

RURAL TRAFFIC SERVICES — MILUC CIVIL — WATER CORPORATION

**1072. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Water:**

I start by wishing the member for Collie–Preston a very happy birthday on behalf of the Nationals WA.

I refer to a company in my electorate, Rural Traffic Services, that was engaged in 2017 as a subcontractor to Miluc Civil for work commissioned by the Water Corporation on the Bruce Rock septic tank effluent disposal scheme.

- (1) Is the minister aware that three years on, Rural Traffic Services is out of pocket by over \$65 000 as a result of the liquidation of Miluc Civil?
- (2) Is the minister aware that other subcontractors owed money by Miluc Civil for Water Corporation–related work were paid out by the Water Corporation?
- (3) If not, will the minister investigate why Rural Traffic Services has been unable to secure payment from the Water Corporation when other subcontractors have been paid by the Water Corporation?

**Mr D.J. KELLY replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(3) It sounds as though a company had a contract with a subcontractor who then had a contract with the Water Corporation. In my time as Minister for Water, a number of members of Parliament and individual contractors have approached my office around issues of non-payment—not a lot, but MPs have raised this issue with me and contractors have come directly to my office. My experience has been that, when appropriate, the Water Corporation has actually been very accommodating to assist those contractors who for some reason may not have been paid by the person to whom they have contracted. Obviously, if it is a commercial dispute, the Water Corporation cannot pay out money that is owed by other contractors; it would not be appropriate. However, when the Water Corporation can pay contractors directly for work that has been done, it is willing to do that. Member, I am not aware that you have contacted my office about this company.

**Ms M.J. Davies:** I have, yes.

**Mr D.J. KELLY:** I am quite happy to talk to the member about it, but I do not know the details. As I said, in my experience, the Water Corporation is very accommodating in this area. Obviously, if there is a commercial dispute between two contractors, it is not appropriate for the taxpayer to just cough up money. If it is a legitimate commercial dispute, it needs to be resolved. The Small Business Commissioner can assist in that regard, but if there is a legitimate issue, I am happy to follow it up for the member.