

**Division 6: Salaries and Allowances Tribunal, \$310 000 -**

Ms J.A. Radisich, Chairman.

Dr G.I. Gallop, Premier.

Mr N.C. Dymond, Executive Officer.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: I refer to page 137, output performance measures, number of full-time equivalents. There were two FTEs in 2002-03 but now there is only one. Can the Premier advise what happens when that FTE is sick, on leave or absent for any other reason?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The member may remember that a significant reduction was made to the tribunal's budget in 2003-04 - a reduction in appropriation from \$374 000 to \$307 000 - which was largely reflective of the Functional Review Taskforce identified saving of \$50 000 achievable through a staff reduction of one level 2 administrative assistant and relocation from the nineteenth floor to smaller premises on the twenty-third floor adjacent to the public sector management division. The above changes were put into effect during the current financial year.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: And the answer to my question is?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: No indication has been given to me that there are any difficulties in the functioning of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I refer to page 135, significant issues and trends, and the statement -

The recent electoral boundaries redistribution undertaken by the Electoral Distribution Commissioners requires an extensive review of entitlements for Members of Parliament.

What entitlements will need to be reviewed as a result of the changes to electoral boundaries?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I will refer that matter to Mr Dymond.

Mr DYMOND: The tribunal placed an advertisement in *The West Australian* this Wednesday. It has an inquiry under way, with submissions closing on 15 June. Although the inquiry is reviewing all the matters relating to the remuneration of members of Parliament, it is specifically highlighting the impact of the electoral redistribution. The areas that it will be looking at primarily are electoral allowances, given the changes in some of the electorates - and that is probably mainly country electorates rather than metropolitan electorates - and the air charter entitlement, which also impacts in a major way on country members. Those are the two main areas that we will be looking at, but obviously the tribunal is open to any views that may be expressed by members.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Obviously as electoral boundaries change, a given member may find that he represents quite a different area, but presumably there will be some overlap, some new areas and some areas that have been lost. What criteria or rules apply to a member of Parliament using his current electoral resources in an electorate that he does not currently represent?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: That is not a question for the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: We are talking about electoral entitlements and resources.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: Who would monitor that? It would be the tribunal, would it not?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: No. The tribunal sets the allowances.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: So who would monitor that?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The Department of the Premier and Cabinet, I would imagine.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The same as under Richard Court - the same guidelines.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am not asking the member for Perth.

Mrs C.L. EDWARDES: Does the Premier know the guidelines?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: There are guidelines.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: What are the guidelines?

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is not relevant to this section.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am sorry, Madam Chair. I am not asking the member for Perth. My question was to the Premier.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I have answered the question.

Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Dr Geoff Gallop; Mr John Hyde; Chairman; Mr John Bowler; Mr Mark McGowan

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Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Premier has not answered it, once again. The Premier's budget papers state that the recent electoral boundaries redistribution will require a review of entitlements for members of Parliament.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: That is right.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am asking what entitlement does a member of Parliament have to use his resources in an area that in no way relates to, overlaps or is adjacent to his existing electoral boundaries?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition is seeking an opinion. I think the determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal makes quite clear what the money is to be spent on and how it should operate. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has a responsibility to make sure those entitlements are spent in the right way.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I ask the Premier, then, is a member of Parliament entitled to use those resources in an area that in no way relates to the current boundaries of the electorate that he represents?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: In the case of the Leader of the Opposition, as Leader of the Opposition he gets certain entitlements beyond his own electorate, does he not?

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am talking about as a member of Parliament.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The electoral entitlements are related to the electorate.

Mr J.N. HYDE: The new guidelines will come in on 1 July -

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am asking about -

Dr G.I. GALLOP: The Leader of the Opposition is asking for an opinion.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I will ask for a fact, then. Is the current member for Innaloo entitled to use his electoral resources in the new seat of Mindarie? I am asking the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal -

Dr G.I. GALLOP: It is not a question for the tribunal.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Then it is a question for the Premier.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, Leader of the Opposition! The Premier has provided an answer. If the Leader of the Opposition seeks supplementary information, perhaps he should request it.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The Premier, with respect, has not provided an answer.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: It is an issue, but it is not an issue for this budget.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: It is an issue for the Premier, given his commitment to accountability.

Mr J.J.M. BOWLER: As the Premier is aware, the electorate of Eyre is already huge, and with the redistribution it will almost double in size. I think we should do what the federal Government does and have suboffices, particularly for a massive electorate such as Eyre, which has two major population centres. The federal member for Kalgoorlie has one office in Kalgoorlie and another in the Pilbara, in Karratha. If I am lucky enough to win the seat of Murchison-Eyre, I think that to service that electorate properly I will probably need to have a second office - a suboffice - in Newman.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: I suggest to the member that the advertisement is out, and individual members may make submissions. Does Mr Dymond wish to add to that?

Mr DYMOND: The provision of staff for electorate offices is not something that the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal deals with. That matter comes under the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Page 136 refers to the role of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal and how it sets salaries for the Governor, members of Parliament, senior government officers, and judicial and magisterial officers, and superannuation benefits for members of Parliament. The Salaries and Allowances Tribunal has a broad role. However, in other areas in government, particularly in local government, there is a range of officers at a very high level who have their salaries set sometimes by quite an ad-hoc mechanism. Has any consideration been given to offering a service to local government to set the salaries of chief executive officers? Some concern has been expressed about the salaries of some CEOs, which, anecdotally at least, are far in excess of the salary of the Premier of the State or any public servant. Those concerns have been expressed in some of the royal commissions and inquiries that have been held into some local authorities around the State. A mayor on his or her own - who might have been the proprietor of a corner shop, a public servant or a retiree but with great community roots - might not have the capacity or knowledge to set the salary of a chief executive officer. Would it be appropriate for the Government to make that offer to local government so that the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal can take on that responsibility for local governments -

[12.40 pm]

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member for Rockingham have a question?

Mrs Cheryl Edwardes; Dr Geoff Gallop; Mr John Hyde; Chairman; Mr John Bowler; Mr Mark McGowan

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Mr M. McGOWAN: Yes, I am just asking it. Has the Government made that offer? Is it something that the Government would consider?

Dr G.I. GALLOP: It is not something that I have considered. I suggest that the member talk to the Minister for Local Government who may be looking into this matter. I personally have not seen a proposal, but apparently the Minister for Local Government has raised this matter in the context of the affairs at Joondalup, although I am not sure whether he has worked out a specific proposal. I suggest the member goes to him to check on the progress of that idea. It is not something that Cabinet has considered.

Mr J.N. HYDE: It is more effective to use the SAT system.

**The appropriation was recommended.**

*Sitting suspended from 12.43 to 2.00 pm*