

Parliament House Notes

Our first Advocacy Meeting for 2019 saw 18 Chambers represented by 36 people in attendance. Both elected representatives and Chamber employees shared ideas, information, successes and concerns in a supportive environment of regional peers.



Gathered at Parliament House
13 JUNE 2019

Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLC

Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture & Food; Minister Assisting the Minister for State Development, Jobs & Trade

- We need to be able to better articulate what regional development is
- Through Regional Development Commissions – need diversification of economies to drive out prosperities
- Need to change attitude and stop thinking we can't do things, instead see possibilities
- Possibility to do basic cotton processing on Ord River – prospects of successful cotton industry is in reach
- Every commission has a local procurement officer – role is to advise industry on opportunities and encourage procurers of government infrastructure and service to be open to enable smaller companies to have a go. Still has its challenges
- 13 local content roadshows last year. 500 people and 2500 engagements
- Important to make sure people are ready to take any opportunities that arise and work with the big companies
- Local Content commitments are now part of the contract when a company gets a job
- \$300,000 more to do more capability training for businesses announced in Bunbury as many businesses are not geared up to be able to accept this work. Need to have more resources for business
- New online hub in the making - Services WA – having a one stop shop for government services. Slow process to bring all IT systems together. Centre where you can do all your government services including water, transport etc. First one will be in Bunbury. Looking at how they can use the CRC's to do more of these types of work.
- Going to do an analysis with Albany post office and RDC to see what types of mail is coming in and do more research into it
- Challenging as to how to reactivate these centres where shops are closings, pop up shops etc
- We need to have ideas on how to make this work in the current environment. Online shopping will always be there. Retail now has to be an experience where customers feel valued and experience high level customer service every time.

Hon Paul Papalia CSC MLA

Minister for Tourism; Racing & Gaming; Small Business; Defence Issues; Citizenship & Multicultural Interests

- Tourism – data is collected coming out quarterly from 12 months prior. Last year a lot of old data from 2017. Most recent last look at 2018 data. Best stats in a long time. Attributed to fact that action plan launched in March 2018 to boost tourism is working.
- About to double international marketing spend in 9 different countries to sell WA. Intrastate travel is highest its been.
- International numbers are down but biggest growth in international holiday makers. Leisure market collapsed during boom – everyone was here for work. Numbers are increasing at twice the national average.
- Hilton started building new hotel in Albany will be great for tourism down there
- Role of Tourism WA – Government agency (mainly marketing agency). Give grants to regional tourism organisation but they do what they want, hope they collaborate well



with Tourism WA. Responsible for marketing their product and services in their regions. Tourism WA then takes this promotional material to promote globally.

- Working with WATOC to develop 2-year Aboriginal tourism action plan – about enhancing aboriginal cultural tourism
- Reduced airfares – in discussions with Minister to Transport to see if these can be done more widely across state
- Small business – bill in parliament to mend SBDC act to give Small Business Commissioner to empower him to use a unit which they have created - Small contractor support unit. Lots of stories of small businesses have been ripped off and people lost a lot of money, from contracts. He will be able to get his team to investigate and hopefully prevent this and also recognise good behaviour among contractors.
- Racing and gaming – Changing legislation to sell TAB because the industry said they wanted it. Could be concluded before mid 2020. Private owner of TAB but operate the same as it currently does
- Defence - advocating for defence industry. Launched in June a Defence Science Centre. WA will be only state where all Universities collaborate on defence and appoint associate director to manage. Research and development fund will be accessible where individuals and organisations can get grants to support research to bring SMEs to problem solve for defence to help the Australian Defence force. Enable potentially export opportunity.

Mr Reece Whitby MLA

Parliamentary Secretary to Treasurer; Minister for Finance; Aboriginal Affairs; Lands, and; Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Environment; Disability Services; Electoral Affairs

- TAB sale legislation is currently being debated in the chamber. It needs to get through in this session. Money from sale will be used for updating infrastructure
- 2019-2020 budget commitment to infrastructure for regional WA. R4R \$5.2 billion. New initiatives – employer incentive scheme, industry attraction and development fund (Collie), boosting biosecurity, build marine finfish nursery in Geraldton, regional health service support, news specialist facilities at a number of schools, new regional road upgrades
- Payroll Tax – Treasurer says that each budget time always reviewed to see if there are opportunities. Regional employers will benefit from the new employer incentive scheme.

Hon Liza Harvey MLA

Leader of the Opposition; Shadow Minister for Transport; Planning; Lands

- Elected as first female WA Liberal leader today after Mike Nahan stepped down
- Numerous regional projects that are not currently on the table, they will continue to look at including more high care facilities (nursing home, palliative care) throughout regions
- Will continue to advocate for legislation against extreme activists making it illegal for them to do these acts such as interrogate farmers. This will be looked at again. Need to put pressure on politicians to look at legislation that will work and protect farming businesses
- Remain committed to building Busselton airport

Hon Mia Davies MLA

Leader of the Nationals WA

- State Budget – third for the WA Labor party – went through with fine tooth comb re R4R. We need genuine long-time outcomes for regional development.
- Infrastructure WA – harder to make Infrastructure Australia projects work in regional WA. Submitted and passed amendments
- Working on regional airfares - more pressure needs to be put on Qantas and Virgin to keep reduced prices and add more across state
- Payroll Tax – will keep championing for increasing the threshold
- Happy to work with chambers to test some things in terms of town revitalisation. Explore what does the new town centre look like and how does technology fit into this.
- Parliamentary inquiry into Worksafe. Most business in the trades are micro and small business. Need more support for Work safety as there is very limited Worksafe inspectors in the regions.

Hon Roger Cook MLA

Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Mental Health

- Key projects in rural West Australia: commitment \$41million to extra support and palliative care in regional communities and supporting staff on the front line. Boost to mobile and general regional dialysis. Upgrades to a number of regional hospitals.
- Sustainable health review – looking how it can be done better, looking at telehealth services and increasing their use of the next few years. Need to be more innovative. Online talent platform just launched using cloud base technology to recruit medical professionals
- Rural GPs will continue to be backbone of health system – WA has less GPs per capita than any other state. Highest concentration of GPs in country in Perth Western Suburbs. Working with Rural Health West and they are keen to work with communities to make things work.
- PWC has identified \$10.9 billion in loss of productivity to Australian businesses.
- Developing Step Up, Step Down facilities in regional centres – for people moving into mental health crisis situation. Short term care or care after a hospital stay in a sub-acute setting
- Methamphetamine Action Plan – strategy to reduce supply through policing and reduce demand. Alcohol and other drug workers accompany police to drug callouts and rather than arrest, they help de-escalate the situation and try put them into a care pathway rather than justice pathway.
- How do we get the health community to see the value in the business community and be a part of it?