

HOUSING — DUTIES — RED TAPE REDUCTION

951. Mr P. ABETZ to the Minister for Finance:

How is the government reducing red tape to improve efficiency and avoid delays in the administration of duties in the housing market?

Mr D.C. NALDER replied:

I thank the member for his interest in ensuring that government continues to reduce red tape in its services to the broader community. I recently had the pleasure of being invited to the Office of State Revenue for it to demonstrate the activities being undertaken in the broad reform and it looking at how it could improve efficiency and reduce compliance burden to the broader community.

Point of Order

Mr P. ABETZ: I asked a question and I am trying to hear the answer, but with all the noise coming from the opposition side, I cannot hear it.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Member for Girrawheen, are you finished? I call you to order for the first time. I want to hear the answer in silence.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr D.C. NALDER: I really tip my hat to and credit the Office of State Revenue for the initiative that it has shown and the work it has undertaken. It is one of the first times I have seen a government agency really focus on and deliver something for the customer in the broader community. During my time as minister that I have spent with my department, I think it has done a fantastic job.

One important reform is the requirements around valuations needed for certain property sales. I want to give the history of this. Previously, taxpayers had to manually complete and lodge a paper form at state revenue for assessment. The form was then couriered to Landgate's valuation services. Once Landgate completed the valuation, it returned the form by courier to state revenue. A state revenue officer then completed the assessment and posted it to the settlement agent. The customer was then obligated to pay duty before settlement so that the document could be endorsed and released by state revenue. After all this, the property sale could then proceed to settlement. To fix this old-fashioned and time-consuming process, state revenue introduced electronic valuation requests into its online facility. Now Landgate's valuers can access the request, complete the valuation and enter the value directly into the system. The assessment is calculated immediately and notification is sent directly to the settlement agent. This online system reduces the processing timing by up to 10 days. The buyer is also able to pay duty at the time of settlement. These changes have reduced compliance costs and reduced time delays for buyers and sellers by up to 10 days. Improved efficiency of government also means less taxpayers' money spent on inefficient bureaucracy. This is another win for the community.