

MINISTER FOR ENERGY, ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE, RESOURCES USED

2686. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Energy

- (1) Which officers within the Minister's Departments and Agencies and the Office of the Minister for Energy were involved in the research and development of the answers to question without notice Nos 18, 20, 36, 48, 60 and 75 of 2004?
- (2) How much time did these officers' spend on this research and development?
- (3) What is the salary of each officer?

Mr E.S. RIPPER replied:

No officers within my departments and agencies were involved in the preparation of the questions. While the Member is understandably sensitive about the Leader of the Opposition's secret privatisation agenda, there is no public interest to be served in exposing individual Ministerial officers to Opposition harassment.

The Leader of the Opposition could have terminated the series of questions with a full and frank account of his role in the commissioning of, and deliberations on, the Pathway to Privatisation report which canvassed the sale of Western Power. To date, there has been no satisfactory explanation as to why the Court Government failed to disclose the report to the Parliament.

Further, the Leader of the Opposition has failed to consent to the release of Cabinet papers concerning the disastrous investment by the Court Government in the Windimurra gas pipeline, which has cost taxpayers' millions.

The Member should focus her demand for accountability on the Leader of the Opposition instead of wasting taxpayers' time and money on trivial matters.