

7 June 2018

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
18-32 Parliament Place
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Honorable Members,

RE: Installation of a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) machine in Kalgoorlie Hospital — Requests the Legislative Council to support (Tabled Paper Number 1339)

My name is Sharon Henderson and I am supporting the urgent installation of a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Machine in Kalgoorlie. I am concerned that there is not enough urgency in obtaining an MRI licence which is crucial to installation of the MRI machine.

The installation of an MRI machine in Kalgoorlie has long been discussed in the WA Parliament as evidenced from [Hansard](#) 2007.

In June 2017 State Health Minister Roger Cook was [reported](#) stating that the State Government is “very much committed” to giving Kalgoorlie Hospital an MRI machine in the near future, meaning the 2019-2020 financial year. The \$3 million commitment for an MRI machine at Kalgoorlie Health Campus was announced by the State (Labor) Government in March, to be delivered during Labor’s first term.

He went on to explain that in order to make this a reality the State Government needs to make sure that WA has a licence for it, which is to be issued by the Commonwealth Government. Once the licensing arrangement is in place, then the State Government will be "in a position to undertake the installation of the machine."

Hon Robin Scott has raised the question in Parliament, specifically what actions has the State Government taken to obtain a licence. [Hansard](#) Extract 1 (page 47) – [Hansard](#) Extract 2

Senator Peter Georgiou also raised a question in Federal Parliament regarding the licence as evidenced [here](#).

The MRI licence has not been applied for and as such issued to date, however the process by which to apply for the licence as evidenced from Federal Government Standing [Committee](#) is confusing.

Committee view

3.43 The committee notes that there is no formal process available to apply for an MRI licence and that consequently, the distribution of licenced MRI machines does not account for recent population growth.

3.44 The committee is concerned that the MRI licensing system creates confusion for patients and medical professionals alike and limits the accessibility of MRI.

The process again is confusing – In July 2017, Hon Roger Cook said that the licence needs to be approved first, however Hon Alanna Clohesy said in the answer to Hon Jacqui Boydell question on whether the licence had been obtained was:

"An application for a commonwealth government MRI licence cannot be made until the MRI machine is installed." ([Hansard](#))

Again, I am personally concerned that as the process for attaining an MRI licence seems to be blurred; does the machine get installed first or do you need the licence first? I think even the Honorable Members are confused and as such, it would be easy to keep going around in circles and put the process in the too hard basket.

Recently I asked residents of Kalgoorlie-Boulder to sign a petition to ask the Honorable Members of State Government to do everything in their power to achieve the urgent installation of an MRI machine in Kalgoorlie. I received signatures from people from Laverton through to Esperance. My concern is that without continued focus on attaining the MRI licence, the promised MRI machine will not be funded in the next budget and the installation will be deferred for another year or possibly not installed at all.

Installation of an MRI machine in Kalgoorlie will not only allow many more patients to receive MRI scans, it will mean those who do need them urgently will no longer have to travel to Perth. As Kalgoorlie is the central point of the Goldfields region, this will benefit so many people.

This will be a great improvement for health facilities in Kalgoorlie. This would be the third MRI machine to be installed in regional WA, with one already available in Bunbury and one in Albany, but it would be the first device of its kind to appear in a hospital in the Goldfields, Kimberley or Pilbara.

Many people I have spoken to while I was promoting the petition have told me of the financial, mental, physical and time consumption issues that they have experienced when they needed to go to Perth. I heard so many stories in four hours on market day, I learned an interesting little fact. Some people who had a need to get an MRI, had a referral for an MRI, did not go to Perth and have an MRI because they couldn't afford to go or couldn't get time off work, or didn't have any way of getting there. Now, if you think about it, that means that the State Government has statistics on the number of people who have had an MRI from Kalgoorlie, that doesn't count the number that don't have one.

Kalgoorlie region exports \$8 Billion in mineral resources. It is a region that has 50+ more years of resource mining with over 697 new mines under consideration. With Kalgoorlie-Boulder on the way to will result in more and more people living and working in this region and the need for health services provided by MRI scans will increase.

I have not taken my complaint to the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations (Ombudsman). I ask the Committee to look upon my submission favourably .

Yours Sincerely

Sharon Henderson