



MEDIA RELEASE

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WEST COAST 'AREAS OF NEED'

The Electorate tour of the West Coast region of Murchison concluded today in Strahan. The tour by 12 Members of the Legislative Council was organised and led by Murchison MLC, Ruth Forrest and visited Tullah, Rosebery, Zeehan and Strahan as well as sites including the Lake Margaret Power Station and Barrick Henty Gold Mine. The electorate tour provided opportunities for members of the Legislative Council to meet with community, local government, industry and business representatives and discuss issues related to the West Coast.

"By far, the most important issue raised in all areas, by all sectors of the community of the West Coast, was access to health services" Ms Forrest stated.

"The downgrade of services at the Rosebery Hospital, the shortage of volunteer ambulance officers, the lack of 24-hour personal access to health care providers, especially in areas where mining operations operate 24 hours a day and patient transport issues, are major concerns for residents of the West Coast" Ms Forrest stated.

Access to education in specialist areas is also a challenge, with students at Rosebery District High School without specialist music, drama or 'Language other than English' (LOTE) teachers available to the students.

"The lack of specialist teaching staff in remote areas of the State means that students miss the opportunity to participate in these subject areas, areas which schools in major centres essentially take for granted, and those with talent and enthusiasm in these areas, miss out of the opportunity to advance in these important areas of education" Ms Forrest stated.

"Difficulties in engaging relief teaching staff on the West Coast, where relief staff often don't arrive on site until 11am, results in disruption to normal classes and many challenges not faced by schools in larger centres" Ms Forrest said.

"The lack of relief teaching staff in the area also leads to difficulties in providing ongoing professional development opportunities for staff at these schools" Ms Forrest stated.

For further information contact Ruth Forrest on 0419 879 524 (when in range on the West Coast)

