

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE REPORT

Statement by Member for Ningaloo

MR R.N. SWEETMAN (Ningaloo) [12.57 pm]: I applaud my parliamentary colleagues on the Public Accounts Committee for their efforts and for the report tabled today. I listened with great interest to the report given to Parliament and the five recommendations that came from the process. However, when the minister reads the report and the recommendations I would strongly caution - as I did at the time that Consolidated Constructions went into receivership - that no preferential treatment be given to contractors even though they are hurting and financially disadvantaged by what happened to Carr Civil and Consolidated Constructions. It would send the wrong message and set the wrong precedent to other contractors who observed due diligence and would not work for either Carr Civil or Consolidated Constructions. They should not be further penalised for initiative on their part in not being caught by either of the two companies in the first instance. That needs to be considered and they should not be penalised when tendering for further government work.

It was said that contractors and suppliers who were committed to the project and hurt financially would not withdraw their equipment. There are reasons other than altruism for not withdrawing the equipment. The contractors and suppliers would have been affected by default provisions. They stood to be penalised if they did not act in a timely and appropriate manner. They would ultimately have suffered court action and damages.

Finally, the State Supply Commission Act needs to be revisited because its pre-qualifying processes disadvantage various tenderers when they bid for work.

Sitting suspended from 12.59 to 2.00 pm