

ENTERPRISE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS, PUBLICATION

1325. Hon. C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection

I refer the Minister to the change of practice by the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission to no longer publish the full text of enterprise bargaining agreements (EBAs) in the Western Australian Industrial Gazette and ask -

- (a) what is the policy behind non-publication of enterprise bargaining agreements, given the public and industry interest in EBAs and in particular, pattern agreements;
- (b) is there any reason why EBAs cannot be published on the Commission's website;
- (c) what are these reasons and what measures are being taken to allow the agreements to be published on the Commission's website; and
- (d) how does the non-publication of these agreements equate to the Labor Government's promise of open Government?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:

- (a)-(d) The Commission is an independent statutory body and not subject to supervision or direction by the Minister. Any policy adopted is solely at the discretion of the Commission. However the Registrar has advised me that the decision to cease publication of the full text of EBAs and on the website or in the WA Industrial Gazette is solely related to careful use of limited resources.

The Commission believes that the agreements have no wide application, apply only to the immediate parties, are public documents and may be inspected at the Commission's registry. Therefore there seems little value in widely publishing them.

However the Commission appreciates there may be a research, and general, interest if the full text was made available on the website and is investigating the means to achieve that, accurately, quickly but with minimal use of resources.