importantly, supported the institution of the Parliament.

I also want to thank my husband, Bill Johnston; my children Rebekah, Zoe and Liam, and my son-in-law, Liam— not a lot of imagination there! I also want to thank my two very beautiful granddaughters, one of whom was born

during my time as President. I acknowledge Kora, who has already explored the kitchens of this place extensively, and Tash, and I look forward to them being regular visitors to this place and hopefully at times using the family room.

I want to acknowledge my fabulous electorate office staff who have worked really hard over the last four years: Greg, Jesvin and Rashelle. I wish all members of the fortieth Parliament all the very best for the future, and to the members of the forty-first Parliament, I look forward to working with you as we continue our very important work in our role in this place as a house of review.

It has been a great privilege to serve and it is with some reluctance that I now vacate the chair. The house is now adjourned.

[Applause.]

*House adjourned at 5.55 pm*

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