

MINISTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION — DEFAMATION PROCEEDINGS

169. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I refer to reports that the embattled Minister for Child Protection is being sued by former Western Australian of the Year Dr Tracy Westerman, AM, over public comments the minister made. Will WA taxpayers foot the bill for the minister's legal defence?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

There are protocols around these things that apply to government ministers that have been in place for many years. Those protocols have been applied by both sides of government over the years. I recall back in the day, during Colin Barnett's government, protocols were applied in relation to Mr Joe Francis. I can go further back to the Richard Court government, when they were also applied in relation to Hon Cheryl Edwardes. Obviously, I have had my own issue with Mr Clive Palmer suing me. I expect that the protocols that are in place will be applied.