

PREMIER — PORTFOLIOS — COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRES

5099. Ms M.J. Davies to the Premier; Minister for Public Sector Management; State Development, Jobs and Trade; Federal–State Relations:

I refer to use of the Community Resource Centre (CRC) network to assist with the rollout of public consultation conducted by each agency under your portfolio areas, and ask:

- (a) (a) On how many occasions has each agency used CRCs for public consultation in:
  - (i) 2016–17;
  - (ii) 2017–18; and
  - (iii) 2018–19 to date;
- (b) (b) How many of the above occasions served to replace face-to-face consultation in regional and remote areas;
- (c) (c) How many of the above occasions had a fee for service attached to the consultation involvement;
- (d) (d) If used, what is the estimated total saving made from utilising CRCs in place of face-to-face consultation for each of the above financial years;
- (e) (e) What steps have you taken to encourage your agencies to utilise the CRC network for public consultation;
- (f) (f) What plans are afoot for your agencies to use the CRC network for upcoming consultation; and
- (g) (g) Have your agencies used video-conferencing platforms to enable regional and remote people access to consultation sessions?

**Mr M. McGowan replied:**

The information requested would be too onerous to compile and the responsible Ministers are not willing to dedicate valuable time and departmental resources.

The McGowan Government acknowledges that CRCs provide a valuable service to regional communities.

In 2018, the Minister for Regional Development commissioned a review of the CRC network to identify opportunities for improvement. The review highlighted the need to promote the CRC network across Government and to identify opportunities for agencies to work more closely with CRCs to improve the delivery of services to, and public consultation with, people in regional communities.

The Wheatbelt Business Network has been engaged by DPIRD to identify and pilot initiatives that enhance collaboration between CRCs and Government agencies. The Wheatbelt Business Network negotiated for the Australian Electoral Commission to use CRCs in the recent Federal election as pre-polling centres and training venues. Work is also underway with the Western Australian Electoral Commission for future State elections and with the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the 2021 Census.

DPIRD is establishing a Government Senior Officers Reference Group to build stronger relationships between CRCs and Government agencies. This group will be tasked with preparing options to encourage Government agencies to review their regional service delivery model and, on a fee-for-service basis, consider using CRCs as a cost effective option.

DPIRD is planning a forum for Government agencies to hear about, and better understand, the role of CRCs. This forum is expected to help inform the work of the Government Senior Officers Reference Group.