

MINISTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION — DEFAMATION PROCEEDINGS

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

I have a supplementary question. Has the Premier counselled or discussed this with the minister to ensure the exposure to the Western Australian taxpayer is minimised?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

These matters are not really something that I am keen to discuss in the Parliament, but they are matters that occur from time to time. Obviously, when we speak publicly, sometimes people will take offence and will issue a writ or take legal action. That occurs from time to time with ministers and Premiers of all persuasions; it happens federally and in other states. It is the nature of these things. We have to have the opportunity and capacity for ministers to answer questions and to speak in public. Commentary from some people is that we should speak only in Parliament. If that was the case, because Parliament sits for only 60 days of the year, that would not really be a sensible way of approaching these things. I understand that the protocols that are in place and that have applied across various governments will be and are being applied.