

RACING INDUSTRY, REVIEW

1250. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) What is the current time frame for the Government's response to the review into the racing industry?
- (2) Will the formula for distribution of Totalisator Agency Board funds be considered by the Government in its assessment of the recent review, and included in its legislative response?

← Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS replied:

- (1)-(2) The review was commenced by my predecessor, Hon Norman Moore. The report of the review was handed to me on 31 October 2001. Within a matter of days I caused the content of the report to be made public, notwithstanding the fact that a federal election was in the wind. I was concerned to have the industry and interested persons consulted fully as soon as possible, and I did not want this issue to be politicised. It is too important an issue to be made the subject of petty point-scoring.

Hon Norman Moore: Thank goodness you never did anything like that!

Hon N.D. GRIFFITHS: The member is quite right. The racing industry is very important to employment in our community, and is capable of increasing its wealth. The terms of reference of the review were changed, narrowing them to deal with the issues of governance in particular. That action was timely, and enabled the report to be brought down within its time frame, and under budget.

Hon Barry House would be well aware of the content of the report. I caused him to be provided with a copy when he requested it. He would be aware that the report suggests a regime in which money is distributed on a performance basis. It is very important to take on board the views of the major stakeholders before the Government makes a decision, although I have also sought the views of other interested people. The Western Australian Trotting Association gave me its submission late in February, and a couple of days later the president and the secretary of that organisation came to see me to further put its point of view. It is very important that the right decision be made after consultation.

I am conscious of the fact that the current stake money regime is due to expire on 31 July this year, because the legislation passed towards the end of 2000, which changed how the stake money was divided, had a sunset clause. I have announced that the Government intends to introduce legislation into Parliament with a view to extending that sunset clause for a further year. The Government can then seriously consider the matters addressed by the review and other matters. I am keen to listen to the views members of Parliament may wish to put. I am pleased to note that Mr Trenorden, the Leader of the National Party, wishes to speak with me about the governance of the industry, and I am very interested in hearing what he has to say.