

GOVERNMENT AGENCIES — PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, INITIATIVES, SCHEMES AND SUBSIDIES

1460. Mr M. McGowan to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Indigenous Affairs

- (1) Could the Deputy Premier please list by name all government projects, programmes, initiatives, schemes and/or subsidies abolished in agencies within his Ministerial portfolios since 23 September 2008; and
  - (a) which of these government projects, programmes, initiatives, schemes and/or subsidies were abolished after 14 May 2009?
- (2) Could the Minister please list by name all government projects, programmes, initiatives, schemes and/or subsidies within his Ministerial portfolios that have been subject to budget or funding cuts since 23 September 2008; and
  - (a) could the Deputy Premier please itemise in dollars the amount of each budget or funding cut for these government projects, programmes, initiatives, schemes and/or subsidies?

Dr K.D. HAMES replied:

The Legislative Council's Estimates and Financial Operations Committee looked at these issues earlier this year and questioned CEOs in public hearings on these types of matters.

The Committee's terms of reference were:

The Committee is to inquire into and report on Government measures to audit the operational and financial performance of the Western Australian public sector, and any other means by which efficiencies in public sector expenditure can be gained and all the circumstances surrounding the implementation of a three percent efficiency dividend including —

- (a) the impacts of a three percent efficiency dividend on the general level of service delivery across all agencies; in particular any impacts on service delivery to regional areas;
- (b) consider alternative methods for achieving a three percent reduction in government expenditure, including:
  - (i) the approach of the former Government;
  - (ii) whether certain agencies or functions of agencies should be exempt from the efficiency dividend; and
  - (iii) whether the rate of the dividend should vary according to agency size or function, and if so specific advice on which agencies or functions should contribute a disproportionate share of savings over the forward estimates.
- (c) whether a three percent efficiency dividend has a disproportionate impact on smaller agencies, including whether or not smaller agencies are disadvantaged by poorer economies of scale or a relative inability to obtain funding for new policy proposals;
- (d) what measures agencies are taking to implement a three percent efficiency dividend, and the effect on their functions, performance and staffing arrangements;
- (e) the impact of the current financial crisis on the state's economy and finances;
- (f) the sustainability of the rate of growth in general government expenditure detailed in the 2008-09 budget;
- (g) the sustainability of the forecast decrease in operating surplus detailed in the 2008-09 budget;
- (h) the sustainability of the forecast increase in net debt detailed in the 2008-09 budget; and
- (i) the impact of failing to fully implement a three percent efficiency dividend on the operating surplus and net debt.