

COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO LONG WORKING HOURS

1819. Mrs C.L. Edwardes to the Minister for Consumer and Employment Protection

I refer the Minister to *The West Australian* on 14 May 2003 and the article titled, 'Long work hours inquiry ordered' and ask -

- (a) who will make up the committee of inquiry into long working hours;
- (b) have the terms of reference been set for the inquiry and will the Minister table them;
- (c) what is the budgeted cost of this inquiry;
- (d) of this cost, how much is for sitting fees, how much for travel and how much for administration;
- (e) when is the inquiry due to commence and when is the reporting date of the inquiry;
- (f) how soon after the reporting date will the report be tabled; and
- (g) how will the inquiry determine the onus of responsibility for working hours when dealing with employment, travel and a second job, as the Minister highlighted in the West's article?

Mr J.C. KOBELKE replied:

- (a) The Extended Working Hours Review Panel is comprised of:
Associate Professor Laurence Hartley – (Chair) School of Psychology, Murdoch University
Ms Helen Creed – National President, Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Workers Union
Mr Pat Gilroy AM – Chief Executive Officer, MARCSTA and member of the WorkSafe Commission
Mr David Todd – Divisional Manager, Health and Safety, BHP Billiton Iron Ore.
- (b) The terms of reference are as follows.
The Review Panel is to receive and consider public comment and make recommendations for the improvement of the State's occupational and health frameworks that apply to issues arising from extended working hours.
The Review Panel is to have regard to:
 - o The incidence of extended working hours in specific industries/occupations or sectors of the Western Australian community.
 - o The extent and nature of demonstrated health and safety issues, such as fatigue, for employees working extended hours.
 - o Specific models and/or general structures to provide guidance on the management of, and if necessary specific limits on working hours where there is strong evidence of serious health and safety issues in 2 above.
 - o The extent to which instruments (for example codes of practice) may be utilised in standard generic form or whether they are better tailored to specific industries or occupations.
 - o The lessons to be derived from and the transferability of, instruments already applied to problem areas, eg road transport and medical interns in teaching hospitals.
 - o Proposed action to be taken by government and industry for the development, implementation and monitoring of recommended models along with resource implications.
 - o Emerging issues arising from extended working hours whether they be industry/occupation specific or more generally impacting on the health of individual workers, their families or their community.
- (c) \$22,000.
- (d) The anticipated costs are as follows:
Sitting fees – \$12,000
Travel – \$10,000.

Administrative – the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection will absorb administrative costs.

- (e)-(f) The review commenced on 19 May 2003. A Discussion Paper was released on 25 July by the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection for public comment. I expect to receive the Review Panel's report in January 2004 and for it to be tabled as soon as is practicable thereafter.
- (g) I understand that the Review Panel is considering the many complex factors that have given rise to extended working hours using a variety of approaches.

The Review Panel will:

consider submissions from the public
consult with key stakeholders in both Perth and regional centres; and
evaluate options that have been utilised in other jurisdictions.