

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH — INCREASE IN ADMINISTRATION AND CLERICAL STAFF

804. Mr E.S. RIPPER to the Minister for Health:

I have a supplementary question. Am I to interpret the minister's answer as a defence of his department putting on 370 additional administrative and clerical staff, and does the minister believe that is a good thing?

Dr K.D. HAMES replied:

We have now been in government for one year. The rise in administrative staff that has occurred under our watch is a small component when we compare the 2007-08 figures with those of 2008-09.

Several members interjected.

That amount of growth supported a significant increase in other areas of staffing to make up for long-term deficiencies. But, yes, I have said quite clearly in this house that total employment in the Department of Health overshot the mark, particularly the number of staff in the administrative area. That will be the area in which we will do the most work to get value for money for Western Australian taxpayers.