

Language around WA's GST share leave our 'deal' in doubt

It was Budget Estimates in State Parliament this week. It's where the Opposition gets to ask government ministers direct questions. Sometimes we get direct answers. Here's 10 things we learnt.

1 The Premier still thinks the Prime Minister's word is his bond, even though the PM's words have changed over our GST deal recently.

The PM, who lied about changing capital gains tax and negative gearing, now says WA will get its "fair share" of GST, a big step down from his previous "guarantee" for our current GST deal.

2 More than 20 regional courts can't operate because WA Police who normally

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supply security and support services in those centres are so short-staffed. The Government was warned about this 18 months ago but sat on their hands. It means very rough access to justice for people who live in regional and remote parts of WA.

3 Energy Minister Amber-Jade Sanderson wouldn't come clean on the total cost of our State's decarbonisation to 2030. We know the cost to date is \$6.8 billion. "Get your calculator

out" was the response when I asked for the total cost.

4 Male prisoners scaled a fence during a riot and allegedly sexually assaulted female inmates. It took the Estimates process to draw that information out into the public domain.

5 More than \$141 million has been spent on consultants for WA Health's new HR, payroll and rostering system.

At the same time, 366 older adults are waiting in WA hospitals for residential aged care, EDs are recording wait times of up to nine hours, and this week there were reports of 12 ambulances ramped in hospital carparks – and it's not winter yet.

6 Wait times for parents to see a paediatrician have blown out to about two years — 23.9 months to be exact. These times are not improving. For the wealthiest State in the country, this is a shameful stat.

7 The Burswood racetrack is not coming in on time or on budget.

The Deputy Premier confirmed the racetrack won't be ready for round one of the 2027 Supercars and when pressed on the cost, instead of the previous cast-iron guarantee of \$217.5 million, it has now morphed into "endeavouring" to bring it in on budget while also saying "every State, every Territory and every project has experienced cost pressures".

We get the picture.

8 There's another new addition to Perth Park, this time an additional hospitality venue. But guess what, magically the cost of constructing that venue won't be included in the \$217.5m.

9 Despite all the fanfare, the reason Perth didn't end up staging the first Serie-A match played outside of Italy? Because somebody forgot to ask the Asian Football Confederation if it would be OK to play the match on their turf.

10 Only four out of 45 schools have the air-conditioning they were promised at the last election. Four in 16 months, that's a slow rollout.

