

PERTH STADIUM — WESTADIUM CONTRACT — AUDITOR GENERAL'S REPORT

683. Ms R. SAFFIOTI to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

I refer to the Auditor General's report of 27 August in which he stated —

There is a clear public interest in Parliament and the public having access to information about government's payment obligations to Westadium over the 25 years of the contract.

Can the minister now tell Parliament the expected annual payment that the state government will be making to Westadium?

Ms M.J. DAVIES replied:

We have been over this so many times. The information the member is asking for is commercial-in-confidence, and this state government will not be providing it. Can I talk about the Auditor General's report, because it has been raised by —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am not even looking at my notes, thank you very much.

The SPEAKER: Thank you. Through the Chair, please.

Ms M.M. Quirk: "Commercial-in-confidence" is three words; she has two pages of briefing notes.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I do not know what the member for Girrawheen is looking at.

Ms R. Saffioti: What is the expected payment?

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I have answered the member's question, and I am going to give her a reason.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I call you to order for the first time. Through the Chair, no more interruptions, and a quick answer; thank you.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: When the Auditor General's report came out, there was much hysteria from the opposition around the fact that we had been secretive and we were not providing information. If the opposition had actually read the report, it would know that the Auditor General made an assessment on four occasions when my predecessor and I had made the decision not to release information on the grounds of commercial-in-confidence. The Auditor General uses four criteria, and 15 out of 16 times we were found to have made a reasonable decision; it was reasonable for us. The Auditor General's opinion was that in 15 out of the 16 criteria we were tested on, we made a reasonable decision. On the balance of probabilities, it could be suggested that he did not form an opinion on the sixteenth because he could not get access to the privileged legal information provided by the State Solicitor's Office to the government that has been protected under this government and previous governments.

Several members interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: That has been a longstanding situation. He could not form an opinion. On 15 out of 16 criteria, we were found to have made a reasonable decision not to release information because it would significantly impact on the decisions we would make to secure this contract with Westadium.