

Division 32: Law Reform Commission, \$851 000 -

Ms Guise, Chairman.

Mr McGinty, Attorney General; Minister for Justice and Legal Affairs; Electoral Affairs; Peel and the South West.

Ms H. Kay, Executive Officer, Law Reform Commission.

Mrs EDWARDES: If I can refer please to page 559, dealing with major initiatives for 2001-02, does the attorney have in mind any references to which he expects to be referring off to the Law Reform Commission and could we please receive advice as to what are likely to be the several special projects to be undertaken in respect to the 30th anniversary?

[2.10 pm]

Mr McGINTY: Yes. First of all, the Law Reform Commission has recently undergone a bit of a trauma and that is because the chairman has been appointed to be counsel assisting the HIH Royal Commission, Wayne Martin, and that will mean that he will not be able to continue to contribute to the workings of the Law Reform Commission. He will, however, be staying on until early in the new year to complete the judicial review of administrative decision-making, reference to which was made by the former attorney. In addition to that, Lindy Jenkins has been appointed a District Court judge and that only left one member of the Law Reform Commission, Professor Ralph Simmonds. We are in the process at the moment of finalising new appointments. We have not been in a position yet to confirm those to the position. We are ready to announce them, but we are having discussions with the Crown Solicitor's Office and others so that we will have effectively a new Law Reform Commission, certainly from the beginning of next year.

Because of that my focus with the Law Reform Commission has been on new appointees to go to it and seeing through the references that were made essentially by the previous Government. Principal among those is the reference in relation to traditional Aboriginal law. That is the major reference that it will be undertaking. The final part of the question the member raised, and I will then ask Ms Kay if she can add any further information to the questions she has asked, is, next year is the 30th anniversary of the Law Reform Commission.

In a meeting with the Law Reform Commission earlier this year we observed the fact that over the 30 years there has been quite a number of reports, sometimes dealing with some of the more esoteric issues of law, that have remained unimplemented. I have asked the Law Reform Commission to advise me of those which remain capable of being implemented and which should be implemented and they have undertaken to provide that information to me this year with a view, as one way of celebrating the 30th birthday of the Law Reform Commission, of implementing all of those outstanding reports, except the most recent one in respect of reform of the criminal and civil justice system because that is going to be an ongoing matter for the next few years, but with some of the others in relation to wills and matters of that nature which have been gathering dust, to the extent they are still relevant we are keen to implement them. I spoke with Professor Simmonds last week about that and he has indicated that he will get that forward, so next year could be a big year for law reform.

Mrs EDWARDES: Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN: Members, the question is that in respect to division 32, appropriation be recommended. That is carried. Thank you very much.