

BUY LOCAL POLICY

181. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Does the minister support a buy local policy?
- (2) What steps have been put in place to ensure that country businesses, including country professionals, can compete equally with city businesses for government contracts?
- (3) Will the minister explain why, in a recent Department of Education tender for consultants, the six successful tenderers in the town planning category were all from the metropolitan area; and why the four successful contractors named in the specialist land consultants and the five successful contractors in the land surveyors category were all from Perth?
- (4) How many businesses submitted tenders in the three categories, and, of those businesses, how many worked in the city and how many in the country?

Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Department of Education, on behalf of the minister, ensures that when tenders are called - depending on the location of the services - they are designed to ensure that regional and small businesses are given equal opportunity to bid in an open playing field. The buy local policy, which includes regional price preferences in business and content, is considered against all compliant offers where applicable.
- (3) The request for tender was advertised in *The West Australian* on Saturday 26 January 2002, and on the government electronic market tendering facility, which resulted in bids being received from 42 organisations. A detailed analysis of each of the tenders was conducted against the selection criteria has detailed in the RFT document for each particular category. The RFT indicated that it was expected that a maximum of five consultants would be appointed to each area of expertise. However, only consultants possessing appropriate selection criteria and offering effective costs would be appointed.

Some city firms that tendered had offices or partners in country areas, which meant that regional businesses in Albany, Broome, Bunbury, Busselton, Dunsborough and Karratha were successful.
- (4) In the town planning category, 11 tenders were submitted, all of which were from the city. In the specialist land consultant category, seven tenders were submitted, all of which came from the city. In the land surveyors category, 11 tenders were submitted, four of which came from the city and three from the country.