



Nats push defence, property rights

Tom Zaubmayr

Boosting defence presence in the North West and strengthening property rights for farmers will be front and centre of the Nationals' pitch to voters as they look to win a Federal seat in WA for the first time in six years.

Speaking at the confirmation of four more candidates to contest the 2019 Federal Election in Claremont earlier this month, Senate hopeful Nick Fardell said families were sick of dealing with strangers lurking around their homes.

"These people need to be in jail and we need stronger property rights to do that," he said.

"That includes for mums and dads here in Perth."

On defence, Mr Fardell said boosting the army presence in the State's north was about more than just border security.

"If a local Shire in the middle of nowhere is trying to build a bridge, the garrison engineers can come and help with the forward planning," he said.

"If you have remote clinics struggling to get doctors, we could have people in the military go out and train in those areas.

"I can't see a real threat down in South Australia from the penguins, but I'd say up in the North West there's more of an issue."

Getting more doctors out to regional WA, decentralisation of government departments and

regional telecommunications will be among other key talking points for the candidates leading up to the election.

Denmark's Siobhan Blake and

Manjimup business owner Louise Kingston will join Mr Fardell on the WA Nationals' Senate ticket.

Karratha resident Scott Bourne

will contest Durack, and bio-security auditor Steve Blythe will contest Pearce.

They join Pingelly farmer John Hassell, who was announced as the O'Connor candidate last year.

All three seats are held by Liberal members.

Mr Bourne said proper military and naval bases along the coast

would have flow-on effects for surrounding towns.

"Look at a town like Townsville and all the satellite towns that feed off of a big regional hub like that," he said.

"We have deep water ports up here like Anketell, which have been talked about for years and could be utilised to have a navy

presence as well. It just makes sense when you look at the resources we have up there — the gas plants, the mining — without anyone to protect that infrastructure."

WA Nationals State president James Hayward said the party's candidates would put the State ahead of party politics.



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WA Nationals Federal Election candidates Scott Bourne, John Hassell, Siobhan Blake, Louise Kingston and Nick Fardell. Picture: Tom Zaubmayr