

41ST PARLIAMENT



Report 67

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Overview of petitions 1 January 2024 to 30 September 2024

Presented by
Hon Peter Foster MLC (Chair)
November 2024

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs

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1 Introduction

History and function of the Committee

- 1.1 The Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs (Committee) was appointed by the Legislative Council on 17 August 2005.
- 1.2 The functions of the Committee are outlined in its terms of reference in Schedule 1 to the Standing Orders of the Legislative Council. At paragraph 2.3, it says:

The functions of the Committee are to inquire into and report on –

 - (a) any public or private policy, practice, scheme, arrangement, or project whose implementation, or intended implementation, within the limits of the State is affecting, or may affect, the environment;
 - (b) any Bill referred by the Council; and
 - (c) petitions.
- 1.3 This is the sixth overview report tabled by this Committee in the 41st Parliament.

Petitions

- 1.4 A petition is a formal request for action from individuals or groups. The petitions process provides a fundamental link with the community. The general public can bring issues of concern to the attention of the Parliament through this process.
- 1.5 Conforming petitions¹ presented in the Legislative Council by a Member are automatically referred to the Committee.² The promoter of the petition (known as the 'principal petitioner') must reside in Western Australia or, if a corporate body, have its registered office in Western Australia.
- 1.6 Whilst most petitions contain many signatures, this is not necessary. *Petition No. 133—Firearms Bill 2024* contained 32,234 signatures. By way of contrast, *Petition No. 92—Inquiry into the extension and replacement of the Beenyup treatment sewage outfall* contained only four. However, the Committee will deal with all petitions referred to it in the same way. Just one signature is sufficient for a petition to be regarded as conforming.
- 1.7 There has been an increasing trend for petitions, once tabled, to be supported by a chain of unsolicited emails. These communications do not further the case of the petitioners or add value for the Committee. Rather, they take up the administrative time of Committee Members and staff whose time would be better spent on the issues raised in the petitions. This practice is not encouraged by the Committee and ought not to be encouraged by Members.
- 1.8 The Committee is not a decision-making body, and only has the power to make recommendations for the Government to consider. It does not have the power to direct, amend or overturn the decisions of other bodies. It cannot make binding decisions to resolve the matters or issues raised in the petition. Only the Government has the power to change policy or take other action to resolve these matters.

¹ Petitions are considered to be 'conforming' if they meet the conditions set out in Standing Order 101 of the Standing Orders of the Legislative Council as to form and content, and have been certified as conforming by the Clerk.

² [Standing Orders of the Legislative Council of Western Australia](#), Standing Order 102.

- 1.9 Therefore, a petition will not always bring about a change of policy by the Government or achieve the specific objectives desired by petitioners. A fact sheet is sent to all principal petitioners at the submission stage (paragraph 1.14).
- 1.10 However, responses received from Ministers or public bodies to the Committee's enquiries may provide petitioners with an explanation for Government decisions or actions.

Introduction of e-petitions

- 1.11 The Legislative Council agreed to trial an e-petitions system, which commenced on 1 January 2022.³ The procedures governing e-petitions are contained in the Legislative Council's Temporary Order of 9 September 2021, the effect of which was extended to 31 October 2024.⁴
- 1.12 Petitions can now be created on the Parliament's website (see: www.parliament.wa.gov.au » Get Involved » e-Petitions » [Request a new ePetition to the Legislative Council](#)).
- 1.13 The Committee considers e-petitions in the same way as paper petitions once they have been tabled in the Legislative Council. The majority of petitions received by the Committee are now commenced in this way (paragraphs 1.22 to 1.23).

Petitions process

- 1.14 The nature and extent of the investigation into each petition will vary depending on the nature of the issues raised. In most cases, the Committee will request a submission from the principal petitioner and the tabling Member. These submissions enable the Committee to better understand the issues involved and the action, if any, already undertaken by the petitioners to resolve the matter.
- 1.15 The Committee requests submissions be provided to it within 30 days. If a submission is not received from the principal petitioner or tabling Member within this timeframe, the Committee will send a reminder.
- 1.16 Once submissions are received, the Committee will usually request a response to the petition from the relevant Government Minister. The Committee may also seek responses from other organisations (such as local governments) and carry out other investigations as required.
- 1.17 In many instances, the Minister's response to the petition will provide to the Committee an explanation for the policy or action in question. Sometimes the Committee will need more information to clarify the issues to its satisfaction. These enquiries may take the form of further correspondence or a hearing to obtain more detailed evidence.
- 1.18 The Committee will regularly produce and table a report on its enquiries in the Legislative Council. On some matters raised, the Committee may resolve to conduct a formal inquiry. A

³ Legislative Council, [Motion, Division](#), 9 September 2021, pp. 3680–3688. This was on the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges. See Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, report 64, [Review of the Standing Orders](#), Western Australia, Legislative Council, September 2021, pp. 25–27.

⁴ Legislative Council, [Motion](#), 14 March 2023, p. 759. This again was on the recommendation of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges: Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges, report 69, [Preliminary review of E-Petitions](#), Western Australia, Legislative Council, February 2023. After a successful trial, e-petitions were formally adopted by the Legislative Council on 23 October (see [Standing Orders 101](#): Form and Contents of Petitions and e-petitions).

formal inquiry into past forced adoption was initiated by Petition No. 70,⁵ and the [Broken Bonds, Fractured Lives](#) report was tabled in the House on 22 August 2024.⁶

- 1.19 The Committee may decide to limit or conclude its consideration of a petition for several different reasons. These are explained to the principal petitioner in the fact sheet sent to them.
- 1.20 Reasons for finalising a petition include:
- there are other ways to address the issues in the petition which have not been pursued
 - the matter has been or is being dealt with by the relevant authority (for example, planning or environmental matters have established decision-making and appeal processes over which the Committee has minimal influence)
 - the issues raised in the petition will be, or have already recently been considered and/or debated by the Legislative Council
 - the matter is the same or very similar to a petition or petitions the Committee has already considered
 - the petition is the subject of a commercial dispute or legal action.

Overview of petitions

- 1.21 This report provides an overview of petitions which were finalised by the Committee during the period 1 January 2024 to 30 September 2024 (the reporting period).
- 1.22 The Committee concluded its consideration of 44 petitions. Thirty-four were initiated as e-petitions and 10 as paper petitions. They are outlined in Part 2 of this report. Petitions 108, 115, 116, and 120 were tabled multiple times. Petitions 108, 116, and 120 were tabled twice each, once as an e-petition and once as a paper petition. Petition No. 115 was tabled 3 times, once as an e-petition and twice as paper petitions. As a result, the total number of unique petitions finalised by the Committee in the reporting period was 39.
- 1.23 At the end of the reporting period, 24 petitions were still under consideration (listed in Part 3). Of those 24, 19 are e-petitions and 5 are paper petitions. Two were tabled multiple times, those were petitions 138 and 141, accounting for 22 unique petitions.

Committee webpage

- 1.24 The Committee's webpage is a central source of information about petitions tabled in the Legislative Council (see: www.parliament.wa.gov.au » Committees » Environment and Public Affairs » [Petitions](#)). It contains copies of public documents including the terms of each petition, submissions, government responses and transcripts of evidence. Hard copies are made available on request. It also advises of the status of the Committee's consideration of each petition.
- 1.25 Open and closed e-petitions are also hosted on the Parliament's website (see: www.parliament.wa.gov.au » Get involved » e-Petitions » Browse and [sign open ePetitions](#) to the Legislative Council).

⁵ Legislative Council, [Petition No. 70—Request to Parliament to hold an inquiry into past adoptive polices and practices](#) (TP 1805), tabled 15 November 2022.

⁶ Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs, Report No. 66, [Broken Bonds, Fractured Lives: report on the inquiry into past forced adoption in Western Australia](#), Western Australia, Legislative Council, August 2024.

2 Finalised petitions

Petition No. 72—Stolen Generations compensation

Date tabled	17 November 2022
Tabled paper number	1848
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	1,310
Principal petitioner	Alan Carter
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC
Date finalised	17 April 2024

- 2.1 Petition No. 72 called for action on recommendations 3 and 4 of the *Bringing them home* report (1997), which relate to the need for reparations to support healing and reconciliation for the Stolen Generations.⁷
- 2.2 The petition asked the Legislative Council to inquire into compensation schemes in other jurisdictions and make recommendations for establishing a similar scheme in WA.
- 2.3 Submissions were received from the [tabling Member](#), Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and the [principal petitioner](#), Alan Carter on behalf of Bringing Them Home WA.
- 2.4 In their submission, Bringing Them Home WA noted that it has been 25 years since the *Bringing them home* report was released, and WA is among only 2 states which have not introduced a scheme for compensating survivors of the Stolen Generations. Most recently, the Victorian Government commenced the Stolen Generations Reparations Package in 2022.
- 2.5 The Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC submitted that urgent action was needed because:
- aging and poor health outcomes mean that many of those who would be eligible for a Stolen Generations compensation payment simply do not have the luxury of time.⁸
- 2.6 The Committee agreed that surviving members of the Stolen Generations are aging, and the benefit of any scheme is reduced as time passes.
- 2.7 The Committee sought comment from the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, and received a total of 3 responses dated [20 January 2023](#), [3 April 2023](#), and [26 June 2023](#). Those responses provided a general overview of the WA Government’s actions and intentions in relation to this issue.
- 2.8 In its [letter](#) to the Minister, the Committee advised that it had resolved not to undertake an inquiry into a Stolen Generations compensation scheme for WA.⁹ The Committee’s view is that it is the place of Government to act on Recommendations 3 and 4 of the *Bringing them home* report, as raised by the petitioners.

⁷ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, [Bringing them home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families](#), Australian Human Rights Commission, 1997, accessed 20 August 2024, pp. 245–246.

⁸ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 72 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, 16 December 2022, p. 2.

⁹ [Letter](#) to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, 18 April 2024.

- 2.9 It was clear to the Committee that the WA Government is across compensation schemes in other states and territories. The Government has largely satisfied the first request in the petition through the comparative and monitoring work it has done and continues to do.
- 2.10 The Committee shares the Government’s view that any process relating to Stolen Generations compensations ‘should be led and informed by Aboriginal Western Australians, especially members of the Stolen Generations’.¹⁰ It considers that Government is best placed to convene Aboriginal-led processes.
- 2.11 The principal petitioner requested that the issue of compensation be examined in relation to WA’s specific history. The Committee concurred that any WA compensation scheme would need to be informed by the unique experiences of Aboriginal people in WA. It observed that the Aboriginal Engagement Directorate within the Department of the Premier and Cabinet appears to have the capacity and expertise to establish a suitable process.
- 2.12 The Committee also noted that truth-telling can be integral to any compensation process, as has been the case in schemes in Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia and the territories.
- 2.13 Following consideration of the petition and for the reasons listed in its letter to the Minister, the Committee resolved to finalise its consideration of the petition on 17 April 2024.

Petition No. 81—Air conditioning at Roebourne Regional Prison

Date tabled	14 March 2023
Tabled paper number	2075
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	603
Principal petitioner	Paul Kevin Meek
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024

- 2.14 Petition No. 81 raised the longstanding issue of air conditioning at Roebourne Regional Prison. The petition cited decades of reporting on the issue by numerous bodies to no avail, despite the prison being subject to regular temperatures of 40°C or more and 82 cases of heat-related illness reported between 2010 and 2016.
- 2.15 Tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, [submitted](#) that the Government is ‘choosing to breach’¹¹ human rights by subjecting prisoners to extreme heat. He claimed that the Government has a dismissive attitude to the suffering of prisoners, citing Government assertions that ‘prolonged exposure to extreme heat conditions can be adequately managed using electrolyte drinks (which are sold through commissary), hats, and ice machines.’¹²
- 2.16 Acknowledging the Government has commissioned a feasibility study in April 2022 and has committed to fulfilling the petition’s request within the 2023–24 financial year, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC asserted that ‘[a]ny further delays in installing air-conditioning in all cells at Roebourne Regional Prison [would be] unacceptable.’¹³

¹⁰ [Response](#) to Petition No. 72 from Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, 26 June 2023, p. 2.

¹¹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 81 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, 19 April 2023, p. 1.

¹² [Submission](#) to Petition No. 81 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, 19 April 2023, p. 1.

¹³ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 81 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, 19 April 2023, p. 1.

2.17 On 12 March 2024, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC raised the following question without notice in the Parliament to the Minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services, Hon Sue Ellery MLC:

I refer to the November 2022 announcement that air conditioning would be installed in cells at Roebourne Regional Prison in the 2023–24 financial year and to recent reporting that tender applications for the Roebourne Regional Prison temperature management system are finally being reviewed.

- (1) How many tender applications were received?
- (2) Has a tender been awarded?
- (3) Will the installation of air conditioning at Roebourne Regional Prison be completed before the beginning of next summer?
- (4) If no to (3), why not and in which month will the installation be completed?¹⁴

2.18 In response to part (3) of that question, Hon Sue Ellery MLC responded:

The time frame for the installation of air conditioning at Roebourne Regional Prison will be determined once the tender has been awarded.¹⁵

2.19 On 13 March 2024, the Committee decided to finalise its consideration of Petition No. 81 as it is being dealt with by the Department of Corrective Services.

Petition No. 87—Royal Commission to evaluate our health system

Date tabled	9 May 2023
Tabled paper number	2184
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	1,576
Principal petitioner	Aswath Chavittupara
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC
Date finalised	14 February 2024

2.20 This petition requested the Legislative Council ask the State Government to ‘commit to conducting a Royal Commission into the Western Australian Health system in 2023.’¹⁶ The reasons set out included a general sense of chaos and poor outcomes from the WA health system, as well as specific complaints of:

- ambulance ramping
- elective surgery blowouts
- a rise in clinical incidents
- a lack of transparency and accountability in decision-making.

2.21 A [submission](#) was received from Mr Chavittupara on 26 July 2023.

¹⁴ [Answer to question without notice 109](#) asked in the Legislative Council by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Sue Ellery MLC, *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, 12 March 2024, p. 602.

¹⁵ [Answer to question without notice 109](#) asked in the Legislative Council by Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC and answered by Hon Sue Ellery MLC, *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard)*, 12 March 2024, p. 603.

¹⁶ Legislative Council, [Petition No. 87—Royal Commission to evaluate our health system](#) (TP 2184), tabled 9 May 2023.

2.22 Mr Chavittupara writes to the Committee as a grieving father, having tragically lost his daughter two-years prior. Since his daughter's passing, Mr Chavittupara has been actively involved in attempts to improve WA's healthcare system, including his participation in three separate inquiries. Mr Chavittupara laid out several areas of concern:

- accountability
- transparency
- ambulance ramping
- prolonged elective surgery waiting periods
- delayed specialist appointments
- emergency department waiting periods
- staffing and resource management.

2.23 The Committee sought a [response](#) from the Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, who advised that she:

does not support a Royal Commission to evaluate the WA health system.¹⁷

2.24 The Minister identified numerous processes in place within WA Health to maintain its 'commitment to excellence',¹⁸ including:

- Independent reviews: 'An independent review of governance of the WA health system was recently conducted in 2022 to examine the operational and practical effectiveness of governance structures set out in the *Health Services Act 2016* and their impact on patient experience and outcomes.'¹⁹
- The Sustainable Health Review.
- Performance review protocols: including Performance Management Policy, supported by the Health Service Performance Review dashboard.
- Regular performance review meetings.
- Risk management and audit: including internal audit programs and regular independent auditing by the Office of the Auditor General.
- Collaboration and engagement with formal workforce unions.
- The severity assessment code: a process followed after an incident is 'identified as having caused, or with the potential to cause, serious harm or death, and that is attributable to health care provision (or lack thereof)'.²⁰
- External investigations, including Coroner's Court inquiries.
- Consumer engagement teams, including the Care Opinion website that collects feedback from patients and consumers.
- State and Commonwealth Ombudsmen.
- The Health and Disability Services Complaints Office.
- Healthcare education via dedicated teaching hospitals.

¹⁷ [Response](#) to Petition No. 87 from the Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, 8 February 2024, p. 1.

¹⁸ [Response](#) to Petition No. 87 from the Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, 8 February 2024, p. 1.

¹⁹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 87 from the Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, 8 February 2024, p. 1.

²⁰ [Response](#) to Petition No. 87 from the Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, 8 February 2024, p. 2.

2.25 In consideration of the Minister’s response, the Committee resolved on 14 February 2024 to finalise the petition as it was satisfied that the issues raised are being adequately dealt with by the Department of Health.

Petition No. 89—Wittenoom memorial for Australia's worst industrial disaster

Date tabled	9 May 2023
Tabled paper number	2186
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	693
Principal petitioner	Melita Markey
Tabling Member	Hon Peter Foster MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

2.26 This petition sought support for permanent memorials in Perth and the Pilbara in remembrance of the Western Australians who have died from asbestos-related diseases.

2.27 On behalf of the Asbestos Diseases Society of Australia (ADSA), the principal petitioner [submitted](#) that such memorials would serve multiple purposes:

- deterrence to visitors in the contaminated area
- a tool for education on occupational health and safety
- highlighting the importance of union advocacy
- emphasising the need for worker health monitoring.

2.28 Principal petitioner, Ms Markey, noted that the legacy of Wittenoom is still felt today, with WA having the highest incidence of mesothelioma cancer globally. Despite ADSA’s campaigns and petitions, the WA Government has not yet committed to creating a permanent memorial.

A lasting memorial for Australia's worst Industrial disaster – Wittenoom (1937-2021) respectfully developed and constructed has the power to save lives and to educate future generations on the need for valuing human life in all endeavours of industry development and growth...²¹

2.29 The tabling Member’s [submission](#) provided further context for why the proposed memorial is justified:

Thousands have already lost their lives to mesothelioma, almost certainly contracted because of their exposure to asbestos, and the number of casualties continues to rise.

Permanent memorials to asbestos victims, in Perth and the Pilbara, would be a fitting tribute to the lives tragically cut short.²²

²¹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 89 from principal petitioner, Melita Markey, 8 June 2023.

²² [Submission](#) to Petition No. 89 from tabling Member, Hon Peter Foster MLC, 29 June 2023.

- 2.30 In his [response](#) to the petition, the then Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Industrial Relations, Hon Bill Johnston MLA advised that:
- the ASDA receives \$100,000 in annual funding from the State Government, partly for the purpose of promoting public awareness of the risks associated with asbestos
 - the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety does not have the resources or remit to establish and maintain the proposed memorials.
- 2.31 As a consequence, the Government is unable to provide the assistance requested:
- While I am supportive and sympathetic to the request from the petitioners for permanent and lasting memorials to those that have lost their lives to asbestos-related diseases, I am unable to provide further assistance in the matter.²³
- 2.32 The Committee also received responses to the petition from the [Shire of Ashburton](#) (which incorporates the townsite of Wittenoom), the [Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage](#) (who lead the Wittenoom Steering Committee), and the [City of Perth](#).
- 2.33 In summary of those responses:
- Shire of Ashburton: The Shire does not support the request for a permanent memorial within the Shire but suggested the Committee investigate the possibility of a permanent virtual Wittenoom memorial.
 - Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage: The Wittenoom Steering Committee does not recommend the placement of a memorial within the boundaries of the Wittenoom Asbestos Management Area.
 - City of Perth: The City does not have discretion to take on commemorative works projects nor can it fund or maintain such projects.
- 2.34 The current Minister for Industrial Relations, Hon Simone McGurk MLA, advised that the Government is 'unable to offer direct ... support for the development of a virtual Wittenoom memorial' and suggested ASDA 'consider establishing and maintaining a virtual memorial on their website.'²⁴
- 2.35 In consideration of all the responses received, the Committee concluded its consideration of the petition on 14 August 2024 on the ground that neither the WA Government or City of Perth were willing or able to fund a memorial.

²³ [Response](#) to Petition No. 89 from Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Industrial Relations, Hon Bill Johnston MLA, 5 October 2023.

²⁴ [Response](#) to Petition No. 89 from Minister for Industrial Relations, Hon Simone McGurk MLA, 21 June 2023.

Petition No. 92—Inquiry into the extension and replacement of the Beenyup treatment sewage outfall

Date tabled	17 May 2023
Tabled paper number	2115
Type of petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	4
Principal petitioner	Kim Shawn Allen
Tabling Member	Hon Martin Pritchard MLC
Date finalised	14 February 2024

2.36 Petition No. 92 requested an inquiry into the position and condition of the Beenyup treated sewage outfall in Perth’s northern suburbs. The petition outlined concerns about:

- increased pressure on receiving waters in the Marmion Marine Park due to population growth in Perth’s northern suburbs, potentially impacting the ecological value of the park
- public health, including occasionally compromised beach water quality
- proximity of the outfall to the new Ocean Reef Marina and the planned ocean pool within the marina precinct
- evidence that the outfall plume sometimes exceeds conditions set by the Minister for Water
- presence of trash, such as single-use cotton buds, washing up onto Mullaloo Beach.

2.37 A comprehensive [submission](#) was received from Mr Allen on 12 June 2023.

2.38 Mr Allen expanded on the above concerns to include issues with aging infrastructure and the flawed design of the pipeline. In particular, Mr Allen suggested that any long-term failures with the treatment plant may render it out of order for a prolonged period. This could result in ‘200 million litres of raw sewage discharged into the marina on a daily basis.’²⁵

2.39 Mr Allen also described how:

- the outfall is located adjacent to a proposed world-class super-yacht marina despite forecasts that future inflows will total around 200 million litres of effluent per day
- the current outfall is located at a depth of 7 m below sea level, while similar outfalls ordinarily discharge in depths between 50–100 m below sea level
- a 1988 civil engineering report recommended that the pipeline be extended 5.8 km offshore, so that it is outside of the bounds of the reef and so that dilution and mixing may be improved
- increased nutrient and contaminant load from the outfall facility may reduce water quality in the area and increase the likelihood of future algal blooms.

²⁵ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 92 from principal petitioner, Kim Allen, 12 June 2023, p. 2.

2.40 The Minister for Water’s [response](#) disputes many of the claims made by Mr Allen, particularly in reference to:

- infrastructure:

The pipelines are less than halfway through their 100-year design life, and the most recent inspections indicate both are in very good condition with a very low likelihood of failure.²⁶

- population growth and its impacts on wastewater flows:

Planning forecasts indicate the ultimate population will not grow beyond 785,000, based upon projections beyond 2080. The current average daily inflows of wastewater are around 135 megalitres per day (MLD), and this is not projected to exceed 150MLD in future due to the construction of Alkimos WRRF, which will divert flows from fast-growing areas in Perth’s north.²⁷

- the Beenyup Water Resource Recovery Facility’s impact on the environment:

Water Corporation monitors the marine environment surrounding the outfall, including the shore environment as part of the Perth Long-term Ocean Outlet Monitoring program, and the Beenyup WRRF outfall has met the Environmental Quality Objectives established under Ministerial Statement 382.²⁸

2.41 On 14 February 2024, the Committee resolved to finalise its consideration of the petition as the issues raised have been addressed by the Minister for Water.

Petition No. 95—Firearm Act reform

Date tabled	8 August 2023
Tabled paper number	2405
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	5,750
Principal petitioner	Aaron Cross
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Brian Walker MLC
Date finalised	28 February 2024

2.42 This petition urged the Parliament to consider the following proposals before enacting ongoing firearm law reform:

- License shooters instead of individual firearms, in alignment with other states.
- Provide an explanation of how proposed mental health checks would work, including:
 - how they would fit into the mental health system
 - who would pay for them
 - how regional shooters would be accommodated.

²⁶ [Response](#) to Petition No. 92 from Minister for Water, Hon Simone McGurk MLA, 22 December 2023, p. 1.

²⁷ [Response](#) to Petition No. 92 from Minister for Water, Hon Simone McGurk MLA, 22 December 2023, p. 1.

²⁸ [Response](#) to Petition No. 92 from Minister for Water, Hon Simone McGurk MLA, 22 December 2023, p. 2.

- Make no changes to the existing property letter system without consulting the wider body of shooters.
 - Implement no calibre bans without consulting the wider body of shooters.
- 2.43 Submissions were received from the [tabling Member](#), Hon Dr Brian Walker MLC, and the [principal petitioner](#), Aaron Cross.
- 2.44 In his submission, Mr Cross offered a comprehensive list of alternative suggestions in light of consultations with WA Police and the Minister for Police. They include:
- case-by-case exemptions for legitimate needs beyond 10 guns
 - temporary permits for club-supported firearms on private property
 - support multi-calibre firearms to reduce overall gun numbers
 - allow suppressors with strict regulations for safety benefits
 - legal codification of reloading activities and the exemption of inert brass from safe storage
 - introduce grandfathering clauses for new storage requirements
 - consider rural challenges in mental health checks and training.
- 2.45 A short time later, the *Firearms Bill 2024* was introduced in the Legislative Assembly on 21 February 2024.
- 2.46 The Committee’s consideration of the petition was finalised on 28 February 2024 on the ground that the issues raised will be debated in the Legislative Council in due course.

Petition No. 97—Threat to Broome lifestyle and livelihoods

Date tabled	8 August 2023
Tabled paper number	2403
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	478
Principal petitioner	Jan Lewis
Tabling Member	Hon Peter Foster MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

- 2.47 This petition concerned the impact that heavy haulage trucks would have on the liveability of Broome and its tourism sector. It raised matters such as:
- limited public consultation
 - issues with the approvals process by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
 - impact on road infrastructure at rate payers’ expense
 - safety of other road users
 - radioactive material.
- 2.48 The submissions from the [principal petitioner](#) and [tabling Member](#) outlined the petitioners’ concerns, with the principal petitioner stating that:
- [We have] been trying to determine how the decision to approve up to 49 huge heavy haulage mining truck movements to the mine, returning carrying radioactive

material through our town to the Port day and night, every day for more than 30+ years was considered to have no significant impact and made with no public consultation.

...

Road safety is a real concern in the Kimberley, with a significant number of road fatalities every year. There are at least 2 locations on the route between the mine site and Broome Port where the road is regularly flooded in the wet season. If the road is driven over by extremely heavy mining trucks it will quickly be destroyed. Should the tax payer have to pay for such repairs?

...

We are concerned not only about safety, noise, air quality and amenity issues but also the potential impact on one of Broome's major industries – tourism. The tourism industry is a major source of revenue and employment for Broome.²⁹

2.49 The Committee received responses to the petition from the [Shire of Broome](#), [the Minister for Ports](#), and [the Minister for Transport](#). Each addressed all or part of the petitioners' concerns:

- **regarding public consultation**

Shire of Broome:

The Shire has addressed these matters on various occasions through public questions, meetings with members of the public, meetings with [Kimberly Mineral Sands (KMS)] and Main Roads WA as well as assessment and reporting of various studies audits and reports.

Minister for Ports:

As part of its effort to gain trucking approvals, KMS conducted extensive community consultation and has funded initiatives such as advertising programs to educate drivers on interaction with road trains.

Minister for Transport:

Main Roads has had extensive contact with Ms Lewis throughout 2022 and 2023, regarding heavy vehicle operators ... The Agency has also met with Ms Lewis on numerous occasions to further discuss her concerns.

- **regarding the EPA approvals process**

Shire of Broome:

The proposal is consistent with the Shire of Broome's Integrated Planning Framework documents, such as the Economic Development Strategy, Corporate Business Plan and Strategic Community Plan. The Shire of Broome is not however an assessment authority for the proposal.

Minister for Ports:

KMS had received EPA approval to operate its Quad Road Trains at up to 50 round trips per day, eventually delivering up to an estimated 1.6 million tonnes per year.

²⁹ [Submission](#) to petition No. 97 from principal petitioner, Jan Lewis, 25 August 2023.

- **regarding the impact of heavy haulage trucks on Broome's liveability**

Shire of Broome:

The Shire of Broome has no legal capacity to limit vehicle movements or types of vehicles on public roads, this is entirely managed by Main Roads WA approval of vehicle types or through EPA approvals.

Minister for Ports:

To access the port, trucks use the Gubinge Road route, avoiding the main built up area of the town. Speed restrictions are in force on these vehicles on sections of this route where local traffic interactions are heaviest.

Minister for Transport:

Long-term Broome residents will recall that freight traffic originally passed through the townsite of Broome. As a result, the Shire of Broome and local community were in favour of the construction of a heavy haulage bypass of the townsite. The Broome Highway Realignment (Gubinge Road route) was subsequently adopted by the Shire of Broome and Main Roads as the future heavy haulage route for the town of Broome and was included in Town Planning Scheme Amendment No 4 (1999).

...

While Gubinge Drive is relatively new and built to a high standard to accommodate freight vehicles, the older section of Port Drive (located within the industrial area) is being progressively upgraded to cater for changing traffic demands.

- **regarding road safety, damage, and maintenance costs**

Shire of Broome:

the Shire has advocated to ensure that issues raised by the community have been considered by both Main Roads Western Australia (Main Road WA) and Kimberley Mineral Sands (KMS) when developing plans and issuing approvals for the use of roads in Broome for Heavy Haulage.

Minister for Transport:

traffic volumes and observations indicate that [Port Drive] is currently operating within its design capacities.

...

Main Roads has acknowledged the road safety concerns raised by the community and has recently completed Road Safety Audits on both Gubinge Road and Port Drive. The issues that were identified in the Road Safety Report are now being addressed...

- **regarding radioactive material**

Shire of Broome:

[The EPA] has confirmed that the materials being transported present no risk to the community in the volumes and method of transportation, and that the materials being transported are not radioactive.³⁰

2.50 Advice from the Minister for Transport confirmed that the KMS project was the result of long-term planning that included the intention to use Gubinge Road as a heavy haulage bypass to the Broome townsite. Gubinge Road was constructed with the express purpose of avoiding many of the issues raised by the petition.

2.51 On 14 August 2024, the Committee finalised its consideration of the petition as it was satisfied that the Ministers’ and Shire’s responses addressed the issues raised.

Petition No. 101—Midwest aeromedical rescue helicopter

Date tabled	16 August 2023
Tabled paper number	2443
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	1,046
Principal petitioner	Ian Geoffrey Dempsey
Tabling Member	Hon Martin Aldridge MLC
Date finalised	14 February 2024

2.52 This petition called for the expansion of the State’s Emergency Rescue Helicopter Service through the addition of aircraft in Geraldton and across regional WA. The petition referred to:

- findings by the Coroner following 4 deaths at Mount Augustus National Park
- the Chief Health Officer’s Inquiry into Aeromedical Services in Western Australia
- other research which support the need for more rescue helicopters.

2.53 Submissions were received from both the [tabling Member](#), Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, and the [principal petitioner](#), Ian Dempsey.

2.54 Mr Dempsey submitted that 10% of Western Australians are not serviced by an emergency rescue helicopter service, including the entirety of the Midwest and Goldfields regions.

Should an [Emergency Rescue Helicopter Service] be required, one would be despatched from Jandakot or Bunbury, which are at least two hours flying time. The helicopter would then have to refuel before attending he [sic] incident.³¹

³⁰ [Response](#) to Petition No. 97 from Shire of Broome Director Development Services, Keith Williams, 26 February 2024; [Response](#) to Petition No. 97 from Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 19 June 2024; [Response](#) to Petition No. 97 from Minister for Ports, Hon David Michael MLA, 23 July 2024.

³¹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 101 from principal petitioner, Ian Dempsey, 15 September 2023, p. 1.

- 2.55 Referring to findings of an Edith Cown University report, Mr Dempsey pointed out that:
 one in three trauma fatalities in the Midwest may have been avoided by the timely availability of a dedicated rescue helicopter service.³²
- 2.56 Hon Martin Aldridge MLC cited research conducted by Dr David Ford,³³ that helicopter emergency medical services ‘markedly improves the survival prospects of severely injured trauma patients in rural locations situated within 50 to 250 kilometres of Perth by as much as 50 per cent.’³⁴
- 2.57 The [response](#) from the Minister for Emergency Services, Hon Stephen Dawson MLC advised that the Government had recently invested \$26.7 million in 3 upgraded, Perth-based, replacement helicopters. While this upgrade does not increase the number of emergency rescue helicopters or change where they are stationed, the new helicopters have an increased operational range of 75% or 350 km, extended to 700 km with the need to refuel.
- 2.58 The Minister concluded his response by stating:
 While I appreciate there is a genuine desire for a Midwest-based ERHS, I note that resource allocation in emergency services must be considered in the context of delivering the best possible long-term emergency service delivery to the whole State.³⁵
- 2.59 In consideration of the Minister’s response, the Committee resolved on 14 February 2024 to finalise its consideration of this petition.

Petition No. 102—Western Australian Truth-Telling and Justice Commission

Date tabled	29 August 2023
Tabled paper number	2463
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	734
Principal petitioner	Heidi Mippy
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024

- 2.60 This petition called for the establishment of a Truth-Telling and Justice Commission, to acknowledge and document First Nations peoples’ experiences and perspectives, as well as provide an opportunity for them to share their culture, heritage, and history with broader society.

³² [Submission](#) to Petition No. 101 from principal petitioner, Ian Dempsey, 15 September 2023, p. 1.

³³ David Ford et al, ‘[Does direct helicopter retrieval improve survival of severely injured trauma patients from rural Western Australia?](#)’, *Air Medical Journal*, 2020, 39(3):183–188.

³⁴ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 101 from tabling Member, Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, 15 September 2023, p. 2.

³⁵ [Response](#) to Petition No. 101 from Minister for Emergency Services, Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, 13 December 2023, p. 2.

2.61 A [submission](#) in support of the petition was received from Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC which provided some further context. In particular, that the Truth-Telling Justice Commission would:

make broad recommendations about practical action and reforms to address systemic racial issues

and:

help cut through the misinformation around the intergenerational trauma experienced by First Nations people and highlight their incredible resilience.³⁶

2.62 As the Committee did not receive a submission from Ms Mippy, the Committee resolved on 13 March 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 103—A calling for rejection of the Eastlink Highway based on irreparable harm to environment, heritage and communities

Date tabled	29 August 2023
Tabled paper number	2464
Type of petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	484
Principal petitioner	Rethink Eastlink
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

2.63 This petition opposed the proposed EastLink Highway (Highway) on the basis that it would cause 'irreparable and irreversible harm to environment, heritage, health, local businesses and [would divide] communities along its route'.³⁷

2.64 In their [submission](#), Rethink Eastlink challenged the necessity of the Highway, citing traffic data that showed significantly lower usage than the proposed Highway's capacity:

The new Highway is rated for 80,000 vehicles per day. However, the current traffic counts ... indicate that the initial 10km ... records only 1/8th that at ~11,000 vehicles per day.³⁸

2.65 A focus of the principal petitioner's submission was the project's environmental impact and the effect of clearing on endangered species and ecosystems:

Using the interim design and the recently completed Northlink Highway as blueprint we estimate a minimum of 700Ha of bush will be levelled for this road.³⁹

³⁶ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 102 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, 1 November 2023, p. 1.

³⁷ Legislative Council. [Petition No. 103—A calling for rejection of the Eastlink Highway based on irreparable harm to environment, heritage and communities](#) (TP 2464), tabled 29 August 2023.

³⁸ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 103 from principal petitioner, Rethink Eastlink, 27 September 2023, p. 1.

³⁹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 103 from principal petitioner, Rethink Eastlink, 27 September 2023, p. 1.

- 2.66 In regard to their lifestyle and economic concerns, Rethink Eastlink explained that:
- The people who live in the Hills routinely voice that they chose the location for its rural and semi-rural lifestyle, where quiet and green spaces are very important and big roads with dense developments are not wanted.⁴⁰
- 2.67 In relation to concerns about the project's cost and a lack of transparency, Rethink Eastlink noted that the business case, despite being publicly funded, 'will not be released to the public.'⁴¹
- 2.68 The [tabling Member](#) added his full support to the petitioners' call to reject the Highway. Citing his consultation with various community groups, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC identified several ecological values which would be impacted by the project. He agreed with the principal petitioner's claim that the project is not justified, stating:
- If EastLink is not constructed, it is unclear there would be any significant increase in local traffic. Eastlink is therefore largely a self-justifying project to facilitate more traffic in the area by enabling new homes on the outer fringe of the metropolitan area in a manner inconsistent with good metropolitan planning.⁴²
- 2.69 In her [response](#) to the petition, Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, advised that planning and development work on the project is now complete and has resulted in the Highway's Ultimate Design Concept. While the Ultimate Design Concept was not publicly available to the Committee, the Minister confirmed the 3 stages to the project are:
- Reid Highway upgrades between Tonkin Highway and Great Northern Highway;
 - Roe Highway upgrades between Great Northern Highway and Clayton Street in Bellevue; and
 - Perth Adelaide National Highway between Roe Highway/ Toodyay Road intersection and the town of Northam.⁴³
- 2.70 The Minister advised that '[e]nvironmental assessments are a key requirement for future project stages' and that Eastlink must comply with all State and Commonwealth regulatory environmental frameworks.⁴⁴
- 2.71 In regard to funding, she advised that:
- A Business Case will be submitted to Infrastructure Western Australia and Infrastructure Australia to guide future investment decisions
- ... it is unlikely that any funding for the project, which is dependent on Commonwealth contributions, will be sourced within the short to medium term.⁴⁵
- 2.72 With the Minister's response having clarified that the project aligns with Government requirements and her assurance that environmental assessment processes will occur, the Committee concluded its consideration of the petition on 14 August 2024.

⁴⁰ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 103 from principal petitioner, Rethink Eastlink, 27 September 2023, p. 2.

⁴¹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 103 from principal petitioner, Rethink Eastlink, 27 September 2023, p. 2.

⁴² [Submission](#) to Petition No. 103 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, 1 November 2023, p. 2.

⁴³ [Response](#) to Petition No. 103 from Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 20 June 2024, p. 1.

⁴⁴ [Response](#) to Petition No. 103 from Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 20 June 2024, p. 2.

⁴⁵ [Response](#) to Petition No. 103 from Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 20 June 2024, p. 2.

Petition No. 105—Electoral reform

Date tabled	12 September 2023
Tabled paper number	2485
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	2,405
Principal petitioner	Robert Dines
Tabling Member	Hon Neil Thomson MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024

- 2.73 This petition raised concerns about recent electoral changes affecting regional Western Australians. Particularly, amendments made to the *Electoral Act 1907 (Act)* which would remove the regional districts of North West Central and Moore and add the district of Mid-West. The petition called for the establishment of a select committee to inquire into the issue and the Government’s amendments to the *Act*.
- 2.74 On the Committee’s review of the changes between the 2019 distribution and the 2023 distribution, it found that there had been twelve changes to Legislative Assembly districts:
- six removed (Burns Beach, Mirrabooka, Moore, North West Central, Wanneroo, and Willagee)
 - six added (Bibra Lake, Girrawheen, Mid-West, Mindarie, Oakford, and Secret Harbour).
- 2.75 All Legislative Council regions have been removed, replaced by a whole of State electorate⁴⁶ consisting of 37 members.⁴⁷ Candidates are now required to receive at least 2.63% of first preference votes to be elected.⁴⁸ If all vacancies are not filled by candidates meeting this quota, other methods will be used to elect candidates with fewer votes than the quota.⁴⁹
- 2.76 All changes will take effect for the first time in the 2025 WA State election.
- 2.77 The [submission](#) from the tabling Member, Hon Neil Thomson MLC, outlined reasons why a select committee ought to be established, including that it:
- would provide more balance in the assessment and consideration of issues
 - would provide an opportunity for bi-partisan support
 - could explore a wider range of issues, being not limited by constrained terms of reference
 - could look into best practices in other countries.
- 2.78 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the principal petitioner, it resolved on 13 March 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition on this ground.

⁴⁶ [Electoral Act 1907](#) s 16C(1).

⁴⁷ [Constitution Acts Amendment Act 1899](#) s 5(1).

⁴⁸ [Electoral Act 1907](#) sch 1 item 3.

⁴⁹ [Electoral Act 1907](#) sch 1 items 4–17.

Petition No. 106—Lack of accessible dental services in Hedland

Date tabled	12 September 2023
Tabled paper number	2484
Type of petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	70
Principal petitioner	Roger Higgins
Tabling Member	Hon Peter Foster MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024

2.79 Petition No. 106 requested the Legislative Council investigate dental services for school aged children and the wider Hedland community, with the aim that the State Government:

- provide regular school dental services
- reduce staff shortages
- open a permanent space for Government dental services that is accessible to everyone.

2.80 A [submission](#) from the tabling Member, Hon Peter Foster MLC, advised that:

- dental services in Hedland are experiencing a lack of available staff to operate the school clinics regularly
- anecdotal evidence from the principal petitioner is that parents are taking their children to him for dental work that would normally be completed by the school dental service
- school children may be missing out on necessary dental hygiene services
- Hedland residents would prefer to see a permanent dental space, rather than the long-standing temporary caravan from which dental services are currently provided.

2.81 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the principal petitioner, the Committee resolved on 13 March 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 107—Kimberley crime

Date tabled	21 September 2023
Tabled paper number	2616
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	1,032
Principal petitioner	Troy Gibson
Tabling Member	Hon Neil Thomson MLC
Date finalised	14 February 2024

2.82 This petition called for the Government to address high crime rates in the Kimberly. It requested an increase in policing, victim support, and mental health support in the area, a full review of child protection services, and asked for an announcement of the opening date for a regional juvenile detention facility.

2.83 The submissions from the [principal petitioner](#) and [tabling Member](#) expressed concern and frustration with the increasing crime rates across the Kimberly region. Mr Gibson outlined how an under-resourced police force contributes to perpetrators rarely getting charged and

results in continued perpetration, no compensation for victims, and an adverse impact on tourism. Hon Neil Thomson MLC elaborated on a complex causality resulting from intergenerational disadvantage, the effects of alcohol and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, youth suicide, and poor school attendance as contributing factors.

2.84 In his [response](#), the Attorney General outlined a number of Department of Justice initiatives which have been implemented in recent years to combat youth offending and high crime rates in the Kimberly. These included the:

- 2020 Commitment to Aboriginal Youth Wellbeing
- Kimberley Juvenile Justice Strategy (KJJS)
- North Regional TAFE alternative learning program
- establishment of the Immediate Response Safe Space
- Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee.

2.85 In regard to the efficacy of these initiatives, the Attorney General said:

Initiatives undertaken by the KJJS support [the priorities developed by the Kimberley Community and Crime Forums],⁵⁰ and it is anticipated this work ... will assist in mitigating the issues contained in this recent petition.⁵¹

2.86 The response from the Minister for Police, [Hon Paul Papalia MLA](#), outlined how an increase in policing and enforcement has seen a decline in burglary, motor vehicle theft, and general stealing related offences between 2021–22 and 2022–23.

The WA Police Force advise agency initiatives including the construction of a District Support Facility in Broome, engagement with key partners in the region (Youth Justice, Department of Education, Department of Communities and the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre), Police and Community Youth Centres and the Banned Drinkers Register are all aimed to reduce crime, limit the incidence of alcohol-fuelled violence and assist vulnerable children and young people at-risk.⁵²

2.87 In consideration of both Ministers' responses, the Committee resolved on 14 February 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition, on the grounds that it is satisfied with the Government's engagement with the issue and believes that the issues are adequately being dealt with.

⁵⁰ Kimberley Community & Crime Forums, [Together we can find solutions](#), 2022, accessed 9 July 2024.

⁵¹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 107 from Attorney General, Hon John Quigley MLA, 12 December 2023, p. 2.

⁵² [Response](#) to Petition No. 107 from Minister for Police, Hon Paul Papalia MLA, 14 December 2023.

Petition No. 108—Enforcing statutory planning scheme- Binningup Golf Course and community land

Date tabled	10 October 2023	30 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2687	2888
Type of petition	E-petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	76	16
Principal petitioner	Fred Flanagan	Stuart Morgan
Tabling Member	Hon Ben Dawkins MLC	Hon Ben Dawkins MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024	13 March 2024

- 2.88 This petition concerned the construction of a golf course within the Shire of Harvey. Contrary to conditions placed on the development, only a 9-hole golf course was constructed (rather than 18-holes) and the Community Open Space was vested to the Shire of Harvey (rather than the Community Association).
- 2.89 The petition therefore requested the Legislative Council urge the Minister for Planning to:
- enforce the requirements
 - direct the Shire of Harvey to do so, or
 - refer the matter to the State Administrative Tribunal.
- 2.90 No submissions were received by the Committee and the petition was finalised on 13 March 2024.

Petition No. 109—The introduction of daylight saving time in Western Australia

Date tabled	11 October 2023
Tabled paper number	2695
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	1,030
Principal petitioner	Brett Tucker
Tabling Member	Hon Wilson Tucker MLC
Date finalised	15 May 2024

- 2.91 This petition called for a referendum on the introduction of daylight savings in WA, pointing to its economic, health, and lifestyle benefits.
- 2.92 Submissions were received from both the [tabling Member](#), Hon Wilson Tucker MLC and the [principal petitioner](#), Brett Tucker.
- 2.93 In their call for daylight savings, the petition and submissions pointed to its:
- Economic benefits: There is an increase in consumer spending in retail, hospitality, and tourism sectors, as people have more time to engage in outdoor activities and leisure pursuits after work. There is also a closer alignment with the operating hours of east coast businesses, which improves productivity of WA's key industries and sectors. An

increase in ambient light is also correlated to a reduction in the rates of some crimes, such as robberies.

- Health benefits: Exposure to natural light has been linked to improved mood, mental health, and overall well-being. The extended daylight after working hours also enables more time for outdoor physical activities, leading to a more active lifestyle and potentially reducing the risk of various health conditions associated with sedentary behaviour.
- Lifestyle benefits: Extended daylight hours promote the adoption of outdoor activities, exercise, and social interaction.

2.94 The [response](#) from the Premier was limited, addressing only the economic argument. It countered the economic benefits by pointing to WA’s alignment with most parts of Asia, hosting a quarter of the world’s population and includes many of WA’s major trading partners. The Premier further clarified that the Government does not support the implementation of daylight-saving time in WA, in alignment with the results of past referenda on the issue in 1975, 1984, 1992, and 2009.

2.95 On 15 May 2024, the Committee resolved to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 111—Muja Coal Fired Power Station closure

Date tabled	17 October 2023
Tabled paper number	2719
Type of petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	11
Principal petitioner	Alan W Read
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024

2.96 Petition No. 111 opposed the unequal treatment of long-term contract employees at coal-fired power stations in Collie after the State Government’s announcement that it would be closing these stations. Specifically, it pointed to large differences between the financial payments and opportunities provided to Synergy employees, as compared to contract employees; many of whom had been working there for over 20 years. It requested the Legislative Council champion the Government to give:

- embedded contractor employees the same redundancy entitlement amounts as Synergy employees under the *Synergy Sites Enterprise Agreement 2022* pt 2.2.3
- redundancy payments preferentially to those who wish to change jobs or proceed to early retirement
- retention payments to embedded contractor employees, as were offered to Synergy employees.

2.97 No submissions were received from the principal petitioner or tabling Member. As a result, the Committee resolved on 13 March 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 112—Say no to race-dividing 'Voice' in WA Constitution

Date tabled	7 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2775
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	10,266
Principal petitioner	Sherry Sufi
Tabling Member	Hon Nick Goiran MLC
Date finalised	14 February 2024

2.98 This petition called for the Legislative Council to reject any legislation seeking to amend the WA Constitution to include a 'Voice' to the Parliament. The petition also raised concern with the Premier not:

- disclosing advice he had received regarding the implications that a Federal Voice to the Australian Parliament would have on WA
- committing to reject the creation of a Voice to the WA Parliament.

2.99 A [joint submission](#) from the tabling Member and principal petitioner requested that the Government 'provide an unequivocal commitment not to enshrine a 'Voice' into the WA Constitution',⁵³ noting support of the idea within the Government by Ministers Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA and Hon Stephen Dawson MLC.

2.100 The joint submission also pointed to existing mechanisms in-place, including:

- recognition of indigenous people in the Western Australian Constitution since 2015
- the Aboriginal Advisory Council, which provides advice on matters relating to the interests and well-being of persons of Aboriginal descent.

2.101 On [referral](#) by the Premier, a [response](#) from the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs stated that:

I am unaware of any proposal being put to the WA Government about changing the WA Constitution.

...

any future efforts to improve the efficacy of existing representative mechanisms could similarly be achieved through ordinary administrative or legislative processes.⁵⁴

2.102 Following the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs' response, the Committee resolved to finalise its consideration of the petition on 14 February 2024.

⁵³ [Joint submission](#) to Petition No. 112 from tabling Member, Hon Nick Goiran MLC and principal petitioner, Sherry Sufi, 5 December 2023, p. 1.

⁵⁴ [Response](#) to Petition No. 112 from Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Hon Dr Tony Buti MLA, 15 January 2024, p. 1.

Petition No. 113—The new Women and Babies Hospital location

Date tabled	7 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2774
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	4,792
Principal petitioner	Joanne Beedie
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC
Date finalised	17 April 2024

2.103 This petition called for a reversal of the Government’s decision to change the location of the new Women and Babies Hospital from the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre to the Fiona Stanley Hospital precinct in Murdoch. The petition highlighted that best practice dictates the new hospital be co-located with a tertiary paediatric service, such as the Perth Children's Hospital.

2.104 The [submission](#) from the principal petitioner, Joanne Beedie, Chief Executive Officer of Helping Little Hands, outlined the following issues associated with the relocation:

- Best practice dictates that the Government co-locate at least one tertiary maternity and neonatal service alongside a tertiary paediatric service. This can only be achieved in WA by co-locating the new hospital alongside the Perth Children’s Hospital.
- The new location would create unnecessary patient movement, separation of mothers from their babies, reduce safety derived from the continuity of care, increase costs for the health system, care providers, and families.

2.105 Ms Beedie references 3 documents that have been developed in response to the decision:

- Government of Western Australia, [Women and Babies Hospital Project: Clinical Consultation Report](#), 17 November 2023.
- A paper prepared by Perth Children’s Hospital & Neonatology Clinicians on the Location of the New Women’s and Babies Hospital, November 2023.
- Infrastructure Western Australia, [Review of the WA Government's decision to proceed with construction of the new Women and Babies Hospital within the Fiona Stanley Hospital precinct](#), July 2023.

2.106 The Minister for Health’s [response](#) explained that the decision to relocate the new hospital was made following consideration of many factors. In particular:

As planning progressed for the new hospital it became clear that building on the QEIIIMC site would cause significant disruption and risk to patients, their families and staff accessing QEIIIMC. It would also lead to extended timelines to delivery, and inadequacy of parking availability. Every possible effort was made to progress construction at QEIIIMC but co-location is not possible due to the significant identified disruptions and risks.⁵⁵

2.107 In support of the new development site, the Minister highlighted:

The new location supports and facilitates the provision of safe and high quality obstetric, gynaecological, and neonatal care for the women, families, and

⁵⁵ [Response](#) to Petition No. 113 from Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, 21 February 2024, p. 1.

communities of Western Australia. It also ensures rapid access to a state-of-the-art Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at the existing FSH, for women requiring life-saving care should they require it. The FSH precinct is close to Jandakot Airport, providing easier access for regional patients needing to utilise emergency services at the hospital. It is also within walking distance of Murdoch Station and provides quality public transport options for staff and visitors.⁵⁶

2.108 In consideration of the Minister’s response, the Committee resolved on 17 April 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 114—Patient Assisted Travel Scheme

Date tabled	9 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2790
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	1,009
Principal petitioner	Casey Petera
Tabling Member	Hon Martin Aldridge MLC
Date finalised	12 June 2024

2.109 Petition No. 114 requested several improvements to the State’s Patient Assisted Travel Scheme (PATS), including:

- an increase in fuel subsidies and accommodation
- an expansion to the eligibility for patient escorts
- an improvement in the taxi voucher system and processing times
- the extension of PATS to include dental and allied health
- assistance for families experiencing a financial burden from taking time off work.

2.110 Submissions were received from [Hon Martin Aldridge MLC](#) and [Ms Petera](#) which built on the suggested improvements. In his submission, Hon Martin Aldridge MLC included reference to the [Report on the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme in Western Australia](#),⁵⁷ stating:

It is disheartening to note that, even after eight years, very few of [the Report’s] recommendations have been implemented.⁵⁸

2.111 In her [response](#), the Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA outlined the Government’s improvements to PATS over recent years, including increases to accommodation subsidies and an expansion of patient escorts. The Minister also noted additional funding of \$32.5 million over 4 years in the 2024–25 State Budget. The Minister did not specify how the additional funding would be allocated however, or whether it would address the issues outlined in the petition.

2.112 In consideration of the Minister’s response, the Committee resolved on 12 June 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

⁵⁶ [Response](#) to Petition No. 113 from Minister for Health, Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson MLA, 21 February 2024, p. 1.

⁵⁷ Standing Committee on Public Administration, report 25, [Report on the Patient Assisted Travel Scheme in Western Australia](#), Western Australia, Legislative Council, June 2015.

⁵⁸ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 114 from tabling Member, Hon Martin Aldridge MLC, 10 December 2023, p. 1.

Petition No. 115—Extending consultation period on proposed firearms reforms

Date tabled	14 November 2023	16 November 2023	29 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2815	2832	2865
Type of petition	E-petition	Paper petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	12,672	105	160
Principal petitioner	Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc	Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc	Sporting Shooters Association of Australia WA Inc
Tabling Member	Hon Colin de Grussa MLC	Hon Colin de Grussa MLC	Hon Colin de Grussa MLC
Date finalised	28 February 2024	28 February 2024	28 February 2024

- 2.113 On 17 October 2023, the State Government released a Firearms Bill Consultation Paper (Consultation Paper) for public review and comment.⁵⁹
- 2.114 This petition requested the Legislative Council urge the State Government to extend the period for consultation from one month to 3. The consultation period in question ran from 17 October 2023 to 14 November 2023.⁶⁰ The petition requests a longer consultation period so that ‘stakeholders have the appropriate time to understand the Government’s proposed changes and provide feedback’.⁶¹
- 2.115 A comprehensive [submission](#) in support of the petition was received from the tabling Member, Hon Colin de Grussa MLC. No submission was received from principal petitioner, Sporting Shooters Association of Western Australia WA Inc.
- 2.116 Hon Colin de Grussa MLC’s submission raised the following issues:
- the Government notified a wide range of firearms community groups but did not engage directly with firearms licence holders
 - 4,200 submissions were received by Western Australia Police in relation to the Consultation Paper
 - ‘[a] consultation period in line with the scale of the reforms, providing all members of the community an opportunity to offer considered feedback should be used’⁶²
 - errors in the Consultation Paper, including an error as to the number of firearms licensable to individuals who fall under the new ‘Target Shooting’ or ‘Hunting’ licence categories.
- 2.117 On 21 February 2024, the [Firearms Bill 2024](#) was introduced in the Legislative Assembly.
- 2.118 The petition was finalised on 28 February 2024, on the ground that the matters raised will be debated in the Legislative Council in due course.

⁵⁹ Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier, and Hon Paul Papalia MLA, Minister for Police, [Public safety enhanced under historic firearm reform](#), media statement, 17 October 2023.

⁶⁰ Hon Roger Cook MLA, Premier, and Hon Paul Papalia MLA, Minister for Police, [Historic reform to deliver toughest firearms laws in the nation](#), media statement, 16 October 2023.

⁶¹ Legislative Council, [Petition No. 115—Extending Consultation Period on Proposed Firearms Reforms](#) (TP 2832 and 2865), tabled 16 November 2023 and 29 November 2023.

⁶² [Submission](#) to Petition No. 115 from tabling Member, Hon Colin de Grussa MLC, 5 December 2023, p. 2.

Petition No. 116—Assaults on retail and fast-food workers

Date tabled	14 November 2023	14 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2813	2814
Type of petition	E-petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	1,786	7,839
Principal petitioner	Benjamin Harris	Benjamin Harris
Tabling Member	Hon Kate Doust MLC	Hon Kate Doust MLC
Date finalised	14 February 2024	14 February 2024

- 2.119 This petition called for an increase to maximum penalties for assaults on retail and fast-food workers in response to frequent incidents of aggression and violence by customers. It also sought to bring WA in-line with other states, which have taken a stronger stance on the issue.
- 2.120 Submissions were received from the [tabling Member](#), Hon Kate Doust MLC, and from Benjamin Harris, [principal petitioner](#), General Secretary of the Shop, Distributive & Allied Employees Association (SDA).
- 2.121 The submissions explained that there has been an increase in instances of abuse and violence towards retail and fast-food workers in recent years, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing cost of living pressures.
- 2.122 The tabling Member’s submission points to a 38.8% increase in retail assaults in WA between 2014 to 2022, along with the concerning overrepresentation of underage workers in these industries.
- 2.123 The principal petitioner’s submission adds that 12.5% of SDA Members have been assaulted at least once in their workplace in the last 12 months, up 56% from 2021. Other states, including New South Wales, South Australia, and the Northern Territory have recently introduced stronger penalties to deter further assaults against essential workers.
- 2.124 A [response](#) from the Office of the Attorney General by Chief of Staff, Ms Wendy Pryer advised that the Attorney General concurs with the premise of the petition and states that:
- [t]he Cook Government is currently considering the terms of Petition No. 116, along with potential legislative reform to address the issues raised.⁶³
- 2.125 As a result, the Committee resolved to finalise its consideration of the petition on 14 February 2024, on the ground that the issues raised are being adequately dealt with by the Government.
- 2.126 The legislative reform alluded to by the Attorney General was passed through the Parliament in early 2024,⁶⁴ receiving royal assent on 14 May 2024.

⁶³ [Response](#) to Petition No. 116 from Ms Wendy Pryer, Chief of Staff to the Attorney General, 7 February 2024.

⁶⁴ [Criminal Code Amendment Bill 2024](#).

Petition No. 117—Firearm reform

Date tabled	29 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2864
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	1,577
Principal petitioner	Anthony Petzer
Tabling Member	Hon Ben Dawkins MLC
Date finalised	28 February 2024

2.127 This petition requested the Legislative Council urge the State Government to:

- recognise that the Law Reform Commission report, *Project 105 - Review of the Firearms Act 1973 (WA)*,⁶⁵ does not recommend 'legislative change that could make it more difficult for firearms users to abide by the law'⁶⁶
- guarantee that amendment of the *Firearms Act 1973* will not cause any firearms licence holders to lose their licence and will be transferred to the appropriate new licence type
- ensure the definition of 'primary producer' includes all those with an interest in the land, the operating entity, or who operate the farm for a family member, making them eligible for a Primary Producer License
- guarantee primary producers being treated for depression or clinical anxiety not be ineligible for a firearms licence
- recognise that situational mental health effects associated with Primary Production ought to be distinguished from clinical mental health conditions for the purpose of eligibility checks.

2.128 No submissions were received from the tabling Member or principal petitioner.

2.129 On 21 February 2024, the [Firearms Bill 2024](#) was introduced in the Legislative Assembly.

2.130 The Committee resolved to finalise its consideration of the petition on 28 February 2024, on the ground that the matters raised will be debated in the Legislative Council in due course.

⁶⁵ Law Reform Commission of Western Australia (LRCWA), [Review of the Firearms Act 1973 \(WA\): Project 105 Final Report](#), LRCWA, 2016, accessed 12 March 2024, p. 9.

⁶⁶ Legislative Council, [Petition No. 117—Firearm Reform](#) (TP 2864), tabled 29 November 2023.

Petition No. 118—Building industry and stimulus grants

Date tabled	29 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2863
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	421
Principal petitioner	John Whinnen
Tabling Member	Hon Ben Dawkins MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024

- 2.131 This petition called for an inquiry into the regulatory framework of the WA building industry. It points to 2 main issues which have caused an increase in homelessness, mental health problems, marriage and family breakdowns, and suicidal ideation. Those issues are:
- the oversupply of government stimulus grants during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - builders taking on more clients than they had the capacity to handle.
- 2.132 No submissions were received from the tabling Member or principal petitioner.
- 2.133 As a result, the Committee resolved on 13 March 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 119—Protect the wetland in the Perth Cultural Centre

Date tabled	30 November 2023
Tabled paper number	2883
Type of petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	328
Principal petitioner	Patrick Cullen
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC
Date finalised	13 March 2024

- 2.134 This petition called for the protection of the wetland at the Perth Cultural Centre. The wetland is the last cultural reminder of the original landscape in the precinct and contributes to the biodiversity of the local ecosystem. It provides numerous benefits to the community including as a living education resource and meeting place.
- 2.135 The Committee notes that it was reported in September 2023 that the wetland would be removed as part of a \$35 million redevelopment of Perth's Cultural Centre.⁶⁷ It was later confirmed that the wetland would not be rebuilt, and would instead be converted into a thoroughfare to link Beaufort Street with the Perth Cultural Centre.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Kate Leaver, '[Perth's urban wetland scrapped in \\$35m cultural centre redevelopment](#)', ABC News, 5 September 2023, accessed 14 March 2024.

⁶⁸ Kate Leaver, '[Construction delays on \\$35 million Perth Cultural Centre revamp cause headaches for businesses](#)', ABC News, 31 January 2024, accessed 14 March 2024.

2.136 The tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC provided a detailed [submission](#) which championed the wetland’s preservation. In it, he stated:

The [Perth Cultural Centre] wetlands are a unique space in our city, providing access to wetlands plants and animals in the heart of the city. There is nothing within easy walking distance that replicates the experience.

...

Despite the relatively short span of time the wetlands have been in place, they are a much-loved part of the city and will be sadly missed.⁶⁹

2.137 No submission was received from the principal petitioner.

2.138 As a result, the Committee decided on 13 March 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 120—Julimar Forest becoming a national park

Date tabled	27 February 2024	19 June 2024
Tabled paper number	2973	3258
Type of petition	E-petition	Paper petition
Number of signatures	2,819	2,378
Principal petitioner	Sharon Richards	Sharon Richards
Tabling Member	Hon Darren West MLC	Hon Darren West MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024	14 August 2024

2.139 This petition sought to have the Julimar State Forest (Forest) classified as a national park to protect the Forest's unique ecosystems.

2.140 On behalf of the principal petitioner, Julimar Conservation and Forest Alliance (JCFA) provided a [submission](#) which outlined examples of the Forest’s biodiversity and its value in countering the effects of climate change:

As major carbon sinks, forests play a crucial role in combatting climate change. By destroying or damaging Julimar State Forest, a crucial mechanism is removed for storing carbon in the future.⁷⁰

2.141 JCFA provided detail as to how:

- revegetation offset programs cannot replace old-growth forests
- access to biodiverse natural environments has benefits on our mental, physical, and spiritual health and wellbeing.

2.142 JCFA also outlined how national park status will:

- ensure appropriate management planning is undertaken
- protect waterways
- manage threats to the Forest from mining, feral animals, fire, off-road vehicles, and the spread dieback

⁶⁹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 119 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC, 11 December 2023, pp. 1-2.

⁷⁰ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 120 from Julimar Conservation and Forest Alliance on behalf of the principal petitioner, 7 May 2024.

- help Australia meet its international commitment to achieve protection and conservation of 30% of its land by 2030
- ensure the Government conserve the Forest for the benefit of all.

2.143 In [response](#) to the petition, the Minister for the Environment explained that conversion of all 28,610 hectares of Julimar into a National Park is currently not feasible because Alcoa Corporation hold development rights over 7,580 hectares of the Forest under a State Agreement. Additionally, there are existing and pending exploration licences for mining operators currently in-place.

In summary, Julimar Forest is a significant area for its cultural and recreational values. However, any change in its reservation, including the boundary and tenure arrangements, will require stakeholder consultation and refinement processes.⁷¹

2.144 The Minister addressed specific issues raised by JCFA in their submission, including:

- In relation to the Forest’s biodiversity:

There are 613 hectares of old-growth forest (jarrah and wandoo) mapped in Julimar. While reserved as State forest, the area has had no timber harvesting activities since the mid-1970s and has been managed for conservation for many decades.⁷²

- In relation to National Park status helping Australia meet its international commitments:

The Convention on Biological Diversity has a target to conserve and effectively manage at least 17 percent of terrestrial areas in conservation reserves. A change of tenure to either national park, conservation park or nature reserve would contribute to national targets for a CAR reserve system.⁷³

- In relation to threats to the Forest (such as the Gonneville Nickel-Copper-Platinum Group Element project):

On 16 April 2024, the EPA decided to formally assess the [proposal to mine the Gonneville deposit] as a Public Environmental Review (PER) with an eight-week public review period. Any concerns about the impact of the project on Julimar and surrounding areas will be considered through the PER.⁷⁴

2.145 Following consideration of the Minister’s response, the Committee finalised its consideration of the petition on the basis that although the Government does not support the formation of a Julimar national park, it has several mechanisms in place to protect the Forest.

⁷¹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 120 from Minister for the Environment, Hon Reece Whitby MLA, 18 June 2024, p. 1.

⁷² [Response](#) to Petition No. 120 from Minister for the Environment, Hon Reece Whitby MLA, 18 June 2024, p. 1.

⁷³ [Response](#) to Petition No. 120 from Minister for the Environment, Hon Reece Whitby MLA, 18 June 2024, p. 2.

⁷⁴ [Response](#) to Petition No. 120 from Minister for the Environment, Hon Reece Whitby MLA, 18 June 2024, p. 2.

Petition No. 121—Additional bus for school students from Brunswick to Harvey Senior High School

Date tabled	27 February 2024
Tabled paper number	2974
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	8
Principal petitioner	Casey Blunsdon
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC
Date finalised	29 May 2024

- 2.146 Petition No. 121 requested a second school bus service from Brunswick Junction to Harvey Senior High School to provide access for local students.
- 2.147 A [submission](#) in support of the petition was received from Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC which provided some further context.

I note that there is currently one school bus running between Brunswick Junction and Harvey, so the suggestion that the students go there is not abstract.

However demand for exceeds supply of seats and there is a long waiting list.⁷⁵

- 2.148 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the principal petitioner, the Committee resolved on 29 May 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 122—Reasonable and inclusive eRideable legislation

Date tabled	27 February 2024
Tabled paper number	2975
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	332
Principal petitioner	Michael Bertrand
Tabling Member	Hon Dr Brad Pettitt MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

- 2.149 This petition called on the Government to reform legislation on eRidables to mirror changes in Queensland which permit a greater device weight of 60 kg, and the use of speed limits rather than restrictions on devices' speed capability.
- 2.150 In his [submission](#) to the Committee, the principal petitioner outlined the reforms requested by the petitioners, including:
- legislative reform to increase the maximum allowable weight of eRidable devices from 25 kg to 60 kg and relax size restrictions
 - legislative reform to place 25 km/h speed limits on shared and bicycle paths, without placing any limits on eRidable devices' speed capability

⁷⁵ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 121 from tabling Member, Hon Dr Steve Thomas MLC, 26 April 2024.

- government to do more to encourage the uptake and safe use of eRidables and inform the public on their merits
 - cessation of police enforcement initiatives targeted at overweight devices ridden responsibly.
- 2.151 Responses were received from the [Minister for Road Safety](#), Hon David Michael MLA, and the [Minister for Police](#), Hon Paul Papalia MLA, which addressed legislative reform and police enforcement respectively.
- 2.152 The Minister for Road Safety explained that laws affecting eRidables arose in 2021 in response to their growing popularity and sought to balance the use of devices with rider safety alongside other path and road users.
- 2.153 The Government’s position is summarised by the Minister as follows:
- While I acknowledge that some people want to use a heavier and more powerful eScooter to ride further and faster than is currently possible given the existing restrictions on weight and size, at some point these devices move into a category of being more like a motorcycle than a bicycle. As such, before we allow them onto our roads we need to consider carefully things like rider licensing, device registration and insurance, device safety standards and construction standards. These matters are best progressed in a consistent fashion across all jurisdictions. However, at this stage, not all States and Territories have moved to allow privately owned eScooters on public roads and paths, which indicates that it may be some time before we are in a position to work through all the issues.⁷⁶
- 2.154 The response from the Minister for Police advised that:
- Electric personal transport devices that exceed the weight, overall dimensions, and speed capabilities outlined in the Regulations are classified as unlicensed motor vehicles [and will be impounded]. The WA Police Force has a duty to ensure that the community of Western Australia adheres to the State's laws and to enforce those laws impartially and without bias.⁷⁷
- 2.155 The Committee was satisfied that the Ministerial responses explained the Government’s policy on eRideables. In addition, the Committee noted the Road Safety Commission's *eRideable Post Implementation Review Survey*,⁷⁸ which sought community feedback on recently implemented rules for eRideables, would be published in the near future. On 14 August 2024 the Committee concluded its consideration of Petition No. 122.

⁷⁶ [Response](#) to Petition No. 122 from the Minister for Road Safety, Hon David Michael MLA, 6 June 2024, p. 3.

⁷⁷ [Response](#) to Petition No. 122 from the Minister for Police, Hon Paul Papalia MLA, 15 July 2024.

⁷⁸ Road Safety Commission, [eRideable Post Implementation Review Survey](#), Community Connect, 2022, accessed 17 September 2024.

Petition No. 123—Protection of bushland at Erindale Road Hamersley

Date tabled	28 February 2024
Tabled paper number	2984
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	3,437
Principal petitioner	Marie Giorgi
Tabling Member	Hon Ayor Makur-Chuot MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

2.156 This petition sought to permanently protect 42 hectares of bushland at 179 Erindale Road, Hamersley from development for the following reasons:

- the biodiversity it offers amongst a highly developed urban area
- its utilisation as a habitat for threatened species
- its Aboriginal cultural heritage value has not been assessed
- it provides a number of positive effects on surrounding suburbs (such as cooling temperatures, mitigates air pollution, and providing amenity).

2.157 On behalf of Friends of Erindale Road Bushland, the principal petitioner’s [submission](#) expanded on the issues raised in the petition, including:

- population decline of species:

Loss of Banksia woodland bushland corridors in the Perth metropolitan area and on the Swan Coastal Plain, is having a catastrophic effect on the population decline of many species of native birds and wildlife, some to the point of extinction. Five threatened, six priority, and two specially protected fauna occur within or close to the Banksia attenuata woodlands.

Large, old trees such as those in the Erindale Road bushland (Tuart, Jarrah, Banksia, Acacia) have fundamental importance to native birds, mammals, insects, and other inhabitants, providing complex canopy, large tree crowns, nesting hollows and dead branches, not found in young trees.⁷⁹

- tree canopy decline in the City of Stirling:

The City of Stirling’s Urban Forest Plan’s strategy includes a target of 18% average canopy by 2040. The City is losing four times more canopy than it grows and the most recent figures available have the City’s canopy as averaging 12.6%. Despite the City’s tree planting program, tree canopy continues to decline. Clearing the proposed area of bushland at 179 Erindale Road would result in the loss of 2.57ha of canopy cover (a 350% increase on the average annual loss in the suburb of Hamersley) and would result in the canopy cover in Hamersley dropping to 13.9%, currently 15.2%...⁸⁰

⁷⁹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 123 by principal petitioner, Marie Giorgi, on behalf of Friends of Erindale Road Bushland, 23 April 2024, p. 1.

⁸⁰ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 123 by principal petitioner, Marie Giorgi, on behalf of Friends of Erindale Road Bushland, 23 April 2024, p. 1.

- its history of ownership:

The bushland at 179 Erindale Road Hamersley was, until it was privatised in 1998, Crown Land with critical communication infrastructure providing ABC, SBS, not for profit radio services, emergency services and community broadcasting to 99% of the Australian population through the National Transmission Network. It is now a private, overseas owned monopoly (86% owned by Canada Pension Investment Fund) seeking to profit from the sale of “surplus” land.⁸¹
- 2.158 The Committee received responses from the [Minister for the Environment](#), Hon Reece Whitby MLA, [Minister for Planning](#), Hon John Carey MLA, and the [City of Stirling](#).
- 2.159 The Ministers’ responses explained that a proposal to rezone the site for residential development is currently the subject of an Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) assessment. They also advised that:
- the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions had not identified the area for inclusion into the State’s conservation reserve system
 - the proposal for rezoning Lot 802 and part Lot 803 was also referred to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water for assessment
 - any proposal to develop the land would require amendment to the City of Stirling’s Local Planning Scheme (which requires a separate EPA assessment).
- 2.160 The City confirmed in its response that it ‘support[s] the protection of vegetation at Lot 802, No.179 Erindale Road Hamersley, and Lot 1 and Lot 803, No. 601 Wanneroo Road Hamersley’.⁸² The City did not support the owner’s proposal to rezone the Lots because:
- the City’s Local Biodiversity Strategy seeks to prioritise areas of bushland classified as Locally Significant Natural Areas
 - the City is in the process of updating its Local Planning Scheme No. 4, which reserves the site in similar terms, meaning significant redevelopment cannot occur, ‘effectively preserving the native vegetation’⁸³
 - reclassification of the site to a Local Significant Natural Area is warranted, which precludes its development under the City’s Local Planning Strategy
 - State Planning Policy does not support the clearing of bushland where threatened species are present
 - precedent from the City’s previous rejection of an application to rezone Lot 802.
- 2.161 In consideration of the responses received and in light of the ongoing assessment by the EPA, the Committee finalised its consideration of the petition on 14 August 2024.

⁸¹ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 123 by principal petitioner, Marie Giorgi, on behalf of Friends of Erindale Road Bushland, 23 April 2024, p. 2.

⁸² [Response](#) to Petition No. 123 by Andrew Lefort, Manager City Future, City of Stirling, 17 July 2024, p. 3.

⁸³ [Response](#) to Petition No. 123 by Andrew Lefort, Manager City Future, City of Stirling, 17 July 2024, p. 2.

Petition No. 124—Urgent call for insurance stamp duty reform in Western Australia

Date tabled	12 March 2024
Tabled paper number	3001
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	437
Principal petitioner	Tony Hutchinson
Tabling Member	Hon Neil Thomson MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

2.162 This petition requested a review of the recommendations of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) in its report, *Northern Australian insurance inquiry – final report*, considering recent cost of living challenges. The petition also called for development of a strategy to reduce or remove stamp duty on insurance.

2.163 The [submission](#) from the principal petitioner, a real estate agent in Broome, points to increasing insurance costs as well as fewer home and contents insurers operating in regional areas.⁸⁴ He quoted a WA Business News article which summarised the issue and highlighted:

- rising costs to small businesses and homeowners resulting in underinsurance or no insurance
- the Commonwealth Government’s Cyclone Reinsurance Pool having little impact
- insurers’ profit margins in the north-west having surged
- a call by the ACCC to abolish or rebase the WA Government’s stamp duty on insurance premiums.

2.164 The [tabling Member](#) expressed disappointment that the State Government has benefitted from natural disasters resulting in higher insurance premiums:

the State Government charges more from home owners who live in higher risk locations, which also happen to be some of the most disadvantaged areas in the State, such as the Kimberley region.⁸⁵

2.165 He provided the following solution to the perceived inequity:

It would seem to be reasonable for the State Government – if they are to apply stamp duty to insurance – to do so on an equitable basis. If applied at all, Stamp Duty could be charged on the amount insured (the value of the policy) rather than the differential rate charged by the insurance company based on risk, noting the State Government has no risk associated with the policy.⁸⁶

2.166 The Treasurer, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA provided a [response](#) to the petition in which she pointed to:

- concerns about equity for homeowners in other high-risk areas if insurance duty were to be abolished only for northern WA homeowners

⁸⁴ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 124 from principal petitioner, Tony Hutchinson, 27 May 2024.

⁸⁵ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 124 from tabling Member, Hon Neil Thomson MLC, 27 May 2024, p. 1.

⁸⁶ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 124 from tabling Member, Hon Neil Thomson MLC, 27 May 2024, p. 2.

- in order to maintain State revenue, savings for northern residents would be transferred to other WA homeowners:

Undertaking such a significant reform on a revenue neutral basis would transfer the costs from people with property in regional Western Australia to people with property in other areas, whose insurance premiums would increase.⁸⁷
- a different tax scheme for northern WA would increase insurers' compliance costs, which would be passed onto consumers
- the Australian Government has provided a Cyclone Reinsurance Pool to lower insurance premiums:

the Commonwealth Government established a Cyclone Reinsurance Pool for insurance companies, backed up by an annual \$10 billion guarantee. The pool is designed to lower insurance premium for consumers living in high-risk areas by reducing the cost of reinsurance for insurers, which is a significant component of insurance premiums for home and content insurance policies.⁸⁸
- the WA Government provides subsidies in other areas, which reduces northern WA residents' overall tax burden.

2.167 The Treasurer's response advised that the Government 'continues to monitor its tax settings to ensure it remains fair to all taxpayers.'⁸⁹ The Committee finalised its consideration of the petition on 14 August 2024.

Petition No. 125—End no grounds evictions, and give renters a fair go

Date tabled	12 March 2024
Tabled paper number	3002
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	205
Principal petitioner	Pierre Marais
Tabling Member	Hon Wilson Tucker MLC
Date finalised	29 May 2024

2.168 This petition called for the inclusion of a ban on no-grounds evictions to the [*Residential Tenancies Amendment Bill 2023*](#).

2.169 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the tabling Member or principal petitioner, the Committee resolved on 29 May 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

⁸⁷ [Response](#) to Petition No. 124 from Treasurer, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 1 August 2024, p. 1.

⁸⁸ [Response](#) to Petition No. 124 from Treasurer, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 1 August 2024, p. 2.

⁸⁹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 124 from Treasurer, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 1 August 2024, p. 2.

Petition No. 126—Giving young people a voice

Date tabled	13 March 2024
Tabled paper number	3007
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	15
Principal petitioner	Stuart Morgan
Tabling Member	Hon Ben Dawkins MLC
Date finalised	29 May 2024

- 2.170 This petition called to enfranchise those aged 16 years and older to vote in WA State elections, expanded from the current age restriction of 18 years.
- 2.171 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the tabling Member or principal petitioner, the Committee resolved on 29 May 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 127—Reverse ban on live sheep export

Date tabled	13 March 2024
Tabled paper number	3006
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	90
Principal petitioner	Gilbert Rowan-Robinson
Tabling Member	Hon Ben Dawkins MLC
Date finalised	29 May 2024

- 2.172 This petition requested the Legislative Council and State Government urge the Australian Government not to proceed with its proposed ban on live sheep exports.
- 2.173 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the tabling Member or principal petitioner, the Committee resolved on 29 May 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 128—Call for WA COVID policy response inquiry

Date tabled	13 March 2024
Tabled paper number	3008
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	971
Principal petitioner	Constantin Ortheil
Tabling Member	Hon Ben Dawkins MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

- 2.174 Petition No. 128 had 2 main requests concerning the WA Government’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Those were to:
- acknowledge the ‘unintended adverse consequences’⁹⁰ of the Government’s policies on Western Australians
 - recognise the need for a ‘genuine and transparent review’⁹¹ into the Government’s policies, to complement the Commonwealth Government’s ongoing COVID-19 Response Inquiry.⁹²
- 2.175 In his [submission](#) to the Committee, the principal petitioner raised concerns that the Government’s response became unreasonable over time. These concerns were evident by vaccines which ‘turned out to be not completely safe or effective’,⁹³ and a dismissive attitude toward well-meaning and genuinely concerned people.
- 2.176 Two responses were received from the Government, one from Chief of Staff, Stacey Hearn on behalf of the [Minister for Health](#), and the other by the [Premier](#), Hon Roger Cook MLA.
- 2.177 Both responses identified the WA Government as the first state government to commission an independent review of its COVID-19 management and response.⁹⁴
- 2.178 The Minister for Health’s response acknowledged the hardship caused by some government policies, such as border closures, but refuted many of the claims levied against the Government’s overall response:
- the intent of the mandatory vaccination program was to protect essential workforces and lift the vaccination rate in WA, with the high level of vaccination facilitating the opening of the border and a transition to the removal of restrictions.
- ...
- rare side effects observed after COVID-19 vaccines contributed to some anxiety surrounding vaccination, but that the growing body of literature did not

⁹⁰ Legislative Council, [Petition No. 128—Call for WA COVID policy response inquiry](#) (TP 3008), tabled 13 March 2024.

⁹¹ Legislative Council, [Petition No. 128—Call for WA COVID policy response inquiry](#) (TP 3008), tabled 13 March 2024.

⁹² Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, [Commonwealth Government COVID-19 Response Inquiry](#), Australian Government, 2024, accessed 17 September 2024.

⁹³ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 128 from principal petitioner, Constantin Ortheil, 15 May 2024.

⁹⁴ Hon John Day, Dr Michael Schaper, and Emeritus Professor Margaret Seares AO, [Review of Western Australia’s COVID-19 Management and Response](#), Department of the Premier and Cabinet, July 2023, accessed 17 September 2024.

substantiate the claims made in public submissions about COVID-19 vaccines causing widespread injury.⁹⁵

2.179 The Premier added:

The COVID-19 pandemic was an unprecedented public health emergency that required a rapid and innovative Government response. The best interests of Western Australians were always the Government's paramount consideration ...⁹⁶

2.180 In light of the independent review commissioned by the WA Government and the impending release of the Commonwealth Government's inquiry report, the Committee concluded its consideration of the petition on 14 August 2024.

Petition No. 129—Re-instating roadside impairment testing by WAPOL

Date tabled	21 March 2024
Tabled paper number	3039
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	31
Principal petitioner	Taryn Davis
Tabling Member	Hon Sophia Moermond MLC
Date finalised	29 May 2024

2.181 Petition No. 129 requested the Legislative Council support the re-instatement of formal training and the implementation of roadside impairment testing by WA Police, allowing impaired but non-intoxicated drivers to be picked up.

2.182 A [submission](#) in support of the petition was received from the tabling Member, Hon Sophia Moermond MLC, which provided some further context. This included that the additional testing may pick up drivers who are fatigued, on medications, or suffering other physical stressors, which may make them unsafe drivers.

2.183 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the principal petitioner, the Committee decided on 29 May 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 130—Unacceptable road intersection changes in Rossmoyne

Date tabled	17 April 2024
Tabled paper number	3079
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	927
Principal petitioner	Helen Lund
Tabling Member	Hon Nick Goiran MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

2.184 This petition opposed changes to the intersection of Leach Highway and Fifth Avenue in Rossmoyne (the intersection). The reasons for the petitioners' opposition were

⁹⁵ [Response](#) to Petition No. 128 on behalf of the Minister for Health, by Stacey Hearn, Chief of Staff, p. 2.

⁹⁶ [Response](#) to Petition No. 128 from Premier, Hon Roger Cook MLA, 1 July 2024.

inconvenience, an increase in traffic, and greater risk to school children and aged care residents. The petition recommended part of the intersection be retained and called for a road engineering review to be conducted.

2.185 In her [submission](#), the principal petitioner highlighted Rossmoyne's unique accessibility. Namely:

- as it is surrounded by the Canning River on 2 sides, the careful planning of road access points is vital
- convenient and safe road accessibility is exacerbated by the number of schools and aged care facilities in the suburb, all within close proximity to the intersection.

2.186 The submission reasoned that the proposed changes would cause a diversion of traffic through limited entry points and onto suburban streets not designed as thoroughfares.

2.187 Ms Lund provided several solutions, including:

- maintaining all current entry points, such as the right inbound turn into Fifth Avenue
- safety could be improved by closing the right outbound turns from Fifth Avenue onto Leach Highway
- the coordination of traffic lights at High Road and Karel Avenue could ease congestion
- consultation with emergency services about optimal ambulance routes should be conducted, considering the local aged care facilities
- reconsider the need for changes to Corinthian Road based on actual accident rates
- explore alternatives to new traffic lights, such as widening Shelley Bridge
- emphasise a balanced approach based on data and community consultation.

2.188 In his [submission](#), tabling Member, Hon Nick Goiran MLC informed the Committee that his office was contacted by numerous local residents. Attached to his submission was a submission by Amanda Spencer-Teo, City of Canning Councillor and local Rossmoyne resident.

2.189 Ms Spencer-Teo's submission provided a useful background to the proposed changes to the intersection, and highlighted a potential oversight:

This new MRWA project is the result of a 2021 election commitment by now Riverton MLA Dr Krishnan, and I understand it was developed due to concerns raised by some residents about the Fifth Ave/Leach Hwy intersection and associated congestion. The commitment however preceded the Webb St project, which has not only improved the Webb St intersection, but reduced pressure on the Fifth and Beatrice Ave intersections, and according to the latest data has reduced the number of crashes (16 over the last 5 years, with only one in 2023 at Fifth and 17 over the last 5 years and also one in 2023 at Beatrice).

...

this project is not a result of a detailed data-based analysis of the intersections based on a priority basis, but a project initiated and prioritised due to an election commitment of Riverton MLA Dr Krishnan.⁹⁷

2.190 Ms Spencer-Teo recommended the best course of action was for Main Roads WA to put the project on hold, pending 'the City of Canning to obtain the relevant data regarding the

⁹⁷ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 130 from tabling Member, Hon Nick Goiran MLC, 14 May 2024, attachment 1 of 1, pp. 1, 2.

impact on the local road network, and to allow proper and transparent community consultation.⁹⁸

- 2.191 Both the [Minister for Transport](#), Hon Rita Saffioti MLA and the [City of Canning](#) were approached for a response to the petition.
- 2.192 The Committee was pleased to learn that the Minister has considered the concerns raised by the petition, along with a survey conducted by Dr Jags Krishnan MLA, and as a result:
- Main Roads will now pursue the secondary option of retaining the right turn from Leach Highway into Fifth Avenue while removing the right turn option from Fifth Avenue onto Leach Highway.⁹⁹
- 2.193 Further, Main Roads have investigated alternative solutions which have determined that the:
- optimal combined treatments ... [are] to signalise Leach Highway and Beatrice Avenue and modify the Fifth Avenue and Corinthian Road East intersections that are currently proposed.¹⁰⁰
- 2.194 The City of Canning’s response provided a useful overview into the communication it has had with Main Roads, local residents (including the principal petitioner), and the Minister for Transport – the latter of which raised concern about a lack of community consultation conducted by Main Roads and requested it engage in further consultation.
- 2.195 The City concluded its submission by stating:
- The City’s position is that any changes to the State controlled road network that will or has the potential to transfer wholly or in part the function and/or risk to the local road network (being the responsibility of the City of Canning) must be appropriately mitigated and must not detrimentally impact the City of Canning and its local community.¹⁰¹
- 2.196 Following receipt of both responses, the Committee was satisfied that the issues raised have been taken into consideration and plans for the intersection have been amended accordingly. On 14 August 2024 the Committee finalised its consideration of the petition.

Petition No. 132—Medical defence for medicinal cannabis users who drive

Date tabled	18 April 2024
Tabled paper number	3083
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	243
Principal petitioner	Courtney Corker
Tabling Member	Hon Sophia Moermond MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

- 2.197 Petition No. 132 proposed an impairment test for drivers and a distinction between those who merely test positive for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and those who are actively impaired while driving.

⁹⁸ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 130 from tabling Member, Hon Nick Goiran MLC, 14 May 2024, attachment 1 of 1, p. 2.

⁹⁹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 130 from Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 19 July 2024, p. 2.

¹⁰⁰ [Response](#) to Petition No. 130 from Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti MLA, 19 July 2024, p. 1.

¹⁰¹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 130 from Graeme Bride, A/Chief Executive Officer, City of Canning, 12 July 2024, p. 3.

- 2.198 The principal petitioner’s [submission](#) pointed to the ‘undeserved discrimination’¹⁰² faced by users of medicinal cannabis despite its legalisation across Australia since 2016. Specifically, Ms Corker pointed to the fact that cannabis remains detectable in oral fluid for up to 3 days. Therefore, roadside drug testing of saliva days after use may return a positive result regardless of the driver’s level of impairment.
- 2.199 The tabling Member’s [submission](#) explained that:
- The high sensitivity of the tests used simply shows the presence of THC without proving impairment.
- ...
- Increasing amounts of research are showing that impairment due to cannabis, when smoked or vaped, lasts for approximately 3-4hrs, depending on the amount. This clearly demonstrates that a detectable amount of THC in the saliva does not equate impairment.¹⁰³
- 2.200 In comparing WA laws to other jurisdictions, the tabling Member referred to Tasmania Police’s experience that:
- detection does not indicate impairment. The police there [are] well-versed in observing signs of impairment and smelling signs of cannabis use. No notable change has been observed in traffic accidents.¹⁰⁴
- 2.201 The Committee noted that a Victorian trial was announced on 21 May 2024 ‘to determine whether Victorians who use medicinal cannabis can drive safely’.¹⁰⁵
- 2.202 Responses to the petition were received from the [Minister for Road Safety](#), the [Minister for Health](#)’s Chief of Staff, and the [Minister for Police](#).
- 2.203 The Minister for Road Safety and the Minister for Health’s responses both pointed to the establishment of the Medicinal Cannabis and Safe Driving (MCSD) Working Group as the body currently considering this issue. The MCSD was established in response to recommendations by the Legislative Council’s Select Committee into Cannabis and Hemp, which produced a report into medicinal cannabis and industrial hemp in WA in 2023.¹⁰⁶
- 2.204 The Minister for Police’s response provided an overview of laws regarding drug driving as they currently stand. These include the petitioners’ concern that ‘[n]o level of impairment is required to prove this offence.’¹⁰⁷
- 2.205 On 14 August 2024, the Committee finalised its consideration of the petition as it was satisfied that the issues raised were being addressed by the MCSD Working Group.

¹⁰² [Submission](#) to Petition No. 132 from principal petitioner, Courtney Corker, 17 May 2024, p. 1.

¹⁰³ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 132 from tabling Member, Hon Sophia Moermond MLC, 22 May 2024, p. 1.

¹⁰⁴ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 132 from tabling Member, Hon Sophia Moermond MLC, 22 May 2024, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵ Premier of Victoria, [Green Light For World-First Medicinal Cannabis Driving Trial](#) [media release], Government of Victoria, 21 May 2024, accessed 26 September 2024.

¹⁰⁶ Select Committee into Cannabis and Hemp, [Medicinal cannabis and industrial hemp in Western Australia](#), Western Australia, Legislative Council, March 2023.

¹⁰⁷ [Response](#) to Petition No. 132 from Minister for Police, Hon Paul Papalia MLA, 4 July 2024.

Petition No. 133—Firearms Bill 2024

Date tabled	7 May 2024
Tabled paper number	3121
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	32,234
Principal petitioner	Rick Mazza
Tabling Member	Hon Nick Goiran MLC
Date finalised	29 May 2024

2.206 Petition No. 133 was the fourth petition of its kind in relation to the *Firearms Bill 2024 (Bill)*.

2.207 This petition had a single request, that the Legislative Council refer the *Bill* to the Standing Committee on Legislation, as provided under Order 4.3 of Schedule 1 of the Standing Orders.

2.208 On 28 May 2024, Hon Peter Collier MLC moved to motion:

That the Firearms Bill 2024 be discharged and referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation for consideration and report by no later than 13 August 2024.¹⁰⁸

2.209 On division of this motion, the Legislative Council voted not to refer the *Bill* as proposed.

2.210 As no further action could be taken to further its request, the Committee decided to finalise its consideration of this petition on 29 May 2024.

Petition No. 134—Corrective Services - Department of Justice

Date tabled	7 May 2024
Tabled paper number	1320
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	148
Principal petitioner	Bronwyn Hendry
Tabling Member	Hon Peter Collier MLC
Date finalised	14 August 2024

2.211 This petition requested an inquiry into the Department of Justice (Corrective Services), with particular reference to Bunbury Regional Prison (BRP). The requested inquiry would investigate poor staffing, high rates of workers compensation claims, workplace bullying and harassment, and the effectiveness of regulatory bodies.

2.212 The principal petitioner's [submission](#) provided an overview of systemic workplace bullying and harassment issues at BRP. The submission highlights the following key areas of concern:

- Multiple regulatory bodies (including the Office of the Inspector of Custodial Services (OICS), Office of the Auditor General, WorkSafe WA, and the Corruption and Crime Commission) have made recommendations to address workplace issues at BRP.

¹⁰⁸ Legislative Council, [Motion, Division](#), 28 May 2024, 2507–2510.

However, the principal petitioner argued these recommendations have been largely disregarded, indicating a systemic failure in implementing necessary reforms.

- Data suggests that BRP has disproportionately high rates of psychological injuries, workers' compensation claims, and staff turnover compared to other correctional facilities.
- The principal petitioner emphasises that these issues extend beyond individual staff members, potentially affecting:
 - overall staff wellbeing and morale
 - operational effectiveness of the prison
 - efficient use of public funds, with significant amounts being spent on compensation claims and staff turnover costs.
- There is a systemic culture of bullying and harassment, particularly from senior management. This was presented as a long-standing issue that has persisted due to lack of accountability and proper oversight.
- Numerous laws, policies, and procedures have not been properly implemented or enforced within the prison environment.
- The above workplace issues have broader implications, potentially affecting prisoner care and rehabilitation, and even contributing to issues like deaths in custody.

2.213 The Committee received responses to the petition from:

- [Eamon Ryan, Inspector of Custodial Services](#)
- [Minister for Corrective Services](#)
- [Minister for Industrial Relations.](#)

2.214 The Inspector of Custodial Services response outlined the work that the OICS had conducted in recent years, and pointed to 3 past reports it published on BRP:

1. 2017 Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison Report 115 - February 2018
2. 2020 Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison Report 134 - January 2021
3. 2023 Inspection of Bunbury Regional Prison Report 153 - April 2024¹⁰⁹

2.215 The Inspector paid note to Report 115, where he advised:

Although the report noted past histories of staff conflict, it also referenced improvements since the 2014 inspection in several measures, including, how staff worked together, support and communication from local management, and the quality of their working life. But these positive indicators were offset by staff ratings of workplace stress having increased over the same period.¹¹⁰

2.216 Report 134 'did not detail issues of conflict between staff... [but] did note that 87% of staff who responded to our pre-inspection survey said they 'mostly' or 'almost always' felt safe at Bunbury.'¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 134 from Eamon Ryan, Inspector of Custodial Services, 25 June 2024, p. 1.

¹¹⁰ [Response](#) to Petition No. 134 from Eamon Ryan, Inspector of Custodial Services, 25 June 2024, p. 2.

¹¹¹ [Response](#) to Petition No. 134 from Eamon Ryan, Inspector of Custodial Services, 25 June 2024, p. 2.

2.217 Lastly, Report 153:

contained more detailed coverage of staffing issues and conflicts. During this inspection we had several interactions with the principal petitioner and received written correspondence from them which was referred to an external agency. The Report noted concerns and issues raised about staff conflict, but these were balanced by positive feedback from many staff that identified collegial relationships between staff as a positive factor of working at Bunbury.¹¹²

2.218 The Minister for Industrial Relations' response addressed two specific questions by the Committee which regarded the number of workers compensation claims from staff at BRP. It showed that the proportion of Corrective Service Officer (CSO) stress-related claims has increased from around 13% in 2018/19 to almost 20% in 2022/23, but that non-CSO claims remain consistent over time.

2.219 The Minister concluded her response by advising the Committee:

Matters related to those raised in the petition are currently under investigation by the WorkSafe Group of the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety. As the Minister responsible for workplace health and safety, it is not appropriate for me to provide comment on matters currently under investigation by the work health and safety regulator.¹¹³

2.220 The Minister for Corrective Services' response also referenced the investigation underway by WorkSafe. In addition, it noted a new service model established by the Department of Corrective Services, and the Law Reform Commission's final report on *Project 111: Review of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984*.¹¹⁴

2.221 The Minister advised that there are a number of independent oversight bodies responsible for investigating and resolving disputes and complaints. The OICS is particularly 'well placed to consider the concerns about systemic cultural issues in prisons as raised in the submission', and 'has not in 12 years identified systemic negligence and staff abuse, despite a stringent inspection and report regime.'¹¹⁵

2.222 The Committee resolved on 14 August 2024 to finalise its consideration of the petition having due regard to the evidence it received.

¹¹² [Response](#) to Petition No. 134 from Eamon Ryan, Inspector of Custodial Services, 25 June 2024, p. 2.

¹¹³ [Response](#) to Petition No. 134 from Minister for Industrial Relations, Hon Simone McGurk MLA, 12 July 2024, p. 2.

¹¹⁴ Law Reform Commission of Western Australia (LRCWA), [Review of the Equal Opportunity Act 1984 \(WA\): Project 111 Final Report](#), May 2022, accessed 27 September 2024.

¹¹⁵ [Response](#) to Petition No. 134 from Minister for Corrective Services, Hon Paul Papalia MLA, 23 July 2024, p. 2.

Petition No. 140—Regional crime - enough is enough

Date tabled	30 May 2024
Tabled paper number	3192
Type of petition	E-petition
Number of signatures	928
Principal petitioner	Tania Parkes
Tabling Member	Hon Neil Thomson MLC
Date finalised	11 September 2024

2.223 This petition expressed concern about increasing antisocial and criminal behaviour affecting regional WA communities and a perception of leniency by WA Courts toward offenders. The petition highlighted the impact of crime on victims and sought improved redress for victims.

2.224 A [submission](#) in support of the petition from the tabling Member, Hon Neil Thomson MLC, stated that:

Quite frankly, the community is tired of the violence and sense of lawlessness in our regional towns. It is in this context that the petition was put forward. The community is particularly fed up with the light touch of our Courts.¹¹⁶

2.225 As the Committee did not receive a submission from the principal petitioner, the Committee finalised its consideration of the petition on 11 September 2024.

¹¹⁶ [Submission](#) to Petition No. 140 from tabling Member, Hon Neil Thomson MLC, 9 July 2024, p. 2.

3 Petitions subject to ongoing enquiries

3.1 At the end of the reporting period, the Committee was continuing its enquiries into the 22 petitions listed in Table 1. *Petitions subject to ongoing enquiries*

Table 1. *Petitions subject to ongoing enquiries*

Petition number and title	Date tabled	Tabled paper number	Type
Petition No. 131—Request a moratorium on all lethal dingo controls and undertake an investigation into the adoption of non-lethal tools	17 Apr 2024	3078	E-petition
Petition No. 135—Equity in enrolment to learning of second language courses in WA secondary schools	07 May 2024	3122	E-petition
Petition No. 136—Pollution from the Alcoa Pinjarra Alumina Refinery	15 May 2024	3140	Paper petition
Petition No. 137—Protect Entrance Point reef, Broome, from the proposed floating wharf and its infrastructure	15 May 2024	3150	Paper petition
Petition No. 138—Boddington Hospital	28 May 2024	3177	E-petition
Petition No. 138—Boddington Hospital	19 Jun 2024	3257	Paper petition
Petition No. 139—Protect the rights of biological females	28 May 2024	3187	E-petition
Petition No. 141—South Coast Marine Park	13 Jun 2024	3231	E-petition
Petition No. 141—The proposed South Coast Marine Park	13 Jun 2024	3232	Paper petition
Petition No. 142—Keep the Horizontal Waterfalls open to everyone	13 Aug 2024	3360	E-petition
Petition No. 143—Calling for a parliamentary inquiry into the treatment of children suffering from gender dysphoria	13 Aug 2024	3361	E-petition
Petition No. 144—Reforms for tiny houses and caravans	13 Aug 2024	3362	E-petition
Petition No. 145—No to windfarms in Western Australia	13 Aug 2024	3365	E-petition
Petition No. 146—Commercial groundwater abstraction in the Perth Hills	13 Aug 2024	3363	E-petition
Petition No. 147—Headspace WA	13 Aug 2024	3364	E-petition
Petition No. 148—Stopping offshore wind farms in Geographe Bay	20 Aug 2024	3392	E-petition
Petition No. 149—Water licences and the sale of water in the Lennard Brook area	21 Aug 2024	3394	Paper petition
Petition No. 150—Call for transparency re Glen Iris development override	11 Sep 2024	3420	E-petition
Petition No. 151—Action needed power reliability and compensation inquiry	11 Sep 2024	3464	E-petition

Petition number and title	Date tabled	Tabled paper number	Type
Petition No. 152—Justice for Stacey Thorne	18 Sep 2024	3538	E-petition
Petition No. 153—Missing persons in the North West	17 Sep 2024	3496	E-petition
Petition No. 154—Law and order. State housing	17 Sep 2024	3498	E-petition
Petition No. 155—Urgent reform to state planning system and abolition of political donations from developers	17 Sep 2024	3499	E-petition
Petition No. 156—IPLX water pipes in homes	17 Sep 2024	3500	E-petition

Hon Peter Foster MLC
Chair

GLOSSARY

Term	Definition
Committee	Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
e-petition	An electronic petition to the Legislative Council which is submitted to, hosted on, and able to be signed electronically on the Parliament's website
paper petition	A petition to the Legislative Council which is printed on paper and physically signed before being submitted to Parliament
principal petitioner	The promoter of the petition
reporting period	1 January 2024 to 30 September 2024
response	A written response to the petition and the submission(s) received from the principal petitioner and tabling Member from a Government Minister, Local Government, or other organisation (see 1.15)
submission	A two-page submission requested from the principal petitioner and the tabling Member after the petition is tabled (see 1.14)
tabling Member	The Member of the Legislative Council that presents the petition to the House under Standing Order 102 of the Standing Orders of the Legislative Council

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs

Date first appointed:

23 May 2017

Terms of Reference:

The following is an extract from Schedule 1 of the Legislative Council Standing Orders:

'2. Environment and Public Affairs Committee

- 2.1 *An Environment and Public Affairs Committee is established.*
- 2.2 The Committee consists of 5 Members.
- 2.3 The functions of the Committee are to inquire into and report on –
 - (a) any public or private policy, practice, scheme, arrangement, or project whose implementation, or intended implementation, within the limits of the State is affecting, or may affect, the environment;
 - (b) any Bill referred by the Council; and
 - (c) petitions.
- 2.4 The Committee, where relevant and appropriate, is to assess the merit of matters or issues arising from an inquiry in accordance with the principles of ecologically sustainable development and the minimisation of harm to the environment.
- 2.5 The Committee may refer a petition to another Committee where the subject matter of the petition is within the competence of that Committee.
- 2.6 In this order "environment" has the meaning assigned to it under section 3 (1) and (2) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.'



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