

SPENCER PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL, GARDENER

81. Hon BOB THOMAS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Education:

- (1) Has the Education Department reduced the Spencer Park Primary School gardener's hours from one full time equivalent to 0.5 FTE a week as a result of the installation of reticulation at the school?
- (2) If yes, how was this reduction in time calculated?
- (3) How many hours are currently allocated to each of the gardener's weekly duties and how many will be allocated after the hours are reduced?
- (4) What level of consultation was entered into with the gardener about the proposed changes before he was informed of the decision to alter his working arrangements?
- (5) Were any other members of the school community consulted before the decision was announced?

Hon BARRY HOUSE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1)-(2) Yes. However, the total hours worked by the gardener involved will not change, as the reduction in his time at Spencer Park Primary School will be balanced by hours worked at another school in the area. The reduction in time was calculated in accordance with the school gardening formula. The formula was developed to ensure that gardening time is calculated equitably and consistently for the many types and sizes of schools across the State.
- (3) Time is allocated against a range of primary duties; however, the gardening role includes a number of incidental tasks. Previously the entitlement to gardening time was one FTE, calculated against the following headings -

Turf activities	10 hours a week
Garden features	1.9 hours a week
Main features	6.3 hours a week
Maintain equipment	2 hours a week
Semi-cultivated areas	10 minutes a week
Handy person duties	36 minutes a week
Special allocation - irrigation override	15 hours a week

The irrigation override is an allocation of additional watering time to reflect specific requirements of the site.

After the installation of the automatic reticulation, the gardening allocation is 0.34 FTE, which has been rounded up to 0.4 FTE. That is allocated according to the following formula: Turf activities, 7.5 minutes a week

Hon Tom Helm: You are joking - 7.5 minutes!

The PRESIDENT: Order, members! Some members have already asked a question, but others are still waiting to do so, with every chance of missing out the way we are going.

Hon BARRY HOUSE: The information I have is that the allocation for turf activities is 7.5 minutes per week. I think it should read 7.5 hours per week. I will check that. The answer continues -

Garden features	1.9 hours per week
Main features	6.3 hours per week
Maintain equipment	3 hours per week
Semi-cultivated areas	10 minutes per week
Handy person duties	21 minutes per week
Special allocation - irrigation override	nil

Spencer Park Primary School will actually be staffed on a 0.5 FTE basis, which is above the calculated formula entitlement, to best cater for the circumstances of the current gardener.

- (4) The reduction in the gardener's hours at Spencer Park Primary School was due to the installation of automatic irrigation on the site. The gardener was advised of this at the time of the announcement of

the program in late 1998. Since then, detailed advice of the composition of his position following the installation of irrigation has been provided. Education Department representatives have also held discussions with the gardener on his redeployment options, any personal circumstances that might impact on those options and any concerns he may have. This process was undertaken in accordance with the agreements between the Education Department and the Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union. There has also been significant consultation with principals of surrounding schools to arrange the best possible redeployment placement for the gardener, taking into consideration his personal circumstances and specific concerns.

- (5) No. However, following the announcement of the school's inclusion in the irrigation program, discussions over its implementation took place between the principal of Spencer Park Primary School and the program coordinator.