

DESIGN FOR COMFORT WOOL PROGRAM

Hon MATT BENSON-LIDHOLM to the minister representing the Minister for Agriculture and Food:

I refer to Design for Comfort, a joint research project between Curtin University and the Department of Agriculture and Food.

- (1) What is the future of the Design for Comfort wool program?
- (2) Who is currently providing funding for the program?
- (3) Will any funds for the program be removed or reduced by the government?
- (4) Are there any plans to privatise the program?
- (5) Given that Western Australian fine wool has characteristics specific to the state, will the minister take the appropriate steps to keep this project in Western Australia?

Hon ROBYN McSWEENEY replied:

I thank the honourable member for his question. The minister has provided the following answers —

- (1) The Design for Comfort wool program is seeking to become a fully externally funded enterprise, providing a service to industry.
- (2) The Department of Agriculture and Food and the Cooperative Research Centre for Sheep Industry Innovation are currently funding the program, with some funding from Australian Wool Innovation.
- (3) Government has reduced funding by approximately 50 per cent for 2010–11.
- (4) The Design for Comfort wool program is seeking to become a fully externally funded enterprise.
- (5) There is an expectation that industry will support the project if it is seen to be of value to industry.