

WESTERN POWER, ENGINEERING CONSULTING BRANCH

614. Hon Helen Hodgson to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Have or will the services provided by the Engineering Consulting branch of Western Power been outsourced?
- (2) If so, to what company and when does the contract commence?
- (3) What options have been given to employees of the Engineering Consulting branch regarding their future employment, and how many weeks were they given to consider those options?
- (4) Were the employees of that branch consulted regarding the outsourcing prior to a decision being made to take that course of action?
- (5) If no to (4), why were the employees of the Engineering Consulting branch not given the same consideration and options given to other employees of corporations that have been privatised (eg. AlintaGas, Dampier-Bunbury pipeline)?
- (6) Were the employees of the branch offered permanent employment only 12 months ago after being told they were considered to be required employees after a restructure within the department?

Hon N.F. MOORE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) (a) Burns and Roe Worley Pty Ltd.
(b) 24 July 2000.
- (3) (a) Ongoing employment with BRW or retraining and redeployment with Western Power Corporation.
(b) Employees notified on 15 June 2000. Currently six weeks with no fixed deadline.
- (4) Following WPC Board approval, employees were consulted.
- (5) Not privatisation - this is occurring within the terms of the current certified agreement which is in place between WPC and its employees.
- (6) The Engineering Consulting Branch was formed 12 months ago to provide engineering services to the Generation Division of WPC and to the external market. ECB was staffed with existing employees at that time. Since its formation, it has been recognised that the internal workload is declining, that the external workload will not materialise due to the increasing competition facing WPC, and the presence of existing consultants in the private sector. Thus, the decision has been taken to outsource the work and transfer the employees to BRW to perform the work, and to capture additional work from within BRW, not WPC. No employees are being made redundant, and all have a guarantee of ongoing employment, and all will receive 12 weeks' salary on transfer. This is a different circumstance than prevails at Westrail and AlintaGas.