

CARABOODA FIRE — INJURY TO FIREFIGHTER

**913. Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:**

I refer to the tragic house fire at Carabooda last Sunday, in which two children were killed and a firefighter injured.

- (1) Is the minister aware that the injuries to the firefighter could have been avoided if he had been wearing protective clothing with a moisture barrier?
- (2) Is the minister aware that the United Firefighters Union has been calling for this personal equipment for over two years and that the issue has been stalled in committees?
- (3) Is the minister aware that the Fire and Emergency Services Authority of Western Australia is resisting the provision of this protective clothing because of related increases in fatigue in firefighters and associated rostering issues?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The safety of firefighters is a priority for FESA. The injury to the firefighter at Carabooda is currently subject to an internal investigation. It is to be noted that the gloves supplied to firefighters meet national safety standards and have a moisture barrier.
- (2) FESA has been working cooperatively with employee representatives through the University of Western Australia in a testing and evaluation process of new protective clothing. This testing program will ensure that the final approved garments are appropriate for use throughout the state.
- (3) FESA is committed to the replacement program for personal protective clothing for firefighters. The final testing and evaluation process is an important definitive step prior to the approved garments being issued to firefighters.