

INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS — COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

389. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Indigenous Affairs:

I draw the minister's attention to the budget commitment to spend \$2.3 million of royalties for regions money on the development of a program to improve corporate and community governance and leadership, including a review of regional governance models for the Kimberley and Pilbara. Who will develop the program; who will do the review; will the development and the review be informed by the final report of the Indigenous Implementation Board; and, will the minister table the report?

Hon PETER COLLIER replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I will table the IIB report very shortly. As the honourable member would be well aware, one of the key components covered in the two preliminary IIB reports was the whole notion of Aboriginal governance. I will not go into the actual report as it has not yet been tabled. Suffice to say, we are not saying anything new from what came out in the first two reports. This initiative from royalties for regions for governance in those local communities is a very welcome step forward in empowering local communities. A common theme right through not just the two IIB reports but also a number of investigations is the ways we can improve outcomes for Aboriginal people. I assume that the member is referring to the IIB report.

Hon Sally Talbot: Yes, the third one.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I will be tabling the IIB report very shortly. Quite frankly, I did not want it to get lost in the budgetary processes because it is a significant report. It will create a fair degree of public discussion. I want to ensure that it does get that oxygen.

As to funding from royalties for regions, my department, the Department of Indigenous Affairs, will be directly involved in that consultation process and the investigation into those governance arrangements. We will work with all departments. That is how I am starting to move DIA. I spent the past three or four months establishing the actual role of DIA. It has come under a lot of criticism, unjustifiably in most instances. I want to see DIA as the governance body that articulates the decision making right throughout various departments. The Aboriginal Affairs Coordinating Committee is the coordinated body with all the government departments. Quite frankly, I would like to see DIA play a much more pivotal role in coordinating that decision making and then disseminating the policy framework through the office. It has been really good up to this point. When I first took over the portfolio, I wanted to find out what proposals and policies were in existence at the time. That has been a little problematic from not just a state perspective but also a federal perspective. There is a plethora of different programs for service delivery in the Aboriginal space. I wanted to ensure that we identified areas of duplication and wastage of resources before we decided to roll out any future policy frameworks.

In terms of the governance structure from royalties for regions, I am very appreciative of the funding, as I am very appreciative of a host of funding initiatives that have come through this budget for Indigenous affairs, a significant proportion of which have come through royalties for regions. I am extremely grateful. I am very confident that as a result of these initiatives, outcomes for Aboriginal people will be significantly improved.