

CHIEF SCIENTIST, AND PREMIER'S SCIENCE COUNCIL

765. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Science and Innovation:

- (1) Will the position of Chief Scientist left vacant by Dr Bruce Hobbs be filled?
- (2) If yes to (1), when?
- (3) What are the current status and functions of the Premier's Science Council?
- (4) Are there plans to combine or merge the functions and operations of the Western Australian Technology and Industry Advisory Council with those of the Premier's Science Council?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) As the Office of Science and Innovation has been relocated into the Department of Industry and Resources, the Chief Scientist position is no longer the head of this area as it was under Dr Hobbs. Consequently, the Premier and the Minister for Science and Innovation are considering the issues surrounding the position and expect to come to a determination shortly.
- (2) If the determination is that the position should be filled, it is anticipated that the role would be assumed by January 2007. There is no urgency for this appointment as the Office of Science and Innovation is now the Office of Science, Technology and Innovation and is within the structure of the Department of Industry and Resources.
- (3) The current status and functions of the Premier's Science Council remain unchanged from the role described for it in its original terms of reference.
- (4) A number of changes and initiatives are being considered for the future direction of science and technology in Western Australia. These include possible changes to the current roles of the Premier's Science Council and the Technology and Industry Advisory Council.