

LOTTO PRICE INCREASES

97. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) Did the Minister for Racing and Gaming approve the recent increase in the price of lotto tickets? If so, why?
- (2) What will be the estimated increase in revenue to the State Government and what amount will be distributed to community groups as a result of the lotto price increase?
- (3) Will the Lotteries Commission grants to community groups continue to be handed out exclusively by Labor Party parliamentarians?

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS replied:

- (1)-(3) The member has made a most inaccurate assertion. A number of members of Parliament, who were not elected under the banner of the Australian Labor Party, have handed out Lotteries Commission cheques; I will mention one. Members on the other side of the House have handed out Lotteries Commission cheques; however, I will not mention members from this Chamber. I can assure the member that if he had an occasional chat to the Leader of the Opposition in the other place, he would be aware that the Leader of the Opposition handed out a Lotteries Commission cheque for a very substantial amount. That occurred because it was appropriate for him to do so. The member who asked this question should get his facts straight. He should do some investigation before he engages in trite and petty politics.

I will refer to the detail of the question. I am very happy to provide the member with a comprehensive list of his colleagues who have handed out Lotteries Commission cheques.

Hon Peter Foss: I want to hear about the price increases.

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS: I am sure the member wants to hear about the price increases, and I will deal with that now. I assure the House that to the best of my recollection, Hon Peter Foss has not handed out a Lotteries Commission cheque. I am very concerned, as I am sure members in the past who have had the honour of having ministerial responsibility for the Lotteries Commission were, about maintaining the strong reputation of the Lotteries Commission in this State. I do not seek to politicise it in the way that Hon Barry House has sought to do. He asked a most disgraceful question.

The price increase will take effect from December of this year. The price increase in certain products to be sold on the Saturday draws will bring the price for that product into line with other jurisdictions in Australia -

Hon Simon O'Brien: What does that have to do with anything?

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS: The member might not understand these matters. That will lead to an increase in revenue for lotto retailers. This is a small business measure. It will assist those who -

Hon Kim Chance: Members opposite don't like small business.

Hon NICK GRIFFITHS: They do not like them at all.

The price increase will assist lotto retailers and will bring the price of lotto tickets in line with other jurisdictions. It will lead to increased revenue being raised, which will enable more money to go back into our community. I would have thought that any member of Parliament who was community minded would be very pleased to know that that will occur. The attempt by the member to politicise the work of the Lotteries Commission is an absolute disgrace.