

BIOTECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

**912. Hon BARRY HOUSE to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

- (1) Why is there no longer a state government representative on the Western Australian State Agricultural Biotechnology Centre management committee?
- (2) When did Dr Sue Meek leave her position on this board?
- (3) The Western Australian biotechnology development strategy includes the following key action -
  - Investigate the establishment of a commercialisation centre as part of the new Agricultural Research Western Australia facility.
  - (a) What is the progress of this investigation; and
  - (b) if the result of this investigation is to build an additional facility at the ARWA, what timeline will be put on this development of the centre?

**Hon KIM CHANCE replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

- (1) There is a state government representative on the State Agricultural Biotechnology Centre management committee. That representative is Dr David Bowran, who represents the Department of Agriculture and Food on the management committee.
- (2) Dr Sue Meek was the former Department of Commerce and Trade's representative on the SABC. She left her position with the Department of Commerce and Trade in 2001 to become the commonwealth Gene Technology Regulator in Canberra. Her work with SABC continued until October 2001.
- (3)
  - (a) The progress of the investigation has not commenced.
  - (b) This is not applicable at this stage; however, I am aware of the work being done towards that objective and I have been briefed, in particular by the Vice-Chancellor of Murdoch University. I think it is a great proposition and one that I would very much like the state government to support, but it is too early to give any sign of commitment to it. It is a logical extension from what is being done with the ARWA at Murdoch University in particular.