

BUILDING INDUSTRY AND SPECIAL PROJECTS INSPECTORATE, EFFECTIVENESS

1317. Hon. C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection

I refer the Minister to the finding of the Royal Commission into the Building and Construction Industry that 'In the Building Industry in Perth there is a strong perception that [the Building Industry and Special Projects Inspectorate], in contrast to the previous WA [Building Industry Taskforce], is ineffective. Part of this perception arises from a view that BISPI is reactive rather than proactive and has achieved little,' and I ask -

- (a) what will the Government now do to ensure that the Inspectorate is a proactive body with a meaningful place in the management of industrial relations on building and construction sites; and
- (b) when does the Minister anticipate that the Inspectorate will be sufficiently empowered to eliminate the misuse of power in the industry and be given a role in enforcing the Code of Practice for the Building and Construction Industry?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:

- (a) The Building Industry and Special Projects Inspectorate (BISPI) has always adopted a proactive approach to breaches of state industrial law. BISPI conducts frequent visits to construction sites throughout the metropolitan area and regularly communicates with builders, subcontractors and individuals within the industry. BISPI investigates all reports of alleged unlawful conduct. Such investigations are initiated on BISPI's own motion or in response to information obtained or received by BISPI inspectors, regardless of its source. The recent successful prosecution of CFMEU Assistant State Secretary, Joe McDonald is clear evidence of BISPI being proactive with investigations and prosecutions. A signed Protocol between BISPI and the Police means BISPI is able to facilitate quickly the reporting of criminal matters to the relevant police officer.
- (b) The Code of Practice for the Building and Construction Industry was never intended to be a document which would be enforced by BISPI. It is a voluntary Code, which was developed and agreed to by the major industry participants, including the CFMEU.

The State Government expects industry participants to comply with the Code requirements. Compliance with the Code is mandatory for all State Government construction works.

A private mediation service and the Code Monitoring Committee has been established to resolve disputes regarding compliance and to consider appropriate responses where breaches do occur.