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Member for Mining and Pastoral Region
Delivering Royalties for Regions

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Cue parliament sits

On 8th May I went along to the Murchison Country Zone Meeting of WALGA, known as Cue Parliament. Minister for Local Government John Castrilli was there and not surprisingly much of the discussion was on Local Government reforms. Outback shires with huge areas to cover see little value in amalgamation and reduction in representation. The Minister assured them that there would be no coercion but strongly encouraged all local governments to take a long dispassionate look at their operations and identify any ways that their services can be delivered more efficiently.

Royalties for Regions money in the Country Local Government Fund received a great wrap with councils well into planning the use of the money to improve their communities.

While in Cue I met with local pastoralists who are really keen to see a bounty introduced to reduce the wild dog population and changes to the pastoral industry to help them continue to live and work in our amazing outback.



Cue Aerodrome

Focus on horticulture

The first meeting of the Gascoyne Foodbowl Consultative Committee was held in Carnarvon on 21st April.

As chair of the committee I met with representatives of the horticultural industries as well as Department of Water, Department of Agriculture and Food, and the Gascoyne Development Commission to plan for the expansion of the horticultural industries and the release of new land when the water supply is upgraded.

The Carnarvon horticultural industry is the most productive in Australia generating \$8.5m per gegalitre of water. Canarvon is a great community with huge potential both in town and in the surrounding pastoral areas. The Carnarvon Cattle Industry Forum was a huge success with the recently opened Gascoyne Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Centre, bursting at the seams with innovative and proactive producers full of great plans to grow their business.



Carnarvon Cattle Industry Forum

Minister visits Esperance

I had the pleasure of accompanying Minister for Agriculture, Terry Redman, on a visit to the Esperance Region recently. We looked at the proposed GM canola site on the Esperance Downs Research Station and then went on to meet with the representatives of South East Premium Wheatgrowers. The Minister was very impressed with the professional group of farmers and their close working relationship with DAFWA officers in Esperance. I really enjoyed looking over Phil and Nicole Chalmers' beef production business on perennial pastures based on kikuyu. This Beef Profit Partnership group has doubled their production and increased soil carbon on typical Esperance "DGS" – deep gutless sand.

Our day was topped off by inspecting the recently commissioned drainage system to reduce water levels in the RAMSAR listed wetlands around Esperance. Soon the amazing little migratory birds that fly down from Siberia each year will have somewhere to land!

Congratulations to Tilo Massenbauer for his dogged determination to make this happen and to DEC for the completion of the project.



Agriculture Minister Terry Redman inspects the drainage system in the RAMSAR listed wetlands around Esperance.

Hope as Ravensthorpe, Hopetoun farewelled

Brendon Grylls, Minister for Regional Development, and I have been working to assist the communities of Hopetoun and Ravensthorpe come to terms with the closure of the BHP Ravensthorpe Nickel mine. I have nothing but admiration for the strength of character and positive outlook of the people of those communities and I know their future will be brighter.

It was a real honour to be at the moving farewell function at The Hopetoun Golf Club where the Hopetoun Progress Association and Ravensthorpe Regional Arts group sang and danced the night away to celebrate their new found friends and wish them well as they moved on to new challenges.

We have been working closely with BHP and YMCA to make sure Hopetoun and Ravensthorpe continue to have childcare services and thanks to the very sympathetic attitude of YMCA we have committed to keep the service running until family day care can be arranged.