

CORONAVIRUS — HOTEL QUARANTINE

23. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the announcement on 28 April that the state government would no longer use the three highest risk hotels identified in the Glossop Consultancy report for hotel quarantine for overseas travellers.

- (1) Prior to 28 April, had the government commissioned any reports or been advised of any hotels that would be better suited for hotel quarantine than any of the hotels in the Glossop report?
- (2) Is the minister aware of any hotels in the Perth and Peel regions that would be better suited for hotel quarantine than the 10 identified in the Glossop report; and, if so, when did the minister become aware of them?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) On 16 April, the government became aware of advice from the Chief Health Officer on hotels that were the subject of the analysis by Glossop Consultancy and other consultants. That report made a specific finding that all the hotels were suitable for hotel quarantine, but that some of them were better suited than others; that is, they required less mitigation in engineering and other mitigation methods, such as the movement of staff, the use of HEPA filters in rooms with positive cases and so on. That report was into the hotels that we were using at the time. As the Premier said in a recent announcement, upon further reflection we decided to retire the Four Points by Sheraton Perth, the Mercure Perth and the Novotel Perth Langley because of the circumstances relating to the incidents at the Mercure hotel. I stress that none of the hotels were considered unsuitable for hotel quarantine but some were better than others.

In his 16 April advice, the Chief Health Officer said that the Four Points and the Novotel Perth Langley could still be used, but the Mercure should be used for low-risk travellers such as seasonal workers who were being brought in to support the horticulture and agriculture industries and also offshores, which is industry language for people leaving merchant vessels when they have done their tour of duty, for want of a better description. I am not aware of any other hotels that have been put to us that we should have been using, because I do not think the reports went into hotels that were not commissioned. We have to remember that at the time, and it remains the case, other hotels had guests so they did not necessarily want them to be used as quarantine facilities. I want to place on the record my thanks and appreciation for the management and owners of all the hotels that are in service at the moment and providing an incredibly important service on behalf of the people of Western Australia.

We are investigating other hotels and other solutions. We would expect any government that is in charge of a critical program such as this to be open and aware of what other opportunities exist out there. But at the moment, we will be retiring from service the Mercure, the Novotel Perth Langley and the Four Points and we will continue to do an important role on behalf of the commonwealth government, which is exercising its quarantine powers under section 51 of the Constitution. We will continue to play that role because that is a commitment that the Premier has made as a member of the national cabinet. We will continue to do it competently and in a manner that keeps the people of Western Australia safe.

There may have been other elements that I missed. The member can remind me.