

SENIORS — COST-OF-LIVING REBATE

471. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the Minister for Seniors and Volunteering:

- (1) Will the minister explained why the rebate to seniors has risen by only 2.25 per cent since last year when this year has produced record price rises in essential services such as gas, water and electricity?
- (2) Will the minister explain why the rebate will be received in the last week of July or the first week of August—15 months after the first payment?
- (3) Will the minister address concerns that if seniors missed the 31 May 2010 cut-off to apply for a Seniors Card, and therefore the rebate, they will have to wait until July 2011 to receive their first payment?

Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The cost-of-living rebate is indexed annually to the consumer price index—CPI. The 2010 cost-of-living rebate payment will include the CPI for the financial years 2009–10 at 2.25 per cent, and 2010–11 at 2.5 per cent, as a result of the deferral of the 2010 cost-of-living rebate payment to July 2010. This has resulted in an overall increase of 4.8 per cent to the cost-of-living rebate for the 2010 payment.
- (2)–(3) The 2010 cost-of-living rebate was deferred for three months to July 2010 in order to ensure that the state could continue to meet its budgetary commitments across all sectors of the community while still being able to honour vital election commitments to seniors. The cost-of-living rebate payment will commence on 19 July. Payments will be \$104.84 single and \$137.22, with each cardholder receiving \$78.61. Bank statements will show the seniors rebate put in. Seniors who received a payment last year do not have to do anything to receive the payment this year unless their bank details have changed, and cost-of-living payments the following years will be made in July of each year.

Can I just say to the member, before running off to the press, could the member please get correct information, because it does upset seniors when people go out, especially members of Parliament, and give incorrect literature to the press.